

Wednesday, December 14, 2011



Board of Directors

Linda Carroll
President

Marcia Gray
Vice President

Jessica Case
Secretary

Tom Meng
Treasurer

John Darnell
Andrea Gottler
John Hackworth
Joseph Hillenmeyer
Barbara Hinkle
Hart James
Bill Johnston
Mike Meuser

Randall Miloszewski CPA
Andrew Moore
Pamela Perlman
Maureen Peters
Foster Pettit
Dan Poposki
Fran Taylor
Phillip Tibbs, MD

**Executive Director
Emeritus**

Richard DeCamp

Advisory Board

Barbara Hulette, Chair
Clyde Carpenter
Richard DeCamp
Ann Garden
Gay Darsie Glenn
John Hackworth
Nancy Iliff
Susan Jackson Keig
Zee Faulkner Kurfees
Gloria Martin
Mike Meuser, Esq.
Joyce Ockerman
Foster Pettit
Sharon Reed
Daniel Rowland
James Thomas

Mr. Louis Stout, Chairman
Board of Adjustment
LFUCG Division of Planning
200 East Main Street
Lexington, KY 40507

Dear Chairman Stout and Members of the Board of Adjustment:

The Blue Grass Trust for Historic Preservation serves as the region's leading advocacy organization for all preservation related matters. Founded in 1955, we are the 14th oldest preservation organization in the United States. Since the time of its formation, the BGT has endeavored to promote the public recognition and preservation of buildings, structures, neighborhoods, districts, areas and objects which form the foundation of the Bluegrass Region's historic fabric.

On Friday, December 16, 2011, you will have before you a matter which has significant impact on a rural historic district. The Boone Creek Rural Historic District, approved for placement on the National Register on August 19, 1994, represents 4,060 acres of land, 92 buildings, 55 structures, and 25 sites. National Register placement requires approval at the local level by the Historic Preservation Commission, state level by the Kentucky State Historic Preservation Officer, and finally, the national level by the Department of the Interior, National Parks Service, Keeper of the Register.

National Register status recognizes a body of research regarding the historic, cultural, built and natural elements. In this case, 73 pages of research detail the lower reaches of the Boone Creek Rural Historic District and site the significance of elements including water, geology, topography, soil, vegetation, and cultural resources as they relate to water, geology and topography and soil and, of course, structures.

The addresses for the areas of the district under consideration for this scheduled hearing include 8291 and 8385 Old Richmond Road. If you reviewed the National Register nomination form you would find:

8291 – non-contributing: 1 building, a modern vacant gas station and the applicant's intended welcome center.

8385 – six buildings and two sites and the applicant's intended trail, above ground shelter and amusement ride.

Described as the farm at Rogers Mill, the application before you describes a frame dwelling, a meat house, chicken coop, garage, cabin, ice house, barn, mill site and cabin site. And, without boring you with the detailed descriptions of each of these buildings and sites, you should know words such as, limestone foundation, sawn frame, clapboard siding, and timber pier foundation, represent the bulk of the descriptors.

The farm at Rogers Mill is associated with Jeremiah Early Rogers and his son Jeremiah E. Rogers, who owned the farm acreage and pursued agricultural and mill related activities thereon. The land was used for agricultural purposes by each subsequent owner, Nettie Rogers, John T and Thomas Denton, and Howard Early, until coming into the hands of the current owners, the Snyder family.

In the matter before you on December 16, 2011, the Blue Grass Trust is writing to memorialize our strong objection to any approval of conditional use of the Boone Creek Rural Historic District for the purpose of an amusement park known as the Boone Creek Adventures, LLC.

The Blue Grass Trust asks for the Board of Adjustment to carefully weigh the issues in this matter. You will hear an interesting presentation from Mr. Burgess Carey. You will hear of his planned improvements to the land, his own worldwide experiences zip lining and his family's future as it relates to this development. But, please remember throughout his presentation, this is a National Register rural historic district. It would be precedent-setting to allow an amusement park of this type to be installed on agriculture land of this importance.

