

Preservation Piedmont
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Newsletter
Fall 2016



preservation piedmont

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31st Annual Virginia Preservation Conference

Sunday, October 16th and Monday, October 17th in Charlottesville

With World Heritage sites, the Blue Ridge Mountains, the downtown pedestrian mall and a burgeoning agritourism industry, Charlottesville is the perfect location to explore the heritage tourism movement in Virginia. Keynote Speaker Cheryl Hargrove looks at the state of heritage tourism on a broad scale and ways that the historic resources of underrepresented populations contribute to a more robust and balanced experience.

Preservation Virginia is also showing **Rosenwald** at The Paramount Theater and hosting their annual Preservation Pitch and Awards. Join as part of the conference or buy a ticket separately for the film and panel discussion only.

Special pre-conference activity offerings on Sunday the 16th include an exclusive visit to Monroe's Highland and a Cemetery Workshop. Registration details and the conference schedule-at-a-glance detailing all events can be found here: <https://preservationvirginia.org/programs/annual-conference>



As part of the **Preservation Virginia conference**, there will be a special screening of Aviva Kempner's documentary, **Rosenwald**, which premiered locally at last fall's Virginia Film Festival.

Rosenwald is the incredible story of Julius Rosenwald, the son of an immigrant peddler who never finished high school, but rose to become the President of Sears. Influenced by the writings of the educator Booker T. Washington, this Jewish philanthropist joined forces with African American communities during the Jim Crow South to build over 5,300 schools during the early part of the 20th century.

Presented in partnership with the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities, the evening will include a post-screening discussion with scholars, Rosenwald School experts and the community.

*Tickets for the film and panel discussion are also available to the public at the Paramount box office or online at the following link at a cost of \$12/person (\$2 of which supports the Paramount's historic preservation fund). Groups of 10 or more attending **Rosenwald** receive a \$5.00 discount on the price of tickets making them just \$7.00 each. The complete order for a group should be placed at one time. Please contact the Box Office at 434.979.1333 to get this special rate or for more information.

<http://www.theparamount.net/2016/preservation-virginia-presents-rosenwald/>

Charlottesville Blue Ribbon Commission on Race, Memorials, and Public Spaces

The Charlottesville Commission on Race, Memorials and Public Spaces met biweekly over the summer, including two large public forums (with about 30-40 speakers). Meetings in October and November will include another forum for public input at Walker School November 3. The Commission holds public comment periods at the start and end of its regular meetings, and expects to present its final report and recommendations to City Council in November.

Jean Hiatt, President of Preservation Piedmont, spoke (with input from the Board of Directors and its Advisory Board) at the Committee's September meeting. Jean had previously contributed comments on the Commission's process. The latest recommendations include the following:

- Retention of the four sculptures (Lee, Jackson, Lewis and Clark and Sacajawea, George Rogers Clark) donated by Paul Goodloe McIntire in 1919-24 with additional interpretive signage.
- Rehabilitation of Lee Park, including revised, expanded, and new interpretation that also tells the story of UVA and Charlottesville Public Schools desegregation ordered by the federal court meeting in the adjacent Post Office and federal building, now the Jefferson Madison Regional Library.
- Historic rehabilitation of the Daughters of Zion Cemetery; additional signage or other art associated with the slave auction block at Court Square, and support for the Vinegar Hill Park that was originally envisioned in the original Downtown Mall design. For all these projects, additional funding is needed.
- Use of the City's Historic Resources Committee as the ongoing agency responsible to identify and research historic sites and areas for commemoration and additional staff and funding to accomplish this.
- A central Visitor Center featuring a mural and map showing all historic sites in the City, County, and UVA, and providing recorded interviews and printed materials.
- Reinstitution of a City "Percent for Art" program, whereby a percent of each city capital project goes into a fund for the purpose of historic site interpretation and art.
- Increased use of mobile cellular technology to enliven the stories of the historic sites and augmentation and revisions of walking tours to expand awareness of African American history. Expanded interpretation of the Drewary J. Brown Bridge to increase awareness about the contributions of our community's Bridge Builders who have been change agents in the ongoing civil and human rights struggles of our community.
- Documentation of all historic neighborhoods, including Tenth and Page, Rose Hill, Starr Hill, Venable, and Woolen Mills and inclusion on maps, brochures, mobile apps, and appropriate signage.

