

December 21, 2006

MEMORANDUM

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Richard C. Hawthorne, Chief for Transportation Planning
County-wide Planning DivisionJudy Daniel, Team Leader for Bethesda-Chevy Chase/North Bethesda Team
Community-Based Planning DivisionFROM: David Paine: (301) 495-2191, Transportation Planning
County-wide Planning DivisionPROJECT: Chapman Avenue Extended (includes existing Maple Avenue) From
Randolph Road to Old Georgetown Road
CIP No. 5093370

REVIEW TYPE: Mandatory Referral No. 06814-DPWT-1

APPLICANT: Montgomery County Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPWT)

APPLYING FOR: Plan Approval

COMMUNITY-BASED PLANNING TEAM AREA: Bethesda-Chevy Chase/North Bethesda Team

RECOMMENDATION: Approve the Mandatory Referral of the proposed project (Attachment 1: Location Map), with the following comments to the Montgomery County Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPWT):

1. Continue to coordinate the design of this project with the on-going work with SHA's Rockville Pike (MD355)/Montrose Parkway/Randolph Road Interchange Project (Contract no. MO 8305171).

2. Reconfigure the eastern 90-degree angle turn/intersection (STA 20+00) to include:
 - a. A driveway treatment for the parking lot that clearly directs through movements on Chapman Avenue.
 - b. A level concrete crosswalk across the parking lot entrance to differentiate the pedestrian zone from the automobile zone.
3. Designate a signed/shared bikeway on Chapman Avenue and provide “Share the Road” signage to at appropriate intervals along the project length.
4. Install conduit to accommodate future ornamental street lighting to match the White Flint Sector Plan streetscape, to lessen the need to reconstruct the portion of Chapman/Maple Avenue as adjacent properties redevelop.
5. Continue the landscape treatment and tree spacing established at the south end of the project by the White Flint Station development, planting shade trees in either the landscape panels or tree pits as applicable.
6. Revise the tree save plan to show preservation measures such as root pruning for the specimen tree.

PREVIOUS BOARD ACTION: The proposed project is consistent with the Phase I Facility Plan Study approved by the Planning Board on June 23, 2005.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed road would be constructed between Randolph Road and Old Georgetown Road in North Bethesda partially along the existing alignment of Maple Avenue and Citadel Avenue for a total length of approximately 1400 feet as shown in Attachment 2. This project would provide a significant link in the roadway system between the White Flint Policy Area and the Twinbrook Policy area.

DISCUSSION

Roadway

The project proposes to construct a new road with a 70' ROW, two travel lanes and on street parking. The roadway would be 40 feet wide with sidewalks and a lawn panel for trees on both sides. Sidewalks with tree pits are proposed for the segment currently known as Maple Avenue, where a property fronts along Chapman Avenue. Chapman Avenue is classified as a Business District Street in the *1992 North Bethesda/Garrett Park Master Plan*.

The road would improve vehicular circulation in the area and increase vehicular access to properties along Chapman Avenue, however several elements appear to be unfinished in the submitted design. Sheet 4 (STA 20+00, area shown in Attachment 3 of this memo) shows the eastern intersection with offset entrances to existing parking lots. The sidewalk ramps are also offset, which creates an undesirable break in the pedestrian network, in this case directing pedestrians into the middle of the parking lots. Similarly, an automobile exiting either parking lot needs to execute a turning maneuver to avoid driving onto the sidewalk.

The design currently puts pedestrians and vehicles in a potential conflict, rather than clearly delineating the pedestrian zone (crosswalk, sidewalk) from the automobile zone (road, parking lot travelway). Staff recommends reconfiguring the intersection with a driveway treatment for the parking lot so that through movements on Chapman Avenue are clearly identified.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Accommodations

Implementation of Chapman Avenue will provide a direct pedestrian link between residential development in the North Bethesda Town Center and Montrose Crossing commercial area to the north. It breaks up the large suburban block, providing more direct pedestrian and bicycle connections, which encourages those modes. Continuous sidewalks with ADA ramps are provided for the length of the project. The segment currently named Maple Avenue will have 10-foot wide sidewalks, with pits for trees. The continuous sidewalks will greatly improve pedestrian access, however, a few elements appear unfinished as noted above. Again, sheet 4 (STA 20+00, area shown in Attachment 3 of this memo) shows the eastern intersection with a non standard design. ADA ramps are offset which creates an undesirable break in the pedestrian network, in this case directing pedestrians into the middle of parking lot travelways. There is also no guidance for a visually impaired pedestrian where the path continues or how to cross safely. Therefore staff recommends reconfiguring the intersection as mentioned above with a level crosswalk across a driveway treatment maintained and marked with a concrete crosswalk. These modifications would offer a safer environment for pedestrian accommodation.

