



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

MCPB
Item #
9/6/07

August 20, 2007

MEMORANDUM – MANDATORY REFERRAL

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: John A. Carter, Chief, Community-Based Planning Division *JAC*
Callum Murray, Potomac Team Leader *CM*
Community-Based Planning Division

FROM: Nancy Sturgeon, Planner Coordinator (301.495.1308)
Community-Based Planning Division

SUBJECT #1: Forest Conservation Plan for Mandatory Referral No. 07402-MCPS-1:
Bells Mill Elementary School – 8225 Bells Mill Road, R-90 Zone,
Potomac Subregion Master Plan

SUBJECT #2: Mandatory Referral No. 07402-MCPS-1: Bells Mill Elementary School
(Replacement of Existing School with New Building on Same Site)

This combined staff report provides recommendations on the Forest Conservation Plan and Mandatory Referral for Bells Mill Elementary School (No. 07402-MCPS-1). The school is located at 8225 Bells Mill Road in Potomac and is within the boundaries of the 2002 *Potomac Subregion Master Plan*.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

SUBJECT #1: APPROVE the Forest Conservation Plan for Bells Mill Elementary School with the following conditions:

1. Submit a Final Forest Conservation Plan that meets the requirements of Section 109(B) of the Forest Conservation Regulations. Final Forest Conservation Plan to be approved by the M-NCPPC prior to any clearing or grading for the new facility.
2. Place retained forest in a Category 1 conservation easement. Easement to be protected by split-rail fencing or other measure approved by Environmental Planning.

SUBJECT #2: APPROVE transmittal of the following comments regarding Bells Mill Elementary School to Montgomery County Public Schools:

1. Comply with the conditions of the Stormwater Management Concept approved by the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services on April 6, 2007.
2. Submit a new Mandatory Referral for any future expansions.

3. Submit a traffic study if any future Mandatory Referral for the school would result in an increase in the school's core capacity of 640 students.
4. Provide cut-off shield light fixtures to eliminate light intrusion from the school property onto adjacent residences, particularly on the eastern boundary where homes are closest to the school. Exterior pole and building-mounted lighting should not exceed a height of 15 feet.
5. Plant all trees shown on the submitted landscape plan (dated 2-27-07), including those listed as "optional," on the eastern edge of the property adjacent to the single-family homes, in front of the school along Bells Mill Road, on either side of the parking lot driveway, and in the parking lot.
6. Provide adjacent residents with relevant information about the construction schedule, including estimated length of time, placement and security provisions for any on-site construction staging areas, and hours during which construction will take place.

INTRODUCTION

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) has submitted a Mandatory Referral for Bells Mill Elementary School, located at 8225 Bells Mill Road in Potomac. The 9.5-acre site is located on the north side of Bells Mill Road west of Seven Locks Road and east of Falls Road between Gainsborough Road and Deborah Drive (see Attachment 1). Bells Mill Elementary School is one of five elementary schools in the Winston Churchill High School cluster, which also has two middle schools.

Bells Mill Elementary School is within the boundaries of the 2002 *Potomac Subregion Master Plan*. The school is located in an established residential neighborhood. Adjacent to the property on the east is a single-family residential neighborhood, to the north is a townhouse community, to the west are Georgetown Hill Day Care Center (on property owned by the Board of Education) and Cabin John Middle School, and to the south, across Bells Mill Road, are single-family homes. The school and all of the surrounding properties are zoned R-90.

Project Summary

Current and projected enrollment at Bells Mill Elementary School exceeds capacity. According to the 2007 MCPS *Educational Facilities Master Plan*, Bells Mill Elementary School is the most overutilized school in the Churchill cluster. There are currently eight relocatable classrooms on the school grounds. The existing building is 37,900 square feet and has a student capacity of 313 students. The 2006-07 enrollment was 476 students.

A modernization project was previously scheduled for this school with a completion date of August 2010. Due to County Council adopted changes in plans for elementary school space in the Churchill cluster, the modernization completion date was accelerated to August 2009. A boundary study will be initiated by MCPS in the spring of 2008 to review options for reassigning students between Bells Mill, Potomac, and Seven Locks elementary schools.

In 2006, MCPS initiated a facility plan to explore modernization options for Bells Mill Elementary, including adding classrooms to the existing building. Constructed in 1968, the school is nearly 40 years old. Given the building's age, condition, and the cost to bring it into compliance with current code requirements, MCPS determined that the most cost-effective option would be to raze the school and build a replacement facility on the same site. The building design for the proposed new Bells Mill Elementary School was originally created for Seven Locks Elementary (Replacement) School when that school was planned to be rebuilt on a site on Kendale Road. Subsequently, MCPS decided to modernize the existing Seven Locks Elementary School rather than build a new school on Kendale Road.

The new Bells Mill facility will be 77,300 square feet and will accommodate full-day kindergarten through grade 5. The initial student capacity will be 609 students, with a future potential capacity of 640 students. This additional capacity will accommodate students that will be reassigned to Bells Mill Elementary School after MCPS completes the boundary study referenced above. Two additional classrooms will be planned for future expansion. MCPS is attempting to design schools that accommodate changing educational programs, interdisciplinary teaching methods, and efficient and cost-effective use of space.

MCPS plans to vacate the building by December 2007. Demolition of the existing building and construction of the new facility is planned to begin in January 2008, and the new school is scheduled to open in August 2009. When the new school opens, hours will continue to be from 9:15 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Staff hours are from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., although many staff members arrive earlier. After-school activities are over by 4:30 p.m. After-hours activities scheduled through the Montgomery County Community Use of Public Facilities normally conclude by 9:30 p.m.

Project Site

The school site is trapezoidal in shape, with approximately 400 feet of frontage along Bells Mill Road. The existing square-shaped building is a partial two-story building centered in front of Bells Mill Road. Currently, there is only one vehicular egress point that accommodates buses as well as vehicles from the parking lot, the student drop-off, and the service area (see Attachment 2). With school modernizations in recent years, MCPS has consistently been redesigning on-site circulation systems to separate the bus loop from the parking lot and student drop-off areas.

The proposed new Bells Mill Elementary School is a partial two-story structure that is more than twice the size of the existing school. It has a larger building footprint, and it is set back farther into the site and placed at an angle to the street (see Attachment 3). This site design creates more space to provide separation in circulation between the bus loop and the parking lot/student drop-off area. The revised circulation layout will provide both the bus loop and parking lot/drop-off loop with separate driveway access to and from Bells Mill Road. The new bus loop will accommodate up to 12 buses and can be used for after-hours parking for up to 63 vehicles. The new parking lot will continue to be located on the west side of the site, but will be twice the size of the existing lot (80 spaces as opposed to 44).

