

Bull Run Civil War Round Table (BRCWRT) Preservation Corner September 30, 2020



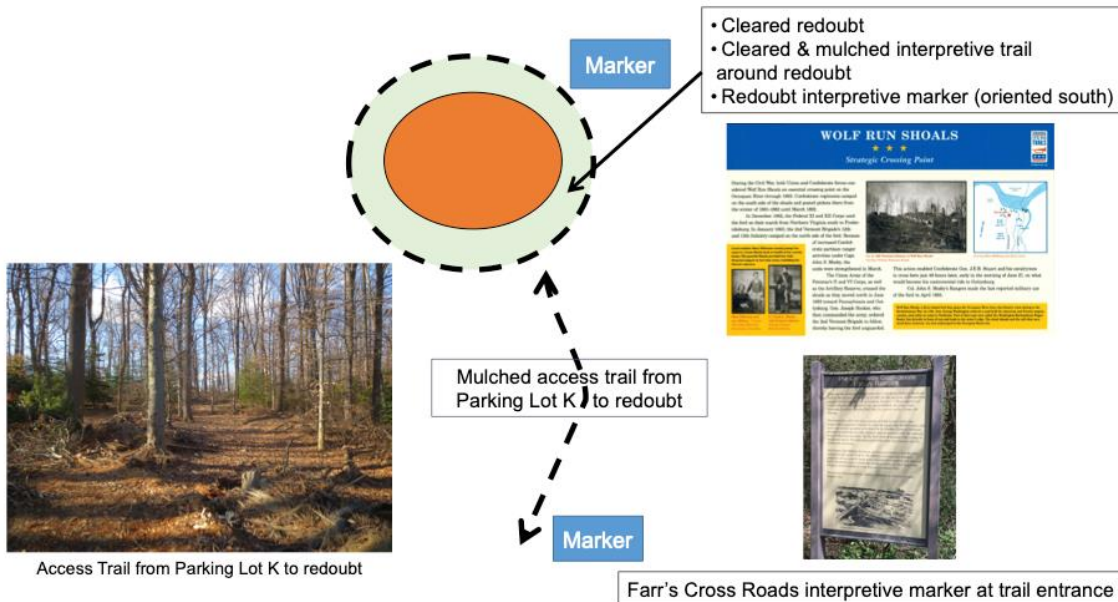
Greetings BRCWRT Members - I hope and trust that you and your family and friends are doing well and are safe and healthy.

This edition of *Preservation Corner* includes; 1) an update on the Farr's Fort preservation and interpretation project at GMU, 2) an update on the Route 28 By Pass project, 3) results of the September 15, 2020 Public Hearing before the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors on the Civil War related markers located at the Fairfax County Judicial Complex, 4) BRCWRT's involvement in a Dranesville Battlefield preservation initiative, and 5) a final update on BRCWRT's fundraising project in support of GMU's 8th Regiment Band .

Farr's Fort Preservation and Interpretation Update

As previously reported, the Farr's Fort Interim Preservation and Interpretation Project Plan, implementing the approved interim site concept and a timeline for completion by November 2020, was approved by GMU's Vice President for Facilities, Frank Strike on August 17, 2020.

Interim Preservation & Interpretation Schematic



On September 25, 2020 Blake Myers and Dr. Brian Platt met on site at Farr's Fort with Eric Miller, GMU's Grounds Program Manager, to walk the site and review the project plan, the grounds and maintenance related actions, and the envisioned timeline for completion.

On September 30, 2020 Blake Myers, Jim Lewis, Brian McEnany and Dr. Brian Platt met with John Forgy, GMU's Environmental Graphic Designer, on site at Farr's Fort to walk the site and review, discuss

Bull Run Civil War Round Table (BRCWRT) Preservation Corner
September 30, 2020



and update the two planned historical markers and the process for designing, producing and installing the markers.

BRCWRT coordination and work continues with GMU as we implement the Project Plan, achieving our long-sought objective of preserving and interpreting this historic site on GMU's Fairfax Campus. Project completion is anticipated and scheduled by mid-November 2020.

Route 28 Bypass Update

AS previously reported, at their August 4, 2020 meeting the Prince William Board of County Supervisors (BOCS), following lengthy discussion, 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.

