

**MASTER PLAN
PETER BURR LIVING HISTORY FARM
FALL 2010**

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I. MISSION STATEMENT

The Peter Burr Living History Farm was created to achieve the following goals:

- Preserve and maintain the Peter Burr House and adjacent springhouse according to applicable state and federal standards.
- Develop and maintain a ca 1800s living history farm that reflects rural life at this site mainly during Peter Burr's residence (ca. 1748-1795).
- Develop activities that are compatible with the historic site and focal period ca. 1800
- Acquire the resources that will enable the Peter Burr Living History Farm to be financially self-sustaining.

II. HISTORY

Location and Physical Description

The Peter Burr Living History Farm is located in Jefferson County, West Virginia, in the Burr Industrial Park off old WV Route 9, approximately 3 miles north of Charles Town. The Farm is bounded on the south by industrial buildings and T.A. Lowery Elementary School, on the west by the industrial park, on the north by the CSX railroad, and on the east by Warm Springs Road.

The property is roughly a 350'x 1550' rectangle of approximately 9.5 acres. It is crossed by a storm water management system. The land on the southeast is approximately fifty acres of public school property of the same elevation.

The Peter Burr House is the oldest standing wood frame structure in West Virginia. Dating from ca. 1751, the original portion of the house was built by Peter Burr I, uncle of Aaron Burr. Two other sections were added, kitchen ca. 1800 and the connecting room ca. 1815. The New England style house has post and beam construction with brick infill and mud daubing in the walls. The house is a rare example of the residence of an 18th century yeoman farmer. Except for the house and a stone springhouse, no other outbuildings survived on the property, although several must have existed during Peter Burr's occupancy (1751-1793). The second Burr House and the 19th century bank barn were destroyed ca. 1985 at the direction of the Jefferson County Commission. A dedicated group of volunteers continue to research Peter Burr and his family during the period. As more documentation becomes available the information will be used to inform decisions made about the house and farm.

The idea of creating a living history farm at the Peter Burr House grew out of the need to gather public support to undertake archeological, restoration, and interpretative activities at the site. The house required substantial restoration, much of which could not take place without completing pre-development archeology. The goal of the living history project is to draw upon the archeological and architectural evidence to develop an understanding of how a typical ca. 1790's farm functioned. Using this information, the Landmarks Commission has pursued its second goal -- developing a living history farm in a way that took into account both historical and environmental requirements and site limitations. The

final goal is to use the resources gathered during these efforts to restore then maintain the house and outbuildings and to create a financially self-sustaining living history farm.

Refer to Appendix B – History of Improvements accomplished between 1999 and 2010

III. MASTER PLAN

General

The Jefferson County Historic Landmarks Commission owns the approximate 9.5-acre tract that includes the Peter Burr House and springhouse and, with the approval of the Jefferson County School Board maintains a nature trail through their property for enjoyment and interpretation of local native fauna and flora.

In recent years Jefferson County has realized that preservation of and access to historic sites and development of heritage tourism is an economic asset of tremendous value to the area. The County wants to capture a bigger share of vacation and tourist business, by providing attractions for travel, sightseeing, and recreation minded people of West Virginia and the whole country. At the same time, there is a need to educate local residents — both adults and especially children -- on their heritage so that they could make wise decisions about preserving their cultural heritage amidst the pressures of ongoing economic development.

The 1999 master plan committee indicated a program of development which provided the basis of the original Master Plan and Report and indicated a suitable scheme for public educational and recreational use of the Peter Burr Farm, with the following groups of activities: recreational, historic, educational, environmental, and scientific. These activities are supported by the JCHLC maintaining safe and assessable facilities, circulation, utilities, and landscaping. This revision of the Master Plan (2010) incorporates changes that reflect evolving and different user groups, changes to the flood plain, and other factors influencing the site.

Recreational

Tourists have been coming to Jefferson County for decades to visit historic Harpers Ferry, go white water rafting, attend the Mountain Heritage Arts and Crafts Festival, and visit the Charles Town Races and Casino. In the past, many of those visitors returned home without taking advantage of the other cultural resources in the area. Jefferson County has sought to draw upon this influx of visitors to these major events and to channel visitors into other activities by developing cultural/historic activities centered in Charles Town, Shepherdstown, and Harpers Ferry, and by promoting historic byways, such as The George Washington Historic Trail.