The proposed new school building is closer to the eastern property line and nearer to adjacent residents than the existing building. As shown on Attachment 2, there are currently several play areas between the existing school building and the eastern property line. As shown on Attachment 3, the play areas are relocated to accommodate the larger building. Several residents have complained about the location of the new school building and this issue is summarized below.

Community Issues

The plans for the replacement of Bells Mill Elementary School are based on educational specifications prepared by MCPS. At the beginning of the process, staff from the MCPS Division of Construction formed a 40-member Facility Advisory Committee consisting of Bells Mill school staff, parents, neighborhood residents, and PTA members. Facility Advisory Committee meetings were held in 2006 on July 25, August 15, September 13, and October 3. According to MCPS, the proposed plans went through a series of design reviews based on the suggestions of the Facility Advisory Committee, and they were evaluated and modified to the extent possible.

On August 9, 2007, the M-NCPPC staff sent a letter to local citizens, adjoining and confronting property owners, and other interested parties notifying them that the Mandatory Referral for Bells Mill Elementary School had been received and was tentatively scheduled with the Planning Board.

After the Mandatory Referral was submitted to the M-NCPPC for review, staff received e-mail correspondence (see Attachment 4) from several residents of Kirkwall Court whose property abuts the school's eastern edge. MCPS staff met with these residents at the beginning of the process. They are primarily concerned about the placement of the new building, which will be significantly closer to the eastern property line than the existing building. The distance between the existing school building and the eastern property line is 135 feet. The distance between the new school building and the property line will be 32 feet at the closest corner. The eastern side of the new building will be angled, creating a varied building line.

Residents also questioned why the school building was not sited closer to the western edge of the property and closer to the day care center, which is owned by the Board of Education, rather than placing it closer to the single-family homes. These neighboring residents also expressed frustration that by using architectural designs that were originally intended for another site, there were limited options to address their concerns and move the building away from their homes. Instead of designing a building that was appropriate to the site, the site had to accommodate a predetermined building design as well as its expanded parking and vehicular circulation requirements.

In addition to the Facility Advisory Committee meetings, MCPS staff met with adjacent property owners on November 28, 2006 and January 24, 2007 to discuss the location of the building. MCPS explained the building and site requirements, explored options to minimize the impact on adjacent neighbors, but were unable to significantly change the building's location. MCPS offered to plant evergreens along the eastern property line to help buffer the building from the residents.

MCPS states that the building was designed to respect the character, setting, and architectural features of a residential neighborhood by reducing its mass and creating smaller components with intermittent pitched roofs. MCPS acknowledges that the pre-designed building presented some limitations, but stated that other factors were as significant to the site layout, including the separate access requirements for buses and cars, limited frontage along Bells Mill Road, and doubling the size of the parking lot. In addition, interior building requirements call for placement of public areas at the front of the school, including the administrative suite, multi-purpose room, art, music, and support spaces. The gymnasium is also located at the front of the building and has a separate entrance near the parking lot and athletic fields to provide after-hour access for recreational uses that does not involve the entire building.

ANALYSIS

Master Plan and Zoning

Bells Mill Elementary School is within the boundaries of the 2002 *Potomac Subregion Master Plan*. While the Master Plan did not specifically mention the Bells Mill site, on page 143, the Plan states: *Public schools are an essential component of community life and an integral part of community structure. Montgomery County's public schools are divided into clusters of elementary, middle, and high schools, with cluster boundaries drawn to serve their surrounding residential communities, while maintaining a balanced socio-economic student population.*

Bells Mill Elementary School is in the R-90 Zone, as is all of the surrounding property. The R-90 Zone is primarily a single-family residential zone. The following table shows the development standards for the R-90 Zone, which stipulates the minimum and maximum building requirements. In all categories of the development standards, the proposed new building will meet or exceed the requirements of the Zone.

Development Standards in the R-90 Zone

<u>Section</u>	<u>Development Standard</u>	<u>Permitted</u>	<u>Proposed New School</u>
59-C-1.322	<i>Minimum Lot Sizes</i>		
	Lot Area	9,000 sf	418,176 sf (9.6 acres)
	Lot Width at Street	25 feet	400 feet
59-C-1.323	<i>Minimum Building Setbacks</i>		
	Building from Street	30 feet	164 feet
	Side yard – one side	8 feet	32 feet
	Side yard – sum of both sides	25 feet	212 feet
	Rear yard	25 feet	262 feet
59-C-1.327	Maximum Building Height	35 feet	35 feet
59-C-1.328	Maximum Building Coverage	30%	11.4%

Transportation and Pedestrian Access

Transportation Planning staff has reviewed the Mandatory Referral for Bells Mill Elementary School and their memo is attached to this report (Attachment 5). A Local Area Transportation Review (LATR) study was waived for this site because school-related traffic did not affect specified intersections within the Potomac Policy Area identified in the LATR Guidelines.

Bells Mill Road is designated as a primary residential street with a 70-foot right-of-way and two travel lanes. There is currently no sidewalk on Bells Mill Road in front of the school. A five-foot wide concrete sidewalk will be installed along the frontage of the school property parallel to Bells Mill Road. This sidewalk will connect with existing sidewalks to the west and east of the school property. New lead-in sidewalks from the street to the school building will also be built. On the east side of the property, an existing pedestrian path that connects the school to the neighborhood (to Kirkwall Court) will be maintained. On the west side of the property, an existing pedestrian path that connects the school building through the parking lot to the adjacent property (day care center) will be maintained as well. At the neighborhood's request, the existing steps in the old stairway on the west side will be eliminated.

Environment

Environmental Planning staff has reviewed the Mandatory Referral for Bells Mill Elementary School and their memo is attached to this report (Attachment 6). A Natural Resources Inventory/Forest Stand Delineation (NRI/FSD; No. 4-07110) was approved by Environmental Planning staff on February 22, 2007. The Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services approved the stormwater management concept for the site on April 6, 2007.

Forest Conservation

Environmental Planning staff reviewed the preliminary Forest Conservation Plan (Attachment 7), which shows the site containing 0.46 acres of existing forest, of which the applicant intends to retain 0.38 acres, generating a planting requirement of 1.13 acres. The applicant intends to meet this requirement by a combination of on-site afforestation of 0.53 acres, a landscape credit of 0.04 acres, and a payment of *fee in lieu* for the remaining 0.56 acres. Environmental Planning recommends approval of the Preliminary Forest Conservation Plan with the conditions listed on page 1 of this memo.

