

# Feasibility Study for the Destination Peace Valley Trail

---



**Submitted To:**  
Doylestown Township, Doylestown Borough, New Britain Township,  
New Britain Borough and Chalfont Borough

**Prepared by:**

**Baker**

**Michael Baker Jr., Inc.  
201 Gibraltar Road - Suite 120  
Horsham, PA 19044**

**January 2011**

## Table of Contents

A)	Introduction.....	1
	1) Study Objectives .....	2
	2) Project Scope .....	2
	3) Project Partners .....	3
	4) Regional Context .....	3
	5) Demand for a potential trail .....	6
	6) Profile of Potential Users and Usage Estimates: .....	8
	7) Compatibility with Adjacent Land Uses:.....	8
	8) Determination of Feasibility .....	10
B)	Inventory and Analysis .....	10
	1) Design Methodology.....	10
	2) Corridor Analysis.....	13
	i) <i>Trail Option #1 – Old Ironhill Road Link</i> .....	14
	ii) <i>Trail Option #2 - Chapman Road Link</i> .....	19
	3) Preliminary Cost Estimate .....	22
	4) Comparison of Route Alternatives .....	25
C)	Implementation Strategies .....	27
	1) Recommended Construction Phasing:.....	27
	2) Acquisition Techniques: .....	27
	3) Maintenance and Operation Plan.....	28
	4) Funding Options: .....	29
D)	Recommendations for Peace Valley Park.....	29
E)	Public Participation Process.....	30

Appendix A

Appendix B

## A) Introduction

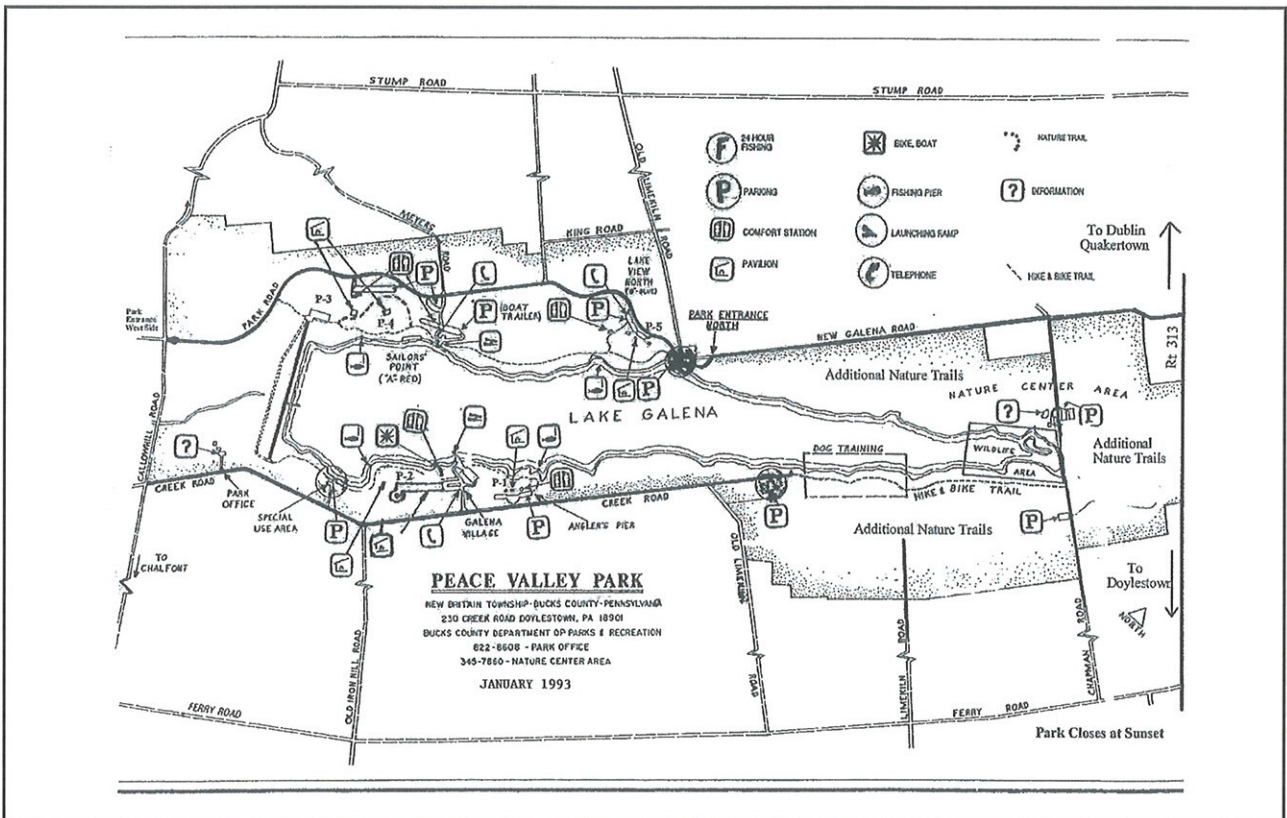
The Doylestown Community Bike and Hike committee in conjunction with New Britain Township, New Britain and Chalfont Boroughs have a goal to connect their communities to the major natural resources at Peace Valley Park through a walking and bicycling trail.

