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Planning District Commission



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Mr. Robert A. DeForrest,
Executive Vice President
Afro-American Institute for
Historic Preservation &
Community Development
1420 N Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005

Dear Mr. DeForrest:

We had a telephone conversation a few weeks ago concerning a local landmark in Prince William County, a small (18' x 24') stone structure known as the Ben Lomond Stone Accessory Building, built about 1820-35, and thought to have been a slave quarters. This building is being threatened by the Westover Baptist Church, who wish to demolish this structure on their property for a driveway and entrance to their proposed new church facility. Recent developments show that demolition may be imminent.

You can see from the fact sheet and other enclosed material that the Church has rejected proposals for adaptively reusing the building, and in January offered the building to any group that would remove it from their property.

The Prince William County Historical Commission recognizes the value this structure has to the community, and is seeking a means of preserving it. State and local archeologists have visited the site, and after a preliminary archeological investigation recommended further field work, since no site of this type has ever been found and excavated in Northern Virginia.

When we talked, you said that you might like to write a letter to the Westover Baptist Church recommending that they not demolish this building because of its potential importance to area Black history and the information it may yield about Blacks in Northern Virginia.

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It has been said that the Church could begin demolition of the building at any time, despite requests by the Prince William County Historical Commission and Park Authority that the building be saved.

If you would like to recommend preservation of this local landmark, please write to the Church in care of:

Rev. Alfred Philley
9425 Westmoreland Avenue
Manassas, VA 22110
Telephone: 703-368-0826

Thank you for your interest in this matter. If you want more information on the building/site, please contact me at the NVPDC office.

Sincerely yours,

Frances Jones

Frances Jones
Architectural Historian/Surveyor

FJ:cae
Encl.

P.S. You might want to send a copy of your letter to the Prince William County Historical Commission (Don Curtis, Chairman), Prince William County Courthouse, Manassas, VA 22110 and to the Virginia Historical Landmarks Commission (Tucker Hill, Executive Director), 221 Governor Street, Richmond, VA 23219.