

## **Natural and Cultural Asset Plan Meeting #2**

### ***Natural and Cultural Assets Mapping Committee***

Date: Wednesday January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2022

Time: 10:00 AM – 12:30 PM

Location: James City County, Building F

In-person attendance: Bruce Abbott, Jay Everson, Matthew Woolsey, Mary Bressler, Alain Outlaw

Remote attendance: Adrienne Frank, Ryann Greifenberger

JCC staff: Tammy Rosario

GIC staff: Karen Firehock, Matthew Lee

#### Discussion:

#### **Welcome and Overview**

GIC welcomed the attendees back to the project for the second meeting. Staff explained the purpose of the meeting is to review the updated base map and the themed overlay maps as well as the plan for public engagement. GIC also prepared a slide show of examples for how the data and maps created for this project could be used to inform county planning.

All voted to adopt the minutes from the past meeting and they can now be posted to the project website. Members then voted unanimously to adopt a remote participation policy and then to allow for remote participation by two members due to health reasons. The remote members participated on screen with the group and then in a breakout session with staff to review the maps and their comments are incorporated in this meeting summary.

Before the start of the presentation, a committee member asked staff to address any implications for new regulations and expressed concern that the tone of the report would make it seem that the environment is in bad shape. Staff responded that there are no particular regulations in mind for this plan. However, staff noted that in past projects sometimes regulations have been amended to benefit communities and give flexibility. An example was given for Harrisonburg, Virginia in which the plan suggested giving credits to landowners who plant trees on their properties so that they would not have to pay the city's existing stormwater fee that is levied on impervious surfaces in the city. This was requested by the community and has now been added as an option within the city's stormwater utility regulations. Another example was given of a developer who has already contacted James City County in fall 2021 to get suggestions for how he can conserve important natural features on his land while completing his plan for development. Staff were able to provide him with the maps to show areas where conservation could be most beneficial and he is now working on his site plan to incorporate those features. This is entirely voluntary by the landowner, but it demonstrates that these maps can be used in development scenarios.

Staff assured the committee that the strategies developed will be done in consultation with the advisory committee and approved by the board. Staff will be careful to paint an accurate picture of the county in describing the assets and recommending workable strategies. Staff from GIC are available to provide ideas of what has worked well in other similar Virginia counties – but each community is unique and so are their strategies.

## Examples of How Plans Have Been Used in Other Communities

Next the group watched a presentation with examples of how natural and cultural asset maps have been used to inform planning or conservation. See slides [here](#)

Following the presentation, three small groups gathered to review the maps. Separating into smaller groups avoided overcrowding at map tables to ensure safety. Following are the combined notes from the three Breakout Groups on themed Maps with the Mapping Committee. Note that there are some recommended map features for which the consultants still need further information to map such as the two historic fish houses.

## Review of Base and Themed Maps

### Water Map:

Cranston Mills Pond - landowner is trying to get a permit to use this freshwater supply for drinking water for JCC.

Deer Lake - concern by the golf course about the dam and issues with not being able to use it for irrigation.

Jolly Pond - dam is going away so this water resource is likely to go away in the future.

Proposed withdrawal site for pulling water out of the Chickahominy River.

Lake Powell is gone. It is just swamp land now. The dam broke when it was overwhelmed by a hurricane or severe storm.

The different shades of green are hard to distinguish on this map.

### Recreation Map:

Jolly Pond Rd is popular road for people to bike on.

Colonial Heritage Club is a golf course.

There is some discussion of making a bikeway along Longhill Rd (see map).

News Rd is another popular spot for biking.

Powhatan Shores is NOT a public water access point. Only for members so remove this.

The focus of the recreation map should be on public amenities.

Remove Williamsburg Christian Retreat Center – not public.

Should we call out small playgrounds like Forest Glen and Audrey Simpson Jones Park?

## Forestry Map:

Reach out to the Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) to see if they have any recommendations for things to add to this map.

## Ag Map: (some of these could also or instead move to the culture and heritage map)

Include farm wineries. Williamsburg Winery (since they grow their grapes there) 5800 Wessex Hundred, Williamsburg, VA 23185

Let's do have Community Supported Agriculture (CSAs) on map as well as local farms that are open for tours (ag tourism)

Bush Neck Farm (apples and blueberries) 1502 Bush Neck Rd, Williamsburg, VA 23188

Kel Rae Farm, 126 Camp Rd, Toano, VA 23168

Mill Farm (Christmas Trees, berries) 4900 Fenton Mill Rd. Williamsburg, VA 23188

Pumpkinville (hayrides and pumpkins) 7691 Richmond Rd., Toano VA 23168

Sweet Lavender of Williamsburg Farm (open by reservation) 2460 Bushneck Road, Williamsburg, VA 23188

Fox Wire Alpaca Farm (animal tours), 200 Turners Neck Rd. Toano, VA 23168 (tours by appt)

Wildwood Farm, 3901 Ironbound Road, Williamsburg, VA 23185 (goat products and flower farm)

Colemans Nursery, 3000 Ironbound Road, Williamsburg, VA 23185 (plant nursery, does not seem to have plants grown on site – include or not???)

