


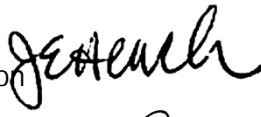


MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARKS
THE MARYLAND - NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

MCPB Item:

May 2, 2008

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Mary Bradford, Director of Parks 
Dr. John Hench, Chief, Park Planning and Stewardship Division 

FROM: Joey Lampl, Cultural Resources Manager, Park Planning and Stewardship 

Subject: Waters House Special Park: Waters Barn Feasibility Study – Approval with Conditions

Recommended Board Actions

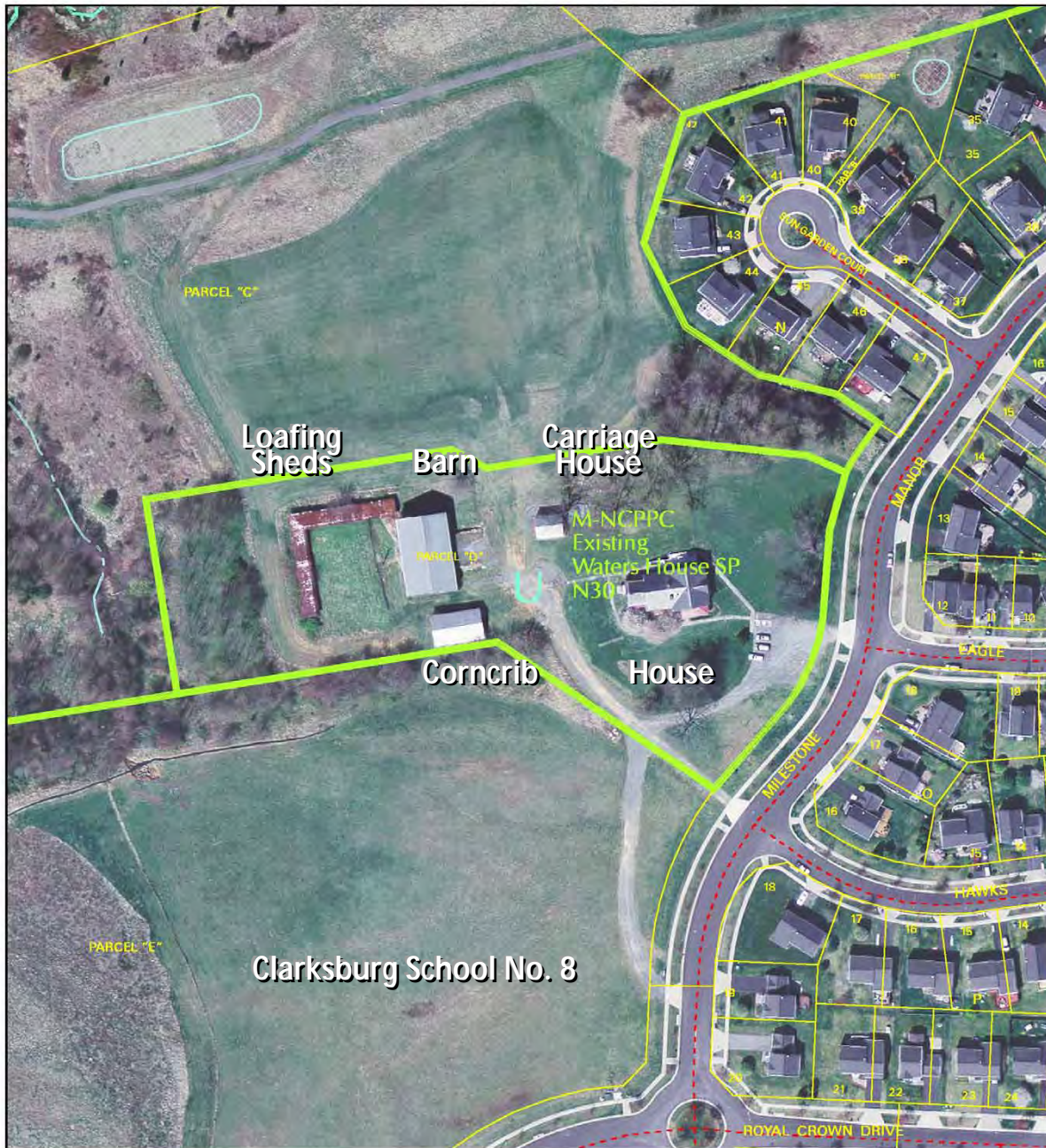
Approve Waters Barn Feasibility Study concept of a heritage-based adaptive reuse for the barn based on the following conditions:

1. A Market Study is completed to determine the viability of a Heritage Visitors Center at this particular location (including access to the site);
2. Programming associated with the adaptive reuse potentially shift even more towards heritage tourism serving local audiences and less towards a conventional visitors bureau serving tourists;
3. A Business Plan is completed including detailed operation and use procedures and a specific financial model for operational self-sufficiency. See <http://www.mcparkandplanning.org/team/ppp/index.shtm>
4. The lease, license, and development agreement with the Commission is re-negotiated at such time that it needs to incorporate the new facility at the Park.

These conditions must be met prior to any future request for permits for construction on park property.

Figure 1: Waters House Special Park Location Map, Germantown

WATERS HOUSE SP



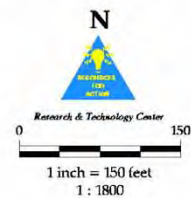
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MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARK AND PLANNING
 THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
 8787 Georgia Avenue - Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3700



Figure 2a: The Waters House

Background

The purpose of a Heritage Visitors Center is to:

- Provide orientation to Montgomery County's rich historic and cultural resources through exhibitions and literature;
- Engage the community through outreach and educational programs;
- Sponsor heritage and other-related festivals, crafts fairs, concerts, etc.;
- Maintain an archives and provide corresponding research services; and
- Provide printed information on heritage opportunities.

The entire Feasibility Study for the Waters House Barn, prepared by Cunningham & Quill Architects, can be found at www.ParksCulturalResources.org under the "Ongoing Projects" link. The proposed Heritage Visitors Center is intended to serve as the county's premier heritage center, much as Black Rock Arts Center is its arts center, and Strathmore its music center. The Heritage Visitors Center will consist of exhibits from the collection of the Montgomery County Historical Society and other area collections, a climate-controlled archives, classroom and community meeting space, and potentially some services of the Montgomery County Conference and Visitors' Bureau (MCVB). The MCVB engages in promoting the county's economic opportunities, including lodging, dining, conference facilities, etc.

Waters House Special Park is located at 12535 Milestone Lane in Germantown, on the east side of I-270, in the Milestone Manor subdivision. (Figure 1: Location Map) The Park is in the Northern Region, managed by the Park Manager from Little Bennett Regional Park. At 3.9 acres, Waters House Special Park is a small, cultural park. The Commission owns the four historic buildings on the site: the house, bank barn, carriage house, and corncrib. (Figures 2a-2g: Buildings and Structures at Waters House Special Park.)



On March 7, 2001, the Commission entered into a development, lease and license agreement with the Montgomery County Historical Society to rehabilitate the house as part of the Milestone Manor subdivision. Per the agreement, the Commission reimbursed the Society for a pre-arranged value of rehabilitation expenses to bring the house up to commercial code and provide public access. The Society also arranged to have water, gas, and electrical service brought out to the

barn (including sprinklers) in anticipation of a future adaptive reuse project. In exchange for the rehabilitation, the Commission charges an annual rent of \$1 to the Society for use of the Waters House. At present, the Society operates under a lease that is set to expire on March 6, 2011.

Figure 2b – Above: The Bank Barn Façade

Figure 2c - Below: The Bank Barn Side and Rear Elevations.



Since 2001, the maintenance arrangement for the Park has been that the Commission maintains the exterior of all buildings and the site while the Society pays for interior maintenance of the house. The Society uses the Waters House as a satellite office to its main Beall-Dawson House headquarters and hosts rotating exhibits in the Waters House. Currently open to the public two days per week, the house attracts approximately 10 people per day. Seasonal events have become a mainstay of the community, and

bring the overall attendance to approximately 3,000 visitors annually. The Society sublets several of the second-floor rooms in the house to the Heritage Tourism Alliance of Montgomery County, the Lincoln Park Foundation, and the King Barn Dairy Mooseum, all heritage-based 501 © 3 organizations.



Figure 2d – Left: The Carriage House.

Figure 2e - Below: The Corncrib.

Figure 2f - Bottom: The Loafing Sheds





Figure 2g: View of Outbuildings.

Project Description

In 2006, a coalition of partners formed to plan for the reuse of the bank barn. Coalition partners are: The Montgomery County Historical Society, the Conference and Visitors Bureau of Montgomery County, the Heritage Tourism Alliance, and the Arts & Humanities Council of Montgomery County. In 2007, the coalition hired Cunningham & Quill Architects to undertake a feasibility study and conceptual design to determine the appropriateness of the Waters House Special Park as a location for a Heritage Visitors Center for Montgomery County, Maryland. In addition to the heritage services noted above, the proposed Heritage Visitors Center will be used by the Montgomery County Conference and Visitors Bureau (MCVB) as a portal to the heritage sites in the county. Whether or not MCVB staff will be housed there is yet to be determined. In sum, the proposal calls for the adaptive reuse of the now-vacant barn into a heritage facility that will be run by a non-Commission entity—potentially a new 501 © 3 spawned by the Society.

History of Improvements

As noted, Waters House Special Park features a historic house, carriage house, corncrib, and wooden bank barn. The bank barn is approximately 7,400 square feet in size. The park used to be part of a plantation known as Pleasant Fields. The Waters family inhabited Pleasant Fields for more than a century. About 1790, Basil Waters established a large tobacco plantation, supported by as many as 22 enslaved African-Americans. The brick sections of the house are the earliest, dating from the late 1700s or early 1800s. In the late 1800s, Basil's nephew, Dr. William A. Waters, a general practitioner, occupied the house and had his office there. The house gained its present Italianate appearance under the

ownership of Charles Waters, son of William. Charles Waters was a successful breeder of racehorses, one of whom set the East Coast trotting record in 1898. The bank barn has always been home to horses, as have the loafing or run-in sheds which frame the stable yard behind the barn. The property, including the house, bank barn, carriage house, and double corncrib, remained in the Waters family until 1932. A small Waters family burial plot is nearby the park on Hawk's Nest Lane.

