MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARKS
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

MCPB 12/6/07
Item: _____

November 9, 2007

MEMORANDUM

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Mary R. Bradford, Director of Parks
Michael F. Riley, Acting Deputy Director, Department of Parks
Doug Alexander, Acting Chief, Park Development Division
Patricia McManus, Design Section Supervisor, Park Development Division

FROM: Heidi Sussmann, Landscape Architect, Park Development Division, (301-495-2547)

SUBJECT: Facility Plan for Renovation and Expansion of North Four Corners Local Park

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I. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

1) Approve the facility plan Alternative 2 for North Four Corners Local Park, which will amend the facility plan approved by the Montgomery County Planning Board on September 22, 2005.

2) Affirm the proposed schedule for design and construction included in the FY09-14 Capital Improvements Program (CIP).

II. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this project is to review the approved facility plan for the renovation and expansion of North Four Corners Local Park, and to determine whether there are alternative plans that might better serve current and future area needs. The park consists of 7.9 acres of existing recreational area and 6 acres of acquired area. The Montgomery County Planning Board approved the facility plan for the park on September 22, 2005, following a three-year planning and design process. During this timeframe, the primary project goal was to provide additional active recreation facilities to serve current and future area needs. This goal was based primarily on recommendations from the 1996 Four Corners Master Plan for acquisition of the new land parcel for active recreational use, and on field needs assessments from the 2005 Land Preservation Parks & Recreation Plan (LPPRP).

A supporting project goal was to address physical and operational problems within the existing park, based on community feedback regarding use of the current field and park. Throughout the facility planning process, the majority of residents from the immediate neighborhood remained strongly opposed to providing another field or additional active recreation facilities in the park. Most residents expressed a desire for a more passive neighborhood-oriented park with natural areas, which would not draw park users from a wider geographic area. A number of operational problems were identified with the existing park, including the lack of on-site parking areas for the existing field and recreation building, the overflow of parking onto neighborhood streets when these facilities are used, noise, trash, public urination near the field, growth of invasive plant species, and security. There were also concerns expressed about commuter traffic cutting through the neighborhood. The approved facility plan addressed operational conditions within the existing

park area and provided for future recreational needs and infrastructure in the acquired area, offering a total of two rectangular sports fields.

The Planning Board proposed this project for design and construction in the FY07-12 Capital Improvements Program (CIP). During review of the CIP the Montgomery County Council's Planning Housing & Economic Development Committee (PHED) heard public comments on the project and recommended that the M-NCPPC study additional alternatives to the approved facility plan prior to submitting the FY09-14 CIP. The Council approved an additional $30,000 to be included in the Facility Planning: Local Parks PDF for this purpose. Additional language was added to the North Four Corners Local Park PDF as follows:

> *The Facility Planning Local PDF includes $30,000 in FY07 to study alternatives to the facility plan approved by the Planning Board on September 22, 2005. The result of the analysis and alternative options will be presented to the County Council for review as part of the FY09-FY14 CIP. These options will include one or two soccer fields and alternative non-soccer uses for the site of the existing field and the proposed new field. Costs of each option should be included in the analysis. In addition, M-NCPPC should present detailed information about the shortage of fields in this area and an assessment of other opportunities to meet this shortage.*

Staff has conducted this analysis and is recommending Alternative 2, which is a revised plan that amends the approved facility plan only within the area of the existing field. Alternative 2, like the approved plan, would relocate active field use to the new parcel and provide direct access to parking areas for this field from University Boulevard. The existing field, which is in closer proximity to neighboring homes, would be replaced with passive paths, seating areas, and landscaped spaces to address neighborhood concerns. This is a significant compromise from the original recommendation in that Alternative 2 does not provide an additional field, however it provides a larger and more usable field with adequate parking and supporting facilities. It should be noted that the M-NCPPC staff team did not achieve consensus on this recommendation. In light of the need for additional soccer fields in the Silver Spring/Takoma Park community planning area, Community-Based Planning staff prefers either the approved plan or Alternative 1 to the park staff recommendation. Planning staff believes that a plan that maintains the status quo with one field is not a good use of public tax dollars and does not meet the intent of the project.

III. PROJECT BACKGROUND

A. Project Site

North Four Corners Local Park is a 13.9-acre park located on the north side of University Boulevard at Brunett Avenue, near the commercial node of Four Corners. It is surrounded primarily by single-family residential neighborhoods and is within walking distance of many homes, including an adjacent elderly housing facility. Two stream valley parks are also located within one mile of the park, providing opportunities for recreation and enjoyment of nature.

The original 7.9-acre portion of the park was acquired in the 1940's for approximately $5,900, and facilities were constructed during the 1950's. These facilities included a small community building, 16-space paved parking lot, playground area, soccer field, two tennis courts, single basketball court, and pathways that all remain today. The original portion of the park is accessed from the terminus of Southwood Avenue, within a residential neighborhood. In addition to these facilities, the older site includes areas of open space, two areas of mature specimen trees with under-story vegetation, and perimeter hedgerows with some invasive vegetation.

An adjacent 6-acre tract of land was acquired in 1998 for $1,251,000, based on recommendations from the 1996 Four Corners Master Plan to expand the park and provide additional active recreational resources. The appraisal reports for the purchase of the property indicated that the value of the property was based on the

development potential of the site for 42 residential townhouse lots, which had been previously proposed for the site based on its zoning. The property was originally a school facility beginning with the Alexander Day School in the 1950's and more recently the Yeshiva High School. Site features included three classroom buildings, driveways and parking areas, playground equipment, a swimming pool with pool building, a fountain, a tennis court, and storage sheds. These facilities had become dilapidated and were demolished by the M-NCPPC in preparation for the park expansion, leaving a vacant site that directly fronts University Boulevard. The site slopes gently down from the road, providing good visibility and pleasing views inward. This new tract of parkland offers direct vehicular access from a major road and is served by public transportation. The site has minimal physical constraints for the creation of new local park facilities. Refer to Attachment 1 for an Existing Conditions Plan and Vicinity Map.

B. Facility Plan Approved in 2005

The facility plan approved in 2005 included the following sequence of steps: analyze environmental conditions; assess current recreational needs; develop a program of requirements; obtain community input; evaluate various designs; finalize the design and obtain permits; and develop construction costs. Several alternative concepts for the park were prepared and evaluated during the initial project timeframe from 2003 through 2005. Concepts for the new parcel ranged from creating large passive areas, a full sized soccer field, and adding other types of active recreation such as roller hockey. Concepts within the existing park included scenarios to remove the recreation building or improve it, add playground space, add a new parking area off Royalton Road, expand the field and remove the courts, and expand the current parking area.

The process included outreach to the surrounding community through three public meetings and two Northwood Four Corners Civic Association (NFCCA) meetings, conducting two written surveys, posting the project to the Commission website, and testimony was taken at the Planning Board meeting. While there was some support from neighborhood residents as well as residents of Takoma Park, the majority of residents from the surrounding NFCCA community desired a more passive, neighborhood-oriented park. They consistently opposed the addition of another soccer field, which would serve residents from outside the immediate neighborhood. They identified a number of operational problems in the park that were caused by use of the existing soccer field by adult groups, large groups using the recreation building, and concurrent use of the field and building on weekends. These issues included inadequate parking areas within the park which causes overflow of parking and increased traffic on neighborhood streets. Other issues included noise from the building and field, trash in the park, public urination near the field, growth of invasive plant species, obstructed views through the park, and security. In addition, comments were made that the project process did not provide adequate opportunity for public input and that needs assessment data could be flawed. Residents from The Oaks at Four Corners (adjacent elderly facility) were opposed to use of the new parcel for a sports field, but recommended using the property for walking paths and seating areas or for a recreation center that offered programs for seniors.

In response to these comments, numerous site visits were conducted by staff to study use patterns and parking issues within the park, the concept plans were revised to include additional passive areas and open green space, buffer plantings were added between facilities and adjacent residences, and a number of scenarios were studied to add parking areas. The Commission also initiated a local park usage study to address issues at a number of heavily used local parks, including enforcement, maintenance, design, permitting, and outreach. Operational changes were made to the existing park, which are described in Section C below. Refer to Attachments 2 and 8 for the 2005 staff memo, the facility plan report (including alternatives studied), and community correspondence and testimony.

The approved facility plan proposed the following opportunities for active and passive pursuits: a new multi-purpose rectangular field (to serve all ages); refurbishing the existing smaller field; additional parking (for a total of 79 spaces) in the new and the existing park areas; vehicular access only from University Boulevard into the new park tract; a playground; a master planned bikeway connection through the park; interior

pathway loops with exercise stations and heart-smart distance markers; open space for picnicking and lawn games; passive features including a shaded plaza and game table area, seating areas, and gazebo; amenities including portable toilets, trash receptacles, bike racks, drinking fountain, and signage; and landscaping improvements such as rain-gardens, added trees and plantings, removal of invasive vegetation, and off-site reforestation.

C. Operational Changes

Based on community input during the facility planning process and conditions resulting from heavy use of the existing field and park, staff from the Region, Park Permits, and Park Police completed several actions that have resulted in a better managed park. Nearby residents attending a recent public workshop in June 2007 verified that conditions have improved. These operational changes went into effect over the past one to three years, and are as follows:

- Use of the existing rectangular field was limited to youth and teen practice permits only (no game use). Permits for adult use at the existing field are no longer issued.
- The field goals and posts were removed on the existing field to reduce the likelihood of non-permitted, adult pick-up games.
- Permits for the existing community building and field are no longer issued simultaneously on weekends.
- The group size allowed to use the community building was reduced to 50 people. (A church group that had been using the building on weekends was subsequently relocated to another park).
- Four Park Rangers were hired in a pilot program to patrol heavily used parks, including this park, with a focus on ballfield use and related activities during peak use seasons.
- 'No Parking' signs were installed by County Police on Woodridge Avenue, the abutting street where many prior complaints occurred.
- Trash receptacles were added to the park. (At the time of the facility plan study, trash receptacles had been removed as part of the carry-in, carry-out trash initiative.)
- Portable toilets have been provided at the existing field during high use seasons.
- Region staff will start removing invasive vegetation to improve visibility within the park this year (winter 2007).
- Park Police have been monitoring the park and reported that outside calls to Park Police were reduced from 47 calls in 2005 to 26 calls in 2006.

IV. AMENDED FACILITY PLAN PROCESS

A. Planning Document Recommendations

Four Corners Master Plan (Approved and Adopted, December 1996): The Four Corners Master Plan provided the impetus for this project, for both the land acquisition and the plan to expand the park to provide active recreational facilities. The preliminary draft of the master plan proposed residential development on the new site (R-60 zone with an option for a PD-7 zone). In public testimony on the preliminary draft, the Citizens Advisory Committee and the Northwood Four Corners Civic Association proposed the acquisition of this property to expand the park, in order to improve access to the park and to replace the recreational facilities lost to the community from the Alexander School and Four Corners Elementary School (now the

site of The Oaks at Four Corners elderly residential facility). Recreational facilities that had been previously available for community use at Four Corners Elementary school included a playground, a basketball court and a multi-purpose court. Facilities that had been available on the Alexander School site were previously described in Section III-A of this report.

In response to these community recommendations, Parks Department staff analyzed the issue and provided a memo to Community-Based Planning staff justifying the acquisition of the property for park use based on an analysis of ballfield needs in the Silver Spring planning area. The memo included a concept sketch for the property and proposed that the new site could provide one additional soccer field, walkways, a playground, a gazebo and an open play area. The Parks Department memo, in support of the park acquisition, was included as part of the County Council's public hearing record on the Planning Board (final) draft of the Four Corners Master Plan. The approved and adopted master plan includes the following language on page 55:

> *This plan recommends that the six-acre property at 315 University Boulevard, formerly a private school, be acquired for parkland. Acquisition of this property will allow an expansion of the existing local park, North Four Corners, and will provide additional active recreational resources in this heavily populated area. It will also provide open space and park access along University Boulevard. Connections between the proposed new park site and the existing local park should be accomplished with pedestrian walkways and not a road extension through the properties or from residential streets that terminate at the property line.*

The master plan includes the following additional language regarding this property on page 25:

> *There is a six-acre property at 315 University Boulevard that was formerly occupied by a private school and is currently vacant. The property owner may rebuild a school on this site, which is an appropriate use for this site. If the property owner decides not to build a school and intends to pursue other options, then this site is appropriate for parkland. Increased parkland in this portion of Four Corners will provide needed recreational facilities and will replace open space that was lost when the former Four Corners Elementary School, which occupied the adjacent site, was converted to elderly housing. If Park and Planning does not decide to use Advanced Land Acquisition or Capital Improvement Program (CIP) funds for purchase within six months after the property owner indicates in writing to Park and Planning that a school will not be built on this site, then the site may be developed for residential purposes. The site has a base zoning of R-60 and is suitable for development as PD-7.*

***2005 Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan (LPPRP)*:** Needs assessments from the LPPRP confirmed previous projections of the 1998 Park, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan (PROS), and provided specific information for projections to the year 2020. The new study incorporated a comprehensive inventory of available park and school facilities and provided more detailed analysis for specific types and sizes of facilities. On pages III-25 and III-26 of the plan, the information concludes that there will be a deficit of 10.8 multi-purpose rectangular fields to serve all ages including adults by 2020 within the Silver Spring/Takoma Park Community-Based Planning Area that includes this park. The plan recommends that field needs be met within each Community Based Team Area, but that the service area for fields is usually larger than the Planning Area. The data indicates a future deficit of 73 such field facilities countywide by 2020, representing the greatest demand for a specific recreation facility. On Page XIV-3, the LPPRP notes the 2000 Park User Study observed that 65% of people visiting local parks were field users and spectators, representing an increasing trend since 1995. The LPPRP also includes the M-NCPPC park classification system with descriptions of each type of park. On page III-13, it includes the following information in its description of a local park:

> *The major difference between neighborhood and local parks is that the local parks provide regulation size athletic fields that can be reserved for game play. Over 40% of the people visiting local parks in 1996 were either league players or league game spectators. Ballplayers attend games on fields near their homes, or travel to other parts of the County to challenge opposing*

teams. Therefore local parks often have large service areas. Many people drive to local parks, while many neighborhood parks are within walking distance.

***Countywide Bikeways Functional Master Plan (Approved and Adopted, March 2005)*:** A shared-use path through North Four Corners Local Park is identified as part of Route SR-31 on page 52 of the master plan. This is a critical eastern county bikeway connection from U.S. 29 to downtown Silver Spring. The route is primarily a signed, shared roadway but includes segments of shared-use path through parkland.

B. Demographics

An important demographic-related factor, specific to North Four Corners Local Park, is the elderly housing facility of The Oaks at Four Corners that includes 120 apartments located directly adjacent to the park on University Boulevard. Taking a broader view, accessibility will continue to be a critical element in the design of parks based on county-wide population growth, which is now greatest within age groups from 55 and older. It is worth noting, however, that recent information indicates Montgomery County has experienced an unprecedented number of births during 2007. Current population projections from 2005 to 2020 for the Kemp Mill/Four Corners, White Oak, and Takoma Park planning areas indicate a relatively unchanging population; however, population within the Silver Spring planning area is projected to increase by 14,569 people and in the Kensington/Wheaton area to increase by 7,694 people. Census Projections for zip code areas within 1.75 miles of the park, to the year 2015, indicate the following:

- An increase of 6,790 households;
- Population increases within the age groups from 0-9 years old, 20-29 years old, and 55-74 years old;
- An increasing trend toward diversity, with greatest increases within the Hispanic group.

C. Area Facilities

As a local park, North Four Corners serves residents beyond the surrounding neighborhoods and immediate planning area. Planning areas within a three-mile radius of the park include portions of: Kemp Mill/Four Corners (PA 32), Silver Spring and Vicinity (PA 36), Takoma Park (PA 37), Kensington/Wheaton (PA 31), and Colesville/White Oak (PA 33). The area surrounding the park is mostly single-family detached residential with nearby commercial areas. Two stream valley parks are also located within proximity of the park, Northwest Branch Stream Valley Park to the northeast and Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park to the northwest. These stream valley parks include 1,884 acres of natural resource parkland within a 3-mile radius of the park. Sligo Creek Golf Course and Wheaton Regional Park are also within the 3-mile radius of the park. Wheaton Regional Park includes 2/3 of its acreage in an undeveloped state, with the remaining 1/3 of developed land for active recreation and Brookside Gardens. Other local parks in close proximity include Indian Spring Terrace, Argyle and Pinecrest. They each include a softball field, and Pinecrest Local Park includes a rectangular field overlay.

There are several schools in close proximity to North Four Corners Local Park. Montgomery Blair and Northwood High Schools are both within walking distance. Montgomery Blair High School offers limited community use of their baseball/softball fields, and no public use of the large soccer field except for school purposes. The *'Sports Academy'*, an after-school program that combines academics and athletics, recently began with one of its most successful pilot locations at Blair High School. According to the program director, the program has difficulty obtaining sufficient field use time at the high school. Northwood High School has need for use of additional fields to supplement their facilities and support their expanding athletic programs, including soccer and lacrosse. Other area schools include: Sligo, Eastern, and Lee Middle Schools; Oakview, Highland View, Forest Knolls, Kemp Mill, Montgomery Knolls, MacDonald Knolls, and Spring Elementary Schools; and St. Bernadette's private school. Seven of these public schools offer small youth sized rectangular sports fields, to serve students and the community.

D. 2007 Assessment of Field Opportunities

Additional study for this project was completed during 2006 and 2007 to analyze field opportunities in the area to meet future needs. Current analysis of potential sites confirms that a large rectangular field is needed within the three-mile vicinity of North Four Corners Local Park. Nearly all surrounding parkland, as well as private land, is already developed, and environmental constraints limit the possible sites for future development of larger fields. Additionally, adjacent planning areas also have unmet needs for large rectangular fields and therefore cannot help to serve this area, further compounding the problem of people driving longer distances to find available fields.

Field needs and available inventory are both measured in the spring season when use is at its peak. Within a three-mile radius of North Four Corners Local Park, one field conversion (from softball to soccer) is underway at Broadacres Local Park. However, this field is intended to replace a soccer field lost from Brookview Local Park, when this park property was transferred to Montgomery County Public Schools to construct Brookview Elementary School. Synthetic turf is also proposed for the rectangular field at Blair High School, to increase available field use. The proposed level of community use of the Blair High School field has yet to be negotiated between the Planning Board and the Board of Education, and there is currently no community use of this field. It is also possible that a future small field may be included in the proposed White Oak Community Center. There are no other existing rectangular fields that can be expanded and no other undeveloped sites suitable for a large rectangular field with the associated space required for parking and storm water management. In addition, the existing soccer field at North Four Corners Local Park was included in the LPPRP inventory as a full size rectangular field. Since the goals were removed and this field has been eliminated for adult use, the inventory of existing large fields has been reduced and needs increased accordingly.

In addition to the need for large rectangular sports fields, there are also unmet needs in the area for baseball and softball fields, therefore, permanent conversion of existing baseball and softball fields is generally not recommended. Dual use of triangular fields with rectangular fields occurs in the fall and is limited to the daylight hours before 5:30 pm, which does not significantly address field shortages. Dual use of fields may also result in incompatible wear patterns of turf and is generally not recommended. There is no need in the area for additional small rectangular fields to serve youth under 10-years of age, because there are many nearby school fields that are available for community use. Unfortunately, it is not feasible to enlarge these smaller rectangular fields due to topography, forest cover, drainage, and stream valley floodplain.

Staff conducted site visits to many school and park fields in the Four Corners, Silver Spring and Takoma Park areas in November and December of 2006, at the end of the soccer season. The condition of both large and small fields was photographed. Turf areas were consistently worn at the goal mouths, as well as down the full length of many of the larger fields. Based on visual inspection of these fields, they appear to be heavily used.

In summary, there are no additional existing fields that can be expanded or converted that are not currently planned, and there are no other undeveloped sites that are suitable for a large rectangular field to help meet this need in the Silver Spring/Takoma Park community based planning area that includes North Four Corners Local Park. Refer to Attachment 3, for the 2007 Analysis of Field Opportunities.

E. 2007 Alternative Plans and Public Outreach

Concept plans for the park were prepared and evaluated as alternatives to the approved facility plan. Various options were explored by staff that included one or two fields. The plans were presented at a public workshop on June 12, 2007 and were provided to the Northwood Four Corners Civic Association after the workshop for use in their June community meeting and upcoming newsletter. Refer to Attachment 4 for the plans presented and notes from the meeting.

In summary, comments from the attending community were focused on similar points expressed during the initial facility plan process and are as follows.

- There was a request for an alternative with no fields, rather than alternatives with one or two fields. The preference was for a passive neighborhood park with green-space to serve as an oasis for the neighborhood.

- Of the alternatives presented, Option 3 was preferred, provided that the permitting of the existing field remains as it is now for youth and teen team practices only. (Option 3 proposed passive use of the new parcel with no field, and it proposed the existing park to remain in its current condition.) An alternative with no fields would also be desirable to the community. Park plans should include field permitting scenarios, in order for residents to make sound choices between the plans.

- The need for more athletic fields was questioned, and the implications of a field creating more traffic, trash, and negative impacts on the park were discussed.

- General concerns were expressed about traffic cutting through the neighborhood, as well as overflow parking from park users onto nearby streets. Several residents expressed that additional parking within the park could attract more people and traffic, adding to the existing problem.

- The definitions of local and neighborhood parks were discussed, including their acreage and typical facilities included in each type of park. A general preference was expressed that this park should become a neighborhood park.

- A request was made for park staff to begin removal of invasive plant material now, rather than waiting for implementation of the plan. Staff agreed to this request.

- Many residents use the site as an unofficial dog park. A neighborhood dog park without fencing would be a good use on the site.

- Concerns were expressed about the project process and the timing of meetings to provide adequate time for the civic association to form an official position on the alternatives.

