

Jason Sullivan

From: Jim and Bev Wiggins <jimerly@embarqmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, December 2, 2017 10:05 PM
To: Seali; Amy Diamond
Cc: Lynn Richardson; Cory Connell
Subject: Ryan's Crossing Site Visit and Research
Attachments: Ryans Crossing Deed Search and Historical Research.pdf; Ryans Crossing photos of old cabin.pdf; Cara Tripp Ryan Family tree (5 generations)1.pdf; Evander Tripp Family tree (5 generations)1.pdf

Notes on Ryan's Crossing Proposed Development

To: Alex Barroso and Amy Diamond

From: Bev Wiggins, CCHA Preservation and Cemetery Survey

Copied to: Lynn Richardson, Chatham County Planning Office, Cory Connell S&EC

I am attaching pages summarizing my research on this property. Note that I have made corrections and additions to the summary of research that I sent to you earlier.

Site Visit and Cabin

Site visit to old cabin on property on 27 Nov 2017. Bev and Jim Wiggins were accompanied by owners, Alex Barroso and Amy Diamond, and soil scientist Cory Connell, with Soil and Environmental Consultants, PA. The old structure is located on parcel 88505 and is visible on the Chatham County GIS aerial photos included in the EIS for the project.

The structure consists of a one-room log house (divided by a non-structural interior wall) and an added shed section. The log portion of the structure has been covered on the exterior by board and batten siding and much of the structure appears to be in fair condition. The floor shows deterioration and we did not enter the cabin because of this. The added shed portion of the structure is in a much deteriorated state. Some cut nails were observed in the siding.

A large, well-built, stacked stone chimney graces the north-northeast side of the structure and appears to be in good condition from the exterior. The log walls of the structure are exposed on the interior. A steep stairwell to the loft occupies the northwest corner of the main room.

Cory Connell provided coordinates for the cabin: 35.832171 -79.135182. The cabin is located on the northern part of the parcel to be developed and, according to the developer, the intention is to leave this part of the property as it is, as part of a conservation development plan.

My deed search suggests that the Tripp family owned this property (a section of a larger parcel owned by them) since the early 1800s. Members of the family may have lived on the property as early as 1813, when John Tripp purchased 250 acres from John Wilson (who may have been his father-in-law as his wife is believed to be Nancy Wilson). John Tripp transferred 150 acres on Wilkerson Creek to Wilson Tripp [aka John Wilson Tripp] in 1844 and it appears that Wilson and wife Emeline lived on this property.

Other deeds show parts of the property passing to Wilson and Emeline's son William and then to his son Evander Tripp, who eventually passed the property to his children, including Cara Tripp Ryan and her sons. References in deeds DP/437 and GO/525 indicate that Emeline continued to live on the property with her children and that her residence was later inhabited by three of her unmarried daughters [Mary, Jeannette, and Geneva], and subsequently by Emeline's grandson Evander Tripp's family.

I believe it is likely that the cabin we investigated on the property may well be the residence of Wilson and Emeline Tripp, dating from the mid-1800s, and lived in by members of the Tripp family well into the 20th century. Structures of this age are not common in the county. Most have succumbed to the ravages of time and the elements.

Suggestions regarding the Cabin

1. If possible, have the cabin evaluated by someone with expertise in historical architecture to document it and to determine the feasibility of a) restoration or b) salvage. I expect that your legal advisors will suggest that the cabin can't be left where it is, as it is, because of liability issues. This was also the case for an old tobacco barn on Briar Chapel property, but that structure ultimately was saved in situ. It is located in a common area next to an old cemetery. There are people who buy salvageable materials from structures such as this, but accessibility could be an issue in this location. A similar cabin on nearby property was moved to Virginia and incorporated into a larger, new structure.
2. If restoration or major salvage is not possible, consider salvaging some materials for use in other locations on the property (use rocks from the chimney or foundation for a wall at your entrance, or timbers for benches along your trails, for example). If you include signage indicating the source of the materials (and maybe a photo of the cabin or chimney) that would preserve part of the area's local history.
3. If you have to demolish the cabin but can leave the chimney in place, signage would, again, be a plus.
4. I suggest getting some better photos of the cabin, including the interior if it is safe enough to enter and clean up a bit, to use in future publicity, signage, etc.