In 1914, a tornado destroyed an earlier bank barn that stood on the property. The barn that replaced it that same year was in poor condition by 1998 when the Commission began developing the Park. In that year, the Commission stabilized the bank barn, which included the replacement of nearly all of the 1914 plank wall boards, the roof, and some structural supports. As a result, the stable level of the barn contains most of the original building material, while the upper two-story threshing area and hay loft contains mostly late 20th century materials. In addition to the barn itself, there is an early 20th century, two-sided loafing shed, a tin-roofed, pole-supported, open-air structure that the animals can run into in cases of inclement weather. The loafing shed provides a natural enclosure to the stable yard. These sheds were not stabilized as part of the 1998 project. Because the barn stabilization project was funded by a state bond bill, the Maryland Historical Trust holds an easement on the property, which covers the interior and exterior of *a//* buildings and the site, and precludes any alterations or new improvements to the property unless such actions receive approval from the Maryland Historical Trust Easement Committee.

Applicable Plans and Developments

In spring and summer of 2007, the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) underwent the mandatory referral process for the proposed Clarksburg No. 8 Elementary School to house 700+ students on the site immediately adjacent to Waters House Special Park. (Figure 3: Site Plan, Clarksburg Elementary School No. 8). The Historic Preservation Section staff sought to influence the location of the school so as to not completely obscure the view of the historic Waters House from Observation Drive. The proposed school was moved slightly to accommodate Preservation staff, but the effect of a barricade could not be prevented. Subsequently, the Cultural Resources Stewardship Section of the Department of Parks sought to influence the design of the proposed "green" school to make it more historically sensitive, more agricultural in appearance, and/or generally more "green" in architectural character. None of these design efforts were undertaken by MCPS. (Figure 4: Elevations of Clarksburg Elementary School No. 8.) Through the mandatory referral process, the Department of Parks was able to extract a curb cut on school property so that park maintenance vehicles can potentially have better access to the park. In addition, a length of the new sidewalk along the school's property can lead to an improved hard-surface trail on the park property, first suggested in 1998 and still recommended as a future Capital Improvement Program item.

Figure 3: Site Plan, Clarksburg Elementary School No. 8.

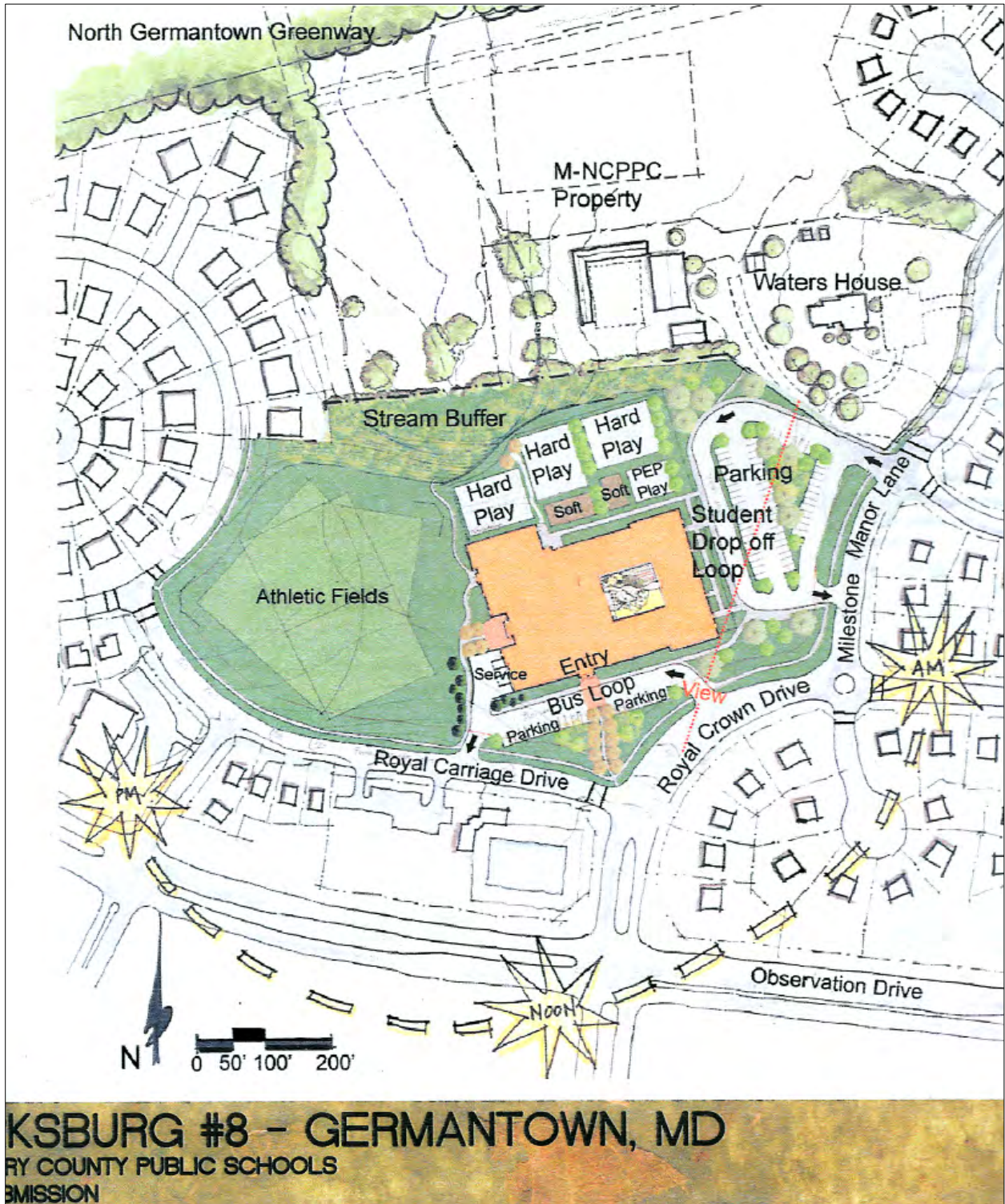
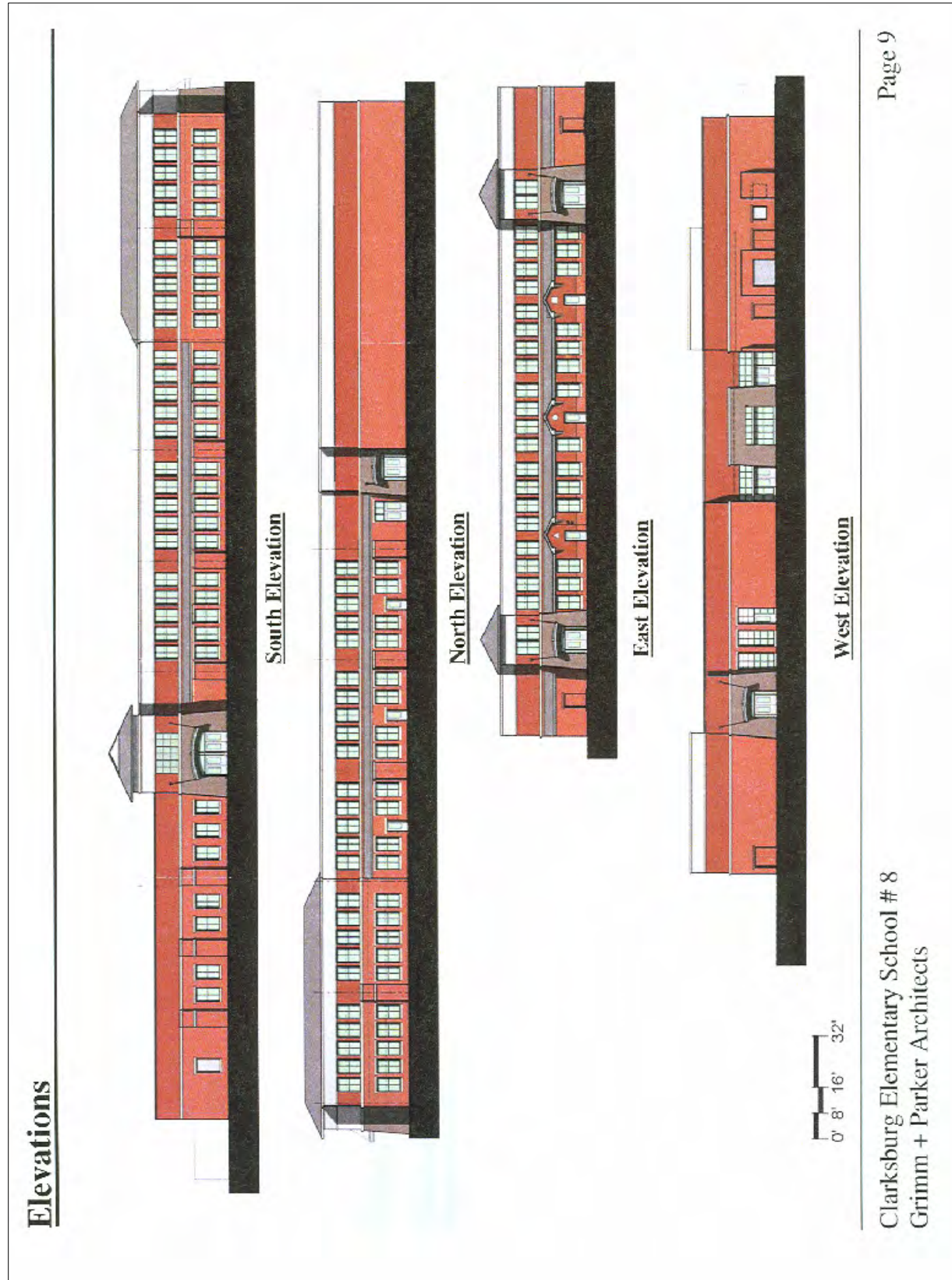


Figure 4: Elevations of Clarksburg Elementary School No. 8.



The tenants at Waters House Special Park saw in the school project an opportunity to potentially partner with MCPS on its investment in geothermal wells to heat and cool the large new school, hoping to sink the wells to heat and cool a restored barn as well. In December 2006, the coalition partners approached the Department of Parks about sponsoring the adaptive reuse of the bank barn for the Heritage Visitors Center so that the project could be timed in conjunction with MCPS' school construction.

In addition to the Concept Development Plan for the Waters House Special Park and the Mandatory Referral for Clarksburg School No. 8, Waters House Special Park is the subject of draft recommendations in the current Germantown Master Plan Update (in progress). The draft master plan recommends a trail connection from Clarksburg School No. 8 northwards through the special park to the North Germantown Greenway, plus an improved trailhead at the Greenway. It also recommends more interpretation of the Waters Family as a founding family of the area.

Other applicable plans include the fact that the entire 3.9-acre park is protected on the *The Master Plan for Historic Preservation* as a designated site. As such, any and all exterior improvements to the buildings and/or changes to the site require a Historic Area Work Permit plus approval from the Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission, including any proposed changes that would affect significant trees or landscaping. As already noted, any and all improvements must also have the approval of the Maryland Historical Trust Easement Committee. The current concept proposal for the adaptive reuse of the barn into a Heritage Visitors Center has already been taken to the Easement Committee with the assistance of staff and the project has been approved in concept by that committee. That approval is valid for a period of six months, which means it must be renewed after June 2008. (Attachment 1: Maryland Historical Trust Easement Committee concept approval letter for Waters Barn).