Based on the public meeting comments, a zero-field alternative was prepared and the plans were broadened to include ballfield permitting recommendations. Staff felt that several of the alternatives with informal open spaces would provide opportunities for dog-walking and exercise, and there is also a designated dog park nearby at Wheaton Regional Park. These revisions to the plans resulted in four final alternatives to the approved facility plan that range from most to least intensive use. The revised alternatives are summarized in the table below and are illustrated in Attachment 5.

Alternative 1 is physically very similar to the approved facility plan except it adds shade trees at the existing field and recommends limiting its use to youth/teen practices. Alternative 2 goes a step further and physically alters the existing field into an informal green space with landscaped paths and seating areas, and limited potential for field activities. Alternatives 1 and 2 are the same as the approved plan within the new parcel, providing a large new field for use by all ages.

Alternatives 3 and 4 are based on a concept prepared during the original facility plan study that was similar to the community's submitted concept. Alternatives 3 and 4 both propose a passive park within the new parcel including a new 38-space parking area along University Boulevard. They differ in that Alternative 3 proposes to improve the smaller existing field and use it for permitted games (all ages); and it expands the existing parking lot from 16 to 29 spaces. Alternative 4 adds more trees to the existing field, to reduce its size and limit its use, and it does not expand the existing parking lot. Alternative 4 essentially proposes a passive neighborhood-oriented park.

Alternative	Features	Comments
Approved Facility Plan	• Two fields with goals available for use by all ages. • Existing parking lot expanded (29 total spaces) and new parking lot (50 spaces) developed with direct access from University Boulevard.	• Provides one additional field to address down-County large field shortages. • Increases use of the park. *Cost Estimate: $5.3 million*
Alternative 1	• Existing field limited to youth and teen practices with goals removed. • One new large field for use by all ages. • Existing parking lot expanded (29 total spaces) and new parking lot (50 spaces) developed with direct access from University Boulevard.	• Provides one additional field to address down-County large field shortages. • Reduces use of the existing field, reducing conflicts with neighboring homes. *Cost Estimate: $5.2 million*
Alternative 2	• Existing field replaced with informal open space, including decorative paving, seating and landscaping. • One new large field for use by all ages. • Existing parking lot expanded (29 total spaces) and new parking lot (50 spaces) developed with direct access from University Boulevard.	• Does not provide an additional field, but replaces existing small field with a larger, more usable and accessible field at University Boulevard. • Removes active use areas and potential conflicts from proximity to neighboring homes and streets. *Cost Estimate: $5.5 million*
Alternative 3	• Existing field renovated and enlarged for use by all ages. • New parcel developed similar to community concept, with passive, rolling open space and seating areas with decorative paving, trellis and gazebo structures, seat walls, game tables, etc. • Existing parking lot expanded (29 total spaces) and new parking lot (38 spaces) developed with direct access from University Boulevard.	• Active use areas, including the field and parking, remain close to neighboring homes with potential conflicts. • Improves existing field, but does not provide an additional field to address down-County field shortages. *Cost Estimate: $4.1 million*
Alternative 4	• Tree plantings added to existing field, reducing its size and changing its use to an informal open space. • New parcel developed similar to community concept, with passive, rolling open space and seating areas with decorative paving, trellis and gazebo structures, seat walls, game tables, etc. • No change to existing parking lot, but new parking lot (38 spaces) developed with direct access from University Boulevard. • Park is reclassified from Local Park to Neighborhood Park.	• Creates entirely passive park on both parcels. • Does not utilize added parcel of land that was purchased for and is suitable for development of active recreational facilities. • Removes existing field, increasing down-County field shortages. *Cost Estimate: $3.7 million*

It should be noted that design and construction cost estimates for the Approved Facility Plan and Alternatives 1 and 2 are founded on a more finalized plan that includes engineered grading and earthwork calculations, an approved Storm Water Management Concept, engineered utilities, and approved Preliminary Forest Conservation Plan. Estimates for Alternatives 3 and 4 include some assumptions for grading, earthwork, utilities, reforestation, and storm water management. All estimates include design costs, construction costs, a construction contingency factor, and costs for M-NCPPC staff charge-backs for design, construction management and construction inspection.

Fundamental cost differences between Alternative 2 (highest cost) and Alternative 4 (lowest cost) are the result of: additional earthwork and imported fill, additional retaining walls, a large new sodded rectangular field with amenities, additional storm water management, additional vehicular parking on both parcels, higher demolition costs, relocating an existing sanitary sewer line, and additional accessible pedestrian hardscaping. What is attained with Alternative 2 is: active recreation including a larger sports field to better serve area needs; good visibility within the new parcel and full use of the area with a variety of spaces; 25 more parking spaces to facilitate visitation of the park; and a level passive green space with accessible landscaped paths and seating areas at the existing park to serve all ages and abilities. In comparison, Alternative 4 offers rolling green space with several larger trees retained, more seat-walls with pergolas at the new parcel, and a smaller level open space at the existing park area without a loop path and seating areas.

A public questionnaire with the revised alternatives and a summary table was sent by mail and e-mail in late August to community members who had previously corresponded or attended public meetings. The project was also updated on the M-NCPPC website in early/mid September, and postcard notices were widely mailed to residents, as well as others who expressed interest in the project. The notices provided directions to check the updated website for revised alternatives and the questionnaire.

Based on public comments received through November 9, the majority of those who responded preferred either the approved facility plan or Alternative 4, with some favoring Alternatives 2 and 3. The soccer-playing community sent many letters favoring the approved facility plan, as well as a petition in favor of the approved plan from teenage soccer enthusiasts. These field supporters were from: Silver Spring/Takoma Park/Kensington-Wheaton (73%); Rockville/Gaithersburg/Germantown (14%); and other (13%). Residents of the North Four Corners neighborhood have been on the record consistently and in large numbers through the original facility plan study and during this study in opposition to additional fields. The majority of comments received from neighborhood residents favor Alternative 4, and the Northwood Four Corners Civic Association favors a passive plan with no actively used fields. Staff will continue to collect community correspondence for distribution to the Planning Board. Refer to Attachment 7 for 2007 Community Correspondence. Results of letters and e-mail correspondence are tabulated below:

Approved Facility Plan (2 fields permitted for games all ages)	(160) (93)	Broader area residents/soccer players are strongly in favor of a plan with two fields (mostly one form letter); also support letters from five nearby residents. Teen petition (Coleville/White Oak planning area)
Alternative 1 (1 new field permitted for games all ages; 1 field permitted for youth practices)	(1)	Nearby resident prefers 1 large game field + 1 practice field.
Alternative 2 (1 field permitted for games all ages)	(4)	Nearby resident(s) prefer 1 large game field + passive space at current park.
Alternative 3 (1 field permitted for games all ages)	(7)	Nearby resident(s) prefer 1 game field at current park + passive space at new parcel.
Alternative 4 (No permitted fields) **Alternative 4/3,2**	(25) (9)	NFCCA (letter w/official position); and nearby community are strongly in favor of a plan with no fields. Nearby residents favor passive plan 4; next 3 or 2.
Other	(1)	Swim facility

V. CURRENT RECOMMENDATION - AMENDED FACILITY PLAN

A. Basis for Amending the Approved Facility Plan – Alternative 2

The staff recommendation is to amend the approved facility plan as shown in Alternative 2, included in Attachment 5. Alternative 2, which proposes a total of one field, provides a new larger rectangular field within the new parcel that is directly accessible from University Boulevard. Staff concludes that this alternative responds to requests from the surrounding NFCCA neighborhood for a more passive park and one that does not promote soccer as the main activity throughout both sides of the park, while at the same time, the recommended plan will offer the large soccer field and a variety of facilities and features to serve users of all ages. Factors leading to an amended staff recommendation are:

- There is a greater need for larger rectangular fields than smaller fields, per the 2005 LPPRP study. While the existing field at North Four Corners Local Park has been well used, there are other small fields available at nearby schools and in parks that are also available for use. The existing field is smaller than is desirable for adult permitted games (ages 10 and up). This space could be a candidate for another use.

- North Four Corners is a unique and cohesive neighborhood with strong sense of park ownership and desire for a passive park to serve their community. Alternative 2 would remove the existing field and provide a passive green space area immediately adjacent to residences. This would reduce traffic and parking issues within the surrounding neighborhood that result from park use.

- Alternative 2 provides a park with one fully permitted larger rectangular ballfield serving all ages, consistent with the local park category designation and serving a broader area than the immediate neighborhood. The majority of the currently developed M-NCPPC local parks in Montgomery County include one or two permitted fields per park (not including field overlays). The field is located on the new parcel, visible from University Boulevard, and is served by public transit. It has adequate parking and is accessible from a major road, which would remove park user traffic from residential streets. Adjacent seating, viewing areas, storm water management, paths, and other features are also provided. This area is naturally separated from the existing park and homes by a band of forest cover and hedgerows.

- There is an adjacent elderly housing facility with 120 apartments that allows residents to own small dogs. While all of the alternatives provide opportunities to exercise dogs and include passive seating areas, Alternative 2 would provide a quiet, level, open area that is separated from the active use field. These residents could benefit from an easily accessible, level green open space with seating areas, pathways, and landscaping as proposed in Alternative 2.

B. Features of Recommended Alternative 2

Existing Park Area:

- **Replace the existing sports field with a passive area,** including green open space, a loop path, picnicking area, seating areas with decorative hardscaping, amenities, and landscaping.
- **Add 13 parking spaces** at the current parking lot (for a total of 29 total spaces) to alleviate parking shortages and improve maintenance and emergency vehicle access; includes underground storm water management.
- **Connect the bikeway** from Southwood Avenue to the park with a boardwalk.
- **Improve the area near the community building,** including decorative pavement in replacement of asphalt, and a rebuilt stone wall with railings.

- **Improve pathways and drainage,** including widening/resurfacing, addition of exercise stations, replacing asphalt swales with vegetative swales, and addition of planted beds to capture runoff.
- **Improve landscaping**, including tree under-plantings, buffer plantings, vegetative swales, and removal of invasive vegetation.

Undeveloped Park Area:

- **New rectangular sports field (180' x 300')** to provide open green space for use by any recreational age group, including permitted practices and games as well as a variety of informal sports play or other field activities. The proposed field will comply with international standards for the minimum field size to serve recreational soccer players of all ages, which is 150' x 300'. While smaller fields are acceptable for players under 16 and over 35, the regionally preferred minimum size to serve all ages is 180' x 300', and this size also better serves the sports of field hockey and lacrosse.
- **New play area suited for school-aged children** to complement the existing tot lot.
- **Passive features,** such as a shaded plaza with benches, game tables and planters, seating areas with a pergola, green space for picnics and lawn-games, and a gazebo.
- **New parking** with a 50-space parking area accessed directly from University Boulevard and driveway location that served the former Yeshiva School. The parking area would be sufficient to serve the new field and provide maintenance and emergency vehicle access, with 60% of spaces in pervious grass-crete surfacing.
- **Improved pedestrian access and circulation** with a paved accessible loop path, and accessible connector paths (boardwalk and asphalt) from the proposed park area to the existing park and to existing facilities.
- **Amenities**, including signage, a water fountain, screened portable toilets, fencing, exercise stations, heart-smart distance markers, benches, planters, decorative piers, bike racks, kiosks, fencing, and trash receptacles.
- **Class I bikeway connection** from University Boulevard, as an accessible shared-use path through the park, to Southwood Avenue. The Master Plan bikeway is 10' wide asphalt with a section in boardwalk, and incorporates a retaining wall to preserve trees along the property line. Design will include a Maryland State Highway Administration safety analysis for crossing improvements and traffic calming measures at the location of the current crosswalk and curb cut on University Boulevard.
- **Landscape Improvements**, including ornamental landscaping, buffer plantings, retaining walls to save existing trees, removal of invasive vegetation, retention of some natural areas, and 2.37 acres of off-site reforestation within the Northwest Branch watershed.
- **Stormwater management** with bio-retention structures, rain gardens, and vegetative swales.

VI. AMENDED FACILITY PLAN COST ESTIMATES

A. Construction Cost Estimate

The following costs are based on the amended facility plan and represent funding requests included in the current FY09-FY14 CIP. The estimated cost for implementation of the expansion to North Four Corners Local Park is **$5,527,000.** This total project cost is represented in 2007 dollars. The costs included in the PDF for the FY09-14 CIP have been inflated to represent 2009 dollars. Refer to Attachment 6 for the PDF included in the current FY09-14 CIP.

ITEM	ITEM DESCRIPTION	COST
1	SITEWORK	$1,079,400
2	SWM & SEDIMENT CONTROL	$468,280
3	FOREST CONSERVATION & REFORESTATION	$178,300
4	UTILITIES	$79,785
5	VEHICULAR PARKING & ACCESS	$310,039

6	PEDESTRIAN TRAILS, PAVEMENT & HARDSCAPE	$604,771
7	STRUCTURES	$149,600
8	SITE AMENITIES & FURNISHINGS	$171,700
9	RECREATION FACILITIES	$276,000
10	LANDSCAPING	$344,073
*	**PARK CONSTRUCTION SUBTOTAL**	**$3,662,000**
11	CONSTRUCTION CONTINGENCY (30% x Construction Subtotal)	**$1,098,000**
**	**PARK CONSTRUCTION TOTAL**	**$4,760,000**
12	DESIGN W/CONTINGENCY	$480,600
13	STAFF CHARGE-BACKS (20% x Design w/Contingency)	$ 96,000
14	CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT/INSPECTION (4% x Construction Total)	$190,400
**	**TOTAL PROJECT COST ESTIMATE**	**$5,527,000**

B. Operating Budget Impact (OBI)

Staff from the Southern Region, Natural Resources, Central Maintenance, and Park Police prepared an estimate of annual operating budget costs that would be required in order to maintain the new facilities, in addition to current costs for operating the existing park area. Estimates address labor, equipment, materials, and contract work. The total estimated annual operating budget for the expanded and renovated park is $85,000. This preliminary estimate will be further refined and incorporated into the CIP in future years.

VII. CONCLUSION

The amended facility plan for North Four Corners Local Park represents a design that is both attractive and functional, offering features for active and passive recreation to serve people of all ages and abilities. The plan provides a larger rectangular sports fields and includes attractive green open spaces, heart-smart paths, improved visibility, reforestation and rain gardens, and also provides improved vehicular and pedestrian access directly from a major road, reducing use of neighborhood streets.

In summary, staff recommends approval of the amended facility plan for North Four Corners Local Park and the associated cost estimate. The project has been proposed in the FY09-14 Capital Improvements Program for design in FY12-13 and construction in FY14. The facility plan addresses present conditions and expands this park to meet the needs of the future. This is an important opportunity to create an attractive and useful park for everyone to enjoy.

VIII. ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Existing Conditions Plan; Vicinity Map
Attachment 2: 2005 Approved Facility Plan - Staff Project Memo to Planning Board; Alternatives Studied; and Final Community Correspondence *(provided under separate cover)*
Attachment 3: 2007 Analysis of Field Opportunities
Attachment 4: 2007 Preliminary Options; public workshop and meeting notes
Attachment 5: 2007 Revised Alternative Plans; including **Alternative 2 – Recommended Facility Plan**
Attachment 6: Project PDF included in FY09-14 CIP
Attachment 7: 2007 Community Correspondence *(provided under separate cover)*
Attachment 8: 2005 Approved Facility Plan – Consultant Facility Plan Report and Appendices *(provided under separate cover)*

Attachment 1

VICINITY MAP FOR
NORTH FOUR CORNERS LOCAL PARK

Map compiled on August 01, 2008 at 10:01 AM | Site located on base sheet no - 218NW01 | Data of Orthophotos - April 2004 | Orthophoto images Licensed from VARGIS LLC.

NOTICE

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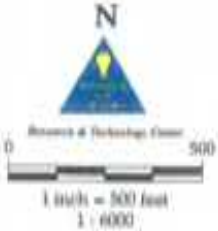
Property lines are compiled by adjusting the property lines to topography created from aerial photography and should not be interpreted as actual field surveys. Planimetric features were compiled from 1:14400 scale aerial photography using stereo photogrammetric methods.

This map is created from a variety of data sources, and may not reflect the most current conditions in any one location and may not be completely accurate or up to date. All map features are approximately within five feet of their true location. This map may not be the same as a map of the same area plotted at an earlier time as the data is continuously updated. Use of this map, other than for general planning purposes is not recommended. - Copyright 1998



MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARK AND PLANNING
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
8787 Georgia Avenue - Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760

Attachment 1

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

Montgomery County Department of Park and Planning

8787 Georgia Avenue

Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

NORTH FOUR CORNERS LOCAL PARK

EXISTING CONDITIONS

SCALE: 1" = 150'

M-NCPPC

MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARK AND PLANNING

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

9500 Brunett Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20901

MCPB 9/22/05
Item: _____

August 26, 2005

MEMORANDUM

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Michael F. Riley, Chief, Park Development Division MR
Patricia McManus, Design Section Supervisor PM

FROM: Heidi Sussmann, Landscape Architect HS

SUBJECT: Facility Plan for Renovation and Expansion of North Four Corners Local Park

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I. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

1) Approve the Preliminary Forest Conservation Plan.

2) Approve the Facility Plan – Modified Option B-2, for North Four Corners Local Park, including cost estimate.

3) Determine the schedule for design and construction during review of the FY07-12 Capital Improvements Program.

II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A. Introduction

The purpose of this project is to provide a Facility Plan and detailed cost estimate for the renovation and expansion of a local park, which will provide additional active recreation to serve current and future area needs, in fulfillment of the 1996 Four Corners Master Plan and stated purpose for the land acquisition. North Four Corners Local Park is a 13.9-acre park located on the north side of University Boulevard at Brunett Avenue, near the commercial node of Four Corners. The park is served by public transportation and is within walking distance of many residents, including an adjacent elderly housing facility. It is surrounded primarily by single-family residential neighborhoods.

The original 7.9-acre portion of the park was constructed with facilities during the 1950's including a small community building, a 16-space paved parking lot, a playground area, a soccer/softball field overlay, two tennis courts, a single basketball court, and pathways. The playground, community building, and parking area were recently renovated, and the community building area is lighted. The original portion of the park is accessed from the terminus of Southwood Avenue, within a residential area. The more recently acquired 6.2-acre portion of the park fronts University Boulevard, providing the park with direct vehicular access from a major road. The newer site is undeveloped, free of notable constraints, and is well suited for park improvements. Refer to Attachment 1 for a Vicinity Map.

B. Project History and Premise of Facility Plan Project

The Montgomery County Council and the Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) were first approached in 1994 by the Northwood-Four Corners Civic Association (NFCCA) with a request to purchase the 6.2-acre site, formerly the private Yeshiva School, in order to provide additional space for community recreation activities. The community recognized the opportunities of the site in statements from the president of the NFCCA and Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) representative during a June 27, 1995, Joint Public Forum on the FY97-02 Capital Improvements Program (CIP), as follows: *"The acquisition of this property would have the following beneficial results: 1) it would provide additional recreation resources which are a recognized need in this area of Montgomery County"*, and, *"the Four Corners area is in an older, highly urbanized section of the County that has few opportunities for expanding the existing recreational facilities. It has also been identified as an underserved portion of the County by the Silver Spring Parkland Study Group in 1988 and, again, in a 1993 study done by former County Executive Neal Potter's planning staff."*

The Montgomery County Planning Board public hearing for the Four Corners Master Plan was held on March 7, 1996, and the community testified about the importance of the site and its potential to serve area recreation needs as follows: *"With the loss of recreational facilities by the removal of the Yeshiva School and Four Corners Elementary School, this purchase would help to replace a needed resource"*, and, *"When both the Alexander and Four Corners Elementary Schools existed, significant additional recreation facilities were available to the community. As the CAC notes, Silver Spring is currently shortchanged when it comes to recreation facilities."*

The Montgomery County Council public hearing on the Four Corners Master Plan was held on October 24, 1996. The memorandum to the Council included an attachment from the Parks Department Land Acquisition Specialist justifying the recommendation to acquire the property for parkland. The memo endorsed the purchase stating: *"if acquired, the Yeshiva site can provide 1 additional ball field, parking, walkways, gazebo, playground, and a open play area."* The December 1996 Four Corners Master Plan Amendment to the 1986 Sector Plan was subsequently adopted with language stating "*Acquisition of this property will allow an expansion of the existing local park... and will provide additional active recreation resources in this heavily populated area."*

The Montgomery County Planning Board approved the purchase agreement on November 13, 1997, in fulfillment of the Master Plan and in response to community support for purchase of the property to provide recreation. The Planning Board subsequently received thanks from the NFCCA in a letter stating: *"With the County Park Commission's approval of the purchase agreement...our community is looking forward to this much needed addition to the area's recreation facilities. This action by the County will not only benefit our residents but also increase access for those living in the surrounding neighborhoods and in The Oaks elderly housing facility."* Refer to Attachment 5, Appendix A– for community testimony.

C. Project Funding and Initiation

The original 7.9-acre park area was acquired in 1944 and 1947 for approximately $5,900. The new 6.2-acre tract of land was acquired in 1998 for $1,251,000, and the Yeshiva School facilities were subsequently demolished in preparation for the new park addition. The facility planning study for this park was funded in the Capital Improvements Program (CIP), FY02 Facility Planning PDF, with subsequent funding transfers and total allocation of $177,000. The consulting firm of Grace E. Fielder and Associates was hired to prepare the facility plan in October of 2002.

D. The Facility Plan Process

The preparation of the facility plan included many steps. Environmental conditions and site opportunities and constraints were analyzed; recreational needs were assessed; a program of requirements (POR) was developed; community input was obtained; various design scenarios were analyzed; and detailed construction costs were developed. The process included outreach to the surrounding community through three public meetings and two civic association meetings, two local surveys, and posting the project to the Commission website. Refer to Attachment 5 – The Facility Plan Report, for a more detailed outline of the planning process.

