

The Resource



Preserving our Past and Protecting our Future

What is a Conservation Easement?

- An easement is a legally binding, voluntary agreement between a landowner and a qualified conservation organization, usually with a donation of rights.
- It restricts or prohibits certain uses of the land to protect specific conservation values in perpetuity.
- The landowner retains a set of rights and public access is not necessarily allowed.

Why Do Landowners Utilize Conservation Easements?

- Retain the rural or natural character of their land.
- Protect areas of significant conservation value or of significant historical or cultural interest.
- Ensure their land will not be developed.
- Obtain financial incentives for estate planning, charitable donation from IRS, or state tax credit and/or property tax relief.
- Ensure their land conservation values will continue following termination of their ownership.

(Courtesy of Janet Steele, [Nation Ford Land Trust](#).)



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YCF Assists in Conservation of Historic York County Properties

The York County Forever Commission is pleased to provide funding for fees associated with the placement of conservation easements on two sites of over 100 total acres of historically significant properties in the Rock Hill area. The easements will be held by [Nation Ford Land Trust](#) and will ensure the permanent protection of the land. With the preservation of these sites, YCF has now helped to conserve over 9,200 acres of unique York County resources.

Located on McConnells Highway, the Jack and Ann Roddey property consists of 58 acres that were originally part of a 1,000 acre tract leased from Native Americans by Major

Thomas Roach, a veteran of the War of 1812. The site includes the Roach-Roddey House, built by Major Roach in 1811, out-buildings over 100 years old, and a 200 year old oak tree. The bricks used for the house exterior were made onsite, and the interior still has the original mantels and some original flooring. In addition to its significant historical resources, the tract has important natural and open space resources with substantial frontage on Wildcat Creek, and a well-preserved rural landscape surrounded by the rapidly developing City of Rock Hill.

The 53 acres of the Eloise Miller property are located off Mount Gallant and India Hook Roads.

The tract was originally part of 200 acres acquired incrementally in the 1870s and 1880s by the current owner's grandfather, Ned Miller, an emancipated slave. Serving as a working family farm for well over a century, the land is also significant for its agricultural and scenic open space resources.

Although the properties will remain privately owned, they will continue to be used for pre-arranged special community events or educational visits from local school children. Both owners share a vision for the properties to be maintained, respected, and loved for the edification and enjoyment of future generations.



(Pictured above, clockwise: Roach-Roddey House; Miller property open space; Miller property wooded area; Roddey out-building. Roddey photos courtesy of [Locations Hub](#) and Miller photos courtesy of Janet Steele, [Nation Ford Land Trust](#).)

Why Do Old Places Matter?

In 2013 Tom Mayes, the deputy general counsel at the [National Trust for Historic Preservation](#), was selected as a winner of [the Rome Prize](#), which is awarded annually to about thirty emerging artists and scholars who represent the highest standard of excellence. A life-long preservationist, Mayes spent six months living in Rome investigating questions such as: Why do old places matter? What difference does it make to people if we save, reuse or simply continue to use (or don't) old places? Do old places make people's lives better and, if so, how? He shared the results of his exploration in a series of numbered essays published on the Preservation Leadership Forum blog of the National Trust, and excerpted here.

One: Old places are even more fundamentally important to people and more important than our preservation policies and practices might suggest. Old places support our psychological health by providing a sense of stability, continuity, belonging, memory and identity. Our sense of stability in our world is rooted in place, our memories are embedded in place, and our identity is defined by place. The overlapping senses of stability, continuity, belonging, memory and identity provided by old places form a network of information consciously, unconsciously, and continuously received by people that reinforces their sense of who they are. This, I think, is the essence of the "sense of orientation" referred to in [With Heritage So Rich](#), a seminal volume in historic preservation history. The bottom line is that old places matter much more than we give them credit for, and for more reasons. Preservation of old places is not just something "nice" to do; it provides profound psychological, sociological and spiritual benefits for people

Two: Preservation is a large field and we should listen to both intentional and "accidental" preservationists about why old places matter to them. Once I began to talk to people about why old places matter, I was struck by how pervasive the topic is, throughout the United States and the world, even though people don't always use the term "preservation." Everyday people: mayors, brewers, philosophers, housing advocates, historians, planners, developers, architects, shop owners, politicians, environmentalists, sustainability

experts, environmental psychologists, sociologists, neighborhood advocates, artists, writers, composers—all weigh in on why old places matter. As preservation has become more professionalized we have developed our own language, practices, standards and professional organizations. While the professionalization is useful in many ways, it can also create an insularity that may impede our capacity to see what we have in common with others outside the field who also care about old places. And we may not recognize some of our own biases. I came away from the project thinking that our field could become larger, more diverse, more influential and more responsive to the human needs that can be served by old places if we consistently listened to these other voices.

