
**Consideration for the Restoration of Bostwick House
Planning and Discussion Document**

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Prepared for: Stakeholders

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Introduction

This white paper presents a possible scenario wherein the Bostwick House in Bladensburg is occupied by an active tenant organization in order to provide long-term care and maintenance after a thorough restoration. The Bicentennial of the War of 1812 and the Battle of Bladensburg are rapidly approaching. In order to enhance the opportunity for Bladensburg and the Port Towns to capitalize on the events surrounding the bicentennial celebration, this proposal is presented for stakeholders to review and determine a role in the plan.

Background

Bostwick House is currently owned by the Town of Bladensburg. It was sold to the Town about ten years ago by Susanna Yatman and her husband Tim. The town is currently using the house for meetings on a limited basis because of the upgrades necessary for public occupancy. Over the ten years period since the town acquired the property, various plans have been presented for the maintenance and restoration but no significant progress has occurred to date. Currently, overdue roof replacement is under way but overall restoration has not been undertaken because of the substantial funds required with no identified potential end user.

The University of Maryland Architecture Department is working on a plan to restore the house. The UMD Archeology Department is performing some minor excavations for the MD State Highways Administration (SHA). The House was constructed in 1746 by Christopher Lowndes who was one of the wealthiest merchants in Prince George's County. Lowndes owned many slaves and indentured servants which were prevalent in Bladensburg at that time. It seems logical that both slaves and indentured servants participated in the construction of the Bostwick House under the direction of Christopher Lowndes. Lowndes' daughter married Admiral Stoddard, the first Secretary of the Navy and they resided at Bostwick. The house sits on a rise that previously allowed a commanding view of the port located at Bladensburg.

The Property consists of approximately 7.8 acres of formerly agricultural lands located in an urbanized area. A garage and two barns are located on the property. All the buildings are in need of major restoration estimated at \$3 million.

Opportunity

We are proposing to interested stakeholders that we consider the restoration of the Bostwick House as one of four or five remaining historic structures in Bladensburg. Bostwick currently is operational but structural upgrades, protection of historic finishes, and modernized conveniences are necessary for the adaptive reuse of this property.

This plan incorporates the restoration into preparations for the War of 1812 and Battle of Bladensburg Bicentennials. The Town of Bladensburg is "ground zero" for visitor and tourist activities focused on the battlefield from where the British troops left to burn the Capitol and the White House. Our initial thoughts are that AWS would move into a restored Bostwick House and another organization, perhaps the National Park Service (NPS) or, perhaps the Maryland National Capital Parks and Planning Commission (MNCPPC), would take over the George Washington House to be used as a Visitor Center. The George Washington House is centrally located, has recently been renovated, and would be easily converted to a visitor Center in time to accept visitors prior to 2012. AWS would move into a restored Bostwick in an arrangement among the stakeholders that provides a centrally located Visitor Center in time for Bicentennial celebrations, a long-term user of the restored Bostwick House, relief for the City from maintenance, and economic development for the Port Towns.

Stakeholders

The potential Stakeholders in this arrangement are:

Aman Memorial Trust-AMT sold the GW House to AWS and continues a long and strong relationship with AWS in the operations and maintenance of the house. AMT proposes to be a long-term leaseholder for Bostwick and manages the restoration and financing. AMT would work with AWS to maintain the house and grounds for use as the AWS headquarters. The grounds would be maintained by AWS.

Anacostia Watershed Society- AWS currently owns the George Washington House. AWS would vacate the GW House and move to Bostwick, preferably AFTER the major renovations are substantially completed.

Town of Bladensburg-Bladensburg would retain ownership of Bostwick and lease the property to the Aman Memorial Trust for a 50 to 100 year period. The Town would have access for inspection and potential use of the grounds for functions.

University of Maryland (UMD)- A long-term partner in the use and restoration of Bostwick. UMD continue in an ongoing role they are currently serving. One scenario includes UMD Staff living onsite in an outbuilding.

Maryland National Capital Parks and Planning Commission-Potential partner in the Visitor Center and promoter of historic Bostwick site.

National Park Service (NPS)-NPS would potentially take ownership of the George Washington House and hopefully provide a major source of funding for the restoration of Bostwick. In this scenario, AWS would occupy Bostwick for a nominal lease amount and assist with the

maintenance of the structures, responsible for smaller capital expenditures and the grounds.

Other potential Stakeholders include:

MD State Highway Administration

Anacostia Trails Heritage Area

Port Towns Community Development Corporation

Ottery Group (Historic Preservation Consulting)

Prince George's County Historical Society

Prince George's Heritage, Inc.

Prince George's Historical & Cultural Trust

Bladensburg Local Development Corp.

Timeline

September 2009-Meeting of Stakeholders

September 2009-Committee of the Willing formed

September 2009- Presentation to Bill Pencek, MD SHA

October 2009-Agreement to Explore Partnership of Stakeholders

Winter 2010-complete plans and specifications for restoration work

Winter 2010-Identify Funding sources

Spring 2010-Obtain Proposals from Contractors

Summer 2010-Obtain permits

Fall 2010- Start Construction

Summer 2011-Complete Construction

Summer 2011 Occupy Bostwick

Fall 2011-Refresh GW House for Visitor Center

Winter 2012-Occupy GW House

Action Items

- 1) Gather Stakeholders to discuss this proposal.
- 2) Determine the status of restoration planning and preparations
- 3) Identify potential leadership and potential funding sources
- 4) Find large potential sponsor
- 5) Draft agreement between all stakeholders
- 6) Financial Analysis of proposal

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