III. NEEDS ASSESSMENT

A. Planning Document Recommendations

Area Master Plan - The Four Corners Master Plan was approved and adopted in December 1996, following an extensive community process that included the formation of a Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC). The Master Plan was adopted with the following language:

> *"This plan recommends that the six-acre property at 315 University Boulevard, formerly a private school, be acquired for parkland. Acquisition of this property will allow an expansion of the existing park, North Four Corners, and will provide additional active recreation resources in this heavily populated area. It will also provide open space and park access along University Boulevard. Connections between the proposed new park site and the existing local park should be accomplished with pedestrian walkways and not a road extension through the properties or from residential streets that terminate at the property line."*

Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan (LPPRP) Staff Draft 2005 - Emerging needs assessments from the 2005 LPPRP Plan confirm some of the previous projections of the 1998 Park, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan (PROS) and also provide more specific information for projections to the year 2020. Present assessment of general trends in the county indicates an increase in multiple sports use of rectangular fields, an increase in youth team sports, a decrease in softball, a decrease in baseball, and a decrease in roller-hockey. The new data incorporates a comprehensive inventory of available park and school facilities and includes a more detailed analysis for specific types and sizes of facilities. Current information indicates that there will be a deficit of over 11.1 standard size multi-purpose rectangular fields, to serve all ages including adults, by 2020 within the Silver Spring/Takoma Park Community-Based Planning Area that includes this park. The data further indicates that there will be a deficit for 77 such field facilities countywide, representing the greatest demand for a specific recreation facility.

1998 Park Recreation and Open Space Master Plan (PROS) - The approved and adopted 1998 PROS Plan indicates that ball field needs are met within the planning area of Kemp Mill/Four Corners, but the directly adjacent planning areas all have unmet needs as follows: Silver Spring/Vicinity and Takoma Park have unmet needs of more than 5 fields within each area; and Kensington/Wheaton and Colesville/White Oak have unmet needs of 1 to 5 fields within each area. The plan makes the following statements:

> *"Although many of the ball field needs will be provided at new parks and schools, it may not be possible to locate all future ball fields in the planning area where they are needed. This is particularly true in the down-County area, because field construction requires large, cleared, level sites which are in short supply in developed portions of the County. As a result league players may have to drive to fields in nearby areas for their games."*

"The need for local park ball fields is greater than for any other recreation facility. Ball fields receive more use than any other local park facility. Since 1988, the trend toward an increase in soccer has continued and, in addition to organized play, there are many players that are utilizing fields informally. Soccer is emerging as a growing sport in many ethnic groups with an increasing number of teams and large numbers of players gathering to play soccer at fields throughout the County. Projected field needs are based on a substantial increase in teams from 1990 to 1995. Since 1995, teams have escalated at an even greater rate. The need for ball fields has literally exploded in recent years. It is estimated that by 2000 an additional 69 ball fields will be needed to serve County residents and this number will increase to 101 by year 2010."

2001 PROS Master Plan Implementation Study - This report provides site-specific recommendations to meet the needs identified in the 1998 PROS plan for the year 2010. It also makes recommendations based on community based planning team areas in order to aggregate needs and recommendations into larger community based service areas. It states the following:

"This allows Planning Areas with surplus facilities to serve the needs of contiguous areas with facility deficits. It is recognized that all facility needs will not be met in all areas. Reasons for this include realities of fiscal constraints countywide and lack of land availability down county."

"Ballfields are one of the most heavily utilized recreation facilities in Montgomery County and have the greatest estimated shortages."

"The Four Corners Master Plan recommended the purchase of a six acre property...for parkland. This recently purchased site...is in the CIP for Facility Planning. The site was incorporated into the existing North Four Corners Local Park and could offer one additional ball field."

Countywide Bikeways Functional Master Plan, 2005 - This functional master plan, adopted by the Montgomery County Council in February 2005, identifies a signed shared roadway SR-31, Colesville Road (US 29) South, to provide the only bikeway connection between downtown Silver Spring and employment centers and communities in the US 29 corridor. The bikeway extends from Lockwood Drive, part of the US 29 Commuter Bikeway, to Wayne Avenue where the Silver Spring Green Trail is planned. The purpose of the route in the Four Corners area is to bypass US 29, which features very high traffic volumes and speeds. The majority of this planned bike route travels along local streets as a shared roadway, requiring only signage improvements. Part of the bikeway, however, passes through North Four Corners Local Park where it is planned as a shared use path. The bike route crosses University Boulevard at the existing mid-block crosswalk, between the park and Brunett Avenue, and passes along the southeastern border of the park to Southwood Avenue. Between Southwood Avenue and Lockwood Drive, the bike route will travel along a planned sidewalk/shared use path along the west side of US 29. Nearby local streets proposed for only bike route signs include Southwood Avenue and Brunett Avenue. This planned bikeway is in fulfillment of the 1996 Four Corners Area Master Plan recommendation #PB-16, for a shared use path through the park, connecting with shared roadways along Brunett Avenue (EB-2) and Southwood Avenue (PB-17).

B. Surveys and Studies

2003 Park User Satisfaction Survey - The M-NCPPC recently completed this survey in response to significant demographic changes in Montgomery County, based on the 2000 U.S. Census. This information reflects opinions of residents across the County. Some of the most popular and needed facilities, countywide, include playgrounds, paved trails, picnicking, garden-like/landscaped areas, basketball, rectangular sports fields, and natural areas. Most users think priorities should be: maintaining what we have, buying natural areas, and developing more facilities on existing park property. Data more specific to this

park has been obtained by running responses within immediate zip codes and planning areas. In the zip codes within 1.75 miles of the park, 52.8% of park users believed there were too few soccer-use fields, and 50% believed this County-wide.

Community Survey 2003 - During the programming phase of this project, over 450 survey forms were mailed to the surrounding community, and 76 forms and letters were received providing comment on 'what was wanted', 'what was not wanted', and 'what the park issues were'. Two petitions were also received from The Oaks at Four Corners and NFCCA, both requesting a passive park. The Oaks petition also supported the concept of a recreation center on the site. The responses were very informative, somewhat consistent, and are listed numerically in each category in descending order of priority.

- *Wanted Facilities*: 1) accessible paths with fitness stations, 2) natural open space, trees, and/or garden-like areas, 3) additional parking, 4) more playground, 5) benches, and, 6) picnic facilities;
- *Not Wanted Facilities*: 1) no more ball fields, 2) no enclosed shelters, and 3) no more parking;
- *Identified Park Issues*: 1) trash, 2) traffic and access, 3) lack of parking to serve the park, and, 4) enforcement.

School Surveys 2003 - During the programming stage of this project, two nearby schools participated in a survey to canvas the desires of students for active recreation and passive pursuits. The results are listed below.

Sligo Middle School - 6th graders requested:

- *Active Recreation* (195 entries), with most popular facilities in descending priority:
  1) playgrounds, 2) paved multi-use area, tied with, 2) multi-use field, 3) paved multi-purpose trail, and 4) basketball
- *Passive Pursuits* (82 entries), with most popular features in descending priority:
  1) sitting/gathering areas, 2) water-related, 3) picnic related, and 4) nature/hiking related

St. Bernadette's private school - 3rd and 8th graders requested:

- *Active Recreation* (91 entries), with most popular facilities in descending priority:
  1) playgrounds, 2) multi-use field, and, 3) basketball
- *Passive Pursuits* (9 entries), generally related to: 1) quiet, reading, and trees.

North Four Corners Park Site Monitoring 2004 - Staff monitored use at North Four Corners Local Park during ten non-rainy weekend days and several weekday afternoon site visits from August 28 through November 7, 2004. The objective was to determine specific operational issues apparent during peak use times, typically occurring throughout weekends and potentially on weekday afternoons and early evenings. Results varied significantly from very sparse visitation, to intermittent use, to very heavy use of facilities with related parking overflow to the side streets of Southwood and Edgewood Avenues. General observations were that weekday visitation included teen and youth soccer practices along with moderate playground and trail use, and the parking area was rarely overfilled.

Weekends incurred the highest levels of park use with related parking overflow. Youth and teen field use by itself incurred moderate, occasional parking overflow onto Southwood Avenue. Some uses of the community building, with a lot of attendees and no concurrent field use, also incurred moderate parking overflow to side streets. The greatest weekend parking deficits were realized during simultaneous use of the community building, for a church group or dance class, at the same time the field was used for practices and games. Notable parking deficits also occurred during an adult soccer game with many spectators and periodically during very heavy attendance by only the church group.

M-NCPPC Park Permit Office Records - During the Spring 2004 season, the Park Permit Office turned away 180 soccer permit applicants county-wide, more than for any other sport. The sports field at North

Four Corners Local Park was permitted mostly for soccer related use during the Spring and Fall seasons of 2003/2004, primarily by Montgomery Soccer Incorporated (MSI) and St. Bernadette's School. Permits were issued for youth and teen games and practices during weekdays and weekends. The field is now being used for Peewee soccer as well. The community building was permitted frequently during the same timeframe for a church group, classes, parties and events, and NFCCA meetings.

C. Demographics

2003 Census Projections for the Four Corners planning area indicates a slowly increasing population. The 2003 census projections for zip code areas within 1.75 miles of the park, from the years 2005 to 2015, indicate the following: 1) an increase in total population from 204,747 to 219,724 people, and an increase of 6,790 households; 2) population increases within the age groups from 0-9 years old, 20-29 years old, and 55-74 years old, with other age groups stable; and, 3) an increasing trend toward diversity, with greatest increases within the Hispanic group. Accessibility will continue to be a critical element in the design of parks based on trends in countywide population growth, which is greatest within age sector groups from 55 and older. Demographic trends may also influence planning for active recreation, considering that moderately sized facilities are easier to play games on with less effort, therefore better suited to recreational players who are getting older and less fit.

D. Area Facilities

North Four Corners Park is a local park and is intended to serve residents beyond the surrounding neighborhoods and immediate planning area. Planning areas within a two-mile radius of the park include: Kemp Mill/Four Corners (PA 32), Silver Spring and Vicinity (PA 36), Takoma Park (PA 37), Kensington/Wheaton (PA 31), and Colesville/White Oak (PA 33). The surrounding area is primarily single-family detached residential with nearby commercial areas. There are several school and park facilities in close proximity to North Four Corners Local Park. Montgomery Blair and Northwood High Schools are both within walking distance. Montgomery Blair High School offers very limited community use of their baseball/softball fields, and no public use of the large soccer field except for school purposes. Northwood High School has need for use of additional fields to supplement their facilities and support their expanding athletic programs, including soccer and lacrosse. Other area schools include: Sligo, Eastern, and Lee Middle Schools; Oakview, Highland View, Forest Knolls, Kemp Mill, Montgomery Knolls, MacDonald Knolls, and Spring Elementary Schools; and St. Bernadette's private school. Seven of these public schools offer small youth sized rectangular sports fields that could be more fully utilized. Other local parks in the area are Indian Spring Terrace and Pinecrest. They each include a softball field, and Pinecrest Local Park includes a rectangular field overlay.

Two stream valley parks are located within one mile of the park, Northwest Branch Stream Valley Park to the northeast and Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park to the northwest. They provide significant tracts of land for conservation, passive recreation and enjoyment of nature, and limited areas for active recreation. These stream valley parks include over 1,000 acres within only two miles of North Four Corners Local Park, and many more acres beyond that. Sligo Creek Golf Course and Wheaton Regional Park are also within the two-mile vicinity. Wheaton Regional Park includes 2/3 of its acreage in an undeveloped state, with the remaining 1/3 of developed land for active recreation and Brookside Gardens.

IV. THE FACILITY PLAN STUDY & COMMUNITY OUTREACH

A. Inventory of Site Conditions

The new park area includes an undeveloped and visible 6.2-acre tract. The site slopes gently down from its ridgeline at University Boulevard, providing pleasing views inward toward a backdrop of trees. This new tract of parkland offers prime vehicular and public transit access, with minimal physical constraints to the creation of new local park facilities. The area consists of upland meadow interspersed with aging specimen trees, forest fragments, hedgerows at its borders, and some invasive vegetation. Small remnants of the former school foundations and paving are present. There are no streams, wetlands, or floodplain on the site, and soils and grades are acceptable for park development. The adjacent 7.9-acre area includes the existing park facilities accessed from Southwood Avenue. Flat to moderate slopes prevail on the site that includes open green space, two areas of mature specimen trees with under-story vegetation, and perimeter hedgerows with some invasive vegetation.

B. Program of Requirements

The first public meeting was held on January 30, 2003, to present the site inventory and analysis, to receive input regarding what was desired at the park, to determine any issues, and to define a program of requirements (POR). Two written surveys were conducted to gather additional information, as previously noted. The school survey results indicated a desire for more active recreational activities with first choices related to a multi-purpose rectangular sports field or a multi-purpose paved area. The community survey results, written correspondence and petitions, and public meeting comments were unanimously opposed to another soccer field and preferred a more natural, undeveloped park that would be used primarily by the immediate neighborhood. As a follow-up to the public meeting, staff attended a NFCCA meeting on April 9, 2003, to discuss specific community concerns regarding park use and enforcement problems with the existing park. These concerns included event-related parking overflow onto side streets, uncontrolled trash, the need for sanitary facilities near the field, excessive use of facilities, and need for improved enforcement of park regulations.

The following program of requirements was developed for the park, based on an assessment of area needs and input received from the community and the staff team:

- Additional active recreation to serve the widest age group possible
- Playground activities for older children
- Passive features, including areas for sitting, picnicking, lawn games, and spaces suitable for use by the elderly
- Trail features including a loop path and pedestrian connections to the existing park
- Accessibility to all facilities
- A shared-use bikeway connection through the park
- Necessary infrastructure throughout the park including parking and maintenance access
- Direct vehicular access and parking off a major road, without a vehicular connection to the existing park or from abutting neighborhood side streets
- Streetscaping to provide an attractive visual frontage for the park
- Improved landscaping, invasive removal, tree saving, reforestation, and buffer plantings
- Rain gardens and improved drainage
- Improved visibility for safety enforcement
- Amenities to facilitate park use, such as exercise stations, portable toilets, water fountain, bike racks, trash cans
- Use of recycled materials during final design and construction

C. Initial Design Phase

Two concept plans were prepared for the park that each provided a primary active recreation feature. Plan A included a multi-purpose paved area, and Plan B provided a small rectangular sports field. The plans were presented at a second public meeting on June 19, 2003, along with the results from the school and general community surveys. The attending majority did not favor Plan B and had concerns with an additional field, due to usage issues related to the existing park field. Plan A was generally favored and became the original direction of the project, in part because it saved more existing trees as the result of a smaller limit of disturbance. Project information was also delivered to The Oaks at Four Corners for their review and comment. Both plans, with site analysis information, were posted to the M-NCPPC website.

The NFCCA proceeded to prepare and promote a plan, titled Plan C, during the summer of 2003, in letters to the Montgomery County Council and the M-NCPPC. Plan C essentially modified Plan A by removing the multi-purpose paved area, reducing the new parking area, reducing the pathways, and placing the new play area close to University Boulevard. Staff did not support Plan C, due to the stated goal and purpose of the project to provide active recreation facilities.

D. Design Reevaluation Period

During summer of 2003 both of the concept plans prepared by M-NCPPC were revised to include more open space and landscaping in response to community comments. They were titled Plan A-2 and Plan B-2. Changes occurred in the direction of the project as a result of staff and management review of these plans. In order to address community concerns about problems with the existing park, the study area was expanded to include the existing park, operational changes were evaluated, and needs information was studied further.

Staff determined that needs were inconclusive for a multi-purpose paved area, based on mixed results observed at recently built facilities and reported declines in roller-hockey teams. As a result, in November of 2003, the plan that was preferred by staff and management became Plan B-2. The change in project direction was made in response to generally accepted and known needs for ball fields down county, per the 1998 PROS Plan and ball field initiatives program supported by the Montgomery County Council. Staff also recognized that this local park is intended to provide recreation for all residents, and there are very limited land opportunities down county for providing active recreation facilities.

In the analysis of the existing park, the primary goal was to add parking, in response to needs identified by the community. Two options were considered reasonable: expansion of the existing parking area, and the addition of a new parking area off Royalton Road. Staff believed that additional parking, portable toilets, and operational changes would help to alleviate problems at the existing park, and the new park area would be designed with adequate parking to meet demands. Plan A-2 and Plan B-2 were posted to the Commission website during summer of 2004, with B-2 stated as the preferred plan. The website noted that Plan B-2, including design ideas for the existing park, would be presented at a third public meeting. Site monitoring followed during Fall 2004, in order to determine specific solutions for improved operations at the current park.

E. Finalizing the Facility Plan

The third public meeting was held September 23, 2004, to review the recommended Plan B-2 and options for increasing parking at the existing park, with the goal of finalizing the recommendation. The large group of attendees was opposed to another soccer field and did not agree that staff should propose it, considering their prior opposition in the previous public meeting to a field. They were also opposed to most of the ideas to add parking in the existing park, especially off of Royalton Road. Essentially they requested for little or nothing to occur on the new site or the existing park area. There was no community support expressed for the recommended plan, other than a few favorable letters and phone calls from neighbors and a Northwood

High School representative stating that school groups would use the proposed field. Refer to Attachment 4 – Recent Community Correspondence and Attachment 5, Appendix A for extensive community correspondence, petitions, and survey summaries.

During the winter and spring of 2005, other options for the site were considered as a result of clearly divergent goals for the park, between community desires and the staff and management team recommendation. Two concepts were prepared, evaluated, and rejected by staff: one plan created an entirely passive park by removing the paved multi-purpose area in Plan A-2, and another plan included a full size regulation soccer field within the new tract. The first plan, titled Plan A-C, was devoid of active recreation opportunities. The other plan, titled Plan D, was considered overly intrusive to the site and neighbors with no free space and it was generally less attractive. Other ideas were discussed, including land banking the new property for another valid public purpose, such as workforce housing. The idea of doing nothing on the new property was considered ill advised on several levels, including crime and safety concerns, as well as poor use of a prime tract of land. Refer to the Facility Plan Report, for the various plan options considered.

Additional assessment of needs and evaluation of options occurred in the interest of forming the best final recommendation. The new 2005 LPPRP Plan process began, with improved methodologies for assessing needs data, and a new Local Park Use study was also initiated. Both efforts incorporate feedback from public and multi-agency forums. These emerging results have helped to shape final recommendations for the North Four Corners Local Park project, including moderate expansion of the small rectangular field proposed in Plan B-2 (150' x 250') to the minimum desirable size to serve all recreational age groups (180' x 300'). The recommended facility plan, with operational improvements, has resulted.

F. Operational and Maintenance Improvements

Staff is in the process of implementing changes to current park operations and maintenance in order to address issues identified by the community. Although facility planning projects typically deal with plans for physical park improvements, specific operational issues became evident during the facility planning process for this park. As a result, the following new permitting strategies for use of the existing rectangular sports field and small community building have already been initiated, in order to improve park use and alleviate parking deficits:

- Limit use of the existing rectangular field for youth permits only.
- Do not issue permits for the existing community building and field simultaneously during weekends.
- Reduce the group size allowed to use the community building to 50 people.
- Add kiosks at the existing field and community building, and post permits.
- Monitor use throughout the park to determine appropriate future operations.

The recently initiated 'Local Park Use Study' identifies recurring problems at heavily used local parks with ball fields, and recommends general solutions to address these problems. The problems identified in the study include insufficient police enforcement, parking deficits, over-permitting of facilities, trash, lack of sanitary facilities, noise, need for buffer plantings, and improved outreach. These are all issues that have been identified at North Four Corners Local Park and this facility plan recommends the following measures, in addition to new permitting practices, in order to address these conditions:

- Provide additional annual operating funds for increased police surveillance and enforcement, maintenance efforts, and natural resource management
- Add 13 parking spaces at the existing parking lot and 50 spaces within the new tract
- Add trash receptacles throughout the park and portable toilets near the existing and proposed field
- Include maintenance and emergency vehicle access throughout the park
- Add buffer landscaping near property lines, remove invasive plants, and improve visibility
- Remove the softball field overlay and improve soil and turf conditions of the existing field

G. Response to Public Comments

The following table is a general summary of the public comments received throughout the facility planning process. It includes actions taken by staff in response to public comments.

General Public Comments	Actions Taken
Provide adequate opportunities for public comment.	• Three public meetings were held. • Staff attended two NFCCA meetings. • Two written public surveys were conducted. • Project information was hand-delivered to the adjacent elderly community, The Oaks at Four Corners. • Project information was posted on the M-NCPPC website. • Staff report was released 3 weeks prior to the Planning Board meeting at the community's request.
Address problems with the existing park, including overflow parking on residential streets, trash, public urination, and security concerns.	• The project area was expanded to include the existing park. • Numerous site visits were conducted to study use patterns. • Operational changes in permitting practices have been implemented and will continue to be monitored. • Parking options were studied, and additional parking is proposed in the existing park, as well as on the new parcel. • Trash receptacles are being replaced in the park, and portable toilets are proposed. • Understory vegetation will be selectively cleared to improve visibility within the park, and open views will be maintained into the park from University Boulevard. • A local park usage study was initiated to address issues identified at heavily used local parks, including enforcement, maintenance, design, permitting and outreach.
Needs assessment data could be flawed.	• Methodologies for assessing needs have been revised and improved during the LPPRP process and have included public, agency, and user group forums.
Provide passive, open space areas and natural areas.	• Plans were revised to include more open, green space. Tree saving measures, under plantings, and rain gardens are included in the plan.
Bikeway is located too close to adjacent residences.	• The bikeway was shifted away from the adjacent residences, and buffer plantings are proposed.
Do not provide a ball field or other active recreation facility in the new park area.	• The facility plan recommends addition of a rectangular sports field to serve critical recreation needs of the down county, taking advantage of a rare land opportunity to do so.
More than one ball field is excessive for a local park.	• The 129 currently developed M-NCPPC local parks in Montgomery County provide 284 ball fields, which is an average of 2.2 fields per park.

