

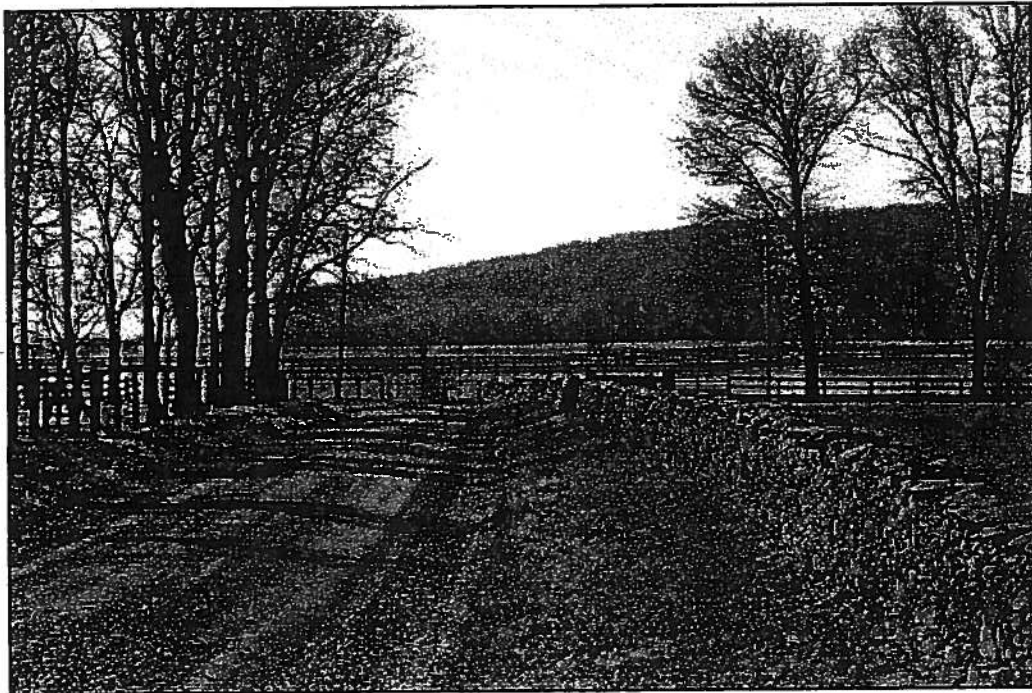
# Loudoun County, Virginia Beaverdam Creek Historic Roadways (HR) District

## A Supplement to Historic District Guidelines

### I. INTRODUCTION

Located in the far southwestern portion of Loudoun County, the Beaverdam Creek Historic Roadways (HR) District is characterized by a network of mostly rural, unpaved roads that have evolved from Colonial paths and trails. These narrow, winding roadways represent historical connections among farms, families, and markets and have changed very little since the county was formed.

Typically tree-lined and bordered by hedgerows and stone walls, these roadways offer scenic views of woodlands, pastures, farms, streams, and mountain vistas. These travel ways are important to the cultural history of the county and provide a unique glimpse into Loudoun's rich heritage. They also contribute significantly to the county's tourism economy and property values in the area.



## **A. Purpose & Intent**

It is the purpose of these guidelines to retain and preserve the historic, cultural, and scenic features that define the existing rural character and landscape quality along these roadways; to promote economic development through preservation; and to enhance and protect property values. It is also the intent to maintain slow travel speeds and accommodate the wide variety of users of such roadways, including drivers of farm equipment, trucks, and automobiles, bicyclists, equestrians, and pedestrians.

These guidelines are intended to apply to natural and man-made features adjacent to these affected roadways such as trees, stone walls, fences, signs, lighting, and structures. These guidelines will be used by the Loudoun County Historic District Review Committee (HDRC) when considering permit applications under Section 6-1900, Permits in Historic Districts, of the Loudoun County Zoning Ordinance.

## **B. Authority**

This District is established in accordance with Section 6-1803(C) of the Loudoun County Zoning Ordinance and Section 15.2.2306 of the Code of Virginia.

