

From: Larry French <lfrench@vt.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 10:55 AM
To: Bob Booher <booherfamily@comcast.net>; Paula Puglisi <paulajpuglisi@gmail.com>; BetsyKlinger <betsyklinger@aol.com>; washgrove@comcast.net
Subject: community survey

January 23, 2024

Hi Bob,

I'm writing to you as chair of the Historic Preservation Committee to urge you to take steps to preserve the data collected via questionnaires in late 2021 and 2022 by the RASEC Committee about residents' attitudes regarding the culture of Washington Grove.

My understanding is that about 125 questionnaires were obtained from residents. There have been a series of presentations about the results of analyses of the data and, apparently, a final report will be issued shortly.

I assume that a computer-based file, probably in excel format, was created to facilitate the data analysis. Because these data have historical significance and represent the first systematic survey ever made of town residents' attitudes toward their town, I strongly believe that the data file should be preserved as well as specific descriptions of how it was created and the completed questionnaires themselves so that others can conduct their own analyses and research for whatever reason they choose.

RASEC has been justly concerned about the rights of individual respondents to the survey but has paid less attention to community's stake in this enterprise. I would hope their concerns do not slow the process of making the data file, documentation and questionnaires available to others in town. Information identifying individual respondents can be easily deleted from the data file and "redacted" from the questionnaires.

I confess that I'm curious about the results of the survey and would be glad to help in the efforts needed to make the data more broadly available. Moreover, my request should lead your committee and perhaps the town council to consider both the potential value of systematic surveys of town residents in the future regarding issues of the day and appropriate guidelines for their conduct and dissemination.

Larry French

Cc: paulapuglisi@gmail.com, betsyklinger@aol.com, washgrove@comcast.net (to be distributed to mayor and council)