



MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 30, 2010

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Mary Bradford, Director of Parks *M Bradford*
 Mike Riley, Deputy Director of Parks *M Riley*
 John E. Hench, Ph.D., Chief, Park Planning and Stewardship Division *J Hench*
 Doug Redmond, Natural Resources Manager, Park Planning and Stewardship Division *D Redmond*

FROM: Jai Cole, Principal Natural Resources Specialist, Park Planning and Stewardship Division *Jai Cole*

PROJECT: ICC Environmental Stewardship-Compensatory Mitigation Projects PB-114A and PB114/115

REVIEW TYPE: Mandatory Referral No. 10001-SHA-1: ICC Environmental Stewardship

APPLICANT: Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA)

APPLYING FOR: Plan Approval

RECOMMENDATION: Approve the construction of two Upper Paint Branch Special Protection Area (SPA) Best Management Practice (BMP) Environmental Stewardship projects; one is a new stormwater management pond (PB-114A) located within the Peachwood Neighborhood Park and the other (PB-114/115) is a series of biotrench facilities in Department of Transportation (DOT) Right of Way (ROW)

Background

As a part of the ICC Environmental Stewardship and Compensatory Mitigation Program, the State Highway Administration (SHA) is completing a number of stream restoration, wetland creation, and stormwater management projects throughout Montgomery County. Many of these projects focus on the Upper Paint Branch SPA due to the impact of the ICC on this watershed's high water quality and unique self-sustaining brown trout population. The project PB-114A is the construction of a new stormwater management pond in Peachwood Neighborhood Park and PB-114/115 are biotrenches to be built within the Department of Transportation (DOT) Right-of-Way (ROW).

PB-114A

PB-114A will be located approximately one mile upstream of the primary spawning grounds of the Upper Paint Branch's brown trout population (Figure 1.). The surrounding neighborhood was built prior to the adoption of requirements for stormwater management controls and is the only portion of the

