MCPB
Item #
10/23/08

MEMORANDUM

Date: October 10, 2008

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Jorge Valladares, Chief, Environmental Planning
Mark Pfefferle, Supervisor, Environmental Planning

FROM: Marco Fuster, Senior Planner, Environmental Planning

REVIEW TYPE: Forest Conservation Plan Review

APPLYING FOR: Preliminary Forest Conservation Plan (FCP) – Proposal for stream restoration project along lower Booze Creek

PLAN NAME: Lower Booze Creek Stabilization

PLAN NUMBER: Mandatory Referral #06902-DEP-1

REVIEW BASIS: This property is subject to the Chapter 22A Montgomery County Forest Conservation Law

LOCATION: Located within Booze Creek Stream Valley Park, between River Road and the Cabin John Parkway.

APPLICANT: Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)
ENGINEER: Greenman-Pedersen, Inc and Coastal Resources, Inc.

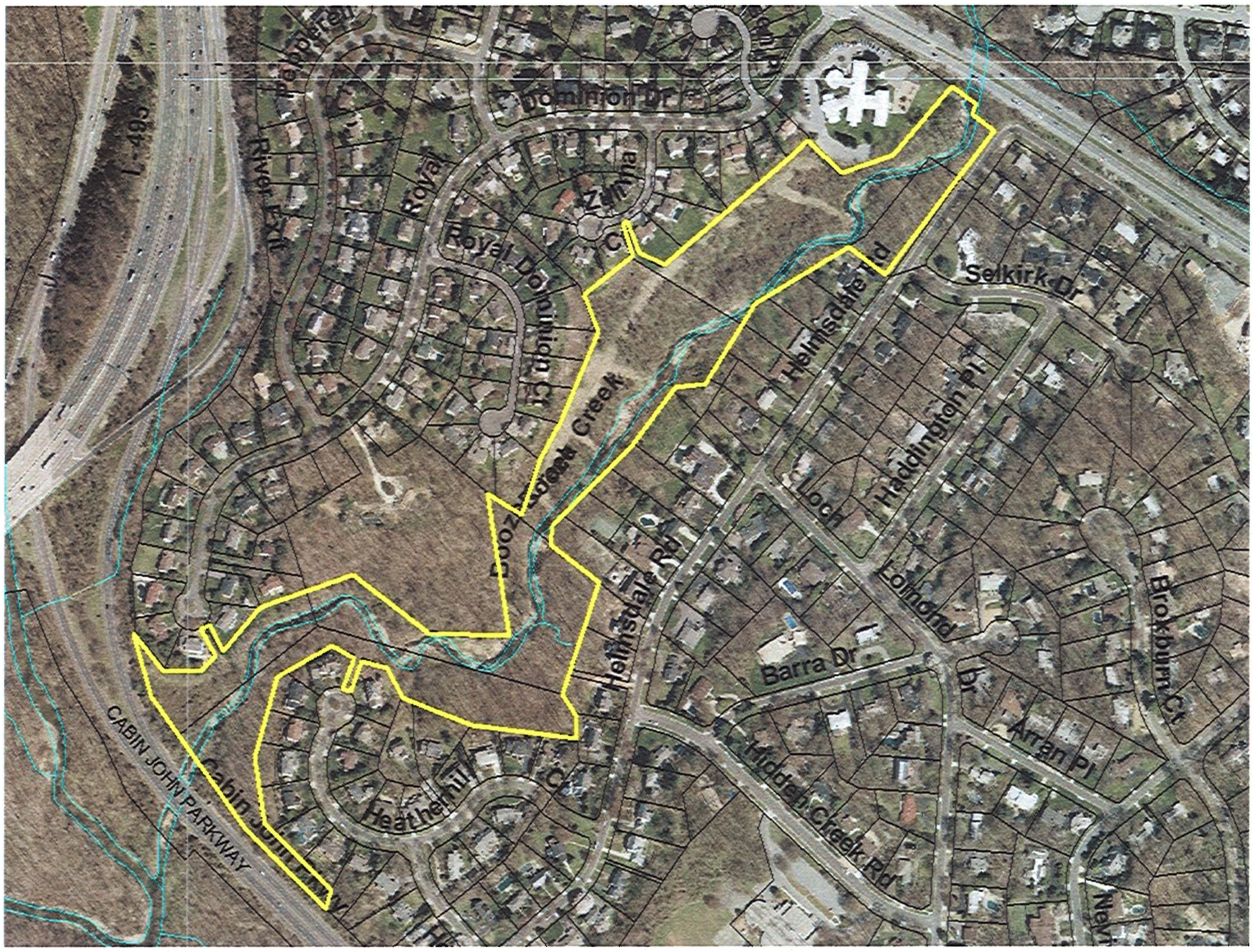
HEARING DATE: October 23, 2008

RECOMMENDATION: Approval subject to the following conditions:

1. Compliance with the Preliminary Forest Conservation Plan subject to final staff review and approval.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The subject property, Booze Creek Stream Valley Park shown below, is a 23-acre property located between River Road River Road and the Cabin John Parkway. The project is bordered by residential homes to the east and west, and is adjacent to a day care facility to the northeast. The entire property is within the Cabin John Creek watershed, Use I-P waters. There are no wetlands or associated wetland buffers within the subject boundary, however the property almost entirely within the stream buffer. A number of WSSC sewer lines and easements traverse the project site.



BACKGROUND

The Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is proposing a stream restoration project along lower Booze Creek. The proposed project, originally identified as a priority stream restoration project in the Cabin John Watershed Study (DEP 2004), is designed to stabilize the highly degraded stream channel located on private and M-NCPPC property. Active WSSC sewer lines are exposed by the stream erosion in a number of locations. Project design and construction is coordinated with WSSC so that the aging and exposed sewer lines can be maintained and protected. Both agencies (DEP and WSSC) will use the same access corridors to reduce environmental impacts.