Finally, the Waters House site is identified as a Top 20 Priority Project in *From Artifact to Attraction: A Strategic Plan for Cultural Resources in Parks*. Although this plan has never been formally adopted by the Board, it often functions as a blueprint for the Cultural Resources Stewardship program. Specific to the Waters House and under the heading "Work Planned for the Future," the Strategic Plan states: "Program the barn, potentially for exhibits, in the future."

Chronological Background to the Feasibility Study

- In December 2006, Parks staff was invited to attend a planning session for the adaptive reuse project. As a follow-up to that meeting, staff wrote to the coalition partners on 12/15/2006: *"Do we have statistics that support that people will get off the highway for a certain amount of time to reach a visitors' center?"*
"How can we best ensure that the Waters House site stands out as a heritage site when it is so surrounded by new development?"

- In spring 2007, the Montgomery County Arts and Humanities Council, a member of the coalition, sought a \$100,000 Supplemental Appropriation to its FY 07 Operating Budget through the Health and Human Services Committee to support the adaptive reuse project for the barn. The coalition sought a match for the supplemental appropriation from the Department of Parks, asking if Parks could sponsor the project and if it would apply the value of the land and improvements as a match.
- To address the match question, the Director of Parks gave a briefing to the Planning Board on April 24, 2007. As part of the briefing, the Director submitted a letter that she had written to then-Council Chair Marilyn Praisner, recommending general support for adaptive reuse of the barn, but further investigation into the project's underlying assumptions: (Attachment 2, Letter from Mary Bradford to Marilyn Praisner, April 24, 2007.) Ms. Bradford's letter stated in part:

The idea to adaptively reuse the wooden bank barn as a Heritage Visitors Center and a new home for the Conference and Visitors Bureau could well be a good idea. Accordingly, we are interested in seeing the results of the feasibility study, business plan, and concept design. . . . On the other hand, we have questions concerning the viability of the proposed use given the location of Waters House Special Park in the Milestone Community, the adequacy of existing transportation infrastructure, and how the proposed use will coincide with the planned new elementary school and adjacent parkland. More specific issues regarding facility operation, use, and maintenance; parking; the need to preserve existing specimen trees; stormwater management and Forest Conservation requirements; and the possible relocation of an existing large, un-programmed, open play area located behind the barn have already come up among park staff.

- On April 24, 2007, the Planning Board endorsed Ms. Bradford's letter, but declined to vote on two issues: 1) its willingness to act as a sponsor, and 2) whether or not to provide a soft match to the Supplemental Appropriation request by means of the value of the land and improvements. The Chairman noted at the April 24, 2007 meeting that tenant-initiated bond projects drive a strong share of the Department of Parks' work program and have the potential in some cases to supplant elements of its planned work program. Lacking the Commission's match, a Supplemental Appropriation of \$60,000 was awarded in January 2007 to the Arts and Humanities Council for the project. That money was put towards the Feasibility Study.
- In spring 2007, staff worked with the coalition partners to draft the scope of work for the Feasibility Study. Several, but not all, of the elements that staff suggested be included in the scope of work became part of the final RFP. As examples, ADA compliance, stormwater management, and forest conservation law requirements were not part of this first phase of work.
- In June 2007, Parks staff helped review the two proposals that were submitted on the Request for Proposals via written comments. On June 22, 2007, staff suggested asking both bidders:

1. *Please describe in more detail how you would arrive at program feasibility? Will you look beyond the market study from the Conference and Visitors Bureau (CVB) and MCPS' traffic analysis? What exactly would your subconsultants do to conduct a needs assessment?*
 2. *Are you open to the possibility that the site may not be ideal to the program envisioned? Do you intend to suggest alternative sites, if that is the case, or alternate program possibilities for the barn building?*
 3. *Please describe (if or how) the firm will analyze Facility Sustainability and the extent of any Operations Plan.*
- In June 2007, Cunningham & Quill Architects were selected to conduct the Feasibility Study.
 - On July 19, 2007, Parks staff and the Historical Society's President presented the project in a public hearing at the Upcounty Regional Services Center as part of the public hearing on the Clarksburg School No. 8. Unfortunately, due to terrible weather, only two members of the public attended, despite full public noticing.

The Feasibility Study

Throughout the Feasibility Study, staff from both the Cultural Resources Stewardship Section of the Montgomery County Department of Parks and the Department of Planning's Historic Preservation Section advised the primary client, Montgomery County Historical Society, and its architect, Cunningham & Quill, on matters relating to historic preservation, stewardship, park operational concerns, etc. Staff proposed connecting the new school with the Greenway, maintaining the area to the north of the barn as maintained open space for cultural or recreational programming, avoiding additional paved parking, avoiding work in the critical root zone, repairing and programming the loafing shed, and protecting the stable interior's historic layout etc. Staff from both Departments advised the architect and the Society how to best achieve concept approval from the Maryland Historical Trust's Easement Committee. Staff found the Society and its architect very good to work with and eager for Department of Planning and Department of Parks' input.

The Feasibility Study's Executive Summary, proposed floor plans, site and programmatic graphics, and two operational spreadsheets are included with this staff report. (Attachment 3: Cunningham & Quill Architects: The Waters Barn: Feasibility Study for Adaptive Reuse, Executive Summary/Excerpts, January 16, 2008).

Highlights of the study include:

- Adaptive Reuse Concept: The Heritage Visitors Center would house some of the county's existing historical collections not presently on display, plus have climate-controlled archives. In addition, it would host a range of exhibits, and provide information regarding park and recreational activities; the Agricultural Reserve; other local heritage collections; genealogy and research; heritage functions; wineries; and hotels and dining.

- The results of a July 2007 visioning charrette. This charrette was hosted by the coalition partners and architects and extended to the Milestone community and other interested parties.
- Primary tenants will be a new 501 © 3 spawned by the Montgomery County Historical Society to operate the facility and, potentially, the County's Conference and Visitors' Bureau.
- Visitors will be local residents within five miles, other residents of Montgomery County, and visitors coming from outside the County interested in heritage tourism and/or conference and visitors' opportunities in Montgomery County.
- The visitor experience will embrace the overall site by using the flexible outdoor space of the loafing sheds for farmers markets, craft fairs, concerts, wine tastings, or catered events. A warming kitchen in the adaptively reused barn will allow for food service.
- New and/or enhanced trails and trailheads could further support the use of the North Germantown Greenway.
- Parking would be shared with the Clarksburg School No. 8, which will have approximately 80 spaces available on weekends and after hours during weekdays. The existing, small gravel parking lot on site could be modestly improved with historically compatible fencing and overflow parking for large events could be accommodated on the lawn behind the house.
- The barn (together with the house) will serve as a community amenity in its offering of classroom/meeting space, in addition to the outdoor space.
- Environmental stewardship may be promoted through the use of sustainable strategies for adaptive reuse (although the 'window' to tap into the geothermal wells dug by MCPS has passed).
- A business plan was included in the Feasibility Study that represented a single operating scenario (run by a NGO) in year two of operation and based on certain assumptions. Because the business plan showed a net earning loss, the Study asked a number of outstanding questions, including: *"Will the center's volunteer leadership and professional staff have the capacity to secure funding?"*

Costs of the Project from the Study:

- The current operational cost estimate for running the Center indicates an annual net loss from operations of \$142,706. (Note: this calculation assumes that the Commission will contribute \$33,950 annually for Exterior Utilities and Exterior Maintenance.) (Attachment 2 – Schedule A, Operating Summary and Attachment 3, Schedule B, Detail of Activity from Feasibility Study).
- The probable construction cost as of June 2009 to convert the vacant bank barn into the proposed Heritage Visitors Center is \$3,239,144. Escalation beyond June 2009 would be calculated at a rate of 6% per year.

Follow-up to Feasibility Study Report and Funding for Next Design Phase

- On March 12, 2008, Staff arranged for the Montgomery County Historical Society and Cunningham & Quill to brief the Director of Parks and senior Parks managers. At that time, the Director indicated her support for an adaptive reuse of the bank barn into a heritage-related function, but cautioned the Society to downplay the focus on a visitors' bureau. Describing the reality that people today use the Internet rather than driving to a building to find out about food and lodging, the Director indicated that a program built upon history, heritage, and locally grown and made products would have more traction than one geared towards a traditional visitors' center. Staff had indicated from the beginning, and the Director concurred, that expecting visitors to travel to the site from I-270--located as it is in the middle of a contemporary subdivision-- would probably not yield enough patrons. The Director was encouraging, however, of several heritage-related uses.
- The Director indicated that the Society should consider ways to "grow the audience" for the adaptive reuse, especially considering showcasing local produce either through a food venue or farmers' market. She indicated that a true Market Study should be undertaken to determine what the market wants.
- The Director also pointed out that more work needs to be done in the form of a Business Plan/Operation and Use Plan to seriously consider the operational issues associated with the proposed Center. She asked:
 1. *Who will do the programming?*
 2. *How will parking be handled?*
 3. *What if there are disputes between vendors?*
 4. *How will they guarantee litter pickup during and after special events and restoration of the landscape?*
 5. *How can the coalition guarantee that they are not proposing a project that will require long-term subsidies from the Department of Parks?*
- Finally, the Director noted that in order to sign off on permits for construction on park property, the final plan would have to be consistent with all applicable master plans, strategic plans, and environmental regulations (stormwater management, forest conservation, sensitive area protection, etc.). The Director advised that the Planning Board be briefed in full on the project in May, to gauge its reaction prior to the coalition receiving any bond money.
- On April 11, 2008, staff received a letter from the President of the Montgomery County Historical Society that the Society had already received word of passage by the General Assembly of a state bond bill in the amount of \$250,000 for design and construction documents relating to the adaptive reuse of the barn as a heritage visitors center. The bill had been sponsored by Senator Garagiola. Due to the fact that the Planning Board has yet to approve the concept for the project, there is no presumed Commission match for this particular bond bill. Instead, the Society is prepared to submit its own maintenance costs over the years as the

match. (In addition, the coalition plans to potentially seek transportation-enhancement related federal funding for its heritage project.)

- On April 11, 2008 staff sent out public hearing notices for this May 15 Planning Board item. (Attachment 4: Public Hearing Notice, May 15, 2008, Waters Barn Feasibility Study). These notices were mailed to 350 homeowners in a ¼ mile radius. In addition, on April 14, 2008, notices were mailed to the major community facilities (libraries, post offices, community centers, etc.) for those zip codes within a five-mile radius of the property.

