

After careful deliberation, the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) would like to make the following comments and recommendations to the Planning Board regarding the Bancroft Redevelopment Plan (RP) currently before the Board. The HPC's responsibility in this matter is to examine the RP from a historic and cultural perspective within the context of the Haddonfield Historic District Ordinance and the Historic Preservation Element of the Master Plan.

COMMENTS:

Pertinent sections of the current Borough Land Development Ordinance charge the HPC with the protection of the heritage, municipal character and identity of Haddonfield (in its advisory capacity to the Planning Board):

1. to **safeguard the heritage of the Borough of Haddonfield** by preserving that part of the Borough which reflects elements of the cultural, social, economic and architectural history;
2. to preserve the integrity of design of the **eighteenth and nineteenth century buildings and streetscape within the Historic District** and the **preservation of the historic and architecturally significant buildings**;
5. **to preserve and promote the Historic District as an essential element of municipal character and identity**, as an important factor in the economy of the Borough and the property values therein;
6. **to foster civic beauty**;
7. to promote the use of the District for **the education, pleasure** and welfare of the citizens of the Borough and its visitors; and
8. to further assure that construction, alterations, repairs, replacements such as lighting, fences, walkways, signs, color and landscaping are **compatible with the Borough's historic, cultural, aesthetic and architectural heritage**.

(Emphasis added)

The Historic Preservation Element of the Haddonfield Master Plan states in Goal 10 that "show sensitivity to the economic and cultural diversity of the residents of Haddonfield while **preserving the historic character of the community**." (Emphasis added)

The historical and cultural significance of the Bancroft land as a cultural and historic resource cannot be denied. Its context, located on Kings Highway in close proximity to several of Haddonfield's most important structures, make it a important and highly visible element on the main street streetscape. There are known associations with the War of Independence as Haddonfield was in the "crossroads of the American Revolution", caught between American and British troop movements. As a cultural resource, it is the birthplace of Margaret Bancroft's humanitarian mission as an educator and early advocate for disabled and developmentally challenged children. (Additionally, Margaret Bancroft has been recently listed on the National

Parks website in connection with properties associated with women's rights (<http://home.nps.gov/wori/parkmgmt/upload/Appendix%20E.pdf>.) Some of the historical events associated with the land are of international importance (Hadrosaurus *foulkii* Leidy site, Maple Ave. – a National Historic Landmark) as with the discovery of the first (almost) complete dinosaur skeleton which redefined the study of fossils and began the field of modern day paleontology. (see Appendix B). There are several 19<sup>th</sup> (or earlier) century structures (Lullworth Hall, the Carriage House and three outbuildings) that are significant in their own right with high integrity and retention of historic material, features and character. Lastly, then as now, the Bancroft land is one of the highly visible “gateways” which introduce visitors to our town and its historic character.

Due to their social, cultural, architectural and archeological significance, in 1972 both parcels were included in the Historic District Ordinance and placed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places e.g. listings of cultural resources worthy of preservation which examines the property's age, integrity and significance. Please see the narrative from the Green Acres application of July 2010 (Appendix A) for a more detailed overview of the significant historic and cultural events that took place in and around the Bancroft land.

The HPC believes firmly that the Bancroft land, which has met the criteria over and above for designation\* into the Historic District as a historic site based on the reasons listed above, must continue to have the highest level possible of protection.

#### REQUESTS:

In order to extend that protection to these historically significant sites, our requests regarding the RP are as follows:

1. Request for Design Review authority: In the draft RP as written,

“the provisions of Article VI ... shall apply to the entire Redevelopment Area.”

However, if there are inconsistencies between Article VI and the Redevelopment Plan, the Plan “shall control.”

The HPC would request that the RP be revised to explicitly state the HPC has the same advisory powers as currently exist in the Borough Land Development Ordinance over both parcels, including Lullworth Hall, other existing historic structures and new construction in order to continue with the responsibility entrusted to the HPC by the town of Haddonfield.

