MCPB Item # 7/2/09

MEMORANDUM

DATE:

June 19, 2009

TO:

Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA:

Rose Krasnow, Chief, Development Review Division

Mark Pfefferle, Acting Chief, Environmental Planning Division

Catherine Conlon, Supervisor, Development Review Division

FROM:

Andrea Stone, Senior Planner

Candy Bunnag, Planner Coordinator, Environmental Planning Division

REVIEW TYPE:

Preliminary Plan Amendment

APPLYING FOR:

Limited Preliminary Plan Amendment to modify a Conservation Easement.

Proposal to remove conservation easements and pay county fee-in-lieu to

address SHA Intercounty Connector (ICC) Plans

PLAN NAME:

Mill Creek South

PLAN NUMBER:

#11991069A

REVIEW BASIS:

Forest Conservation Regulations, Section 113.A.(2), Regulation No. 1-01AM

(COMCOR) 18-01AM1. A Preliminary Plan Amendment is necessary to

reflect the revisions to the conservation easements.

LOCATION:

Mill Creek South, Briardale Rd., 1500 feet northwest of Shady Grove Road

APPLICANT:

State Highway Administration (SHA)

ENGINEER:

Melinda B. Peters

Director, Office of the Intercounty Connector

State Highway Administration

HEARING DATE: July 2, 2009

As there were eight proposed amendments to Preliminary Plans and Forest Conservation Plans due to the ICC project, staff presented all the amendments to the Planning Board as a comprehensive package rather than exclude this smaller amendment that is not subject to the Forest Conservation Law from the public hearing process. This application is being reconsidered to meet technical notice requirements.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. Approval of the Limited Preliminary Plan Amendment for Mill Creek South #19991069A subject to the following conditions:
 - a. The State Highway Administration (SHA) must pay a fee-in-lieu of \$221,110.56, which may be provided in cash and/or by transfer of assets found to be of comparable value to M-NCPPC, to allow the M-NCPPC Department of Parks to plant and maintain 5.64 acres of forest on parkland located in the Potomac River watershed².
 - b. SHA must prepare an amendment to the conservation easements, include that portion of the SHA plat for the ICC related to the Subject Property as an exhibit, and record the documents among the land records of Montgomery County, Maryland. SHA must submit all documents related to the amended conservation easements for Staff review and approval prior to recording these documents in the land records.

BACKGROUND

On February 26, 2009, The Planning Board approved amendments to Forest Conservation Plans and Preliminary Plans for nine sites adjacent to the ICC ROW which had conservation easements displaced by construction of the ICC. These platted properties had existing conservation easements recorded in the county land records prior to SHA obtaining portions of these properties for the ICC ROW.

One site is a subdivision (Mill Creek South, #19991069A) approved prior to the adoption of the County Forest Conservation Law. It includes a conservation easement that was created to protect a forested environmental buffer area, in accordance with the Planning Board's "Environmental Guidelines" that was in place at the time of the subdivision approval. This amendment is being brought back to the Planning Board to allow public testimony from Mill Creek South residents that were not notified of the February public hearing. The staff recommendations remain the same as the original recommendations on February 26, 2009. The original staff report is included as Attachment 1.

PLANNING BOARD REVIEW AUTHORITY

The Mill Creek South Limited Preliminary Plan Amendment would remove less than 5,000 square feet of forest and associated conservation easement area. However, as there were eight proposed amendments to Preliminary Plans and Forest Conservation Plans due to the ICC project, staff presented all the amendments to the Planning Board as a comprehensive package, rather than exclude the smaller amendment that is not subject to the Forest Conservation Law from the public hearing process.

The original February 26, 2009 Planning Board hearing to amend conservation easements was in accordance with the Forest Conservation Regulations. The Regulations require Planning Board action on certain types of modifications to an approved forest conservation plan. Section 113.A(2) of the Forest Conservation Regulation states:

² The \$221,110.56 fee-in-lieu represents the total fee due for removal of all conservation easements within the ICC ROW on three properties west of Georgia Avenue. The fee-in-lieu due for the Mill Creek South subdivision is \$5,096.52.