Energy Efficiency

Where possible, the project will incorporate sustainable design principles, but MCPS will not be seeking LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification for this school because the architectural designs (which were prepared for another site) were completed before the green building law was approved. The new building will be more energy efficient than the baseline ASHRAE requirements. Energy saving light fixtures, bulbs, and appliances will be utilized. Indoor air quality will exceed minimum ASHRAE requirements. Adhesives and sealants, paints and coatings, and carpeting will be low-emitting materials.

Landscape and Lighting Plan

MCPS states that pole and building-mounted exterior light fixtures will be designed to shield adjacent residences from intrusive glare while maintaining light levels for safety and security purposes. Light poles will be no higher than 15 feet.

A tree stand at the rear (northeastern) edge of the site will be preserved, as required by the Forest Conservation Plan. The submitted landscape plan (dated 2-27-07) lists plantings as "optional" if they are not required as part of the Forest Conservation Plan. The M-NCPPC staff recommends that all plantings that are listed as "optional" on the landscape plan be planted by MCPS. Along Bells Mill Road, five trees are indicated along the street frontage and three trees are shown on each side of the access driveway to the parking lot. The parking lot will have areas of green space and nine trees will be planted. The eastern property line, where the new school building will be closest to adjacent residences, will be planted with a significant number of new trees, most of them evergreen species. These plantings on the school property, combined with the existing trees on the homeowner's property, will provide an enhanced buffer for the residents that may help mitigate the closeness of the new building.

CONCLUSION

Staff recommends approval of the Forest Conservation Plan and the Mandatory Referral to replace the existing Bells Mill Elementary School with a new facility, scheduled to open in August 2009. Staff recommends that the Planning Board approve transmittal of the comments summarized on pages 1 and 2 of this memorandum to Montgomery County Public Schools.

NS:ha: g:\sturgeon\Bells Mill ES Mandatory Referral

Attachments

1. Vicinity Map
2. Existing Site Plan
3. Proposed Site Plan
4. Correspondence
5. Transportation Planning Memo
6. Environmental Planning Memo
7. Forest Conservation Plan

BELLS MILL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



Map compiled on August 07, 2007 at 3:03 PM | Site located on base sheet no - 213NW08

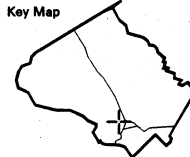
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Key Map



