

Landmarks Nomination Hearing Held on 189-Year-Old Buckland

REFERENCE

Civic pride is on the upswing again in Buckland 189 years after the town was chartered.

Last night some 20 residents turned out Wednesday night in Manassas, for a public hearing on Buckland Historic District's nomination to the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places, held by the Virginia Historic Landmarks Division.

Buckland, a small community

near the Prince William/Fauquier county line, was first established in 1794 when John Love built a grist mill on the edge of Broad Run. The mill and many of the original houses still remain intact today.

Bryan Mitchell, director of the Virginia Historic Landmarks Division, explained to residents Buckland was considered architecturally significant since it was one of the few remaining mill-oriented communities, typical in the 18th century that still remains in the nation.

Mitchell told the residents that if the Buckland is selected for the landmark designation, Buckland homeowners who use their houses for business purposes will be able to qualify for investment tax credits. If Buckland is accepted to the Virginia register as expected, it will automatically be nominated to national register. Being listed on the national register will afford Buckland some protection from encroachment from any federally-funded projects, such as road building, utility installation and public housing. In the case of Buckland, which is split by U.S. 29-211, the designation would probably have its most immediate effect by requiring a federal review of any highway expansion plan on the community.

According to Mitchell, homeowners in the historic district who do not use any federal funds or investment tax credits for home improvements would not be restricted in any way from altering their homes if Buckland receives the historic landmark designation.

The majority of property owners attending last night's meeting expressed support for the inclusion of Buckland on the historic register.

Buckland's nomination to the state register was initiated by Prince William County, which contracted for an architectural survey of the community and filed an ap-

plication with the state for landmark designation. Gainesville Supervisor Tony Guiffre said during Wednesday's hearing that the nomination was supported by the Prince William County Board of Supervisors.

See Hearing Held on A-2.

Prince William Public Library
Manassas, Va.

Hearing Held

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Some residents expressed concern during the meeting that the owners of the St. Luke's Methodist Church, which is one of the "contributing structures" included in the proposed historic district, is slated for demolition. Jay Hanke, of the Northern Virginia United Methodist Board of Missions, who was present at the hearing representing the board which owns the church, said the board plans to demolish the church, since it represents a liability to his group. The church, according to Hanke, is in disrepair and presents a liability risk. Several residents said that they had made offers to pur-

chase the church, but that they had received no response from the board of missions.

Also at Wednesday's meeting, Guiffre said he requested an opinion from the Prince William county attorney on whether Buckland's town charter, which has not been active for many years, was still in effect. Guiffre said if the charter were still valid, residents could reactivate it and reorganize a town government.

The Virginia Landmarks Board will meet in Richmond on Dec. 8 to consider the inclusion of Buckland on the state register.