

**Mount Gilead Master Plan
Public Information Meeting
Tuesday, November 28, 2006
7:00 PM**

MEETING MINUTES

ATTENDANCE

BOS Members

Supervisor Michael Frey, Sully District

FCPA Board Members

Hal Strickland, Chairman, Sully District; Harry Glasgow, Member at Large

Staff

Mike Kane, Director, Park Authority; Cindy Messinger, Director, Resource Management Division; Angela Allen, Special Projects Branch; Linda Blank, Historic Preservation Planner, DPZ; Liz Crowell, Manager, Cultural Resource Management and Protection; Matt Devor, Park Operations, Area 5; Sherry Frear, Park Planning Branch; Andy Galusha, Park Planning Branch; Meaghan Kiefer, Sully District Supervisor's Office; Tammy Schwab, Park Services, Cub Run; Scott Sizer, Park Planning Branch; Sandy Stallman, Park Planning Branch

Attendees

40 individuals signed in.

PROCEEDINGS

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 p.m. by Sandy Stallman, Manager, Park Planning Branch. Ms. Stallman welcomed those present and introduced County staff.

Ms. Stallman gave a brief presentation of the park planning process and then introduced Sully District Supervisor Michael Frey and FCPA Board Chairman Hal Strickland.

Supervisor Frey welcomed those present and discussed the value of Mount Gilead and Centreville's other cultural resources.

Mr. Strickland echoed Supervisor Frey's comments and stressed the importance of community participation in the park master planning process.

Ms. Stallman then introduced Debbie Robison, Program Manager, Historic Preservation and Restoration, SWSG, P.C.; Board Member, Historic Centreville Society. Ms. Robison presented a brief history of the development of Centreville.

Sherry Frear, project manager for the Mount Gilead Master Plan, then presented the site's existing conditions and reviewed the master planning process.

An open discussion period, moderated by Sandy Stallman, ensued as follows:

- Q.** *Keith Young: With regards to the prospect that the historic overlay district will be expanded, how will Mount Gilead be integrated? How will you ensure that the master plan will not be short-sighted when considering the district expansion?*
- A.** Mount Gilead is part and parcel of the expansion of the historic district. We don't want to isolate the site; we want to make connections to its surroundings, and this is something that is being considered during the master plan.
- Q.** *Larry Baldwin: Cheryl Ann, Don, Alan and myself met last week to discuss the master plan. I am very surprised to see that the focus items you presented are so close to ours and I want to share the thoughts we have developed. We came up with the theme of crossroads—there are a series of crossroads that define a sequence of themes for Centreville: (1) Lay of the Land, recognizing the importance of springs, natural trails, and geology, such as Mississippian limestone, (2) Mount Gilead, focusing on colonial times, (3) The Federal Period, (4) Harrison-Havener and Village Construction, (5) The Civil War, including assets outside the Mount Gilead property and incorporating these features into the planning process, and (6) The Civil War through the Roaring Twenties.*
- A.** Thank you for your support and we'd very much like to receive a copy of your comments.
- Q.** *Peter Crafts: This is an ambitious project that you are taking on, but no where is the budget being talked about. At what point do you start tying down money? How will it be phased?*
- A.** The master plan is the big picture that provides an overall vision for the site. The park will be developed as funding is available and actual, physical development will likely be phased. We are very cognizant of our fiduciary responsibility and make every attempt to use our funding wisely.
- Q.** *Peter Crafts: As a taxpayer, I hate that Fairfax County is coming and reaching in my pocket. How far and at what expense do we go to develop this site?*
- A.** We are still at the beginning of the planning process, but we are sensitive to using our funding sources well. We live within our means. It's a balancing act

that we deal with on a daily basis. We have treasures here that are worth protecting, but we will balance it against the cost.

Q. *Kevin Whalen, Walney Glen resident and Boy Scout leader: We want to work with the County to do community service. As a taxpayer, I am all for what you are trying to do and want to help out in preserving what is here.*

A. Thank you very much. Volunteer work is very important to the Park Authority and we appreciate it. Volunteers are one of our biggest assets that allow us to leverage tax dollars and other funding sources. Thank you for your support.

Q. *Vickie Hull: Can you put this in context? When and where is the last time you did something like this? What is this comparable to? How much did those projects cost? Are there bond funds for this?*

A. We are just at the beginning stages of the planning process and we will not know what specific uses are planned until the master plan is completed. Suggestions of what uses you would like to see at the site are very helpful right now.

While this is a unique site, this site would be similar to the work done at Ellanor C. Lawrence Park where multiple structures were renovated over multiple decades. This is different in that the multiple buildings are on one site.

Mount Gilead was not included in the 2006 Bond passed this month and the next opportunity for bond funding will come in 2008.

In addition, there is an active Park Foundation that pursues private funding and partnerships. This project is different from Sully, where there is a foundation with an endowment.

Q. *Vickie Hull: Has there been a list of priorities made for if you get funding?*

A. No, we are still in the infancy of this project and it's not yet been decided what should happen here. We want to hear from you to help us determine the priorities.

Q. *Al Francese, Little Rocky Run resident: What kind of land uses will be here? Will it be only Park Authority use? Any commercial use?*

A. Since this is a public park, commercial land uses are not envisioned. Our focus at this site will be on cultural resource interpretation and passive recreation such as picnicking and trails. The site will still host Centreville Days. Again, we want the public's input on appropriate uses.

Q. *Al Francese: Do you have a time period for this project? 5-10 years? 10-20 years?*

A. No, we are just at the beginning of the process.

Q. *Doug Garrell, St. John's Episcopal Church: How long does it take to get a master plan?*

A. Typically, it takes 12 months. We expect to have a master plan approved next summer. We're moving faster than typical on this site because the Cultural Landscape Report has been completed and provides a wealth of site research and information. We have already done our 'homework' on this project that will help us move forward.

Q. *Doug Garrell: Have decisions been made for the 2008 Bond?*

A. Projects to be included in the 2008 Bond have not been decided and staff will be working with the Park Authority Board to determine priorities. This project could be a candidate. Having a master plan in place is very useful to the Board allowing them to have an overall vision for site. We will start planning for the next bond in late 2007 and final decisions will be made in early spring 2008.

Q. *Larry Baldwin: Is the Park Authority coordinating with Planning & Zoning on Comprehensive Plan issues?*

A. The Historic Preservation Planner from DPZ, Linda Blank, serves on the Mount Gilead staff master plan team and we coordinate closely with her on Plan and Zoning Ordinance changes that might affect this site. In addition, the Park Authority will need to file an application for determination of compliance with the Comprehensive Plan, known as a "2232" process, that requires the Mount Gilead Master Plan to line up with the Comp Plan in terms of character, location and extent.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 PM.