N

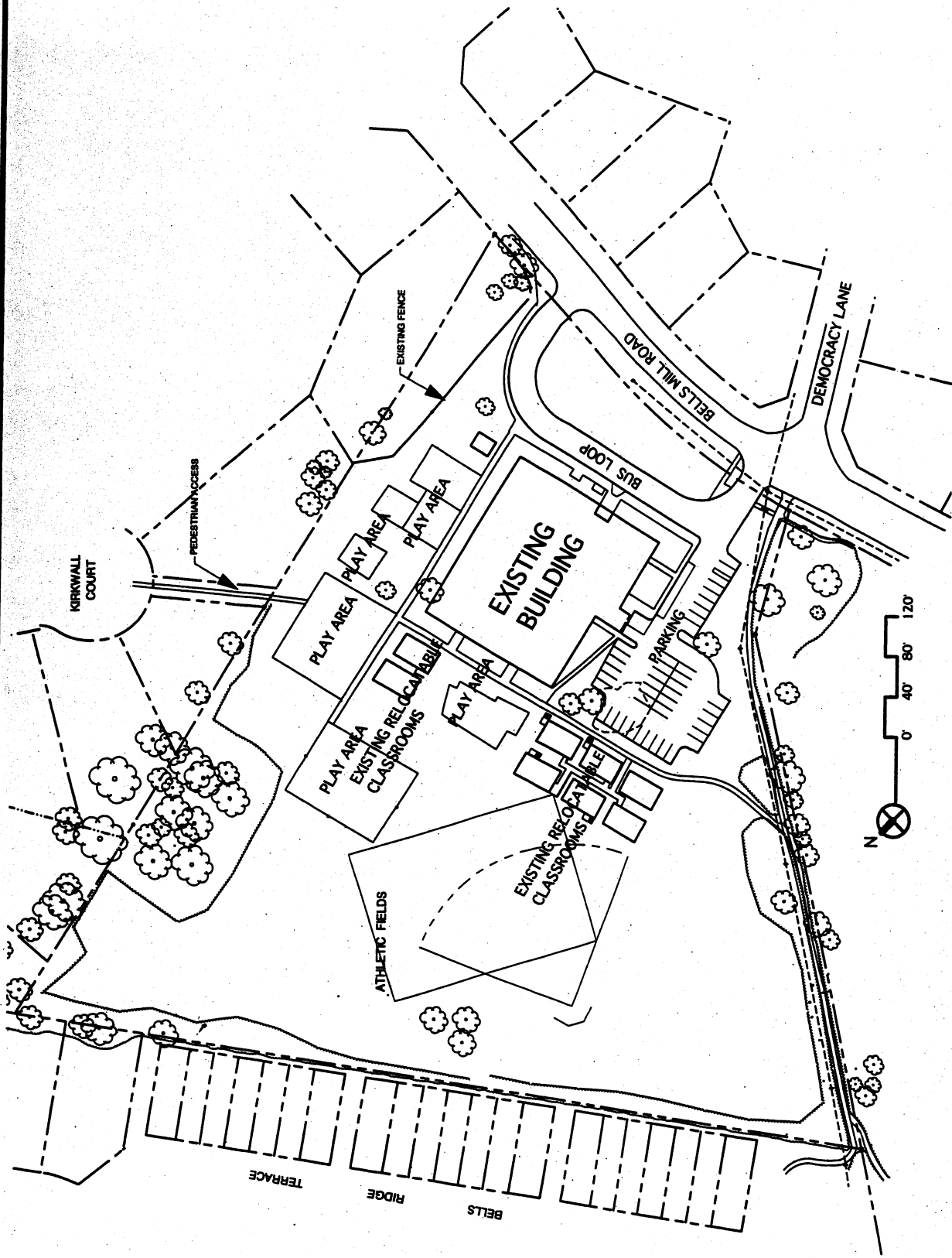


Research & Technology Center

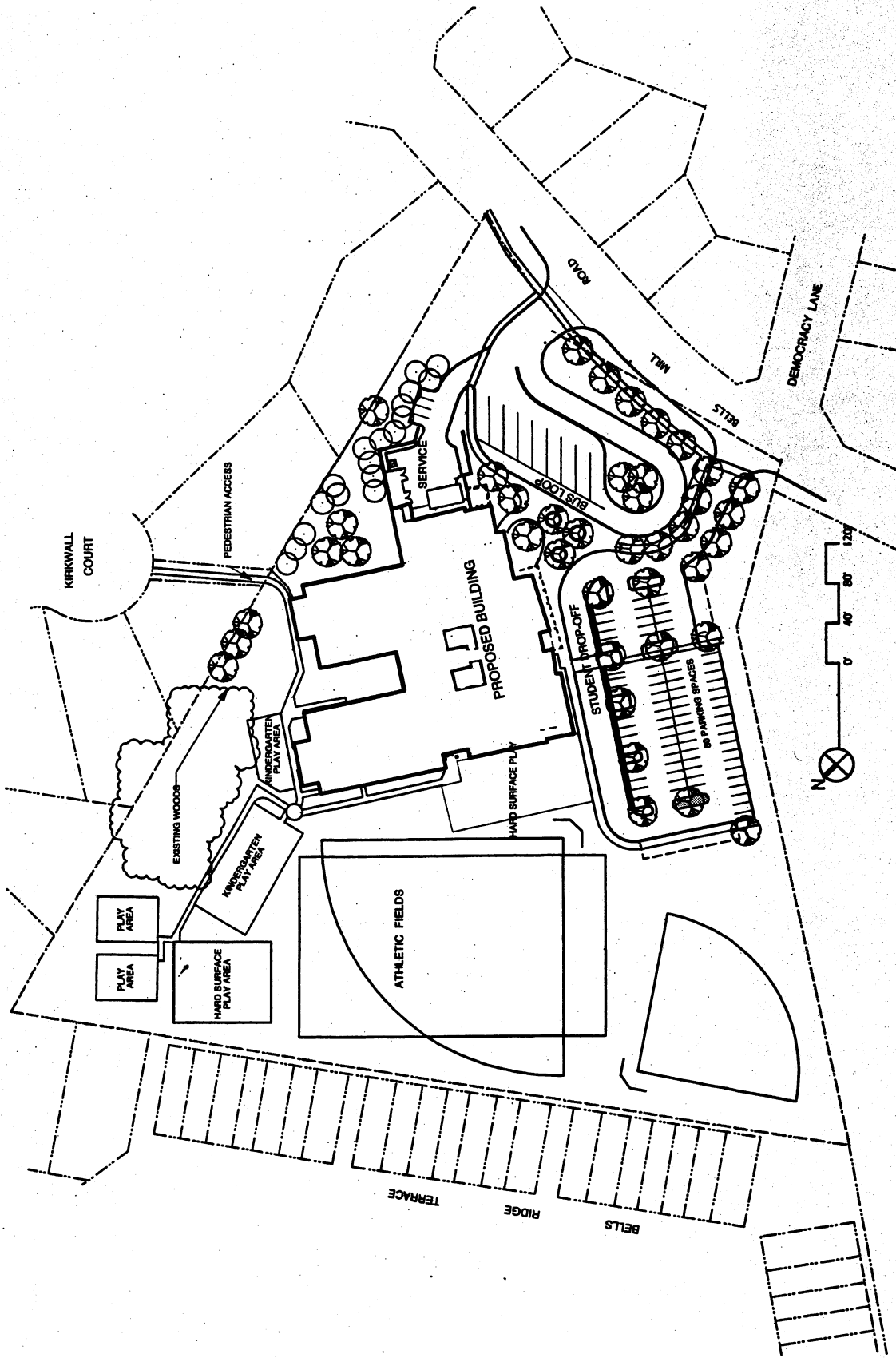


1 inch = 400 feet
1 : 4800

Existing Site Plan



Proposed Site Plan



ATTACHMENT 4

C O R R E S P O N D E N C E

Sturgeon, Nancy

From: Murray, Callum
Sent: Friday, March 30, 2007 9:47 AM
To: Sturgeon, Nancy
Subject: FW: Bells Mill Elementary School Renovation

-----Original Message-----

From: Crystal Pools [mailto:crystalpools@crystalpools.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 01, 2007 2:12 PM
To: Murray, Callum
Subject: Bells Mill Elementary School Renovation

March 1, 2007

Mr. Callum Murray
MD-NCPPC
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Mr. Murray,

This letter is being written with regard to the renovation of Bells Mill Elementary School and the callous disregard for the contiguous residential neighbors by MCPS.

This is truly an example of due process being short changed, even misrepresented to effect a quick fix.

Let me begin by clearly stating that the effected parties want the new school. The issue is simply the location of the building.

In 2003, the feasibility study was done for the renovation of Bells Mill. All effected parties participated in the development of three options and the recommendation of one.

However, this past June 2006, MCPS officials, a new architect, and Bells Mill officials met in a closed session and decided to pursue an entirely different, unrelated plan. Public meetings were then held with only this layout. Opposition to the building location was voiced and was addressed by a nominal movement of 5'. After the meetings were completed the affected parties continued to seek a resolution with MCPS. Even after demonstrating that the "Ed Spec" design criteria that MCPS said they had to adhere to, were in fact not followed in several areas, they continue to be inflexible.

This is so clearly a knee jerk response to fix the Bells Mill problem and the Seven Locks debacle, that "fastness" is driving MCPS without any "fairness". At one meeting the neighbors were told it takes 3-4 months to design an Elementary school. When asked again, the neighbors were told it would set the whole process back 1 year. This building is already designed. MCPS is simply not interested in relocating the building for the sake of a nominal amount of time. MCPS would rather damage the 4 million dollars of single family residential property than place the building 25' from the Georgetown Day Care facility which is already on additional MCPS property!

In closing, let me reconfirm the neighbors want the school. We want the school, and to have it placed on the lot fairly, not fast. The time lost to do this fairly can not be the driving force. We have been working out of the "public scene" to get MCPS to do the fair thing, not the fast thing. Hopefully, the MD-NCPPC can help this from becoming another embarrassing Elementary school problem.

3/30/2007

Sincerely,

Duncan MacKeever
9 Kirkwall Ct.
301.299.6414

Sturgeon, Nancy

From: Murray, Callum
Sent: Friday, March 30, 2007 9:48 AM
To: Sturgeon, Nancy
Subject: FW: Bells Mill Elementary School and neighboring area

-----Original Message-----

From: BRALOWER@aol.com [mailto:BRALOWER@aol.com]
Sent: Sunday, March 04, 2007 6:20 PM
To: Murray, Callum
Subject: Bells Mill Elementary School and neighboring area

March 4, 2007

Mr. Callum Murray
Potomac Team Leader
Montgomery County Regional Office – MC-MNCPPC
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Mr. Murray:

We are thrilled that the Bells Mill Elementary School community will benefit from a new, state-of-the-art elementary school. We have been good neighbors for the past 26 years. However, we are contacting you now to express our grave concern over the process used in choosing a site for the new school; and this has not been very neighborly.

