



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

MCPB Agenda Item 7
October 4, 2007

MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 28, 2007

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Mary Bradford, Director, Department of Parks *MB*
Mike Riley, Acting Deputy Director, Department of Parks *MR*
Doug Alexander, Acting Division Chief, Park Development Division (PDD) *DA*

FROM: Mary Ellen Venzke, CIP Manager, PDD *MEV*

SUBJECT: Proposed FY09-14 CIP Work Session #3

Staff Recommendation

Approve staff recommendations of projects for the FY09-14 Capital Improvements Program (CIP).

Work Session Status

This is the third and final work session for the FY09-14 CIP. Staff will present recommendations for continuing stand-alone projects and the remainder of the new projects. The Board will receive a complete set of project description forms (PDFs), including operating budget impacts (OBI), for final approval. The recommended FY09-14 CIP will be forwarded to the County Council by November 1st, as required by State Law and County Executive with a favorable recommendation.

Attached you will find staff responses to issues raised by the Board at work session #2. If the Board has additional questions, we will have staff available to answer questions or provide follow-up information before the CIP is transmitted to the County.

I. Continuing Stand-Alone Projects from FY07-12 CIP

1. Brookside Gardens Master Plan Implementation

This project implements phases 1 and 2 of the Brookside Gardens Master Plan. Private donations will fund the majority of the design and construction cost. Fundraising is well under way.

Phase 1: 1800 Glenallan Avenue Entry

This phase establishes 1800 Glenallan Avenue as the main entrance to the garden by creating a welcoming and functional entrance for both vehicles and pedestrians. The plan reinforces the 1800 Glenallan Avenue entrance and Visitor's Center as the "heart" of the Garden. Scope of work includes garden design and new plantings, safe and easy-to-access pedestrian entrance, a gate house, signage, and driveway improvements.

Phase II: Parking Lot Expansion, SWM and South Service Drive

This phase addresses current demands for additional parking for garden-sponsored programs and events, rental events, and high-visitation days. The project consists of adding a third parking bay to current Visitor's Center parking lot, additional storm water management capacity, and improvements to service road on south side of Visitor's Center to allow vehicle access to gardens for staff and emergencies.

Project Status: Facility planning for the phase 1 Visitor's Center entrance will be presented to the Board in FY08

Cost Estimate: \$661,000

Expenditure Schedule: Construction of phase 1 is planned for FY09-10. Construction is dependent on further fund raising. Facility planning for phase 2 is scheduled for FY09-10.

2. Wheaton Tennis Bubble

Wheaton Tennis Bubble is an indoor tennis facility which is part of the Wheaton Regional Park Athletic Complex that includes the new Wheaton Ice Arena, the old ice rink (a roofed structure used seasonally for roller hockey and ice hockey), baseball fields, basketball courts, outdoor tennis courts, and parking.

The Wheaton Tennis Bubble is one of two publicly provided indoor tennis facilities in Montgomery County. It is a fabric covered steel frame structure approximately 36,000 square feet in an area which houses six tennis courts. The main fabric covered structure is currently under renovation. The original fabric, which was deteriorating, has been removed and will be replaced with a new and better quality fabric. The HVAC system, which did not include cooling and had an insufficient radiating heating, is being replaced with a new forced air heating and cooling system. The existing metal halide lighting, which is also insufficient and a maintenance problem, is being replaced with indirect T5 fluorescent fixtures during the renovation. As part of this renovation, there are also site improvements to enhance aesthetics and improve drainage and maintenance.

The attached support building is approximately 48' x 52' in area and serves as the entrance to the tennis bubble. It includes an entrance lobby, pro shop, and restrooms. This building is deficient in many aspects such as lobby and office areas, restroom, shower and locker areas, storage area, and lacks a viewing area of the courts.

Staff has completed a facility plan for the building. The facility plan proposes replacing the existing ancillary building with a new one at the same location. The new building will include a second floor mezzanine to provide an alternative viewing area to the tennis courts. The building would be accessed from the west by reconfiguring the existing walkway. The facility would house a large waiting/sitting space with a view of the tennis courts from the first floor and the mezzanine level, two staff offices, a cashier's office with space for a "pro shop", restrooms with showers and lockers, a kitchenette, and a large storage space. Court access will be provided from the first floor lobby/sitting area.

Project Status: Bubble replacement is underway. The facility plan for the ancillary building is scheduled to be presented to the Board on October 4.

