

Article from the Loudoun Independent, Wednesday, 9 June 2010  
By Jason Jacks

## Broad Run Tollhouse: 'It is Worth Preserving'

Developer to Buy National Register of Historic Places Structure for County, Nonprofit

Tucked down an embankment from car-clogged Route 7 in Ashburn is a little-known piece of history that has fallen on hard times. Known as the Broad Run Tollhouse, the nearly 200-year-old stone structure has been a stop for weary travelers, a hideout for bootleggers and a private home.



Broad Run Tollhouse.  
Courtesy of Loudoun Planning Department

Today, though, the only people with access to this recently foreclosed property, which includes an out-of-place-looking swimming pool, work for the mortgage company that owns it.

"This is such a unique structure," Loudoun Supervisor Lori Waters (R-Broad Run) said publicly earlier this month. "It is worth persevering,"

The house rests on almost one acre near the Routes 7 and 28 interchange and next to 400 acres that a developer wants to transform into a massive mixed-use community of 1,400 homes and 4.5 million square feet of commercial space to be called Kincora Village.

While the development never threatened the tollhouse, the building was once in the way of a future extension of Pacific Boulevard, a key artery for the future community.

Because of the road, there was talk of picking up and moving the building. But after local preservationists aired concerns about disturbing the structure and asked that it be preserved in place, plans for the road were altered, moving it slightly south of the tollhouse.

"It's no longer in the way of the road," said Kincora developer Michael Scott, who said the plan now is for his company to spend \$300,000 to purchase the property and give it to the county or a nonprofit to restore and maintain.

According to the original application to include the property on the National Register of Historic Places, which happened in 1970, Virginia's General Assembly passed legislation in 1809 creating the Leesburg Turnpike Co. tasked with building a toll road from Leesburg to the Little River Turnpike in Alexandria. As part of the project, the Broad Run Tollhouse and an accompany stone bridge was built in 1820.

When open, just as the name implies, the tollhouse was where travelers would stop to pay a fee to continue on Leesburg Turnpike. However, after another bridge along the road washed away in the 1840s and after business was slowed by competition from the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, the toll road was abandoned at the onset of the Civil War.

The tollhouse continued in use for several more decades, as travelers still paid a fee there to cross its bridge. During Prohibition, according to local historian Eugene Scheel, it was also a place where thirsty travelers would purchase illegal alcohol.

For much of the rest of its existence, the tollhouse was a private residence; and sometime along the way, a pool was added.

Annandale-based East Oaks LLC, a subsidiary of Mortgage Trustees LLC, now owns the property, according to land records, as it went into foreclosure three years ago. The county's assessor's office last valued the site at \$236,000, which is less than half the 2008 assessment of \$622,000.

Today, according to Loudoun Preservation Society President Lori Kimball, the site is Virginia's only tollhouse and accompanying bridge that remains intact, a key aspect to preserving it, she said. Another reason for bringing the tollhouse back to life, she said, is "there are so few historical structures in eastern Loudoun."

She said while the Loudoun Preservation Society is not in the "business of purchasing and restoring" properties, she said the group is trying to identify those who would be willing to take on the task of preserving the tollhouse. One idea being considered is to turn the building into a local history stop for hikers using a trail that will someday pass by the site.

"We are optimistic we can make something happen," she said.

Those who have an idea for what the tollhouse should become can contact the Loudoun Preservation Society at [ips@preserveloudoun.org](mailto:ips@preserveloudoun.org).