



Chapter Twelve:

Heritage

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Goal

Preserve the County's historic, cultural, scenic, and architectural heritage

The Significance to Carroll County

Historic resources and natural attractions give a community its identity. These resources provide a sense of who we are, where we came from, and where we may be going. Preservation of these important assets helps us to understand the present as a product of the past and as a modifier of the future. Protecting these buildings and landscapes conserves tangible and visible links with a community's past, preserves places that are important parts of a community's identity, and retains important resources that may provide historical information about how an area was settled, developed, or declined.

Currently, nearly 1,615 historic sites throughout the County have been inventoried as part of the Maryland Historic Sites Inventory for Carroll County. It is estimated that fewer than half of the historic sites that exist in the County have been inventoried. An estimated 40 historic districts and sites have been designated for the National Register of Historic Places. National Register historic districts include Union Bridge, Lineboro, McKinstry's Mill, New Windsor, Taneytown, Westminster, Uniontown, Linwood, and Sykesville. Several Historic Zoning Districts exist in the County as well. These include Uniontown, Westminster, and Sykesville.

The 1997 General Assembly adopted several specific programs, which together form the Smart Growth initiatives. The Act designates specific Priority Funding Areas throughout Maryland. Counties may include identified Rural Villages as Priority Funding Areas if designated and adopted in the Master Plan by July 1, 1998. The Board of County Commissioners adopted 35 designated Rural Villages in June of 1998. Factors considered in these designations included, but were not limited to, historic qualities, rural or agricultural character, primarily residential in nature, unincorporated areas, and high potential for water/sewer problems. These 35 Rural Villages are as follows: Alesia, Bruceville, Detour, Feesersburg, Frizzelburg, Gamber, Harney, Keymar, Keysville, Lineboro, Linwood, Maple Grove, Marston, Mayberry, McKinstry's Mill, Melrose, Middleburg, Millers, Pleasant Valley, Silver Run, Smallwood, Snyderburg, Taylorsville, Tyrone, Union Mills, Uniontown, Warfieldsburg, Watersville, Winfield, Woodbine, Bark Hill, Patapsco, Louisville, Shipley, and Starner's Dam.

The Challenge to Carroll County

Because of the County's relatively late start in suburban development and growth, many of the County's historic and scenic resources have survived. However, as the County continues to grow, it is important that efforts to inventory and protect the County's historic and scenic resources continue so that these resources can be preserved.

Approximately half of the historic sites in the County have been inventoried over the last 27 years, over three-quarters of which were inventoried prior to 1990. Many of the sites inventoried to date were done so by the State Highway Administration during the initial phases of several bypass projects in the County. With few such projects anticipated in the near future, the task to inventory the remaining sites will fall solely on the County.

Creating an inventory of the County's historic and cultural sites is crucial to understanding the resources that are here. But once the sites have been surveyed, there is no way of knowing if they later get demolished or substantially altered to the point that they lose their historical value. We are left with a record of our past, but no tangible evidence of it. There is no way of knowing how many of the 1,615 sites inventoried remain today. However, given the fact that the County has doubled in size since the inventory began, no doubt many have been lost. Over the next 23 years, the County's population is expected to increase by one-third, which will place historic and cultural resources in even greater threat of irreparable destruction. As development occurs it alters our scenic, historic, and cultural landscapes as well. Yet the County currently has no mechanism for ensuring that development occurs in harmony with or enhances these resources.

A great challenge facing Carroll County in the coming years will be to document its heritage resources as quickly as possible. This will aid in the formulation of well-informed decisions on what needs to be protected and will assist in the development of appropriate mechanisms to adequately preserve them. However, it will require that both the public and private sectors work together to achieve the goal. Gaining private sector support for heritage preservation poses another significant challenge. Promoting awareness of the benefits that can be derived from heritage preservation among businesses and private property owners means high levels of outreach and communication. It also means crafting preservation mechanisms that will serve all interested parties equally well and will not be viewed as obstacles to economic development or excessive restrictions on private property rights.

The Choice: Goals, Policies, Thresholds, & Recommendations

Goal

Preserve the County's historic, cultural, scenic, and architectural heritage

Policies

- A. Regulations for signs and billboards will be written to preserve the County's historic and scenic resources.
- B. County land will not be used to lease billboard space.

Recommendations

- A. Periodically update and maintain a Carroll County Heritage Areas inventory. The inventory shall be a listing of historic properties, historic districts, sites, objects and structures, scenic resources, and natural attractions.

Fiscal Impact to the County

Additional studies, regulations, amendments, and plans required under the goal and recommendations can be prepared by existing personnel.