Recommended Board Action

The coalition enjoys support from both local and state elected officials for the project. Staff has been consistent, however, in seeking assurances that the project is programmatically and operationally viable for the long term. Staff has received assurances from the Montgomery County Historical Society that it is flexible regarding the best type of heritage programming for the barn in order to achieve a successful program. Staff also has received verbal assurance that the Society and its partners have no intention of approaching the Department of Parks for any operational subsidies for the project in the future.

Staff therefore recommends that the Board: Approve Waters Barn Feasibility Study concept of a heritage-based adaptive reuse for the barn based on the following conditions:

1. A Market Study is completed to determine the viability of a Heritage Visitors Center at this particular location (including access to the site);
2. Programming associated with the adaptive reuse potentially shift even more towards heritage tourism serving local audiences and less towards a conventional visitors bureau serving tourists;
3. A Business Plan is completed including detailed operation and use procedures and a specific financial model for operational self-sufficiency. See:
<http://www.mcparkandplanning.org/team/ppp/index.shtm>
4. The lease, license, and development agreement with the Commission is re-negotiated at such time that it needs to incorporate the new facility at the Park.

These conditions must be met prior to any future request for permits for construction on park property.

Attachments

Attachment 1: Maryland Historical Trust Easement Committee Concept Approval, December 2007



Maryland Department of Planning
Maryland Historical Trust

Martin O'Malley
Governor

Anthony G. Brown
Lt. Governor

Richard Eberhart Hall
Secretary

Matthew J. Power
Deputy Secretary

December 20, 2007

Ms. Joey Lampl
Cultural Resource Manager
Montgomery County Department of Parks
1109 Spring Street
Suite 800
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Re: Dr. William A. Waters Property, Montgomery County
Maryland Historical Trust Preservation Easement

Dear Ms. Lampl:

Thank you for your letter of November 26, 2007 and for attending the Maryland Historical Trust Easement Committee (Committee) meeting on December 18, 2007 to discuss the proposed adaptive reuse of the Waters barn property. Also in attendance were David Bagnoli, Mary Kay Harper, and Adam McGraw.

Based upon the review and recommendation of the Committee, I conceptually approve of the plans to acclimatize the barn provided that the building's volume and proportions are maintained. Any modifications to accommodate insulation and the like should be made to the interior of the building.

I further approve of the conceptual plans to restore the loafing sheds, corn crib, and carriage house provided that final plans and specifications are submitted to the Trust for review and approval. The scope of work is consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's General Rehabilitation *Standards 1, 2, 3, 8 and 9.*

This approval is valid for a period of six months from the date of this letter. Should you require additional time to complete this project or make any changes to the scope of work as approved, please contact Ms. Elizabeth Schminke, Easement Administrator, at (410) 514-7632/email: bschminke@mdp.state.md.us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Rodney Little', written over a light blue horizontal line.

J. Rodney Little
Director
Maryland Historical Trust

JRL/ESS

cc: David Bagnoli, Cunningham/Quill Architects
Mary Kay Harper, Montgomery County Historical Society



MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARKS
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

April 24, 2007

The Honorable Marilyn Praisner
County Council President
Montgomery County Council
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, MD

Dear Ms. Praisner:

I am writing in regard to an FY07 Supplemental Appropriation Request of \$100,000 by the Montgomery County Arts and Humanities Council regarding the Waters House Barn. It is my understanding that the proposed appropriation will be used to fund a feasibility study, business plan, and concept design to convert the Waters House Barn into a Montgomery County Conference and Visitors Bureau *Visitors Center* with related *exhibit galleries, storage areas for historical collections, and public meeting rooms.*

The barn is located in Waters House Special Park. The park totals 3.9 acres, is located at 12535 Milestone Lane, Germantown, Maryland 20876, and includes the Waters House, the barn, a corn-crib, an "L" shaped loafing shed, and a gravel parking area. The park is "nestled" within the Milestone Community and is bordered by single lot homes (along Sun Garden Court) and Milestone Manor Lane to the east, the future Clarksburg Elementary School #8 to the south, single lot homes (along Village Green Circle) to the west, and North Germantown Greenbelt Park to the north. The Commission currently has a lease and development agreement with the Montgomery County Historical Society, which is a tenant in the house. The Montgomery County Heritage Tourism Alliance is a subtenant. Waters House Special Park is the responsibility of Park Manager Wendy Hanley of our Park Department's Northern Region; Ms. Hanley's telephone number is 301-972-6581.

The idea to adaptively reuse the wooden bank barn as a Heritage Visitors' Center and a new home for the Conference and Visitors Bureau could very well be a good idea. Accordingly, we are interested in seeing the results of the feasibility study, business plan, and concept design that would be funded by the proposed supplemental appropriation. These products will facilitate full participation in the planning and decision-making process by local residents, the business and tourism community, Commission staff, and other interested parties.

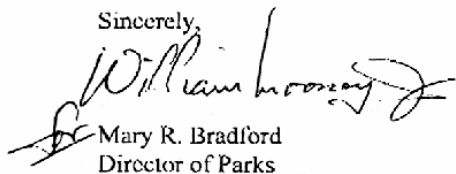
On the other hand, we have questions concerning the viability of the proposed use given the location of Waters House Special Park in the Milestone Community, the adequacy of existing transportation infrastructure, and how the proposed use will coincide with the planned new

clementary school and adjacent parkland. More specific issues regarding facility operation, use, and maintenance: parking; the need to preserve existing specimen trees in Waters House Special Park; stormwater management and Forest Conservation requirements; and possible relocation of an existing large, un-programmed, open, play area located behind the barn have already come up among park staff. We encourage the applicants to include the impact of the adjacent school land use (with its infrastructure needs) when conducting their own study, as the two projects are interrelated. I am under the impression that the applicants are already in communication with Montgomery County Public Schools.

Three other points are worth noting: 1) neither our Department of Parks Senior Management team, the public, or the Planning Board has been actively engaged in any substantive discussions regarding the proposal; 2) until July 1st, the overall management of the cultural resources program and coordination of this project rests with the Historic Preservation Staff in the Planning Department. Thereafter, this responsibility will reside with the Department of Parks; and 3) the Historic Preservation Commission has an important role to play in reviewing any proposed changes to the barn and/or to the land and structures within the environmental setting of this Master Plan for Historic Preservation-designated site.

All that being said, I do not oppose a study to see if the proposed use is a good fit for Montgomery County's Heritage Tourism Industry, the Milestone Community, and Waters House Special Park. I will raise this matter with the Planning Board at the earliest opportunity and contact you again with the outcome.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Mary R. Bradford".

Mary R. Bradford
Director of Parks

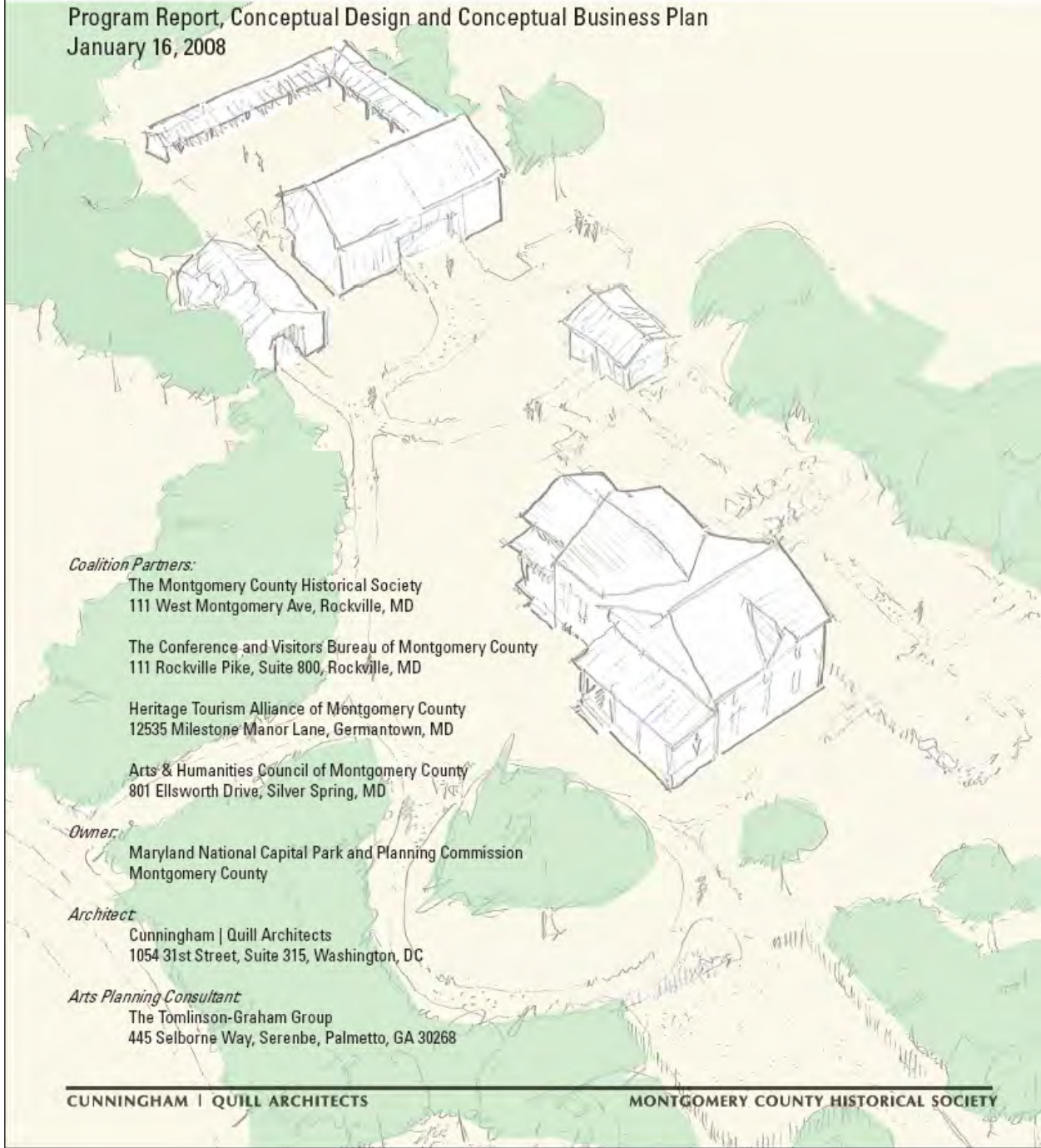
MRB:JH:JL

cc: Gwen Wright

THE WATERS BARN FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR ADAPTIVE REUSE

Germantown, Maryland

Program Report, Conceptual Design and Conceptual Business Plan
January 16, 2008



Coalition Partners:

The Montgomery County Historical Society
111 West Montgomery Ave, Rockville, MD

The Conference and Visitors Bureau of Montgomery County
111 Rockville Pike, Suite 800, Rockville, MD

Heritage Tourism Alliance of Montgomery County
12535 Milestone Manor Lane, Germantown, MD

Arts & Humanities Council of Montgomery County
801 Ellsworth Drive, Silver Spring, MD

Owner:

Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Montgomery County

Architect:

Cunningham | Quill Architects
1054 31st Street, Suite 315, Washington, DC

Arts Planning Consultant:

The Tomlinson-Graham Group
445 Selborne Way, Serenbe, Palmetto, GA 30268

CUNNINGHAM | QUILL ARCHITECTS

MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION TO THE FEASIBILITY STUDY

In fall 2007, Cunningham I Quill Architects and their consultants completed a feasibility study and conceptual design to determine the appropriateness of the Waters House Special Park as a location for a new Heritage and Visitors Center for Montgomery County, Maryland. The primary focus of the study was the investigation of the site's potential to serve as a single location for two distinct but programmatically compatible county-wide functions;

- 1.) *A County-Wide Heritage Center* - To provide orientation to Montgomery County's rich historic and cultural resources through exhibits, outreach programs, archival resources and printed information.
- 2.) *A Montgomery County Visitor's Center* - To promote the Montgomery County through tourist assistance functions, which provide such resources as maps, hotel/restaurant information and additional tourist related publications.