## **C. District Boundaries**

The Beaverdam Creek Historic Roadways District applies to roadways within the geographic area generally bounded by the Snickersville Turnpike (Route 734) on the north, St. Louis Road (Route 611) on the east, Trappe Road (Route 619) to the west, and the John Mosby Highway (Route 50) on the south. MAP 2002-0024, which shows the overall boundaries of the District, is adopted by reference as part of these guidelines.

## **D. Applicability**

1). These guidelines apply to applicable properties and uses and structures on those properties within 35 feet of the centerline of each designated roadway within the Beaverdam Creek Historic Roadways District. This area shall be known as the **roadway buffer area**. No application to demolish, remove, or raze, or a certificate of appropriateness for the erection, reconstruction, exterior alteration, or restoration of any building, structure, or trees shall be issued within the roadway buffer area unless the Historic District Review Committee determines that these guidelines have been met.

2). With the exception of the east side of St. Louis Road (Route 611), the south side of the John Mosby Highway (Route 50), and the north side of the Snickersville Turnpike (Route 734), the following specific roadways are subject to these requirements:

Airmont Road (Rt. 719)  
Austin Grove Road (Rt. 739)  
Bloomfield Road (Rt. 626)  
Ebenezer Church Road (Rt. 779)  
Foggy Bottom Road (Rt. 626)  
Foxcroft Road (Rt. 626)  
Furr Road (Rt. 736)  
Greengarden Road (Rt. 719)  
John Mosby Highway (Rt. 50)  
Lemmon's Bottom road (Rt. 832)  
Llangollen Road (Rt. 766)  
Millville Road (Rt. 743)  
Newlin Mill Road (Rt. 790)

Piney Swamp Road (Rt. 737)  
Poor House Road (Rt. 756)  
Quaker Lane (Rt. 630)  
Ridgeside Road (Rt. 765)  
St. Louis Road (Rt. 611)  
Snake Hill Road (Rt. 744)  
Snickersville Turnpike (Rt. 734)  
Trappe Road (Rt. 619)  
Unison Road (Rt. 630)  
Welbourne Road (Rt. 745)  
Willisville Road (Rt. 623)  
Woodtrail Road (Rt. 700)  
Yellow Schoolhouse Road (Rt. 831)  
Hollow Oak Road (Rt. 759)

MAP 2002-0024, which depicts these specific roadway segments, specific properties subject to the guidelines, and roadway buffer areas, is adopted by reference as part of these guidelines.

## **II. DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES/STANDARDS**

The following guidelines and standards shall apply within the roadway buffer areas in the Beaverdam Creek Historic Roadways District.

### **A. Walls & Fences**

#### **1) Intent**

Fieldstone fences located adjacent to roadways are an important attribute within the Beaverdam Creek Historic Roadways District. Their protection is fundamental to the preservation of the District's ambience and history. Stone fences may be reconstructed or new stone fences may be installed to maintain this critical feature.

#### **2) Acceptable Fencing Types**

The following types of fencing are appropriate and are strongly encouraged:

- a. Native fieldstone walls and fences.
- b. Board, post and rail, and post and wire fences, especially for control of livestock.

#### **3) Discouraged Fencing Types**

- a. Plastic and chain link fencing are strongly discouraged.
- b. Except for stone walls and fences, solid wood fencing in front yards should not be utilized.

#### **4) Treatment**

- a. Wooden fences may be painted or stained, preferably black, dark brown, or white.

#### **5) Height**

- a. The maximum fence height should not exceed 42 inches except for the purposes of livestock control.

## **B. Signs**

### **1) Intent**

The design and placement of identification and advertising signs can have a negative visual and physical impact on the scenic resources along roadways in the District. Limited, appropriate signage should be employed to help identify activities or direct travelers while maintaining the attractiveness, historic quality, and unique character of this portion of Loudoun County.

### **2) Permitted Sign Types**

- a. Signs allowed under Section 5-1200 of the Loudoun County Zoning Ordinance shall be permitted subject to the general sign guidelines contained in Chapter VI, *Signs*, of the Loudoun County Historic District Guidelines dated September 21, 1987.
- b. Official traffic and informational signage, while allowed, should be minimized.

