

**VISION OF BOYDS:
A LONG-RANGE PRESERVATION PLAN**

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A VISION OF BOYDS HISTORIC DISTRICT

Boyds is a small historic rural village located in the most northern outreaches of Montgomery County. Its architecture and physical organization reflect its 18th century plantation heritage and later transformation into a 19th century railroad community. A formal Historic District listed on the Montgomery County Master Plan, Boyds is also a viable residential community set within the ever-growing metropolitan area of Washington, D.C. Threatened by massive public and private industrial development projects, the preservation and protection of Boyds' architectural character and historic pattern is at the foundation of the retention of its significant contribution to the county's heritage.

The Boyds Historic District is composed of 34 properties grouped in two historic areas. The residential area features groups of buildings clustered together at each end of the district and with generous expanses of green space between the buildings. The northern cluster includes nineteen historic sites and a cemetery. The southern cluster includes six historic sites, including the Boyds Negro School building. The commercial area contains a cluster of nine historic sites fronting Barnesville Road. These clusters present the important pattern of sub-communities that formed the crossroads known today as Boyds.

The character of these distinct areas and an understanding of their symbiotic relationship must be observed in future development. The establishment of a buffer area, immediately surrounding the district, will provide some mitigation of potential adverse effects of nearby development; however, the magnitude of the mitigation should be directly proportional to the potential adverse impact of the projects. An understanding of the past and the protection of the elements which create Boyds' unique character will be pivotal to the preservation and enhancement of the historic district in the face of the future.

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IV. DEVELOPING A LONG-RANGE PRESERVATION PLAN FOR BOYDS HISTORIC DISTRICT

INTERESTS AND CONCERNS

Identification of Issues, Challenges and Community Ideas

The framework for developing a long-range plan for the historic district of Boyds was established around the specific preservation issues and concerns of the community. An initial workshop was held with residents of the district to identify and determine priorities of the issues, concerns, and problems which citizens face in the preservation of the districts. Following this session, the historic district was analyzed from an historical and planning perspective to identify its character defining features, historical land use patterns, and relationship to the Master Plan. Based on the issues identified in the workshop and the analysis of the characteristics of each district, statements were developed summarizing the preservation challenges to be addressed in long-range preservation planning. A follow-up meeting was conducted with citizens to review these statements and discuss potential ideas for dealing with the preservation challenges. The citizen contribution through this series of meetings helped to establish a framework for developing a preservation plan for the district which is relevant to the interests and concerns of Boyds residents.

Workshops on Preservation Issues

An initial workshop was held the evening of June 2, 1992 for those concerned about the preservation in the historic districts of Clarksburg, Hyattstown, and Boyds. The session provided a forum for residents and property owners to identify the concerns and issues relating to the preservation of the district. Residents from Hyattstown and Boyds formed their own group to identify a list of preservation issues and concerns. At the conclusion of this exercise, the lists posted for everyone to review and identify the higher priority issues. These responses were used to assign priorities to the issues from each group. These issues are listed for in order of descending priority for each of the workshop groups as given in Figure 32: Boyds Issues and Concerns.

Many of the issues identified in the workshops represent conditions or problems which are impeding preservation in the community and require attention and improvement. Some issues are specific in nature and can be addressed by singular actions. Other issues require activity over a long period of time to correct and improve the underlying conditions. Many of the issues relate to the policies and authority of the County government and the Historic Preservation Commission in administering the historic preservation in the districts. Following the workshops, the consultants worked with these issues to identify the primary areas of concern in each community and to translate the issues into "Challenge Statements" which express the broader preservation objectives to be reached. The issues raised in each workshop were analyzed and grouped according to common themes or topics in order to identify the primary areas of concern in the district. Based on these areas of concern and the specific issues

raised, a statement of the general objective, goal, or challenge was formulated which attempts to encompass the range of related concerns and issues. These statements are meant to more clearly define the core issue and as such are general in nature. A second meeting was held for the purpose of reviewing the "Challenge Statements" and discussing ideas and strategies for dealing with specific issues or meeting the broader challenges. Citizen participation in this event was intensive and very productive in producing ideas and strategies relevant to the issues which they had identified previously.