V. AGENCY COORDINATION AND REGULATORY APPROVALS

The facility plan process involved coordination and reviews with several agencies as outlined below. Detailed information is included in the Facility Plan report.

Development Review Committee (DRC) - Plans A and B were reviewed early in the process by the DRC on June 16, 2003. There were mixed preferences for aspects within each plan. Recommendations included:

one parking access point from University Boulevard; separation of the current sidewalk away from University Boulevard; relocation of the existing sewer line and manhole in the middle of the park; grass-crete surfacing for a portion of the parking spaces; multiple smaller bio-retention/rain gardens for storm water management; tree saving measures to the greatest extent possible; and a designated Class I bikeway connector as a shared-use path through the park.

Department of Permitting Services (DPS) - Staff and the consultant met with DPS to discuss the stormwater management approach for the recommended facility plan that included: grass swales and bio-retention/rain-gardens in the newer area; and underground methods for expanding the existing parking area. The stormwater management concept plan for all recommended park development was submitted during March of 2005 and was approved on April 28, 2005.

M-NCPPC Environmental Planning/Countywide Planning Division - The Natural Resources Inventory/Forest Stand Delineation Plan (NRI/FSD) was approved January 30, 2003, and October 22, 2004, for the new tract and older park area respectively. An updated plan for the new tract was re-approved on August 23, 2005. The Preliminary Forest Conservation Plan was submitted on August 22, 2005, reflecting the final facility plan. Refer to Attachment 3.

Montgomery County Department of Recreation (MCDR) - Coordination occurred with the MCDR during the park process, concerning status of the site selection process for the Kemp Mill Recreation Center. The following project status statement was provided by the MCDR on July 19, 2005: *"Currently, the Site Selection process for the Kemp Mill Community Recreation Center is focused in the more immediate Kemp Mill/Wheaton vicinity and not in the Four Corners area. In all likelihood the North Four Corners Local Park would not be a location given much consideration for this facility."*

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) - Coordination with MCPS occurred during the project for various purposes: to participate in the local school survey; to share inventory data for fields at nearby schools; and to obtain feedback from the nearby high school on the project proposal.

M-NCPPC Staff Team and Management Reviews - The project was reviewed during the process by various members of the staff team at six key progress review points and also for review of the final plan. Park Police review of the plans for Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) compliance occurred during the process, resulting in recommendations for proposed landscaping and clean-up of existing vegetation. Management briefings and reviews also occurred throughout the project process to clarify the direction and objectives of the project.

VI. RECOMMENDATION

A. Recommended Facility Plan

A summary of proposed facilities in the recommended facility plan, Modified Option B-2, is outlined below. Refer to Attachment 2 for the recommended facility plan.

The Undeveloped Park Tract:

- **A rectangular sports field (180' x 300')** - to provide open green space for use by any recreational age group, potentially including permitted practices and games as well as a variety of informal sports play or other field activities. The new field may also eliminate some of the pressures on the existing field and facilitate maintenance of both fields. The proposed field will comply with international standards for the minimum field size to serve recreational soccer players of all ages, which is 150' x 300'. While smaller fields are acceptable for players under 16 and over 35, the preferred minimum size to serve all ages is 180' x 300', and this size also better serves the sports of field hockey and lacrosse.

- **A play area suited for school-aged children** to complement the existing tot lot.
- **Passive Features** - a shaded plaza with benches and game tables, seating areas, green space for picnics and lawn-games, a pergola, and a gazebo.
- **Parking** - a 50 space parking area accessed directly from University Boulevard, sufficient to serve the new field and provide maintenance access; 60% of spaces in pervious grass-crete surfacing.
- **Improved pedestrian access and circulation** - a paved, accessible loop path and connector paths from the proposed park area to the existing park and to existing facilities.
- **Amenities** - signage, a water fountain, screened portable toilets at both fields, fencing, exercise stations, heart-smart distance markers, benches, planters, bike racks, kiosks, fencing, and trash receptacles.
- **A Class I bikeway connection** - from University Boulevard, as a shared-use path through the park, to Southwood Avenue. Full build-out of the park would require a Maryland State Highway Administration safety analysis for crossing improvements and traffic calming measures at the location of the current crosswalk and curb cut on University Boulevard.
- **Landscape Improvements** - ornamental landscaping, buffer plantings, removal of invasive vegetation, and retention of some natural areas.
- **Stormwater management** - bio-retention, rain gardens, and vegetative swales.

The Existing Park Area:

- **Additional parking** (13 added spaces) at the current parking lot (for a total of 29 total spaces) with underground stormwater management.
- **Renovation of existing sports field** (205' x 270') by removing the softball backstop/field overlay, restoring turf conditions, and adding field boundary fence.
- **A boardwalk connection to the bikeway** – from Southwood Avenue to the park.
- **Improvements near the community building,** including decorative pavement in replacement of asphalt, and a rebuilt stone wall with railings.
- **Minor improvements** to pathways and drainage.
- **Landscape Improvements** – tree under-plantings, buffer plantings, vegetative swales, and removal of invasive vegetation.

B. Capital Improvements Program (CIP) Construction Cost Estimate

The estimated cost for implementation of the expansion to North Four Corners Local Park is **$5,820,555.** The following table summarizes projected costs for design and construction of the proposed park.

ITEM	ITEM DESCRIPTION	COST
1	SITEWORK	$1,079,400
2	SWM & SEDIMENT CONTROL	$419,775
3	FOREST CONSERVATION & REFORESTATION	$188,550
4	UTILITIES	$100,485
5	VEHICULAR PARKING & ACCESS	$299,760
6	PEDESTRIAN TRAILS & HARDSCAPE	$469,705
7	STRUCTURES	$149,600
8	SITE AMENITIES & FURNISHINGS	$183,700
9	RECREATION FACILITIES	$302,750
10	LANDSCAPING	$277,089
*	**PARK CONSTRUCTION SUBTOTAL**	**$3,470,814**
11	CONSTRUCTION CONTINGENCY (30% x Construction Subtotal)	**$1,041,244**
**	**PARK CONSTRUCTION TOTAL**	**$4,512,058**
12	DESIGN W/CONTINGENCY (20% x Construction Total)	$902,412
13	STAFF CHARGE-BACKS (20% x Design w/Contingency)	$180,482
14	CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT/INSPECTION (5% x Construction Total)	$225,603
**	**TOTAL PROJECT COST ESTIMATE**	**$5,820,555**

C. Operating Budget Impact (OBI)

Staff prepared an estimate of annual operating budget impact costs that would be required in order to maintain the new facilities. These costs would be in addition to current costs for operating the existing park area, and include tasks accomplished by staff from the Southern Region, Natural Resources, Central Maintenance, and Park Police. Estimates address labor, staff years, equipment, materials, and contract work. The total estimated annual operating budget for the expanded park area and operational improvements is $84,875. Refer to the Facility Plan Report for a more detailed operating budget estimate.

VII. CONCLUSION

The Facility Plan for North Four Corners Local Park has been designed to fulfill the original project purpose, address current conditions, and meet long term planning goals. The plan represents a balanced design that is both attractive and functional, offering features for active and passive recreation to serve people of all ages and abilities. The plan addresses estimated recreation deficits in this area for over eleven standard rectangular sports fields and is consistent with planning document recommendations for the site. The plan includes attractive open green spaces, improved visibility for the safety of park visitors, environmental benefits including reforestation, rain gardens, and removal of invasive vegetation, and also provides improved vehicular and pedestrian access directly from a major road to reduce use of neighborhood streets. The plan provides a versatile recreational footprint with level space that can be readily adapted to another active recreation use should it ever be necessary. This will be important if recreational trends change or a new need emerges in the long-term future.

In summary, staff recommends approval of Facility Plan – Modified Option B-2, for North Four Corners Local Park and the associated cost estimate. The facility plan addresses present conditions and expands this park to meet the needs of the future. This is an important opportunity to create an attractive and useful park.

VIII. ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Vicinity Map
Attachment 2: ✓ Recommended Facility Plan – Modified Option B-2
Attachment 3: ✓ Agency Correspondence –
- Memorandum on Forest Conservation Plan
- DPS Approval of SWM Plan
- Memorandum from Community Based Planning

Attachment 4: ✓ Recent Community Correspondence
Attachment 5: The Facility Plan Report


North Four Corners Local Park
APPROVED FACILITY PLAN
THE OAKS AT FOUR CORNERS
ASSISTED LIVING CENTER
TO WHEATON
TO FOUR CORNERS
UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD (Rte. 193)
BRUNETT AVE.
PINEWOOD AVENUE
LEGEND
SHADE TREE
FLOWERING TREE
EXISTING TREE TO BE SAVED
EVERGREEN TREE
PERENNIAL BED
EXISTING TREE TO REMOVED

Attachment 3: Agency Correspondence -

Memorandum on Forest Conservation Plan
DPS Approval of SWM Plan
Memorandum - Community Based Planning

Attachment 2

M-NCPPC

MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARK AND PLANNING

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760
301-495-4500, www.mncppc.org

MEMORANDUM

TO: Heidi Sussman, Park Development Division

VIA: Mary Dolan, Environmental Planning MD

FROM: Michael Zamore, Environmental Planning MZ

DATE: September 6, 2005

SUBJECT: 1. Preliminary Forest Conservation Plan for North Four Corners Local Park

2. Facility Plan for Expansion of North Four Corners Local Park

---

Preliminary Forest Conservation Plan Recommendation

Staff recommends **approval** of the plan with the following conditions:

1. Compliance with conditions of the approval of the Preliminary Forest Conservation Plan prior to the release of the sediment and erosion control permit.

2. Compliance with conditions of DPS's letter of April 28,2005 approving the SWM Concept Request for the site.

3. Final Landscape Plan to MNCPPC for review.

Facility Plan Recommendation

The Environmental Planning staff has reviewed the facility plan referenced above. Staff recommends **approval.**

Background

North Four Corners Local Park is a 13.9-acre park located 0.4-mile northwest of the intersection of Colesville Road (MD Rte. 29) and University Boulevard (MD Rte. 193). The area consists of upland meadow interspersed with aging specimen trees, forest fragments, hedgerows at its borders, and some invasive vegetation. There are no streams, wetlands, or floodplain on the site. The park consists of an original portion with facilities built in the 1950's, and a more recently acquired portion fronting University Boulevard. The original portion contains Parcels P 659 and P 587 (covered by NRI/FSD No.4-05059 issued October 22, 2004), and the more recently acquired section contains Parcel P 803 (covered by NRI/FSD No. 4-03130 issued August 23, 2005). There are 35 specimen trees and 31 significant trees on the parcels. The Montgomery County Department of Parks and Recreation proposes to provide additional active recreation facilities, including one adult soccer field, at Four Corners Local Park to serve current and future area needs, in fulfillment of the 1996

Attachment 2

MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
NATURAL RESOURCES INVENTORY/FOREST STAND DELINEATION
COMMENTS

TO: Grace Fielder
G.E.Fielder and Associates

Phone 410-423-6318

NRI/FSD # 4-03130
Date Recd 8/23/05
Name of Plan North Four Corners Local Park
Fax 410-423-632

The subject Natural Resources Inventory/Forest Stand Delineation Plan has been reviewed by the Environmental Planning Division to determine if it meets the requirements of Chapter 22A of the Montgomery County Code (Forest Conservation Law). The following determination has been made:

SUBMISSION ADEQUACY

X Adequate as submitted (NRI/FSD plan and supporting information is in Environmental Planning Division file.)

RECOMMENDATIONS:

X Approval. Forest Conservation Plan may be submitted. Approval may be subject to confirmation of floodplain and wetlands delineation at later planning stages. If DPS determines a floodplain is present, or if wetland-permitting agencies determine wetlands are present, the environmental buffer areas on the plan will have to be enlarged to incorporate those additional environmentally sensitive areas.

Note: When the NRI/FSD is approved and stamped by MNCPPC, please submit a copy of the approved plan as a PDF named Approved NRI/FSD. The NRI/FSD plan drawings are to be grouped and saved in numerical order within one file. All PDFs are to have a graphic scale.

SIGNATURE: _____ 301 495-4546 DATE: 8/23/05

Josh Penn
Environmental Planning Division

Reminder: **Address your submissions/revisions** to the Reviewer who completed the Comments sheet. **Put the Plan numbers** on your cover/transmittal sheets.

Attachment 2

DEPARTMENT OF PERMITTING SERVICES

Douglas M. Duncan
County Executive

Robert C. Hubbard
Director

April 28, 2006

Ms. Caryn Williams
KCI Technologies, Inc.
14502 Greenview, Drive, #100
Laurel, MD 20708

Re: Stormwater Management *CONCEPT* Request
for North Four Corners
Preliminary Plan #: N/A
SM File #: 214508
Tract Size/Zone: 14.01 acres / R-60
Total Concept Area: 14.01 acres
Lots/Block: N/A
Parcel(s): 547, 801, 587, 869, 803
Watershed: Northwest Branch

Dear Ms. Williams,

Based on a review by the Department of Permitting Services Review Staff, the stormwater management concept for the above mentioned site is acceptable. The stormwater management concept consists of on-site water quality control via construction of three bio filters and one separator sand filter; and onsite recharge via impervious area disconnection and storage below the proposed bio filters. Channel protection volume is not required because the one-year post development peak discharge is less than or equal to 2.0 cfs.

The following items will need to be addressed during the detailed sediment control/stormwater management plan stage:

1. Prior to permanent vegetative stabilization, all disturbed areas must be topsoiled per the latest Montgomery County Standards and Specifications for Topsoiling.
2. A detailed review of the stormwater management computations will occur at the time of detailed plan review. All stormwater facilities must be designed per the most recent Montgomery County design specifications. It is agreed that proposed bio filter no. 2 may exceed the normal drainage area limitation of 1 acre, due to its location and to the fact that it is located on MNCPPC property.
3. An engineered sediment control plan must be submitted for this development.
4. All filtration media for manufactured best management practices, whether for new development or redevelopment, must consist of MDE approved material.

This list may not be all-inclusive and may change based on available information at the time.

Payment of a stormwater management contribution in accordance with Section 2 of the Stormwater Management Regulation 4-90 is not required.

Attachment 2

This letter must appear on the sediment control/stormwater management plan at its initial submittal. The concept approval is based on all stormwater management structures being located outside of the Public Utility Easement, the Public Improvement Easement, and the Public Right of Way unless specifically approved on the concept plan. Any divergence from the information provided to this office; or additional information received during the development process; or a change in an applicable Executive Regulation may constitute grounds to rescind or amend any approval actions taken, and to reevaluate the site for additional or amended stormwater management requirements. If there are subsequent additions or modifications to the development, a separate concept request shall be required.

If you have any questions regarding these actions, please feel free to contact Mark Etheridge at 240-777-6336.

Sincerely,

Richard R. Brush, Manager
Water Resources Section
Division of Land Development Services

RRB:am mce

cc. R. Weaver
S. Federline
SM File # 214500

QN -ON; Acres: 14
QL - ON; Acres: 14
Recharge is provided

Attachment 2

MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
NATURAL RESOURCES INVENTORY/FOREST STAND DELINEATION
COMMENTS

TO:	Grace Fielder	NRI/FSD #	4-03130
	G.E.Fielder and Associates	Date Recd	8/23/05
		Name of Plan	North Four Corners Local Park
Phone	410-423-6318	Fax	410-423-632

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SIGNATURE: _____ 301 495-4546 DATE: 8/23/05
John Penn
Environmental Planning Division

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Attachment 2

M-NCPPC

MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARK AND PLANNING

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760
301-495-4500, www.mncppc.org

August 16, 2005

MEMORANDUM

TO: Heidi Sussmann, Landscape Architect
Park Development Division

VIA: John Carter, Chief JC
Community-Based Planning Division

FROM: Glenn Kreger, Silver Spring/Takoma Park Team Leader GK
Community-Based Planning Division

SUBJECT: North Four Corners Local Park Facility Plan

The Community-Based Planning Division would like to convey our enthusiastic support for the proposed Facility Plan for North Four Corners Local Park. The recommended Facility Plan provides a good balance of facilities in a visible location on a major highway that is served by public transit. The Facility Plan is consistent with the December 1996 *Approved and Adopted Four Corners Master Plan* which specifically recommended the expansion of the existing park through the acquisition of the six-acre tract at 315 University Boulevard (formerly occupied by a private school) to "provide additional active recreational resources in this heavily populated area." It is noteworthy that this Master Plan recommendation was supported by the community and was the basis for the County Council's decision to fund acquisition of the property.

The Facility Plan for North Four Corners Local Park proposes improvements to the existing portion of the park and new facilities in the six-acre addition to the park adjoining University Boulevard. The new facilities include additional parking; an off-street bike connection between University Boulevard and Edgewood Avenue, as recommended in the Master Plan; and a rectangular field that could be used for soccer. The rectangular field recommended in the Facility Plan responds to the growing demand for soccer fields in the increasingly diverse down-County area. In addition, it provides the flexibility for other types of activities. If community needs change in the future, the rectangular field could easily be adapted for another type of facility.

We understand that some in the immediate neighborhood oppose this component of the Facility Plan. However, we get few opportunities to provide soccer fields in the urban part of the County and should not pass up this rare opportunity. It is important to recognize that North Four Corners is classified as a Local Park, not a Neighborhood Park. Local Parks are larger facilities that serve a broader area than just the immediate neighborhood.

Some residents have expressed a concern about people from outside the neighborhood behaving inappropriately at the existing park (e.g., leaving trash, making noise, and perhaps engaging in questionable behavior) because they have no stake in the neighborhood. Clearly, such behavior should not be tolerated. It is up to us to design park facilities with CPTED in mind, regulate the use of our facilities, maintain them and police them. If we are successful, facilities like North Four Corners Local Park could become places where people from diverse backgrounds come together as one community, much like the soccer fields in the South Riding community in Loudoun County described in the July 24 Washington Post.

While we understand the concerns of those who already live near Four Corners Local Park, the way to address these concerns is not simply to leave the property in its "natural" condition. Given the cost of property in the urban area, it is essential to obtain active recreational facilities when we expand our parks—both in Four Corners and at Fenton Gateway Park. It is difficult to justify the cost of parkland acquisition simply to provide a buffer for the adjoining homeowners.

GK:ha: j:\cbp1\kreger\N4C LP

7/24/05

Finding the World in Loudoun County

With Soccer's Help, Unexpected Bonds Form in Diverse Development

By Stephanie McCrummen
Washington Post Staff Writer

The second pickup soccer match of the season came on a gray spring Tuesday. It was drizzling and cool, and by 6:30 p.m., a dozen or so men had gotten home from work, changed into shorts and walked from their houses over to a field in their Loudoun County development, a left beyond a glossy red Sheetz gas station and a split rail fence.

As always, Arthur Skaer — real estate agent, orchestrator, all-around community guy — came in his Olympic-flag windbreaker and was now yelling, "Antonio! *Que pasa*?!" at his neighbor, Antonio Duenas, who is originally from Peru and who passed the ball to Falayi Adu, originally from Nigeria. Eventually, the players included residents who once called Morocco, Colombia, Iran, Cambodia, Somalia, Poland, Austria and Finland home, in addition to places such as Alexandria and Springfield.

When summer came, the assortment of nations expanded as neighbors from China, India, Haiti, Jamaica, Senegal, Spain, Ukraine, Mexico, Honduras, El Salvador, Brazil and Argentina were drawn to the field where once nothing was, and where about 4,700 brick and vinyl-sided homes now stretch along wide, tree-bordered streets, heralded by the wishful sign at the entrance: "South Riding, Your New Hometown."

BY RICKY CARIOTI — THE WASHINGTON POST

Farid Elabderrahmani, Ibrahim Kahin and Jeff Branch chat on a soccer field. Branch and Elabderrahmani, from different parts of the world, are neighbors and friends.

The scene, an extreme example of the growing diversity of the region's outermost suburbs, was probably noteworthy to demographers, and maybe surprising to people who imagine the rim counties of Northern Virginia as stultifyingly homogenous places. To the men on the field, though, it simply was what it was.

The matches had been going on for a few years now. Self-conscious jokes about couscous, or gringos, or the Somali army had been told, beers shared, hellos exchanged in the aisles of the Food Lion. Mustafa had become Moose. The novelty of differences had largely worn off, in other

See LOUDOUN, *A14, Col. 1*

For many residents of ethnically diverse South Riding, a 10-year-old planned community near Dulles International Airport, conversations about cultural differences have evolved into talk of television shows and children.

PHOTOS BY RICKY CARIOTI — THE

Ibrahim Kahin, originally from Somilia, travels up the field with the ball ahead of Farid Elabderrahmani, who in Morocco and Poland. The players belong to their development's pickup soccer team, dubbed South Riding

Diverse Loudoun Community Forges Unexpected Bonds

LOUDOUN, *From A1*

words, leaving something more ordinary, perhaps, and yet no less significant to the people who live there.

"Last goal . . . !" someone on the field called. "*Uno mas*!"

They played three more goals, snapped the ritual postgame photo, shirts and faces sweaty, and left.

■

Jeff Branch, 32, and Farid Elabderrahmani, 33, grabbed their stuff and walked together down the slope toward Edgewater Drive, past kids leaving baseball practice, parents pushing strollers and headlights gliding into driveways after work.

Soccer, the international sport, and more particularly, Skaer, who organizes the matches by e-mail, were magnets that brought the two men together. But so were market forces, a bit of social engineering and the universal allure of a new house with decent square footage.

