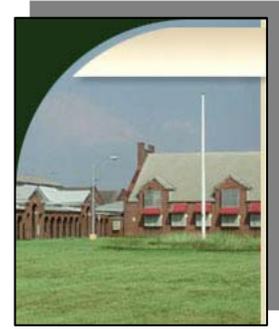


Laurel Hill Project Advisory Committee

April 25, 2007



Dear Chairman Connolly and members of the Board of Supervisors,

The Laurel Hill Project Advisory Citizens Oversight Committee met Tuesday, April 24, 2007 and adopted the following recommendations related to the Draft Architectural Standards and Guidelines for the Laurel Hill Adaptive Reuse site. Although the Board does not formally adopt these Standards and Guidelines we submit these to you for your consideration:

The Fairfax County Architectural Board's Draft Standards and Guidelines For the Laurel Hill Adaptive Reuse Site

The Project Advisory Committee has reviewed the Architectural Review Board's draft Standards and Guidelines for the Reformatory and Penitentiary at Laurel Hill. Additionally, a PAC member attended the "Mock Review" held by the ARB on 12 April, 2007, at which the draft Standards and Guidelines were applied to a moot proposal presented by David H. Gleason and Associates, Inc. (the consulting firm that developed the draft text). Among the standards involved in this exercise were those involving penetration of the Penitentiary wall, and height of new construction within the wall, both of which issues are discussed in more detail below.

The draft Standards and Guidelines references the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), which is included in the original Deed of Transfer, and the Laurel Hill National Register Historic District listing. However, the draft provides no illumination or understanding of differences between these two distinct documents. It is important to note the following:

- The National Register listing for Laurel Hill increases the number of contributing resources from 136 in the MOA to 194 for the National Register. The Register listing omits contributing features identified in the MOA, revises the boundary of the historic district and extends the period of historic significance to 1961.
- According to a September 14, 2005 opinion by the Fairfax County Office of the County Attorney, "The terms of the Memorandum apply only to the 136 contributing structures and 106 non-contributing structures referenced in the Memorandum and described in the January 2000 *Final Historic Structures Determination of Eligibility Report*. An amendment to the Memorandum would have to be executed by the parties to the Memorandum to make any National Register listed structures subject to the terms of the Memorandum."
- On November 21, 2005, a motion by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors clarified that their endorsement of the National Register nomination did not add further restrictions to potential development partners in the Board's adaptive reuse plan.

- ***If the Laurel Hill National Register listing and the draft Standards and Guidelines are used to establish a Fairfax County historic overlay district, it may be necessary for the County to rectify differences between the local overlay district and the MOA. This could mean that the County – or a potential development partner - assumes additional responsibilities for maintenance, stabilization and adaptive reuse of NR-designated contributing resources - which are not listed as contributing resources in the MOA.***
- A memorandum dated January 3, 2007 from Jim Zook, Director, Department of Planning and Zoning, to Tony Griffin, County Executive, cites “developer uncertainty” in the recently concluded RFP process for the Reformatory and Penitentiary.

Recommendations

1. The draft Standards and Guidelines should not be adopted until the County includes clarifying language regarding differences between contributing resources listed in the MOA and the National Historic Register.
2. The draft Standards and Guidelines should not be adopted until the County has more information from the next phase of the Reformatory-Penitentiary adaptive reuse process. As outlined in Jim Zook’s January 3, 2007 memorandum, this involves soliciting a master developer to assist the county in developing the site. The additional information can include clarifying the County’s priorities regarding historic preservation and adaptive reuse.
3. The County should immediately authorize an engineering study of the Penitentiary wall to determine its current condition, as well as procedures and costs for stabilization and reuse. The draft Standards and Guidelines recommend retaining and preserving the Penitentiary wall, its sally ports and gateways.
4. The Laurel Hill Adaptive Reuse Citizen’s Task Force recommendations, as currently represented in the Comprehensive Plan, indicate a need for direct vehicular access from the Adaptive Reuse site, specifically the Penitentiary, to Silverbrook Road. This access will require a new entrance through the existing prison wall. The draft Standards and Guidelines discourage such access, or any breach of the wall. A viable adaptive reuse will likely require vehicular access for safety, circulation, and development purposes. The Project Advisory Committee recommends that the Standards and Guidelines be modified to reflect the Comprehensive Plan and the previous Task Force recommendations regarding the potential need for access through the wall.