City Farmer's Market to add: several members felt that although it is technically inside of the City of Williamsburg it has produce from across the county so they suggested adding it. If so: 345 W Duke of Gloucester Street. Williamsburg, VA 23185

How can we add in Century Farms – is there a good data source for this (note: GIC has tried to find a list).

Original Governor's Landing is a site of a small farm that has won numerous awards for its farming practices.

There should be a farm stand across the road from Forest Glen Park.

Farm stands may be best on the recreation map from a map user perspective.

Jerry's Garden on News Rd may have a new name.

Toano Market (this is small but GIC has already GPSed this one): 7891 Richmond Road Toano VA, Toano, VA 23168.



## Heritage and Culture Map

Natural Heritage Resources – should this be on the habitat map? What is this – its from the county but does this duplicate the habitat cores map? (GIC note, this data source was from the county but will be removed from this map as it is not a cultural resource)

Review the 2008 Historic Structures Document

[https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/pdf\\_files/SpecialCollections/JC-271\\_Historic\\_Structures\\_Survey\\_JamesCityCounty\\_2008\\_OTTERY\\_report.pdf](https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/pdf_files/SpecialCollections/JC-271_Historic_Structures_Survey_JamesCityCounty_2008_OTTERY_report.pdf)

These structures would need to be digital already – does JCC have this data? Also we are looking for clusters of resources in the county or rural landscape dependent properties. Need to research with the county.

Add: Hazelwood Fish House on Hicks Island (Help GIC find the location on Hicks Island as it is not clear where it is located).

Add historic Fish House on Menzels Road (Help GIC find the location as it is unclear where this is located.)

Add two (or more) historically black communities. One is on Chickahominy Road. The other is Grove. Add the Audrey Simpson Jones Park. (GIC has ordered this book which describes them: Twin-Paths-Freedom.)

Also, can GIC get the county's data for point locations for this report for the heritage county map?

<https://jamestownva.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2728/Discover-Our-New-World-JCC-Historical-Map-PDF>

Check in with the tribes on the history between the Chickahominy and freed slaves at Freedom Park.

New Zion Baptist Church and cemetery are not labeled on the map.

Fred Boelt wrote a book in 2011 on cemeteries in the county. Not sure if there is a map of these that is already digitized.

Alain prepared a packet of information on historical and cultural sites. The 1862 Battle of Williamsburg is complicated with elements in York and JCC.

Alain outlined the Original Governor's Archaeological District with his materials. Consult those maps to digitize.

## Additional comments:

One member expressed a concern that there are too many mountain bike trails in Freedom Park that are perhaps having a negative impact.

There are 12,000 years of prior settlements in James City County and much of the history is still being discovered, so the plan should reference that.

Consider if the Farm Stands should also be on the culture map (or instead of on the Ag map).

Ask the SWCD if they have anything to add to the ag map.

### **Public Engagement**

Staff reviewed the community engagement memo <add link> provided prior to the meeting. Staff explained that a survey will be created to launch in February the public to comment on. Maps will be on-line for people to comment on by dropping a digital pin on the map. A physical map and comment box is also planned for those who don't want to or don't know about the on-line version. The committee suggested that the Recreation Center could be another location for a physical map for comments (in addition to the library). (Staff note – yes this will be done).

Staff will also send a blurb for newsletters and create a mini slide show to brief other groups.

For community engagement also consider sharing this work directly with the "Breakfast Club" that meets at Sandy's Restaurant in Lightfoot every Tues.

The Master Naturalist Group would be good to share this with (one committee member can help with this since they are a member).

Another group to potentially outreach to is the Historical Commission. Staff indicated that the established county commissions would also be briefed on this work by county staff.

### **Summary of Next Steps**

- Present a status summary to the Board of Supervisors (Jan. 25)

- Update the maps with comments from this meeting
- Host the on-line and physical comment stations (Feb 14 – March 7)
- Outreach to relevant county commissions and committees about the project and solicit their input
- Collect and collate public comments and create a list of definite/potential map edits
- Categorize the cultural data and represent on the maps, make any corrections to other maps
- Propose a ranking system to include cultural values in the landscape maps (e.g. a natural asset core that is both ecologically and culturally important may be ranked more highly).
- Create a network of corridors that connect the landscape
- Host 3<sup>rd</sup> committee meeting to review proposed rankings, connectivity corridors and begin discussion of risks and opportunities.

#### **Public Comment**

There were no members of the public at the meeting.

*To provide comments on this meeting summary please contact [mlee@gcinc.org](mailto:mlee@gcinc.org)*