This planning study was undertaken to advance the development of the Destination Peace Valley trail which will connect the 1500 acres of bucolic, natural open space areas, Nature Center and 14 miles of nature trails at Peace Valley Park to the existing 15 mile long Doylestown Community Bike and Hike system as well as the planned Tri-municipal trail network in New Britain Township, New Britain Borough and Chalfont Borough.

The following map shows the amenities and public facilities available at Peace Valley Park:



Existing Walking/Bicycling Trail at Peace Valley Park



Map of Peace Valley Park

Two corridors were originally proposed for this study. The Trail Options proposed for the study are as follows (See Appendix A for maps of the proposed trail options):

#### Trail Option #1 – Old Iron Hill Link

Starting at the end of the existing shared use path on Iron Hill Road, through Pine Run Reservoir to Cover Bridge Park, crossing Pine Run Creek, to the existing shared use path on Old Iron Hill Road, crossing Ferry Road, continuing along Old Iron Hill Road, to the intersection of Creek Road and into Peace Valley Park.

#### Trail Option #2 - Chapman Road Link

Starting at the end of the existing shared use path on Meetinghouse Road near Sandy Ridge Road to Pine Run Road to Chapman Road, crossing Ferry Road to South Chapman Road into Peace Valley Park.

### 1) Study Objectives

This multi-use trail feasibility study involves the design and construction of a bicycle and pedestrian facility between the Doylestown Bike and System and Bucks County's Peace Valley Park for recreation and transportation purposes. The objectives of this study are the following:

- Determine the feasibility of constructing a trail facility in the two chosen corridors
- Develop a trail concept that takes advantage of the natural and scenic benefits of the surrounding area
- Evaluate connections to existing/proposed parks and trail facilities
- Evaluate connections to town centers, recreational areas, cultural, commercial and employment areas
- Provide recommendations for trail safety, maintenance, operations and accessibility
- Provide preliminary design and construction cost estimates for future funding
- Recommend a trail development strategy and right of way acquisition methods
- Serve as a resource to municipalities for the future grant applications and as a starting point for future preliminary engineering efforts

### 2) Project Scope

This multi-use trail feasibility study is being conducted through the support of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Community Conservation Partnerships Program. The technical scope of work is based on DCNR's sample scope of work for rail trail feasibility studies. It was been modified slightly to better suit this effort and project area. Scope of the study involves the area between existing SR 202 to the south, SR 152 to the west, Peace Valley Park to the north and SR 313 to the east.

### 3) Project Partners

This effort has been directed by a steering committee made up of representatives of each municipality, Bucks County and representatives of the Doylestown Community Bike and Hike Committee. Please see Appendix B for list of participants. Residents from the affected project area have attended committee meetings on a periodic basis. Two sets of meetings have been held to move this study forward. The first is the monthly Doylestown Community Bike and Hike committee meetings. This study is a standing agenda item for each meeting. Progress on the study was discussed at each meeting. Questions, comments, and next steps were also discussed each month. The second set of meetings were study specific meetings with the managers of each municipality and the Director of the Bucks County Parks Department. Minutes from these minutes are included in Appendix B.

### 4) Regional Context

The Doylestown, Chalfont and New Britain areas are an interesting mix of suburban, rural and main street village areas. Doylestown is the County seat of Bucks County and the courthouse and other County offices create a great deal of business and commercial activity in the Borough of Doylestown. The Borough also is a major destination of the SEPTA Lansdale – Doylestown commuter line that extends to center city Philadelphia. Chalfont and New Britain Boroughs also have train stations on this line which are important parts of these communities as well. Chalfont and Doylestown also are main street villages that are centered on the major roadway of US Route 202. Doylestown and New Britain Townships are more rural townships that have been become popular area for residential development outside the Boroughs and along US 202 and the SEPTA rail line.

The Doylestown Community Bike and Hike Committee has been in existence for over 18 years. They have been working diligently over that period to develop a community wide system of walking and biking trails to benefit the area. Doylestown Borough and Doylestown Township together, in 1992, formed a joint committee to study the concept of developing a multi-use path that would surround the Borough. The initial plan showed a path largely in the right-of-way of the Route 202 and Route 611 Bypass.

