

General Development Plan 2008

Background Report on Cultural Resources



February 2008

I. Introduction

**History is a guide to navigation in perilous times.
History is who we are and why we are the way we are.**
■ David C. McCullough

Anne Arundel County has a rich and varied collection of sites, structures, landscapes, and cemeteries that represent its collective history, from 13,000 year-old prehistoric archaeological sites, to Colonial plantations, to World War II era housing. These cultural sites are important elements of the County's landscape and are worthy of study and preservation.

Thousands of years ago the region was populated by prehistoric people drawn to the area for its abundant animal and plant life, and its access to fresh water and the Chesapeake Bay. These early inhabitants first appeared in the area approximately 13,000 years ago. Evidence of their occupation was discovered near BWI Airport by archaeologists a decade ago. Dating to 11,000 B.C., this site is one of the earliest known Paleo-Indian sites yet to be found in Maryland. Another recent find near Marley Station Mall revealed archaeological remains of the earliest intact cooking hearths found in Maryland (8000 B.C.). Evidence of numerous extractive sites has been found throughout the County where Native Americans camped for short periods of time while exploiting the natural resources of the area. Near the present day Piney Orchard, archaeologists discovered the remains of a migratory campsite utilized during the Archaic and Woodland Periods (8000 B.C. to 1400 A.D.) including evidence of lithic (stone tool) workstations where stone spear points were made and used by Native Americans for large game hunting.



The Patuxent River became an important tributary for Native Americans drawn there by the bountiful supply of fish. Archaeological sites along the Patuxent date to the middle to late Woodland Period (500 to 1400 A.D.) and include several village sites. Some of these are located on public land and have been protected, but many have unfortunately been destroyed by sand and gravel mining. Along the Chesapeake Bay, evidence of oyster harvesting by native people can be found. Native Americans migrated freely between the uplands and rivers and the Chesapeake Bay, using a system of trails and footpaths that were also part of a larger regional system of migratory and trade routes. Eventually these early trails and footpaths became the transportation routes of the European settlers.

The first settlers to Anne Arundel County were protestant Englishmen from Virginia who arrived in 1649 and established a hamlet known as Providence at the mouth of the Severn River. The

population soon dispersed into other parts of the County. Upland areas to the north and west were first used for resource extraction such as timber, iron, and wild game, as well as a limited number of plantations. Along the South and West Rivers, ports were established for trading posts. These included the site of London Town, an important trade and tobacco shipping center that served as the County seat from 1684 to 1695 and which today is a National Historic Landmark. Further



south, plantations were established for crop cultivation. Throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, the South County area remained a strong agricultural producing region with tobacco as its chief crop.

In the western and northern areas of the County, iron ore outcrops were discovered and exploited early in the 18th century. The existence of both iron and timber led to the emergence of the iron smelting industry in the region. In the 1720s, an extensive iron furnace operation known as Patuxent Furnace was developed on present day Fort Meade. Similar operations were located at Elkridge Landing and at Curtis Creek. The rich reserves of timber and iron ore were exploited well into the 19th century.

The development of rail transportation in the 19th century had a dramatic impact on the region. The Annapolis and Elkridge (A&E) Railroad, the second railroad constructed in Maryland, was chartered in 1837. It connected the city of Annapolis with the Baltimore and Ohio (B&O) Railroad's Washington D.C. branch line, intersecting at Annapolis Junction. Villages established along its route included Millersville, Crownsville, and Patuxent Forge. The Baltimore and Potomac (B&P) Railroad arrived in 1868, connecting Baltimore and Washington D.C. and spawning the formation of the town of Odenton. Other crossroad villages and railroad station communities continued to form during the 19th century including Woodwardville, Gambrills, and Sappington. The railroad industry continued to be the major influence on development in the County until the development of Fort Meade, the National Security Agency and the BWI Airport and the suburban expansion of Baltimore and Washington D.C. in the 20th century.

The County is fortunate to have retained many historical and archaeological treasures that trace this long and interesting history, from Native American tools to Colonial period relics to the tobacco barns of South County. The following sections outline the various programs and strategies used to preserve these important resources and discuss some additional needs.

II. Inventory of Resources

The County's Historic Inventory is a list of important resources that document the historic sites, buildings, landscapes and objects that are significant to the County's past. This archive is substantial and has been developed over more than 40 years of research by local historians, interested citizens, and increasingly, by professionals in the field. The Inventory of resources is a constantly changing database that is maintained and updated by the Cultural Resources Division in the County's Office of Planning and Zoning.