Planning staff recommend approval of this amusement park in a rural historic district without regard to Article 13 of the zoning ordinance. Article 13-1 "declares, as a matter of public policy, that the preservation, protection, perpetuation and use of historic districts; landmarks; sites; neighborhoods; areas; places; structures; improvements; and geological and archaeological sites having special, unique, or distinctive character or a special historic, aesthetic; architectural; archaeological; geological or cultural significance or value; and which serve as visible reminders of the history and heritage of this county, state or nation, are public necessities. The protection of these is required in the interest of the economic well being, prosperity, health, safety and general welfare of the people."

The lower reaches of Boone Creek and specifically the parcel addressed as 8385 Old Richmond Road, richly represent all that is a reminder of the "history and heritage" of Lexington and members of the Board of Adjustment are duly obligated to fiercely defend it.

The Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation, written first in 1979, call for preservation of the landscape surrounding an historic building and contained within an individual parcel of land. What becomes known as the building site contributes to the overall character of the historic property. The landscape under discussion reflects the historic period when the historic buildings were created.

The 2007 Comprehensive Plan declares that the mission of Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government's planning efforts is to provide a vision for physical development that will allow Lexington-Fayette County to grow and prosper, promoting economic development and viable job development while preserving the quality of life that makes it a desirable place to work and live and protecting and enhancing existing neighborhoods, downtown, and the rural Bluegrass cultural landscape.

Goal 5 of the Comprehensive Plan repeatedly uses phrases such as "encourage protection" and is attached here in visual form to remind members of the Board of Adjustment of the value placed on historic and cultural resources.

While the applicant may portray this as fallow land which needs much improvement, the addition of shelter sleeping towers, canopy walkways, the potential unintended consequences to century old trees, the

GOAL 5. Protect and preserve Fayette County's significant historic and cultural heritage.

OBJECTIVES:

- A. Use the Long-Range Preservation Plan as a resource to assist in balancing development and protecting and enhancing Fayette County's historic and cultural resources.
- B. Preserve, protect, and enhance the natural and cultural landscape that gives the Bluegrass Region its unique identity and image.
- C. Encourage protection of significant historic resources and archeological sites by documenting and/or designating historic districts and historic landmarks.
- D. Encourage renovation, restoration development, and maintenance of historic residential and commercial structures.
- E. Encourage the retention, protection, and compatible adaptive re-use of historic resources, sites, and structures.
- F. Encourage the development of incentives for the retention, restoration, preservation, or continuation of historic uses of historic sites, historic structures, rural settlements, and urban and rural neighborhoods.
- G. Encourage citizen education about the importance of Fayette County's historic resources.
- H. Encourage inter-governmental cooperation among the various units of the Urban County Government in dealing with the protection and maintenance of both private and public sites and structures.
- I. Encourage continued historic and cultural contributions by and partnerships with local and regional institutions of higher learning.
- J. Limit land use in rural settlements to the recommendations of the 2007 Comprehensive Plan or amendments to the 2007 Comprehensive Plan.



LEXINGTON-FAYETTE COUNTY, KENTUCKY

GOAL 5

H
I
S
T
O
R
I
C

P
R
E
S
E
R
V
A
T
I
O
N

creation of hiking trails and the annual introduction of more than 20,000 visitors to this rural area do not identify, retain or preserve the significant features of this site as called for by the Secretary of the Interior, the National Trust for Historic Preservation or the LFUCG's own Comprehensive Plan.

The Blue Grass Trust for Historic Preservation, at this writing, finds no precedence for the creation of an amusement ride such as a zip line in land designated as a National Register Rural Historic District. We conducted on line research and held conversations with members of the National Trust, The National Parks Service, Preservation Kentucky, the Kentucky Heritage Council, and several statewide preservation organizations and we can find no obvious example of a change in use from rural agricultural land listed on the National Register to an amusement park with a zip line canopy tour.

The Blue Grass Trust respectfully implores the members of the Board of Adjustment to reject the Applicant's request for conditional use of rural farm land designated on the National Register of Historic Places.

Sincerely,

Linda Carroll, President

Copy to: Board Members of the Blue Grass Trust for Historic Preservation