2. Historic Out Buildings on the Site: There is no statement of disposition regarding the three 19<sup>th</sup> (or earlier) century outbuildings (fieldstone and frame buildings). From their appearances, they have a high level of integrity and are good examples of 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> century architecture. (See Appendix C) They would be candidates for rehab to another use but the Plan outlines only the preservation of the Carriage House which is to be rehabbed for use within the affordable housing zone. The HPC would ask that more information be gathered to determine the historic character and integrity of the three

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\* “Criteria for Designation: A building, complex of buildings, structure, site, object or district may be designated for preservation if it (a) has significance character, interest or value as part of the heritage or cultural characteristics of the municipality, State or Nation or is <sup>2</sup> associated with the life of a person significant in the past.” Section 135-50, LDO

unexamined structures before any action is taken. We would request that a Historic Building Survey (HSR) that examines, documents and evaluates the condition of the historic structure(s) be commissioned for the three outbuildings. The HPC would support the reuse of these buildings in their original site. The HPC would strongly discourage the relocation or demolition.

3. Protection of Archeological Resources: The HPC, with the documentation of further archeological resources existing on the site and the potential implications for the National Historic Site near on the Bancroft parcels, (See Leidy Map, Appendix B) requests further research into the resources on this site for the purposes of preservation. More information is required.
4. Appropriate development of the Site: The HPC agrees that the future development of the site, if any, should be in character with the Historic District, the surrounding streetscapes and the neighborhoods. The preservation of the character and identity of Haddonfield, which is the reason d'etre of the Historic District Ordinance, is paramount.

Currently the area is zoned R3 for residential, located adjacent to a County Park, park land, the High School and residential neighborhoods. An intensification of the density of the site would not be appropriate in this context and would be a detriment to the historical character and identity of Haddonfield. The “spatial context” or visual relationship between the various elements on the existing built and natural environment on that site as well as with the surrounding sites would be drastically changed with the addition of high intensity development such as is suggested in the RP. The size, scale and massing of the proposed development is inappropriate for that site. In the opinion of the HPC, there would be a negative impact with the proposed development plan as outlined.

#### CONCLUSION:

As one member of the HPC put it: “Close your eyes and think of Haddonfield. What do you see?” Historic structures and streetscapes, as well as an attractive down town area are what most people would envision. This is the identity that Haddonfield has cultivated and protected over the past 300 years. We at the HPC would argue that a high-density development such as the one described in the RP is incompatible with our unique community/municipal character, a character so cherished by the residents that 488 structures and their sites were placed under special design review protection on behalf of future generations. The important historic resources on this property and the historic associations with significant local, state and national events make it even more critical to maintain, protect and possibly even reclaim the character of this site with its singular importance.

APPENDIX A – Historical Narrative from Green Acre grant application:

**5. HISTORIC PRESERVATION: IMPORTANCE OF SITE AS A HISTORIC RESOURCE**

From historic preservation to paleontology to challenging the prejudices of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Haddonfield has contributed more than its share of significant "firsts" (and "seconds") to the history books. Due to its location, important Victorian buildings and the people associated with them, the Bancroft land figures prominently in many of these events. A highly visible location on Kings Highway East, this site is also viewed as the town's northeastern "Gateway," setting the stage and expectations of visitors to historic Haddonfield.

Haddonfield is well known for its on-going commitment to historic preservation, an important tool used to preserve the character of "this beautiful town," threatened by demolitions and developers in the late 1960s. In 1971, Haddonfield was the second New Jersey municipality to form a Historic District (over 400 structures and the central business district) with the protected structures listed on both the National Register of Historic Places and the New Jersey State Register of Historic Places. The Bancroft property is located in the Historic District.

Several of Haddonfield's most revered historical buildings, recognized for their importance over and above their inclusion in the Historic District, are clustered within 1/2 mile of this site: Greenfield Hall, the Haddon Fortnightly Clubhouse, the Hip Roof House and the Indian King Tavern. Located next to the two main transportation arteries of the time (Kings Highway and the Cooper River), the Bancroft property was situated, like the others, at the crossroads of 18th and 19th century Haddonfield.