The current Inventory includes historic sites and structures, scenic and historic roads, archaeology sites, cemeteries, and recorded easement properties as well as sites on the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties. In addition, there are almost 60 sites, buildings and districts in the County that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Four of these sites are designated as National Historic Landmarks, the highest ranking for historic properties that are of national significance. As of December 2007, the County's Inventory of Historic Properties includes 2,237 historic sites, 1,444 archaeological sites, 388 recorded cemeteries, and 153 scenic and historic roads.

The Inventory includes highly significant properties, including London Town Publik House, Tulip Hill, Thomas Point Shoal Lighthouse and White Hall, that have the distinctive honor of being designated National Historic Landmarks. While many Inventory sites are high style



buildings, other important sites appear much more common, and may not initially be seen as worthy of preservation by the lay public. Preserving such a cross section of the County's built environment is important however. Cedar Park (located in South County), for example, may not strike someone as an important building, but it was built in 1702 and is the oldest surviving "earthfast" constructed building in the Chesapeake region. Nearby is an archaeological site from the 1650s, one that represents the County's founding families. Likewise, simple domestic

dwelling from the late 19th or early 20th century may not seem important, until one considers that they might be the last remaining link we have to an agricultural past, one that built this County.

While the Inventory does indeed include such nationally distinguished properties as aforementioned, it is also comprised of a myriad of historic sites and buildings that have local value and speak to the history of Anne Arundel County. More locally significant properties include for example, 19th century farmhouses, tobacco barns, churches, and seaside communities

that are made up of 20th century bungalows. Even though these properties might not possess the highest level of architectural integrity, they are associated with people significant to the history of the County, are representative of a specific time period in the County's past, or are important to a particular community and its residents.

Many of the County's Inventory properties are listed for their association with African Americans, including several free black communities. Anne Arundel County was one of the largest population centers of free blacks during the 19th century and the County's rich African-American heritage contributes significantly to its Inventory of cultural resources. Most significant among those resources are a handful of Rosenwald Schools. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, these historic structures were built with funds from the Julius Rosenwald Fund's School Building Program. Initiated by Julius Rosenwald, the president of Sears, Roebuck Company between 1911 and 1932, the Rosenwald School Fund was a program designed to provide better educational facilities for rural African Americans in the South. Several of these Rosenwald Schools have been rehabilitated and returned to community use. Other County efforts toward the preservation of the African-American experience in the County include support for restoring the Wilson property in Galesville. Likewise, the County's archaeology program has excavated numerous sites over the years with important African-American components.



It is important to note that the Inventory does not discriminate properties by architectural significance alone. Other criteria are taken into account when determining a property's eligibility for listing. The criteria are further described in Section IV.

III. Recent Goals and Strategies

The County's 1997 General Development Plan and Small Area Plans included several policies and recommendations to address the broad goal of protecting and preserving the County's historic and archaeological heritage. These recommendations included the following:

- promoting existing preservation programs;
- strengthening applicable codes and regulations;
- establishing development guidelines for new development in proximity to historic sites;
- providing incentives for preservation, including grant and loan programs and tax incentives;

- providing public education and outreach;
- working cooperatively with Federal and State agencies and local organizations; and
- encouraging renovation and/or adaptive reuse of historic structures.



Since the adoption of the 1997 GDP, the County has continued to implement the above stated goals. Existing programs have protected hundreds of resources over the past decade. Recent changes to the County Code offer effective, clear and succinct preservation measures for a range of resources, including buildings, archaeological sites, cemeteries, and scenic/historic roads. The County has also obtained support from local non-profits and grant programs to enhance County funded operations. Such support has allowed the County to develop comprehensive planning tools for specific regions of the County, and has allowed for the identification, study, and mitigation of threatened sites that are not protected under current codes. The Cultural Resources Division's public outreach efforts touch more than 1,500 students, citizens, property owners, and

researchers each year, through public "dig days," Laboratory open houses, as well as public lectures and presentations.

The County will continue to work to address these recommendations. Additional strategies may be incorporated into the 2008 General Development Plan as needed to further enhance these efforts.

IV. Existing Implementation Programs

The County has developed a multi-faceted program that includes a variety of responsibilities related to implementation of the above strategies for cultural resource preservation. These include conducting compliance reviews of development plans; conducting site investigations as required in the course of these reviews; proactively pursuing preservation projects that will benefit the citizens of Anne Arundel County; supporting and serving in advisory roles for preservation programs and research efforts of local non-profits and the County citizenry; providing public education and outreach to raise awareness and promote stewardship of the County's threatened cultural resources; and conducting research to document, register, record, and investigate the cultural resources of Anne Arundel County.