Cost Estimate: \$1,913,000 for design and construction of the ancillary building (\$1,878,000 is current approved in the FY07-12 CIP for the fabric bubble and associated upgrades and facility plan). The revised project total is \$3,791,000

Expenditure Schedule: Replacement of fabric bubble, lights and HVAC will be complete in FY08. Design of ancillary building is proposed to begin in FY10, with construction in FY12-13.

II. New Projects

1. Falls Road Local Park

The Facility Plan proposes to renovate Hadley's Playground and expand the existing parking lot at Falls Road Local Park. The 19.9-acre park was built in the late 1980's. It is located on Falls Road at the intersection with Falls Chapel Way. The site gains access from Falls Road to the East, Cold Spring Road to the West and Falls Chapel Way to the South.

The park includes football/soccer, practice soccer, and baseball fields, a large playground, a parking lot, and a loop path. The areas for the basketball, handball, and tennis courts were graded; however, they were never constructed.

In 1998, the original tot lot was removed and replaced with a large playground as part of a public private partnership. This park is very popular mostly due to Hadley's Playground that was specifically designed for children with disabilities. Frequent busloads of children are brought from the County's special education centers to the park. The playground is covered in rubberized surfacing that has deteriorated and will be replaced by this project.

The plan also proposes to expand the existing parking lot. The existing parking area is inadequate to accommodate the volume of park patrons associated with multiple games. The number of parking spaces will be increased from 71 to 154.

Project Status: The facility plan is scheduled to go before the Board on October 4th.

Cost Estimate: \$1,683,000

Expenditure Schedule: The playground renovation is proposed for design and construction in FY09. The parking lot expansion is scheduled for design in FY11-12 and construction in FY12.

2. Lake Needwood Modifications

Lake Needwood is a valued hydrological resource and recreational amenity for the County. Preservation of this resource is dependent on dredging the Lake to remove existing sediment and addressing further siltation. In 2000, the Park Development Division conducted a Sediment Study of the lake to determine the extent of siltation and costs for removal. This project would remove approximately 100,000 cubic yards of sediment from the forebay and upper reaches of the main lake, install structural improvements within the forebay to facilitate sediment collection, establish new shoreline protection along the upper lake, and deposit the sediment off-site. In addition to restoring the Lake for recreational use, a major objective for the dredging project is to assess the present and future function and management of the lake for flood control, stormwater management, sediment and erosion control, and downstream water quality.

This project was part of a functional plan written in 2005 for the Lake's use as a recreational amenity, as well as lakeshore facilities. This project does not require a formal facility plan; however, staff will provide the Board with a detailed briefing on the preliminary engineering for the project in the fall. Staff has already presented the design concept to the community and received favorable responses.

Project Status: This project is being designed as part of the Pollution Prevention and Pond Repairs level-of-effort project. A public meeting was held on September 25, 2007. Preliminary Engineering is scheduled to be presented to the Board on November 29, 2007.

Cost Estimate: \$3,695,000

Expenditure Schedule: The detailed design is currently under contract and construction is planned in FY10.

3. Magruder Branch Trail Extension

This project will add 1.1 mile of new hard surface trail to the 3.1 mile existing trail that begins in Damascus Recreational Park and travels north to Valley Park Drive. This project will extend the trail from Valley Park Drive to the Damascus Town Center. The eight-foot wide hard surface trail travels through a wooded stream valley and includes 1,300 feet of boardwalk, two bridges through sensitive areas, as well as road crossing improvements at Bethesda Church Road.

Project Status: The facility plan is scheduled to be presented to the Board on October 4th.

Cost Estimate: \$2,434,000

Expenditure Schedule: The project is proposed for design in FY11-12 and construction in FY13-14.

III. Inter-County Connector (ICC) Projects

1. Woodlawn Barn Visitors Center

In June 2003, the Planning Board approved a Feasibility Study and Development Plan for the Woodlawn Visitor's Center. This project will convert the historic barn to a visitor's center with a focus on the Underground Railroad and the Quaker experience in Montgomery County. Design funding is included in the Restoration of Historic Structures project. We will transfer approximately \$800,000 from that project and receive an additional \$2.0 million in State funds from the ICC mitigation to renovate the barn as a visitor's center. The facility will be the model for future interpretive historic sites.

Project Status: The RFP for the design contract is in progress as part of the existing funding in the Restoration of Historic Structures PDF. Staff is working with SHA on a Memorandum of Understanding to secure the funding.

Cost Estimate: \$2.8 million

Expenditure Schedule: The detailed design RFP is progress. Construction is planned for FY09-10.

