

BUCKLAND

HISTORIC SITE FILE

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Manassas, Va.

# Protection for Buckland worth the price, residents say

By GARY CRAIG  
of the Potomac News

Jim Toth said Wednesday that there could be some drawbacks to living in a community designated as a historic zone, a neighborhood frozen in time.

Alterations to homes will have to be approved by an architectural board, limiting a homeowner's freedom.

There's a chance that property values won't keep up with surrounding land, he said.

But those are minor quibbles when weighed against the protection offered the historic community of Buckland where he lives, Toth told Prince William County planning commissioners.

"We, at least in our family, believe that is a small price to pay to preserve the village as a whole," Toth said at Wednesday's commis-

sion hearing.

The Planning Commission Wednesday requested that the county consider designating Buckland a historic zone, thus assuring that Prince William County's first inland town won't be overrun by the development boom overtaking much of the county's western reaches.

County supervisors must agree to designate the community as a "historic overlay district." Before supervisors will consider the proposal, the planning commission will hold public hearings, probably in February, and make a formal recommendation.

Buckland, established in 1798, is indicative of the small, mill-oriented communities common throughout the region in the 19th century, said David Edwards, an official with the Virginia Division

of Historic Landmarks.

The community's focal point, a grist mill, was built in 1899 and is thought to be the third mill at the site. A dozen buildings constructed during the mid and late 19th century surround the mill.

Also prominent in the community is the Buckland Tavern, a rest stop for 19th century commuters on the then-popular thoroughfare between Alexandria and Warrenton. The tavern served as a hospital during the Civil War.

Buckland's Deerlick Cottage has had a life as varied as the colors in a kaleidoscope. The cottage has served as a post office, a general store and a distillery.

In all, there are 21 buildings in the historic district area, Edwards said.

"It is especially noteworthy because there are very few modern

buildings within the district," he said.

To the community's east will be the Robert Trent Jones resort community, on the shores of Lake Manassas. The 1,100 acre development is a mix of housing, resort property, commercial enterprises and championship golf courses.

Water and sewer extensions, the first signs of the path of development are not supposed to move west of the Robert Trent Jones International community, former Gainesville district supervisor Tony Guiffre said. Buckland's designation as a historic district will be a safeguard that the community isn't fazed by development, he said.

Toth said that most of the Buckland community has united around

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the historic district idea. At Wednesday's commission meeting were a roomful of supporters for the proposal.

A historic district, permitted under county law, is a special zoning designation that places restrictions on construction or changes in existing buildings in order to preserve the district's historic flavor.

Gainesville-area resident Bobbi McManus urged the commission to support the historic zone for Buckland. If not, she said, "it will slip away building by building until it's only something that was."

The commission also requested that county planners study the idea of designating the Ben Lomond

Manor House as a historic district. The two-story stone house on Sudley Road was built in 1837.