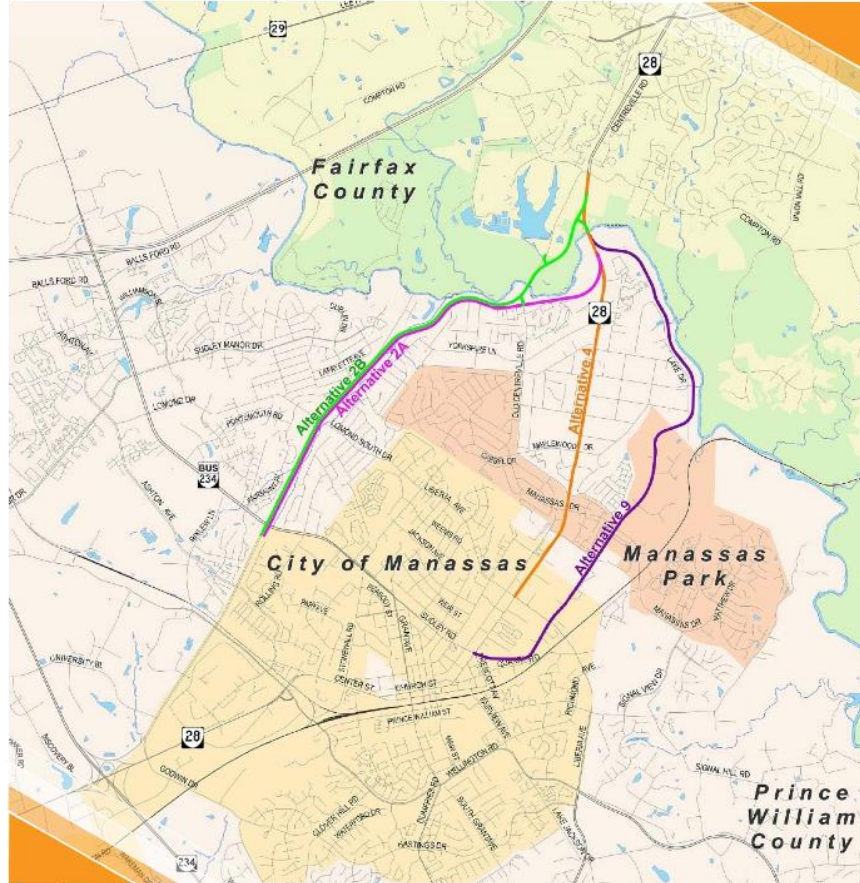
The basis for the BOCS vote & decision regarding the recommended Alternative 2B is summarized as follows:

- 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

During a very contentious, and at times confusing, September 8, 2020 BOCS meeting the Prince William Board of County Supervisors reconsidered its August 4, 2020 decision and took the following actions with respect to Route 28:

- Upon reconsideration of the respective PW Staff proposal, the Board voted to endorse (on a 5-3 vote) the PW Staff recommendation to adopt Alternative 2B as the location for the Route 28 Bypass
- The Board voted against (on a 4-3 vote w/1 abstention) endorsing Alternative 4 (Rt 28 Widening)
- The Board approved (8-0) initiation of a Comprehensive Plan Amendment for widening Route 28.

**Bull Run Civil War Round Table (BRCWRT) Preservation Corner
September 30, 2020**



The central factor in reconsidering Alternative 2B appeared to be the potential loss of \$89M in Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) funds for the Route 28 project. The Comprehensive Plan Amendment is viewed by the BOCS as a back-up plan should Alternative 2B encounter an Army Corps of Engineer decision to deny the permit(s) for road construction through the respective protected wetlands.

The Comprehensive Plan Amendment, to include widening Route 28 from the City of Manassas to Fairfax County, timeline (as of September 2020):

- September 2020 - Comprehensive Plan Amendment Initiation; dispatch review of CPA (90-day review by Code) to regional transportation partners
- September/October 2020 - Public Engagement
- November 18, 2020 - Planning Commission (PC) Public Hearing
- December 15, 2020 - Board of County Supervisors Public Hearing

**Bull Run Civil War Round Table (BRCWRT) Preservation Corner
September 30, 2020**



Civil War Related Markers/Items Located at the Fairfax County Judicial Complex

On September 15, 2020 a public hearing was held during the scheduled meeting of the Board of Supervisors of Fairfax County. The stated purpose of the public hearing was "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" under consideration were the granite obelisk/marker commemorating the death of John Quincy Marr, the first soldier killed in action in the Civil War, two boat howitzers adjacent to the Marr marker, and Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) Historical Marker B-262, entitled "First Confederate Officer Killed".



Marr Marker/Obelisk & Boat Howitzers

**Bull Run Civil War Round Table (BRCWRT) Preservation Corner
September 30, 2020**



Virginia DHR Historical Marker B-262

President Mark Whitenton submitted a written statement on behalf of the BRCWRT's 384 members calling for these three items to remain in their current locations as they are historical markers commemorating an historically significant event in our Nation's and Fairfax County's history, and are not monuments or memorials to, or monuments or memorials glorifying, either John Marr or the Confederacy. In addition, 17 individuals, including 7 BRCWRT members, spoke at the public hearing in opposition to removing or relocating the items.

Immediately following the public hearing, in a series of three 9-1 votes, the Board of Supervisors approved three resolutions directing the removal of the Marr marker/obelisk, the two boat howitzers and Virginia DHR Historical Marker B-262, respectively, and gave the County staff until October 20, 2020 to determine the disposition of these items.