Surveys and Recordation of Sites

The basis for the County's management and compliance decisions is the County's Historic Inventory of cultural resources. The Cultural Resources Division conducts research on sites, buildings, archaeological resources, cemeteries and scenic/ historic roads to determine their eligibility for listing in the Inventory. Research methods to determine a resource's significance

include reviewing archival documentation such as historic maps, chain of titles (deeds), or genealogical information; architectural and photographic documentation; ethnographic research, or field investigations. All properties listed on the Inventory hold value either to the nation as a whole, or are important to the State of Maryland, Anne Arundel County, or the community in which it is located.

A property that is listed on the Inventory, be it a historic structure, archaeological site, historic district, or cemetery will usually be more than 50 years old, and will possess one or more of the following criteria: (1) association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; (2) association with the lives of persons significant in our past; (3) distinctive characteristics of a type or period of architecture, or method of construction, or is the work of a master architect; and (4) potential to yield or have yielded information important in prehistory or history.

Land Use Policies and Regulations

Formal regulation of historic resources in Anne Arundel County began in the late 1980s when the County hired its first preservation planner. The program has since expanded to include three cultural resources professionals who possess a broad range of expertise in architectural history, archaeological research, historic and archival research, and preservation law. Current laws/regulations regarding historic resources include, Article 17 Sections § 17-6-501 to 504 of the Anne Arundel County Subdivision Code; Article 15-105.8 of the Construction and Property Maintenance Codes regarding demolition permits; Cellular Tower Construction review which falls under § 18-10-109 of the Code; Article 83B Title 5 of the Annotated Code of Maryland; and Section 106 and Section 110 review of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 as per a Memorandum of Agreement with the Maryland Historical Trust.

Compliance review under existing legislation affords protection of historic and cultural resources through the review of all subdivision and site development plans, some building and grading plans, demolition requests, and telecommunication proposals. The County also coordinates with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to facilitate compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, which pertains to projects funded by Community Development Block Grants or with federal or state monies, and with Article 83B of the State's Planning and Zoning section of the Annotated Code, which requires similar obligations at the State and local level as the Federal NHPA.

Sections 17-6-501 to 504 of the Subdivision Code authorize the County's cultural resources staff to review site development activities for potential effects on historic structures, archaeological sites, cemeteries, and scenic and historic roads. If it is determined that a proposed development will adversely affect a cultural resource, then mitigation will be required. Mitigation might include requiring a buffer zone around an historic structure to preserve its immediate environs, requiring the protection of an historic family cemetery, or for highly significant sites, requiring that a protective easement be placed on the property in order to safeguard the resource in perpetuity. If a property yields any known sites, or has a high potential for the existence of an archaeological resource, then a "Phase I" archaeological survey shall be required of the developer. Scenic and historic roads are protected under this regulation as well, with the goal to

preserve and maintain the scenic or historic character of the landscape viewed from the road. A vegetative buffer zone or design limitations of the proposed development might be required as per this section of the Code. The requirements aforementioned are only a few examples of the provisions found in Article 17, and these sections need to be reviewed comprehensively.

Scenic and Historic Roads

In 1997 the County adopted a resolution to establish a program to protect, preserve, and recognize its scenic and historic roads, including procedures for designating and classifying these roads and establishing protective measures. Since that time, the County has incorporated provisions for development along scenic or historic roads into its Subdivision Regulations. Such developments are required to incorporate site designs that minimize impacts on views from the road, minimize tree and vegetation removal and grading, and include other design criteria such as buffers and natural screenings that will help retain the scenic character of the road. The Subdivision code was revised again in 2006 to prohibit certain uses allowed in the RA (Rural Agricultural) zoning district from locating on a scenic or historic road. The inventory of scenic and historic roads was also expanded at that time to include additional roads.

Interagency Coordination

The County regularly engages with professional preservation organizations to enhance its historic preservation program, which includes coordination with State and Federal preservation initiatives such as “endangered sites” programs, priority funding, and associated public grants that support preservation activities. The County’s local preservation program was established in the late 1980s in part to assist the State Historic Preservation Office in ensuring compliance with Federal and State code requirements as described above. The County program coordinates permit review when a development project has State or Federal requirements, providing a more streamlined and coordinated review process for citizens. The County also assists local preservation organizations with acquiring funding from State and Federal sources for preservation projects that will benefit the County.

