

STOP THE DESTRUCTION OF THE PRINCETON BATTLEFIELD

AN APPEAL to the INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY

As you read this letter, the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, N.J., is proceeding with plans to **destroy one of the most significant historic sites in the nation**. The property, a key part of the Princeton battlefield, is where George Washington launched a daring charge that secured victory and saved an American Revolution that appeared lost less than two weeks before. It is hard to imagine such a seminal moment in American history being bulldozed for faculty housing — but that is exactly the situation confronting us today.

In response to the Institute's plans, **a coalition of national and regional conservation and historic preservation groups has formed to save this endangered site before it is too late**. The Save Princeton Coalition (#SavePrinceton) is composed of the American Association for State and Local History; the American Revolution Institute of the Society of the Cincinnati; the Civil War Trust (through its Campaign 1776 initiative); The Cultural Landscape Foundation; the National Coalition for History; the National Parks Conservation Association; the National Trust for Historic Preservation; the Princeton Battlefield Society and the New Jersey Chapter of the Sierra Club.

Together, our organizations respectfully and formally request that the Institute for Advanced Study **cease its development plans** and pursue alternate building locations for the faculty housing project slated for the Washington's Charge site. In this request, we are joined by our members and thousands of concerned Americans who have weighed in on this issue through petitions, letters and phone calls to New Jersey lawmakers and the Institute itself.

The property, known locally as Maxwell's Field, has been identified by the National Park Service, countless historians and numerous archaeologists as the site where Washington's famous counterattack first struck the British lines. Part of the property is designated a National Historic Landmark. Historian David Hackett Fischer, in a letter to the National Trust for Historic Preservation, said, "This land is as central to the Battle of Princeton as the field of Pickett's Charge is to Gettysburg and as Omaha Beach is to D-Day."

The Battle of Princeton, fought January 3, 1777, was among the most significant engagements of the American Revolution. The culmination of the legendary 10-day campaign which began with Washington's crossing of the Delaware, Princeton marked the first time Washington and his threadbare Continental Army defeated British regulars in the field. It also led to the liberation of New Jersey, demonstrating to both Americans and international observers that **the Declaration of Independence was more than mere words written on parchment**.

The Institute's proposed housing development will destroy the site where Washington — ignoring imminent danger to himself — personally led the right wing of the charge that forced the defeated British back into downtown Princeton. This portion of the **Princeton Battlefield, left in pristine condition for nearly 240 years, will be forever diminished as a result of the Institute's housing plans**. Future generations will be denied the opportunity to wander a key part of the battlefield that has, until recently, remained unchanged since 1777.

In an earnest effort to assist the Institute in finding alternate venues for its faculty housing, the Civil War Trust, a Save Princeton Coalition member, has offered to acquire the Maxwell's Field tract for \$4.5 million (more than \$1 million above the appraised value of the property). This goodwill offer still stands. The groups of the Save Princeton Coalition ask the Institute to reconsider this offer and work toward a **mutually beneficial resolution** that saves this historic site and outdoor classroom for future generations.

The Princeton battlefield is an indelible part of our history, its **ground hallowed by American and British blood**, and it cannot be moved or replaced. We, the Save Princeton Coalition, along with concerned citizens from throughout the country, implore the Institute to work with us to preserve this national treasure. We stand ready to meet with the Institute for Advanced Study to find alternatives to the destruction of the Washington's Charge site at Princeton.

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SAVE
PRINCETON
PRESERVE WASHINGTON'S CHARGE
#SAVE PRINCETON



**Stop the destruction of the
Princeton battlefield. Learn more at
campaign1776.org/saveprinceton.**

SAVE PRINCETON COALITION