"Major amendments which entail more than a total of 5,000 square feet of additional forest clearing must be approved by the Planning Board or Planning Directory (depending on who approved the original plan). Notice of each major plan amendment must be given to adjacent property owners as part of the Planning Board or Planning Directory approval processes."

PROPOSED PRELIMINARY PLAN CHANGES

SHA proposes to remove 0.064 acre of the conservation easement that now lies in the ICC Right-of-Way, located on the western cul-de-sac of Briardale Road, in the Shady Grove Sector Plan area. The amendment is subject to conditions approved for the replacement of conservation easements impacted by the ICC. The conservation easement areas that will be removed are shown in Attachment 2.

Based on the Resolution of Conservation Easements within ICC Limits of Disturbance between SHA and M-NCPPC, dated July 31, 2008 and amended November 10, 2008, the conservation easements are proposed to be mitigated as follows:

1 acre of replacement forest per acre of conservation easement removed -- if replaced with existing forest onsite

2 acres of replacement forest per acre of conservation easement removed -- if replaced with existing forest offsite or with newly planted forest

To mitigate for the loss of 0.064 acres, SHA proposes to pay a fee-in-lieu, as may be provided in cash, and/or by transfer of assets found to be of comparable value to M-NCPPC, to allow the M-NCPPC Department of Parks to plant and maintain 0.13 acres of forest on parkland located in the Potomac River watershed. This amount of forest planting is twice as much as the total amount of conservation easement areas that will be lost.

REVIEW ISSUES

Community Notification

For the February 26, 2009 public hearing staff mailed notifications on Friday, February 13, 2009, of the proposed amendments to property owners within the subdivisions where conservation easement amendments were proposed, as well as to property owners adjoining these affected subdivisions. Following the hearing, and before the Resolution had been adopted, staff realized that the noticing for the public hearing had inadvertently excluded eight residents of the Mill Creek South subdivision. The notice was defective as it did not include all interested parties for the Mill Creek South subdivision.

Staff requested reconsideration for the Limited Preliminary Plan Amendment for Mill Creek South to allow public testimony from the Mill Creek South residents. The Planning Board granted the reconsideration on June 18, 2009. Staff mailed notifications on Friday, June 19, 2009 of the proposed amendment to the Mill Creek South conservation easement to property owners within and adjoining the Mill Creek South subdivision and to all the parties originally notified of the February 26, 2009 public hearing.

Staff Analysis/Position

SHA's proposed mitigation acreage is consistent with the SHA and M-NCPPC Resolution of Conservation Easements within ICC Limits of Disturbance between SHA and M-NCPPC, dated July 31, 2008 and amended November 10, 2008. To mitigate for the loss of .064 acres of conservation easement in the Mill Creek South subdivision, staff supports the payment of a fee-in-lieu. Parks staff has indicated that they can plant 0.13 acres of forest within parkland in the Potomac River watershed.

Staff finds that SHA's proposal, with staff's recommended conditions, will result in the creation of planted forest that exceeds the amount of conservation easement area that will be removed and that are consistent with the SHA and M-NCPPC Resolution of Conservation Easements.



MCPB Item # 8 2/26/09

MEMORANDUM

Date:

February 13, 2009

TO:

Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA:

Mark Pfefferle, Acting Chief

Stephen D. Federline, Master Planner

Environmental Planning Division

FROM:

Andrea Stone, Senior Planner

Candy Bunnag, Planner Coordinator 3

Environmental Planning Division

REVIEW TYPE:

Forest Conservation Plan Amendments

APPLYING FOR:

Amendments to Forest Conservation Plans (FCP) and limited Preliminary Plan

Amendments to modify approved Forest Conservation Plans and/or

Conservation Easements. Proposal to remove conservation easements and replace offsite, or pay county fee-in-lieu to address SHA Intercounty

Connector (ICC) Plans

PLAN NAMES AND PLAN

NUMBERS:

Mill Creek South, #11991069A; Woodlawn/Rock Creek Ridge, #12005038A;

Small's Nursery, #11994011A; Golden Bear Golf Center, #11997003A;

Washington Christian Academy, #12004055A; Willson Property,

#11996077A; Cross Creek Club, #11998048B; Graystone Property (Neuberg Property), offsite forest retention site for Kaufman Property, #119980960; Vihara Property, offsite forest retention site for Kaufman Property,