Elabderrahmani, who grew up in Morocco and Poland, came to the United States as a graduation present after college and decided to stay. He lived in Arlington first, then Reston and Centreville. On Christmas Eve in 2000, he and his wife, who is Peruvian, visited a friend in South Riding. They liked the clean newness of it, the sense of safety created by the self-contained streets, he recalled, and decided to buy a townhouse.

Branch was an Army kid and grew up all over the world but most recently lived in Rockaway, N.Y. He got a job offer in the area and moved with his wife to South Riding, a few miles southwest of Dulles International Airport, the same year as Elabderrahmani. Their reasons were similar: It was a relatively affordable place that approximated their ideal of what a neighborhood should be.

Having moved to a planned community with fields and parks and sidewalks intended to lure people outdoors, it was not quite accidental that the two men, independent of each other, came upon Skaer's pickup soccer match the way many people did: driving past the field on their way home from work.

Skaer, who likes to fling around rudimentary Spanish phrases such as *muy bonita* and who has an abiding interest in world cultures, welcomed the walk-ons to the nascent team, which was eventually named South Riding United, less for sentimental reasons than as a nod to the world-renowned Manchester United team from England.

At first, Elabderrahmani said, he assumed he'd "have nothing in common with this redheaded guy," Branch. The redheaded guy recalled that he just wanted to play, really. But after a few games, they started to joke around, and, as soccer players do, they hugged after goals. They noticed that they pulled into driveways within eyesight of each other.

"So we started talking," Elabderrahmani said. "You know, 'What do you do? What do *you* do?' "

Elabderrahmani was working in Herndon for Allstate Insurance. Branch was starting a job running an assisted living facility in Oakton. He had a couple of dogs, and Elabderrahmani offered to come over and help walk them, even though he didn't like dogs. "And that was how it started," Elabderrahmani said of their friendship.

At first, there were questions about religion — Branch is Catholic, Elabderrahmani is Muslim — and a curiosity about cultural trappings.

Elabderrahmani, whose wife is Catholic, explained to his friend certain types of prayers and the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, and Branch watched him and other Muslim players struggle through matches the month of the fast.

Branch lost relatives and friends on Sept. 11, 2001, and the two men had conversations about that day and about the causes of religious extremism.

Elabderrahmani, who has been in this country about 12 years, asked Branch about such things as Social Security, Medicare and the meaning of "dude."

And as the months passed, the two moved beyond whatever initial awkwardness existed and found their common ground. Conversations turned to the intricacies of workdays, women and "Seinfeld."

"The guy is from Morocco, and his favorite thing is 'Seinfeld,' " Branch said. "I'm not a huge fan, but he couldn't stop going on and on about it, and he was explaining to me how funny it is. I'm like, 'I don't get it.' So, things like that come up a lot."

There were cookouts and block parties. They both bought new houses in South Riding and helped each other move, and they have come to rely on each other for smaller favors, drives to the airport or errands. Elabderrahmani helped Branch find a baker who could make a Barbie birthday cake for his daughter, and Elabderrahmani came to the party afterward.

"He just stood off to the side and said, 'Just to see your daughter so excited is great,' " Branch recalled. "Then, at 8 p.m., I get a call, and he wants to walk the dog because he wants to talk about work. It's so funny."

Of his friend, Elabderrahmani just said, "I love that guy."

■

On Tuesday, the match at Donegal field got going about 7 p.m.

Branch and Elabderrahmani were there, and the assembly included two players from Ghana. Skaer shook their hands and told them to come again.

When Jean Jupiter showed up, someone yelled, "There's a Haitian in the house!"

Off in the middle of an adjacent field, a woman in pink robes was meditating.

Over by a pond, Satya and Vijaya Parakala took a walk with their son.

There was the sound of hammers and power saws in the Amberlea section, where townhouses had signs on the windows: "Future Home of the ____s."

When he thought about it,

See LOUDOUN, *A15, Col 1*

Attachment 2


GEF
FACILITY PLAN
ALTERNATIVE A
Existing Park
Existing Parking
University Boulevard 120' ROW
THE OAKS AT FOUR CORNERS
ASSISTED LIVING CENTER
MONTGOMERY COUNTY
NORTHWOOD PARK
2ND ADDITION

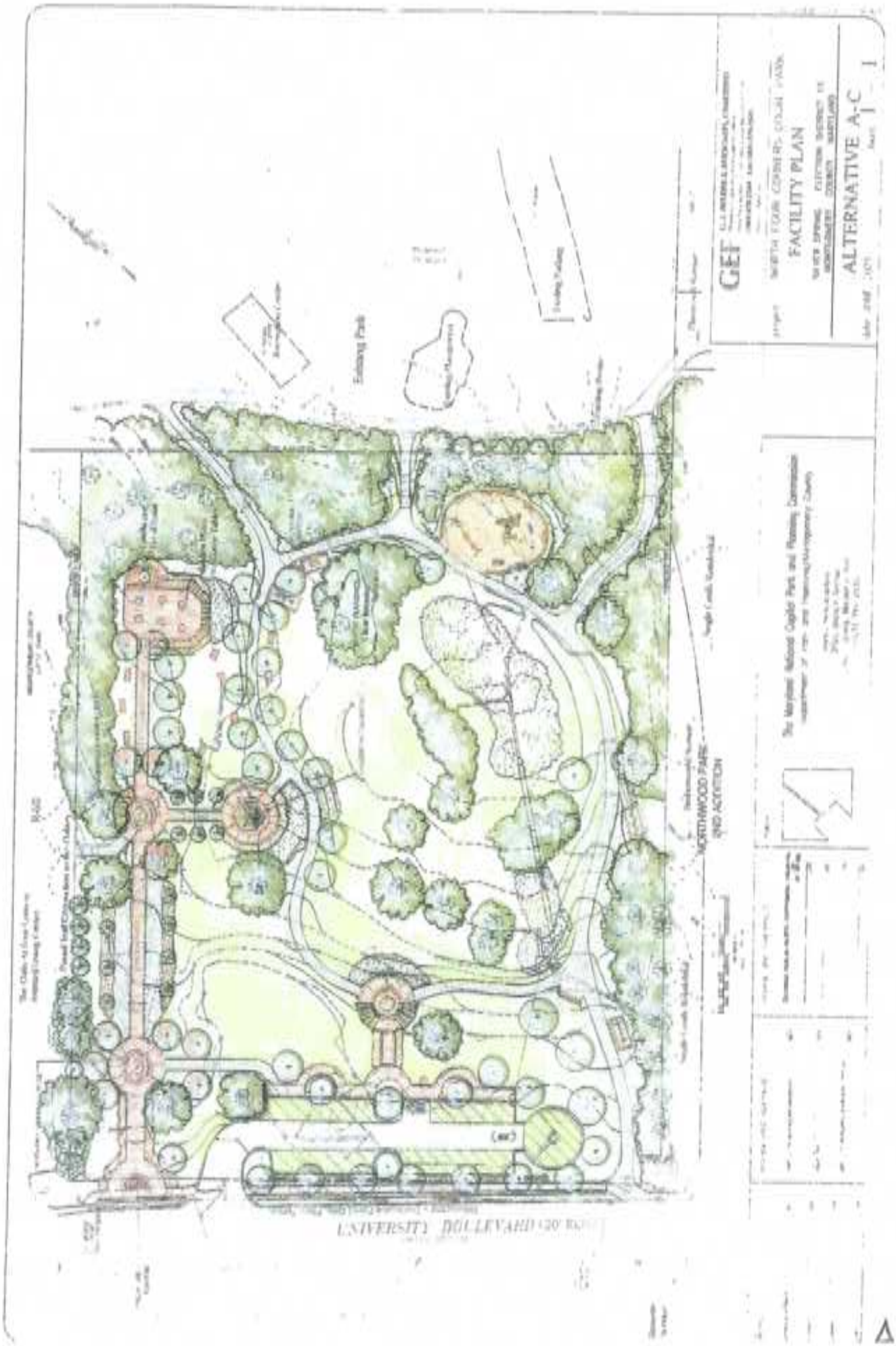
GEF
NORTH FOUR CORNERS LOCAL PARK
FACILITY PLAN
ALTERNATIVE B
EXISTING
UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD
120' R.O.W.
THE OAKS AT FOUR CORNERS
ASSISTED LIVING CENTER
MONTGOMERY COUNTY
UTILITY PAD
SOUTHWOOD PARK
2ND ADDITION

A.4.2

Attachment 2


EXISTING
PARK
GEF
NORTH FOUR CORNERS LOCAL PARK
ALTERNATIVE B-2
UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD
NORTHWOOD PARK
2ND ADDITION

Attachment 2



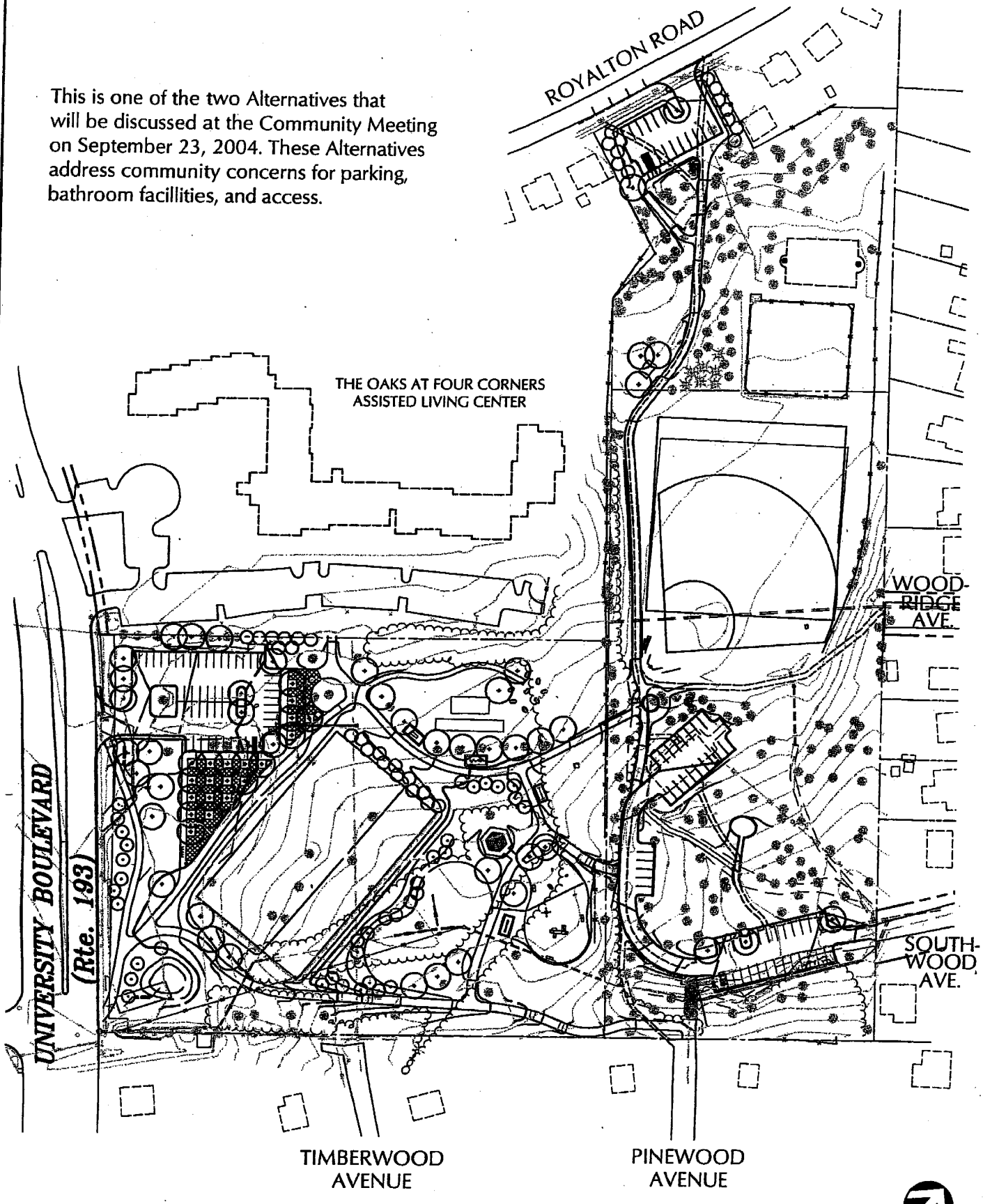
A.4.5

Concept C

Northwood-Four Corners Civic Association

Attachment 2

This is one of the two Alternatives that will be discussed at the Community Meeting on September 23, 2004. These Alternatives address community concerns for parking, bathroom facillities, and access.



GEF

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Department of Park and Planning/Montgomery County

NORTH FOUR CORNERS LOCAL PARK
EXISTING PARK ALTERNATIVE B

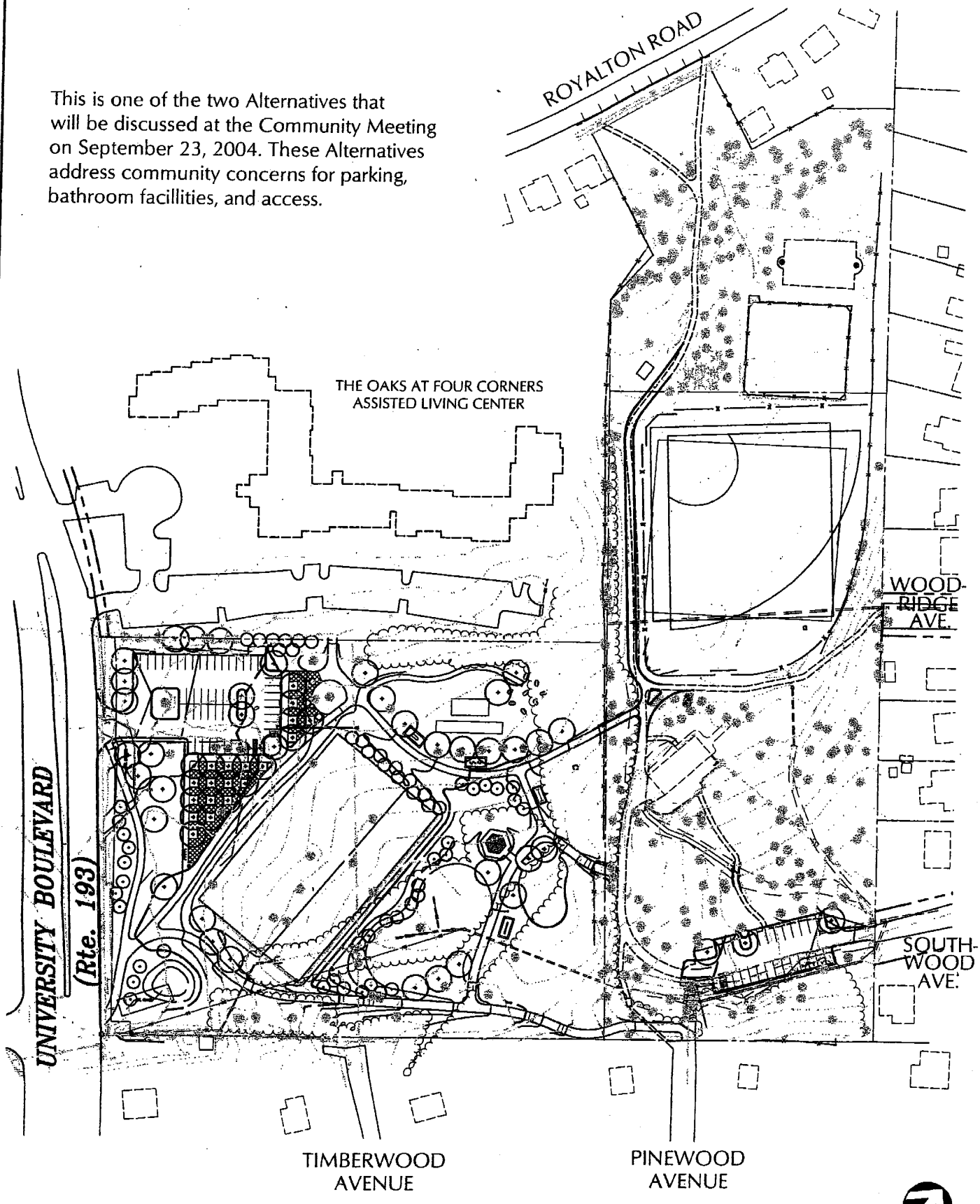
SILVER SPRING, ELECTION DISTRICT 13
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

AUGUST, 2004

2 of 2

Attachment 2

This is one of the two Alternatives that will be discussed at the Community Meeting on September 23, 2004. These Alternatives address community concerns for parking, bathroom facillities, and access.



GEF

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Department of Park and Planning/Montgomery County

NORTH FOUR CORNERS LOCAL PARK
EXISTING PARK ALTERNATIVE A

SILVER SPRING ELECTION DISTRICT 13
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

date AUGUST, 2004

sheet 1 of 2

Attachment 2
(Provided Under Separate Cover)

2005 APPROVED FACILITY PLAN

FINAL COMMUNITY CORRESPONDENCE

Summary:

Letters/emails in favor (40)
Testimony in favor (0)

Letters/emails opposed (9 letters; two petitions/228 signatures)
Testimony opposed (16, w/8 letters; same petitions attached)

(Attachment 3)

2007 ANALYSIS OF FIELD OPPORTUNITIES

Summary:

Analysis of future field needs and potential sites available to meet those needs confirmed that **a new large rectangular field, to serve all ages, is definitely needed in the new portion of North Four Corners Local Park.** There are almost no opportunities available to meet an **estimated year 2020 need for 10.8 additional large rectangular fields in the Silver Spring Team Area.** There is one field conversion proposed to offset the elimination of one field, and lighting of the Blair High School field may also add some field capacity depending on the amount of community use allowed. There are no existing fields that can be expanded and no other undeveloped sites that are suitable for a large rectangular field with 50 car parking to help reduce this need.

Existing Rectangular Fields:

Rectangular fields at parks and schools both serve teams in the community. Table I, lists existing rectangular fields in the Silver Spring Team Area and within a 3-mile radius of North Four Corners Local Park (which extends into White Oak and Kensington-Wheaton). At the present time, **there are 9 large rectangular fields at parks (4 of which are in the floodplain), and 9 large rectangular fields at schools for use by all ages, primarily youths 10 and older and adults**. The attached map shows the locations of these fields. These fields are heavily permitted by local teams. In addition there are a large number of small youth fields for use by younger children, 9 at parks, and 18 at schools. Needs for fields are measured in the spring season when use is at its peak, thus the inventory is based on spring field use. Some softball fields do convert to rectangular fields in the fall, however, fall use is limited in that it is dark by 5:30 pm during much of the season.

Description of Future Field Needs:

The approved **2005 Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan (LPPRP)** estimates that for the year 2020 there will be an unmet need of **10.8** large rectangular (soccer/lacrosse) fields, for youths over 10 years of age to adult use, in the Silver Spring Team Area in which North Four Corners is located. However, as the current rectangular field at North Four Corners Local Park can no longer count as a large rectangular field, because the goals have been removed and permitting is restricted to youth practices, the need increases to 11.8. There are **no additional needs** for small rectangular fields for youths under 10 years old as there are many school fields in the area that have small fields. (See table list). **There is also an estimated need for 8.7 additional softball/baseball fields, and 4.1 (90') baseball fields.** Additionally, adjacent areas such as Eastern County and Georgia Avenue also have unmet needs for large rectangular fields, and thus can not help serve the Silver Spring Area.

Estimates for future field demand were made using age and participation data from the *2000 Park User Survey* and the *amount of field hours reserved from the CLASS Permitting System* for the first full week in May (which is peak use for the spring season). Total demand for all types of fields was estimated from existing participation rates and future population predictions, and then divided by sport and field capacity based on Maryland statistics from the "Super Study of Sports Participation". The future needs are compared to supply (year 2002) to determine future unmet needs. Facility capacity is the maximum number of hours a facility can safely handle in any given week taking into account daylight hours, (on weekdays, after school and work, and weekends), field lighting, informal play/community use, and field resting.

Alternatives to North Four Corners Park - to locate new soccer fields in area:

Although there are heavy needs for soccer fields in the Silver Spring/Takoma Park area, there are very few opportunities to provide new fields. Standard soccer fields need large rectangular areas with adjacent room for grading, room for 50 car parking and for storm water management. A regulation soccer field is 220'x360' however fields can be 180'x300' to serve all ages for soccer and also be used for lacrosse and field hockey. Nearly all parkland (as well as private land) is already developed in the area, and environmental constraints to soccer field development also limit the possible sites for future fields. Environmental guidelines restrict buffer areas within stream valley parks from clearing and grading to provide larger soccer fields. It is also not feasible to expand existing small fields because of topography, forest cover, drainage, or location in a stream valley flood plain.

- **There is only one standard rectangular field (in addition to North Four Corners Park expansion) currently proposed to help reduce the projected large soccer field deficit** by 2020 and it is at Broad Acres Local Park. This project includes the conversion of a softball field to a large soccer field. The proposed field at North Four Corners Park on University Boulevard provides an excellent site for a standard rectangular field as it has no environmental constraints, is on a main arterial road and has public transportation.

- **There are no other undeveloped park sites that have the potential for development for a large rectangular field with 50 car parking in the vicinity of North Four Corners or in the entire Silver Spring/Takoma Park area**. The undeveloped Glen Haven Neighborhood Park and undeveloped portions of Evans Parkway are too small, and have environmental constraints. Other examples of developed parks in the area that are unfeasible to convert to standard soccer fields with 50 car parking include Indian Spring Terrace and Pinecrest Local Parks. Both parks have softball fields—Pinecrest Local Park has a rectangular overlay. Both existing park fields are too small for conversion to a large rectangular sports field. There is also a small field below Parkside Headquarters, however, it cannot be converted to a larger field because it is too small and within the flood plain. It is possible that a small field can be developed at the proposed White Oak Recreation center.

