

LAUREL HILL HOUSE



Historic Structure Report and Treatment Options

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DRAFT



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Laurel Hill Project Advisory Citizens Oversight
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Fairfax County Architectural Review Board
Virginia Department of Historic Resources
Fairfax County Department of Transportation
Fairfax County Facilities Management Department



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The Laurel Hill House is located within the Adaptive Reuse Area of the former Lorton Prison site in Fairfax County. The Adaptive Reuse Area is approximately 80 acres and is also part of a larger 511-acre District of Columbia Workhouse and Reformatory Historic District that was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in February 2006.

The Laurel Hill House is listed as a contributing structure to the historic district. It is currently owned by Fairfax County and managed by the Department of Planning and Zoning.

Originally built circa 1787, it was the home of Major William Lindsay, who served in the Virginia Militia during the American Revolution. Beginning in the early 1900s, the house became part of the Lorton Prison site and served as home to the Superintendent of Lorton Prison. It has a significant relationship to two adjacent cultural resources being considered for improvements by Fairfax County: the Lorton Reformatory and the 1930s era neoclassical gardens (that are associated with the Laurel Hill House). Please refer to separate studies for information regarding these related projects.

The building is of wood frame construction with a masonry foundation. It is 1 1/2 stories with a partial basement and upper story spaces created by roof dormers. The area of the house is approximately 3900 square feet (not including the basement).

The structure of the circa 1787 original house still exists, but it has been absorbed within and obscured by numerous additions and alterations. Many of the latest additions and alterations date from the period of time that the house was used by the adjacent reformatory. Due in part to this association, some of these changes can be considered to have acquired their own historic significance. However, many of the changes that took place during this time period had a questionable impact on the architectural integrity of the original dwelling.

The house has been vacant since the 1970s and has received only minimal maintenance. As a result, the overall condition of the building ranges from fair to poor. In general, all of the finishes within the building are in need of restoration, repair or replacement. In addition, all of the building systems are in need of replacement. The exterior of the building also is in need of substantial work. An engineering evaluation found the structure of the building to be in serviceable condition.

Three treatment options were developed after receiving input from a committee consisting of County Staff and local citizens. Treatment Option 1 proposes a restoration of the eighteenth century house with a new addition designed to accommodate modern needs. Treatment Option 2 proposes a rehabilitation of the building in its current configuration. Treatment Option 3 proposes an interpretation of the site and foundation after a selective demolition of the house down to the masonry foundation.

Total project cost for Option 1 is estimated to be \$1,463,000.

Total project cost for Option 2 is estimated to be \$1,750,000.

Total project cost for Option 3 is estimated to be \$322,000.