

Agency Official 106 Effect Report

*Installation of a Fire Suppression System in the Fredericksburg National Cemetery Lodge
Fredericksburg, Virginia*

**U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania County Battlefields Memorial National Military Park
120 Chatham Lane
Fredericksburg, Virginia 22405**

Purpose

Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania County Battlefields Memorial National Military Park was authorized by an act of Congress on February 14, 1927 (44 Stat. 1091). The purpose of the park, as stated in the act, is “to commemorate the Civil War battles of Fredericksburg, Spotsylvania Court House, Wilderness, and Chancellorsville, including Salem Church ... to survey, locate, and preserve the lines of the opposing armies in said battles, to open, construct, and repair such roads, highways, paths, and other approaches as may be necessary to make the historical points accessible to the public and to students of said battles ... and together also with such additional land as the Secretary of War may deem necessary for monuments, markers, tablets, roads, highways, paths, approaches, and to carry out the general purposes of this Act.” By Executive Order 6166 in 1933 the park was transferred to the Department of the Interior to be administered by the National Park Service.

The Fredericksburg National Cemetery Lodge was built in 1871. It served as the home for the superintendent, and his family, of the Fredericksburg National Cemetery. When the cemetery was transferred to the National Park Service in 1933, the lodge came with it. The lodge has been used as a residence for park staff ever since.

Need

The Fredericksburg National Cemetery Lodge is the oldest building in the park that did not exist during the Civil War, as it was built just six years after the war ended. The building has not had a fire suppression system and its continued use as residence would greatly benefit from improved protection. The floor plan is such that continued use of the second floor for bedroom space requires either a fire suppression system or development of additional fire escape and evacuation routes. After study, the park concluded that a fire suppression system would be the least intrusive option, would allow for continued occupancy, and would also help to preserve the structure in the event of a fire.

Property Description

A. Major Physical Components – The Fredericksburg National Cemetery Lodge sits inside the Fredericksburg National Cemetery. It is on the lower terrace and to the north of the cemetery carriage drive. The Fredericksburg National Cemetery is comprised of 12.00 acres and is the final resting place for 15,436 individuals.

B. Historical Significance – The Fredericksburg National Cemetery was established in 1865 and burials began the following year. The cemetery contains the burials of 15,436 individuals, all of whom are military veterans, spouses or dependents. The cemetery was closed to future burials in 2010. The lodge was built in 1871 and served as the home of the cemetery superintendent and his family. In 1933, the cemetery and the lodge were transferred to the National Park Service.

C. Archaeological Significance – The Fredericksburg National Cemetery is an archaeological site, containing the burials of 15,436 individuals. It is also part of the battlefields for the First and Second Battles of Fredericksburg. The cemetery is a contributing resource.

D. Historic Landscape Significance – The draft National Register documentation states:

“A number of resources in Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania NMP possess national significance under Criterion C in the areas of Architecture and Landscape Architecture...The layout and design of the landscape and buildings of Fredericksburg National Cemetery represent the initial concepts employed by Quartermaster General Montgomery C. Meigs in developing the burial grounds of the National Cemetery System.”

A Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) is currently being researched for the Fredericksburg National Cemetery. A Cultural Landscape Inventory (2011) does exist and states that the “Lodge Grounds and Yard” are character-defining features of the Fredericksburg National Cemetery. Also, the Lodge itself is identified as a character-defining feature.

E. Architectural Significance – The Fredericksburg National Cemetery Lodge was constructed in 1871 as a single-story residence for the cemetery superintendent and his family. The building was based upon a design by General Montgomery Meigs. Five years later a second story was raised, a kitchen addition was constructed in 1905 and in 1929 the cellar was added. While no historic structure report exists for the lodge, it is considered a contributing structure under the park’s draft National Register documentation.

Proposed Action

The park proposes to install a fire suppression system in the Fredericksburg National Cemetery Lodge. This system will be a wet pipe system, designed by EYP Architect and Engineering Firm, which designed the fire suppression system at Ellwood on the Wilderness Battlefield, and approved by the NPS’s Historical Architecture and Conservation Engineering (HACE) office. The intent of the fire protection system is to protect both building occupants and the historic structure in the event of a fire. The project will include bringing new water service, for both fire suppression and domestic use, to the building from the main in Sunken Road. Approximately 750 lf of fire sprinkler piping, 15 sprinkler heads, sidewalls and pendants, new access panel, new meter and water line will be installed. The work will be done in a manner that minimizes impact to the historic character defining features of the structure.

To provide adequate water service for a wet system, the replacement of the existing 2” water line by a 4” water line is necessary. The plan is to excavate the existing line and install the new line in the same trench and immediate area. Vegetation that has grown up over the existing line will need to be removed. This includes the oak tree that stands in front (south) of the lodge and some of the boxwoods along the west side of the building. The oak tree was planted in 2008. The

boxwoods are much older. The park will replace all vegetation after the new waterline has been installed.

The new waterline will enter the cellar of the lodge where the existing 2" line enters on the west side of the building. The hole in the building's foundation is an existing 4" in diameter. At this point, the water service will drop to a 3" line to enter the building, thus not requiring an enlargement of the penetration hole.

Once inside the cellar, the fire suppression pipes will access the first floor via two existing chases on the west wall, one in the dining room and a second in the living room. An additional chase will be built in the northwest corner of the first floor bedroom. Pipes will run from the floor to the ceiling inside the chases. The gypsum board ceiling on the first floor will be removed and the sprinkler lines will extend to the center of all rooms within the first floor ceiling joists, at which point sprinkler heads will protrude from the ceiling. In the kitchen, the existing acoustical tile ceiling will be removed for installation of the sprinkler lines. All gypsum board and acoustical tile ceilings will be replaced and painted to match the existing colors.

On the second floor, the pipes will access the ceiling via two existing chases and a third chase to be built inside the hall closet. The sprinkler heads on the second floor will protrude through the walls into each room, providing adequate coverage.

No historic fabric will be removed or destroyed during the project. The gypsum board ceilings are not historic, nor is acoustical tile ceiling in the kitchen. The addition of two new chases should not drastically affect the building and will be reversible.

Description of Mitigation Measures

The park is committed to having an archaeologist monitor the removal of the existing waterline and the installation of the new waterline.

Effect Analysis

It is park's opinion that the preferred alternative will have "no adverse effect" on the historic properties of Fredericksburg National Cemetery Lodge or the Fredericksburg National Cemetery.

Park Consultation

The proposal is being circulated to the park's Section-106 advisor for landscape architecture, historic architecture, and archaeology.

The proposal will go through a 30-day public comment and review period. During that time, the project will be placed on the NPS public website. The park will also contact representatives of interested local organizations, such as the University of Mary Washington's Department of Historic Preservation, City of Fredericksburg, the Rappahannock Valley Civil War Round Table, the Central Virginia Battlefields Trust, and the Pamunkey Indian Tribe.

The project will go through a 30-day comment and review period with the Virginia SHPO.

Attached Supporting Documentation

- A. Park Map
- B. Photos

Conclusion

At important historic sites, the proposed undertaking would foster fulfillment of the park's General Management Plan directives to protect cultural resources. This project will have "no adverse effect" upon historic resources.

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