



March 25, 2024

Mayor Mark Bell
Hillsborough Board of Commissioners
Re: Minnette C. Duffy Award Nomination

Preservation North Carolina:

I am writing to express my wholehearted support for the Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation and their remarkable efforts in rebuilding the Occaneechi Replica Village for this year's Minnette C. Duffy Landscape Preservation Award. The significance of this project to the community of Hillsborough cannot be overstated.

Along with other members of the Hillsborough community, I have personally worked many hours on building and maintaining the Occaneechi Replica Village under the direction of tribal leaders and can attest that it stands not only as a testament to the rich cultural heritage of the Occaneechi people but also as a beacon of unity and understanding within our community. Through their meticulous reconstruction efforts, the Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation has brought to life a piece of history that serves as a valuable educational resource and a source of pride for all who call Hillsborough home.

Beyond its historical and cultural importance, the Occaneechi Replica Village serves as a gathering place for community members of all backgrounds. It fosters a sense of belonging and connection, offering a space where individuals can come together to celebrate diversity and learn from one another.

Moreover, the dedication and passion demonstrated by the Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation in preserving and sharing their heritage are truly commendable. Their commitment to honoring the traditions of their ancestors while embracing the evolving needs of the community inspires us all.

In conclusion, I wholeheartedly endorse the Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation's nomination for their work on rebuilding the Occaneechi Replica Village. Their efforts have not only enriched the cultural fabric of Hillsborough but have also strengthened the bonds of friendship and understanding among its residents. Thank you for the opportunity to offer my support for this important initiative.

Sincerely,

Mayor Mark Bell
Cc:
Mayor Pro Tem Robb English
Commissioner Meaghun Darab
Commissioner Kathleen Ferguson
Commissioner Matt Hughes
Commissioner Evelyn Lloyd