The Peter Burr Living History Farm has developed two major interpretative programs. The first, designed for visitors who prefer passive recreation, provides a self guided tour of the Peter Burr Farm, including buildings, gardens, and activities, and includes the opportunity to interact with interpreters. The second program, designed for persons who want a more intimate historical experience, allows volunteers to spend longer periods of time on a

1800's farm, working with other interpreters to gain a greater understanding of life on a colonial farm.

Historic

Jefferson County, with its rich historical background, is the proper place to give the public information about their ancestor's efforts to settle the frontier in the 18th century, win their independence from England, and struggle to form a new nation. As the place where northern and southern cultures met, Jefferson County in the early 18th century contained a variety of social, religious, and ethnic groups.

The Peter Burr Living History Farm seeks to identify these groups and representative individuals so that the dynamic nature of the period can be experienced. In addition to providing glimpses of Peter Burr and other yeoman farmers of the day, the interpretive programs will also examine the plantations and slave owners who lived in the same area. Notables such as George Washington, General Charles Lee, Charles Washington, Ferdinando Fairfax, General Horatio Gates, Adam Stephen, and Aaron Burr will provide points of reference between events of local and national importance. Forces that would later become polarized and bring about the Civil War will be explored.

Visitors, individuals and groups, will be told the story of Peter Burr's life on this farm (1751 to 1795) and the pathways, buildings, gardens, and interpretive programs will provide additional glimpses of the late 18th and early 19th centuries.

Educational and Scientific

The living history farm is conceived as a historically accurate site with the flavor and atmosphere that prevailed during the 1790's. The permanent exhibits will be a collection of artifacts found during archeological excavation of the site, details from restored buildings, HABS photographs, original and reproduction tools and utensils, gardens and plantings, maps, and pictures. Everything will be done to make an outstanding exhibition of local agricultural history.

The planted gardens, special plantings, and nature trail are educational features of the farm and are a place for instruction in native plant material suited to the soil and climatic conditions of the area. Development of paths, the placing of name tags on all significant plants along the paths, the planting and maintenance of native plants in gardens and throughout the property are a priority.

IV. FACILITIES

Development at the Peter Burr Living History Farm will be limited to facilities that contribute to enjoyment of the farm's recreational, historic, educational and scientific interests and its interpretive program, where the story of the farm, residents, major social and political figures, agricultural, historical, and archeological themes will be presented. Other than restoration and maintenance of the historic buildings and reconstructed period outbuildings additional improvements will be limited.

A four-crib log barn was built on the site to house interpretive materials, some period agricultural implements, and maintenance equipment. The barn also serves as a classroom and indoor meeting place for use in inclement weather.

A utility building containing two restrooms, kitchen, and large deck was constructed in 2001 on the west side property.

Circulation

Currently the only access to the farm is through East Burr Blvd., off WV Old Route 9, in the Burr Industrial Park. Traffic on old Route 9 is often heavy, and the intersection is somewhat dangerous. For the foreseeable future, the public will continue to access the property from East Burr Blvd.

Vehicle access to the Farm will be off East Burr drive and end at the parking area. Vehicles will not be allowed beyond the parking area. The parking area will be graveled and include fencing to prevent vehicles from straying from the designated area. A utility entrance will be added from the parking area to a spot between the barn and utility building for occasional use. This entrance point to the historic area of the property will be designed to support occasional vehicular and emergency traffic.

A designated pedestrian entrance from the parking area to the historic sections of site will be designed and installed. The path will be kept smooth and firm using unobtrusive local materials and meet ADA requirements. The pedestrian circulation system will provide safe and aesthetically pleasing access to all the points of interest.

A nature trail beginning at the main house and running east through the wetland and looping back to the main house will be designed and maintained by the JCHLC

Utilities

Basic utilities, public water and sewer and electricity have been provided to serve the needs of the site.

Potable water is currently available in the utility building as well as by three cold weather faucets located near the barn, the springhouse, and the brick oven. Additional water access for non-drinking uses and fire protection could be added as the need arises.

Storm drainage is provided by the existing storm water management system, whose channel enters the property on the northwest and exits it on the northeast. Efforts will be made to improve the efficiency of this feature.

Electric power is currently available in the barn, the utility building, and the springhouse. A sanitary sewer line, which supports the restrooms and kitchen runs from the utility building parallel to the west storm water management channel.

The future development of utilities will be in proportion to their use in the several areas of the farm.

