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- Walt Haber, treasurer;
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October 14, 1008  
Bethel Township Supervisors:

The Swatara Watershed Association recognizes the Bordner cabin as an important structure and has committed to working with state and local authorities to ensure its preservation. Thus, with your help, when we are gone, historic sites of local significance will still exist. With this in mind, the Swatara Watershed Association respectfully requests your consideration of historic status for the Armar Bordner cabin in Swatara State Park, Bethel Township, Lebanon County. As evidenced by a 1939 cornerstone on the structure, in 2009, the hand-hewn log cabin will turn 70 years old. What a fitting tribute for local leaders to become trailblazers and champions for preservation of the Bordner cabin.

Since 1961, Pennsylvania municipalities have enjoyed a special opportunity to preserve and rehabilitate historic structures, buildings, and neighborhoods that possess historical and architectural significance. That year the General Assembly of Pennsylvania enacted legislation, 1961 P. L. 282, No. 167, to enable municipalities to designate certain areas as historic....

Until the year 2000, Article VI § 604 and § 605 were the sole explicit references acknowledging the importance of historic or patriotic resources. Section 604 authorizes the municipality to “promote, protect and facilitate” the “preservation of the natural, scenic and historic values in the environment.” Section 605 provides for the “regulation, restriction or prohibition of uses and structures at, along or near: (vi) places having unique historical, architectural, or patriotic interest or value.” As stated earlier, the addition of § 603(g)(2) “zoning ordinances shall provide for protection of natural and historic features and resources,” reinforces the authority of local government to protect historic resources within their municipal boundaries.

As the current tenant of the Bordner cabin, SWA has made their intentions known to the state of PA to seek historic status. Both local landmark and National Register status is simply an acknowledgement of a property's importance within its community. Besides public recognition, the granting of historic status provides several benefits. In some cases, owners may be eligible for federal and state tax credits to encourage the appropriate rehabilitation of their historic buildings. Designation has also proven to be a stabilizing factor for communities since owners of historic buildings generally take greater pride in their neighborhoods and work to maintain their properties.

Upon request, SWA is available to answer questions and/or attend meetings to facilitate historic designation of the Bordner cabin.

Sincerely,