Through its website, the Commission also receives comments from interested citizens. If you wish to express your view, please go to <http://www.charlottesville.org/departments-and-services/boards-and-commissions/blue-ribbon-commission-on-race-memorials-and-public-spaces>.

Where Do We Pop Up? – Spring 2016 Tour

The year is about 1802, and we are in the largest and wealthiest establishment in Albemarle, even surpassing Charlottesville. It is a busy port where farmers load their produce on bateaux to travel down the Rivanna River to the James River and on to Richmond to be sold. Where are we?

We are in Milton, just eight miles east of Charlottesville, and just across the Rivanna from the Clifton Inn. We are at Locust Grove Tavern, the only remaining structure from Milton's heyday, between late 1700s and early 1800s. It sits on a ridge overlooking the Rivanna.

The earliest part of the tavern was built in 1812 and enlarged in 1857. It consists of two main sections. The first, built in 1812 and known as the grocery house, is a one-story frame structure. The later section, from 1857, remains unaltered, is a two-story "I" house. Over the years the tavern served as a store, town jail, school, saloon, inn, and residence. It began to be called Milton Tavern or Milton House in the early 20th century.

While in the neighborhood, let's pop over to Tufton Farm, which is part of Monticello and houses the Center for Historic Plants. The oldest surviving structure at Tufton Farm is a stone building behind the main house. Jefferson had it built in 1819 for his grandson, Thomas Jefferson Randolph. The main house, a brick Greek revival, was constructed in 1849 for Colonel Thomas Macon.

Pop-up tours are a membership perk. If you would like to be notified of these tours, please become a member. Our end of the year membership drive has begun and you can join online (ppiedmont@squarespace.com). You can also join anytime during the year.



Locust Grove Tavern during the April 2nd pop-up tour

Woolen Mills Village Historic Conservation District

On September 20th the BAR discussed and voted unanimously to endorse Charlottesville's 3rd Historic Conservation District (CV) overlay, for the Woolen Mills Village.

The concept of the Conservation district overlay was suggested in Satyendra Huja's 1976 introduction to the *Historic Landmark Study*. The ordinance adding the Historic Conservation Overlay District designation to Charlottesville's zoning code was approved by Council in 2009.

The proposed Woolen Mills CV marks the first application from a district comprised entirely of vernacular architecture and from a district which features no named architects. The Woolen Mills Village includes workers' and supervisors' housing, a school, a riverfront, the remains of a dam, two stores, two bridges, a historic by-way, a chapel, a mill, a cemetery, and domestic landscapes. The district's National Register period of significance is 1847-1962. April 2009 Preservation Week featured a walking tour of the district.

For more information visit:
<http://historicwoolenmills.org/>

written by Bill Emory, Woolen Mills Neighborhood

Daughters of Zion Cemetery Rededication

The Preservers of the Daughters of Zion Cemetery Rededication event on May 29, 2016 was moved inside to CitySpace on the Downtown Mall in light of an uncertain weather forecast. A standing-room-only crowd was treated to a lively tribute which included inspirational songs, poetry, remarks by Justin Sarafin of Preservation Virginia, Pete Armetta of the Ridge Street Neighborhood Association, and the reading of a Proclamation by Mayor Mike Signer.

After a brief reception and the return of the sun, the group, including descendants who traveled from far and wide, gathered at the cemetery where a historic marker sponsored by the City of Charlottesville's Historic Resources Committee was unveiled, and details of the Preservers' restoration and preservation plans for the cemetery were shared by Monument Conservator Shelley Sass and Landscape Architect Liz Sargent.

The Daughters of Zion Cemetery was established in 1873 by an African American women's benevolent society who sought to provide a dignified place of burial for African Americans in segregated Charlottesville. The cemetery is listed on the National and State Historic Registers and was designated as a 2016 Virginia's Most Endangered Historic Places by Preservation Virginia.

Special note: The Daughters of Zion Cemetery will be featured in the Cemetery Workshop at the 31st Annual Virginia Preservation Conference.

