



National Register Conference March 30, 2011



“Embracing the 20th Century:

Documenting Delaware Contemporary Cultural Resources”

Stephen Marz

Patrick Andrus

Carol Lee

Cheryl Nagle

Joan Larrivee

Attendees

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, **Stephen Marz**, welcomed speakers and more than 40 guests to the 2011 National Register Conference hosted by Delaware’s State Historic Preservation Office. Architects, preservation planners, preservationists, members of the State Review Board for Historic Preservation, consultants, employees from state and county agencies, members of historical societies and certified local governments gathered in Dover to learn about the significance of documenting and recording buildings constructed during the 1940s and 1960s.

Patrick Andrus (Historian – National Register of Historic Places) reminded attendees that resources, constructed within the last fifty years and possess architectural and historical integrity, are potentially eligible for listing in the National Register. Mr. Andrus explained that authors of nominations needed to develop a historic context that explains what the resource means to a community, identifies who used/occupied or constructed the residential, civil, commercial, or public structure, and denote how this representative example relates to a distinctive or vernacular style. Buildings constructed between the 1940s and 1960s are among the properties listed in the National Register in a variety of states including California, Colorado, Connecticut, Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Oregon, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Texas, Utah, and Washington.

Two speakers from the Pennsylvania Museums and Historic Commission – Bureau for Historic Preservation: **Carol Lee** (National Register and Survey Coordinator) and **Cheryl Nagle** (Historic Contexts Coordinator) provided background information about Pennsylvania’s initiative to document modernists’ trends and ideas that reshaped construction of houses, community planning, commercial buildings, and social reform in the Post World War II era. Between 2005 and 2010, staff compiled information identifying architects and contractors associated with these construction activities and compiled a website program documenting the suburban developments throughout the state <http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/pennsylvania-suburbs/5864>. This website summarizes attitudes of the times, identifies national trends, provides research tools and guidelines, offers examples of primary research and maps, gives access to National Register nominations and links to website resources, and contains a bibliography.

Joan Larrivee (Delaware’s Coordinator of the Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program) discussed examples of state activities that encouraged the preservation and retention of twentieth century buildings located in historic districts listed in the National Register. Buildings, owned by non-profit entities and individual property owners, which benefitted from the preservation tax credit program included commercial districts, residential neighborhoods, art studios, educational facilities, and apartment/office buildings.