During the 2003 feasibility study regarding the Bells Mill ES modernization, the community, and in particular, the neighbors whose homes were in closest proximity to the school, were involved in the process. This has **NOT** been the case with the current plans to rebuild. The entire process seems to be on the fast track, with little regard for how the placement of the school impacts the four families whose property lines run the length of the school property, or how the placement of the school will impact the wooded area that is at the rear of the property.

The trees that comprise the woods have taken a beating over the past few years due to wind, rain and lightening strikes. We are very concerned that the planned placement of the school will further compromise this valuable area.

We have tried to work through the proper channels to receive fair consideration of our concern: that the school will now be 30 feet from the closest property line on our side of the school. We have attempted to work with MCPS construction representatives – in fact during the course of our meetings it became evident that those we were working with were unaware that MCPS already owned the property that is currently occupied by Georgetown Hill. Maybe if they had been aware of this, the building might have been sited along this side from the start.

It is apparent to us that the project for Bells Mill was put on the “fast track” to utilize the school that had been designed for Kendale, at the least additional cost to MCPS; and in this rushed

Sturgeon, Nancy

From: Murray, Callum
Sent: Friday, March 30, 2007 9:48 AM
To: Sturgeon, Nancy
Subject: FW: Bells Mill Elementary School Modernization Project
Importance: High

-----Original Message-----

From: Cardona, Maria Isabel [mailto:ISABELC@iadb.org]
Sent: Friday, March 02, 2007 2:11 PM
To: Murray, Callum
Subject: FW: Bells Mill Elementary School Modernization Project
Importance: High

Mr.Murray:

Please find below the email we sent to the Montgomery Board of Education on February 12, 2007.

Sincerely,

Jorge & Isabel Cardona
14 Kirkwall Ct.
Potomac, Md. 20854
(301) 299-7210

-----Original Message-----

From: Cardona, Maria Isabel
Sent: Monday, February 12, 2007 10:51 AM
To: boe@mcpsmd.org
Subject: Bells Mill Elementary School Modernization Project
Importance: High

Dear Montgomery Board of Education,

We, Jorge and Isabel Cardona are very concerned at the process that the Montgomery School Board is taking with our neighborhood's request to be heard on the Bells Mill Elementary School modernization project. We feel in the neighborhood that you are not taking into consideration our concerns with this matter. We believe that our concerns are adequate enough for this council to have an open hearing to enable us to voice these concerns. This decision is moving too fast without all the voices heard and as loyal taxpayers we feel that this is extremely unfair.

Sincerely,

3/30/2007

Jorge & Isabel Cardona
14 Kirkwall Ct.
Potomac, Md. 20854

Sturgeon, Nancy

From: Mark and Marilyn Wolff [mcwolff@comcast.net]
Sent: Sunday, July 08, 2007 12:32 PM
To: Sturgeon, Nancy
Subject: Bells Mills Elem.

Nancy—I hope you remember me, Debbie and Paul's friend, who talked to you in the past about the Forest Glen property and homeless shelters. Hope you and family are fine. Now I have a personal issue—I live in a cul de sac adjoining Bells Mills Elem, which is scheduled for renovation. Apparently, MCPS is using the discarded Seven Locks Elem. Design and using it at Bells Mills. The new building will be 30 feet from a neighbors bedroom even though there is a large field to work with. Four neighbors who abut the field hired a lawyer who worked with them and then said the fight would be too expensive. No one in the county or MCPS met with the rest of us in the cul de sac. I am wondering if you know the status of this, and if there is any recourse left. No one opposes a renovated school at all, it is the placement of the building on the property.

Thanks for anything you can find out about this. Currently the neighbors who used the lawyer said it is not in the "budget" yet but I don't know which budget.

ATTACHMENT 5



MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

August 20, 2007

MEMORANDUM

TO: Nancy Sturgeon
Community-Based Planning Division

VIA: Daniel K. Hardy, Supervisor *DKH*
Transportation Planning

FROM: Cherian Eapen, Planner/Coordinator *CE*
Transportation Planning
301-495-4525

SUBJECT: Mandatory Referral 07402-MCPS-1
Proposed Replacement of Bells Mill Elementary School
Montgomery County Public Schools
8225 Bells Mill Road
Potomac Policy Area

This memorandum presents Transportation Planning staff's review of the mandatory referral for the replacement of Bells Mill Elementary School located at 8225 Bells Mill Road within the Potomac Policy Area. The proposed new building will be located in the same general location of the existing school building.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We have completed our review of the materials submitted for the subject mandatory referral and recommend that the Planning Board transmit the following comment to Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS):

- Submit a traffic study in the event a future mandatory referral for the school would result in an increase in school's core capacity, which with the current improvements will be 640 students.

DISCUSSION

School Location, Access, Pedestrian Facilities, Public Transportation, and Parking

Bells Mill Elementary School is located along Bells Mill Road in Potomac, just east of Cabin John Middle School. The school is open between 9:15 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. The new school will have core capacity to support 640 students. The existing school had an enrollment of approximately 467 students in the 2006-2007 calendar year.

Bells Mill Road is an east-west primary residential street between Seven Locks Road and Falls Road and has a posted speed limit of 25 mph in the vicinity of the school. The intersection of Bells Mill Road, Democracy Lane, and the main Bells Mill Elementary School Driveway is all-way STOP sign controlled. Democracy Lane is a north-south secondary residential street with speed humps that extends between Bells Mill Road and Democracy Boulevard and has a posted speed limit of 25 mph. Pedestrian and school warning signs currently exist along Bells Mill Road approaching the school. Though there is no public transportation along Bells Mill Road, Gainsborough Road is served by RideOn Route 38 and has stops near the Cabin John Middle School (approximately 1,000 feet from Bells Mill Elementary School).

A four-foot wide sidewalk currently exists along the north side of Bells Mill Road between Deborah Drive (to the east of the school) and school's east bus access driveway, and between Gainsborough Road (to the west of the school) and school's main driveway. Currently, these two sections do not connect in front of the school. Lead-in sidewalks however, are provided to the school from Bells Mill Road. Marked crosswalks are provided at the Bells Mill Road/Democracy Lane/School driveway intersection. An adult crossing guard mans this crosswalk during the morning school opening and afternoon school closing periods.