Other functions of the center might include providing numerous county heritage organizations a range of opportunities to improve upon current individual efforts to develop and maintain independent archives as well as providing a venue for exterior functions such as a farmer's market, crafts fair or seasonal events. Finally, the study assumed that the property will continue to serve its role as a special park, owned and maintained by the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission of Montgomery County (MNCPPC).

CULTURAL FACILITIES IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Montgomery County is a place rich in history and culture that seeks to provide a balance between its rural, suburban and rapidly growing urban spaces. In order to further explore the role of culture in the lives of county residents, an important study was commissioned by the Arts and Humanities Council in 2001 titled *Creative Montgomery: A Vision for the Arts and Humanities in Montgomery County, MD*. *Creative Montgomery* put forth 48 recommendations for cultural facilities, educational opportunities, and support for local artisans and historians, among other things, to be implemented over a five year period. Many of the goals laid out in the plan have been brought to fruition, most notably the completion of the Strathmore Music Center and the BlackRock Center for the Arts. There remains one primary goal left unrealized, the development of a facility specifically dedicated to the history and culture of Montgomery County.

HEALTHY AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES- MR. LEGGETT'S VISION FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY

In addition to the important role of cultural resources outlined in the *Creative Montgomery* Report, County Executive Ike Leggett, in his 2006 Transition Plan, outlined his concerns for the natural environment, sustainable communities and the role of the arts in the daily lives of county residents. The plan contains 3 Strategic Policy Recommendations for Healthy and Sustainable Communities, the significance of which are further explained within this report:

- 1.) *Preserving and Sustaining the Environment for Our Community;*
- 2.) *Planning and Growing Sustainable Communities*
- 3.) *Making a Life While Making a Living*

As outlined in the report, the proposed Heritage and Visitors Center recognizes and builds upon recommendations from both of these important documents, and will provide the county the opportunity to showcase its unique history and natural beauty.

PROCESS

As a means to build consensus, Cunningham I Quill utilized an inclusive process of multiple public and private meetings with neighbors, residents, and user coalition members. At many of these sessions, participants questioned and ultimately returned to the validity of the proposed mix of heritage and visitor functions under a single roof. Additional conversations regarding operational plans, project visibility, income stream, visitor profile and the overall visitor experience were also part of the process. Finally the team utilized pre-existing market data in an effort to understand the potential range of the Center's end users. Following these conversations and discussions, the team assembled their findings and prepared an initial program of spaces and draft report for review and comment by the user coalition and MNCPPC. Refinements were later assembled for this report.

GOALS

Through a visioning charrette held at the Water's House Special Park on July 24, 2007 and conversations with members of the User Coalition, representatives of MNCPPC, the Maryland Historic Trust (which holds a preservation easement for the interior and exterior of all buildings on the property), as well as county and neighborhood residents, six goals for the project have been identified. These goals build upon the recommendations of the *Creative Montgomery* report and County Executive Ike Leggett's vision for Montgomery County referenced in Chapter 1 and include:

- GOAL 1: The Center should be a focal point for a county-wide visitor experience;*
- GOAL 2: Capitalize on Unique Attributes of the Waters House Special Park for Exhibition, Interpretation and Conservation;*
- GOAL 3: Support Community-Based Heritage Organizations;*
- GOAL 4: Create Opportunities for Community Events and Programs;*
- GOAL 5: Increase Awareness of Montgomery County's Commitment to the Natural Environment;*
- GOAL 6: Provide Educational Opportunities for Area Schools.*

WATERS HOUSE SPECIAL PARK: HISTORY

The Waters House Special Park is located on the Waters family farm which was also known as “Pleasant Fields” The site includes the Waters House – an historic house that dates to the 1790’s- as well as a series of agricultural buildings, the most prominent being a large bank barn which was built into the “bank” of a hill to allow for on-grade access to its main level threshing floor and to its lower level livestock stalls. The site also includes an open air corn crib, a series of loafing sheds and a carriage house.

The Waters House was rehabilitated in the 1990’s by MNCPPC and currently houses offices and modest exhibition space. At the time of the rehabilitation of the house, the barn and its ancillary structures were stabilized in order to prepare them for what was at that time an undetermined future use. While MNCPPC maintenance records indicate that most of the heavy timber structural support elements, roof and exterior skin were replaced during this 1998 stabilization project, the techniques of this reconstruction appear to be sympathetic to the original 1914 construction of the barn.

The site provides magnificent views across a large field to the north toward the adjacent to Stream Valley Park, the North Germantown Green Way, and a large expanse of grassy meadows and wooded rolling hills. The site’s buildings and grounds are a notable representation of Montgomery County’s heritage of rural homesteads and agricultural industries.

BUILDING CONCEPT: HERITAGE AND VISITOR’S CENTER

From the outset of design it has been critical that the sense of grandeur one feels upon entering the main level of the barn be maintained even while it is converted into a modern heritage center. This magnificent sense of space is retained in the conceptual design, which envisions minimal introduction of new interior walls and floors. Visitors will be greeted by this sense of grandeur from the moment they enter the barn, and the large heavy timbers that comprise the interior structure will remain much as they appear today. Improved views from the Barn into the Barnyard below and to the north will allow visitors to enjoy views of the adjacent structures and landscapes, including the meadows, woods and hills of Stream Valley Park. As the primary location of the programmatic functions intended for the Heritage and Visitor’s Center, the Bank Barn will become the central building within the special park. It is intended that the main level of the barn and a portion of the lower level of the barn be open to the public for exhibits and interpretive display.

ADAPTIVE RE-USE OF THE BARN

With the change in use from a large open-air agricultural structure to an occupied, climatized space, modifications to the exterior wall system of the existing barn will be required. These include the strengthening of the existing post and beam structure, the addition of insulation at the walls and roof and the introduction of windows and doors behind existing sliding barn doors. Cunningham I Quill Architects and their consultants have experience in sensitively updating historic barns, have worked with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Historic Preservation, and are confident that these modifications can be achieved while preserving the unique characteristics of the Waters Barn.

SITE CONCEPT

As a special park owned and maintained by The Maryland National Capital Parks and Planning Commission, the site represent a wonderful public asset for county and neighborhood residents. While the grounds contain many older trees that may be original to the farm the grounds and associated landscaping are not representative of the historic farm to which they are associated and do not contribute to a sense of history. A long term goal for the project should include the research and restoration of the landscapes and grounds to be representative of the historic farm of which they are a part.

WAY-FINDING AND PATHWAYS

Through coordinated signage that takes advantage of historic photos and research, the property should be both educational and easy to navigate for potential visitors. Just as important to the visitor experience will be accessibility for all. A pathway system that meets the American with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines and that is easily maintained will be provided and designed in a manner compatible with the historic nature of the site. Many examples exist of such pathways, including exposed aggregate concrete, compacted gravel, “tar and chip” or concrete pavers. In all cases, ease of maintenance will be considered while providing an improved and appropriate surface for site circulation.

THE BARNYARD

Created by the relationships of the Barn, Loafing Sheds, Corn Crib and Carriage House the outdoor space of the barnyard should remain as an integral component of the farm’s history. The barnyard and its adjacent structures present the opportunity for multiple outdoor events.

PUBLIC FACILITIES ON SITE

Should the site be made available for outdoor events, the degree to which support spaces for visitors are to be provided will need to be clarified as the project moves forward. For events taking place in the “barnyard” the lower level of the barn would contain the necessary facilities such as a warming kitchen and restrooms. In addition, the Carriage House might be an appropriate structure to accommodate additional, modest restrooms and storage that would service patrons, park users, and people using the site as a trail head to the North Germantown Green Way.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the vision for the project outlined within this report, Cunningham I Quill Architects strongly make the following recommendations for the development of the Heritage and Visitors Center:

RECOMMENDATION 1: That Montgomery County proceed with the development of MNCPPC's Waters House Special Park as a new Heritage and Visitors Center as outlined within this report.

RECOMMENDATION 2: That financing for the construction costs for the Center be accomplished with debt-free financing.

RECOMMENDATION 3: That Montgomery County move forward as expeditiously as possible with the installation of geothermal wells as a portion of similar work scheduled to be accomplished on the adjacent Clarksburg Elementary School.

RECOMMENDATION 4: That Montgomery County and the Coalition begin fund-raising efforts immediately.

MARYLAND HISTORIC TRUST CONCEPT APPROVAL

The Waters House Special Park is owned and maintained by the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission, which in turn leases it to the Montgomery County Historical Society. The Historical Society is responsible for programming and interior maintenance of the buildings, all of which are under an historic preservation easement from the Maryland Historic Trust (MHT). This easement requires that any modifications to the interiors or exteriors of all site structures gain approval from MHT. In addition, the exterior of all buildings and the core site are designated under Montgomery County's Master Plan for Historic Preservation- any changes to which will require approval from the Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission (HPC).

