



City of Bowie

2614 Kenhill Drive
Bowie, Maryland 20715

MEMORANDUM

TO: City Council

FROM: David J. Deutsch
City Manager

SUBJECT: Prince George's County Preliminary Historic Sites and Districts Plan
City Position Letter
Consent Agenda

DATE: January 13, 2010

The public hearing on the Preliminary Historic Sites and Districts Plan is scheduled for Tuesday, January 19, 2010. Last October, Council sent a comment letter regarding the M-NCPPC Staff Draft specifically opposing the designation of the Magruder-Bell House as an Historic Resource. The Preliminary Plan continues to recommend designation of that property, despite the objections of the property owner, Mr. Robert Thompson, and City. The attached position statement has been drafted to reflect the concerns advanced previously by City Council.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Council approve sending the attached position letter to the District Council.

Attachment

DRAFT

January 20, 2010

The Honorable Thomas E. Dernoga, Chairman
Prince George's County Council
14741 Governor Oden Bowie Drive
Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772

RE: Historic Sites and Districts Plan (HSDP)

Dear Chairman Dernoga:

The Bowie City Council has reviewed the Preliminary Historic Sites and Districts Plan (HSDP) and we wish to commend the Planning Board and their staff for the very impressive compilation of goals, policies and strategies that have been set forth to guide Prince George's County in its historic preservation efforts. The City is very supportive of preserving the County's diverse heritage and history. These key policies will greatly assist the County by directing future actions in a constructive manner. The HSDP documents the County's historical assets, such as surveying of Old Town Bowie as an Historic Community, and helps to reinforce the identity of our community. Because of its convincing historic, recreational and archaeological value, the City Council supports the designation of the Colbert Family Farm Site (71B-019) on Race Track Road as a new Historic Site. We are heartened to see The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission taking an active interest in acquiring the property for public use, and we encourage the Commission to purchase this land as soon as possible.

The City Council has only one other property-specific recommendation pertaining to the Preliminary HSDP. During the review of the Bowie and Vicinity Area Master Plan, designation of historic properties without the owners' consent became a major issue. At the public hearing on the Master Plan in 2005, the City expressly opposed such designations. Consistent with this policy, the City Council **OPPOSES** the designation of the Magruder-Bell House (71B-002-21) as an Historic Resource, because the property owner, Mr. Robert Thompson, does not wish to have his property included in the HSDP. We ask that you seriously consider this issue and remove the Magruder-Bell House from the proposed HSDP.

Thank you for the opportunity to review the Preliminary Plan and make these recommendations.

Sincerely,

Bowie City Council
G. Frederick Robinson
Mayor

cc: Mr. Robert Thompson