Additionally, staff recommends that signs indicating that motorists share the road with bikes be added as appropriate to indicate bikes are expected on the roadway. This would establish the roadway as a signed/shared roadway within the network of bikeways, extending the planned signed/shared roadway planned south of Old Georgetown Road.

Landscaping and Lighting

Staff understands from the submitted materials as well as conversations with DPWT that standard “Cobra” lights on existing utility poles are proposed along the roadway for lighting and that no significant landscaping has yet been identified to be included in the project. The Board expressed an interest at the Phase I hearing in having the White Flint Sector streetscape, including Washington Globe lights, extended to this area. With the reasonable expectation that the properties fronting Chapman Avenue are possible candidates for redevelopment, staff believes that it would be prudent to wait for the properties to redevelop and require the improved lighting at that time. However, installing conduit to support the updated lighting should be done as part of this project to avoid future costs and disruption. Therefore staff recommends DPWT

install conduit to accommodate future ornamental street lighting to match the White Flint Sector Plan streetscape, to lessen the need to reconstruct the portion of Chapman/Maple Avenue as adjacent properties redevelop. To continue the landscape treatment and tree spacing established at the south end of the project by the White Flint Station development, shade trees should be planted in either the landscape panels or tree pits as applicable.

Forest Conservation

Chapman Avenue Extended is aligned through an industrial area developed prior to regulations for forest conservation and stormwater management or Environmental Guidelines. Most of the area is impervious with little to no landscape. An approved Natural Resource Inventory/Forest Stand Delineation was included as part of this submission. A Forest Conservation Plan exemption was granted because the project is a County Highway subject to County Code section 22A-9(b) and will clear less than 40,000 square feet of forest. One significantly sized 24" Maple is located in the southern right-of-way of the western 90-degree road bend. A Tree Save Plan was submitted showing protection for this tree in the form of fencing during construction. Preservation measures such as root pruning must be shown prior to final approval of the Tree Save Plan by Environmental Planning. A certified arborist and MD DNR Tree Care Expert signed the Tree Save Plan.

Public Outreach

As part of the Phase I study, there were three public meetings, including the Planning Board Hearing held on June 23, 2005 and subsequent briefing before the Council T&E committee. As part of Phase II there was one additional public meeting conducted by DPWT on September 18, 2006 to inform the public of progress made and gather input preceding this Mandatory Referral.