Additionally, the draft Guidelines for the wall recommends “Identifying, retaining and preserving Surrounding Wall, Gateways and Sallyports, including how their historic materials, size of openings, and decorative features (*sic*).” The Project Advisory Committee recommends that the Standards and Guidelines be modified to reflect a recommended preservation of the wall to the degree that it is prudent and feasible. The preservation of buildings and structures is desirable and a preferred course of action. However, the wall has been greatly modified (lowered from its operational height), has serious deterioration and structural distress, and – as mentioned above – inhibits access. Decisions about the preservation of the

wall should be made in light of safety factors and what is prudent and feasible from the county and developer standpoint.

5. The document should include standards and guidelines that were utilized by the Architectural Review Board for the review and approval of the Workhouse adaptive reuse project. If a county historic overlay district is created at Laurel Hill, it may include buildings, structures, sites and objects within the entire 500-acre site designated by the National Register, not just the Reformatory-Penitentiary area.
6. The Project Advisory Committee has provided additional comments regarding the draft Standards and Guidelines on the next page.

Please feel free to contact members of the Project Advisory Committee with questions or comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Timothy J. Sargeant". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a thin vertical red line.

Tim Sargeant, Chair
Laurel Hill Project Advisory Committee

PC: John Burns, Chairman, Architectural Review Board
Bob Cosgriff, Project Advisory Committee
Doug Wrenn, Project Advisory Committee
Jim Zook, Department of Planning and Zoning
Chris Caperton, Laurel Hill Project Coordinator

Laurel Hill Project Advisory Committee Recommendations Regarding
The Fairfax County Architectural Review Board's Draft Standards and
Guidelines
for the Laurel Hill Adaptive Reuse Site

Page 4, Third Paragraph: Currently reads, "Any proposed building demolition is subject to the procedures outlined in the Memorandum of Agreement."

- This should be clarified, given the differing lists of contributing resources in the Memorandum of Agreement and the Laurel Hill National Historic Register.

Page 9, Second paragraph, last sentence: "In addition, the lack of shrubs or trees, except near the chapel, is a defining characteristic of the landscaped within the Reformatory.

- This appears to contradict statements on Page 78, Second Paragraph (Preserving and Rehabilitating Existing Landscapes): "...further research in archival records may reveal that trees and shrubs were formerly associated with the Reformatory, Penitentiary or surrounding areas."

Page 16, Section 2 (Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings and Structures), last sentence states: Maintaining and preserving the surrounding wall, and its gateways and sallyports are important in any development."

- The Penitentiary wall is listed as a contributing resource in the National Register, but not the Memorandum of Agreement. Please refer to the Project Advisory Committee's Recommendations 1, 2 and 3 on the previous page.

Page 54, Map 4, Possible Locations for Additions

- The map differs from the Comprehensive Plan map for possible location of additions. A sentence should be included to acknowledge the difference.

Page 64, Section, Map 5: Possible Location for New Construction

- The sloping to the east of Buildings R-28, R-23 and R-22 may allow space for new construction without interfering with viewshed.

Page 71, Section 4 (New Construction). The Standard states, "New construction within the Reformatory complex shall not be higher than 50 feet."

- The text should explain how this height standard was established.

Page 71, Section 4, Within the Penitentiary complex: According to the current statement, "New construction within the Penitentiary complex shall not be higher than the surrounding wall."

- The Penitentiary wall was approximately 25 feet higher. Sections of the wall collapsed and were replaced with chain link fence in the 1990s. Does this Standard refer to the modern-day height or the original height when the wall was constructed in the 1930s? An explanation of this standard should be included.