BRCWRT is pursuing, in collaboration with other local history organizations, potential legal action to prevent Fairfax County from removing the Marr marker/obelisk, the two boat howitzers and DHR Marker B-262. The grounds for this potential legal action include 1) that the Virginia Statue upon which the Board of Supervisors based its actions, *15.2-1812, Memorials for War Veterans*, is not applicable in this case since none of the respective items is a monument or memorial to a war veteran, and 2) multiple procedural omissions and errors in the "process" used by the Board of Supervisors to reach the decisions to remove the items.

Meanwhile several organizations, including Manassas National Battlefield Park, have contacted Fairfax County expressing their interest in taking possession of the boat howitzers. Several organizations, including BRCWRT, have written to City of Fairfax Mayor David Meyer and the City Council members encouraging Fairfax City to accept transfer of the Marr marker/obelisk and relocate it to the Fairfax

**Bull Run Civil War Round Table (BRCWRT) Preservation Corner
September 30, 2020**

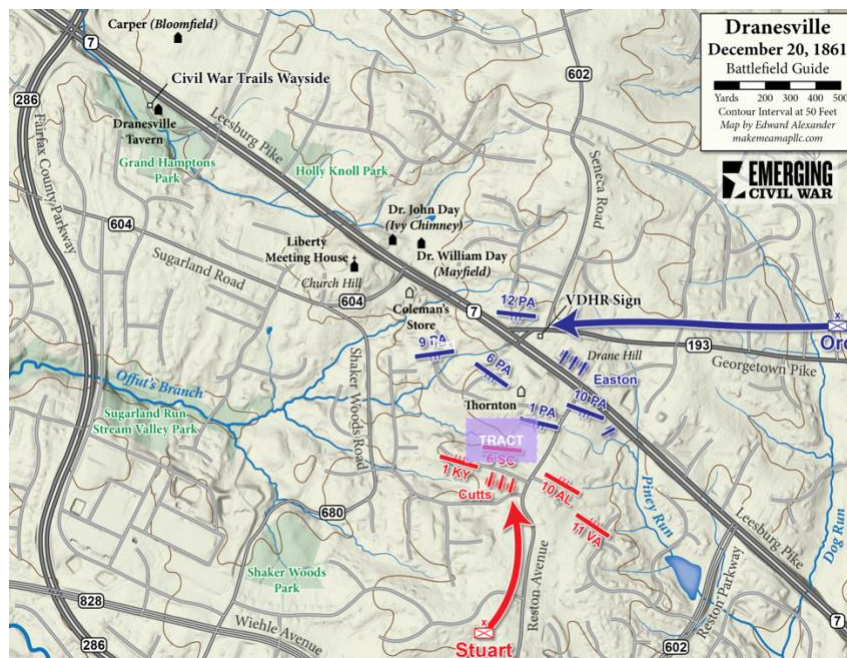


Cemetery or another historically relevant site within Fairfax City. Virginia DHR has been made aware of the Board's action with respect to DHR Marker B-262.

An Opportunity to Save a Core Section of the Battle of Dranesville Battlefield

BRCWRT recently became aware of a unique opportunity to save four acres of core battlefield on the Dranesville Battlefield in Fairfax County. Though a relatively small affair between the units of the Pennsylvania Reserve Volunteer Corps under the command of Brigadier General E.O.C Ord and Confederate Infantry under the command of Brigadier General J.E.B. Stuart, the fighting in the Battle of Dranesville on December 20, 1861 was fierce and left a strong impression on those who fought here.

The available land tract lies directly across today's U.S. Rt 7 from the Dranesville Church of the Brethren which sits atop what was in 1861 Drane Hill (see map, below).



Battle of Dranesville Map - Annotated with Available Land Tract (Emerging Civil War)

BRCWRT is working with local (Dranesville/Herndon) residents who are interested in saving this battlefield land, and the American Battlefield Trust to take advantage of this last, best chance to save a portion of the Dranesville Battlefield.

As a side note, in early October 2020 the Church of the Brethren is scheduled to install on its grounds a new historical marker on the Battle of Dranesville - an Eagle Scout project supported by historians Ryan Quint and Edward Alexander.

**Bull Run Civil War Round Table (BRCWRT) Preservation Corner
September 30, 2020**



BRCWRT Fundraising in Support of GMU's 8th Regiment Band

BRCWRT successfully raised and donated \$1,075.00 's in support of the purchase and restoration of Civil War era brass instruments by and for the GMU 8th Regiment Band. A huge thank you to our members who generously donated to enable BRCWRT's support of this GMU Green Machine Civil War Brass Band ensemble.



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

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

Blake Myers
BRCWRT Preservation Committee Chair