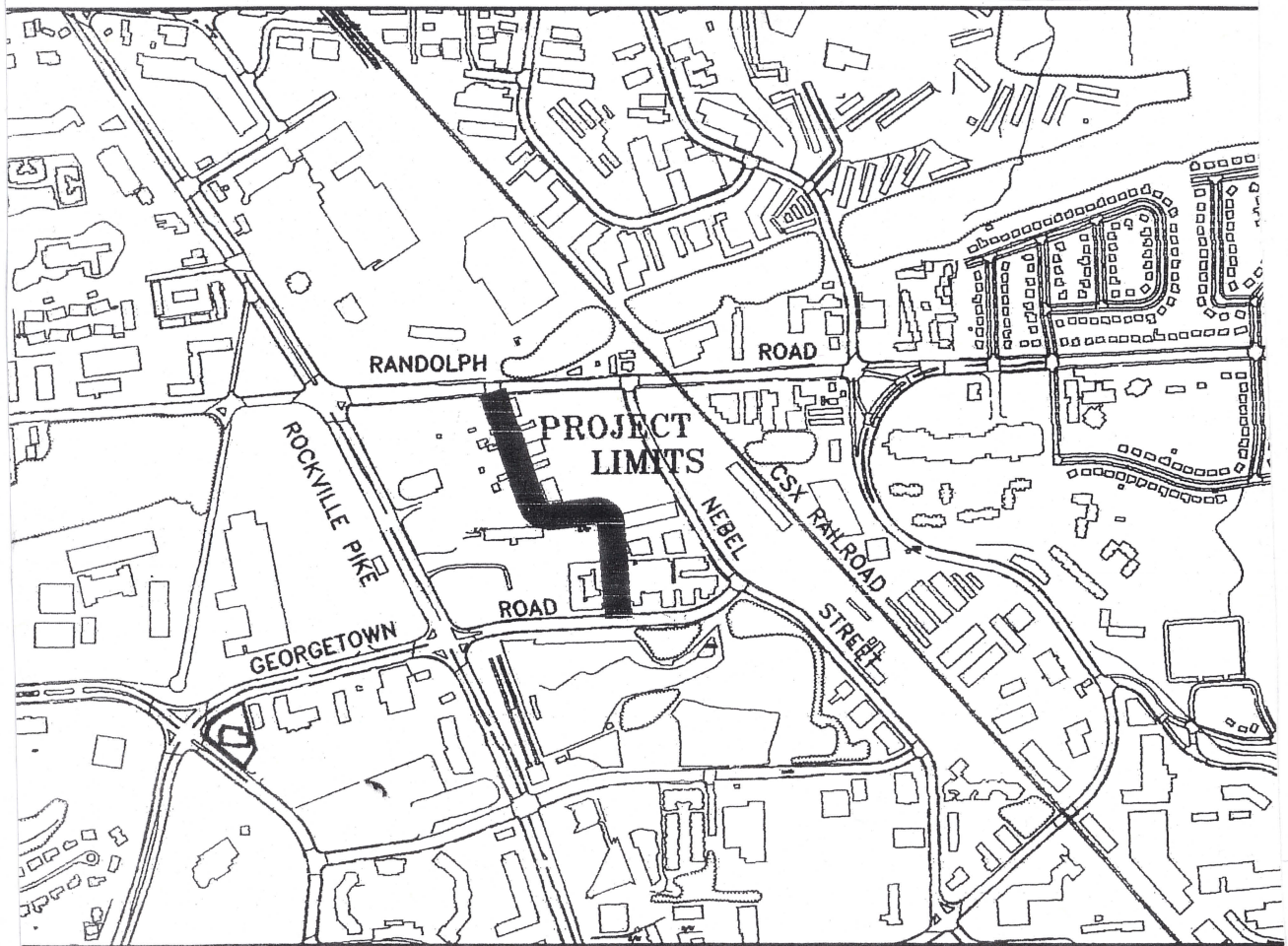
Notices of the Planning Board's meeting were sent to area civic associations.