Cunningham Doods Transmission Line

On August 8, Jean Hiatt, president of Preservation Piedmont, gave testimony before the State Corporation Commission (SCC) meeting at a hearing about the proposed transmission line. Dominion Virginia Power. has proposed rebuilding the Cunningham Doods transmission line that crosses through Albemarle County. This proposal has created substantial concern among preservationists, business owners, and residents of western Albemarle County. The line would affect the Southern Albemarle Rural Historic District and the Greenwood-Afton Rural Historic District as well as several properties with conservation easements held by the Virginia Outdoors Foundation (VOF). Beyond Albemarle, the line would affect views from the Appalachian Trail and Shenandoah National Park.

While the alignment of the proposed line is not changing substantially, increased height and a reflective material would make the line more prominent. The VOF has previously proposed use of a "darkened or low-reflective treatment applied to the finish of galvanized steel lattice towers to reduce the visual presence of the structures in scenic areas." Dominion's consultants, Stantec, have evaluated the visual changes as having only a minimal effect on historic resources, and Dominion has been resistant to changing the proposed materials to reduce glare and visibility.

Mark Graham, Director of Community Development for Albemarle County; Ann Mallek, Albemarle County Supervisor; representatives from King Family Winery; Genevieve Keller, Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commissioner and cultural landscape expert; wedding industry representatives; and several property owners expressed concern about the potential harmful cultural and scenic effects of the changes. There is particular concern as the landscape is an essential asset for the region's thriving tourism industry. There is economic as well as historic importance in protecting this area, some of the most beautiful countryside in the United States. A majority of those testifying to the SCC expressed concern about the increased height and changed material that would make the replacement transmission line more visible. The transmission line requires SCC approval to begin construction as planned for Summer 2017.

Rose Hill Neighborhood Update

The Rose Hill Neighborhood successfully fought a zoning change in their treasured neighborhood of early 20th century single family homes and long standing family ownership. Richard Spurzem, a local developer and owner of Neighborhood Properties, purchased in 2015 a very large out of scale property at 624 Booker Street that had recently been constructed by another developer. Mr. Spurzem, who has purchased several properties on Booker Street and Rose Hill Drive, requested that City Council rezone 624 and its neighbor, 626, and allow three apartments in the building. After learning of the rezoning request, the neighborhood association wrote letters to City officials and the developer, created a petition, walked door to door, researched zoning law and a possible historic conservation district designation.

The efforts to ward off the zoning change lasted several months and involved a community meeting with the architects for the project, followed by consideration of the zoning designation change before the Planning Commission and ultimately City Council on July 5. Many Rose Hill residents and other citizens represented neighborhood interests at all of these meetings with heartfelt and eloquent statements. Rose Hill residents were gratified by the unanimous decisions of both the Planning Commission and Council to deny rezoning and support the preservation of the single family zoning status. Residents of Rose Hill feel that they need to continue to be vigilant as two important historic houses on Rose Hill were demolished several months ago and a small yellow bungalow on the corner of Dale and Rose Hill came down September 29.

The neighborhood was also hard at work planning their centennial celebration marking the year 1916 when the area was annexed by the City. It transformed from plantations in the 1700s to an active and varied African American neighborhood with industries developing along the railroad track. The celebration was held on September 10 at Washington Park, the center of social and sports activities for several neighborhoods since the early 1900s. It was a festive celebration highlighted by statements and stories from long-time residents and presentations and a proclamation from City and state officials.



Historic Smith House in Crozet



Blue Ridge Avenue in Crozet lies within the Crozet district of the National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Landmarks Register.

The 100-year-old Smith House, a residence identified as a contributing resource, is now threatened by a large scale development on the property. Neighbors of the Smith House at 1194 Blue Ridge Avenue contacted Preservation Piedmont in hopes of discovering a way to protect the house.

William Park of Pinnacle Construction & Development Corporation is in the process of purchasing the property from Piedmont Housing Alliance (PHA). Mr. Park plans to build a 126-unit apartment complex on the property, which now comprises 21 acres. Unfortunately, his plan also includes demolishing the Smith house. The neighbors and residents of Crozet are especially disturbed by this project because they were previously engaged in extensive negotiations with PHA, which has owned the property for several years and planned a 72-unit development that would include affordable housing and preserve the Smith House.

