



Save the date—Monday, June 2, 2008, 7 PM

June 2, 2008, 7 PM, the Charlottesville City Council will consider re-establishing the seven acre “individually protected property” (IPP) designation for the Timberlake Branham Farm at 1512 East Market Street.

The Timberlake-Branham Farm is a keystone of the Woolen Mills Village, it is the home-place to generations of Woolen Mills people.

The cultural and architectural importance of this property was first recognized by Virginia in 1981 and by the National Park Service in 1984 when it was added to the National Register of Historic Places.

In October of 1993, Charlottesville City Council conferred “protected” (IPP) status to this seven acre Woolen Mills gem.

In February of 2007, the City Zoning administrator found that 83% of the protected status had been removed by accident four years earlier.

This property lost its protective zoning overlay through an error. It is in everyone’s interest to acknowledge the problem and correct the error.

We are passionately committed to fairness and due process. We believe that zoning should be a conscious, legislative process carried out by our elected officials.

We must be able to rely on the accuracy of the municipal records and be able to rely on the fairness of the procedure in changing those records.

June 2nd, Council will decide whether to allow first steps toward the reaffirmation of the Timberlake-Branham Farm’s special status.

A move in that direction would be a win-win land use decision. The continued recognition of this special Woolen Mills place will positively affect the property owner, the Woolen Mills neighborhood, and the larger Central Virginia community for generations to come.

What can I do?

The goal is to retain the historic residential character of the Woolen Mills Neighborhood for generations to come.

To help achieve that goal there are three primary courses of action.

- 1) **Attend City Council's June 2 meeting.** There is no need to stay long. The only chance for comment regarding the reestablishment of Timberlake-Branham Farm's special status will be in the first half hour of Council's meeting, between 7:00 and 7:30 PM. To speak at this time, sign up before the meeting commences for "Matters by the Public". There is a sign up sheet at the front of the room.
- 2) **Write a letter and/or send an email.** This rezoning process will involve City Council, the Charlottesville Planning Commission and the Board of Architectural Review (BAR). To save trees, consider addressing your letter to all three groups:
 - Dear Councilors, Planning Commissioners and BAR members...
 - Addresses
 - a. City Councilors, via email is council@charlottesville.org , via ground mail, PO Box 911, Charlottesville, VA, 22902
 - b. Planning Commissioners, via email, send care of creasym@charlottesville.org , ground mail, PO Box 911, Charlottesville, VA, 22902 c/o Ms. Missy Creasy.
 - c. Board of Architectural Review, via email, send care of scala@charlottesville.org , ground mail, PO Box 911 c/o Ms. Mary Joy Scala.
 - d. Please CC: emails to vdunham@gmail.com and emory@cstone.net
- 3) **Attend the meeting and observe.** People in chairs focus Council's attention. Please support our elected officials.

What could you say or write that would help? Speak from your heart. Our interests and viewpoints are as varied as our personalities.

But certainly possibilities include:

- Historic designations matter, they have value. They matter to landowners, to neighbors, to communities, to the whole City. If we are serious about protecting our unique properties, then we mustn't allow preservation overlays to be removed without fair due process.

- The individually protected property designation (IPP) is good for the region, good for neighborhood, good for “cultural tourists” and good for the landowner. It is a win-win no-cost solution that will contribute to the economic and cultural vitality of Charlottesville.
- Point out that Woolen Mills residents first sought BAR review for this property in 1988. Point out that the written record (maps, documents and minutes) clearly support Council's original action—protection of the seven acre parcel.
- You could quote from the survey of this property done in 1993 when Council enacted the seven-acre protective zoning...
 - *Of possibly greater importance than the design of the house itself, however, is the role that it plays in the neighborhood. The southern side of Woolen Mills Road was divided into five-acre tracts in the 1880's, and substantial Victorian houses were built along the road with gardens and pastures behind them. The builder of this house, James E. Timberlake, was a foreman at the Charlottesville Woolen Mills. Several of these large houses have been lost, but with this one, enough remains to establish the character of the neighborhood and to maintain the rhythm and scale of the streetscape. The prominent location of this house on a knoll high above the street gives it special importance to the neighborhood. The loss of such a dominant presence would have a serious effect on the entire Woolen Mills area.*
- For the descendants of people who worked in the Mill, for descendants of Mill administrators, for admirers of the hard working people who comprised “The Charlottesville Woolen Mill”—speak of the value to future generations of maintaining this unique “fabric of history” at the foot of Monticello Mountain. Working people built America, their contribution to our nation is too often ignored.
- At a time when the Board of Architectural Review has recommended the [addition of ten new properties](#) to the “Individually Protected Properties” it would be fitting to correct the 83% shrinkage of the Timberlake-Branham IPP.
- Are you an avid walker? Speak about the potential of a pedestrian path connecting the Downtown mall and Monticello via a walk down “Woolen Mills Road.” The house at Monticello is 6/10ths of a mile from the end of Market Street.
- With the residential Woolen Mills Village approaching nomination as a National Register Historic District, it is the appropriate time to address the accidental loss of a locally protected property.
- No one would be hurt if future development or redevelopment of this site required BAR review. Everyone wins.

If you have special expertise, or a unique viewpoint, bring that experience to bear when you write.

For more information, we will post source documents on the Woolen Mills Road website, <http://www.historicwoolenmills.org> , in the coming days.

June 2008

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