DP:ba

Cc: Margaret Rifkin
Kristin Oconnor
Marion Clark

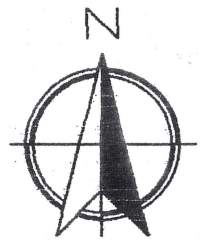
Attachments

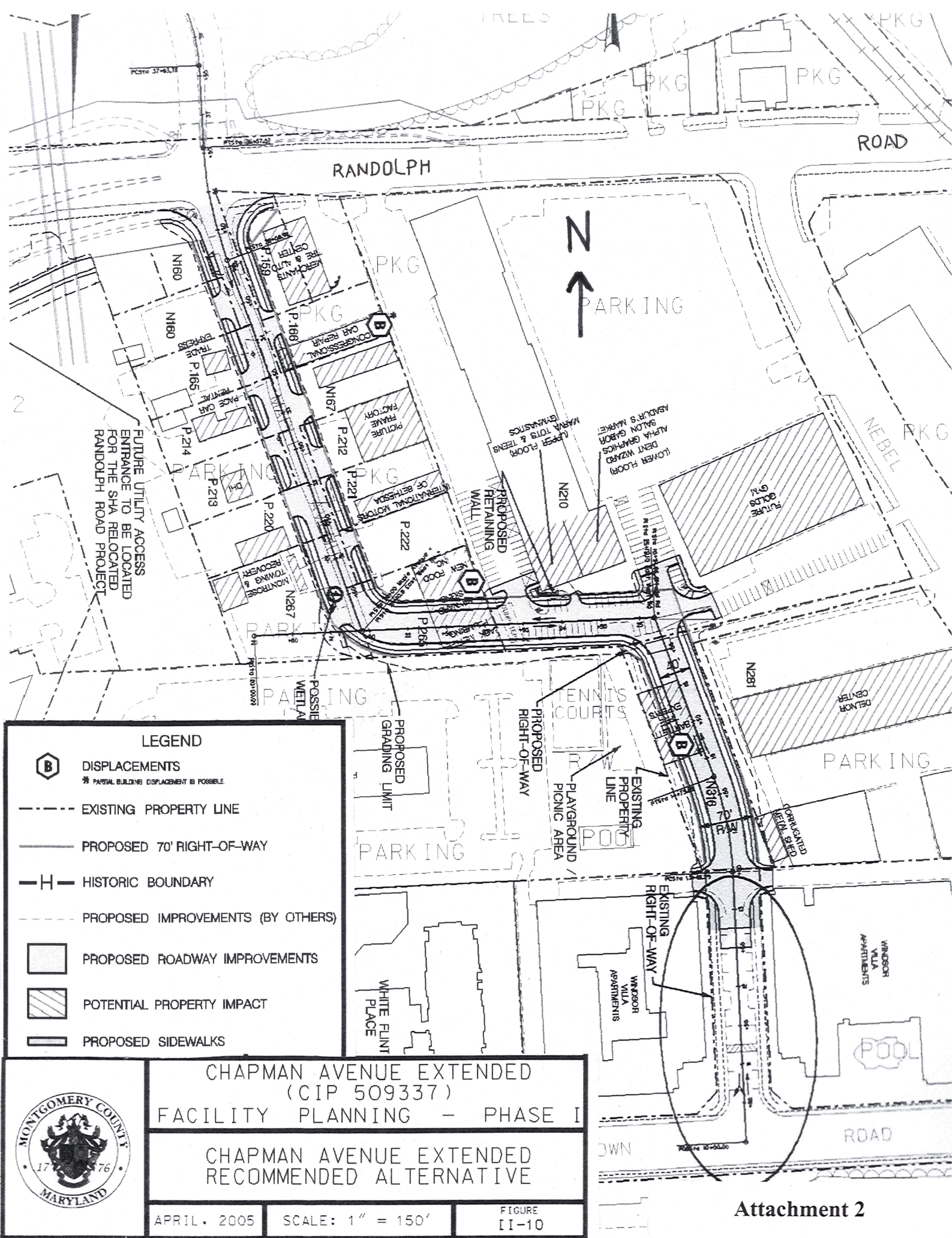
MR mmo to mcpb re Chapman Avenue v2.doc

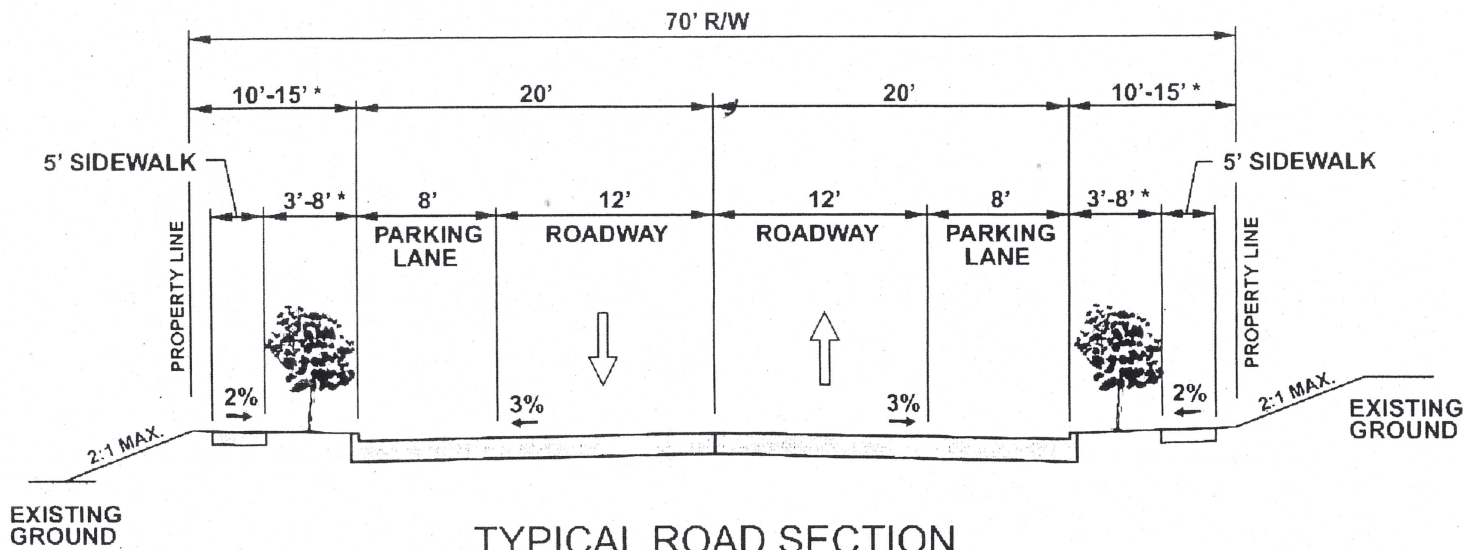


VICINITY MAP

SCALE : 1" = 1000'







Reference: Montgomery County Department of Transportation
Commercial / Industrial Road Standard.