Significant Resource: Crossroads of American Revolution

Today, the Bancroft site is notable for its importance to Haddonfield's historic preservation vision and identity. It is situated on Old Kings Highway—the original road traveled by the King of England and later patriots in the colonial period of our nation's history. Haddonfield's Indian King tavern, about a quarter-mile away, was the (temporary) site of the State Assembly when it was chased from Trenton by British forces. While convened in Haddonfield, the legislators declared New Jersey a state and adopted the Great Seal of New Jersey.

Located in the "crossroads of the American Revolution," many troops from both sides occupied and camped around Haddonfield. Reports hint that the Bancroft site was used for this purpose, including by Hessian mercenaries.

Margaret Bancroft/The Bancroft School

The Bancroft site is equally important for its association with Margaret Bancroft (1854-1912), whose life's work as an educator and an advocate was dedicated to improving the lives of developmentally disabled children.

In 1883, Margaret Bancroft founded the Bancroft Training School, the first of its kind in the country. She quickly attracted national and international attention with her revolutionary and highly successful methods of teaching such children. Thanks to her efforts, the potential and the humanity of developmentally challenged children was recognized. "The wisdom of her teaching and its value in practical work were thus gradually impressed upon a slowly widening circle of hearers, until at length the truth that she advocated was firmly established." ("The

Book of Views, The Bancroft Training School," from the Haddonfield Historical Society library)

Paleontology: Possible fossils specimens on Bancroft site

Dinosaurs play a part in another Haddonfield (and international) "first" with the mid 1800s discovery of the first nearly complete dinosaur skeleton. The excavation site of "*Hadrosaurus foulkii*," designated as a National Historic Landmark park in 1994, is roughly 3/4 mile away from the back boundary of the Bancroft parcel.

