

Chatham County Historical Association, Inc.P. O. Box 93 / Pittsboro, NC 27312 / www.chathamhistory.org

23 Jan 2009

Mr. Robbie Swain
Laurel Ridge Development Inc
1000 St Albans Dr. Ste 400
Raleigh, NC 27609

Dear Mr. Swain:

Thank you very much for meeting Jane Pyle, my husband Jim and me out at the Laurel Ridge property last month to point us to the rock walls and chimney that we had not seen. We enjoyed exploring the property, though the cold weather curtailed our wanderings to some degree. We did take another look at the Lutterloh cemetery, and also found, we think, some of the rock walls near the creek, though their use is not readily apparent. We also took a look at the chimney across from your sales trailer.

We were very pleased to learn that you appreciate the potential value of the old structural remains and the cemetery on your property. As I noted when we met, original gravestones with death dates in the 1700s are quite rare in the county, so the two inscribed stones in the Lutterloh cemetery are a treasure to be carefully preserved. If the Lutterloh family is agreeable, we hope that you will restore the dry stacked stone walls to approximate their original condition. The survival of the site probably is due in large part to the protection the walls provided, even in their deteriorating state. Restored to their original state, the walls would protect the historic gravesites without detracting from their significance. The walls surround the gravesites closely—taking little of your buildable area, and would blend in with the natural surroundings without calling undue attention to the site.

Some attention should be given to the possibility that there might be graves outside of the walled areas. I understand that John Clauser, cemetery consultant, has examined the area and that he does not believe there are graves in the immediate area outside of the walls. However, neither Mr. Clauser, nor anyone else with expertise examined the area before the ground was substantially disturbed. The usual visual clues suggesting the presence of graves would have been destroyed by that disturbance. It was not at all unusual for slave graves to be placed near family burial grounds, but outside the walls or fencing that set the family plot apart. If any additional ground disturbance within fifty feet of the cemetery walls is contemplated, we would like to involve the State officials charged with overseeing the protection of all burial sites. Our experience at other sites suggests that they might require additional testing for the presence of graves, or perhaps oversight of any ground-disturbing activities within that zone.

I understand from the Lutterlohs that they have not yet located the old Lutterloh home site. If they are able to do that, or if someone in your employ should discover the site, we urge you to have it examined by qualified archaeologists. As you described your experience with ESI archaeologists on another project, I'm sure you are aware of the kinds of artifacts they can uncover, and from which they can learn much about the lives of those who lived on the land. The Henry Lewis Lutterloh family along with other early settlers at Rock Rest was an important player in the early settlement of Chatham County. Anything you could learn about what their lives were like would be

of great benefit to the history of the county and should be of interest to future residents of your development.

Evidence suggests that, in addition to two children, the cemetery contains the remains of Henry Lewis Lutterloh and his wife Elizabeth. Henry Lewis Lutterloh bought land in Chatham County as early as 1787. He is the only Lutterloh shown buying property in Chatham until 1797, when his sons begin to acquire property. The 1808 map of Chatham, by Price-Strother shows "Lutterloh" on the southeast side of the intersection of Dry Creek and Graham road—where the Laurel Ridge development is now located.


A deed in Deed Book T, pages 259-260, dated 8 Jun 1814, divides the estate of Elizabeth Lutterloh (wife of Henry Lewis Lutterloh). Property goes to three sons: Charles, Henry, and Lewis. Left to son Lewis was 302.5 acres; one acre being retained for a family grave yard. There is no description or plat showing where the one acre is on the property.

In Deed Book Y, page 187 dated Feb 1823, Lewis Lutterloh sells 190 acres +/- to Nathaniel Brewer. Excepted from the sale is the one acre family grave yard where his father and mother are buried.

The 1870 Ramsey map of Chatham County shows N. Brewer on the southeast side of the intersection of Dry Creek and Graham Road—where Lutterloh was located on the Price-Strother map of 1808.

I am also enclosing copies of two 2006 issues of our publication, the *Chatham Historical Journal*, that features excerpts from the diary of Eliza Lutterloh, who was the wife of Charles Lutterloh, one of Henry Lewis Lutterloh's sons. As you will see, it suggests some family intrigue, as well as describes the often difficult conditions encountered by early settlers. The Lutterloh family has additional information and photographs that could be drawn upon to fashion an interesting historical account for future residents of the Laurel Ridge community.

Thanks again for your help. Please keep us in the loop as your plans for the property develop.


Beverly Wiggins
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cc: Wilber and Therese Lutterloh
Lynn Richardson, Chatham County Planning Office
Dr. Kevin Donald, Cemetery Survey and Stewardship Program, Office of State Archaeology

Attachments:
Price-Strother map
Ramsey map
Deed T-259
Deed Y-187
Chatham Historical Journal articles on Eliza Lutterloh