* Note: The width of proposed backing will be evaluated during the design phase, considering proximity of buildings, landscaping needs and planned uses for abutting properties. Consideration will also be given to paving the entire backing width as sidewalk.



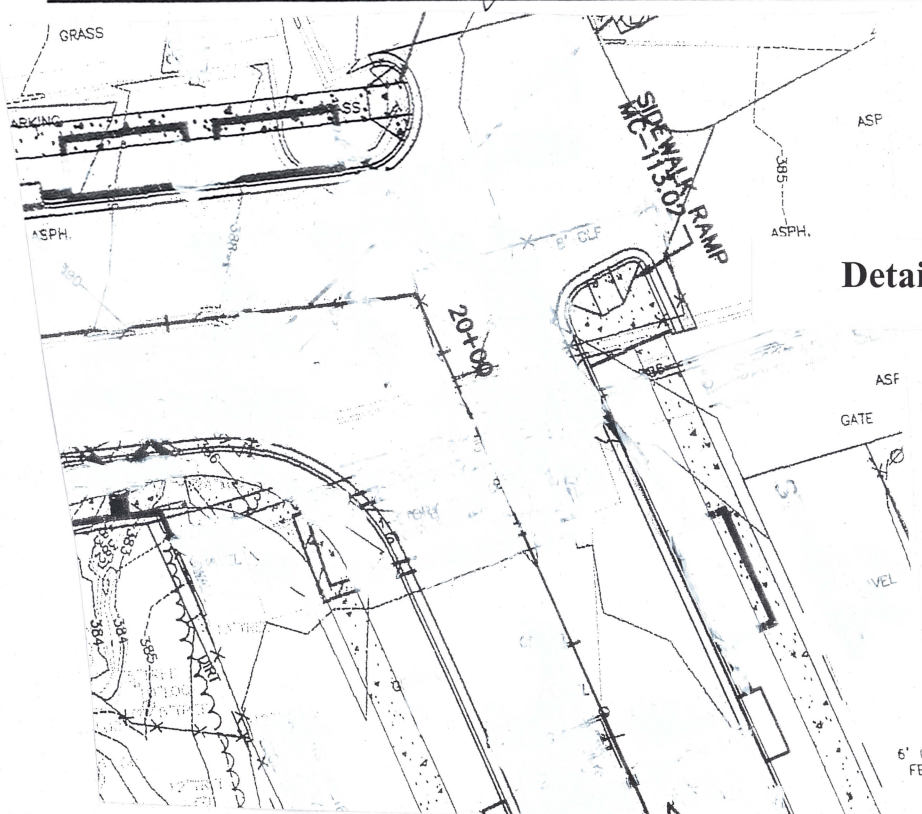
**CHAPMAN AVENUE EXTENDED
(CIP 509337)
FACILITY PLANNING - PHASE I**

TYPICAL SECTION

NOT TO SCALE

DATE: April, 2005

FIGURE
11-6



Detail of STA 20+00

Scale: 1:30



Attachment 3