HYATTSTOWN & BOYDS ISSUES

- *Local representation governing historic districts.*
- *Specific criteria about what is historic instead of arbitrary whims by HPC.*
- *Personal cost vs. preservation.*
- *Upgrading the standard of living/function/comfort vs. preservation.*
- *Repair Boyds' Negro School and find ways to use it.*
- *Develop specific architectural guidelines for appropriate in-fill and adjacent areas.*
- *Vacant buildings should become used and occupied.*
- *Infringement on historic district (i.e., traffic and development).*
- *Upgrade street/road safety while maintaining character of historic district.*
- *Maintain and reinforce unique characteristics.*
- *Keeping the integrity of the neighborhood (i.e., bringing viable commercial [uses] into the district.*
- *Prepare and communicate an accurate history of each historic [area].*
- *County codes vs. preservation.*
- *Restore and reconstruct railroad station in Boyds.*
- *Maintain environmental surroundings adjacent to the district.*
- *Identify and preserve critical open space.*
- *Identify characteristics of structures including setbacks.*

Figure 32: Boyds Issues and Concerns

Workshop Results for the Boyds Historic District

Figure 32: Boyds Issues and Concerns, Figure 33: Issues, Challenges and Strategies Common to Clarksburg, Boyds, and Hyattstown, and Figure 34: Additional Issues, Challenges and Strategies in the Historic Districts of Boyds and Hyattstown present the framework for placing issues into broader planning objectives or challenges, and the ideas and strategies which the community identified. As explained, the issues have been regrouped into thematically related areas of concern. The challenge statements have been developed to address the general long range objective or challenge facing the district. The idea or strategies listed have been stated in somewhat general terms. Specific strategies which are based on these general statements appear in the later discussion of long-range plans for each community.

Issues, Challenges, and Strategies Common to All Rural Districts

Issues	Challenges	Strategies
1. The need for local representation on the Historic Preservation Commission.	A. Establish a method for incorporating local representation into the activities of the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) and administration of the Historic Preservation Ordinance.	● Add local representatives to the HPC for each district.
2. Use of LAP's for preliminary reviews has not worked well due to local subjectivity and lack of criteria to make evaluations.		● Establish HPC subcommittees for each district or region.
3. The lack of specific criteria about what is historic in each district for use by property owners and HPC in making decisions.	B. Document the historic characteristics of each district and establish criteria and specific characteristics to be preserved in each community.	● Designate primary, secondary, and contributing resources in each community based on clearly established criteria of historical or cultural significance.
		● Develop specific architectural design guidelines which are tailored to the specific conditions of each district
4. Historic structures in each district are being lost to abandonment and neglect.	C. To ensure the continued maintenance and use of historic buildings and properties to avoid their loss.	● Establish less demanding water, sewer, building code, and fire requirements for historic structures which can allow for their reuse without endangering public health and safety.
5. The difficulty of meeting current water and sewer requirements is preventing reuse of some significant historic buildings.		● Establish a county assistance program to provide building materials to owners of historic properties at wholesale cost, and a revolving tool share program for approved maintenance and improvements.
6. The high cost of rehabilitation and maintenance of historic structures discourages preservation.		● Enhance existing incentives, such as local property tax credits for rehabilitation to further encourage rehabilitation.
7. Increase awareness of historic preservation in the community.		● Document and identify the significant characteristics of the historic district.
8. Lack of information on the historic district and its regulation	D. To establish a better understanding among residents, property owners, and the public of the significance of the historic district and actions affecting it through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Establishing specific criteria of significance + Establishing an education/awareness program for property owners and real estate. + Notification of property owners about activities and actions affecting the historic district. 	● Educate the public on the significance of the individual historic resources in the district, the relationships which create the open character of the district, and the overall significance of the district.

Issues, Challenges, and Strategies Common to All Rural Districts

Issues	Challenges	Strategies
9. Notification of property owners, historical society, and other interested parties of activities, actions, and surveys affecting the community		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Notify and include local citizens in action affecting the district
10. Maintain and reinforce the unique identity of each district.	E. To ensure that the identity of each Historic District is maintained and reinforced as the surrounding areas continue to grow:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Protect and distinguish the special characteristics of each district including but not limited to the following qualities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Characteristics of open space + Rural village character + Architectural character + Special historic landmarks + Streetscape and trees + Signage controls ● Buffer each historic district adequately to prevent surrounding development from overwhelming the historic district. ● Establish criteria for compatible uses within rural historic districts.