In November, 2007 Cunningham I Quill forwarded a draft copy of the report to MHT and subsequently presented the concept design to the MHT's Easement Committee. At this presentation MNCPPC, MCHS and Cunningham I Quill sought concept approval from the Committee and the Director of the Trust for the following items:

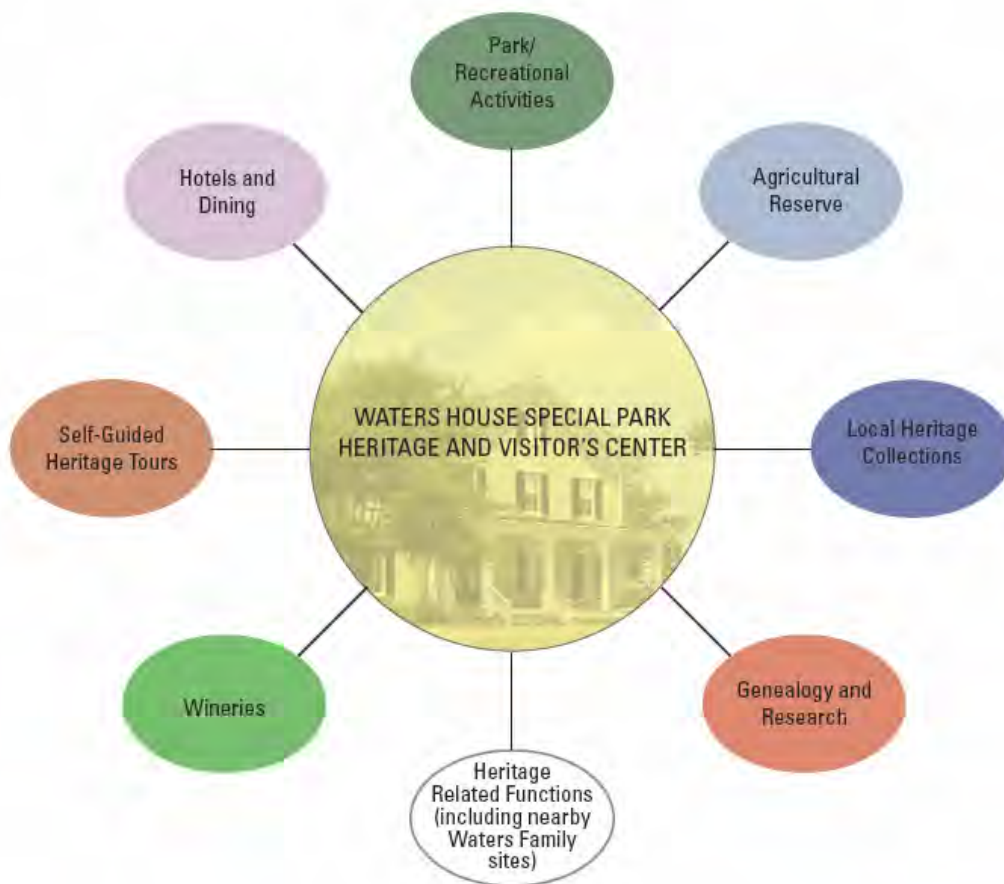
- 1) The Adaptive Re-Use of the Waters Barn and agricultural buildings into a group of indoor/outdoor spaces:
 - Climatization of the barn to house the Heritage/Visitor's Center
 - Restoration of the Loafing Sheds to serve as outdoor shelter for barnyard events
 - Rehabilitation and Preservation of the Corn Crib as a historical exhibit
 - Adaptive Re-Use of the Carriage House to provide additional restrooms and storage for the park
- 2) Improvements to the Waters Farm site to include:
 - Accessible and historically appropriate pathways
 - Low-maintenance historically appropriate landscaping
 - Improved parking
- 3) Connection of the Waters Farm Park with North Germantown Greenway, Ag Reserve and other potential historic Waters sites (family graveyard and mill)

On December 20, 2007, the team was pleased to have received concept approval from the Trust on these important issues. Such approval allows for development of the design to move forward (refer to Appendix A for a copy of the approval letter). It is understood that the team will need to continue to work with MHT and HPC in order to further develop the design of the Montgomery County Heritage and Visitors Center.

CHAPTER 2: VISION & RECOMMENDATIONS

A FOCAL POINT FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY TOURISM

As outlined during the Visioning Charrette and at subsequent Coalition meetings, it is clear the over-arching vision for the Heritage and Visitors Center is to serve as a starting point for further exploration of the county's historic and cultural attractions for residents and visitors alike. As such, the Center will need to present information in a range of exhibits, programs and targeted outreach efforts, similar to many of the precedents included in Chapter 1.



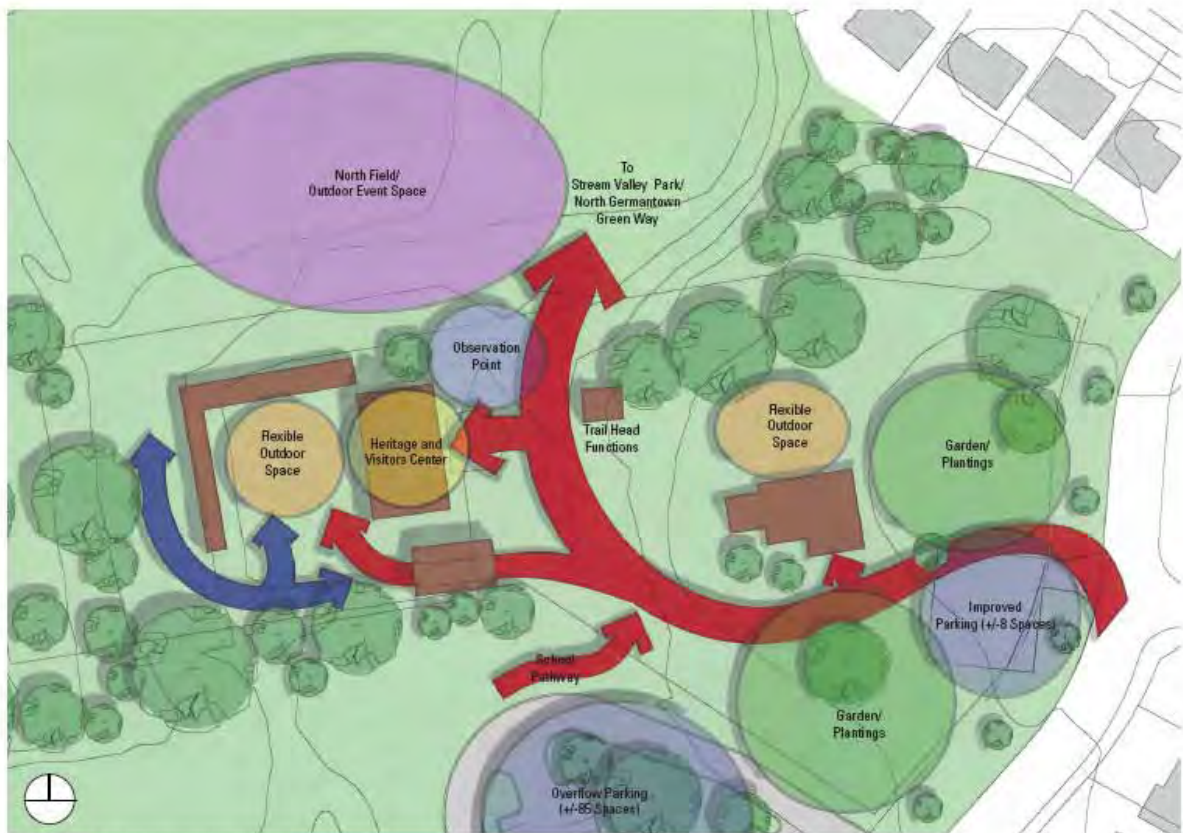
VISION DIAGRAM FOR
THE HERITAGE AND VISITORS CENTER

VISITOR EXPERIENCE

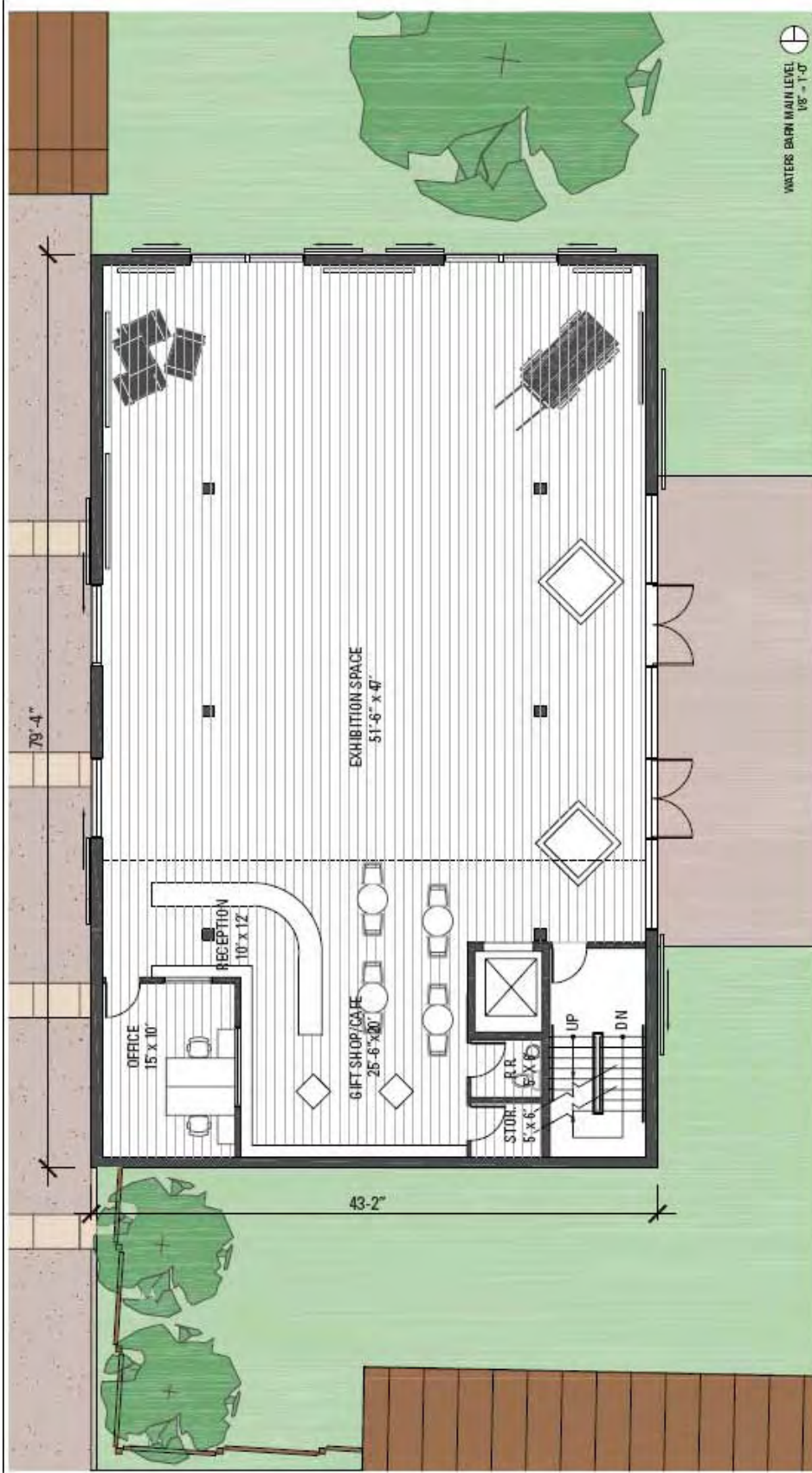
Given the wide range of potential users envisioned for the Center, it is imperative that the project meet the specific needs of each in a manner that is comprehensible and clearly defined. This will require not only a clear programmatic and physical relationship between the variety of intended uses, but also a well-defined way-finding system that directs users with specific needs toward an appropriate location. As a public park with an impressive collection of buildings, the site would also benefit from a series of explanatory exterior displays placed in selective locations so as to capture scenic views of the structures, gardens, meadows, rolling hills and woods that comprise the site and its surroundings.

