

Bull Run Civil War Round Table (BRCWRT) Preservation Corner
August 26, 2020



Greetings BRCWRT Members - I trust that you and your family are doing well and are safe and healthy.

This edition of *Preservation Corner* includes; 1) information concerning the September 15, 2020 Public Hearing before the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors to consider the potential removal, relocation, contextualization, or covering of any or all of the publicly owned Civil War related monuments or memorials located at the Fairfax County Judicial Complex, 2) an update on the ongoing efforts to save and preserve the historic Conner House, 3) an update on the Route 28 By Pass project, 4) an update on the Farr's Fort preservation and interpretation initiative, 5) an update on the BRCWRT fundraising campaign in support of GMU's 8th Regt Band, and 6) information on the Great American Outdoors Act of 2020.

Fairfax County BOS Public Hearing on Fairfax Courthouse Civil War Related Monuments and Memorials

On September 15, 2020 a public hearing will be held during the scheduled meeting of the Board of Supervisors of Fairfax County at the Fairfax County Government Center (Conference Room 11), 12000 Government Center Parkway beginning at 4:30 pm. The purpose of the public hearing is not entirely clear, but according to the legal notice published in the Washington Times on August 15, 2020, the purpose is "*to consider the potential removal, relocation, contextualization, or covering of any or all of the publicly owned Civil War related monuments or memorials located at the Fairfax County Judicial Complex....*" The Civil War related monuments or memorials include the granite marker commemorating the death of John Quincy Marr, the first soldier killed in action in the Civil War, on the lawn of the courthouse near the intersection of Routes 123 and 236, two cannon adjacent to the Marr marker, and a Virginia Department of Historic Resources historical marker entitled "First Confederate Officer Killed," located at the adjacent Judicial Complex.

The meeting and public hearing will be viewable on Channel 16 and streamed live online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cableconsumer/channel-16/live-video-stream. Live audio of the meeting may be accessed at 703-324-7700. Persons wishing to speak at the public hearing may do so in person (unless the meeting is changed to be held electronically), or via phone or pre-recorded YouTube video. Persons wishing to speak via video must register by signing up online or by calling the Department of Clerk Services at 703-324-3151, TTY 711, and must submit their video no later than 9 a.m. on the day prior to the hearing. Persons wishing to speak in person or via phone must register no later than 12:00 p.m. the day of the hearing to be placed on the Speakers List. Persons not on the Speakers List may be heard after the registered speakers have testified. In addition, written testimony and other submissions will be received by mail at 12000 Government Center Parkway, Suite 552, Fairfax, 22035 or by email at ClerktotheBOS@fairfaxcounty.gov.

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Key facts related to the subject items:

- The Marr granite obelisk was installed in 1904. It commemorates an event - the death of John Quincy Marr, the first soldier killed in action (in battle) in the Civil War. Having been shot and killed in a skirmish with the 2d U.S. Cavalry at Fairfax Courthouse in the pre-dawn hours of June 1, 1862, Captain John Quincy Marr's body was discovered later that morning in a clover field near the courthouse grounds.
- The two cannon adjacent to the Marr obelisk are naval cannon that have no connection to the June 1, 1861 skirmish at Fairfax Courthouse or to John Marr's death. In 1910 the U.S. Government donated the cannon to Fairfax County.
- Virginia State Historical Marker E-63, "First Confederate Officer Killed", was installed on June 1, 2009. As with all Virginia Department of Historic Resources (VDHR) historical markers, the text for marker E-63 went through an extensive vetting and accuracy review process prior to approval, production and installation; and VDHR's historical marker program includes a process for revising and updating existing marker text based on newly discovered documents and/or new analysis or research findings.

Preserving Historic Conner House Update

In discussions with Prince William (PW) School staff members in early July 2020 BRCWRT representatives identified a potential site for the relocation of the Conner House in order to ensure the historical preservation and interpretation of, and to public access to, this historic structure .



Conner House (July 2020)

The site, on land that is owned by PW County and is part of the PW School system, is immediately adjacent to the current (original) location of the Conner House. The site, approximately 10 acres in size, is located in the northeast quadrant of Euclid Avenue and Conner Drive and directly across Conner Drive from Osbourn Park High School. PW Schools assets currently on the site include a recently renovated

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PW School Staff building, several mobile trailers used for multiple school programs and a parking lot (see photograph, below).



