

BULL RUN CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE (BRCWRT)
GUIDELINES AND PRINCIPLES FOR HISTORICAL EDUCATION AND PRESERVATION ACTIVITIES

The following guidelines and principles provide a framework for Bull Run Civil War Round Table (BRCWRT) involvement in civil war history education and preservation activities and initiatives. These guidelines and principles were developed as an informational reference for BRCWRT members and to serve as a guide when participating in education and preservation activities or initiatives as a BRCWRT representative or on an individual basis.

No BRCWRT officer or member should make any written or public statement on behalf of the BRCWRT without first confirming, with the BRCWRT President or Vice-President, that the statement is consistent with the BRCWRT's position on the subject.

The Executive Committee, when seeking to establish a BRCWRT position concerning a specific education and/or preservation issue, shall apprise the general membership and seek member input and comment.

Guidelines and Principles.

A. The BRCWRT should, whenever possible, coordinate its efforts with the Civil War Trust (CWT) or other organization(s) dedicated to historic education and preservation.

B. Focus on historical education and preservation - remember the objectives of the BRCWRT are:

- Education – methods to accomplish this include presentations, tours, newsletters, the development of historic signage, and support to selected Civil War events and ceremonies
- Preservation – methods to accomplish this include raising awareness of threats to the integrity of local and national civil war battlefields, memorials, and sites, and presentations, participation and remarks at relevant symposia, hearings, meetings, and commemorations

C. Avoid getting involved in the politics of an issue or controversy

- The BRCWRT must remain apolitical to maintain its credibility, influence and its non-profit status
- Retain the BRCWRT focus on the history and education relevant to an issue or controversy
- Individual BRCWRT members have every right to engage in discussions and actions that go beyond the BRCWRT focus on history and education so long as in doing so they do not implicate or compromise the BRCWRT; e.g. do not 'represent' the BRWCRT, or wear BRCWRT logo items (ball cap, shirt, lapel pins, etc.) when engaging in a politicized event

D. Become knowledgeable of relevant historical preservation processes and programs (local, state, federal)

E. Watch for and be attuned to local rezoning or development proposals that could negatively impact Civil War battlefields and/or historic sites.

- Become knowledgeable of relevant local zoning and permitting processes
- Determine when and how citizen input is appropriate in these processes, and make your views / concerns known; local governing boards, planning commissions, etc. may not be aware of the historical significance of the subject property

F. General Preservation Principles

- i. No battlefield or Civil War historical site is ever completely lost - don't despair....
 - Civil War Trust (CWT) process and preservation methods demonstrate this guideline
 - Previously "lost" historical sites have been restored
 - Franklin Battlefield is being restored piece by piece: some original ground, some original contours restored, other ground reproduced as a facsimile

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- Revolutionary War/ Constitutional Period Philadelphia cityscape - area around Independence Hall cleared of old 19th century buildings
 - Colonial/ Revolution/ Constitutional era Philadelphia is re-emerging
- ii. Something is better than nothing...
- Land development follows paths that depend on unpredictable future conditions (political, economic, land use, etc.)
 - Get a toehold – even a sign on a post is a start
 - History field trips can be conducted based on tiny toeholds
 - People love to learn about history in their neighborhoods
- iii. Something small can grow into something more....
- Something that exists can be added to
 - Growth may be bigger, better or both
 - An unpreserved site or urban decay today can become a park tomorrow
- iv. Use what you have...
- Don't be too pure – 'perfection' can be the enemy of 'good enough'
 - Facsimiles can be used to teach history and demonstrate preservation
 - Colonial Williamsburg is properly located, but is almost entirely a facsimile
 - Likewise the Jamestown Celebration replicas
- v. Things that get used get saved....
- Repurposing saves historical buildings and sites
 - Consider supporting repurposing even if the proposed use may seem obnoxious
- vi. Do what you can now.....
- Write to planning bodies, governing bodies, and other stakeholder groups
 - Speak before planning bodies, governing bodies, and other stakeholder groups
 - Be available to the media
 - Conduct history field trips to accessible sites, however minimal
 - Conduct history presentations to interested audiences (Blenheim Civil War Interpretive Center in Fairfax City, community clubs and organizations, etc.)
- vii. Do more later.....
- Preserving options today leads to additional opportunities tomorrow
 - Remain alert to opportunities
- viii. You are only beaten if you quit...
- You will lose some – tough. Press on
 - Persevere - our mission is a worthy one