V. LANDSCAPE

The physical features of the site largely determine the landscape. The railroad tracks on the north side of the property, the storm water management system flowing from west to east, the industrial buildings to the west, the position of the existing house and spring house, and the adjacent low-lying unused land to the south all limit the ways in which the site can be utilized for historic and interpretive purposes. With some effort, the surrounding modern buildings can be screened by tree plantings and other measures, facilitating the development of an attractive park area. The railroad track adjacent to the property dates from the mid-19th century and will be incorporated into the site interpretation.

The landscape at the Peter Burr Living History Farm will be edited so visitors enter it from a point that shows the house, outbuildings, and grounds, shields them from highway noise and modern buildings, and provides numerous places to observe or participate in activities. Trees and other plantings will serve as a buffer on the south, west, and north sides. Many of the larger trees on the property (primarily silver maples) have died or been removed to prevent storm damage to historic structures. Several black locusts are located near the house and will be incorporated into the landscape. Most of the property is now open land, which varies from well drained in the vicinity of the house to seasonal wetlands.

One of the features of the farm is the adjacent wetland created within the storm water management area. Water flows through the property from the west and exits on the east through a culvert under Warm Springs Road. As development has progressed, the water table at the Burr Farm has risen to just a few feet below the ground. This situation has led to flooding of the eastern section of the property in wet weather and to almost permanent flooding of the root cellar next to the house. Sedimentation and weed growth in the storm water management system are altering the landscape and will be used as part of the educational, environmental, and scientific programs.

With the permission of the JC School Board, a trail will lead from the Burr House eastward, passing roughly through the better drained portion of the property, skirting seasonal wetlands, and looping back toward the house. Other paths will branch off from the main one, providing access to the T.A. Lowery School, special plantings, and locations for various activities. Plants and trees native to the area during the period will be selected and planted according to their importance on a 1790's farm. In addition to placing name labels at trees and shrubs, a number of plants of interest to the student and the amateur horticulturalist will be established and identified.

A variety of fencing styles will be constructed to delineate the boundaries of the Farm, provide security, and control pedestrian and vehicle access. Areas adjacent to the parking area will be fenced and landscaped so that vehicles cannot drive onto the historic sections of the property.

VI. ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

The main house and springhouse are being restored to a style compatible with interpretation as a late 18th and early 19th century site. If additional structures are approved and constructed they will be of stone, post and beam, or log construction and reflect the construction methods used in the existing buildings.

Peter Burr House

The ground floor of the house, consisting of four rooms will be restored to the 1790's period, furnished to the extent possible, and opened to the public. The four upstairs rooms will be restored as time and resources permit, see planned upgrades under short-term goals.

Spring House

The upstairs of the springhouse has been electrified and will serve as a meeting room and storage for the archeological artifacts recovered on the site. The ground floor of this structure now has lighting and electrical outlets and will be interpreted as part of the Peter Burr Farm site. The ground floor of the springhouse will be open to the public when the site is in use.

Barn

A replica barn is a 45' x 45' four-crib log structure. The portion above the first story is sheathed in vertical boards and can accommodate storage or (with the addition of an emergency exit) public events. The building has been constructed so that the ground floor could serve as a meeting or instructional area during inclement weather. The upstairs portion will be used for storage of educational materials until a separate emergency exit can be constructed.

Exhibits & Information

Exhibits and signage will be incorporated throughout the site and into virtually every structure on the farm, with buildings furnished in period style and implements displayed in various buildings in their natural context.

Demonstration Area

A designated demonstration area will be located adjacent to the barn and rest rooms and away from archeologically sensitive areas.

VII. MANAGEMENT

The Jefferson County Historic Landmarks Commission, a branch of Jefferson County government, owns the Peter Burr Farm property. The Landmarks Commission is a certified local government, authorized to acquire land, make contracts, and administer the Burr property.

At present various groups of volunteers assist the Landmarks Commission in maintenance, programming, interpretation, and fund raising. Although these groups have made a valiant effort to assume some of the responsibilities of programming for the site, they currently lack the resources to provide comprehensive, consistent management and to provide

significant revenues. Until a permanent site manager can be identified, either volunteer or paid, to administer PBF, one of the JCHLC Commissioners will be the single point of contact for all Burr Farm activities.

In an attempt to expand the use and eventually support for Peter Burr Farm the JCHLC will approach and encourage a variety of groups to use the facilities and develop programs at PBF. These groups include but are not limited to:

- Reliving History Inc.
- Peter Burr Bread Bakers
- Jefferson Berkeley County Master Gardeners
- Potomac Valley Audubon Society
- Jefferson County Public Schools and Adult Education
- Jefferson County Parks and Rec.
- Shepherd University
- CraftWorks

Regardless who may manage the PB Living History Farm in the future, all parties' involved need to ensure that the site's historical integrity is maintained and that activities performed are in keeping with the mission statement.