The committee began meeting in October of 1992. The first committee meetings tackled the overall concept of the initial plan and developing a list of community resources that should be connected to the bike and hike system. The Community has been very successful working with private development projects to augment the system. In addition, they have been successfully acquired several grants from PennDOT to make major additions to the system. In 2005, the following formal bike and hike map was created through a grant from DVRPC.



Doylestown has a network of 16 miles of completed trails and sidepaths for use by bicyclists and pedestrians. The Doylestown Community Bike and Hike System will continue the effort to develop the proposed additional trails as grants and donations permit.

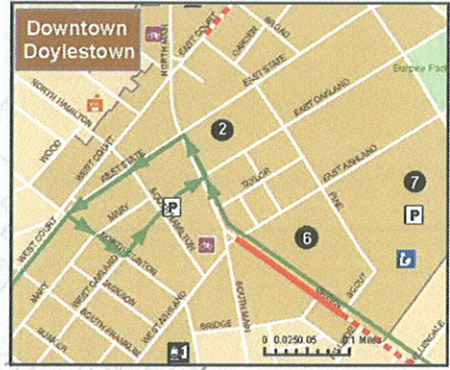
Existing trails are presented as solid red lines, proposed trails as dashed red lines.

Map updated November 7th, 2008

— Existing Trail  
 - - - Proposed Trail

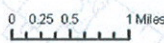
**LEGEND**

- NS Station
- NS
- Bicycle Parking - Existing
- Bicycle Parking - Proposed
- Bike Shop
- County Courthouse
- Doylestown Hospital
- Library
- Municipal Building/Police Station
- PA State Bicycle Route
- Post Office
- Shopping Center
- Vehicle Parking
- Proposed Route 202 Dypass
- State Highways
- Roads
- Water
- Schools
- Parks
- Historic district



**Points of Interest**

- Aldie Mansion
- County Theatre
- Edison Village Park & Historic Area
- Fonthill Museum
- James Lorah Memorial Home
- Mercer Museum
- James A. Michener Museum
- Moravian Pottery & Tile Works
- Senior Citizen's Center
- Y.M.C.A.
- Fanny Chapman Pool
- Delaware Valley College The Farm Market



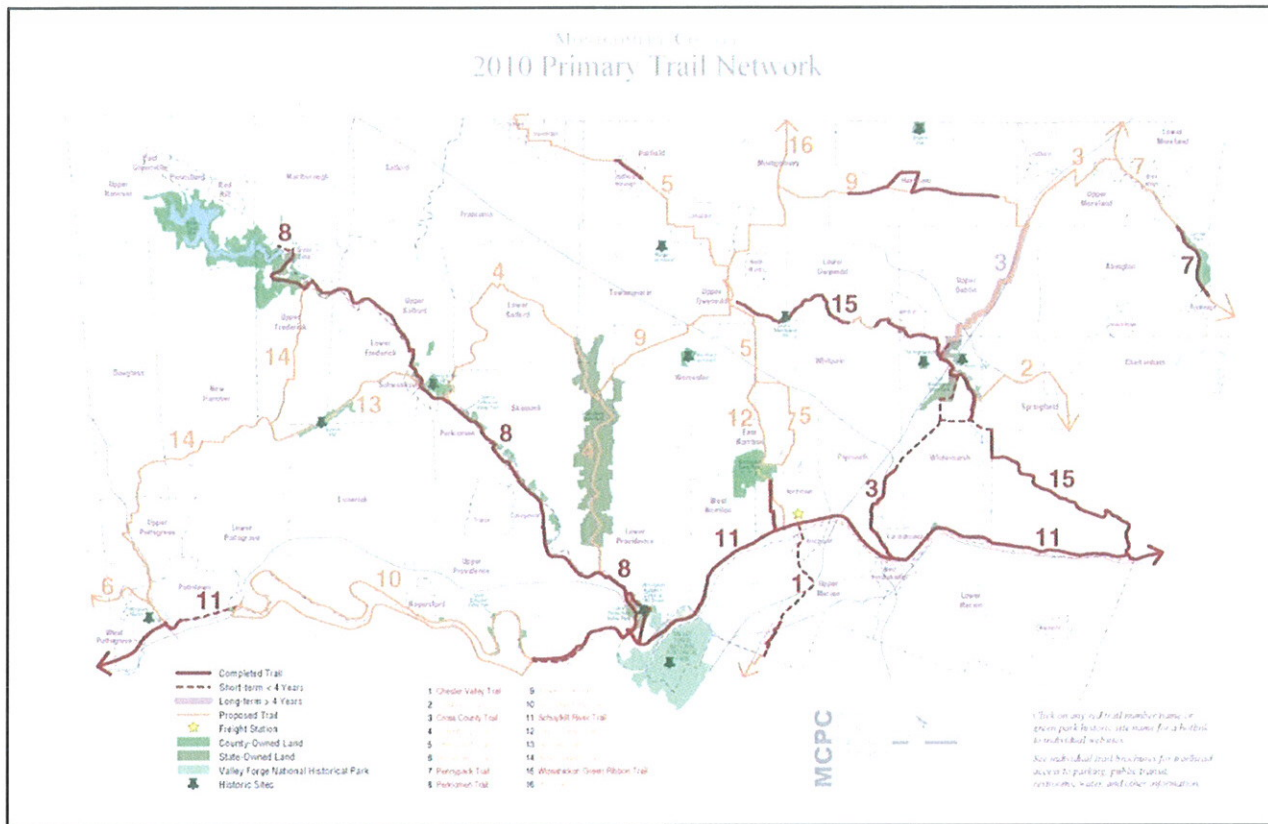
To date, the Committee has developed a system of over 15 miles of trails throughout the community.

