



MCPB
ITEM # 6
July 31, 2008

MEMORANDUM

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

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

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

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

DATE: July 16, 2008

REVIEW TYPE: Preliminary Forest Conservation Plan No. 08401-MCPS-1
Carderock Springs Elementary School Mandatory Referral

LOCATION: 7401 Persimmon Tree Lane
Bethesda, MD

APPLICANT: Montgomery County Public Schools
APPLICANT'S ENGINEER: Adtek Engineering

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

Carderock Springs Elementary School is a 9.0-acre existing school located in the Potomac planning area on Persimmon Tree Lane. There is 0.2 acres of forest onsite and numerous large and specimen trees. There are no streams, wetlands or floodplains on the subject property, nor any areas of environmental buffer. The property is within the cabin John Creek watershed: a Use Class I/I-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 420080490 on October 31, 2007. The site does not include any streams, wetlands, or floodplains and no environmental buffer on the property. There is 0.20 acres of forest on the subject site. 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 0.20 acres of existing forest, 0.02 acres of forest will be removed, and 0.18 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. The site has a 1.17-acre planting requirement, which will be met by planting 35 native canopy cover trees.

Since there are no feasible opportunities onsite for creating or connecting to contiguous forest, the planting requirement will be met on-site with tree cover. Staff supports the use of tree cover on this property because of the land use and the site is not large enough nor shaped in a way to lend itself better to forest planting. The tree cover is being provided in the parking lot and within the existing treed picnic area. The parking lot plantings will help offset the negative effects from the pavement. The picnic area plantings will ensure that the large, older trees will be replaced as they get older with the younger trees

Tree Save

There are 34 large or specimen trees on the property. Nine large or specimen trees will be removed as part of the demolition and construction of the new school. An additional 30 native canopy trees will be planted to mitigate for the lost large and specimen trees.

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.

RECOMMENDATION

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