Several County agencies and organizations work together cooperatively to support local and State preservation activities. These include the Office of Planning and Zoning, Cultural Resources Division, the Recreation and Parks Department, the Department of Public Works, Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation, Arundel Community Development Services, and the Board of Education.

Several historic sites are County-owned properties and/or are under the purview of the Recreation and Parks Department or the Board of Education. For example, the Recreation and Parks Department interacts regularly with the London Town Foundation and the Friends of Hancock’s Resolution on a host of issues. The Cultural Resources Division often serves in an active advisory role to the controlling agency in order to develop and implement a preservation plan for the site. In 2007, a consortium of groups worked cooperatively to promote the preservation of the significant 18th century Goshen House that is located on Board of Education property. Representatives of the Board of Education, the Cultural Resources Division, and an active community group met to discuss the long-term preservation and restoration of this

resource. Most recently, the Office of Planning and Zoning has been coordinating with other agencies in its planning efforts for the Dairy Farm site in Odenton, a property that has many historic structures, archaeological sites and cemeteries.

Other independent or non-profit agencies work closely with County offices as well. As previously mentioned, through coordination with Arundel Community Development Services (ACDS, Inc.) several Rosenwald Schools, significant African American schools from the early 20th century, are undergoing preservation with the County's support and guidance. Another important partnership for preservation is that of the Four Rivers Heritage Area, which is a partnership among the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority, Anne Arundel County, the City of Annapolis, the Town of Highland Beach, and heritage-related organizations and businesses. The partnership's mission is to protect and strengthen the natural, historic, and cultural resources of the heritage area, to nurture their discovery through educational and recreational experiences for visitors and residents, and to promote the region's rich legacy. As an economic development tool, the Four Rivers program develops and supports activities and projects that enhance heritage tourism, a growing segment of the County's tourism industry. The Office of Planning and Zoning, the Annapolis and Anne Arundel County Conference and Visitors' Bureau, and the Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation are active participants with the Four Rivers program.



Also working closely with the County are consultants with the Lost Towns Project, an archaeological research and public education program. The Anne Arundel County Trust for Preservation, Inc., a local non-profit organization, provides additional support for the Lost Towns Project. This team of archaeologists, historians, and architectural historians are critical to supporting the core functions of the County's preservation program. Their efforts to locate, research and protect the vast historic resources within the County began with efforts to explore the early colonial period sites throughout the County. Through this project County staff, various contractors, and a cadre of volunteers and college interns are committed to the preservation of Anne Arundel County's historic legacy.

Public Outreach and Education

The County has a long-term program to promote stewardship through an active volunteer program that encourages local citizens to engage in researching and exploring their historic past. Each year more than 1,500 citizens and students actively participate in the exploration of the County's cultural resources through hands on excavations, historic building investigations, and archival research. The County Cultural Resources Division also has a thriving internship program that engages more than a dozen high school and college students each year in the research, documentation, and preservation of the County's cultural assets. Such outreach

opportunities serve to educate local citizens and get them actively involved in their local history and its preservation, giving them a greater sense of community and place.

V. Future Needs

The County currently uses a variety of approaches as described above to preserve its historic and archaeological resources, and collectively these efforts have resulted in the preservation and protection of numerous important resources in the County. Under the new Code provisions enacted in late 2005, nearly two dozen archaeological sites, cemeteries, and buildings have been protected through preservation easements.

Nevertheless, development pressures continue to compete with historic preservation goals, and structures continue to be lost due to “demolition by neglect” (intentionally allowing a building to deteriorate to the point where demolition is necessary to protect public health and safety). In order to better protect its cultural resources from these pressures, the County needs to take a proactive role by identifying potential development sites that will negatively impact listed or eligible resources, raising awareness about existing regulations, establishing stronger communications within the County government to prevent the inadvertent destruction of sites, evaluating and mitigating the potential effect of large scale development initiatives, and establishing more robust penalties to discourage the intentional destruction of historic resources. Specifically, the County has identified the following needs that if addressed would build upon and enhance current efforts toward preservation.

1) Stronger incentives to encourage and promote preservation actions, along with stronger deterrents to prevent destruction.

