



Lardner/Klein Landscape Architects, P.C.

Memorandum:

To: Larry Miller, Kimberly Abe
Cc: Advisory Committee Members
From: Jim Klein
Date: 17 February 2011
Subject: Meeting Summary Advisory Committee Meeting #1 (Draft)
Meeting Date 1-25-11

The initial meeting of the Rappahannock Station I and II Civil War Battlefield Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) was held January 25, 2011 at St. Luke's Parish Hall in Remington.

Prior to the meeting, PAC members visited the site. Clark Hall provided an overview of the Civil War era history and context of the site. The group also looked at and discussed river access and site access conditions.

Jim Klein provided an overview of the planning context for the project, followed by a discussion of the programmatic elements to be considered for the site.

The discussion that followed focused on the issues that need to be addressed as part of the plan. Participants were also asked to list two goals that could be utilized to measure the success of the plan and to write down phrases or statements that captured the desired vision for the Park.

The following documents the initial observations of the group regarding issues:

Program Emphasis

- 1) There was a clear consensus that passive uses appropriate to the historic quality of the site should be the primary program. It was noted that the nearby elementary school would provide more active uses, so it will not be necessary to accommodate active uses on this site
- 2) River access is important, as this site is the only place in the County where such access is now available. An idea was suggested to incorporate stormwater management and riverbank erosion control into the design of the water access point. It was noted that funds are available from Virginia Department of Fish and Game for water access; kayakers typically do not require much in the way of access facilities

Adjacent Land Use and Regional Context

- 3) The plans of the adjacent owner across the River (Mr. Courier) need to be considered and addressed in the plan.
- 4) Governor McDonnell has made a commitment to place 1000 acres in conservation – this could be an opportunity to pursue.
- 5) The important role that the park's Civil War era interpretive opportunities and Rappahannock River access can play in heritage- and nature-based tourism was noted along with the Town of Remington and Fauquier County's active efforts to capture those opportunities by participating in the Journey Through Hallowed Ground, Civil War Trails, and in promoting bicycling, kayaking, bed and breakfasts and other heritage and nature-based tourism supported businesses. Connectivity with nearby

battlefields is important, as well as trails into town to make the most out of the heritage- and nature based tourism opportunities.

- 6) The river plays an important role for wildlife habitat. The area is an Important Bird Area managed for grassland songbirds and the park would make a logical site to be included in the Birding and Wildlife Trail; the site is a good candidate for warm-season grasses and meadow management for the benefit of wildlife.

Access and Connections

- 7) Opportunities were identified for connecting with the nearby VRE commuter lot on southbound US Route 29 – perhaps to accommodate additional parking
- 8) The planned multi-use trail connection into Remington will also be important for reducing demand for vehicular access.
- 9) Acquisition of the Development Parcel will provide more capacity for on-site parking while reducing the impacts that such access would have on the Civil War era resources and interpretation.
- 10) VDOT has plans to replace Business Route 29 bridge with a similar truss bridge – could be a good opportunity to improve pedestrian and river access; it was noted that the marks on the bridge need to be preserved (river lore for kayakers); connecting up with VDOT would be important and inviting them to participate in the planning for the park

Interpretation

- 11) It was noted that respect for the site and interpretation of history should guide the use of the site and its Hallowed Ground. Other layers of history could be told at the site including Native American history, African American history, natural heritage, and river heritage. There is also significant documentation of the slave movement from Culpeper to Fauquier that could be told here.
- 12) The high ground on the eastern end of the site is best for interpretation (most activity during the Civil War), and it is also furthest from the noise of Route 29.
- 13) The site of a second pontoon bridge is rumored and would be good to incorporate into the interpretation for the Park pending more documentation of its presence.

Park Management

- 14) Law enforcement issues were discussed including the importance of selecting a site for non-motorized water access that has good visibility from nearby roads. The western end of the site (upstream) would have better visibility and better river access conditions.
- 15) Swimming was raised as a safety issue given the dearth of opportunities in the region, and addressing the pressure for this use will need to be addressed.
- 16) Historic preservation issues were discussed including interest in more active interpretation; it was noted that the National Park Service does not permit reenactments on park properties. Reenactments usually occur in nearby towns or non-historic properties more able to withstand the crowds.

Implementation

- 17) The importance of adding the development parcel to the park was discussed including its importance in maintain a high quality interpretive experience and being respectful of the Civil War era significance of the site.
- 18) The park itself could be used as an opportunity to kick-off future funding opportunities associated with the 150th anniversary – a great opportunity for promoting the preservation and interpretation of the site and the need for acquisition of the development parcel.
- 19) The community did a design charrette several years ago indicating a trail around the perimeter and to interpret the Civil War era stories; a commemorative marker was

proposed that would be flush with the ground and include a map of the battlefield. A copy of the plan was provided to Lardner/Klein)

- 20) An obelisk might be available to locate on the park as a temporary monument and then moved to the Town cemetery once a permanent monument is constructed

Next Steps:

The next meeting will take place on March 16th from 5-7pm at the St. Luke's Parish Hall in Remington (same location). Ron Thomson, an interpretive planning specialist, will conduct a work session to develop an overall interpretive framework for the site.

Jim Klein will establish an informal project web site. The site will include meeting notes, presentations, information about upcoming meetings and background documents for review prior to upcoming meetings. The address for that website is:

http://www.lardnerklein.com/rapp_index.html