Chesapeake National Recreation Area Proposed Sites

Burtis House

Photo Credit: Capital Gazette

Burtis House, a 19th-century vernacular house, is significant as one of the oldest buildings in downtown Annapolis, as a remnant of the Hell Point neighborhood to which it originally belonged and as the last waterman's house on the Chesapeake Bay. The house, which is located within the National historic Landmark District at 69 Prince George Street, is named after Captain William Henry Burtis, an Annapolitan who used his house and nearby wharf to rent out fishing boats, equipment and supplies beginning in the early 1890s. The story of Captain Burtis highlights an important part of the Chesapeake Bay's maritime heritage and the centuries-long history of men and women who make a living by fishing and working the Chesapeake Bay's waters. Though the house has never been open to the public, it was owned by the Burtis family for 90 years. At the time of Burtis House's construction, the Hell Point neighborhood was made up of lumberyards, planing mills, boathouses and steamboat wharfs and inhabited by Filipino, African American and European American families. The neighborhood's colorful name is theorized to ether have evolved originally from "Hill's Point" and indicated the struggles of living there or to have come from another point along the waterfront that was notoriously challenging for large ships to navigate.

Whitehall Manor

Whitehall View of the Chesapeake Bay:

Photo Credit: Chesapeake Conservancy

Built in 1764 before the American Revolution began, **Whitehall Manor was originally the home of Horatio Sharpe, the last Provincial Governor of Maryland**. Whitehall is set on a mile and a half of Chesapeake Bay shoreline along the banks of Meredith Creek, Whitehall Creek and Whitehall Bay. **The property is one of the last significant open waterfront spaces in Annapolis, boasting over 135 acres of gardens, fields and park lands**. Designed by Joseph Horatio Anderson, the same architect responsible for the iconic Maryland State House, Whitehall stands as a quintessential example of Palladian architecture. In the early 20th century, it was restored to its 1787 appearance and **in 1960, it became the first National Historic Landmark designated in the state of Maryland.**

Thomas Shoal Point Lighthouse

Photo Credit: Annapolis Maritime Museum; Bob Peterson Photography

The Thomas Point Shoal Lighthouse traces its origins back to 1824 when Congress appropriated funds for construction of a 30-foot, land-based light tower and a small keeper's dwelling. The first lighthouse stood in a stone tower on a bank overlooking the Chesapeake Bay; however, the site proved subject to significant erosion and the lighthouse was replaced with a new stone tower in 1838. In 1875, after continuing erosion threatened the second lighthouse, the land-based tower was replaced with a screw-pile structure in the waters of the Bay itself. In 1999, the lighthouse was designated as a National Historic Landmark in recognition of it being the **only surviving operational cottage-style screw-pile lighthouse in the country that is still in its original location**. Today, the U.S. Coast Guard maintains navigational aids at the Lighthouse, and while the current structure is the third light to mark the shoal, it remains one of the most well-known lighthouses in the Chesapeake.

Fort Monroe - North Beach

Photo Credit: National Park Service

Fort Monroe is a former military installation on the southern tip of the Virginia Peninsula at Old Point Comfort, the first place that, in 1619, ships carrying enslaved Africans landed in the colonies that would become the United States. The Fort is managed by a partnership between the Fort Monroe Authority for the Commonwealth of Virginia, the National Park Service (as the Fort Monroe National Monument) and the City of Hampton. With its strategic location at the convergence of the Elizabeth, Nansemond and James rivers, Fort Monroe defended the navigation channel between the Chesapeake Bay and Hampton Roads, protecting the region from maritime assault until its disarmament in 1946. **The 122 acres of Fort Monroe's North Beach provide opportunities to appreciate the power of environmental restoration, interpret the Indigenous history of the lower Chesapeake Bay and engage with this unique and wild habitat.**