Three: The two primary reasons most often used by our field to justify the preservation of places—their architecture and their history—while important, only support some of the most fundamental reasons why old places matter to people. These reasons are important. Places that are significant because of history—history with a big H—present unparalleled opportunities for learning about the past in a vivid and irreplaceable way. These history places serve as commemorative sites, but also act as vortices for reinterpretation of history, for identification of difficult history, and for acknowledgement and, one hopes, reconciliation and social justice. Old places that represent significant architecture are important because of the primary role of architecture in our world—we all live and work in buildings every day—but also, because significant architecture positions us on the continuum of time. But such places may be just as important to people because they provide a sense of continuity, memory, belonging and identity. And we may be failing to recognize countless other places that are not so architecturally or historically significant but that are also vitally important for people's psychological and social well-being. As Adele Chatfield-Taylor, former president of the American Academy in Rome and staff for many years to the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, told me, we hear at designation hearings how much people care about places, how the places ground their stories and memories. Yet the stories and memories—encapsulating

this sense of identity — aren't necessarily relevant to the criteria that we use to designate and protect places. As a result, some of the key purposes of preservation are left unfulfilled, and the places people care about remain unprotected.

Four: Places may become "old" in only one generation. It's important to recognize that people can develop relationships with places — place attachment and place identity — within only a generation. That's why we're now starting to see people lament the passing of the malls that they knew growing up, the doctors' offices, strip malls and other resources that we may not yet think have architectural or historical significance. If we begin to think of how our field of preservation can support a sense of continuity, stability and memory, it may change the way we view the [National Register's](#) so-called 50-year rule (limiting eligibility to properties that are at least 50 years old unless they are of "exceptional importance") as well as the period of significance concept, and the idea of integrity. It may also suggest that we should be creative about coming up with other recognition tools.

Five: Some of the reasons listed below for why old places matter to people aren't talked about as much as they used to be (perhaps because we feel forced to justify saving places for economic reasons), yet they remain important and deeply meaningful to people.

Beauty. Preservation regulation is sometimes referred to as aesthetic regulation, although rarely today do we justify our work by talking about beauty. Yet encountering beauty remains a fundamental and positive experience for people, an idea that is supported by social science studies.

Sacredness. Similarly, the idea of saving an old place because of its spiritual qualities and associations tends to be limited to certain situations in American preservation practice, such as the recognition of sites sacred to Native Americans. Yet the experience of sacredness found in old places is fundamentally positive for people.

Ancestry. At one time the preservation movement openly advocated for the saving of places because we could find ties to our ancestors (or at least some people's ancestors). More recently, conducting genealogy research has become widely popular
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Earth Day 2016: Trees for the Earth

The first Earth Day on April 22, 1970, activated 20 million Americans from all walks of life and is widely credited with launching the modern environmental movement. The passage of the landmark [Clean Air Act](#), [Clean Water Act](#), [Endangered Species Act](#) and many other groundbreaking environmental laws soon followed. Twenty years later, Earth Day went global, mobilizing 200 million people in 141 countries and lifting environmental issues onto the world stage. More than 1 billion people now participate in Earth Day activities each year, making it the largest civic observance in the world.

Over the next five years, the goal is to plant 7.8 billion trees. Trees will be the first of five major goals undertaken in honor of the five-year countdown to Earth Day's 50th anniversary in 2020. On their own and together, these initiatives

will make a significant and measurable impact on the Earth and will serve as the foundation of a cleaner, healthier and more sustainable planet for all. Why Trees?

Trees help combat climate change. They absorb excess and harmful CO₂ from our atmosphere. In fact, in a single year, an acre of mature trees absorbs the same amount of CO₂ produced by driving the average car 26,000 miles.

Trees help us breathe clean air. Trees absorb odors and pollutant gases (nitrogen oxides, ammonia, sulfur dioxide and ozone) and filter particulates out of the air by trapping them on their leaves and bark.

Trees help communities. Trees help communities achieve long-term economic and environmental sustainability and provide food, energy and income.

(From EarthDay.Org; [#trees4earth](https://twitter.com/trees4earth).)

Why Do Old Places Matter? (continued from page 2)

across a broad spectrum of the population and people are interested in visiting places where their ancestors lived, worked, fought, worshiped and were buried. In visiting these places, they find ties to identity and belonging that are important to their sense of who they are.

Six: Other purposes that we haven't fully developed, such as the way old places spur creativity, may have great capacity to further preservation in the future. We've known for decades that there was a connection between old places and entrepreneurial activity. [Jane Jacobs](#) wrote about the need for cities to have smaller, older buildings. [Richard Florida](#) wrote about the way drivers of the creative economy are drawn to older places. Now the work of the [Preservation Green Lab](#) supports this idea with studies of the important role that older, smaller buildings play in bolstering the creative economy. At the same time, we see example after example of the way old places provide inspiration for creativity. We may need to more actively promote as a rationale for saving, using and reusing old places their role in fostering creativity.