Potential Site for Conner H

Since mid-July BRCWRT representatives have been meeting and speaking with individual PW School Board members to discuss this potential option and gauge their interest and support. To date the majority of the members have indicated interest and support, with further discussions are pending.

Assuming the PW School Board supports exploring and pursuing this relocation and preservation option, we will engage the PW Board of County Supervisors to discuss this option and garner their support. Ultimately, assuming PW County support, discussions will necessarily progress to involve PW County, the City of Manassas Park and perhaps the developer of the apartment complex planned for the land where the Conner House is currently located.

Stay tuned for future updates.

Route 28 Bypass Update

The Prince William Board of County Supervisors (BOCS) conducted final consideration of the recommended Route 28 Bypass Project Location (adoption of Alternative 2B location for the By Pass) at their August 4, 2020 BOCS Meeting. Although the public hearing had been conducted on July 14, 2020 and was now closed, public comments were allowed during the August 4 BOCS Meeting's Citizens Time. Following lengthy discussion the BOCS voted (7-0) not to endorse the staff-recommended Route 28 Bypass project location (Alternative 2B - Godwin Drive Extension), but to pursue the widening of Route 28 instead.

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The basis for the BOCS vote & decision regarding the recommended Alternative 2B is summarized as follows:

- 1) Alternative 2B would not significantly alleviate traffic congestion on Route 28
- 2) Alternative 2B would have negligible traffic impact, but would have significant environmental impacts on the wetlands and residential properties in the existing floodplain within the proposed Alternative 2B route
- 3) Alternative 2B would result in significant fiscal and human impacts on county residents living along the proposed route, including those residents who would face the loss of their home

No information on the widening of Route 28 through the Coles District is available at this time. As this project moves forward, a specific item that bears watching, and would be of concern to BRCWRT, is any proposed widening of the Route 28 bridge that crosses Bull Run and the associated impact on the Blackburn's Ford Battlefield and/or the existing parking lot and access point for the Bull Run-Occoquan Trail.

Stay tuned for future updates.

Farr's Fort (Civil War Redoubt on GMU Fairfax Campus) Update

On August 7, 2020 BRCWRT Preservation Chair Blake Myers led a Farr's Fort site visit & discussion to assess ADA accessibility requirements commensurate with the initiative to preserve and interpret the site. Participants were GMU's Vice President of Facilities Frank Strike, Mason Master Plan development point of contact Alex Iszard, GMU's ADA Coordinator Ruth Townsend, Department of History and Art History Chair Dr. Brian Platt. The site visit included an archaeological and historical overview of the site, a review of GMU Senior Vice President Carol Kissal's June 19, 2019 decisions regarding preservation of the site and a description of the draft interim preservation and interpretation concept.

Ruth Townsend indicated ADA accessibility issues come into play and are a consideration when any preservation and interpretation improvements include land grading or adding infrastructure (pathways, structures, etc.). Clearing undergrowth and vegetation and adding mulch to existing trails or paths would not violate any ADA accessibility requirements or guidelines. Ruth agreed that technology options could potentially be used to help ensure compliance with ADA accessibility guidelines - - these technologies include augmented reality technologies and applications such as those previously discussed (virtual reality site tour, QR code with site specific content included on interpretive markers) with GMU's Department of Geography and Geoinformation Science (GGS).

Based on this discussion and a follow up communication from Ruth Townsend confirming ADA accessibility compliance, Frank Strike approved implementing the Farr's Fort interim preservation and interpretation concept and continuing to address the site's long-term preservation and interpretation as