#119980960

REVIEW BASIS:

Forest Conservation Regulations, Section 113.A.(2), Regulation No. 1-01AM

(COMCOR) 18-01AM

LOCATIONS:

At various locations adjacent to the ICC Right-of-Way (see Attachment 1)

APPLICANT:

State Highway Administration (SHA)

ENGINEER:

Melinda B. Peters

Director, Office of the Intercounty Connector

State Highway Administration

HEARING DATE: February 26, 2009

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Staff recommendations are presented in two groups based on the watershed in which the affected sites are located. Sites to the west of Georgia Avenue lie within the Potomac River watershed (e.g., Rock Creek). Those to the east of Georgia Avenue lie within the Anacostia River watershed (e.g., Northwest Branch, Paint Branch, Little Paint Branch).

- 1. Approval of the following plans located to the west of Georgia Avenue:
 - Limited Preliminary Plan Amendment for:

#19991069A (Mill Creek South)

 Forest Conservation Plan and Limited Preliminary Plan Amendments for: #12005038A (Woodlawn/Rock Creek Ridge) and #11994011A (Small's Nursery)

subject to the following conditions:

- a. SHA to pay a fee-in-lieu amount of \$221,110.56, as may be provided in cash, and/or by transfer of assets found to be of comparable value to M-NCPPC, to allow the M-NCPPC Department of Parks to plant and maintain 5.64 acres of forest on parkland located in the Potomac River watershed. Payment to be made no later than June 30, 2009.
- b. Amended conservation easements for affected properties to be shown on the land records for the affected properties. SHA to submit all documents related to the amended conservation easements no later than June 30, 2009 for staff review and approval prior to recording these documents in the land records.
- 2. Approval of the following plans located to the east of Georgia Avenue:
 - Forest Conservation Plan Amendment for:
 - * 1998096A (Kaufman Property)
 - Forest Conservation Plan and Limited Preliminary Plan Amendments for:
 - * 11997003A (Golden Bear Golf Course Center)
 - * 12004055A (Washington Christian Academy)
 - * 11996077A (Willson Property)
 - * 11998048B (Cross Creek Club)

subject to the following conditions:

- a. SHA to place a Category I conservation easement in a form approved by M-NCPPC for 1.87 acres of existing forest on Parcel 36, Plat Number 17473, Reservation Plat of Land for Public Use, Intercounty Connector, adjacent to Briggs Chaney Road and ICC interchange, and 5.39 acres of existing forest on Cross Creek Property, Map KR61 Parcel P326.
- b. Category I conservation easements in a form approved by the M-NCPPC on Parcel 36, Plat Number 17473, Reservation Plat of Land for Public Use, Intercounty Connector, adjacent to Briggs Chaney Road and ICC interchange and Cross Creek Property, Map KR61 Parcel P326 and amended conservation easements for affected properties to be shown on the land records for the affected properties. SHA to submit all documents

related to these conservation easements no later than June 30, 2009 for staff review and approval prior to recording these documents in the land records.

BACKGROUND

There are nine sites adjacent to the ICC ROW which have conservation easements displaced by construction of the ICC. These platted properties had existing conservation easements recorded in the county land records prior to SHA obtaining portions of these properties for the ICC ROW.

Six of these sites have conservation easements that were created to meet approved Forest Conservation Plan requirements. One site is a subdivision (Mill Creek South, #19991069A) approved prior to the adoption of the County Forest Conservation Law, which includes a conservation easement created to protect a forested environmental buffer area. The remaining two sites (Graystone Property and Vihara Property) have conservation easements that were created to protect offsite forest retention areas in the same watershed as required per condition of approval of a subdivision.

The locations of these nine sites are shown in Attachment 1.

PLANNING BOARD REVIEW AUTHORITY

The Forest Conservation Regulations require Planning Board action on certain types of modifications to an approved forest conservation plan. Section 113.A(2) of the Forest Conservation Regulation states:

"Major amendments which entail more than a total of 5000 square feet of additional forest clearing must be approved by the Planning Board or Planning Directory (depending on who approved the original plan). Notice of each major plan amendment must be given to adjacent property owners as part of the Planning Board or Planning Directory approval processes."

