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Resident Curator Program

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RESIDENT CURATOR PROGRAMS

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BLS program, Leadership and Management

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Report Contents

**History of Virginia's Resident Curator
Programs**

**DHR | Virginia Department of Historic
Resources**

Program Aspects

**Information regarding Historic Black Towns
and Settlements Alliance (<https://hbtsa.org/>)**

Potential challenges/Observations

Virginia's establishment of Resident Curator programs

- **In January 2011, the General Assembly amended Va. Code Ann. § 15.2-2306 authorizing localities to develop resident curator programs. The Code enables localities to create, by ordinance, "a resident curator program such that private entities through lease or other contract may be engaged to manage, preserve, maintain, or operate, including the option to reside in, any such historic area, property, lands, or estate owned or leased by the locality."**
- **The Program (RCP) is designed to preserve historic properties by offering long-term leases to qualified tenants who agree to rehabilitate and maintain these historic Resident Curator resources. A curator can be a private citizen, a non-profit entity, or a for-profit entity.**

DHR | Virginia Department of Historic Resources



**The Virginia Department of
Historic Resources is the
State Historic Preservation
Office.**


**Their mission is to foster,
encourage, and support the
stewardship of Virginia's
significant historic
architectural,
archaeological, and cultural
resources.**

Source: <https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/>

DHR Easement program

- The DHR Easement program is very similar to the Resident Curator program but is managed on a statewide scale and slightly different in nature. This program is another type of curator program and can be an alternative for some individuals or organizations.
- Although the purpose of both programs are similar, the Easement program also speaks to what makes the resident curator programs so unique.
<https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/easements/>
- An overview of the easement program's history can be found in a 2006 article (Forty Years of Preservation: Virginia's Easement Program) authored by former DHR senior architectural historian Calder Loth.
https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/pdf_files/Easement%20Article%20Extract%20from%20Notes.pdf

Virginia History/Resident Curator Program




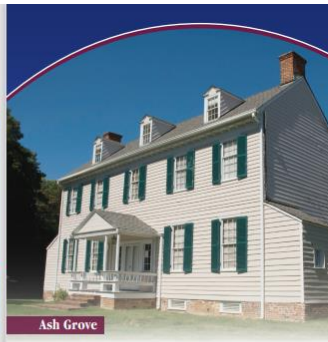
History Preservation Partnerships

RESIDENT CURATOR PROGRAM

Fairfax County Park Authority

Ellmore Farmhouse

Be a preservation hero. Help Fairfax County preserve our tangible past by partnering with us to care for our historic resources. Slices of Fairfax County history are slipping away as some little-used, publicly-owned historic properties fall victim to the elements and disuse. The Resident Curator Program (RCP) is designed to preserve historic properties by offering long-term leases to qualified tenants who agree to rehabilitate and maintain these historic resources. A curator can be a private citizen, a non-profit entity, or a for-profit entity.

Proposed rehabilitation of these sites must meet the Secretary of the Interior's standards for rehabilitating historic properties, and the curator must provide reasonable public access to the property. In return, curators pay no rent as long as they continue to fulfill their obligations. Curators do, however, pay utilities and county property taxes.

During the selection process, potential curators will be assessed through the evaluation of their proposed work plan. The proposed use must be compatible with the historic nature of the resource, the general management plan for the park, the mission of the Fairfax County Park Authority. Curators are chosen based on their financial capabilities and their experience in construction, contracting, and historic preservation.

Shortly after the Virginia General Assembly enacted legislation enabling localities to create RCPS, Fairfax County launched a study of the program and became the first locality in the state to enact a RCP. Since then, Fairfax County has identified qualified historic resources ready for curatorship.

For more information about the Resident Curator Program visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/rcp, call 703-324-8700 or email Parkmail@fairfaxcounty.gov.



A Fairfax County Va. publication • 4716

703-324-8700
TTY: 703-324-8700



Model - Fairfax Resident Curator Program

Potential challenges

- There is extensive information on Resident Curator programs in both Virginia and Maryland. Fairfax County has developed a blueprint for success for their Curators, and they provide close coordination and assistance to both potential and current resident curators.
- One issue is that these projects are sometimes massive, and curators can run out of money, time, and enthusiasm for their role as curators. What happens to the property if the curator became ill or passes away?
- Leasing agreements for a curator program involve an unbelievably detailed lease negotiation requiring extensive legal assistance to craft.

Suggestions and improvements to be explored

- Since some of the agreements involve leasing to curators with families, I would ensure that these leases considers the curator's family to allow temporary modification of the agreement.
- Although the lease includes a formal plan to release the property back to the county, I would like to see more options allowing a substitute or temporary curator, or other types of considerations in case of unforeseen circumstances.
- Develop contingency plans that could allow other relatives or friends to continue and finish what was started by the original curator.
- If needed, provide independent legal resources for curators during the initial stages of developing the lease, working with external contractors, and negotiations with the County or municipal entity providing the potential curated property.

Historic Black Towns and Settlements Alliance (<https://hbtsa.org/>)



HISTORIC BLACK TOWNS & SETTLEMENTS-HBCU SUMMIT 2021

Over the last few years, historic black towns have been working with Historic Black Colleges & Universities collaborating on projects to help improve and preserve historic areas. Join us as we expand upon our current collaborations and share ideas about future collaboration projects.

January 30, 2021
8am - 2pm (EST)
Virtual Event
Register at www.hbtsa.org

History of the Historic Black Towns and Settlements Organization:

- ❖ Former Tuskegee Mayor, Johnny Ford started building relationships with other leaders from historic black towns across America.
- ❖ HB TSA members received individual and collective consulting from a team of consultants after receiving a grant from National Trust for Historic Preservation. The consultants reviewed and provided feedback regarding each town's archival collections, potential for cultural tourism and vernacular environment.
- ❖ In partnership with the University of North Carolina, Southern Historical Collection and historic black towns in North Carolina including Navassa, Princeville and Pocahontas, HB TSA held a regional convening of historic towns on the campus of University of North Carolina and focused on building the capacity of each town to strengthen infrastructure and more.
- ❖ Dr. Michelle Robinson leads educational and outreach programs, HB TSA has hosted various trainings and workshops for members. Dr. Robinson's background as a professor at University of Alabama-Tuscaloosa and now, Spelman College lends itself to help HB TSA members strengthen their communities through education and outreach activities.
- ❖ In 2019, Dr. Robinson secured a grant from the Mellon Foundation to engage students from Historic Black Colleges and Universities to work alongside leaders in communities of color. Through these efforts, local communities created local projects aimed at developing community driven archives.



Thank you!

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- ❖ Aimee L. Vosper, Deputy Director/CBD
- ❖ Dr. Ana G. Chichester, Director, Bachelors of Liberal Studies Program, University of Mary Washington
- ❖ Historic Black Towns and Settlements Alliance Summit 2021