As illustrated on the conceptual site diagram below, it is possible to provide a site design that efficiently directs users toward the Heritage and Visitors Center envisioned for the main level of the Bank Barn. The concept suggests improvements to the current parking lot for the Waters House that visually separates this area from a series of interconnected but easily maintained pathways throughout the site. These pathways would, through a combination of design and way-finding, provide direct and easy access to the Heritage and Visitors Center while also allowing visitors to appreciate the many scenic views of the site.

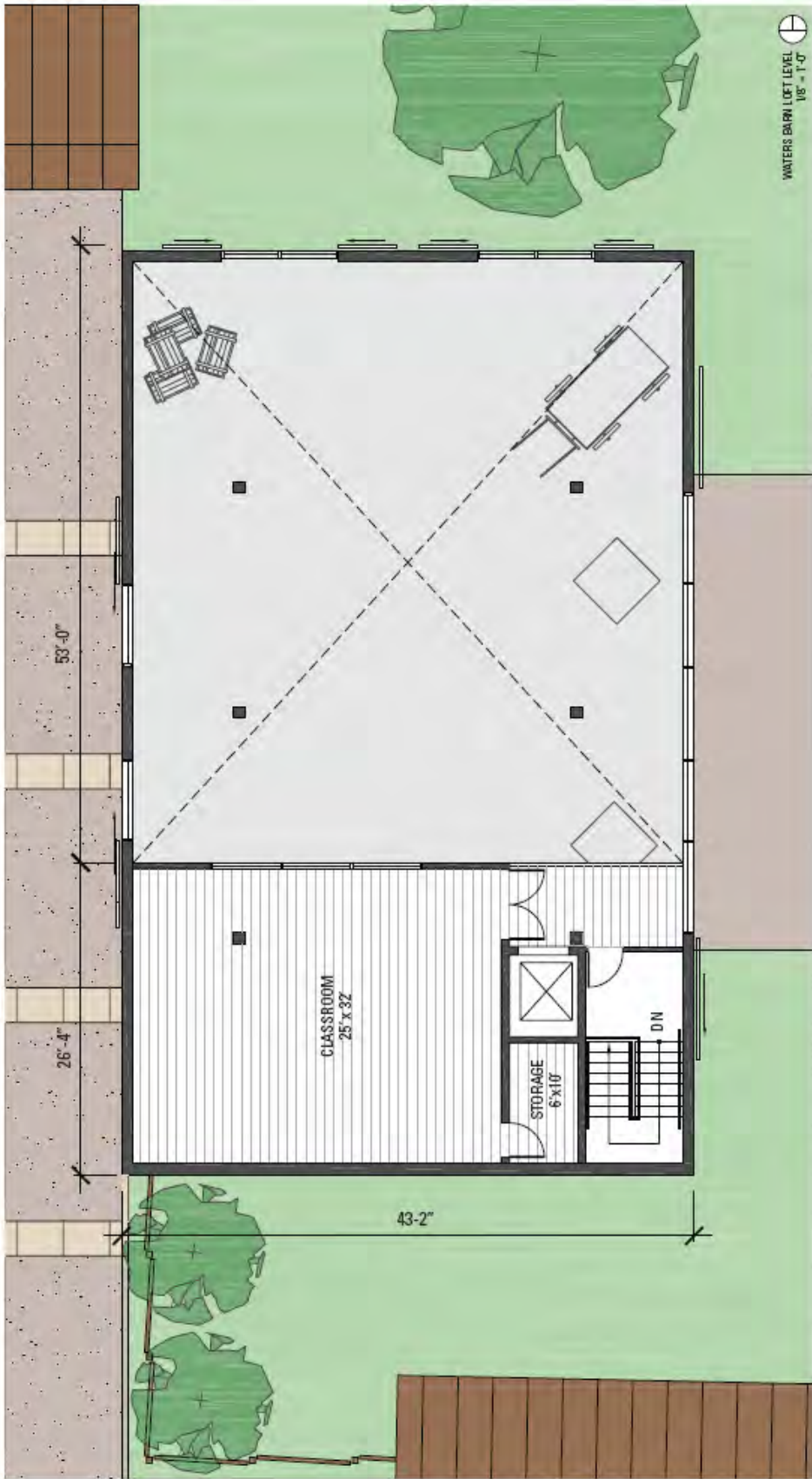
The site could further engage with the community by linking the landscapes and buildings with a proposed path from the Clarksburg Elementary School. By connecting the site's pathways with the school, the design would to engage the children and the community as it invites them directly into the heart of the historic agricultural complex. Finally, should a visitor desire to proceed to the North Germantown Green Way, a trail head marker would indicate present location and trail distances.



Site Diagram of and Integrated and Controlled Visitor Experience



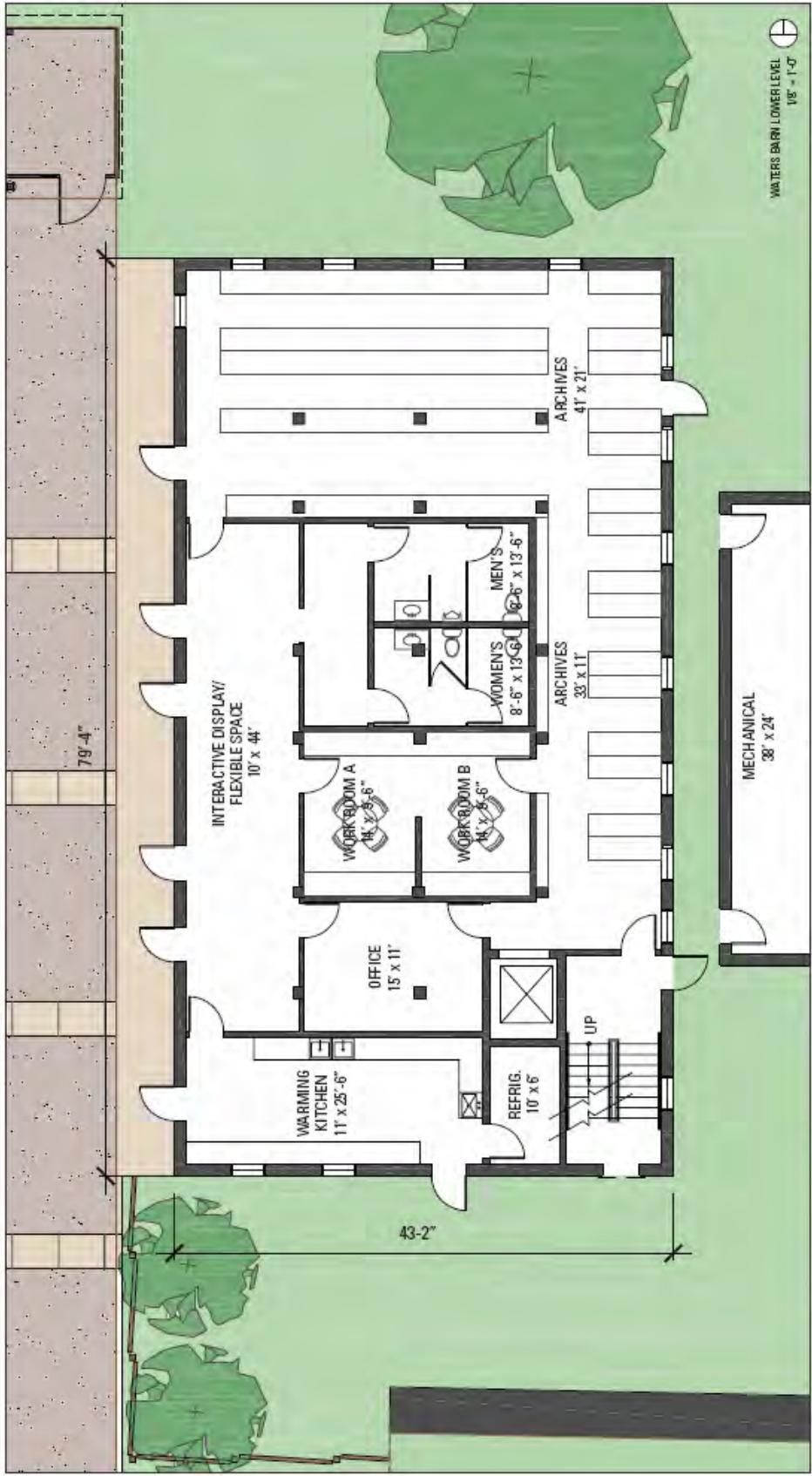
WATERS BARN MAIN LEVEL
1/8" = 1'-0"



WATERS BARN 1ST LEVEL
1/8" = 1'-0"