There are two remaining projects that are part of the community stewardship projects for the ICC and will likely require projects forms in the CIP with Board and Council approval: Rock Creek Trail Improvements and Northwest Branch Recreational Park (Llewellyn Fields). The exact scope of work on Rock Creek Trail Improvements is still under consideration. Once the scope and estimated costs are more defined, this project will come back to the Board for approval.

Northwest Branch Recreational Park (Llewellyn Fields) was envisioned as part of the ICC mitigation program, intended to replace facilities lost at Northwest Branch Regional Park and Layhill Local Park when construction of the ICC takes place. The ICC Record of Decision provided the following:

The Llewellyn property would provide 23.2 acres of replacement adjacent to the Northwest Branch Recreational Park. The property would include construction of four baseball/softball fields, one soccer field, parking and restrooms. The replacement fields would be superior in quality than the existing field because they

are located in upland areas that are less prone to flooding Access to these replacement fields would be provided directly from MD 28, which is also an improvement over access to the existing fields from Layhill Road and Bonifant Road. This property will also provide 3 acres of reforestation land.

Based on need, the project as now envisioned will change three of the baseball/softball fields to rectangular fields, therefore the new fields will include: One full sized baseball field, three soccer fields, and one football field. The 70-acre site includes both existing parkland and land to be conveyed to the Commission from the State. Access to the Complex will be provided directly off Norbeck Road. Staff has been working closely with the SHA consultant on a concept plan for the park.

Future phases for this park provided by Department of Parks may include: One large playground, approximately 2 miles of looped perimeter hiker-biker trails, one picnic shelter, picnic areas, one restroom, reforestation areas, and an interpretative area/kiosk for the adjacent Rachel Carson Greenway trail. The park will be built in phases.

We are working closely with SHA to provide a park that meets the provisions set forth in the ROD, while meeting our current needs in the park system. The initial SHA budget for this project is \$2,900,000, which staff feels may not be adequate to provide the amenities as initially envisioned in the ROD. The project will likely be a CIP project presented as a supplemental appropriation once all of the funding and details are completed.

Conclusion

The Board will receive a separate packet with draft copies of the PDFs. Staff will be refining the text, justifications, maps, and operating budget impact information over the next month. A complete set of final PDFs will be provided to the Board on or before November 1st. Staff seeks approval of the recommended funding levels for the projects for the proposed FY09-14 CIP.

Staff Responses from MCPB CIP Work Session #2

September 20, 2007

1. *Black Hill Trail Renovation & Extension - Review and justification of cost estimates for Black Hill Trail renovation and extension.*

The Black Hill Trail PDF includes two projects; a 2.4 mile trail renovation project and a 1.3 mile new trail extension. The PDF includes consultant costs for design, staff chargebacks for design and construction management, as well as construction costs. Staff removed design and chargeback costs and compared construction costs for four recent trail projects in our program. The attached table on the last page of this attachment compares the significant cost elements included in each project and the average construction cost per mile.

The Matthew Henson Trail costs are actual bid prices for a project currently under construction, so we have the benefit of comparing the other projects against this baseline. As expected, the Black Hill Trail Renovation project has the lowest construction cost per mile, since an existing trail is being renovated rather than being newly constructed. The Magruder Branch Trail project has the highest cost per mile, but this project has many elements that contribute to the cost. This project had the benefit of using the bid abstracts for the Matthew Henson project, and we believe the estimated costs are appropriate. This project is located in a sensitive stream valley area and includes a high proportion of boardwalk, in addition to including a bridge, retaining walls, grading on steep slopes, and road crossing improvements. The Black Hill Trail Extension includes significant grading, steep slopes and retaining walls, and is already funded in the FY07-12 CIP at the level shown, based on a cost estimates from an earlier facility plan.

2. *Laytonia Recreational Park - Consider the large church congregation adjacent to Laytonia RP and the impact the church and park may have on one another.*

In a fall 1999 revised subdivision plan approval for the Covenant Life Church, as a precondition for subsequent phases of development on Church property, the Board reaffirmed a requirement for additional vehicular access from Airpark Road through park property to serve future Church expansion. At the July 30, 2001 Planning Board review for the facility plan, staff noted that an access road for the Covenant Life Church had been provided in the plan for the park. Staff acknowledges that an MOU with the Church is needed, but to date the Church has not sought to expand

further, and the issue of maintenance of the road will need to be worked out. The county Animal Shelter project will construct the entrance road from Airpark Road to ultimately serve all three facilities. The park project will extend the road westerly, to the limits of the need for serving park facilities, and the Church will be required to further extend the road to serve its property.