5. If any interesting artifacts are found within the cabin or on the property, consider documenting them for use in future publicity, signage, etc.

Additional On-the-Ground Research

Identify and let us visit any additional ruins on the property. Wells, foundations, stills, fords, walls—anything that indicates human use would be of interest. Any in the conservation areas might serve as points of historical interest on a trail.

Search likely areas for possible family gravesites. I have found a newspaper article (copy included in my research report) indicating that Emeline is buried at Mt. Pleasant Church Cemetery. That leaves Wilson, who died in 1862 unaccounted for, along with any children that died along the way. Wilson could have been buried at Mann's Chapel or Mt. Pleasant, but I have found no record. The widespread use of family plots near the homestead is clearly evident in this area, so a reasonable search to exclude the possibility of an overlooked graveyard should be conducted. Some care will be required in clearing areas that have not yet been examined. Any graves on the site are likely to have only fieldstone markers and to be overgrown. It takes some skill to recognize sites in this condition.

Identify traces of old roads on the property. We would like to record the coordinates for these traces to enable locating old roads which are often mentioned in deeds. The Old Hillsborough Rd is mentioned in some of the Tripp deeds. If any easily recognizable traces are found that will not be destroyed by development, these might be marked in some way to add historical interest to the property.

Any additional information and/or photos of the people or property that the current owners can provide would add greatly to the story we are trying to tell. I hope the Ryans will share what they know.

Other Ways to Preserve and Share the Local History

Consider having historical signage along your common-area trails. (Briar Chapel has done some of this, though many of their signs are not particularly targeted to their specific locality. Historical points about the Tripps and Ryans and their use of the property would be more interesting than generic ones about the county or piedmont.

Using references to the Tripps and Ryans in your road names, trail names, etc. would also honor the local history of the property. You have made a start by calling the development Ryan's Crossing. I've heard developers complain that it is hard to come up with unique development and road names because so many obvious ones have been used, so they sometimes come up with names that are just so not Chatham County! Please consider names like Emeline's Homestead, Miz Emeline's Lane, Three Sisters Trail, Evander's Patch,

Evander's Path, Tripp's Legacy, Tripp's Tract, Tripp's Ridge, Reedy Fork Way, etc. as possibilities. (There's already a Tripp Road, off of Mt. Gilead Church Rd.) These are top-of-the-head suggestions just to give you an idea of the kinds of names that might be meaningful to current residents of the area as well as to your new residents if put into the context of the property's history.

Consider including the property's history as part of your marketing materials.

CCHA will be happy to recognize any efforts on your part to preserve the local history in these or other ways.

Attachments:

Ryan's Crossing Deed Search and Historical Research (corrected and updated)

Ryan's Crossing Photos of Old Cabin

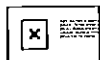
Family Tree of Cara Tripp Ryan *

Family Tree of Evander Tripp *

*These replace earlier family trees I sent you.

--

Jim and Beverly Wiggins
jimerly@embarqmail.com



Virus-free. www.avg.com

Ryan's Crossing Photos of Old Cabin 2 Dec 2017

Photos taken 27 Nov 2017. House on parcel 88505.

One room log house, divided by added interior wall (appears to be non-load bearing). Floor unstable so interior photos taken from doorway on west-southwest end (assumed to be front of house). Intact chimney of local stone on north-northeast side of structure. Shed addition on east-northeast end deteriorating. Standard stairway to loft. Exterior of log structure covered with board and batten siding. Observed cut nails in siding.



Interior of shed addition.



Stairs to loft



Fireplace interior



View from front door.



View from front door, showing interior wall on right. View through to shed section.



Chimney detail



Chimney



Chimney



Chimney



Exterior. Log corner where board and batten siding has deteriorated. This is to left of chimney.



View of chimney from east end.



Deteriorated sill in shed addition section.



Interior of shed addition.



Shed addition. Looks like they built to accommodate the large boulder.



South-southeast side elevation.