

\$25,000 Estimated Cost to Move Slave Quarters Near Ben Lomond

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A recent estimate has put the cost of moving the stone outbuilding of the Ben Lomond Manor at \$25,000.

Frances Jones, architectural historian-surveyor for the Northern Virginia Planning District Commission (NVPDC), said that building mover William Patram last week provided that estimate.

The Prince William County Historical Commission had originally thought that the cost of moving the stone outbuilding, which has traditionally been

known as the slave quarters, would be about \$18,000 to \$20,000.

If the 19th century building is to be saved, it must be moved from its present location near the main house on Sudley Manor Drive.

The outbuilding sits on the planned parking lot entrance to Westover Baptist Church, which recently broke ground for a new structure. The church has offered the building free of charge to any group which may want to move or dismantle it. The church is willing to wait to build the driveway until some decision is made.

The historical commission has explored the possibility of moving the quarters closer to the manor home, which is owned by a private firm known as Manassas Associates or across the street next to the Ben Lomond Community Center on property owned by the county park authority.

The Prince William Board of County Supervisors requested that more research be done concerning the ownership of the property before a decision is made about the stone building.

Last month, two archaeologists conducted a preliminary dig on the

southwest corner of the building. Terry Klein with the Alexandria Regional Preservation Office and Mark Wittkowski with the Virginia Research Center for Archaeology did the work.

"Further testing is obviously needed to completely assess the archaeological potential of this site, though we do know from our test, that some material is present," the report stated.

They found several pottery fragments, a white clay pipebowl fragment with a molded design and a shell fragment.

\$25,000

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"If this structure is indeed a slave quarters, preservation of associated archaeological materials is extremely important. Very few such sites have been investigated scientifically in Northern Virginia, the report continued."

"Also, there may be, associated with the structure, trash pits, privies or wells. From such features data on artifact assemblages and diet of slaves in this region may be obtained," the report stated.

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