At present the majority of the money expended at the Peter Burr site for restoration, facilities maintenance, and some programming, is provided by the Landmarks Commission through the annual county budget and some State grants. The Landmarks Commission needs to expend its financial resources on a variety of fronts. Thus the Living History Farm must develop additional sources of funds to supplement these resources.

VIII. SHORT-TERM GOALS 2011-2016

Maintenance of historic buildings, site security, implementing recommendations of 2010 ADA report, and visitor safety are the highest priority for expenditure of available money.

1. Building Improvements

- Draft and implement a comprehensive security plan for the site.
- Install wireless electronic monitoring system in all buildings; heat detectors are the highest priority
- Implement recommendations of 2010 ADA report

Main House

- Remove all remaining trash from main house
- Clean house to remove all loose plaster, retain surplus building materials such as lath, etc
- Remove the stump and grade on north side of house
- Repaint exterior of main house
- Replace cedar lintel in main hall with chamfered oak lintel typical to the area
- Compact and relay hearth in main hall
- Repair floor under stairs between main hall and addition

- Replace hinges on various doors throughout house with original H&L, strap and knuckle types
- Trim new windows in parlor and on second floor
- Compact and relay hearth in parlor
- Reglaze window in parlor with wavy glass
- Install window trim on
- Remove concrete on North porch
- Reconstruct North porch deck and replace posts to match
- Rebuild North door
- Replace siding as needed

Springhouse

- Repair hinges on door to the root cellar
- Remove all trash from upstairs of springhouse
- Plug all holes between roof and siding to prevent birds from nesting in
- Install steel shelving to house archeological objects excavated on site

Barn

- Remove trash and excess materials from upstairs of barn
- Improve storage of maintenance materials and equipment, 1st floor SW corner
- Repair roof
- Install lighting on ground floor and second floor
- Paint/whitewash interior walls on first floor
- Install emergency exit from second floor

Utility Building

- Redesign kitchen to accommodate security equipment and access to electrical panel.
- Upgrade kitchen equipment and cabinetry to meet Health department requirements

Garden

- Enlarge garden to 40 X 60 feet
- Construct split rail worm fencing around garden perimeter
- Redesign interior garden paths to meet ADA requirements
- Place wooden rain barrels near entrances to garden

2. Utilities

- Extend water line from barn to garden
- Repair electrical line to the bread oven

3. Circulation

- Establish paths, trails, and fenced areas compatible with the interpretative plan
- Construct a new vehicle entrance between the parking lot and Utility Building

4. Landscaping

- Relocate chain link fence around house and springhouse

- Continue to develop a tree and plantings buffer on North, South, and West of property
- Install split rail worm fencing near parking area to define site boundary
- Install chain link fence along railroad to provide security and visitor safety
- Provide additional period seating, wooden benches, for use on site
- Improve site drainage in storm water management channel

5. Interpretive program

- Create a graphic identity for the Peter Burr Farm
- Place interpretive signs at entrance to property
- Provide a array of literature, handouts, throughout the site on various aspects of life on the PBF; i.e. history of house, garden plantings,
- Develop exhibits that educate the public about historical themes emphasized on the site utilizing results of the archeological investigations.
- Provide signage that identifies all of the trees and plantings on site

6. Outreach and development

- Promote PBF to increase public awareness and support
- Expand the number of user groups and their activities at the PBF
- Establish volunteer corps
- Submit grant applications for restoration and interpretive programs

7. Management

- Create a management structure to oversee improvements, maintenance, and program activities at the site

Update the Master Plan every five years

IX. LONG-TERM GOALS

Purchase two to three acres of land from Schonstedt Instruments to increase buffer on southern boundary in front of the main house.

The current site access route is from the end of East Burr Blvd, which passes through the industrial park. Although this route provides easy access to the Burr Farm, it also presents visitors with a stark contrast to the rural 18th century atmosphere that is central to this living history farm. Moving the entrance to the easternmost side of the property adjacent to Warm Springs Road would avoid travel through the industrial park and would approximate the approach used by 18th century visitors. Wetlands near this section of the property make road construction in that area impractical, although a parking lot and trails could be constructed. Shifting public access from East burr Blvd. to Warm Springs Road is one of the major long-term goals.