ENVIRONMENTAL GUIDELINES

The applicant submitted a Natural Resources Inventory/ Forest Stand Delineation (NRI/FSD) number 420062340 and subsequently received approval of the NRI/FSD on November 8, 2007. There is a perennial stream with a mostly forested buffer occurring on the property. There are some areas of steep slopes and highly erodible soils. These slopes are generally forested and are a 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. The net tract area for the project contains 7.46 acres of existing forest, of which, 1.54 acres will be removed, and 5.92 acres of forest will be retained. The net tract area is based on the project's limits of disturbance. Once completed, the disturbed areas will be restored and maintained as forest. There is no forest conservation planting requirement for this project, although approximately 3.51 acres of reforestation is proposed for environmental enhancement and restoration of forested stream buffer.

Forest loss has been minimized by utilizing existing, open access routes (where most of the subsequent plantings will occur).

TREE SAVE

There are approximately 70 large or specimen trees within the subject site. Removal of larger trees will be generally limited to those in very close proximity to the steam bank, which are either failing or are located where the existing land will be re-graded for stability. Among other tree preservation-stress reduction techniques identified on the forest conservation plan, a combination of field located tree protection fences and root protection matting will be utilized for tree preservation.

APPLICANTS POSITION

The watershed of Booze Creek, is highly urbanized. Uncontrolled storm water runoff has caused the stream to widen and erode, exposing sewer lines. The proposed 0.8 mile stream restoration project focuses on establishing a stable stream channel, improving aquatic habitat, and protecting sewer infrastructure. The restoration plan uses in-stream structures, properly-sized substrate, and riparian plantings to create a stable channel.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of the forest conservation plan #06902-DEP-1 with the conditions noted above.

ATTACHMENT

Attachment A – Project overview exhibit (prepared by DEP)

Attachment A

Booze Creek Stream Restoration Project