

WILLIAMSBURG LAND CONSERVANCY

LAND PROTECTION CRITERIA

Adopted by the Board of Directors on September 17, 2002.

SPECIFIC PROPERTY RESOURCES CRITERIA:

Primary Criteria

To solicit a landowner's interest in protection, at least three of these criteria must be met. To accept an opportunity for protection there is no hard and fast rule.

1. The property is in a primarily natural condition OR the property represents important farmland.
2. The property represents exceptionally valuable scenic or historic land.
3. Rare, threatened or endangered species and/or significant natural resources are present.
4. The resources comprise a high quality terrestrial and/or aquatic ecosystem.
5. The property contributes to the ecological viability of an identified park, greenway, or natural area.
6. The property could become part of a wildlife corridor or greenway system.
7. An easement will provide sufficient protection for the resource.
8. The property is large enough to adequately protect the resource.
9. There is no evidence of potential hazards or other liabilities on the property.
10. The potential exists for working with adjacent lands (landowners) to provide increased protection for the resource.
11. Current and/or proposed use of adjacent lands does not pose a significant threat to the protection of the resource.
12. Preservation does not conflict with other local government preservation programs.

Secondary Criteria

These criteria supplement the Primary Criteria in evaluating the need/opportunity for WLC to play a role in protection.

Scenic

1. Protection of the property would secure the scenic character of the local landscape.
2. Protection of the property would secure a scenic view visible from a park, natural area, road, body of water, trail or historic site.
3. The property is sufficiently visible for the public to be able to appreciate its scenic value.
4. Preserving the property helps maintain the scale and character of the surrounding landscape.
5. Protection of the scenic resource is compatible with other land uses in the vicinity.

6. The scenic resource is important for attracting tourists and/or businesses to the area.
7. The property contains unique or outstanding physiographic characteristics.

Historic

1. The property meets the qualifications for a “historically important land area” or a “certified historic structure” (see IRS regulations).
2. The property contributes to the historic and cultural resources of the area.
3. The property is included in a government-sponsored inventory of significant historic sites and/or structures.
4. The property and/or structure is in good condition and could be maintained in perpetuity.
5. The property has been identified as archaeologically significant, or has the potential for archaeological significance.

Recreational/Educational

1. The public would have regular, although perhaps limited, opportunities for access to and use of the property.
2. The property has qualities that would attract the public.
3. The property contains resources of educational and/or research value.
4. The property has the potential to become part of the area Greenway Master Plan or become part of a local, regional or state park.
5. The property has open space value due to its proximity to developing areas.

Resource-wide Criteria

1. Protection of the property would support the objectives of several partners.
2. Protection of the property preserves open space that contributes to the community’s environmental quality.
3. Protection of the property is consistent with clearly defined government conservation policy at the local, state or federal level.
4. Protection of the property yields significant public benefit.

PROTECTION CRITERIA: BASIC QUESTIONS

These are questions to consider for any land protection opportunity.

1. Does the property lie within WLC’s interest area (Williamsburg/James City County/Bruton District of York County)?
2. Does the property have any existing environmental protection designations?
3. What is the legal status of the property? Does the owner have clear title to the land?
4. Does the property have an existing Soil and Water Quality Conservation Plan?

5. Are there financial liabilities (including tax issues) on the property or the property owner that would negatively affect the Williamsburg Land Conservancy?
6. Are there environmental liabilities? Has a Phase 1 environmental audit been performed? Should one be?
7. Is the local government's comprehensive plan designation compatible with preservation?
8. What are the costs to the Williamsburg Land Conservancy for securing the protection of the property?
9. What are the costs to the Williamsburg land Conservancy for the management/oversight of the protected property?
10. Are there potential collaborators for protection of the property? Who?
11. Could the property be incorporated into an area-wide greenway system?
12. Has the property been identified by another agency for protection?
13. Does the property have existing road access?
14. What protection tool is best for protecting the property and meeting the needs of the landowner?
15. What other tools could be used to adequately protect the resource?
16. Is the landowner able and willing to make an appropriate contribution to a property-monitoring fund?
17. Are there marketable natural resources on the property--e.g. timber, sand/gravel? Are there buffer issues?
18. Is there a structure on the property? If so, what is its current condition and what would be its future disposition?