- **Large baseball and softball fields can not be feasibly converted** to rectangular fields because of the large unmet needs for youth and adult baseball (8.7 by 2020)

Natural Resource Land

There are 1883 Acres of Natural Resource Parkland within a 3 mile radius of the North Four Corners Site where residents can enjoy nature. The Northwest Branch Stream Valley to the East provides natural surface trails for hiking and there are paved hiker/biker trails in Sligo and Rock Creek Parks to the West.

Attachment 3

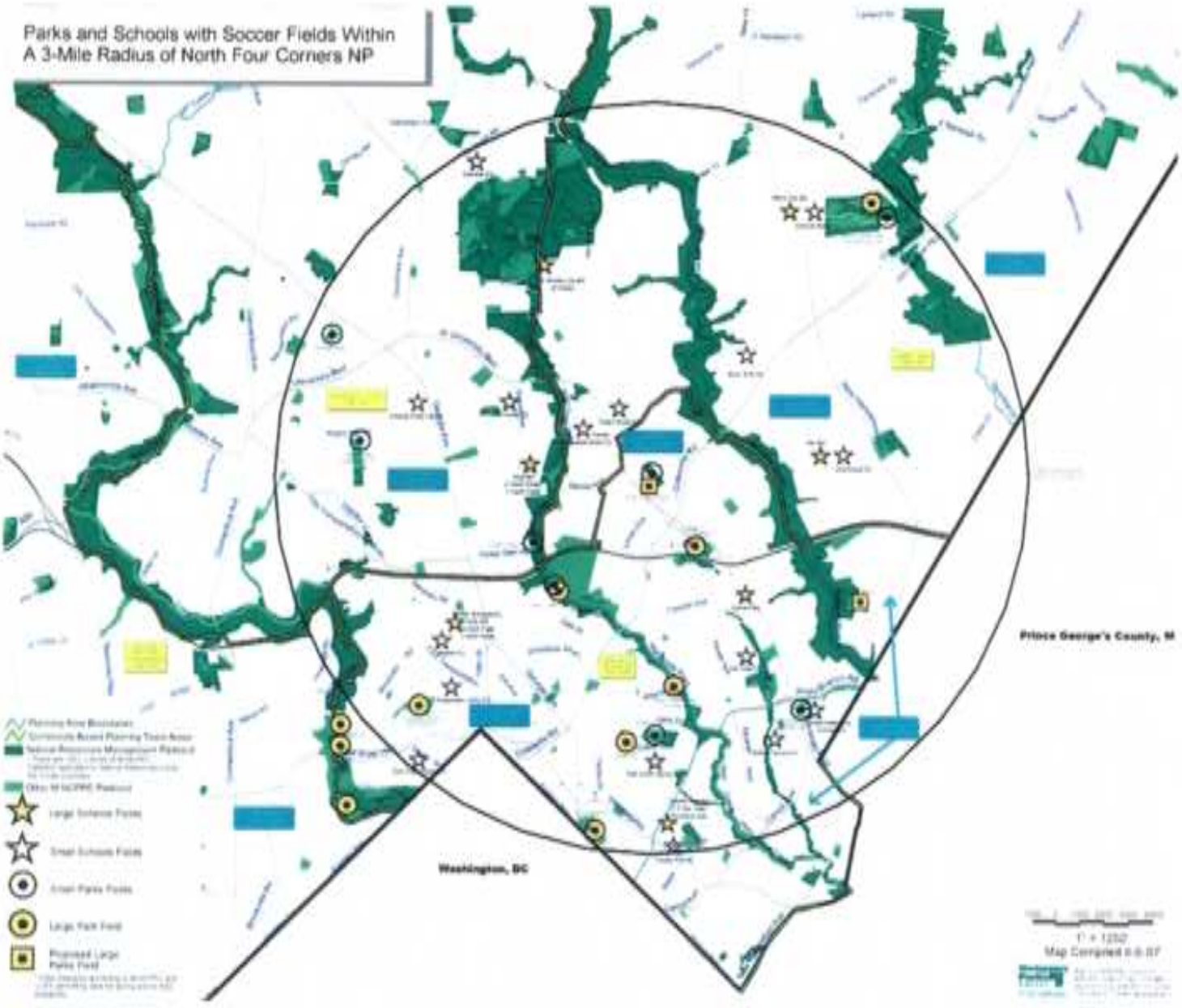


Figure 1- PARKS AND SCHOOLS WITH SOCCER FIELDS WITHIN A 3-MILE RADIUS OF NORTH FOUR CORNERS LOCAL PARK

Youth Park Fields -Name and Number	CBP Team Area	Size	Use Class	Potential for Expansion	Sensitive Area Impact	Meets Artificial Turf Criteria
Capitol View-Homewood LP #3	Georgia Ave. Corridor	124x200	Youth	No	No	No
Forest Grove NP #1	Georgia Ave. Corridor	110x204	Youth	No	Floodplain	No
Martin Luther King Recreational Park #5 (Open)	East County	135x210	Youth	No	Floodplain	No
Meadowbrook LP #8*	BCC/North Bethesda	165x260	Youth	No	Floodplain	No
New Hampshire Estates LP	Silver Spring/Takoma Park	193x220	Youth	No	No	No
Nolte LP #4	Silver Spring/Takoma Park	120x200	Youth	No	No	No
North Four Corners LP #1	Silver Spring/Takoma Park	165x265	Youth	No	No	No
Pleasant View LP #1	Georgia Ave. Corridor	182x331	Youth	No	No	No
Sligo Creek SVU 3 #2	Silver Spring/Takoma Park	134x240	Youth	No	Floodplain	No

Game Park Fields- Name and Number	CBP Team Area	Size	Use Class	Potential for Expansion	Sensitive Area Impact	Meets Artificial Turf Criteria
Blair LP #3 (New Blair HS)	Silver Spring/Takoma Park	225x360	All	No	No	Yes
Bullis LP #1	Silver Spring/Takoma Park	180x300	All	No	No	No
Jesup-Blair LP #1	Silver Spring/Takoma Park	150x330	All	No	No	No
Martin Luther King Recreational Park #3 (Fenced)	East County	180x300	All	No	No	No
Ray's Meadow LP #2*	Silver Spring/Takoma Park	170x300	All	No	Floodplain	No
Ray's Meadow LP #3*	Silver Spring/Takoma Park	134x240	All	No	Floodplain	No
Rosemary Hills-Lyttonsville LP #2	Silver Spring/Takoma Park	164x330	All	No	No	No
Sligo Creek SVU 3 #1 (Old Blair HS)	Silver Spring/Takoma Park	195x330	All	No	Floodplain	No
Sligo Creek SVU 3 #1	Silver Spring/Takoma Park	144x360	All	No	Floodplain	No

Youth School Fields- Name and Number	CBP Team Area	Size	Use Class	Potential for Expansion	Sensitive Area Impact	Meets Artificial Turf Criteria
Burnt Mills ES	East County	112x312	Youth	No	No	No
Cresthaven ES	East County	100x150	Youth	No	No	No
East Silver Spring ES #1	Silver Spring/Takoma Park	178x278	Youth	No	No	No
Forest Knolls ES	East County	60x228	Youth	No	No	No
Former McDonald Knolls ES	East County	150x300	Youth	No	No	No
Former Montgomery Hills MS #1	Silver Spring/Takoma Park	100x204	Youth	No	No	No
Glen Haven ES	Georgia Ave. Corridor	200x336	Youth	No	No	No
Glenallan ES	Georgia Ave. Corridor	150x240	Youth	No	No	No
Jackson Road ES	East County	150x195	Youth	No	No	No
New Hampshire Estates ES	Silver Spring/Takoma Park	100x165	Youth	No	No	No
Oak View ES	Silver Spring/Takoma Park	164x356	Youth	No	No	No
Rock Creek Forest ES	Silver Spring/Takoma Park	124x206	Youth	No	No	No
Rolling Terrace ES	Silver Spring/Takoma Park	138x216	Youth	No	No	No
Rosemary Hills ES	Silver Spring/Takoma Park	110x160	Youth	No	No	No
Sligo MS #3	Georgia Ave. Corridor	110x205	Youth	No	No	No
Stephen Knolls Center	Georgia Ave. Corridor	110x170	Youth	No	No	No
Takoma Park ES	Silver Spring/Takoma Park	148x207	Youth	No	No	No
Woodlin ES	Silver Spring/Takoma Park	105x195	Youth	No	No	No

Game Schools Fields -Name and Number	CBP Team Area	Size	Use Class	Potential for Expansion	Sensitive Area Impact	Meets Artificial Turf Criteria
E. Brooke Lee MS #3	East County	150x357	All	No	No	No
E. Brooke Lee MS #4	East County	165x300	All	No	No	No
Eastern MS	Silver Spring/Takoma Park	300x330	All	No	No	No
F.S. Key MS	East County	180x300	All	No	No	No
Former Montgomery Hills MS #2	Silver Spring/Takoma Park	180x305	All	No	No	No
Sligo MS #1	Georgia Ave. Corridor	210x314	All	No	No	No
Sligo MS #2	Georgia Ave. Corridor	200x338	All	No	No	No
Takoma Park MS (Exclusive Use by T Park)	Silver Spring/Takoma Park	201x362	All	No	No	No
White Oak MS #5	East County	180x300	All	No	No	No

* Outside 3-mile radius

** 30 + represents shared parking areas

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

NOTICE OF A COMMUNITY MEETING

Study of Plan Concepts for NORTH FOUR CORNERS LOCAL PARK

When: **Tuesday, June 12, 2007 at 7:00 P.M.**

Where: **Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission**
8787 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring 20910
Main Auditorium

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission's (M-NCPPC) Montgomery County Department of Parks invites the public to participate in a workshop on the proposed renovation and expansion of North Four Corners Local Park.

The Montgomery County Planning Board approved the Facility Plan for North Four Corners Local Park on September 22, 2005. The approved plan includes a total of two multi-purpose rectangular sports fields: the existing field within the older area of the park, and, a new field within the undeveloped area along University Boulevard *(see back of notice)*.

The project was reviewed by the Montgomery County Council for approval of funding for final design and construction, as part of the FY07-12 Capital Improvements Program (CIP). During this process the Council requested that M-NCPPC complete additional study of ball field needs and study alternatives to the facility plan approved by the Planning Board, as follows:

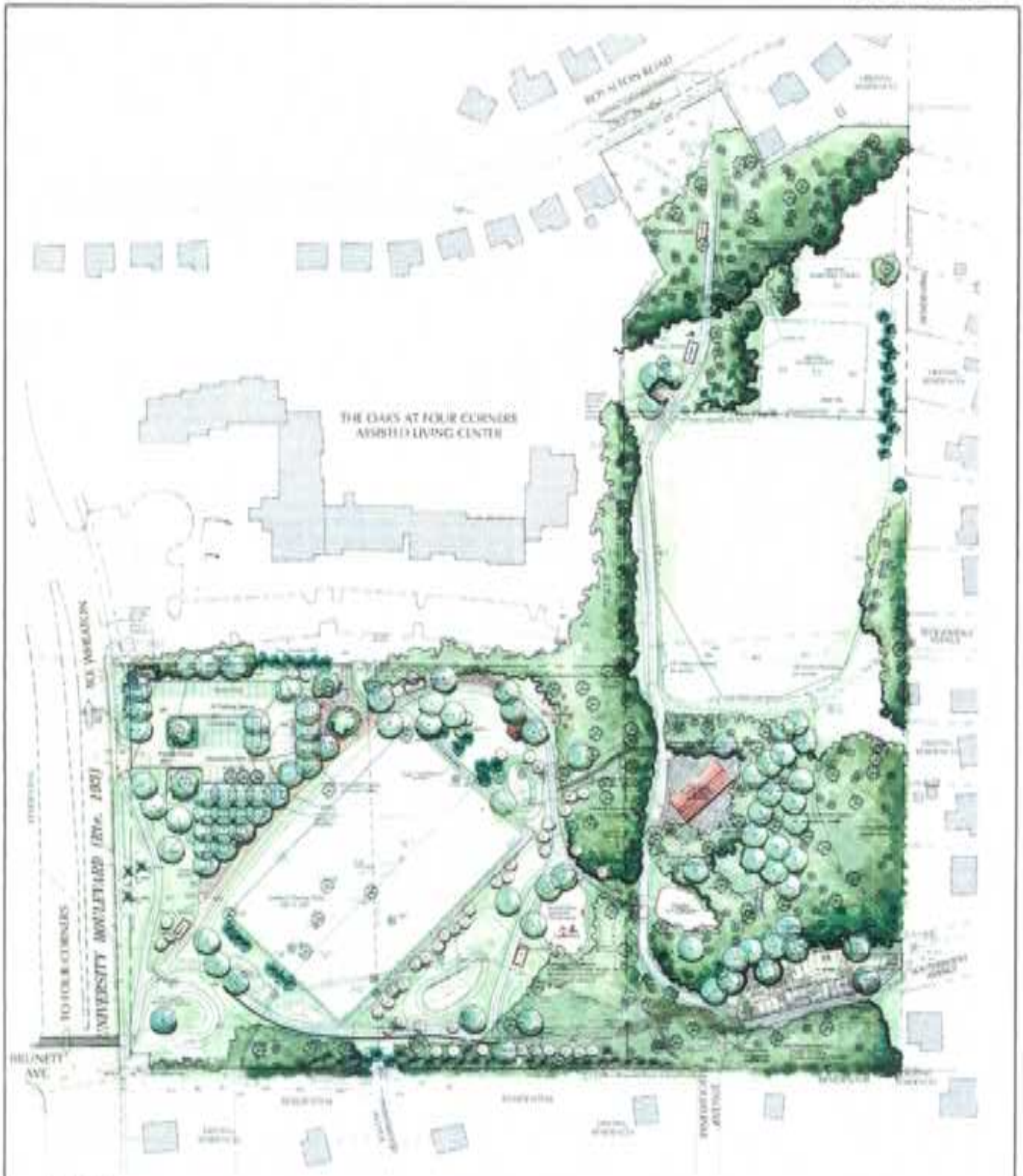
The result of the analysis and alternative options will be presented to the County Council for review as part of the FY09-FY14 CIP. These options will include one or two soccer fields and alternative non-soccer uses for the site of the existing field and the proposed new field. Costs of each option should be included in the analysis. In addition, M-NCPPC should present detailed information about the shortage of fields in this area and an assessment of other opportunities to meet this shortage.

An assessment of field needs and alternative design concepts will be presented at this workshop. Citizens will be asked to provide comments on the plans, as well as additional ideas. Public input will be included in the summary of findings presented to the County Council. The M-NCPPC welcomes and appreciates your ideas. Written comments on the alternatives presented may also be submitted to:

Ms. Heidi Sussmann
9500 Brunett Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20901

email: heidi.sussmann@mncppc-mc.org
phone: (301) 495-2547

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission encourages the participation of individuals with disabilities in its programs and at its facilities, which are accessible. For special needs, such as sign language interpretation, large print materials, assistive listening devices, etc., contact Community Outreach and Media Relations at (301) 495-4600.



OPTION 1

APPROVED FACILITY PLAN

2 FIELDS: 1 New; 1 Existing

GEF

FACILITY PLAN
MODIFIED OPTION B-2

OPTION 2.a

1 Field (new)

GEF

FACILITY PLAN

OPTION 2.b

1 Field (new)

GEF

OPTION 2.c

1 Field (new)

GEF

OPTION 2.d

1 Field (new)

GEF

Attachment 4

OPTION 2.e

1 Field (new)

GEF

FACILITY PLAN
ARCHIVED OPTION B-1

Attachment 4

OPTION 3

1 Field (existing)

GEF

FACILITY PLAN

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
MEDIA ADVISORY

For immediate release:
May 25, 2007

Contact:
Kelli Holsendolph
Community Outreach Manager
Montgomery County Department of Parks
301-650-2866

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS INVITES PUBLIC INPUT ON NORTH FOUR CORNERS LOCAL PARK RENOVATION AND EXPANSION, COMMUNITY MEETING JUNE 12

SILVER SPRING, MD—The Montgomery County Department of Parks invites community participation in a workshop on the proposed renovation and expansion of North Four Corners Local Park—211 Southwood Avenue, Silver Spring—Tuesday, June 12 at 7:00 pm.

The Montgomery County Planning Board approved the facility plan for the park on September 22, 2005. The approved plan includes a total of two multi-purpose rectangular sports fields: the existing field within the older area of the park and a new field within the undeveloped area along University Boulevard. The Montgomery County Council has reviewed the project for approval of funding for final design and construction as part of the fiscal year 2007-2012 Capital Improvements Program (CIP) and has requested additional study of park ball field needs and alternatives to the facility plan approved by the Planning Board, including options for one or two soccer fields and alternative non-soccer uses for the park's existing field and proposed new field.

At the community meeting, the Department of Parks will present an assessment of park field needs and alternative design concepts. Public input will be taken on these presented plans and additional ideas will be welcomed. As part of its summary of findings for the County Council, the Department of Parks will incorporate public input taken during this meeting.

WHO:
Montgomery County Department of Parks

WHAT:
Community Meeting on North Four Corners Local Park

WHEN:
Tuesday, June 12, 2007 at 7:00 pm

WHERE:
M-NCPPC Auditorium
8787 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring 20910

Submit written comments to Department of Parks Project Manager Heidi Sussmann at 9500 Brunett Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20901 or heidi.sussmann@mncppc-mc.org. Or, for more information call Heidi at 301-495-2547.

# # #

North Four Corners Local Park
Public Workshop: June 12th, 2007

AGENDA:

- **Operational Changes and Field Analysis**
- **Alternative Park Design Options**

❖ **Introduction** (Park Development/Heidi Sussmann)

(1) **Overview of PHED Request for Additional Study; Process Schedule** *(5 minutes)*
(Park Development/Mike Riley)

(2) **Park Operational Changes During Past Year** *(5 minutes)*
(Region/Gary Harman, Park Police/Lauryn McNeil)

(3) **Summary of Field Opportunities Analysis** *(5 minutes)*
(Park Planning & Stewardship/Tanya Schmieler)

(4) **Overview of Design Concepts** *(10 minutes)*
(Park Development/Heidi Sussmann)

- **Option 1 = MCPB Approved Facility Plan** (2 fields = 1 new and 1 existing)
- **Option 2 & Variations of Option 2** (1 new field at University parcel, and passive space at existing park)
- **Option 3** (1 existing field at existing park, and passive space at University parcel)

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(5) **Workshop - 3 Stations with Design Options; Record Community Comments** *(45 minutes)*
(staff at 3 stations)

(6) **Questions and Comments** *(30 minutes)*

(7) **Next Steps; Close** (Mike Riley)

Attachment 4

PUBLIC COMMENTS

NORTH FOUR CORNERS LOCAL PARK

Thank you!
We appreciate your comments.

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

E-Mail: _____

1. What OPTION(S) and/or FEATURES do you like the best?_____

2. Additional comments.

Please return by June 28, 2007.

MEETING NOTES

MEETING DATE: Tuesday, June 12, 2007, 7:00 p.m., MRO Auditorium

SUBJECT: Public Meeting - North Four Corners Local Park

M-NCPPC ATTENDEES: Mike Riley, Doug Alexander, Patricia McManus, Heidi Sussmann, Tanya Schmieler, Ellen Masciocchi, Gary Harman, Mark Allen, Lauryn McNeill

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The following is a summary of comments from the Public Meeting held on June 12, 2007. The purpose of the meeting was to review alternative design concepts for the park and obtain public input and comments on the alternatives. A sign in sheet from the meeting is attached.

1. A concern was expressed that the timing of this meeting was poor, because decisions for the park are being compressed within a short period of time. The civic association does not typically hold meetings in July, August and September, and does not have adequate opportunity to discuss this project. Any comments made tonight are not the official position of the civic association.

2. Residents stated that the process for this project should have been more collaborative and iterative with community involvement. Ideas were suggested, including forming a stakeholder group and organizing a design charette facilitated by an outside neutral party.

3. There were questions as to why an alternative with zero fields was not presented by staff. Staff interpreted the direction of the County Council to develop alternatives with one or two fields. The civic association interpreted the direction was also to develop a zero field alternative.

4. The surrounding neighborhood is very densely developed, and this park acts as an oasis of open space. What is really needed in this park is undeveloped green space. This positively affects the quality of the neighborhood. What is needed is "more park and less planning."

5. There were concerns by immediate neighbors that vehicles park on neighborhood streets when there is not enough available parking within the park. General concerns were also expressed about traffic in the entire area around the North Four Corners neighborhood, including Edgewood Avenue. Other concerns were expressed that additional parking within the park could attract more people and traffic, and that expansion of the existing parking lot could result in the loss of several significant trees.

6. Conditions in the existing park have improved following changes to permitting practices, which were implemented during the last two years for the existing field (changes included removing the soccer goals, not granting permits to adult groups, and not permitting the recreation building and the field simultaneously on weekends).

7. Residents recommended that each design alternative should be presented along with a menu of management and permitting changes. What might seem acceptable on a plan might be unacceptable to the neighborhood, depending on how the facilities are permitted and used. The management and permitting of the facilities should be part of the plan approval.

8. Of the alternatives presented, there was general consensus that Option 3 was preferred, provided that permitting of the existing field remains as it is now (permitted for youth and teen practices only). A plan with no fields would also be desirable. Retention of the existing open areas with rolling hills is more desirable than creating flat open spaces.

9. The definitions of local and neighborhood parks were discussed, including their typical acreage and what facilities are included in each type of park. A general preference was expressed that this park should become a Neighborhood Park.

10. The need for fields was questioned, as well as the recommendations in the Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan. There was reference to additional data on Montgomery County Government's website regarding field use. The civic association would like to receive additional needs assessment information that the Council requested.

11. There was a question as to whether staff fully understood the implications of placing a new field on the site at University Boulevard and the level of use it would attract. There are likely to be negative impacts on the park, including increased traffic and trash.