Over the past several years, the neighboring communities of New Britain Township, New Britain Borough and Chalfont Borough have begun similar efforts to develop trail systems in their communities. A Tri-Municipal Trail Plan has been created between these communities that lay out the framework for future trail development throughout these communities and connection to the Doylestown system.



Bucks County and its constituents have all been involved with providing recreational opportunities in nature for its citizens. The passing of the recent referendum for renewal of the Bucks County Open Space fund is evidence of this fact. The development of a larger County trail system as part of this funding is anticipated to be part of the program. There is a large network of trails throughout all the municipalities that are slowly coming together. This trail would be an important linkage of trail systems. Bucks County has also recently commissioned development of a formal County wide bicycle plan that will incorporate existing and proposed bike trails.

In addition, the development of the new SR 202 Parkway by PennDOT between Montgomeryville and Doylestown includes a new independent 12' wide shared use path and a new 9 mile roadway with bike lanes. This facility will likely serve as spine trail for central Bucks County and spur the development of connector trails from the communities along the Parkway. The US 202 Parkway Trail ends close to Montgomery County's planned Powerline Trail. Montgomery County has a extensive system of over 50 miles of trails which allow access all the way to Center City Philadelphia.



### 5) Demand for a potential trail

The Doylestown, Chalfont and New Britain areas have shown a high level of interest and demand for walking and bicycling trails. People from an area within 1-5 miles of the potential trail are likely to use it. This could increase with the development of the 202 Parkway trail and other connectors. The activities mentioned in these previous section show the level of commitment by local governments as well as their citizens for the development of trails. The demographics of these areas also support this fact as follows:

Table C-1: Age Composition

Age Range	Doylestown Boro		Doylestown Twp		Chalfont Boro		New Britain Boro		New Britain Twp	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Under 5 years	377	4.6	989	5.6	250	6.0	143	4.6	713	6.7
5 to 9 years	381	4.6	1,183	6.7	309	7.4	172	5.5	864	8.1
10 to 14 years	358	4.4	1,289	7.3	385	9.2	163	5.2	870	8.1
15 to 19 years	359	4.4	1,025	5.8	266	6.4	485	15.5	664	6.2
20 to 24 years	356	4.3	628	3.6	178	4.3	522	16.7	312	2.9
25 to 34 years	1,185	14.4	1,689	9.6	536	12.9	311	10.0	1,183	11.1
35 to 44 years	1,182	14.4	3,111	17.7	685	16.4	416	13.3	1,989	18.6
45 to 54 years	1,192	14.5	2,676	15.2	510	12.2	354	11.3	1,713	16.0
55 to 59 years	426	5.2	1,039	5.9	330	7.9	143	4.6	653	6.1
60 to 64 years	318	3.9	817	4.6	252	6.0	130	4.2	464	4.3
65 to 74 years	740	9.0	1,354	7.7	305	7.3	165	5.3	788	7.4
75 to 84 years	822	10.0	1,133	6.4	109	2.6	97	3.1	397	3.7
85 years & over	531	6.5	686	3.9	53	1.3	24	0.8	88	0.8
<b>Total:</b>	<b>8,227</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>17,619</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>4,168</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>3,125</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>10,698</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Median Age:	44.2		41.5		37.4		27.6		38.9	

Source: 2000 U.S. Census