



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

**MCPB**  
**ITEM # 5**  
**July 31, 2008**

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Montgomery County Planning Board

**VIA:** Gwen Wright, Chief *GW*  
Countywide Planning Division *GW*

Stephen Federline, Supervisor *SF*  
Environmental Planning, Countywide Planning Division

**FROM:** Amy Lindsey, Senior Planner *AL*  
Environmental Planning, Countywide Planning Division

**DATE:** July 16, 2008

**REVIEW TYPE:** Preliminary Forest Conservation Plan No. 08602-MCPS-1  
Cresthaven Elementary School Mandatory Referral

**LOCATION:** 1234 Cresthaven Drive  
Silver Spring, MD

**APPLICANT:** Montgomery County Public Schools  
**APPLICANT'S ENGINEER:** A. Morton Thomas Engineering

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Staff recommends approval of the preliminary forest conservation plan subject to the following conditions:

- 1) Required site inspections by M-NCPPC monitoring staff (as specified in "Trees Technical Manual")
- 2) Approval of the following items by M-NCPPC staff prior to DPS issuance of the sediment and erosion control permit:
  - a. Approval of Final Forest Conservation Plan consistent with the approved Preliminary Forest Conservation Plan prior to any clearing, grading or demolition on the site.
  - b. The Final Forest Conservation Plan must be prepared, signed and stamped by an ISA certified arborist and include complete details on the proposed tree protection measures.
  - c. Final sediment control plan must be consistent with final limit of disturbance as approved by MNCPPC staff.

- 3) All areas shown on the Final Forest Conservation Plan as “Forest Saved” must be maintained as forest, with no removal of understory unless specifically permitted by MNCPPC staff.
- 4) Submittal of electronic version of signed Final Forest Conservation Plan to be submitted to Environmental Planning prior to clearing or grading. Electronic files must have Environmental Planning approval signature, be in PDF format, and be in only one file.

## **DISCUSSION**

Cresthaven Elementary School is a 9.80-acre existing school located in the White Oak planning area on Cresthaven Drive. There is 4.4 acres of forest onsite and numerous large and specimen trees. There is an intermittent stream with associated environmental buffer on the property. The property is within the Northwest Branch watershed: a Use Class IV/IV-P watershed. The proposed plan is to replace the existing school with a new school.

The Board’s action on the Preliminary Forest Conservation Plan is regulatory and binding. The Planning Board must act on the Forest Conservation Plan before it finalizes its recommendations on the mandatory referral.

### **Environmental Guidelines**

The applicant submitted and received approval of a Natural Resources Inventory/Forest Stand Delineation (NRI/FSD) number 420080270 on November 19, 2007. There is an intermittent stream with mostly forested buffer on the northern section of the property. There are some areas of steep slopes and highly erodible soils. These slopes are forested and are a very high priority for retention. The site is not within a Special Protection Area or Primary Management Area.

### **Forest Conservation**

This property is subject to the Chapter 22A Montgomery County Forest Conservation Law and a Forest Conservation Plan has been submitted for approval. There is 4.40 acres of existing forest, 0.82 acres of forest will be removed, and 3.58 acres of forest will be retained. No easement will be placed on the property but the area will be maintained as forest and not tree cover. There is no planting requirement for this property.

Forest loss has been minimized with the stormwater management conveyance being field located and contiguous with the existing access path as much as possible. Clearing has been minimized on the steep slopes with highly erodible soils. There is no clearing of forest within the stream valley buffer.

### **Tree Save**

There are approximately 74 large or specimen trees on the property. Approximately 13 large or specimen trees will be removed as part of the demolition and construction of the new school. The final disposition of some trees will need to be determined at a later date. For example, there are two white oaks (34” and 31”) that are currently highly impacted by the existing school development. MCPS is going to work with an arborist to try to

save these trees, as they are landmarks on the property. However, it may be determined after detailed work, that it is not possible to save these trees. If this happens, the trees will be replaced with large caliper specimens.

The Preliminary Forest Conservation Plan contains tree protection measures for both on-site and off-site trees. Detailed and specific measures will be required on the Final Forest Conservation Plan. There are a number of off-site trees that will be significantly impacted (~40%) by the proposed development. As avoidance is not possible, MCPS should work directly with the adjacent owners to either adequately protect or remove the trees

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Environmental Planning recommends approval of the Preliminary Forest Conservation Plan with the conditions above.