Figure 1 – Peachwood Park & Primary Trout Spawning Grounds

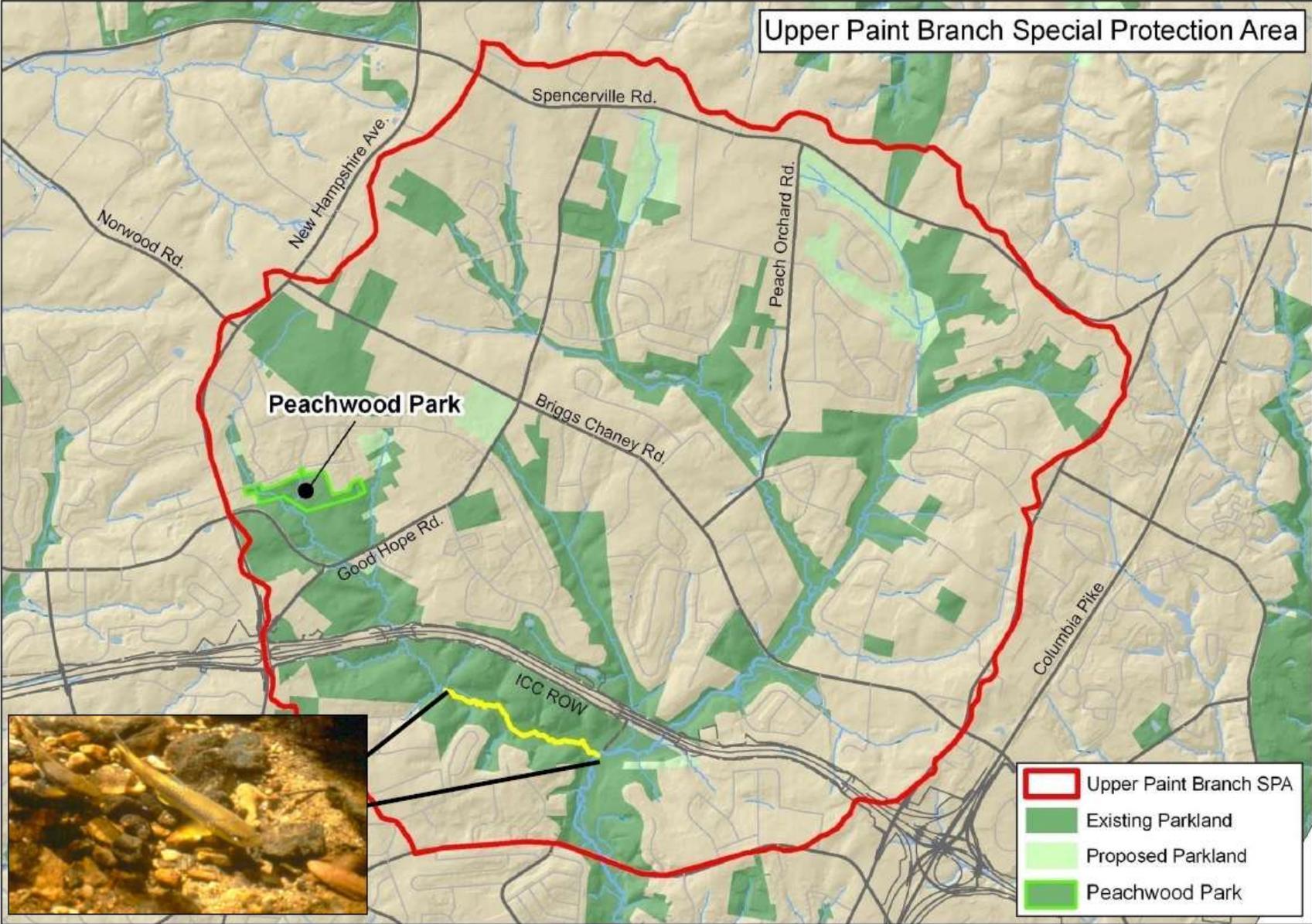


Figure 2 – Good Hope Subwatershed Stormwater Management Treatment Status



Good Hope headwaters that is not served by a stormwater facility (figure 2.). This lack of treatment allows for frequent stormwater discharges into the Good Hope Tributary which greatly contribute to stream channel erosion, increased sedimentation, reduction of both fish and benthic macroinvertebrate habitat, increase in water temperature and an overall reduction in water quality. The stormwater management pond will intercept untreated runoff from the upstream community, provide channel protection quantity management for more frequently occurring storm events, and reduce runoff to the Good Hope tributary of Paint Branch.

Peachwood Neighborhood Park

Peachwood Neighborhood Park is 19.8 acres and is located north of Good Hope Rd. and just south of Piping Rock Dr. in Cloverly, Maryland. The park amenities include two tennis courts, a handball court, a playground, a picnic shelter and two basketball courts. Currently, the park is 5.8% impervious.

The recreational amenities at Peachwood Park are surrounded by high quality forest (Figure 3.). In order to place a stormwater management facility at this location without significantly impacting the forest, a reconfiguration of the Park is necessary. Before doing any design work, the Department of Parks conducted a park user survey (appendix 1.) to determine what amenities Park users valued and what they felt the park lacked. A total of 479 mailers were sent to the surrounding communities (Figure 4.). Out of the 479 mailers, 135 surveys were received by the Department of Parks for a return rate of 28% (The full results of this survey as well as a sample survey can be found in appendix 2).

Design

Using those data, SHA designed three concepts for the park and stormwater management facility. Concept 1 (appendix 3.) involves the removal of the two basketball courts and a large amount of the existing parking lot and replacing it with the stormwater management facility. One of the basketball courts would be re-built where the current handball court is located and an additional 6 parking spaces would be built along the entrance road. Concept 2 (appendix 4.) involves reducing the size of the stormwater management pond, removing one of the basketball courts and a significant amount of the parking lot, leaving one of the basketball courts at its current location and building 6 additional parking spaces along the entrance road. Concept 3 (appendix 5.) involves removing the existing basketball courts and a portion of the parking lot, adding 6 parking spaces along the access road and re-building a basketball court adjacent to the parking area. The community voiced their opinion about having the basketball courts separated from the tennis and playground. They also voiced their concerns about safety issues surrounding the location of the basketball courts and suggested that they be moved to a location that allows for easier patrolling by Park Police. Because of these views, both the community and Parks staff preferred Concept 3.