Seven: The sustainability rationale for retaining old buildings is likely to grow in importance, and has the capacity to funda-

mentally change historic preservation practice. One of the reasons old places matter is because reusing old places is good for the planet. The increasing recognition that the reuse of old buildings, cities and communities is green has the greatest potential, in my view, to change the paradigm of preservation policy and practice in the United States in a positive way. If our society increasingly recognizes the inherent environmental benefits of reusing existing buildings and communities, we are likely to save many more buildings than our current tools have the capacity to do. Yet that may also challenge us to embrace more broadly conceived reuse plans than those allowed by current preservation standards.

These thoughts about "Why Do Old Places Matter?" will hopefully spur others to think about why old places matter and the implications of these ideas for preservation policy and practice. Now, why do old places matter to you?

(Excerpted from Thompson Mayes, "Why do Old Places Matter?" [Preservation Leadership Spring 2015 Forum Journal](#), National Trust for Historic Preservation. View a photo essay of the entire blog series at [Preservation Nation](#).)



Local Earth Day 2016 Events:

[Anne Springs Close Greenway](#)
288 Dairy Barn Lane, Fort Mill
Saturday, April 16th
10:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.

[Museum of York County](#)
4621 Mt. Gallant Road, Rock Hill
Saturday, April 30th
10:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.



Why Do Old Places Matter?

Continuity: Help people feel balanced, stable, and healthy.

Memory: Help us remember.

Individual Identity: Embody our personal identity.

Civic Identity: Embody our civic, state, national, universal identity.

Beauty: Old places are beautiful, which is profoundly beneficial.

History: Give us an understanding of history that no other evidence can.

Architecture: As part of the history of civilization, they place us on the continuum of time.

Learning: Teaching us about the past gives us perspective on the present.

Sacredness: Provide spiritual benefits of serenity, peace, & inspiration.

Creativity: Inspire entrepreneurship.

Ancestors: Connecting us to our ancestors gives us identity & belonging.

Sustainability: Reuse is inherently "green."

Community: Provide connections to our community.

Economics: Foster a sustainable & equitable economy.



YORK COUNTY
FOREVER

York County Planning
1070 Heckle Blvd.
A-5
Rock Hill, SC 29732

Phone: 803.909.7221
Fax: 803.909.7478

E-mail: jacque.sorrentino@
yorkcountygov.com

Visit our webpage:
www.yorkcountygov.com

The Resource, the official publication of the York County Forever Commission (YCF) is published quarterly in the months of January, April, July, and October.

Pictured below is this issue's featured property. For more information, please click on the link or visit the YCF [webpage](#) on the York County website.



[Worth Mountain](#), Hickory Grove

The York County Forever Commission (YCF) was created by York County Council in 1998, to serve as the county's land conservation organization through promotion and protection of significant natural, cultural, historic, and environmental resources. Resource preservation is an investment that pays many dividends, to both the individual citizen and the community, whether economic: increasing property values, attracting business and industry, reducing the cost of services; environmental: controlling pollution, managing floodplains-stormwater, protecting wildlife and vegetation; or social: promoting a healthy life-style, providing low-cost recreation, managing growth responsibly, improving quality of life. YCF is composed of nine members: a citizen appointed from each of the seven Council districts and non-voting representatives from Nation Ford Land Trust and Culture & Heritage Commission.

For an information packet about how you can protect your land or the personal benefits of donating property or a conservation easement through the York County Forever program, please visit the YCF [webpage](#) or contact the York County Planning Department at 803.909.7221.

Commission Corner

York County Forever Commission will support local Earth Day events with exhibit tables and informational material focusing on tree planting and conservation at both the Anne Springs Close Greenway celebration on April 16th and the Museum of York County observance on April 30th. Be sure to drop by and speak with the Commissioner representatives at each event, pick up some educational handouts and promotional items, and learn more about YCF's role in preserving unique county resources.

The Commission expresses its appreciation to York County Council members for their participation in a joint Council/Commission workshop in January. The Commission provided information about its mission, history, project review process, accomplishments; outlined the economic, environmental, and community benefits of conservation; and received feedback and guidance from Council about the scope and direction of future projects.

Enhanced Conservation Tax Incentive Now Permanent. Over the last several years, we have seen enhanced federal conservation tax incentives come and go on an annual basis. In December, 2015, Congress passed legislation permanently raising the deduction a donor can take for donating a conservation easement from 30 percent of their income in any year to 50 percent. Qualifying farmers and ranchers can deduct up to 100 percent of their income, and the carry-forward period for a donor to take the tax deductions for voluntary conservation agreement has been extended from 5 to 15 years. These changes apply to donations made at any time in 2015 and to all donations made after

that. To download a brochure with further information, please visit the Land Trust Alliance [website](#).

York County Visitors App Now Available. The York County Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) is excited about a new mobile [application](#) that was developed to help travelers find their way around the county and to also give longtime county residents the same exposure to events, businesses, and attractions around them. The *Visit York County, SC* app gives users helpful tips on places to eat, things-to-do, places to stay, updates on new events and attractions and special offers. Download the Visit York County, SC app completely free from the [Apple App](#) store or [Google Play](#) store for Android for access to all things [#York-CountySC](#).



Can you identify the structure pictured below, its significance, and location? Check back in the July issue of *The Resource* for the answer.