Additional Issues, Challenges, and Strategies for the Historic District of Boyds

Issues	Challenges	Strategies
1. Preservation of the rural character of the Boyds Historic District	A. To continue to preserve and protect the rural character of Boyds as defined by the character of its historic homes, churches, and open space between buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adopt architectural design guidelines to ensure that alterations, additions, and new construction within the district is compatible with the character of the existing historic buildings. ● Apply the siting characteristics of existing historic development to control new construction including the following relationships: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Typical pattern of front yard setbacks + Typical rhythm of building spacing + Typical patterns for different uses

Additional Issues, Challenges, and Strategies for the Historic District of Boyds

Issues	Challenges	Strategies
<p>2. To further strengthen the identity of the Boyds Historic District.</p>	<p>B. To strengthen and revitalize the identity of the historic district to ensure its long term viability and preservation as a rural community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Special attention should be given to preservation and continued use of the significant landmark buildings and characteristic groupings of vernacular buildings in the district. ● Reuse of the Train station, Boyds Negro School, and other abandoned buildings should be a top priority to avoid deterioration and permanent loss. ● The historic identity of commercial area should be strengthened through application of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Architectural guidelines + Signage guidelines + Additional compatible commercial uses as appropriate
<p>3. Repair and reuse of local landmarks including the Boyds Negro School and Railroad Station.</p>		
<p>4. Concern over the adverse impacts of noise and pollution from quarrying of the diabase deposit west of the historic district.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To adequately buffer the historic district to prevent a negative impact from the quarrying operation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maintenance of an adequate buffer to prevent unacceptable levels of noise for residential areas.

REACHING TOWARD LONG RANGE PRESERVATION OF BOYDS

Boys is a small historic rural village reflecting its 18th century plantation heritage and its development as a 19th century railroad community. It is important to recognize that Boys is and can continue to be a viable historic residential village if the pattern of development and architectural character is preserved and protected.

Two patterns of existing development are identifiable within the historic district. The residential area consists of properties located along Clopper and White Ground Roads within the district and the commercial area consisting of properties located along Barnesville Road at the north end of the district. The residential area features groups of buildings clustered at each end of the district and an expanse of open space between the clusters. The northern cluster includes 19 historic sites and a cemetery. The southern cluster includes six historic sites, including the Boyds Negro School building. The commercial area contains a cluster of nine historic sites fronting Barnesville Road. These clusters represent a pattern of sub-communities within the district. A buffer area can be determined for areas immediately adjacent to the district for use in mitigating the impact of some public or private incompatible land uses, but the magnitude of these operations and services may require further mitigation if they are not to diminish the integrity of the historic district.

STRATEGIES FOR MAINTAINING HISTORIC CHARACTER

Two distinct areas have been identified within Boyds Historic District. Strategies for preserving each area are presented below.