Staff had also agreed with the New Life Seventh Day Adventist Church that the plan for the park would include a buffer from the ballfields and parking on parkland. This will be addressed further at the detailed design stage.

3. *Darnestown Square Urban Park - Secure agreement with adjacent shopping center owner, that visitor's to this park will be permitted to park in their lot.*

In a letter dated September 1, 1998, David Landow of the Darnestown Limited Partnership, who developed the shopping center, granted permission to the M-NCPPC for park visitors to use the parking facilities at the Darnestown Village Center site. This permission was subject to specific terms and conditions that allowed parking by park visitors, provided that there would be no hardship to Food Lion, Inc. and other shopping center tenants, as well as no extra-ordinary wear and tear to the parking facilities.

On August 12, 2005, the Montgomery County Planning Board issued an opinion on Site Plan No. 8-05027, which was an application by David M. Landow to expand grocery store use by 9,458 square feet and a request for a waiver of 28 of the minimum required parking spaces. This site plan was approved with conditions. Condition #2 stated that the applicant would continue to allow use of the parking facilities for park visitor use as outlined in the September 1, 1998 letter. The applicant was also required to grant permission to the M-NCPPC to install a curb cut at the parking lot in order to facilitate access to the park by visitors, M-NCPPC staff and equipment. The curb cut would not result in any loss of parking spaces. The September 1, 1998 letter and the August 12, 2005 site plan opinion are attached.

4. *Evans Parkway Local Park – Contact St. Highway to discuss installing a pedestrian crossing signal at Georgia Avenue.*

At the January 18, 2007 Board review for the Evans parkway facility plan, staff noted that the plan called for a widened sidewalk (10 feet) along the western edge of the park abutting Georgia Avenue and a pedestrian crosswalk at the mouth of Evans Parkway to facilitate pedestrians reaching the nearby bus stop on the east side of Georgia Avenue. No mention was made of park patrons crossing Georgia Avenue. The issue of a pedestrian crossing for Georgia Avenue to serve pedestrian access to park facilities on both side of the road, has been raised in conjunction with the recent rezoning case for the former Maryland College of Art and Design property and interest in possible acquisition of the property for parkland. As requested by the Board, staff will contact the State Highway Administration to request a study for such

a crossing and report back to the Board. The State guideline for a midblock crossing follows:

Standard: The need for a traffic control signal at an intersection or midblock crossing shall be considered if an engineering study finds that both of the following criteria are met:

- A. The pedestrian volume crossing the major street at an intersection or midblock location during an average day is 100 or more for each of any 4 hours or 190 or more during any 1 hour; and*
- B. There are fewer than 60 gaps per hour in the traffic stream of adequate length to allow pedestrians to cross during the same period when the pedestrian volume criterion is satisfied. Where there is a divided street having a median of sufficient width for pedestrians to wait, the requirement applies separately to each direction of vehicular traffic.*

The Pedestrian Volume signal warrant shall not be applied at locations where the distance to the nearest traffic control signal along the major street is less than 90 m (300 ft), unless the proposed traffic control signal will not restrict the progressive movement of traffic.

Cost Summary
Trail Project Comparison

	Black Hill Trail Renovation (Estimated costs at 30% design)	Black Hill Trail Extension (Estimated costs at 80% design)	Matthew Henson Trail (Actual low bid construction costs)	Magruder Branch Trail Extension (Estimated costs at 30% design)
Total Mileage	2.4 miles	1.3 miles	4.63 miles	0.75 mile
New Asphalt Trail (8-feet wide)	0	6,860 LF	22,010 LF	2,600 LF
Renovated Asphalt Trail (8- feet wide)	12,675 LF	0	0	0
Boardwalk (10-feet wide)	97 LF (1% of total length)	0	2,430 LF (10% of total length)	1,300 LF (33% of total length)
Bridges	1	0	5	1
Retaining Walls	2,000 FF	8,500 FF	0	2,500 FF (approx)
Steel Railings	0	1,450 LF	0	0
Road Crossing Improvements	0	0	Veirs Mill Rd.	Beth. Church Rd., Woodfield signal
Significant Grading or steep slopes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Construction Cost	\$1,361,000	\$2,365,000	\$5,030,000	\$1,837,700
Construction Cost per Mile	\$567,100	\$1,819,200	\$1,086,400	\$2,450,300