Efforts to promote preservation by private citizens are often hindered by financial concerns. While in the long term, numerous studies have shown that historic preservation enhances property values as well as a community’s character, the immediate concerns often revolve around the costs associated with preserving a building or loss of the highest and best use of the property.¹ Financial incentives and assistance have been shown to be highly effective tools in the restoration of historic buildings, both commercial and residential. Anne Arundel County is the only county in the metropolitan D.C. region that does not offer local property tax incentive programs for historic preservation. Ten of the twenty-two counties currently have county-wide historic preservation tax incentive programs in place. Additionally, there are also various City-wide tax incentive programs throughout the State. Incentives for preservation can also support other governmental planning initiatives to preserve the region’s quality of life, such as ongoing interest to preserve the rural nature of South County, and Smart Growth. Historic preservation offers a valuable partnership that in effect assists in environmental conservation and preserving rural character, by preserving not only old buildings, but also roads, landscapes, and in the case of archaeological resources, information of past ways of life.

Through the establishment of effective incentives, preservation can become a desired goal of developers who might otherwise see buildings or cultural sites as an obstruction. In addition, the

¹ Note that several Supreme Court cases have reiterated that Preservation, like other zoning restrictions does not guarantee a property owner the highest and best use of his or her property. (For a more in depth discussion of the economic value of preservation, see www.preservationmaryland.org/pdf/PM_Value_scn.pdf)

provision of incentives will be even more effective if combined with realistic deterrents to the destruction of important resources. The current punishment for intentionally destroying a historic resource is negligible, and provides no real deterrence for removing an historic structure outside of the review process. While many do see the value added to their project by preserving resources, the reality is that adequate “sticks” must also be employed to discourage code violations that destroy cultural resources when “carrots” don’t work.

2) Strengthen land use policies and regulations for cultural resource protection.

Preservation of important cultural resources on privately owned property is still accomplished primarily through voluntary mechanisms. Although the County has the opportunity to review development proposals and provide comments and suggestions for minimizing impacts on historic structures and resources, it cannot require an owner to preserve a resource regardless of its historical importance, unless that resource is listed on the National Register of Historic Places or National Historic Landmarks. The County should conduct an assessment of the current level of protection and whether it meets the County’s overall preservation goals, and if not, whether there are additional policies or code provisions that might be incorporated to provide a greater level of protection, particularly for those resources listed on the Anne Arundel County Inventory of Historic Properties.

3) Improved recordation and tracking procedures.

Maintaining an up-to-date and accurate record of resources is vital to the County’s preservation efforts. Continual maintenance of the County’s Historic Inventory, including the addition of previously unrecorded properties, is required and is a time-consuming effort. As time passes, new resources become worthy of protection and thus need to be documented for the Inventory, while others lose their integrity due to structural deterioration or modification and need to be re-evaluated. All too often, the County’s cultural resources are demolished, destroyed, or otherwise lost due to neglect and even natural forces. Ongoing research is required to document the changing status of these resources so that the County can efficiently protect them. The County must continue to dedicate the resources needed to maintain and improve its inventory and recordation system in order to make better decisions and to have a more effective preservation program.

4) Greater interagency coordination and outreach.

Land use, development, growth management and resource protection in the County requires significant coordination among a number of agencies including the Departments of Planning and Zoning, Public Works, Recreation and Parks, Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation, and the Board of Education. Management of cultural resources under the purview of other agencies can be greatly enhanced by formalizing communication and consultation between the Cultural Resources Division and other agencies that manage the County’s land.

By ensuring that all local agencies have a full understanding of the County’s cultural resources laws, and of the County’s responsibilities under State and Federal law (Article 83B and NHPA Section 106 respectively), these resources can be preserved and protected more efficiently. Given the large number of resources located in Anne Arundel County, the County should be a model for the responsible stewardship of its historic resources, and should meet, if not exceed the requirements made upon its citizens through the compliance review process.

5) Enhanced public education and community outreach efforts.

Perhaps one of the most challenging and important tasks for historic preservationists is to bring about public awareness and support for preservation. With current staffing, and the reliance upon contractors and volunteers, the Cultural Resources Division has an expansive outreach program that directly interacts with more than 1,500 citizens yearly through existing educational outreach programs. Much of this activity is supported by grants and through cooperative programs with local preservation organizations. County Staff and contractors speak to public groups several times per month, produce a quarterly “Letters from Lost Towns” newsletter, and regularly work directly with volunteers and interns. This is an effective program, one that is operating nearly at capacity with current staffing levels. Expanded public outreach might be achieved through a more sophisticated use of the Internet, and through exhibits or programming that does not require staff to be present, such as exhibits, displays, or video productions. Such outreach has proven to be a very effective tool. Citizens who have a better understanding of their local history will be more proactive in supporting the preservation of cultural resources. Likewise, educated citizens will instill a conservation mentality within their own lives, and upon their children, creating a tradition of historic preservation in Anne Arundel County.