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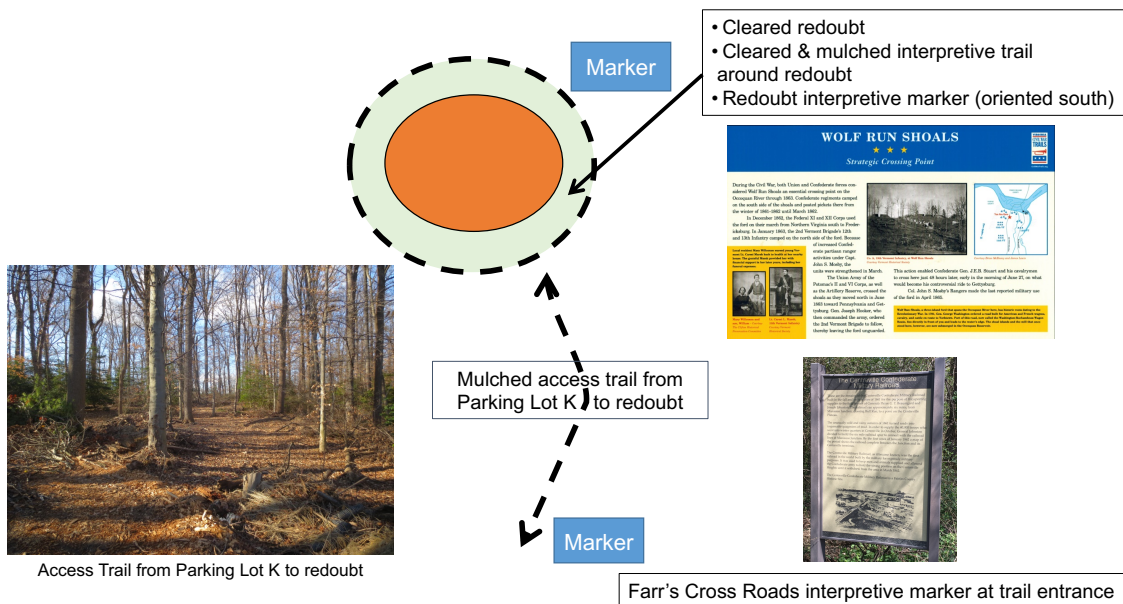
part of the on-going Mason Master Plan development and subsequent campus infrastructure development initiatives and projects.

From August 14 - 16, 2020 BRCWRT members Blake Myers, Jim Lewis and Brian McEnany developed, in coordination with GMU's Dr. Brian Platt, the Farr's Fort Interim Preservation and Interpretation Project Plan, detailing the work required to implement the approved concept. The Project Plan, with a timeline for completion by the end of November 2020, was submitted to and approved by Frank Strike on August 17, 2020, and forwarded to GMU's Director of Facilities Management with instructions to develop a plan to execute the work described in the Project Plan.

The Project Plan work includes clearing and removing the undergrowth and vegetation from the redoubt, the access trail and the interpretive trail, mulching the access and interpretive trails, and installing two historical markers - one at the entrance to the access trail and one at the redoubt (see Interim Preservation and Interpretation Schematic, below), BRCWRT coordination and work continues with GMU as we implement the Project Plan, achieving the long sought BRCWRT objective of preserving and interpreting this historic site on GMU's Fairfax Campus.

Stay tuned for future updates.

Interim Preservation & Interpretation Schematic



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GMU 8th Regt Band Fundraiser Update

BRCWRT's fundraising campaign in support of the purchase and restoration of Civil War era brass instruments by and for the GMU 8th Regiment Band continues (see the August 8, 2020 Preservation Corner for additional details). Our objective is to raise and donate \$900.00 - the remaining amount owed by the Green Machine for these civil-war-era brass instruments. We will submit a consolidated BRCWRT donation to the Green Machine (a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization) for the instruments. As of August 26, 2020 BRCWRT members have contributed \$700.00 to this campaign - many thanks!

BRCWRT members who wish to contribute may mail a personal check - made out to Blake Myers along with their name and mailing address - to Blake Myers at 10012 Marshall Pond Road Burke, VA 22015 no later than October 1, 2020. Blake will submit a consolidated BRCWRT donation to The Green Machine, and will subsequently furnish a copy of the donation receipt received from The Green Machine to each donor.



*Civil War Era Brass Instruments Being Purchased
and Restored by and for GMU 8th Regiment Band*

The Great American Outdoors Act

On August 5, the "Great American Outdoors Act" was signed into law. This landmark Act benefits battlefield preservation in two parallel ways. First, it fully and permanently funds the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) at the \$900 million level annually via revenues from on-shore and off-shore energy development — both fossil and renewable energy operations — that are not already allocated by law to other programs. The LWCF in turn funds the Battlefield Land Acquisition Grant Program, a matching grant program that has saved more than 32,000 acres of Revolutionary War, War of 1812 and Civil War battlefields.

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Secondly, the Act allocates \$9 billion over five years to address the deferred maintenance backlog that exists in federal agencies, including the National Park Service, the National Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Battlefield parks are included in this critical maintenance backlog, with millions of dollars' worth of projects at dozens of battlefield parks. Completion of these battlefield park maintenance projects will enhance these outdoor classrooms and ensure their continued public accessibility.

Thank for your interest in, and support of, historic preservation. Stay strong, safe and healthy!

Blake Myers
BRCWRT Preservation Committee Chair