### **3) Prohibited Sign Types**

No signs shall be illuminated or outlined with neon or similar lighting and shall have no flashing or moving parts or changeable copy.

*Commentary: Are there certain other sign types that should be prohibited in the District?*

### **4) Size/Height**

- a. Signs shall not exceed nine square feet in total area on each face with no single outside dimension greater than five feet.

### **5) Treatment**

- a. All signs shall be ground mounted or mounted on a structure. Freestanding pole signs shall not be permitted.
- b. Sign messages should be painted, carved or engraved on sign surfaces.
- c. Hand-lettered signs are discouraged.

**6) Materials**

- a. To the maximum extent feasible, signs and their supporting basis should be made of materials compatible with surrounding structures.
- b. Acceptable materials include wood, stone, brick, and metal.

**7) Illumination**

In addition to the sign illumination guidelines contained in the Section VI, *Signs*, of the Historic District Guidelines, the following guidelines shall apply:

- a. Signs should not be illuminated with neon or internal illumination.
- b. If illuminated, lighting shall be minimized, shielded, and directed downward and away from roadways towards the sign face to minimize spillover.

**C. Lighting**

**1) Intent**

Exterior illumination within the District is discouraged to minimize the amount of artificial light at night to preserve the rural character and the nighttime visual environment. Generally, lighting should be shielded and directed away from roadways to preclude excessive lighting or glare that is inappropriate for the rural environment or may hinder the visibility of drivers.

**2) Permitted Lighting**

- a. Lighting fixtures should incorporate full cut-off shielding to direct light downward so that all light emitted is projected below the horizontal plane through the luminaire's lowest light-emitting part.
- b. Security lighting is allowed within the roadside buffer area but should utilize motion sensors between the hours of 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. to reduce the need for all-night illumination.

3) **Treatment**

- a. Lighting fixtures should incorporate full cut-off shielding to direct light downward such that all light emitted is projected below the horizontal plane through the luminaire's lowest light-emitting part.
- b. Light poles should not exceed 30 feet in height.

4) **Prohibited Lighting**

- a. Flashing lights and floodlights are prohibited.

**D. Structures**

1) **Intent**

While there are few historic structures within the roadside buffer area of the District, there are many in the general area. Design and materials for new construction or alteration of existing structures within the District should be compatible with existing structures or typical of rural, farm buildings in the vicinity.

2) **Preservation**

- a. To the maximum extent feasible, historic structures should be preserved.

3) **Alteration/New Construction**

- a. In reviewing any applications for erection, reconstruction, or exterior alteration or restoration of any structure, the Historic District Review Committee shall apply the general design guidelines set forth in Chapter V, *Design Guidelines*, of the Loudoun County Historic District Guidelines dated September 21, 1987.

*Commentary: Applying these requirements to a depth of 35' on each side of the centerline of roadways will affect few structures. Typically, scenic roadway requirements apply to areas up to 100' from a roadway. If Loudoun County considers expanding the applicability of the Beaverdam Creek Historic Roadways District, more guidelines relating to structures will need to be considered.*

## **E. Roads**

### **1) Intent**

Rural roads are important to the cultural history of the county and can accommodate a wide variety of uses including farm equipment, automobiles, equestrians, pedestrians and bicyclists. These roads are typically narrow, usually tree-lined, bordered by hedgerows, most often unpaved and requiring slow travel speeds. Their protection is important to preserve the unique historic character of the rural landscape in the District. While the Commission does not have authority to regulate road construction, and most roads in the District are under the purview of the Virginia Department of Transportation, the maintenance of existing road surfaces, shoulders, and banks consistent with the following guidelines, all of which contribute to the character of the rural landscape, is strongly encouraged.

### **2) Road Surface**

Road surfaces within the District are to be maintained, to the maximum extent practicable, in their current status, i.e. dirt, gravel, paved or other. The following types of road surfaces are appropriate and are strongly encouraged:

- a. Native crushed stone/gravel.
- b. Tar and chip.
- c. Asphalt (only if already present)

### **3) Shoulder Treatment**

Where roadway shoulders exist, they should be both safe and visually respectful of the scenic and rural character of the District. For instances where shoulder treatment or improvement is necessary, earth and gravel mixture is appropriate. Treated or improved shoulders should be seeded to encourage growth of grasses which strengthen shoulders as well as prevent erosion of soil and stone at the shoulder and adjacent bank. Gravel only or asphalt shoulders are inappropriate for all roads within the District. Landowners may plant and mow shoulders that are part of their landscape.

