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## **Renovations on Rose Tree Tavern set to begin**

*Historic tavern will once again welcome visitors to Delaware County*

Work will begin this summer to renovate the historic Rose Tree Tavern, a building that once hosted foxhunters and 19<sup>th</sup> century travelers, and will soon welcome visitors to Delaware County.

The Rose Tree Tavern, which dates to 1739, was purchased by Delaware County in 1967. In August, 2004, Rose Tree Tavern was moved 200 feet further back on the property. When renovations are complete, the Tavern will serve as the headquarters of the Brandywine Conference and Visitors Bureau (BCVB), providing County residents and visitors alike with information on the County's historical, cultural and recreational resources.

Delaware County Council, on Tuesday, June 22, approved five prime contracts that cover comprehensive renovation of the historic tavern, from design and electrical work to plumbing and fire protection.

"We are pleased that this project is moving forward and that this historic tavern will once again be utilized for the benefit of our residents, and our visitors," said County Councilman Andy Lewis, Council's liaison to the visitors bureau.

Tore Fiore, executive director of the Brandywine Conference and Visitors Bureau, said the \$1.7 million in renovations is being funded through the 2 percent hotel occupancy tax, which funds the BCVB.

He looks forward to the BCVB's relocation to the Tavern in 2011.

“That move will put us right in the center of Delaware County where we can be a resource for everyone,” Fiore said. “That will give us the capability to be open in the evenings during the Rose Tree Summer Festival, as well as for other significant events in Rose Tree Park during the year.”

Fiore said the BCVB would continue to house the Delaware County Sports Museum.

The Rose Tree Tavern is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The original structure on the site was built in 1739 as a residence, and possibly a tavern. The 1791 datestone on the western gable end of the structure is possibly from this earlier building.

By 1809, after several different names and innkeepers, the frame building was replaced by a stone structure of fieldstone. The 1836 stone addition to the eastern end made it a two-story building.

The Rose Tree Tavern has functioned as an inn, a temperance hotel, and the first meeting place of the Rose Tree Hunt Club, where the fox hunt met and steeplechase races were held.