A part time administrator is needed for the Peter Burr Farm to provide sustained, coherent management of projects and activities, oversee fund raising and public relations, to

supervise planning, construction, and grant writing activities, and to coordinate with the Landmarks Commission and user groups.

In conjunction with Jefferson County Schools develop an outdoor nature lab that focuses on species native to eastern West Virginia.

X. SITE MAPS

(UPDATED SITE MAPS WILL BE ADDED)

The boundaries shown in Figures 1 and 2 roughly correspond with the boundaries of the property. Detailed GIS maps were created in 2010 including: boundaries, base map will be prepared that shows boundary dimensions and other details.

Figure 1. Current layout (July 2005), showing public and private areas:

APPENDIX A

Definition of living history farm.

In North America, many open-air museums include interpreters who dress in period costume and conduct period crafts and everyday work. The living museum is therefore viewed as an attempt to recreate to the fullest extent conditions of a [culture](#), [natural environment](#) or [historical period](#). The objective is total immersion, using exhibits so that visitors can experience the specific culture, environment or historical period using all the physical senses.

APPENDIX B – History of Improvements

(THIS SECTION NEEDS REVIEW ON HOW MONEY WAS SPENT IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS)

This is a summary of the restoration and improvements at the Peter Burr Farm from acquisition in 1998 until August 2010.

The Peter Burr Living History Farm officially opened on May 1, 1999. During its first year, it was open on the first Saturday of each month from May to October.

Work Performed to Date:

A structural analysis and drawings were completed on the Peter Burr House.

In 1998;

- Landmarks Commission contracted to have the stonework on the chimneys and the springhouse restored.
- A large tree overhanging the main house was removed
- Well covers were constructed for both wells.
- A chain link fence was built around the house and springhouse for security.
- The back porch of the house was rebuilt and a temporary stairway was added to the outside of springhouse, providing access to the second story.
- The area adjacent to the house was subjected to shallow plowing and surface collection.

In 1999

- Open windows were covered with Plexiglas.
- An 8' x 16' temporary open shed was constructed for use by archeologists and interpreters. **Note:** In July 2010 the structure was demolished and its activities relocated to other parts of the site.
- The foundation and sill plates of the much of the house were repaired.
- Windows and frames were removed in preparation for restoration and are in the possession Tom McGarry.
- Siding on both the east and west walls has been replaced and the new wood painted.
- Archeological excavation was performed in the log kitchen, where a new floor was laid and the walls chinked and plastered. (Analysis of artifacts continues)
- The current sheet metal roof has been painted and caulked (but is still in need of major repairs). The siding has been replaced as needed, and floors relaid or repaired. Log walls have been rechinked and plastered walls and ceilings repaired.
- A pedestrian bridge was erected on the (then) southwest corner of the property, providing access across the storm water drainage system.
Note: The pedestrian bridge was demolished on July 23, 2010 because of lack of maintenance and change in access route from the west side of the property.
- Approximately 100 trees were planted in an effort to establish a buffer on the south and west sides of the property. Most of these trees died.
- A dozen heritage fruit trees, derived from Thomas Jefferson's orchard at Monticello, have been planted on the north side of the property. These trees are now starting to bear fruit.

In 2000

- A reproduction of a 1750's log barn was erected

In 2001

- A bathroom/utility building was added on the west side of the property.
- Water and electric service were added to that building, the barn, springhouse, and an area near the southeast corner of the Burr House.

In 2003

- A reproduction of a brick colonial bread oven was added near the south corner of the Burr House

In 2004

- Kitchen elements were added to the utility room. The room was certified by the Health Department.

In 2005

- The same year a contract was awarded to Preservation Associates, Inc., to restore the middle downstairs room of the Burr House. This work was completed in July 2005.

In 2006

In 2007

- Open sided post and beam roof constructed to cover brick bread oven
- A 2-story log cabin, donated to the Landmarks Commission, and transported at a cost of \$8,000, needs to be utilized before it deteriorates.

NOTE: In April 2010 the JCHLC determined the cabin was excess and would not be erected on the Burr Site. The logs were sold for \$1,000 and removed by buyer D.L. Morgan for use in the restoration of another cabin near Inwood, WV.

- Metal roof replaced on main house replaced

In 2008

- Construct doors for the barn to provide security and maintain the 18th century look

In 2009

In 2010

- Restoration of east side of main house including manufacture of three new windows
- ADA analysis of PFB completed
- A series of GIS map layers were created by Shepherd University Intern Heather McSharry. Layers included: location of archeological investigations, location of utilities, and boundary locations.