12. Removal of exotic invasive plants is important to increase visibility in the park for security reasons, as well as to prevent the invasive plants from spreading within the park and into neighbor's yards. This work should occur now, rather than waiting until the plan is implemented, because the conditions will get worse with time. Staff agreed with this.

13. The park is being used by neighboring residents as an unofficial dog park. A neighborhood dog park without fencing might be a good use on the site.

Follow-up Actions

- The civic association requested digital copies (PDF versions) of all of the plans for use in their newsletter and other correspondence with the community, as well as for their meeting on Wednesday, June 13. Full size presentation boards of all the plans were provided by staff at the end of the public meeting, and PDF files of all plans were sent by e-mail the following day.
- The civic association indicated it would provide written comments on the alternatives.
- Mike Riley indicated that he would keep the civic association informed of the next steps and schedule for finalization of the alternatives, staff recommendation of a preferred alternative, and Planning Board review of the project.
- There was a request to Park Police for information on the number of phone calls generated from neighbors to Park Police for the last several years. Officer Lauryn McNeill indicated that Park Police records show 47 outside calls to police in 2005 and 26 outside calls to police in 2006. Records for 2007 are incomplete.
- In response to the request to remove invasive plants in the park, Region staff has indicated that they will begin removal of invasives in the park this winter.
- There is a portable toilet located in the parking lot near the recreation building that should be located near the existing field. Park Manager, Mark Allen, will follow up to make sure it is relocated.

SIGN-IN SHEET
NORTH FOUR CORNERS LOCAL PARK
Public Workshop
June 12, 2007

NAME	ADDRESS	E-MAIL	AFFILIATION
CAROLE BARTH	10602 LOCKRIDGE DR Silver SPRING MD 20901	cbarth@mmtspy.com	NFCCA
Dave Paris	901 Larch Ave Tak Pk, MD 20912	dparis5@yahoo.com	
Liz Segueira	10703 CAVALIER DR	esequeira@wholehealthnet.com	
Beth Ginter	10221 Sutherland Rd SS MD 20901	beth.ginter@comcast.net	
DON THOMAS	10709 EASTWOOD AVE SS, MD. 20901		
Robin Loube	10601 Cavalier Dr. SS Md 20901	robinloube@earthlink.net	
Aleks Beltran	10621 Glenwild Rd S.S. MD 20901		
Candice Franklin	108 Woodridge Ave Silver Spring, Md 20901	candice.franklin@sablaw.com	
Christy Mayuder	10429 Edgewood Ave Silver Spring Md 20901		NFCCA
Dale Tibbitts	100 Maryland Ave Ltr A	councilmember.elrich@montgomerycountymd.gov	

Attachment 4

SIGN-IN SHEET
NORTH FOUR CORNERS LOCAL PARK
Public Workshop
June 12, 2007

NAME	ADDRESS	E-MAIL	AFFILIATION
Laura Hussey	10308 Edgewood Ave Silver Spring MD 20901	laura-hussey@mindspring.com	NFCCA/ Resident
David Rotenstein	125 Snowy Owl Dr. Silver Spring, MD 20901	david.rotenstein@earthlink.net	
Irv Gutman		imgut mac@ix.netcom.com	Resident
Jim Zepp	10602 Lockridge Dr SS 20901	jzepp@mindspring.com	NFCCA
Joyce Benson	10427 Eastwood Av, SS 20901	jbenson6@juno.com	NFCCA
Brigitte Greenberg	10409 Edgewood Ave 20901	Brigitte Greenberg.com	NFCCA
Dee Willner	309 Marvin Rd. 20901	deewillner@aol.com	NFCCA/resident
Rod Alba	108 Woodridge Ave. 20901	RXALBA@verizon.net	Resident
David Sabia	2520 Locustwood Pl 20905	dsabia@gazette.net	PRESS
A. J. Morning	10118 Hereford Pl.	PHOENIXECHAOSART.COM	CITIZEN
Bruce Sledzeski	202 Southwood Ave	BLED2901@YAHOO.COM	NFCCA
Darlene Morning	10118 Hereford Pl. SS.	dmorningall@yahoo.com	Citizen
Ursula Allen	10108 Lorain Ave. S.S. MD	ursula@longandfoster.com	resident

Attachment 4

SIGN-IN SHEET
NORTH FOUR CORNERS LOCAL PARK
Public Workshop
June 12, 2007

NAME	ADDRESS	E-MAIL	AFFILIATION
MARION CLARK	1710 SANFORD RD	marion.clark@mncppc-mc.org	neighbor & planning employee.
Mark & Teresa Weingart	309 Timberwood Ave	markweingart@yahoo.com	neighborhood residents resident
Dave Poutak	313 Pinewood AV	DPOUTAK@GMAIL.COM	
Brian M Morrissey & Fiona	10301 Edgewood Rd	MERC259@VERIZON.NET	
Oscar Carrillo	315 Marvin Rd	seoc1995@msn.com	resident

Attachment 4

Park option would take out one soccer field

■ North Four Corners plans attempt to balance neighbors' wishes with demand for organized sports

BY DAVID SABIA 6-20-07
SPECIAL TO THE GAZETTE

Department of Parks staff presented the latest proposals for North Four Corners Community Park June 12, including an option that would eliminate one of two soccer fields that had been approved for the park in 2005.

That option was favored by most community residents who attended the meeting, although it was clear from the comments that many residents

See PARK, Page A-12

PARK

■ Continued from Page A-1

from outsiders who use the park now, and more fields would lead to trash, traffic and quality-of-life problems.

Even though two fields were approved in 2005, the Montgomery County Council has since requested the Department of Parks to look at alternatives because of the community backlash.

At the meeting, the Department of Parks presented three options for the renovation.

Option 1 is the two-field plan, including the existing field and a new, regulation-size soccer field.

Option 2 includes the new field, but converts the existing field into a multipurpose field and garden. Option 2 also has four variations that include differing ratios of concrete to grass.

Option 3 is the closest plan to that suggested by the Northwood-Four Corners Civic Association. This option retains the existing field, only expanding and refurbishing the present parking lot. The expanded area, meeting the standing park through a new connecting trail, would become a large garden with a "Central Park feel," said Acting Deputy Director of Parks Mike Riley.

Residents at the meeting most favored Option 3. However, they asked that the existing field be turned into a multipurpose field and a specific permitting regulation be established for it.

"Option 3 is the closest to what we want: a low-impact, family-friendly, community design," said Northwood-Four Corners Civic Association President Carole Barth. "If we can keep the current permitting plan, it would be even better." The current permitting plan does not allow the North Four Corners Park Recreation Center to be used by permit at the same time as the field, Barth said.

Since events are often held at the center on weekends, the field is often not used then, Barth said. The Parks Department also removed the goal posts so that pickup games could not be held.

For the next meeting, community members suggested a charrette, an in-depth meeting with all stakeholders. Riley and Project Manager Heidi Sussmann promised to take the idea to the Montgomery County Planning Board.

Both residents and parks staff said the meeting contained positives.

"We made much more progress than past meetings," Barth said. "However, I still feel we were given things to react to as opposed to having a helping hand in creating."

The major issue continued to be the two sides' views on the need for a soccer field.

"Any heavily used permitted field will negatively affect our neighborhood," said Don Thomas, a local resident.

"I don't see why we need to sacrifice our quality of life for people that live eight to 10 miles away," he said.

"The parks' decision to add soccer fields has alienated the neighborhood," resident David Botenstein said.

But soccer supporters say there is a need for fields in the area. Jose Segura, who works with Montgomery Blair's after-school Sports Academy and also coaches the Blazing Knights that plays in Montgomery Soccer Inc., the county's largest soccer organization, says that Silver Spring residents often have to travel long distances for league games because of the lack of fields in eastern Montgomery County.

"There is such a huge talent pool for soccer in Montgomery County," Segura said. "It's sad they have to travel so far to play competitive soccer.

"I can understand the problems with soccer matches when people do not use the field properly," Segura said. "If you bring in an organized team or league, though, those things won't happen and the community would benefit a lot."

NORTHWOOD NEWS

PUBLISHED BIMONTHLY BY THE NORTHWOOD-FOUR CORNERS CIVIC ASSOCIATION ■ JUNE 2007

North Four Corners Park Meeting on 12th of June

By Carole Barth

MNCPPC has called a meeting for June 12, at 7:00 p.m. at MNCPPC Headquarters (8787 Georgia Ave.). At this meeting they will present and receive input on their assessment of soccer field needs and alternative design concepts for North Four Corners Park. As you remember, last year the County Council ordered Park and Planning to take another crack at the plan and explicitly ordered them to fully develop a no-field alternative and to provide updated needs information for the Council's consideration as part of the FY09-FY12 Capital Improvement Program.

The current budget process is winding down, which means preparations are beginning for the next budget cycle. Still, a suspicious person might note that summer is traditionally the worst time to seek public input since most civic associations (including NFCCA) have a summer hiatus. Indeed, we have complained several times during our four-year defense of the park that MNCPPC has a pattern of disappearing for long stretches only to come back to the community in a sudden hurry to wrap things up. As usual, their outreach also leaves something to be desired. Some of us (I don't know how many) received this notice in the mail, yet the web page on our park plan, *mcparkandplanning.org/silverspring/public_projects/fourcorners_park.shtm*, has not been updated since September of 2005.

In this case, however, the park meeting is set for the night before our next NFCCA meeting (June 13). I know it's a lot to ask people to attend two meetings in the same week, but I would like to show MNCPPC that we haven't gone away and that we still care. I would also

(continued on page 3)

INSIDE

NFCCA Meeting On 13th of June

The next meeting of the Northwood-Four Corners Civic Association will be held on Wednesday, 13 June 2007 at 7:30 p.m. at the North Four Corners Rec Center. The Rec Center is located at the end of Southwood Road, just off Edgewood Drive.

All residents of the Northwood-Four Corners-Forest Knolls area are invited to attend and express their views. Please note that only paid members of the NFCCA are eligible to vote. (Annual dues are $10 per household and may be paid at the meeting.)■

JUNE

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3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	**13**	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
S	M	T	W	T	F	S

Summer NFCCA Events

Meet and Greet Pool Party

Forest Knolls Pool, 11105 Foxglove Lane
(Between Loxford Terrace and Hannes Street)
Sunday, 24 June 2007
(rain date: 15 July)
See page 6 for details.

Neighborhood Night Out

North Four Corners Park
211 Southwood Avenue (at Edgewood Avenue)
Tuesday, 7 August 2007
See page 9 for details.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

No. FC Park Meeting on 12 June

(continued from page 1)
like to take advantage of the chance for us to strategize as a community on the 13th.

I do not know what they will present on the 12th. As I reported earlier, Mary Bradford (Parks Director) suggested putting the new soccer field close to University Avenue and building a wall between the new and old portions of the park. They may feel that this, combined with removing the goal posts from the old field, is a compromise. It may or may not be their new preferred alternative. Although they were required to develop a no-field alternative, we do know their hearts aren't in it.

I also don't know if they will present any new needs information on the 12th. Everything I can find shows that in general, they are still relying on the ridiculous LPPRP (Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan) document from December 2005. However, we know that Park staff has in the past ginned up dubious information (Heidi Sussmans's so-called survey of middle school students) to support their plans. I will, of course, be trying to find out as much as I can between now and the 12th.

Please come to park and planning's meeting on the 12th to ask questions and speak your mind. Please write/email MNCPPC, the press, and elected officials. Remember, MNCPPC characterized three years of united community opposition to their plans as "a few residents near the park do not support the approved plan," so it's important that a wider group hears our objections. The Parks Department is located at 9500 Brunett Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20901. The Planner is Heidi Sussmann and her email is *heidi.sussmann@mncppc-mc.org*. The Parks Director is Mary Bradford. ■

NFCCA BOARD

The Board of Directors for the Northwood-Four Corners Civic Association meets five times a year, in October, December, February, April, and June. Current officers for 2006-2007 are:

President
Carole Barth
10602 Lockridge Drive
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cbarth@mindspring.com

Vice President
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Treasurer
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Secretary
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REQUEST FOR COMMUNITY COMMENTS

Study of Plan Alternatives for North Four Corners Local Park

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission's (M-NCPPC) Montgomery County Department of Parks *invites the public to comment on five plan alternatives* for the renovation and expansion of North Four Corners Local Park.

The Montgomery County Planning Board approved the Facility Plan for North Four Corners Local Park on September 22, 2005. The *Approved Facility Plan*, which is *one of the five alternatives*, includes a total of two multi-purpose rectangular sports fields: the existing field within the older area of the park, and a new larger field within the undeveloped area along University Boulevard. Both fields in this plan would be permitted for games, and for all ages.

The project was reviewed by the Montgomery County Council in early 2006 for approval of funding for final design and construction, as part of the FY07-12 Capital Improvements Program (CIP). During this process the Council requested that M-NCPPC complete additional study of ballfield needs and to study alternatives to the facility plan approved by the Planning Board in 2005, as follows:

> *The result of the analysis and alternative options will be presented to the County Council for review as part of the FY09-FY14 CIP. These options will include one or two soccer fields and alternative non-soccer uses for the site of the existing field and the proposed new field. Costs of each option should be included in the analysis. In addition, M-NCPPC should present detailed information about the shortage of fields in this area and an assessment of other opportunities to meet this shortage.*

Alternative design concepts were presented at a public workshop in June of 2007. Based on public comments, the plans have been refined. *They are included in this public survey, along with the Approved Facility Plan,* for Citizens to review and provide additional comments. A summary chart, which highlights basic features of each plan, is included on the back of this page. Please share this information with others who may be interested, so we may hear from as many community members as possible.

Next Steps: **Public input is requested by October 12, 2007**, and will be included in the summary of findings presented to the Montgomery County Planning Board in late November and the Montgomery County Council as part of its CIP review. The public will have another opportunity to provide comments at the Planning Board meeting and at the County Council's public hearing on the Capital Improvements Program. The M-NCPPC welcomes and appreciates your ideas.

Written comments on the alternatives may be submitted to:

Heidi Sussmann
9500 Brunett Avenue
Silver Spring, MD. 20901

email: heidi.sussmann@mncppc-mc.org

phone: 301-495-2547

ALTERNATIVE PLANS CONSIDERED: North Four Corners Local Park

Alternative	Features	Comments
Approved Facility Plan	• One new large field and new parking area with direct access from University Boulevard. • One existing field renovated and enlarged. Existing parking lot expanded. • Total of two rectangular fields with goals available for permitted 'game' use, all ages.	• Provides one additional field to address down-County large field shortages.
Alternative 1	• One new large field and new parking area with direct access from University Boulevard. • Existing field unchanged; remains with goals removed as youth/teen practice area only. • Existing parking lot expanded to reduce overflow parking on neighborhood streets.	• Provides one field to address down-County large field shortages. • Reduces use of the current field.
Alternative 2	• One new large field and new parking area with direct access from University Boulevard. • Existing field replaced with passive level open space on existing parcel.	• Does not provide an additional field, but replaces existing small field with a larger, more usable and accessible field at University Boulevard. • Removes active use areas (fields, toilets, field parking) from proximity to neighboring homes and streets. • Provides additional passive open space area adjacent to neighboring homes.
Alternative 3	• Existing field renovated and enlarged. Goals replaced so field can be permitted for games, all ages. • Existing parking area expanded. • Passive rolling open space and additional parking on new parcel at University Boulevard.	• Active use areas, including the field and parking, remain close to neighboring homes. • Does not utilize added parcel of land that was purchased for and is suitable for development of active recreational facilities.
Alternative 4	• Includes no fields and creates entirely passive park on both parcels. • Existing parking lot not expanded on existing parcel. Added parking provided on new parcel with direct access from University Boulevard. • Park is reclassified from Local Park to Neighborhood Park.	• Does not utilize added parcel of land that was purchased for and is suitable for development of active recreational facilities. • Does not provide any additional or improved field to address down-County field shortages.

Encuesta Pública
Estudio para Planes Alternativos para el Parque Local de North Four Corners

La comisión de Parques y Planificación de Maryland (M-NCPPC por su nombre en inglés) Departamento de Parques del Condado de Montgomery invita al público a dar sus comentarios relacionados a cinco planes alternativos para la renovación y expansión del Parque Local de North Four Corners.

El plan para el parque local de North Four Corners fue aprobado por la Junta de Planificación del Condado de Montgomery el 22 de setiembre, 2005. El plan que se aprobó, el cual está incluido en las cinco alternativas, incluye dos canchas atléticas rectangulares, para uso variado. Las dos canchas son: una que ya existe dentro del parque, y una cancha más grande que se construiría en el área contiguo a la University Boulevard. Ambas canchas estarían disponibles para juegos con permisos oficiales del Departamento de Parques, para usuarios de todas edades.

El Consejo del Condado de Montgomery revisó el proyecto en el 2006 para aprobar fondos para el diseño final y la construcción del proyecto. Durante ese proceso el Consejo pidió un estudio adicional para identificar la necesidad de canchas atléticas y posible alternativas al plan aprobado por la Junta de Planificación en el 2005.

Basado en ese estudio, M-NCPPC creó diseños alternativos y las presentó en un taller público en Junio del 2007. Basado en comentarios del público, los planes han sido refinados. Las alternativas están incluidas en esta encuesta para comentarios adicionales del público.
Una tabla de resumen, con los detalles de cada alternativa está incluido al reverso de esta hoja. Por favor comparta esta información con otros residentes interesados- queremos oír del mayor número de miembros de la comunidad.

Próximos Pasos: Pedimos que el público que mande sus comentarios, antes del 12 de octubre, 2007 a la dirección al final de esta página. Los comentarios recibidos se incluirán en el reporte que se presentará ante la Junta de Planificación a finales del mes de noviembre y en el reporte ante el Consejo del Condado de Montgomery. El público puede proveer comentarios adicionales a la Junta de Planificación y al Consejo del Condado durante las reuniones públicas respectivas.

Los comentarios sobre las alternativas se pueden mandar:

Por correo: Heidi Sussmann
9500 Brunett Avenue
Silver Spring, MD. 20901

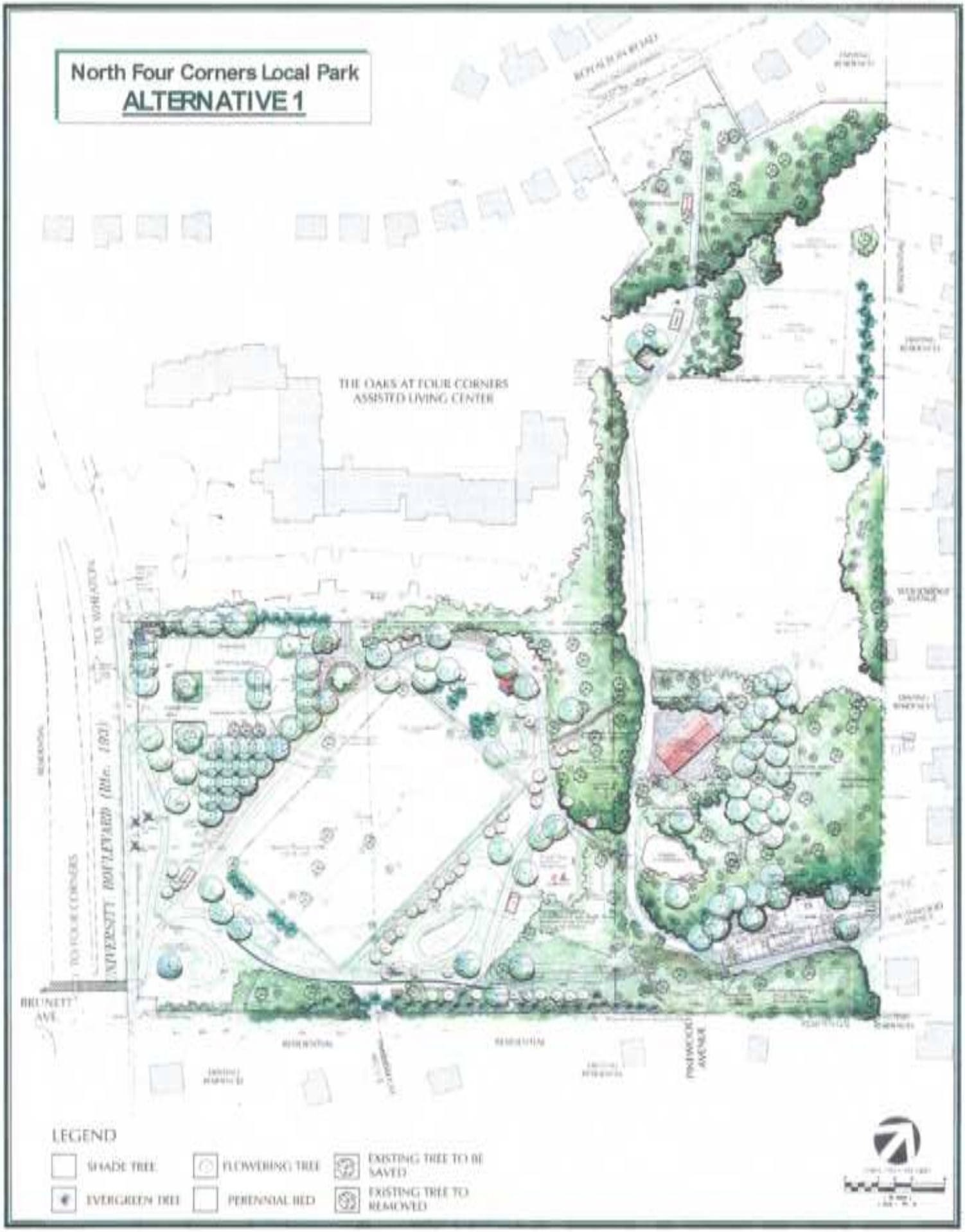
Por correo electrónico: heidi.sussmann@mncppc-mc.org