As part of the mandatory referral, MCPS will construct the missing section of the sidewalk in front of the school, and upgrade lead-in sidewalks to the school. Staff recommends that these lead-in sidewalks be offset at least four feet from the curb-line so that these are safe and usable during winter months. Staff also recommends that MCPS work with Montgomery County Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPWT) to upgrade the sections of sidewalk along Bells Mill Road that have bituminous surface and are in poor condition to a five-foot wide cement concrete sidewalk.

Primary access to the school is currently via a driveway on Bells Mill Road across from Democracy Lane. The parent drop-off and pick-up of students as well as staff access are facilitated at this access point. The parent drop-off and pick-up area is currently separated from the bus drop-off/pick-up area. Buses enter the school via a driveway approximately 300 feet east of Democracy Lane and exit the school via the same driveway used by parent and staff vehicles. With the replacement school, both the bus loop and student loop will be separated with separate driveways from Bells Mill Road. The new bus loop will be located to the front of the school, and will be able to accommodate up to 12 buses. This area would be able to park approximately 63 cars during after-hours. The new school will also have a parking lot with 80 parking spaces, located to the west side of the school.

Master Plan Roadways

The Approved and Adopted *Potomac Subregion Master Plan* describes the following nearby master-planned roadways:

1. Bells Mill Road, as a two-lane primary residential street (P-10) with a recommended minimum right-of-way width of 70-feet, between Falls Road and Seven Locks Road.
2. Gainsborough Road, as a two-lane primary residential street (P-17) with a recommended minimum right-of-way width of 70-feet, between Democracy Boulevard and Seven Locks Road.

Local Area Transportation Review

The *2004 Local Area Transportation Review (LATR) Guidelines* require a traffic study for all uses that generate **30** or more total peak-hour trips during the typical weekday morning (6:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.) and/or evening (4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.) peak periods. However, under Section II.C.1 of the *LATR Guidelines*, a full LATR study is waived within the Potomac Policy Area if a particular use will not impact specific intersections that are identified in the LATR Guidelines (see Attachment No. 1). Since school related traffic did not affect these intersections an LATR traffic study was not required for this mandatory referral.

Staff however requested that the mandatory referral submission for the proposed school reconstruction include an analysis of internal school traffic circulation, existing and projected queuing along school driveways, and school driveway intersections with Bells Mill Road during the morning and afternoon peak school arrival/dismissal hours.

The consultant for MCPS submitted a traffic analysis that presented traffic-related impacts of the replacement school (with core capacity for 640 students) during weekday morning and afternoon peak-periods. Staff review of the above traffic analysis indicated that the study complied with the requirements detailed by staff.

DKH:CE:tc

Attachment

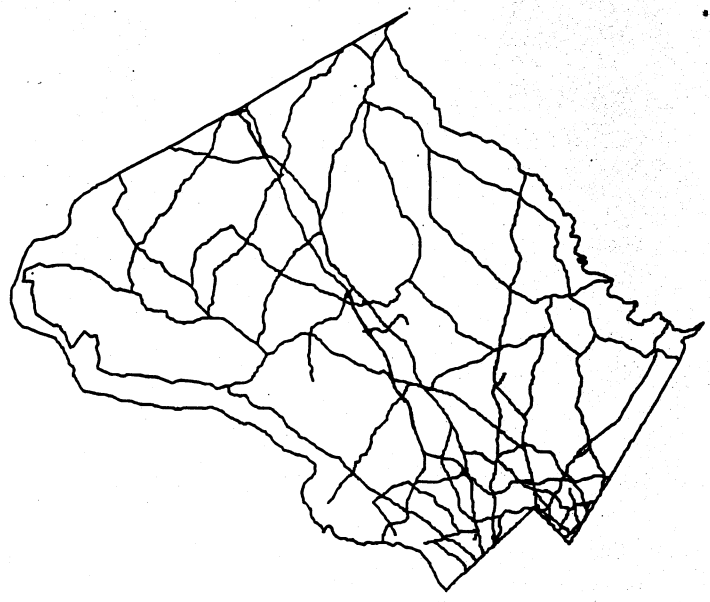
cc: Barbara Kearney
James Tokar
Ki Kim
Greg Leck
Ray Burns

mmo to NS re BMES 07402-MCPS-1

*Approved
and
Adopted
July 1, 2004*

Local Area Transportation Review Guidelines

*Guidelines of the
Montgomery County Planning Board for the
Administration of the
Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance*



Published by:



**THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION**
Montgomery County Department of Park and Planning
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3760

- b. For other land uses, use the latest edition of the *Trip Generation Report* published by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE).

For some land uses of a specialized nature, appropriate published trip-generation rates may not be available. In such cases, Transportation Planning staff may request that determination of rates for these land uses be a part of the traffic study. If special rates are to be used, Transportation Planning staff must approve them prior to submission of the traffic study.

An applicant shall not avoid the intent of this requirement by submitting piecemeal applications or approval requests for zoning, subdivision, special exception, mandatory referral, or building permits. However, an applicant may submit a preliminary plan of subdivision for approval for less than 30 peak-hour trips at any one time provided the applicant agrees in writing that, upon the filing of future applications, the applicant will comply with the requirements of the LATR Guidelines when the total number of site-generated peak-hour vehicle trips at one location has reached 30 or more. Then, a traffic study will be required to evaluate the impact of the total number of site-generated trips in accordance with the LATR Guidelines.

Transportation Planning staff may elect to waive these criteria if the development results in no net increase in weekday peak-hour trips.

B. Congestion Standards

Critical lane volume (CLV) standards for intersections that were adopted for each policy area in the most-recently adopted Annual Growth Policy are shown in Table 1. Transportation Planning staff maintains an inventory of intersection traffic data based upon traffic counts collected by the Montgomery County Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPWT), the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA), and private traffic consultants for purposes of providing applicants with a preliminary assessment of conditions in the vicinity of the proposed development.

C. Exceptions to the General Guidelines

There are several policy areas where there are exceptions or additions to the general Local Area Transportation Review process:

1. In the Potomac Policy Area, only developments that Transportation Planning staff consider will impact any of the following intersections will be subject to Local Area Transportation Review: a) Montrose Road and Seven Locks Road, b) Democracy Boulevard and Seven Locks Road, c) Tuckerman Lane and Seven Locks Road, d) Bradley Boulevard and Seven

Locks Road, e) Democracy Boulevard and Westlake Drive, f) Westlake Drive and Westlake Terrace, g) Westlake Drive and Tuckerman Lane, h) River Road and Bradley Boulevard, i) River Road and Piney Meetinghouse Road, and j) River Road and Seven Locks Road. No other intersections are to be studied.