The following types of road shoulder treatment materials are appropriate and strongly encouraged:

- a. Gravel and earth mix
- b. Grass



#### 4) Banks

Many of the roadways in the District are 'sunken' or contain steep vertical banks on one or both sides. These banks are indicative of historic roadway alignment consistent with the existing road and are a hallmark of the historic features of the District. The intent is to protect the existing banks. Great care must be taken to avoid plowing or grading of road surfaces, or widening of roadways, such that banks are not under-cut, supporting rocks dislodged, or supporting tree and vegetation roots severed. Inappropriate maintenance of loose surfaced roads results in a continual widening of the road and destruction of banks, trees and vegetation, and often stone fencing at the bank. Along gravel and loose surfaced roads within the District, this is a severe threat to the preservation of these roadways. Ditching should be properly maintained.

The following types of bank treatment are acceptable and strongly encouraged.

- a. Plow and grade within the existing roadway
- b. Ditch loose surfaced roads within the existing roadway to re-establish appropriate road width
- c. Maintain hedgerows on banks
- d. Maintain grass shoulders with ditches outside along paved roads
- e. Maintain existing road width as maximum for paved roads
- f. Maintain existing road alignment

#### F. Bridges

##### 1) Intent

Existing wooden, stone or single-lane bridges (usually concrete) are historic waterway crossings and significantly contribute to the ambiance of the area. Maintenance of existing bridges with the goal of preserving the existing structure is strongly recommended over demolition and new construction.

##### 2) Maintenance/Replacement of Bridges in Private Ownership

To the maximum extent practicable, maintenance and improvements to private bridges should utilize native materials, including fieldstone and wood. Where concrete surfaces are apparent, it is recommended that native fieldstone facing be applied. Shiny steel, concrete, or brightly painted surfaces are not appropriate. In some instances and with appropriate architectural and design consideration, rustic treated steel guardrails and

posts may be acceptable; however, wooden railing and posts are strongly recommended over steel.

The following types of bridge materials are appropriate and strongly encouraged

- a. Native fieldstone
- b. Wood
- c. Rustic treated steel components

### 3) Maintenance/Replacement of Bridges Under State Authority

Many public bridges in the District are under the authority of the Virginia Department of Transportation. The County strongly encourages the Department to adhere to the recommendations in this section.

#### G. Trees

*Commentary: Protection of individual trees and the tree canopy in the Beaverdam Creek District is an important goal of the County. However, on advice of legal counsel, it appears that Virginia state enabling legislation for historic districts contemplates only regulation of "structures" and "signs," not trees or vegetation in an historic district. Consequently, such provisions are not included in these proposed district regulations; however, the County is committed to exploring alternative methods of tree preservation through other development review procedures and standards.*

#### H. Definitions

For purposes of these guidelines, these terms shall have the following meaning:

1). Maximum extent feasible. No feasible and prudent alternative exists, as determined by County staff or the Historic District Review Committee, and all possible efforts to comply with the regulation or guideline or to minimize potential harm or adverse impacts have been undertaken by an applicant. Economic considerations may be taken into account but shall not be the overriding factor in determining "maximum extent feasible."

2). Maximum extent practicable. Under the circumstances, reasonable efforts have been undertaken to comply with the guideline or regulation, the costs of compliance clearly outweigh the potential benefits to the public or would unreasonably burden the proposed project, and reasonable steps have been undertaken to minimize any potential harm or adverse impacts resulting from noncompliance.

3). Roadway Buffer Area. An area within 35 feet of the centerline of each designated roadway within the Beaverdam Creek Historic Roadways District.

4). Significant Tree. Any deciduous tree 12 inches diameter at breast height (DBH) or greater, or any evergreen tree eight feet in height or greater.

