

RESOLUTION

**FOR RECOGNITION AND PROTECTION OF
SITES RELATED TO SLAVERY**

WHEREAS, during the first two centuries of Baltimore County’s existence, until November 1, 1864, it was a legal and routinely accepted part of the culture in Maryland for some persons to hold other human beings in absolute involuntary servitude; and

WHEREAS this absolute deprivation of liberty, and sometimes even of life, had manifold horrendous consequences – often destroying the sanctity of family relationships, with children and spouses heartlessly sold forever away from one another; and

WHEREAS slaves were also ruthlessly deprived of the fruits of their own brutally hard labor, without which Baltimore County’s economic prosperity could scarcely have been achieved; and

WHEREAS slaves were regarded as mere chattels, perhaps to be treated with some modicum of decency, perhaps to be shockingly abused and defiled – solely depending upon their owners’ degree of humanity, and with no recourse to appeal for justice; and

WHEREAS untold thousands of slaves were held captive on properties throughout Baltimore County, some lucky few in the attics or cellars of a master’s home or outbuilding, but mostly in crude, wretched shelters, virtually all of which have disappeared during the last century and a half; and

WHEREAS, as the amazing archeological discoveries at Fort Garrison have proven, slavery sites are likely still to hold the potential for yielding remarkable information about the survival of African culture among the inhabitants of slave “quarters” from which the County’s culture was so immeasurably enriched through subsequent generations; and

WHEREAS heartrending accounts by and about the slaves with the inspiring courage to risk the perils of fleeing from their bondage have been linked to specific properties still existing in Baltimore County; and

WHEREAS a deep sense of common humanity compels this generation of Baltimore Countians to honor the memories of these tens of thousands of slaves for their lifetimes not only of quiet desperation, enduring scarcely-imaginable suffering, but also of

courageous resistance to their oppression, striving continually to assert their humanity;
and

WHEREAS no memorial to these victims could be more fitting or more compelling than the few remaining buildings and places associated with their personal tragedies and triumphs;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Baltimore County Landmarks Preservation Commission that, for the purpose of recognizing and protecting the buildings, structures and potential archeological sites which are so intrinsically associated with these events of transcending historical importance and which constitute the mute, physical legacy of slavery in Baltimore County:

1. The Commission will, as rapidly as research is completed, move to achieve Landmark listing or other suitable measures for the permanent protection of the buildings, structures, and sites that are reasonably believed to have been associated with this tragic era of our County's history; and
2. The Commission requests its staff to treat slavery-related properties among its highest proprieties for research, Landmark nomination or other protective measures.

DULY ADOPTED by vote of the Commission
this _____ day of _____, 2005.

James E. Matthews, Chairman

Vicki Nevy, Administrator/Secretary