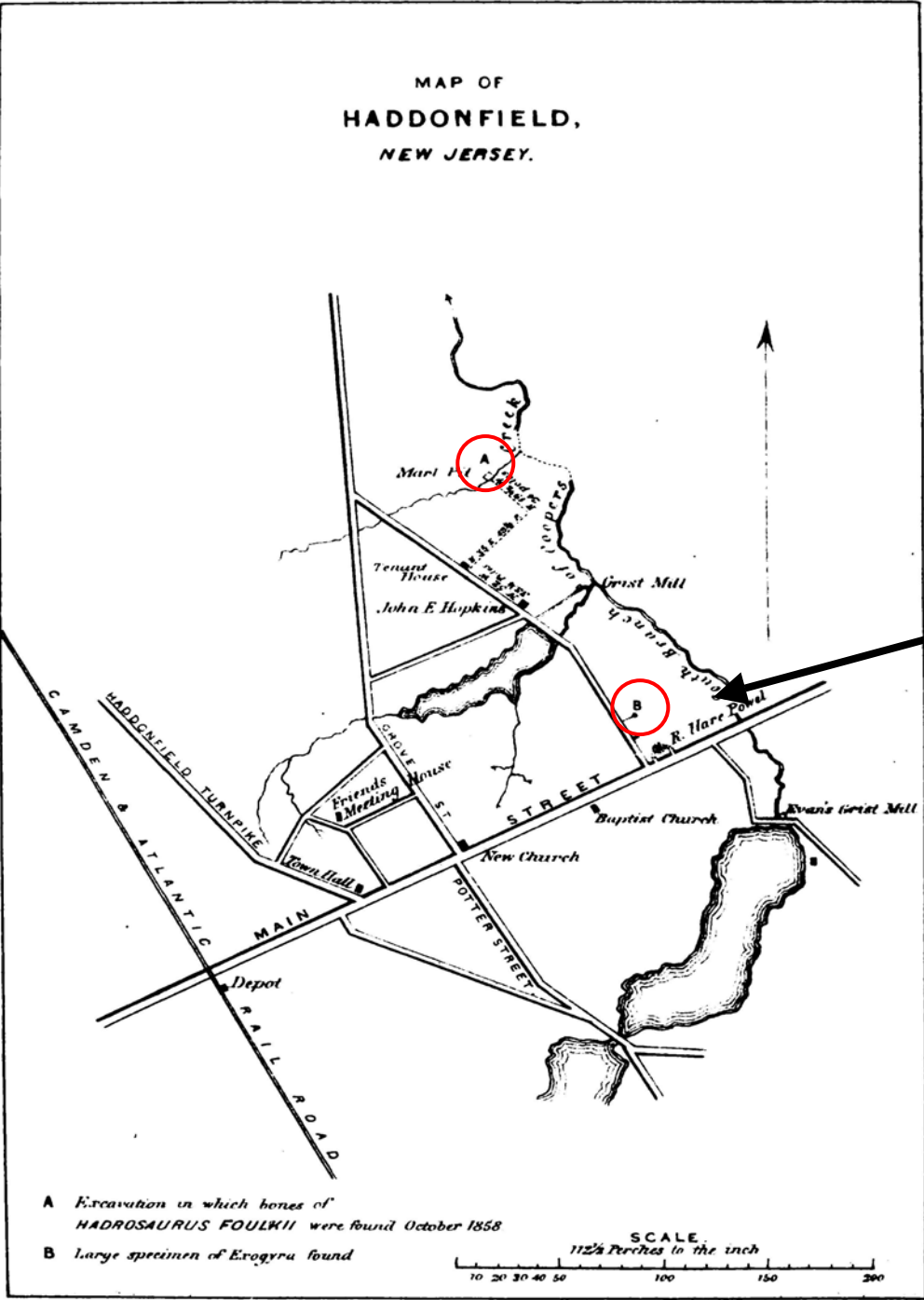
"*Hadrosaurus foulkii*" was discovered in 1858 by William Parker Foulke, a member of Philadelphia's Academy of Natural Sciences. Until that time, only small fossil bits and pieces had been found, tantalizing clues which baffled the scientists of that time. Experts say that the discovery of the Haddonfield dinosaur fossil "was the catalysis that led to everything we now know about the dinosaurs.

When the fossil discovery was presented to the Academy in December 1858, both the report and the accompanying maps indicated that other larger fossil specimens had also been found at a specific site on the present-day Bancroft property.

The location, between today's Hopkins Lane and Kings Highway East, was clearly marked on the map of the property with the words "Large Specimen of *Exogyra* Found" The report comments that "Of the two *exogyra* presented on behalf of Mr. Robert Hare Powel, the smaller was dug, a number of years since, from Mr. Hopkins' farm. The larger, showing a curious peculiarity of growth, was taken more recently from a small excavation in Mr. Powel's ground, between Mr. Hopkins' and the main street. The diagram upon the table would make clear to the members the principal localities which have been mentioned." (Main Street is now Kings Highway)

This companion site has been brought to the attention of the DEP for possible fossil site preservation as they update their current listings.

APPENDIX B Map from report presented to the Academy of Natural Science, Philadelphia PA in 1868 indicating location of observed fossils



Bancroft East Parcel

APPENDIX C  
Historic Outbuildings on Bancroft Site:



Building #1: Fieldstone building on East parcel (next to County Park). Original door below grade could indicate a previous use as a smoke house, root cellar, or ice house. Double level doors on left hand side could be another sign of large heavy items being stored in the building at some point. Bracketed eaves. Victorian style chimney could also be original.



Building #2: Small Frame building on West parcel (next to Lullworth Hall).

Dutchlap siding, brick foundation, heavily bracketed soffits and overhangs..., could be built in 1920's or 30's



Building # 3- Original Tin roof with recessed Yankee gutter, board & batten style siding, brick foundation, Heavily bracketed soffits & eaves.