Although the community did prefer Concept 3, they also voiced their desire for other upgrades to the park in mitigation for the loss of a basketball court. The amenities requested were summarized in a May 31, 2010 letter from the Peachwood Neighborhood Civic Association (appendix 6) and included: additional playground equipment, repaving the existing tennis court, removal of exercise equipment along the existing trail, removal and/or repurposing of the handball court; buffering the basketball court and new parking area; planting shade trees around the playground area; and putting a fence around the new pond. Because PB-114A is included in the ICC ROD, the project cost and scope has to be directly associated with the building of the stormwater management pond. Because Concept 3 does not affect the park west of the stream, SHA will not be including additional park improvements into this project.

Figure 3 – Peachwood Park Amenities & High Quality Forests



Streams & Outlines

Type

-  Stream/Lake Outline
-  Hidden Hydrologic Feature
-  Water Areas

Parkland

Status & Owner

-  Proposed M-NCPPC
-  Existing M-NCPPC
-  Existing Non-M-NCPPC

1 inch = 250 feet



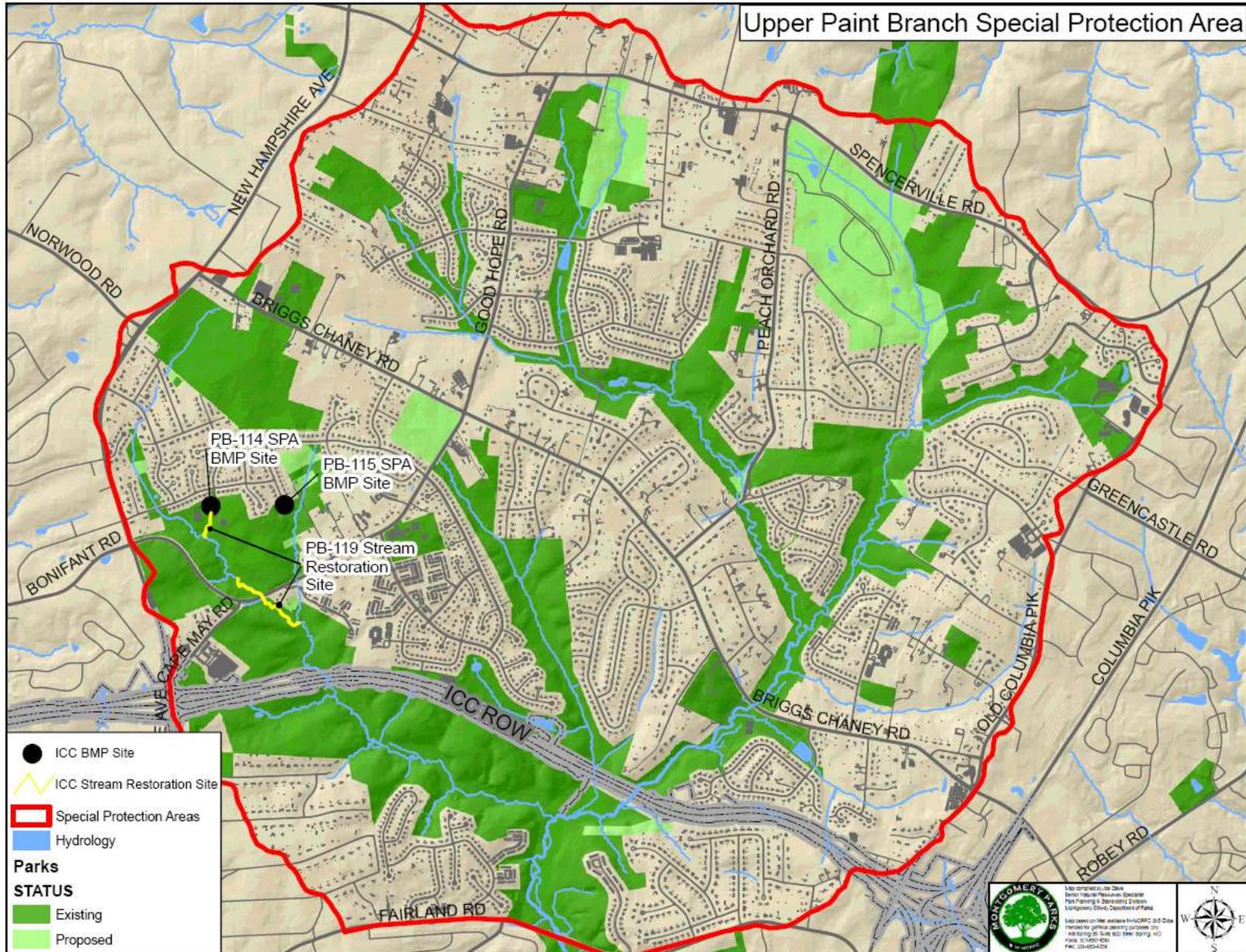
Montgomery Parks
 Senior Natural Resources Specialist
 Park Planning & Stewardship Division
 Montgomery County, Department of Parks
 10000 Old Orchard Road, Suite 300
 Silver Spring, MD 20901
 Phone: 301-455-4200
 Fax: 301-455-4209