Each of these amendments proposes more than 5,000 square feet of additional forest removal when compared to the originally approved plan. These amendments therefore qualify as major amendments. Since each of these forest conservation plans was approved as part of a preliminary subdivision plan, the Planning Board must also review and act on the preliminary plan amendment.

PROPOSED FOREST CONSERVATION AND PRELIMINARY PLAN CHANGES

SHA proposes to remove and amend conservation easements on a total of 9 sites. Staff has grouped them according to the watershed they lie in: there are 3 sites within the Potomac River watershed (west of Georgia Avenue) and 6 sites (east of Georgia Avenue) within the Anacostia River watershed. Staff finds that the loss of the specific conservation easement areas within each of these sites is unavoidable and necessary since the ICC ROW overlaps on these areas. Staff recommends, and SHA agrees, that the mitigation should occur in the same watershed as the easements that will be removed.

Based on the Resolution of Conservation Easements within ICC Limits of Disturbance between SHA and M-NCPPC, dated July 31, 2008 and amended November 10, 2008, the conservation easements are proposed to be mitigated as follows:

1 acre of replacement forest per acre of conservation easement removed -- if replaced with existing forest onsite

2 acres of replacement forest
per acre of conservation easement removed -- if replaced with existing forest offsite or with
newly planted forest

Potomac River Watershed

There are three sites that lie west of Georgia Avenue, within the Potomac River watershed. A total of 52.8 acres of forested conservation easements lie on these sites. SHA proposes to remove 2.82 acres of conservation easements because they lie within the ICC ROW. A total of 49.98 acres of conservation easements will remain on the original sites. To mitigate for the loss, SHA proposes to pay a fee-in-lieu of \$221,110.56, as may be provided in cash, and/or by transfer of assets found to be of comparable value to M-NCPPC, to allow the M-NCPPC Department of Parks to plant and maintain 5.64 acres of forest on parkland located in the Potomac River watershed. This amount of forest planting is twice as much as the total amount of conservation easement areas that will be lost on sites lying within the Potomac River watershed.

Anacostia River Watershed

Within the Anacostia River watershed, there are six sites with a total of 53.3 acres of forested conservation easements. SHA proposes to remove 4.69 acres of conservation easements. A total of 48.7 acres of conservation easements will remain on the original sites.

SHA proposes to mitigate the loss of conservation easements on two separate properties that SHA owns: SHA proposes to protect 5.39 acres of existing upland forest on Cross Creek Property, Map KR61 Parcel P326 and 1.87 acres of upland forest on Parcel 36, Plat Number 17473, Reservation Plat of Land for Public Use, Intercounty Connector (see Attachment 2).

On Parcel 36, Plat Number 17473, Reservation Plat of Land for Public Use, Intercounty Connector, adjacent to Briggs Chaney Road and ICC interchange, SHA will also be protecting 3.80 acres of contiguous forest to help meet Maryland Department of Natural Resources requirements for State forest conservation requirements for the ICC. This protected forest is adjacent to the upland forest that is proposed to mitigate the loss of conservation easements. The site adjoins M-NCPPC Tanglewood Neighborhood Park to the west of the stream (Attachment 3).

On Cross Creek Property, Map KR61 Parcel P326, the proposed mitigation area is an existing forested area adjacent to the remaining conservation easement that will be reduced in size.

List of Preliminary Plans and Forest Conservation Plans Proposed for Amendments by State Highway Administration for the Intercounty Connector Project. The amended plans are included in Attachment 4, with page number referenced in the table.