- 2a. The following policy areas have been designated Metro Station Policy Areas in the most-recently adopted AGP: Bethesda CBD, Friendship Heights CBD, Glenmont, Grosvenor, Shady Grove, Silver Spring CBD, Twinbrook, Wheaton CBD, and White Flint. This designation means that the congestion standard equals a critical lane volume of 1800 (see Table 1) and that development within the area is eligible for the AGP's Alternative Review Procedure for Metro Station Policy Areas (see Appendix D). This procedure allows a developer to meet LATR requirements by 1) agreeing in a contract with the Planning Board and the County Department of Public Works and Transportation to make a payment as designated in the AGP, 2) participating in and supporting a Transportation Management Organization (TMO) if and when one exists 3) mitigating 50% of their total weekday morning and evening peak-hour trips, and 4) conducting a traffic study to identify intersection improvements and/or trip mitigation measures that would have been required. Both residential and non-residential projects are eligible for the procedure.
- 2b. Development in the above-mentioned Metro Station Policy Areas will be reviewed in accordance with Section V of these guidelines. These procedures provide specific criteria to satisfy the general guidelines included in the adopted Annual Growth Policy (AGP).
3. Area-specific trip-generation rates have been developed for the Bethesda, Friendship Heights, and Silver Spring CBDs. (See Appendix C.)

ATTACHMENT 6



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

DATE: August 6, 2007

TO: Nancy Sturgeon, Community Based Planning

VIA: Jorge A. Valladares, Environmental Planning

FROM: Michael Zamore, Environmental Planning

SUBJECT: 1. Forest Conservation Plan for Mandatory Referral No. 07402-MCPS-1
Bells Mill Elementary School

2. Mandatory Referral No. 07402-MCPS-1:
Bells Mill Elementary School

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **Approval** of the Forest Conservation Plan, with the following conditions:
 - a) Applicant to submit a Final Forest Conservation Plan that meets the requirements of Section 109(B) of the Forest Conservation Regulation. Final FCP to be approved by M-NCPPC staff prior to any clearing or grading for the new facility.
 - b) Applicant to place retained forest in a Category 1 conservation easement. Easement to be protected by split-rail fencing or other measure approved by Environmental Planning.
2. **Approval** of Mandatory Referral No. 07402-MCPS-1 for Bells Mill Elementary School

Discussion

Forest Conservation Law Compliance

The 9.5-acre site has an approved Natural Resources Inventory/Forest Stand Delineation (NRI/FSD) (No. 4-07110) granted on February 22, 2007. Environmental Planning staff has reviewed the preliminary forest conservation plan (FCP) submitted for the project. The plan shows the site containing 0.46 acre of forest, 0.38-acre of which the applicant intends to retain. This generates a total planting requirement of 1.13 acres. The applicant proposes to meet this requirement by a combination of onsite afforestation (0.53 acre), landscape credit (0.04 acre), and payment of *fee in lieu* for the remaining 0.56 acre. By doing this the applicant will meet the requirements of forest conservation law. Staff recommends approval of the FCP.

Environmental Guidelines

The project complies with the Environmental Guidelines (*Guidelines for Environmental Management of Development in Montgomery County*).

Water Quality

The site is in the Snakeden Branch subwatershed of the Cabin John watershed. Cabin John is designated as a Use I-P watershed. The *Countywide Stream Protection Strategy* (CSPS, 2003

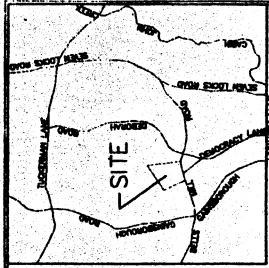
Update) lists subwatershed stream quality conditions as 'poor', current habitat status as 'good/fair', and habitat stability as 'unstable' based on data collected between 1994 and 2000.

Stormwater Management

The Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (MDPS) approved the stormwater management concept request for Bells Mill Elementary School on April 6, 2007. The stormwater management concept consists of onsite channel protection measures via underground detention pipes and onsite water quality control via Stormfilters®, 2 biofilters, and non structural practices. Onsite recharge is not required since this is a redevelopment project.

