

BEVERLY MILL / A PRELIMINARY SITE ANALYSIS - INVENTORY

By; Jim Pickens Landscape Architect

Vegetation

Hardwoods are the primary vegetation type found on the site. Hickory, Walnut, Locust, and Scyamore also are found on the site, but some of these trees may have been planted, and probably did not originate on the site.

At present a lawn area surrounds the Mill building itself. Honeysuckle, briars, and other woody vegetation is found on the site. There is little if any evergreen vegetation immediately surrounding, the Mill itself.

SUMMARY

The location of Beverly Mill is a logical one for a number of reasons. The success of the Mill of the type that Beverly is, depends on several main elements: A site that is accessible to a water source for power, proximity to a source of material for building, and proximity to a transportation route to carry goods to and from the Mill. The Beverly Mill site supplies all of these needs.

Water Supply

A water supply to the wheel on the Mill building was channeled through a viaduct approximately 1000 yards to the west of the Mill. At this point a stream intersects the viaduct, here a gate was built. This gate was opened or closed depending on the level of water in the viaduct channel. Water in the channel then flowed down-slope through the viaduct to the wheel producing water power. This method was probably used for the reason that at the point where Broad Run meets the Mill, there is a difference in elevation of some five to seven feet. Using the smaller stream was also much easier than diverting water from Broad Run.

Building Material

Although there is a significant wood supply in the area, stone was chosen as the basic building material for the Mill. Stone was a good choice for it has provided a strong, long-lasting material.

Evidence points that stone used in the Mill was quarried nearby, and may have even come from the large rock outcrop that stands in front of the Mill. The types and shape of stones point to the fact that the builders did not have to go far to find building material.

Geographical Location

From an economical standpoint the position and geographic location of the Mill proved successful. Thorofare Gap has long been a transportation route from the northwestern part of Virginia to the Washington, D. C. area. Proximity to a transportation route, and a large marketing area such as the National Capital, secured the long successful operation of Beverly Mill.

CONCLUSION

From many standpoints the site on which Beverly Mill stands is just as interesting as the Mill itself. The evidence is clear that the basic elements for a successful Mill operation exist on the site. Water power, building material, and geographical location all combined to make Beverly Mill a success for many years.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Beverly Mill is located in Western Prince William County in the Thorofare Gap of the Bull Run Mountain chain, serving as a boundary marker between Prince William and Fauquier counties.

Sharing Thorofare Gap with the Mill are Broad Run, State Highway Route 55, a line of the Southern Railway, and currently under construction, Interstate 66.

Thorofare Gap has long served as a transportation link between western and Piedmont Virginia. This land form has provided a logical crossing point in the Bull Run Mountain Range.

SITE INVENTORY

Topography

The topography in the area surrounding Beverly Mill is varied. Although Beverly Mill is located approximately 400 feet above mean sea level, it shares the stream valley with Broad Run.

Slopes immediately surrounding Beverly Mill are gentle and range from three to five percent in slope. To the north of the mill slopes increase considerably from fifteen to twenty five percent.

Geology

Rock formations found in this area are typical of those found in most of this part of Piedmont Virginia. Formations found here consist of weverton, which is fine grained white, to light gray fine grained, to massive thin bedded quartlite. Virginia bluestone can also be found mixed with the quartlite. All stratas of rock in this area tend to tilt slightly toward the east. Bed rock ranges from 2 to 7 feet below ground surface, and outcrops may be found in many places.

Hydrology

Drainage patterns occurring in the general area of Beverly Mill are of the Course Grained type. The main or first order stream is of course Broad Run. This stream has a shallow but wide stream channel. Broad Run is fed by many second order streams, which are developed from springs, and groundwater runoff from the nearby Bull Run Mountains.

Flooding occurs many times during the year, but water quickly recedes within hours afterward. Drought or low water periods may occur during extremely dry periods in summer and fall.

Soils

Found on the site on which Beverly Mill stands are a number of soils. The parent material from which these soils originated were developed during the Cambrian Era. Much of the soil found around the Mill is alluvial in nature and was deposited by Broad Run during periods of high water. This particular type of deposited soil is known as congarree fine sandy loam. Other soils which comprise the soil horizon on this site are: Wehaokee Silt Loam, Meadowville Silt Loam, and Manor Very Flaggy Silt Loam. Congarree Fine Sandy Loam, Wehaokee Silt Loam are found primarily in areas near the stream. Meadowville Silt Loam and Manor Flaggy Silt Loam are found on steeper slopes.