



CHAPTER 9

Goal 5: To Enhance the Character and Uniqueness of the Freedom Community

Among the principal concerns noted by citizens during the discussions leading up to the drafting of the Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan was the lack of a “sense of place” or a “feeling of community”. The Sacred Places Workshop focused on the many amenities contained within the Freedom community and suggested ways to protect and enhance them. This plan, therefore, presents a series of recommendations which promote the uniqueness of a variety of elements within the Freedom community while establishing a link to an identity for the neighborhoods and other amenities that make the Freedom community a special place.

A. Historic Properties, Buildings, and Sites

The Freedom community has a number of historically-significant sites that, along with the scenic views, open spaces, reservoirs, and other unique environmental resources, are major components of its unique character. Recognized as non-renewable, these resources deserve special recognition as elements of the past, thereby defining future preservation and conservation efforts within the Freedom community. Combined, these structures and sites add up to a valuable amenity with considerable cultural, ethnic, and economic value to residents of the Freedom community. The Historic Sites Map indicates the location and types of buildings and sites that make up the inventory of non-renewable historic resources within the Freedom community.

B. Scenic Areas and Corridors

“Scenic roads” are those roads that have a unique aesthetic character owing to its alignment, details, and its affiliated landscape. Scenic views are often associated with roadways, highways, rivers, and streams from which vantage points of the views are typically enjoyed. The previously-discussed Sacred Places Workshop resulted in an overall consensus on areas of value within the Freedom community in terms of their scenic beauty. In many cases, areas of scenic beauty coincide with environmentally-sensitive areas such as steep slopes, waterways and reservoirs, stream valleys, and historic structures which already receive measured protection from development pressures.

In Freedom, a multitude of rural roads, built before the neighborhoods of Freedom became home to over 25,000 people, combine to create a maze of scenic corridors. These corridors, combined with the historically-significant buildings and sites contained in the above-mentioned inventory, deserve recognition and a level of preservation in keeping with the goal of enhancing the character and uniqueness of the Freedom community. Scenic Roads Map indicates the location and listing of scenic corridors and views of the neighborhoods of Freedom.



C. Gateways to the Freedom Community

As previously discussed, the boundaries of the Freedom community are located along the Liberty Reservoir (east), the South Branch of the Patapsco River (south), Morgan Run Stream (north), and MD 97 (west). Of the major entryways (MD 26, MD 32, MD 97), only MD 26 on the western boundary of the Freedom community does not involve a water crossing. MD 32 to the north and south requires crossing the Liberty Reservoir and Patapsco River, respectively. MD 26 at the Baltimore County line requires crossing a bridge over the Liberty Reservoir. MD 97 at the Howard County line requires a crossing of the Patapsco River. Freedom is literally surrounded by water. It is also important to note that these gateways to Freedom are also gateways to Carroll County and, as such, deserve ever more consideration for enhancement and protection. The preponderance of water crossings to enter or leave the Freedom community creates excellent opportunities to clearly demonstrate the boundaries of Freedom through appropriate signage and boundary enhancement.

D. Recommendations to Enhance the Character and Uniqueness of the Freedom Community

The following recommendations capitalize on the considerable resources already available in the Freedom community while also presenting a means to enhance the existing and future character of Freedom.

Inventory, preserve, and make wise use of historic resources in the Freedom community

- Promote the adaptive re-use of historically-significant buildings to preserve the history of the community while also serving residents of the neighborhoods in Freedom.
- Require new buildings and subdivisions to respect historically-significant properties and sites through creative design and placement of new roads, buildings, signage, landscaping, etc.
- Designate and conserve areas identified as having scenic beauty or historic importance as a part of new and future development.
- Conduct an historical resources inventory as part of subdivision planning in Freedom and address any resources identified in a plan for preservation as part of development approval.

Promote the recognition and protection of local scenic resources and corridors

Develop standards to allow flexibility in the design of new roads to make them compatible with their natural and historic settings.

Identify various grants available for scenic resource protection

Numerous funds are available through the state and county enhancement programs that need to be pursued in order to protect scenic roads and corridors.



Create gateways to Freedom and Carroll County at high-visibility locations

Construct “Welcome to Freedom, Carroll County, Maryland” signs for placement on Carroll County side of bridges over the Liberty Reservoir (MD 26 and MD 32) and the Patapsco River (MD 32 and MD 97).

Develop programs for the Freedom area that will encourage and enhance historic preservation

If the preservation of our built environment is to become a movement in Carroll County, it is important for the Freedom community to recognize and support historic preservation in the creation of liveable communities and to help promote preservation through the stewardship of its own historic resources. The Freedom area should benefit from countywide regulations that aim to foster and facilitate inter- and intra-governmental cooperation and assure appropriate funding both for personnel and for the maintenance and interpretation of buildings and sites in an effort to preserve and enhance its heritage resources.

Preserve the identified historic and scenic entities within the Freedom area

To achieve the countywide Master Plan’s goal to preserve the totality of Carroll County’s historic experience, the various historic buildings and scenic corridors within the Freedom area should be preserved.

Facilitate economic development by providing mechanisms for the public and private investment in historic properties

Historic preservation can play an important role in the economic development of the Freedom community in general and the expansion of the tourism industry in particular. Public decision making should consider the potential for renewal and the value of investments in existing infrastructure. Economic incentives for the preservation, maintenance, and adaptive re-use of historic structures that are currently either functionally or economically inefficient should be sought.

Promote historic preservation through public education and outreach

The education of public officials and private citizens in the Freedom area on the benefits and methods of preservation, as well as the history, value, and unique qualities of the properties for which they are stewards and the history of the communities and the region in general, are vital to the understanding of, appreciation for, and preservation of our historic resources. This education process should start when young and should be ongoing.

E. Fiscal Impacts

The implementation of recommendations contained within this chapter will have limited budgeting impacts on the county. Aside from the construction of gateway signs which could cost a total of \$5,000 to \$10,000, most recommendations to enhance the character and uniqueness of Freedom can be done with existing staff.