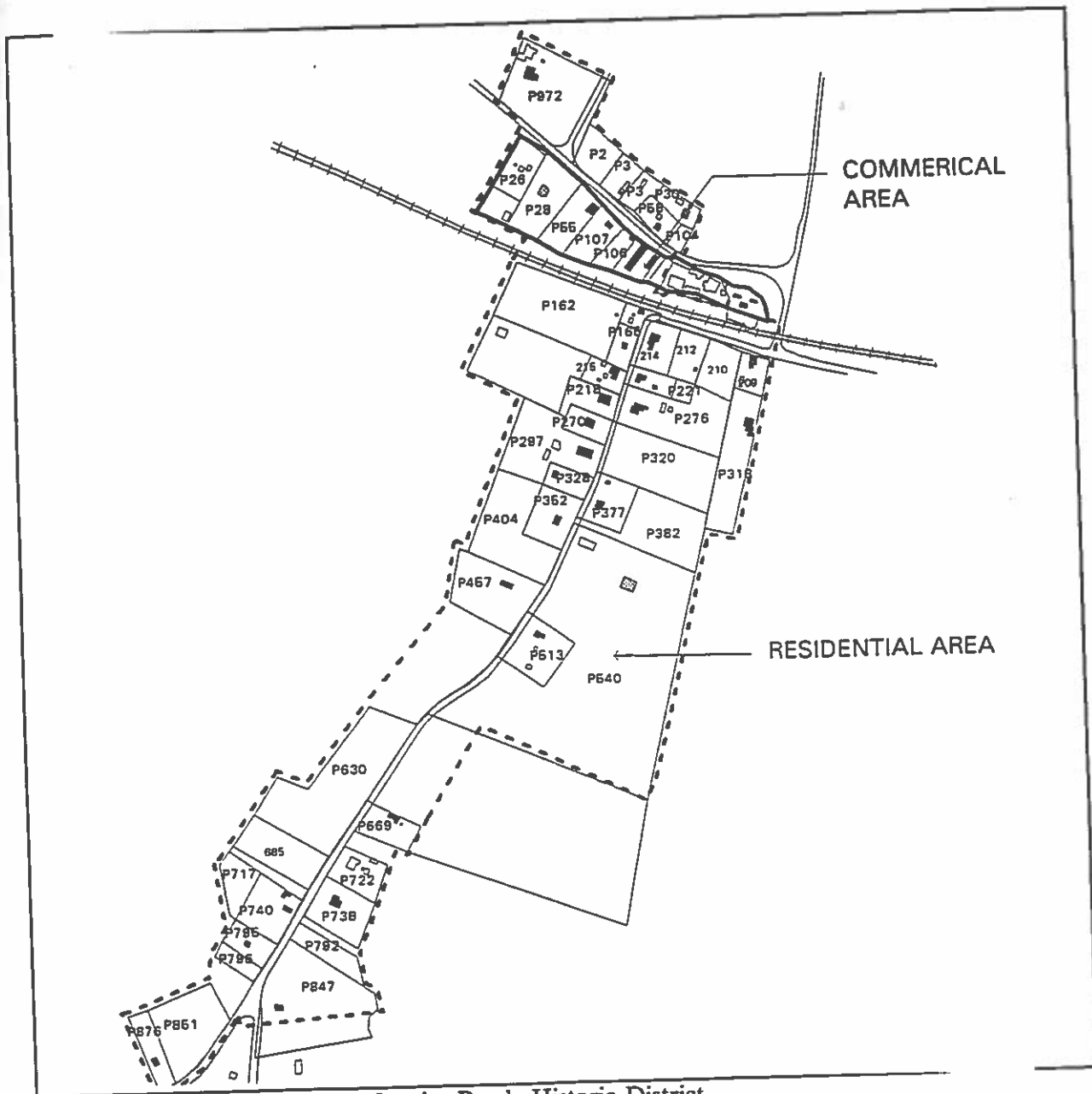


Figure 33: Preservation Areas for the Boyds Historic District

The Residential Area

The Residential Area

The residential area features groups of buildings clustered at each end of the district and an expanse of open space between the clusters.

Strategy 1.1: Satisfy the minimum conditions for water and sewer to ensure the future viability of the community. The long-range goal should be to supply the district with the level of utility service needed to meet necessary health and safety standards. A short-term solution should be found to enable vacant historic resources to be reused to prevent their deterioration. However, since the extension of sewer and water will make it possible for much greater density of development than currently exists within the district, development controls should be secure prior to the availability of services.

Strategy 1.2: Preserve the cluster type pattern of development in the district by (1) encouraging open spaces between the historic building clusters and new construction, (2) encouraging clustering of new development in similar patterns, (3) and maintaining the pattern of building separation and front yard setbacks typical for the district. Based on the analysis of lot characteristics of historic properties in this area the following criteria are suggested for new residential construction to the extent feasible:

+ *Lot sizes average about one acre in the district with an average lot occupancy of about 7%.*

+ *Front yard setbacks average 40 feet for primary historic resources and 65 feet for all buildings within the district. Building separation distances average about 140 feet within clusters.*

Strategy 1.3: Develop a rehabilitation program to stabilize and improve deteriorating and substandard buildings in the area. The object of such a program should be to prevent the loss of important historic elements within the district. As envisioned, such a program could involve property owners and the County government to overcome the cost impediments to rehabilitation work.

+ Explore the creation of a County assistance program to provide building materials to qualifying owners of historic properties at or near wholesale costs.

+ Develop additional incentives to encourage rehabilitation of deteriorating structures considered important to the District.

Strategy 1.4: Develop architectural guidelines for the rural context which address the rural vernacular architecture of the area, issues of the rural quality of Boyds.

Strategy 1.5: A long-range tree preservation and maintenance plan should be developed to ensure that trees which contribute to the character of the historic district are: (1) considered in reviewing applications for work in the district, (2) maintained in good health, and (3) replaced with appropriate varieties when needed.

Strategy 1.6: Encourage the reuse of landmark buildings such as the Boyds Negro School and Train Station to further strengthen the identity of Boyds and prevent the loss of these special resources.

The Commercial Area

The commercial area is almost fully developed with commercial uses on the southern side of Barnesville Road. Properties to the north of Barnesville in residential use. The preservation of this area must recognize this dual quality to this cluster of buildings which are isolated from the southern portion of the district by the railroad. Preservation of this area should focus on strengthening the visual quality of this quaint collection of buildings and preventing future development from negatively impacting the residential area to the north. The following strategies are suggested:

Strategy 2.1: Develop specific architectural guidelines for the commercial area to deal with the different building types, siting relationships, and scales of development characteristic of commercial uses.

Strategy 2.2: Institute model signage guidelines for business identification and advertising signage to enhance the appearance of the district.

Strategy 2.3: Develop a streetscape plan for the commercial area to provide a pedestrian environment through the use of trees, vegetation, sidewalks, and period lighting.