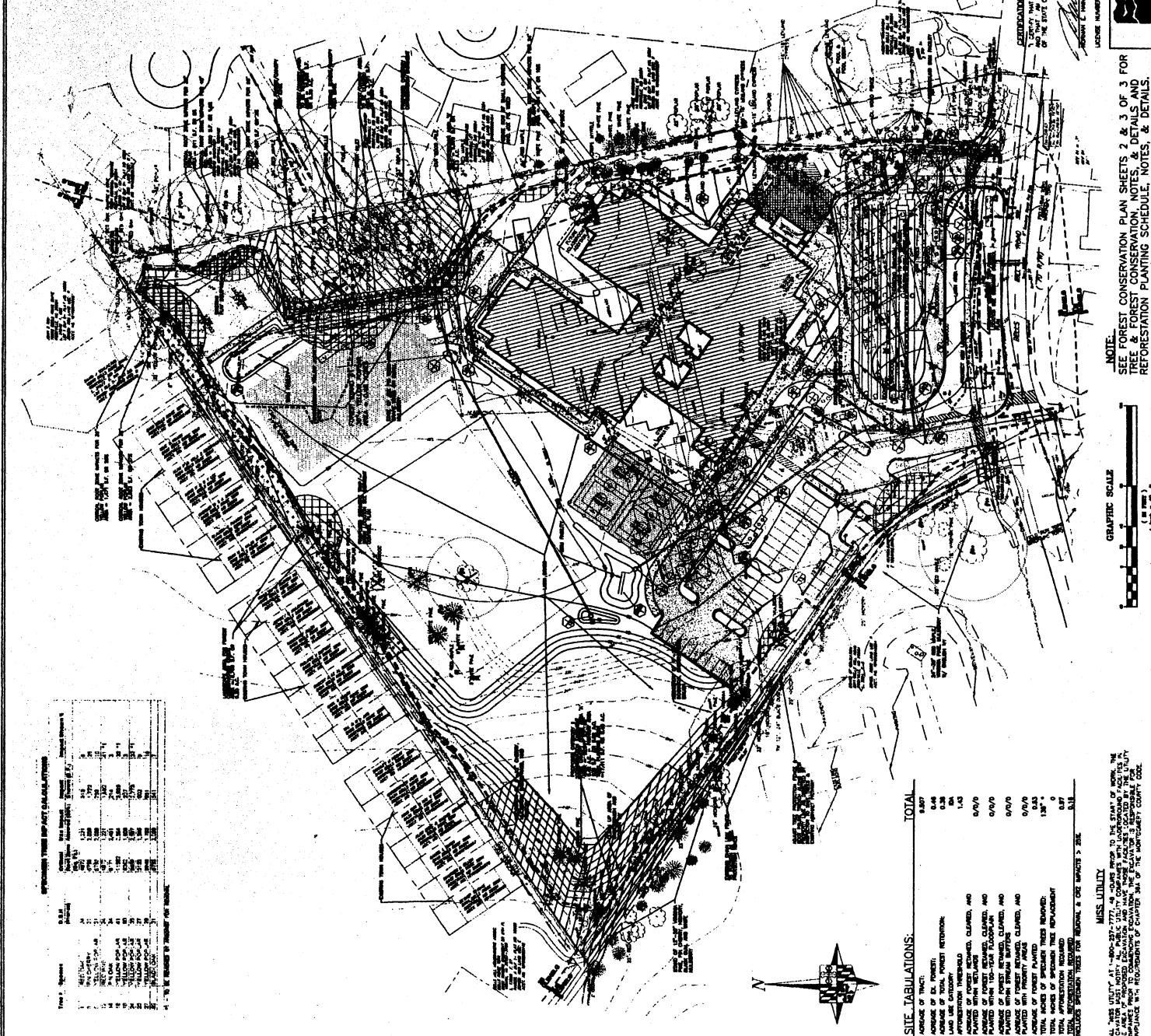
LEED Design

The project will be registered for the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification through the United States Green Building Council. Energy conservation is a primary design factor for the school. The configuration and orientation of the building, the selection of materials, and the mechanical/electrical systems used, all reflect the importance and consideration placed on energy conservation. The building will be designed to exceed ASHRAE 90.1-2004 energy requirements and latest International Energy Conservation code. The design will incorporate the ANSI/ASHRAE/IES Energy Efficient Design for New Buildings.



SCALE: 1" = 200'

- EXISTING FENCE
- EXISTING CONTOURS
- PROPOSED CONTOUR
- MANHOLE
- SEWER
- UTILITY POLE
- OVERHEAD UTILITY LINE
- PROPERTY LINE
- EXISTING FOREST BOUNDARY
- PROPOSED FOREST/TREE AREA BOUNDARY
- COMBINED TREE PROTECTION FENCE/ROOT PRUNE TRENCH
- TREE PROTECTION SIGN
- LIMITS OF DISTURBANCE
- SOIL TYPE & BOUNDARY
- INVERT LABEL
- STORM WATER MANAGEMENT FACILITY LABEL
- MANHOLE LABEL
- UNDERPASS STORM WATER MANAGEMENT FACILITY LABEL
- EXISTING TREE
- SPESIFIED/DESIGNATED TREE BY THE NUMBER & CZE
- TREE 12" + WITHIN 50' OF LOD W/ CZE
- TREES WITH CZE IMPACTS > 30% TO BE REMOVED BY ARBORIST FOR REMOVAL
- SPECIES/SIGNIFICANT TREES TO BE REMOVED
- TREE TO BE REMOVED
- FOREST/CANOPY AREA TO BE CLEARED 3.78% (7/108 AC)
- FOREST/CANOPY AREA TO BE RETAINED 16.82% (37/108 AC)
- PLANTED AREAS w/ CANOPY COVER
- SITE LANDSCAPING CREDIT AREAS PLANTING AREA = 0.20 ACRES
- PROPOSED BUILDING
- CONCRETE SIDEWALK
- REINFORCED CONCRETE
- LIGHT DUTY ASPHALT
- REGULAR DUTY ASPHALT
- PBAR MULCHED AREA



EXISTING TREES IMPACT CALCULATION

Tree #	Species	DBH	Height	Condition	Impact
1	Red Oak	12"	25'	Good	0.05
2	White Oak	10"	20'	Fair	0.03
3	Maple	14"	30'	Poor	0.08
4	Pine	8"	15'	Good	0.02
5	Yew	16"	35'	Fair	0.10
6	Oak	11"	22'	Good	0.04
7	Walnut	13"	28'	Fair	0.06
8	Cherry	9"	18'	Good	0.02
9	Birch	7"	12'	Fair	0.01
10	Hickory	15"	32'	Good	0.07
11	Elm	10"	20'	Fair	0.03
12	Alder	6"	10'	Good	0.01
13	Poplar	8"	15'	Fair	0.02
14	Willow	5"	8'	Good	0.01
15	Sycamore	12"	25'	Fair	0.04
16	Redwood	18"	40'	Good	0.12
17	Juniper	4"	6'	Fair	0.01
18	Cedar	6"	10'	Good	0.01
19	Spicebush	3"	4'	Fair	0.005
20	Boxwood	2"	3'	Good	0.005



SITE TABULATIONS:

DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT	TOTAL
AREAS OF TREES	0.87	0.87
AREAS OF THE FOREST	0.46	0.46
LAND USE CATEGORY	0.14	0.14
APPROXIMATION OVERSHED	0.0/0	0.0/0
PLANTED WITHIN 100' BUFFER	0.0/0	0.0/0
AREAS OF FOREST REMOVED, CLEARED, AND PLANTED WITHIN 100' BUFFER	0.0/0	0.0/0
AREAS OF FOREST REMOVED, CLEARED, AND PLANTED WITHIN 50' BUFFER	0.0/0	0.0/0
AREAS OF FOREST REMOVED, CLEARED, AND PLANTED WITHIN 10' BUFFER	0.0/0	0.0/0
TOTAL AREAS OF FOREST REMOVED:	0.0/0	0.0/0
TOTAL AREAS OF FOREST RETAINED:	1.33*	1.33*
TOTAL APPROXIMATION REQUIRED:	0.87	0.87
* INCLUDES PROPOSED TREES FOR REMOVAL & CZE IMPACTS 2: 0.0	0.18	0.18

CALL "MISS UTILITY" AT 1-800-287-7777, 48 HOURS PRIOR TO THE START OF WORK. THE MISS UTILITY SERVICE IS PROVIDED FREE OF CHARGE TO ALL PROJECTS THAT REQUIRE COMPLIANCE WITH THE MISS UTILITY ACT. MISS UTILITY IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ACCURACY OF THE INFORMATION PROVIDED OR THE RESULTS OF ANY INVESTIGATION CONDUCTED BY MISS UTILITY.



NOTE:
SEE FOREST CONSERVATION PLAN SHEETS 2 & 3 OF 3 FOR TREE & FOREST CONSERVATION, NOTES, & DETAILS AND REFORESTATION PLANTING SCHEDULE, NOTES, & DETAILS.



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