



In his last days in Office County Executive Jack B. Johnson (D) approved the nomination of six sites to the National Register from Prince George's County. The most notable among them is the Tayman tobacco barn of historic Croom in Upper Marlboro—the first tobacco barn nominated for the National Register. During a Dec. 3 press conference Johnson pressed the importance of preserving the county's heritage for the future and his nomination of the Tayman Barn will do just that.

County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III (D) agreed that the historic designation would be a boon for the county. "This type of national recognition will attract more people to the county and allow us to share the rich culture and diversity that makes Prince George's County a great place," he said.

For three centuries tobacco farms littered the scenery of Southern Maryland and played a vital role in the economy and culture of Prince George's County; and the tobacco barn was an important part. The Tayman tobacco barn was nominated to the National Register as a distinguished example of the architecture of the 20th Century air-curing tobacco barn found only in Maryland. The air-curing process involved hanging tobacco upside down in a well-ventilated building to improve the smell and taste.

Built in 1941, the Tayman family used the barn to air-cure tobacco for 19 years, until it was sold to a private family. In 1987, the Vestry of St. Thomas Episcopal Church purchased the land and its buildings, where the barn continues to sit unused since its renovation in 2008.

In recent years, the pressure from the Maryland tobacco buy-out in 2001 and the development needs of the metropolitan area pushed the vibrant tobacco culture into the past. But this nomination will go a long way to keeping the tobacco heritage alive. "The nomination of (Prince George's first) tobacco barn is a way to honor the farmers who lived in Maryland and made their living on tobacco for over 300 years," said Franklin Robinson, the St. Thomas Parish historian

Now the nominations will be sent to the Maryland Historical Trust for review; the process can take at least six months. Then the nominations will be passed on to the National Register.

The National Register is administered by the National Parks Service in a partnership with nonprofits, local, and state officials.

The National Register approval process takes approximately 45 days, one to two weeks to print the public notice, a 15-day waiting period for public comments and four days for the historical review. During the review Patrick Andrews, the Maryland Historian, will review the nomination to make sure the barn meets the National Register's Criteria for Architecture. In Andrew's experience, "The vast majority (of nominations) are approved."

Email me updates about this story.

Enter your email address

Keep me posted