

### **3. Archeological Resources**

#### **a. Background**

Archeological sites and associated artifacts—collectively known as *archeological resources*—are finite, fragile and easily destroyed by various earth moving activities, including construction, demolition, and landscaping. The information yielded from archeological resources can reveal a great deal about the city’s prehistoric and historic cultural evolution; therefore, the City has addressed archeological protection in §603 of City Code. The code establishes a requirement *under certain circumstances* for areas to be disturbed to be assessed for their archeological potential. If the assessment indicates the potential for archeological sites, the sites must be identified and evaluated and, in some situations, a management plan must be prepared. The City Code requires *Standards and Guidelines for Archeological Investigations in Maryland* (Maryland Historical Trust Technical Report Number 2) to be the basis for archeological identification, evaluation, and planning.

Although the code pertains to the entire City, in the Historic District the identification, evaluation, and protection of archeological sites may be required for any building/zoning permit that will result in ground disturbance. Digging holes for fence posts and other minor excavation will not trigger archeological review, unless a known archeological site is present where the digging is proposed. The Commission focuses archeological investigations on properties where there is evidence of historical activity that will be affected by the project.

The archeological sites that are known to exist within the city limits represent the fragile and irreplaceable remains of past human experience spanning some 10,000 years. Although the types of archeological resources found in the City are a microcosm of resources found throughout the mid-Atlantic region, each of the City’s archeological sites represents an expression of cultural change and adaptation unique to Frederick. In the Historic District, historic sites representing the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries are most likely to be encountered, due to the disturbance of prehistoric sites throughout the historic settlement period.

#### **b. The Information Potential of Archeological Sites**

The information contained at archeological sites can help answer questions of scientific and cultural significance. Research questions concerning population size, social organization, trade, and the diet of past populations are examples of the types of questions that can be addressed through an examination of archeological data. The information obtained from the study of archeological resources can be used by educators to teach a variety of subjects, and broaden our understanding of local and national history.

**(1) Historic sites.** Historical archeology is a branch of archeology that focuses on the most recent past, from approximately AD 1500 to the present. Historical archeologists study not only artifacts and sites, but also the documents written about the people and places of the past. Information from historic archeological sites allows us to build on existing knowledge of past events, and enables us to verify or refute historical accounts. Perhaps most importantly, historical archeology gives a voice to traditionally marginalized groups whose stories are often left out of our national history. The lives of women, enslaved

African Americans, and the poor have all been given a voice through information gleaned from historical archeological sites.

- (2) **Prehistoric sites.** Prehistoric archeological sites represent the time period prior to European contact with Native Americans. Since no written accounts of these thousands of years of human activity exist, archeological information is the only source of information about life in North America during this time. Knowledge gleaned from prehistoric sites can tell the story of the past people who lived here. This knowledge can be used to reconstruct how human groups adapted to changing environmental and social conditions, past economies, past technologies, past trade and political processes, diet and settlement.

**c. Types of Archeological Sites in the Historic District**

- (1) **Historic sites.** The following are examples of the types of historic sites that may be discovered in the Historic District: domestic sites, commercial sites, tanneries, potteries, cemeteries, Civil War field hospitals, privies, cisterns, outbuildings, stables, and wells.
- (2) **Prehistoric sites.** The following are examples of the types of prehistoric sites that may be discovered in the Historic District: lithic scatters from the making of stone tools, quarry and mining sites, food procurement and harvesting sites, short-term camps, and base camps.

**d. Types of Artifacts**

- (1) **Historic Sites.** Pottery, glassware, building materials, personal items, toys, coins, weapons, domestic goods, kitchen refuse, and human remains.
- (2) **Prehistoric Sites.** Projectile (spear) points, ceramics, stone flakes from the production of edged tools, tools designed for plant processing, such as axes and grinding slabs, and human remains.

**e. Development Periods and Historic Contexts**

Archeological resources that may be present in the City are best understood within a broader series of chronological developmental periods and historic contexts. The following chronological developmental periods have been adapted from the *Maryland State Historic Preservation Plan* and the *Historic Contextual Overview for the City of Frederick* by Reed and Wallace (2004). Information on these development periods and contexts is available at the Planning Department.

**(1) Prehistoric Development Periods**

Paleo-Indian	10,000-7,500 B.C.
Early Archaic	7,500-6,000 B.C.
Middle Archaic	6,000-4,000 B.C.
Late Archaic	4,000-2,000 B.C.
Early Woodland/Archaic	2,000-500 B.C.
Middle Woodland	500 B.C.-A.D. 900
Late Woodland	900-1600 A.D.

**(2) Historic Contexts**

First Contact and Initial European Settlement Period	1600-1745 A.D.
Establishing Frederick Town	1745-1800 A.D.
Agricultural and Industrial Transition	1800-1860 A.D.

Industrial/Urban Dominance  
Modern Period

1860-1930 A.D.  
1930 A.D.-Present

**f. Types of Archeological Investigations**

Archeological investigations are grouped into three main categories: Identification (Phase I), Evaluation (Phase II) and Treatment (Phase III). Identification (Phase I) consists of background research and sampling of the site in order to assess whether archeological resources are present. Sampling of the site consists of surface survey and subsurface testing, usually shovel test pits laid out according to a sampling strategy. Evaluation (Phase II) consists of more in-depth research and subsurface testing on a previously-identified site. The purpose of the Phase II investigation is to supplement the known information on an identified property and to determine the significance of the resource. Subsurface testing usually consists of larger excavation units, using as few as necessary for the analysis of the site. The goal of Treatment (Phase III) is to avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse effects on significant archeological sites. Preserving the resource is the preferred course, but when that option is unavailable, a large-scale data recovery excavation is used to retrieve and analyze as much information as possible.

**g. References**

- (1) Kavanagh, Maureen. *Archeological Resources of the Monocacy River Region, Frederick and Carroll Counties, Maryland*. Final Report prepared for Maryland Historical Trust by Maryland Geological Survey Department of Natural Resources, 1982.
- (2) Reed, Paula and Edie Wallace. *Historic Contextual Overview for the City of Frederick, Thematic Contexts for Architecture and Agriculture, and Industry*. Prepared for the City of Frederick by Paula S. Reed and Associates, 2004.
- (3) Shaffer, Gary D. and Elizabeth J. Cole. *Standards and Guidelines for Archeological Investigations in Maryland*. Office of Archeology and Office of Preservation Services, Maryland Historical Trust, 1994.