

# **Kensington Cabin Included in Master Plan for Historic Preservation**

Arguments to have the Kensington Cabin included in Master Plan for preservation were presented to Montgomery County Planning Board

By Ben Gross

The Kensington Historical Society and Montgomery County Preservation Commission took an important step in officially having the Kensington Cabin designated as a historic site.

Item seven on the Montgomery County Planning Board Meeting Agenda for Thursday, Oct. 14 was "Public Hearing, Worksession and Action on Update to Locational Atlas and Index of Historic Sites and Amendment to the Master Plan for Historic Preservation: Kensington Cabin."

Scheduled for the afternoon session, the hearing began with a presentation by the Historic Preservation Committee's Clare Lise Kelly, who reiterated which criteria the Cabin meets set forth in Chapter 24 A of the Montgomery County Code for enacting a Historic Preservation Ordinance. Jennifer Gurney, of the Kensington Historical Society followed, offering a historical perspective about the importance of preserving the cabin through photographs, news clippings and architectural renderings.

"It is the oldest remaining standing log structure in Montgomery County. The materials used to build it are simple, in the 'parkitecture' style popular then," Gurney said.

Members of the board paid careful attention to the presentations, often mentioning that they had a question, but would refrain from asking until the completion of all presentations. Leslie Miles the Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission offered few comments, most importantly reiterating that the Commission unanimously voted to include the Cabin in the Locational Atlas. Kensington Historical Society President Julie O'Malley spoke for Kensington residents and their interest in having the site remain as it.

The Planning Board asked a handful of questions, primarily regarding the specific boundaries that would be designated for preservation and how those boundaries might affect other municipal entities such as the Department of Transportation who is charged with maintaining Kensington Parkway which borders the proposed area. Other questions were raised as to how restoration of the site would be addressed, but Chair Francois Carrier quickly put the issue to rest commenting that "this hearing is not about money."

Vice Chair and Commissioner Marye Wells-Harley expressed strong feelings about the proposal.

"This is a very important building, representative of M-NCPPC's history," Wells-Harley said. "I know we can't preserve them all, but we'd be missing something if we don't take this opportunity."

At 2 p.m., Commissioner Norman Dreyfuss called for a vote, seconded by Commissioner Amy Presley. The board unanimously voted to include the Kensington Cabin in the Master Plan. After the meeting, a smiling O'Malley commented that she's very happy the Board recommended the Cabin for designation. Now it goes to the County Council for another hearing for formal designation, but at least the cabin has some protection for now, she said.