Figure 4 –Peachwood Park User Survey Distribution Limits



Figure 5 – PB-114/115 & PB-119



The Department of Parks recognizes that despite the fact that the control of stormwater runoff to the Good Hope tributary of the Upper Paint Branch is a benefit to our parks, the community does not equate the benefits of the new pond to their loss of a basketball court. Although SHA is not prepared to pay for additional projects in this park, the Department of Parks is committed to undertake some additional improvements. We are including the re-paving of the tennis courts and possibly the handball court in our FY12 CIP, and the park manager will be including the removal of the exercise equipment along the trail in his 2011 work program. Staff has committed to study ways to repurpose and/or re-stripe the existing handball court although its removal altogether is unlikely due to budgetary constraints. The current playground is only 6 years old and is not up for replacement in our CIP. For this reason, no changes to the playground will be made by Parks. It is important to note that the work the Department of Parks is prepared to undertake will not be done at the same time as the work done by SHA.

PB-114/115

The complete 'treatment train' that will help increase the health of the headwaters of the Good Hope tributary will consist not only of the new stormwater management pond at Peachwood Neighborhood Park, but also of: PB-114/115, located along Piping Rock Drive, Peachwood Dr., Harvest Lane, Windmill Lane and Mistletoe Court – all within DOT ROW (Figure 5.); and PB-119, a stream restoration project within Peachwood park that will be coming for mandatory referral at a later date (Figure 5.). PB-114/115 involves providing biotrench facilities in existing roadside ditches. Biotrenches are essentially in-line bioretention facilities consisting of an excavated trench approximately four to six feet in depth, filled with specific gradations of stone. The surface of the biotrench is covered with a specific soil mix and planted with turf grass/sod for the final stabilization. Because of the turf grass/sod stabilization, the biotrench will look almost exactly like the currently existing ditches after construction.

Wetland and Stream Impacts

No jurisdictional wetlands are present at either PB-114A or PB-114/115; therefore, no impacts are anticipated. However, PB-114A will result in approximately 73 linear feet of temporary stream impacts. The temporary impacts will be the result of outfall construction and erosion and sediment control protection measures.

Maryland Historical Trust

Cultural or Historic Architectural Resources: The completed ICC Cultural Resource Studies have not identified any historic properties within the general vicinity of the projects. Coordination with MHT is ongoing.

Natural Resource Inventory and Forest Stand Delineation (NRI/FSD)

No forest stands exist within the project areas, therefore no impacts are anticipated as a result of this contract. An exemption of the Forest Conservation Act will be coordinated with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources as required in accordance with the Forest Conservation Act. Strategies for protecting individual trees will be included in the design plans including root pruning, avoidance of critical root zones, and tree protection fencing.