Name of Plan	Plan File No.	Location	Master Plan	Amendi	Amendment to:		Category I Conservation Easements	nservation ents
			Area	Forest Conservation Plan	Preliminary Plan	Total in Plan	Proposed for Removal by SHA	Proposed Mitigation by SHA
Plans in P	Plans in Potomac River Wat	r Watershed:						
Mill Creek	11991069A	Mill Creek	Shady		``	1 350	0.064 20	Loo in lien
South (Attachment 5,		South, Briardale	Grove		•	1.340.	0.004 ac.	for 0.13 ac.
pg. 12)		Rd., 1500ft.	Plan					
		northwest of						
		Shady Grove Rd.						
Woodlawn/Rock	12005038A		Upper					
Creek Ridge		and	Rock	>	>	3.66 ac.	2.50 ac.	Fee-in-lien
(pg. 13)		southeast	Creek					for 5.00 ac.
		sides of	Master					
	-	Needwood	Plan					
		Rd., 600 ft.						
		southwest of				·		
		Muncaster						
Small's Mireery	11994011A		Olnev					
(ng 15)			Master	>	>	47.89 ac.	0.255 ac.	Fee-in-lien
(VB: 12)		intersection	Plan			<u>}</u>		for 0.51 ac.
	·	of Georgia						
		Ave. and						
		Norbeck Rd.						

Plans in A	nacostia Rive	Plans in Anacostia River Watershed:						
Golden Bear Golf Course Center (pg. 16)	11997003A	Northeast quadrant of intersection of Georgia Ave. and	Olney Master Plan	`	>	4.19 ac.	0.63 ac.	1.26 ac. existing upland, offsite forest
Washington Christian Academy (pg. 17)	12004055A	Norbeck Rd. Batchellors Forest Rd., 1300 ft. east of Georgia	Olney Master Plan	>	`	25.99	0.21 ac.	0.42 ac. existing upland offsite forest
Willson Property (pg. 20)	11996077A	Layhill Rd., 1400 ft. north of Longmead Rd.	Aspen Hill Master Plan	>	>	0.51 ac.	0.51 ac.	1.02 ac. existing upland offsite forest
Cross Creek Club (pg. 21)	11998048B	Briggs Chaney Rd., north of Fairland Rd.	Fairland Master Plan	>	`	19.95 ac.	0.07 ac. on parkland + 2.04 ac. onsite	0.14 ac. existing upland offsite forest + 2.04 ac.
								existing upland onsite forest = 2.18 ac. upland forest

Plans in A	nacostia Rive	Plans in Anacostia River Watershed:						
Graystone Property (Neuberg Property) (pg. 23)	Offsite for site for Kaufman Property,	Western end Fairland of Master Countryside Plan Dr., south of Briggs Chaney Rd.	Fairland Master Plan	>	>	1.20 ac.	1.20 ac.	2.40 ac. existing upland offsite forest
Vihara Property (pg. 24)	Offsite for site for Kaufman Property, 119980960	South of Briggs Chaney Rd., west of Wildwood Dr.	Fairland Master Plan	>	•	1.5 ac.	0.025 ac.	0.05 ac. existing upland offsite forest

REVIEW ISSUES

Community Notification

On Friday, February 13, 2009, staff mailed notifications of the proposed amendments to property owners within the subdivisions with proposed amendments to conservation easements and property owners adjoining these affected subdivisions.

Staff Analysis/Position

SHA's proposed mitigation acreages for each of the group of sites within the Potomac River and the Anacostia River watersheds are consistent with the SHA and M-NCPPC MOU (July 31, 2008, amended November 10, 2008).

To mitigate for the loss of 2.82 acres of conservation easements on sites within the Potomac River watershed, staff supports the payment of a fee-in-lieu and recommends that SHA pay a fee-in-lieu of \$221,100.56. This amount is based on 90 cents per square foot of forest planting, which is the county fee-in-lieu rate. Parks staff have indicated that they can plant 5.64 acres of forest within parkland in the Potomac River watershed.

On the two proposed mitigation sites within the Anacostia River watershed, the forest stands that will be protected are upland stands that would not normally be preserved in the County's regulatory process if these sites were developed. In addition, the two forest stands are adjacent to either an existing conservation easement area or a proposed forested conservation area that SHA proposes to create to meet Maryland DNR forest conservation requirements.

Staff finds that SHA's proposal, with staff's recommended conditions, will result in the protection of existing forest and creation of planted forest that exceed the amount of conservation easements areas that will be removed and that are consistent with the SHA and M-NCPPC MOU.

S:\Documents, Data, & Inspection Forms\Forest Conservation Easements\Staff Report 20090213.doc

Attachment 1

