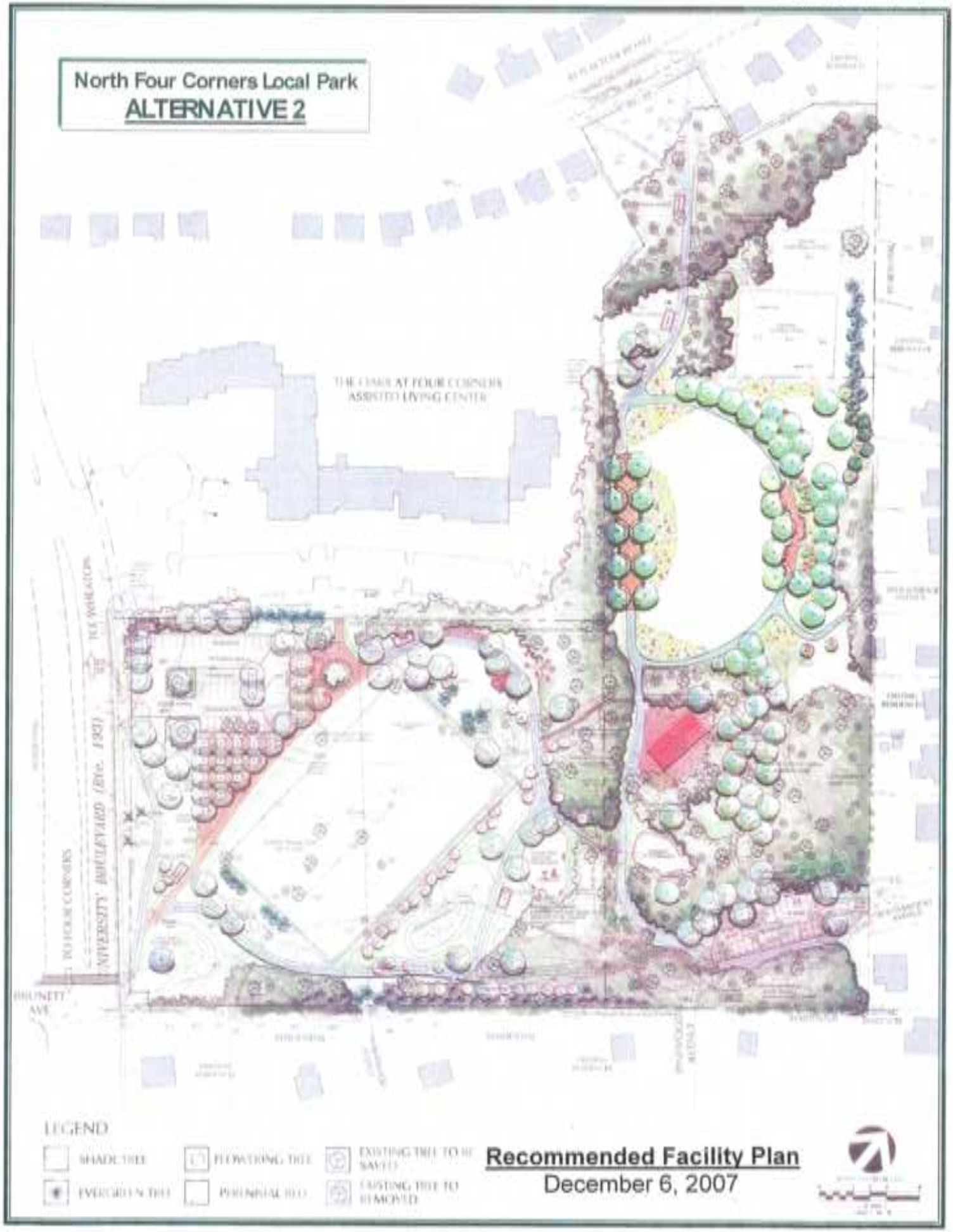
Por teléfono al: 301- 495-4612

ALTERNATIVAS PARA CONSIDERACIÓN: Parque Local North Four Corner

Alternativa	Features	Comentarios
Plan Aprobado	• Una cancha rectangular grande y un área de parqueo con acceso directo de la University Boulevard. • Renovación y remodelación de la cancha existente. Remodelación del área de parqueo existente. • Total de dos canchas rectangulares disponibles para grupos con permiso oficial del Depto. de Parques. Disponible para grupos de todas edades.	• Provee una cancha adicional para responder a la falta de canchas en el sur del condado de Montgomery.
Alternativa 1	• Una cancha rectangular grande y un área de parqueo con acceso directo a la University Boulevard. • La cancha existente queda, sin cambios, solo para prácticas de jóvenes y niños. • Remodelación del área de parqueo para reducir el parqueo en las calles del vecindario.	• Provee una cancha grande para responder a la falta de canchas en el sur del condado de Montgomery. • Reduce la cantidad de uso de la cancha existente.
Alternativa 2	• Una cancha rectangular grande y un área de parqueo con acceso directo a la University Boulevard. • La cancha existente es reemplazada por áreas abiertas para actividades más pasivas y tranquilas.	• No provee una cancha adicional, pero reemplaza la cancha pequeña con una más grande, más usable y más accesible de la University Boulevard. • Reduce la proximidad de áreas de uso activo (canchas, baños y parqueo) de las casas y calles del vecindario. • Provee espacio natural, abierto para actividades tranquilas cerca de las casas vecinas.
Alternativa 3	• Renovación y engrandecimiento de la cancha existente. Los marcos son reemplazados para que la cancha pueda ser usada para juegos con permiso oficial para todas edades. • Expansión del área para parqueo. • Espacio abierto para actividades tranquilas y parqueo adicional en el terreno nuevo en la University Boulevard.	• Áreas para uso activo, la cancha y el parqueo, se mantienen cerca de las casas vecinas. • No utiliza el terreno adicional que fue comprado con la intención de expandir las oportunidades recreativas disponibles.
Alternativa 4	• No incluye canchas atléticas- crea un lugar solo para actividades pasivas en los dos terrenos. • No se expande el parqueo existente. Parqueo adicional se provee en el terreno nuevo con acceso directo de la University Boulevard. • El parque pasa de ser un parque local a un parque de vecindario.	• No utiliza el terreno adicional que fue comprado con la intención de expandir las oportunidades recreativas disponibles. • No provee canchas adicionales o mejoradas para responder a la falta de canchas en el sur del condado de Montgomery

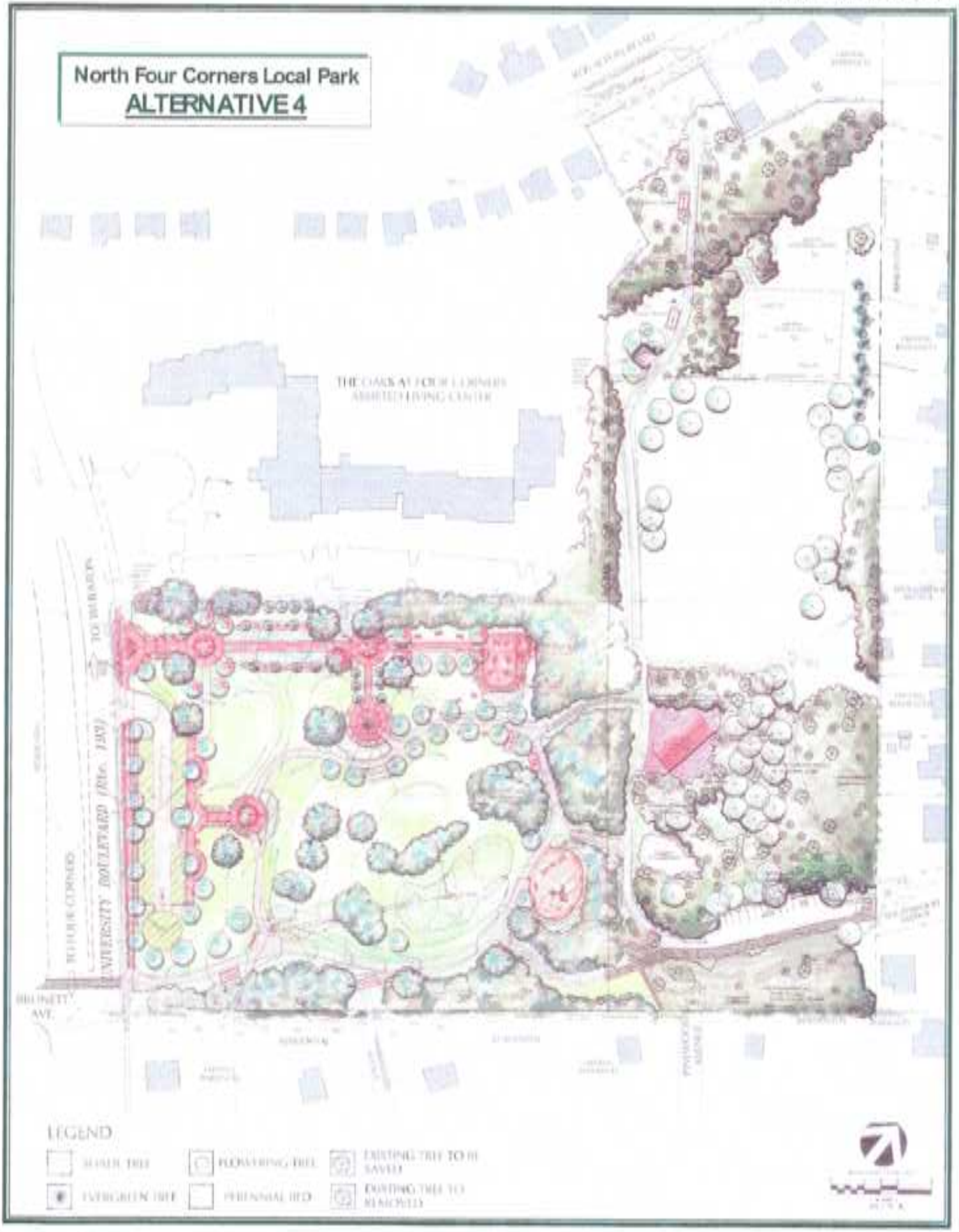

North Four Corners Local Park
APPROVED FACILITY PLAN
THE OAKS AT FOUR CORNERS
ASSISTED LIVING CENTER
UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD (Rte. 193)
TO FOUR CORNERS
TO WHEATON
BRUNETT AVE.
LEGEND
SHADE TREE
FLOWERING TREE
EXISTING TREE TO BE SAVED
EVERGREEN TREE
PERENNIAL BED
EXISTING TREE TO BE MOVED


North Four Corners Local Park
ALTERNATIVE 1
THE OAKS AT FOUR CORNERS
ASSISTED LIVING CENTER
UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD (Rte. 193)
TO WHEATON
TO FOUR CORNERS
BRUNETT AVE
HOLLYWOOD AVENUE
LEGEND
SHADE TREE
FLOWERING TREE
EXISTING TREE TO BE SAVED
EVERGREEN TREE
PERENNIAL BED
EXISTING TREE TO REMOVED



Recommended Facility Plan
December 6, 2007


North Four Corners Local Park
ALTERNATIVE 3
LEGEND


North Four Corners Local Park
ALTERNATIVE 4
LEGEND

M-NCPPC
Request for Community Comments
North Four Corners Local Park

You are invited to comment on updated information for North Four Corners Local Park, which was recently included on the M-NCPPC website:
http://www.mc-mncppc.org/silverspring/public_projects/fourcorners_park.shtm

The new information includes both the 2005 Approved Facility Plan, and four alternatives to this plan. M-NCPPC would like to know your preferences.

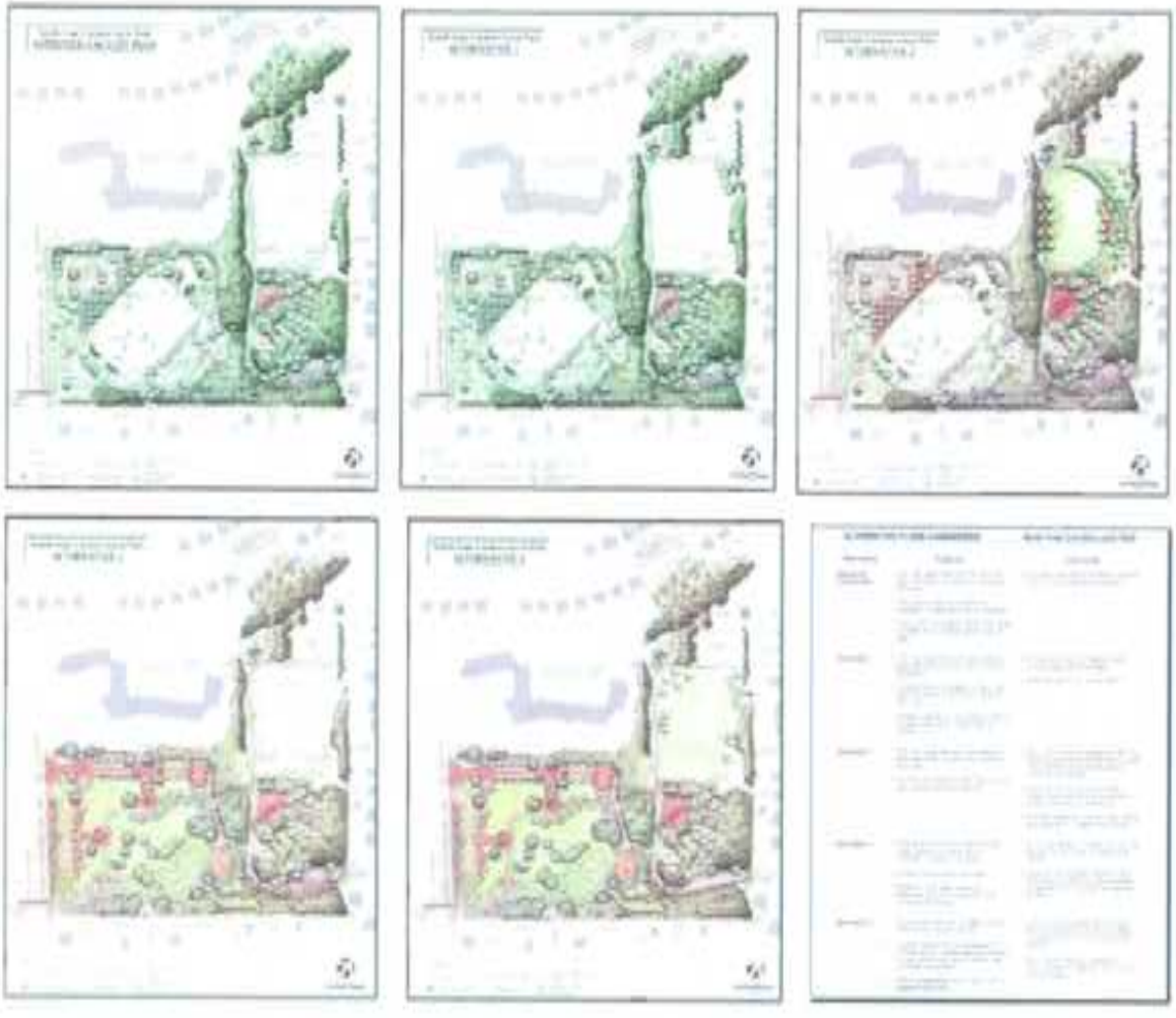
For information about the project, please contact Heidi Sussmann at 301-495-2547 or by E-mail at: heidi.sussmann@mncppc-mc.org.

Attachment 5

Approved_Plan Approved_Plan

MontgomeryParks.org

Public Project: North Four Corners Local Park



Description

North Four Corners Local Park is located at 315 University Boulevard, 2000 feet north of the intersection of University Boulevard (MD Rt. 193) and Colesville Road (MD Rt.29). The park is comprised of 13.9 total acres in southern Montgomery County. The purpose of this project is to provide a Facility Plan for the proposed development within the recently acquired parcel along University Boulevard (6 acres), with facilities and features to serve the needs of the area and to renovate the

Attachment 5

existing park area.

REQUEST FOR COMMUNITY COMMENTS

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Next Steps

Public input is requested by October 12, 2007, and will be included in the summary of findings presented to the Montgomery County Planning Board in late November and the Montgomery County Council as part of its CIP review. The public will have another opportunity to provide comments at the Planning Board meeting and at the County Council's public hearing on the Capital Improvements Program. The M-NCPPC welcomes and appreciates your ideas.

Attachment 5

Written comments on the alternatives may be submitted to M-NCPPC staff contact:

Heidi Sussmann, M-NCPPC
Parkside Headquarters
9500 Brunett Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20901
Heidi.Sussmann@mncppc-mc.org
301-495-2547
Fax: 301-585-1921

Opportunities for Public Participation

The Planning Board reviewed the proposed Facility Plan for the park on September 22, 2005. The staff report is available on-line at M-NCPPC's web site.

Planning Board Review Process & Case Number

Facility Plan review and approval

Planning Board Action

The Planning Board approved the proposed Facility Plan on September 22, 2005.

Notes From M-NCPPC Staff Contact

The Montgomery County Dept. of Recreation is also considering this site for a possible senior citizens/community recreation center. The Recreation Department has also investigated other potential sites for the Kemp Mill Recreation Center, including Blair High School, but has encountered potentially insurmountable site constraints and obstacles for the specific parameters of the project. Contact the Mid-County Center for more information at 240-777-8100.

Date of last page update: September 11, 2007

Contact the Silver Spring/Takoma Park Team

North Four Corners Local Park -- No. 078706

Category	M-NCPPC	Date Last Modified	October 31, 2007
Subcategory	Development	Required Adequate Public Facility	No
Administering Agency	M-NCPPC	Relocation Impact	None
Planning Area	Kemp Mill-Four Corners	Status	Planning Stage

EXPENDITURE SCHEDULE ($000)

Cost Element	Total	Thru FY07	Est. FY08	Total 6 Years	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14	Beyond 6 Years
Planning, Design, and Supervision	730	0	0	730	0	0	0	251	302	177	0
Land	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Site Improvements and Utilities	5,090	0	0	4,587	0	0	0	0	60	4,527	503
Construction	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	**5,820**	**0**	**0**	**5,317**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**251**	**362**	**4,704**	**503**

FUNDING SCHEDULE ($000)

Program Open Space	4,365	0	0	3,988	0	0	0	188	272	3,528	377
Park and Planning Bonds	1,455	0	0	1,329	0	0	0	63	90	1,176	126
Total	**5,820**	**0**	**0**	**5,317**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**251**	**362**	**4,704**	**503**

OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT ($000)

DESCRIPTION

North Four Corners Local Park is a 13.9-acre park located near the commercial node of Four Corners in Silver Spring. The approved facility plan for this project provides improvements to the new, undeveloped six-acre park tract including the following: rectangular sports field, 50 space parking area with vehicular access from University Boulevard, a playground, a Class I bikeway from University Boulevard to Southwood Avenue, paved loop walkways, a plaza with seating areas and amenities, portable toilets, fencing, landscaping, and storm water management facilities. The existing 7.9-acre park area will be renovated to provide additional parking, renovation of an existing field, trail connections, underground stormwater management facilities, landscaping and other minor improvements. Design is scheduled in FY12-13, and construction begins in FY14.

JUSTIFICATION

The Four Corners Master Plan, approved December 1996, recommended acquisition of the six-acre park property and expansion of this park for the purpose of providing additional active recreation facilities in the down-county area. The 2005 Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan (LPPRP) estimates a need for more than 10 additional soccer fields in the Silver Spring/Takoma Park Team Area. This park is one of a very few vacant areas suitable for field construction and will provide an essential new soccer field for this area. The Montgomery County Planning Board approved the park facility plan on September 22, 2005. Alternatives to this plan will be reviewed by the Board in November, 2007.

OTHER

In FY07 the County Council directed that $30,000 be added to the Facility Planning Local PDF to study alternatives to the facility plan approved by the Montgomery County Planning Board (MCPB) in September 2005. The result of the analysis and alternative options will be presented to the MCPB in November 2007, and the County Council as part of the FY09-FY14 CIP review process.

OTHER DISCLOSURES

- A pedestrian impact analysis will be performed during design or is in progress.

APPROPRIATION AND EXPENDITURE DATA

	FY	($000)
Date First Appropriation		
First Cost Estimate Current Scope	FY09	5,820
Last FY's Cost Estimate		6,122
Appropriation Request	FY09	0
Appropriation Request Est.	FY10	0
Supplemental Appropriation Request		0
Transfer		0
Cumulative Appropriation		0
Expenditures / Encumbrances		0
Unencumbered Balance		0
Partial Closeout Thru	FY06	0
New Partial Closeout	FY07	0
Total Partial Closeout		0

COORDINATION

MAP

See Map on Next Page

Attachment 7
(Provided Under Separate Cover)

2007 FACILITY PLAN

FINAL COMMUNITY CORRESPONDENCE

Summary:

Approved Facility Plan (2 fields permitted for games all ages)	(160) (93)	Broader area residents/soccer players are strongly in favor of a plan with two fields (mostly one form letter); also support letters from five nearby residents. Teen petition (Coleville/White Oak planning area)
Alternative 1 (1 new field permitted for games all ages; 1 field permitted for youth practices)	(1)	Nearby resident prefers 1 large game field + 1 practice field.
Alternative 2 (1 field permitted for games all ages)	(4)	Nearby resident(s) prefer 1 large game field + passive space at current park.
Alternative 3 (1 field permitted for games all ages)	(7)	Nearby resident(s) prefer 1 game field at current park + passive space at new parcel.
Alternative 4 (No permitted fields) Alternative 4/3,2	(24) (9)	NFCCA (letter w/official position); and nearby community are strongly in favor of a plan with no fields. Nearby residents favor passive plan 4; next 3 or 2.
Other	(1)	Swim facility