24

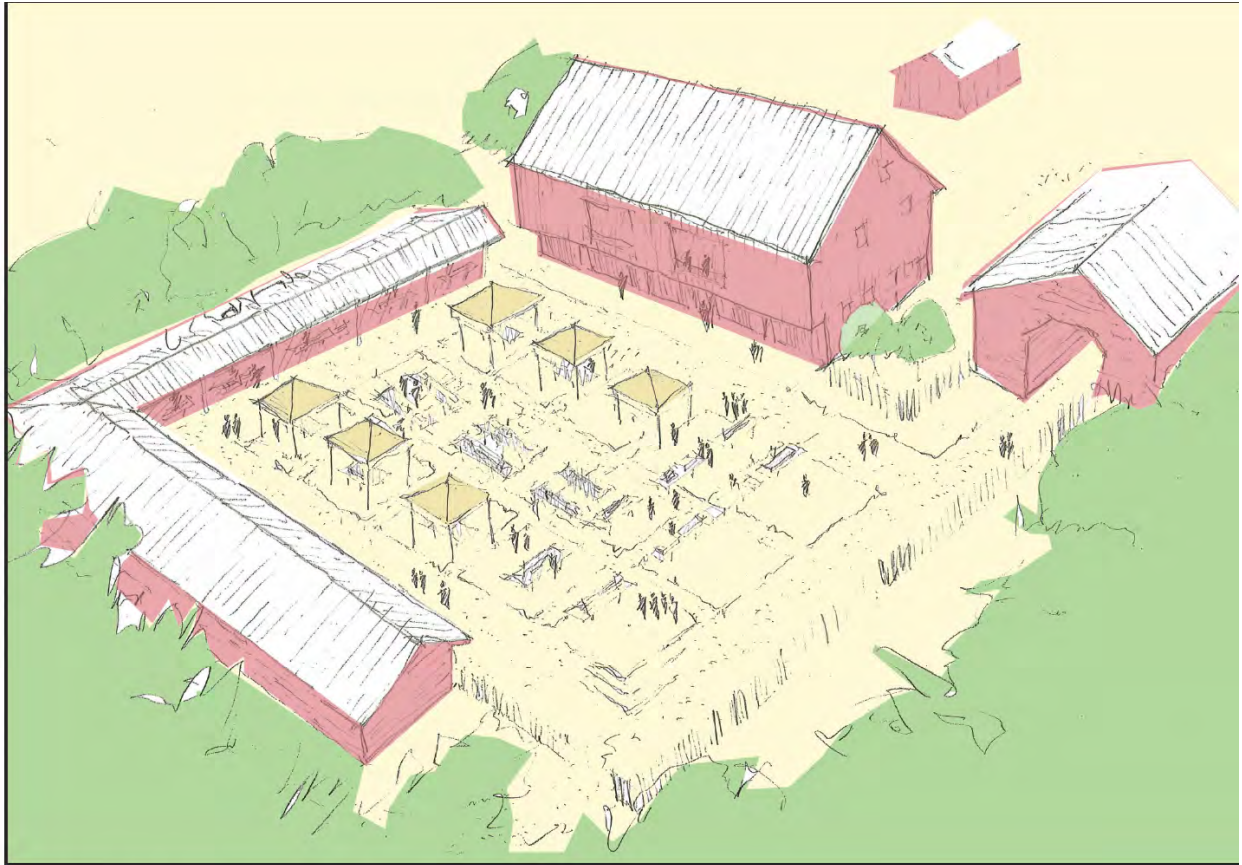
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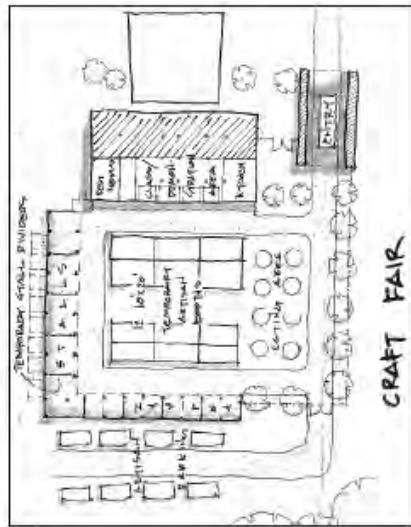
WATERS BARN LOWER LEVEL
1/8" = 1'-0"

25

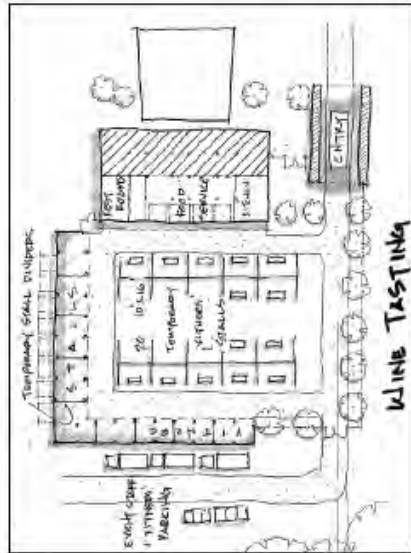
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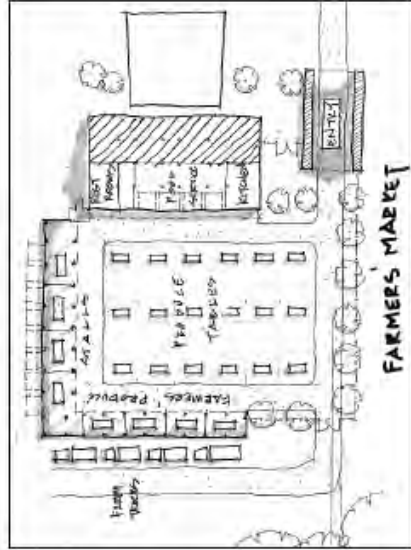
Barnyard and Outbuildings as Flexible Exterior Space



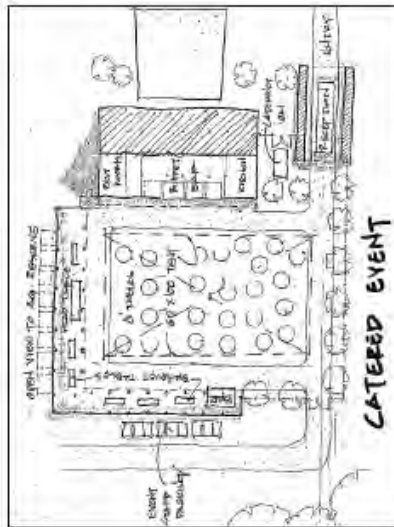
CRAFT FAIR



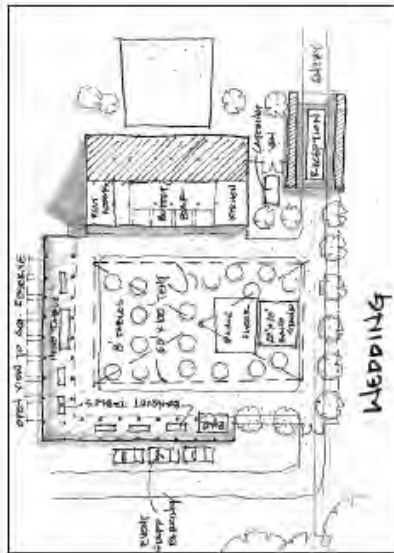
WINE TASTING



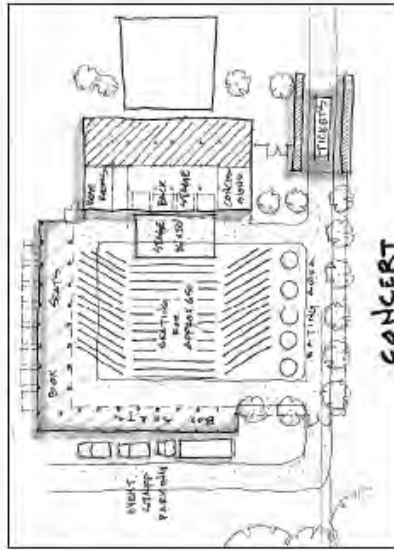
FARMERS MARKET



CATERED EVENT



WEDDING



CONCERT

SCHEDULE A
Operating Summary

WATERS BARN HERITAGE AND TOURISM CENTER OPERATING PRO FORMA SUMMARY		Schedule	Second Operating Year	Primary Funding Source
1.00	REVENUES			
1.10	Earned Revenue			
1.11	Rental Income	B	\$44,626	
1.12	Food and Beverage Income	B	\$40,449	
1.13	Gift Shop	B	\$24,874	
1.14	Café	B	\$9,541	
1.15	Attendee Surcharge for Facility Maintenance	B	\$5,606	
	Total Earned Revenue		\$125,095	
2.00	EXPENSES			
2.10	Staff, General Administration, Marketing & Program	C	\$199,155	WBHTC
2.20	Facility			
2.21	Interior			
2.22	Interior Utilities		\$18,810	WBHTC
2.23	Interior Maintenance		\$5,187	WBHTC
2.24	Annual Fire Inspection		\$2,400	WBHTC
			\$26,397	
2.25	Exterior			
2.26	Exterior Utilities - General		\$14,550	MNCPPC
2.27	Exterior Utilities - Event Space		\$4,150	WBHTC
2.28	Exterior Maintenance - General		\$19,400	MNCPPC
2.29	Exterior Maintenance - Event Space		\$4,150	WBHTC
	Total Facilities		\$42,250	
	TOTAL EXPENSES		\$267,801	
	NET LOSS FROM OPERATIONS		-\$142,706	
1.20	Unearned Revenue			WBHTC
1.21	Donations		\$3,000	
1.22	Memberships & Sponsorship		\$40,000	
1.23	Grants		\$100,000	
	Total Unearned Revenue		\$143,000	
	BALANCE		\$294	

SCHEDULE B
Detail of Activity

EARNED REVENUE ACTIVITY DETAIL Second Operating Year		Uses	Unit	Capacity Booths	Capacity People	% Capacity	Number of Attendees	Net Event Per capita Expenditure Concessions	Net Student / Tour / Booth Fee	Food and Beverage Income	Rental Income	Total Rent
1.00	Educational Activities											
1.10	Loft	12	Classes		80	50%	480		\$ 5.00		\$ 2,400	\$ 2,400
1.20	Lower Level Flex Space	6	Classes		20	90%	107		\$ 5.00		\$ 536	\$ 536
1.30	School Docent Tours	15	Tours		30	100%	450		\$ 1.00		\$ 450	\$ 450
1.40	Public Docent Tours	52	Tours		8	80%	333		\$ 5.00		\$ 1,664	\$ 1,664
2.00	Barnyard Use											
2.10	Performances/Concerts	3	Concert		650	65%	1,268	\$ 0.64		\$ 811	\$ 1,463	\$ 2,274
2.20	Weddings	4	Wedding		300	50%	800	\$ 6.00		\$ 3,600	\$ 5,911	\$ 9,511
2.30	In-House Sponsored Catered Events	15	Event		400	25%	1,500	\$ 5.00		\$ 7,500		\$ 7,500
2.40	Outside Rental Catered Events	5	Event		400	50%	1,000	\$ 6.00		\$ 6,000	\$ 9,851	\$ 15,851
2.50	Annual Heritage Day	1	Event	40	3500	95%	3,325	\$ 3.50	\$ 125.00	\$ 11,638	\$ 5,000	\$ 16,638
2.60	Outside Rental Fairs, Festivals, etc.	2	Events	30	1000	100%	2,000	\$ 5.00	\$ 125.00	\$ 10,000	\$ 7,500	\$ 17,500
3.00	Other Income											
3.10	Gift Shop							\$ 1.50				\$ 24,874
3.20	Cafe							\$ 0.50				\$ 9,541
3.30	Whole Facility Rentals	6	Events		200	75%	150	\$ 6.00		\$ 900	\$ 9,851	\$ 10,751
	Total											
	TOTAL	115					11,212			\$ 40,449	\$ 44,626	\$ 119,489
	Visitors - Waters Barn est						2,870					
	Visitors - Visitor Information Center						5,000					

