

# Local Brentsville on landmarks list

By JEFF DICKERSON  
JM Staff Writer

A portion of the tiny village of Brentsville in central Prince William County has been placed on the Virginia Landmarks Register.

The Virginia Board of Historic Resources voted earlier this month to give the 27-acre Brentsville Historic District the official state designation.

According to Margaret Peters, an information officer with the board, the area, now automatically nominated for national landmark status, includes about half of the original Brentsville plot of 56-acres that was first laid out in 1822.

"The recognized area includes the Brentsville Courthouse, the fourth courthouse of Prince William County, the jail, a school building, three churches and several homes," Peters said.

Brentsville joins the Buckland and Manassas Historic Districts, and fewer than 150 others statewide, to receive such designation in the last 25 years, she added.

The listing on the state and national registers places no legal restrictions on an owner's use of the property, nor does it imply any architectural controls.

According to Peters, "receiving historic district status doesn't preclude development, but will give local officials some guidance when planning growth for the neighboring areas."

Peters also said that registered properties do not have to be accessible to the public. In fact, "The majority of landmarks are privately owned and have never been open to the public. Registration is mainly an official and honorific recognition that a district is a historic and cultural resource for the state and nation and should be preserved," she said.

According to Janet Townsend, a Prince William County planner

who submitted the Brentsville Historic District application, only the courthouse and the jail are publicly owned. The remaining properties are in "private hands," she said.

Brentsville was established in 1822 as a planned new community for the site of Prince William County's fourth courthouse. And, according to the application submitted to the Department of Historic Resources, the brick neo-classical courthouse remained in continual use until the county seat was moved to Manassas in 1893. It is the oldest surviving structure in the county.

"Several of Prince William County's early churches and residences remain in the village as significant examples of local antebellum architecture. Interspersed with these dwellings are various 19th century frame residences, typical of domestic life of the period," the application continued.

The formal nomination report was prepared by William Frazier of Staunton, and was sponsored by Prince William County as part of its activity as a so-called Certified Local Government in the state's preservation program.

State officials visited Brentsville earlier this month to hold a public hearing to explain what the designation means for residents.

It was at such a public hearing where adjacent property owners objected to historic district designation for the 1,100-acre Bristow Battlefield in Prince William County. Those landowners reportedly feared that such a designation would adversely affect property values.

Although that application has been withdrawn temporarily, Bristow remains eligible for the historic designation and may be re-submitted at a later date, according to Townsend.

# Unnamed pol

By JEFF DICKERSON  
JM Staff Writer

A Manassas police officer, who became the target of a police chief-ordered internal investigation and was placed on administrative leave after allegedly assaulting a suspect during an incident on Jan. 12, has been fired, according to city officials.

Neither Manassas City Manager John Cartwright nor law enforcement officials, citing the case

as a "personnel matter" identify the officer.

Authorities did confirm the officer had "previous disciplinary problems" with the unnamed policeman. "The cumulative warranted termination warranted termination" was said.

According to Cartwright, the officer was notified, "in writing," of his dismissal following a department administrative



Neal Snyder—Journal

# Group eyes old

## Pas de pixie

Amanda Hall, 7 (right) and Kelly Smith, 8, practice ballet