Members of the Preservation Piedmont board met with neighbors to learn more. The property is not protected locally because Albemarle County does not have an ordinance that identifies historic properties and/or districts to review exterior physical changes to them. Furthermore, the property is zoned R-6, an intensive zoning category. The residence on the opposite side of the street zoned R-2.

On June 23rd several board members met with Mr. Park and pointed out that Pinnacle Construction has successfully completed several adaptive reuse projects, such as rehabilitating a former school into an attractive apartment building. One member cited examples of properties in Albemarle County where a historic building was preserved and showcased while new buildings were built nearby as part of a unified plan of development. Another board member contacted several government agencies to learn more about the property in an effort to provide Mr. Park with alternative designs that would save the historic house. Mr. Park was attentive to our suggestions but we were not able to sway his decision on the company's development plan.

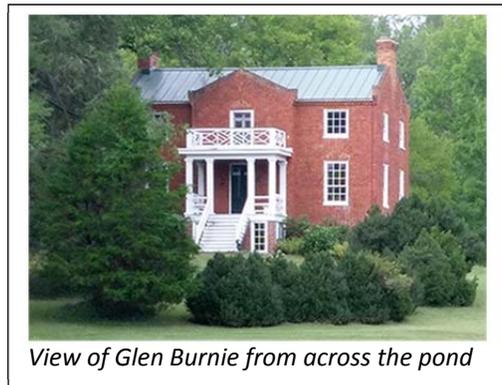
We were disappointed that we were unable to assist in saving this historic residence that is such an important feature of the Blue Ridge Avenue streetscape. This plan of development with its demolition of the Smith House highlights the absence of a county ordinance to protect historic buildings and sites as an essential step for Albemarle County in protecting its heritage. *The Daily Progress* May 26 editorial urged the County to preserve the Smith House as an integral part of the Crozet National Register District.

2016 Fall Tour Showcased Fluvanna County

Preservation Piedmont's September 24, 2016 Fall Tour in Fluvanna County focused on three early nineteenth-century National Register historic brick buildings and their settings near the Rivanna River: Pleasant Grove, the County of Fluvanna Courthouse, and Glen Burnie.

Fluvanna Historical Society president Marvin Moss, director Tricia Johnson, and former director Judy Mickelson welcomed Preservation Piedmont and led the tour that began at the newly rehabilitated Pleasant Grove House Museum, a recipient of a 2015 Preservation Piedmont annual award. Fluvanna County owns the 936-acre property that provides access to the Heritage Trail adjacent to the Rivanna River. Built in 1854, Pleasant Grove is an excellent example of an adaptive reuse project that now houses county offices and a transportation museum. The property also serves as an event venue for both public and private events, including the seasonal Fluvanna Farmers Market.

Touring members next stopped in the village of Palmyra to learn about the Fluvanna Historical Society's efforts to preserve historic village character and significant properties, including the county's notable Greek Revival courthouse and stone jail. The tour concluded at Marvin Moss's Glen Burnie residence, which is architecturally similar on its exterior to the jail in Palmyra. Built in the early 1800's, Glen Burnie is an eclectic house exhibiting features of several historic architectural styles. The entire property is protected by an easement donated to the Virginia Department of Historic Resources. Attendees toured the house and guesthouse/chapel, enjoyed light refreshments on the lawn, and walked the perimeter of the pond.



Membership Application/Renewal Form

Preservation Piedmont is a non-profit corporation that is dedicated to protecting historic structures, sites, landscapes, and neighborhoods, as well as rural areas and open spaces. We do this in order to create an appreciation for the historic resources of the Central Virginia Piedmont region. Based in Charlottesville, we also serve Albemarle and bordering counties.

Student \$15 x ____ Individual \$35 x ____

Sponsor \$100 Patron \$300

I would like to receive my newsletter by *email only*.

If you would like to initiate or renew a membership, please enclose payment and make checks payable to:

Preservation Piedmont
P.O. Box 2803
Charlottesville VA 22902

Preservation Piedmont also has an email list to serve our members and quickly update preservationists throughout the region about important preservation issues. If you are interested in signing up, please include an email address below.

I want to volunteer!

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone/Email: _____