Air and Noise

As proposed, the projects are not expected to have any significant affect on traffic within the adjacent communities. Therefore, an environmental traffic noise analysis and assessment was not conducted. The construction phase of the project has the potential to temporarily affect the local ambient air quality by generating dust through activities such as vehicle traffic, excavation, and materials handling. SHA has addressed this possibility by establishing “*Standard Specifications for Construction and Materials*” that specifies procedures to be followed by contractors involved in site work.

Traffic Control

SHA will coordinate with the appropriate staff of the Montgomery County Department of Transportation for construction access and materials transport.

Public Meetings

For the PB-114A Peachwood Park project, a meeting was held with the community on May 11, 2010 to discuss proposed changes to the Park and background information on the stormwater management needs. Another meeting was held May 25, 2010 to provide the community an opportunity to review and comment on plans for both PB-114A and PB-114/115. Representatives from the neighborhood were in attendance.

Funding

The proposed environmental stewardship and Compensatory Mitigation projects are being funded by the Maryland State Highway Administration.

Implementation

Construction is expected to begin May 2011 following the award of the contract under the normal SHA bid process normally used for similar environmental contracts.

Maintenance

Once completed, aesthetic and everyday maintenance (e.g. regular mowing, trash cleanup, etc.) of PB-114A will be done by Parks while structural maintenance will be done by the Department of Environmental Protection. PB-114/115 is located within Montgomery County DOT ROW and will be maintained by Montgomery County DEP once the project has been completed.

Appendix 1 – Peachwood Park User Survey



Peachwood Neighborhood Park Improvement Survey

Peachwood Neighborhood Park is scheduled to undergo major changes that will benefit the local environment as well as improve the recreational facilities of the park. Please complete this survey so we may have a better understanding of how your community uses the park.

1. Approximately how many times in the last 12 months have you or members of your household used the following amenities at the Peachwood Neighborhood Park? - Check all that apply.

	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Several Times a Year	Never	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important
Natural Areas – Woods, Streams, Trails	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3				
Basketball Courts	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3				
Tennis Courts	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3				
Handball Court	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3				
Playground	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3				
Picnic Tables Near Basketball Courts	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3				
Picnic Shelter Near Playground	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3				
Natural Surface Trail Exercise Loop	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3				
Parking Lot	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3				

2. Please rank the importance of these amenities

3. When do you visit this park?

	Weekdays	Weekends
Before 9am	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9am – 3pm	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3pm – 6pm	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6pm - dusk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. How do you currently get to the park?

- Walking
- Riding on bike
- Public transportation
- Driving

6. How would you prefer to get to the park?

- Walking
- Riding on bike
- Public transportation
- Driving

4. In general, who in your household utilizes park facilities?

- Children
- Young adults
- Pre-teens (10-12 yrs)
- Adults
- Teens
- Seniors (60+)
- None

7. If you do not use Peachwood Neighborhood Park, why not? Check all that apply.

- Not aware of the park or facilities offered
- Park does not have what I want
- Lack of transportation
- No time
- Lack of amenities
- Safety Concern
- Location of facilities is not convenient
- Limited hours of operation – dawn to dusk
- ADA accessibility

Interested in being a part of the Planning Committee for Peachwood Park Improvements? Please provide your contact information below.

NAME:

EMAIL:

PHONE:

Other:

8. Overall, how well do the current amenities meet your needs?	N/A	Not at all	Somewhat	Completely
Natural Areas – Woods, Streams, Trails	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Basketball Courts	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Tennis Courts	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Handball Court	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Playground	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Picnic Tables Near Basketball Courts	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Picnic Shelter Near Playground	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Natural Surface Trail Exercise Loop	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3
Parking Lot	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3

If you indicated "Not at all" or "Somewhat" for any item above please share your comments or suggestions for improvements:

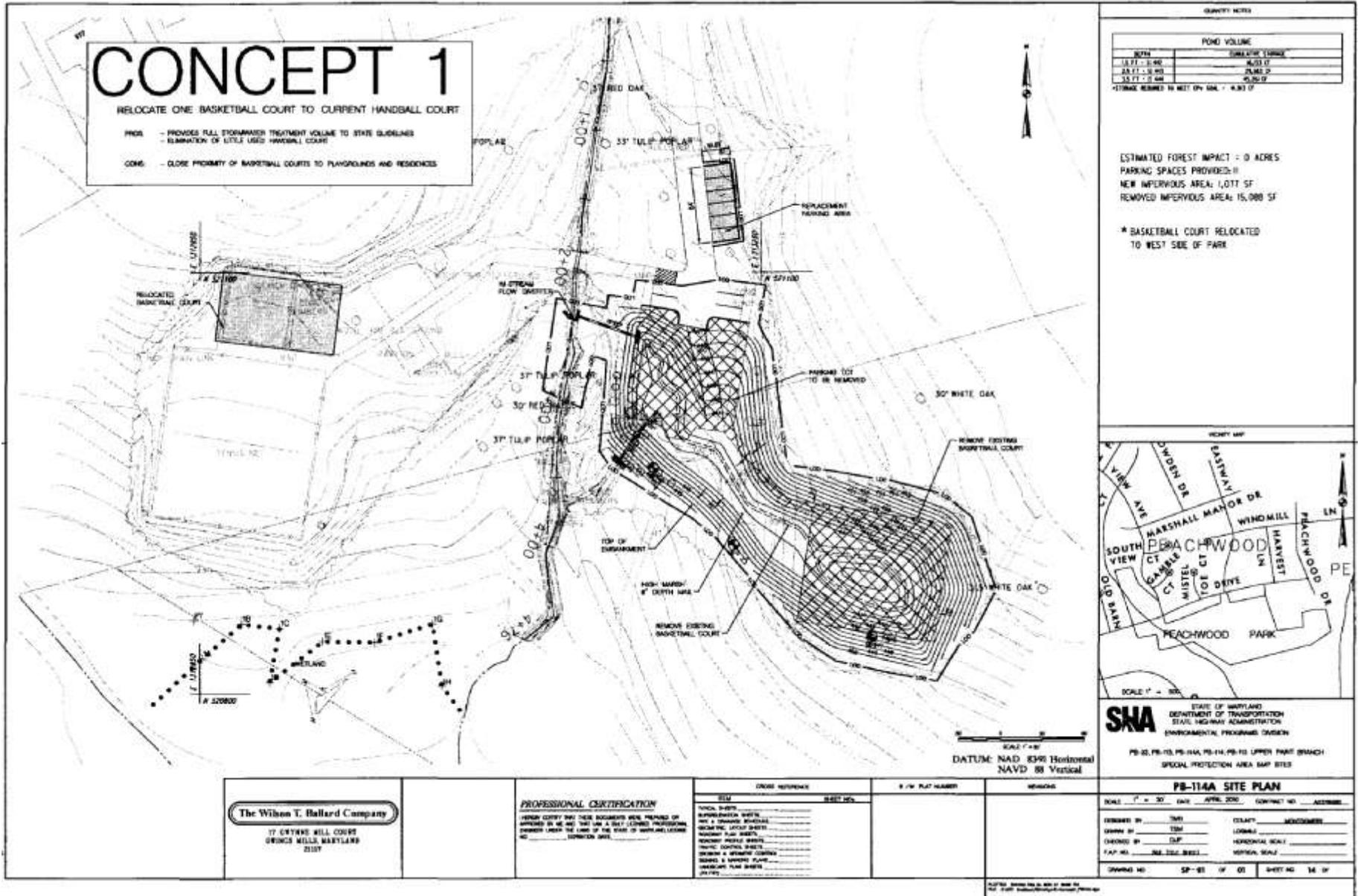
9. How important are the following Trail and Natural area items for possible improvement?	Not important	Somewhat important	Very important
Improve trail connections	1	2	3
Improve trail maintenance	1	2	3
Build more trails	1	2	3
Provide parking at trail heads	1	2	3
Provide trail amenities (benches, trash container, signage, etc.)	1	2	3
Preserve Wildlife habitat	1	2	3
Create wildlife viewing opportunities	1	2	3
Minimize impact of impervious areas (asphalt)	1	2	3
Provide access to natural areas	1	2	3
Protect rivers, creeks and wetlands	1	2	3
Create buffers between adjacent communities	1	2	3

We welcome your ideas and suggestions:

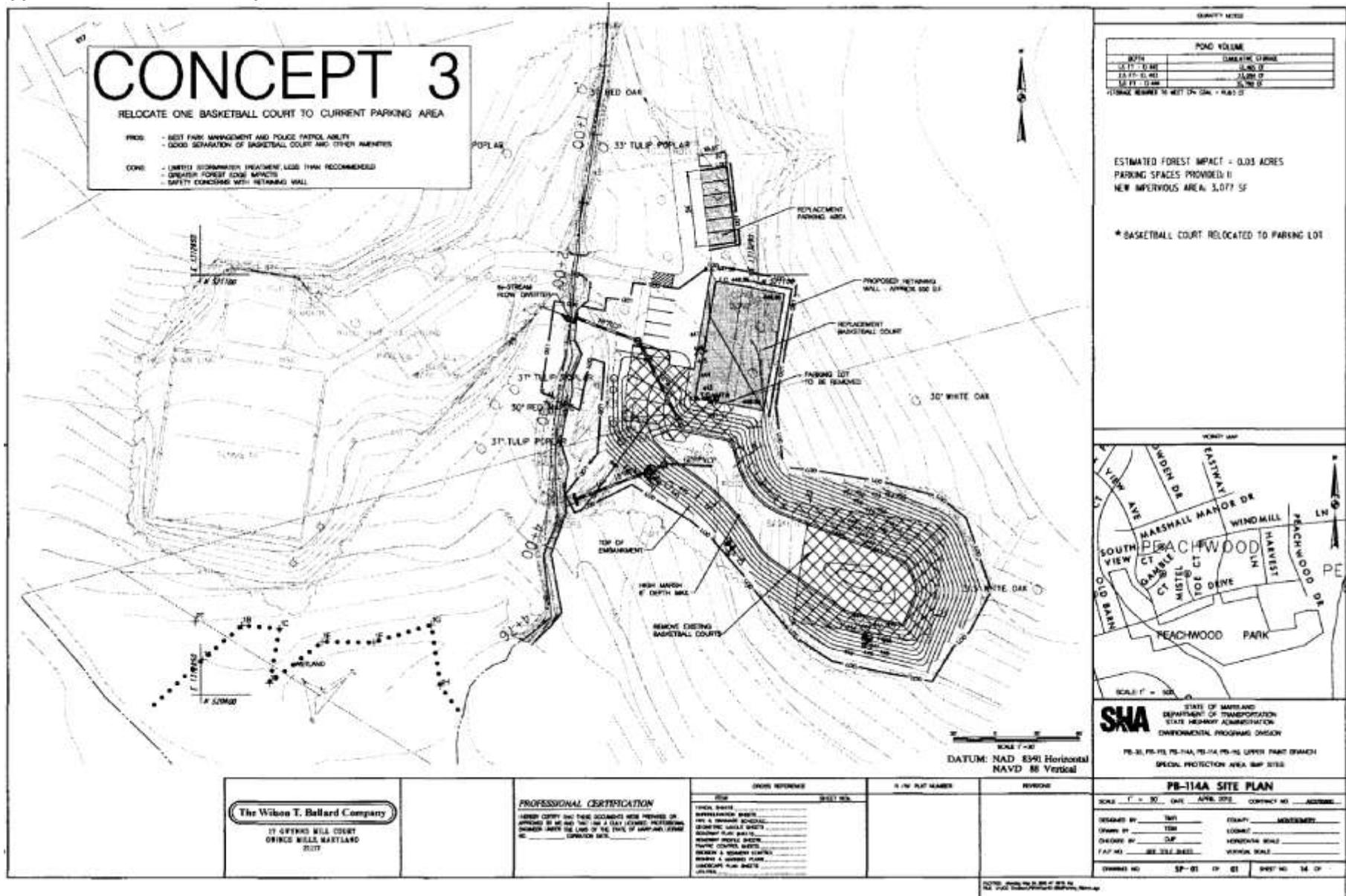
Thank you for participating in this survey. Your input is very important in the planning and future of Peachwood Neighborhood Park. Please return this survey by March 17, 2010 to:

Montgomery County Department of Parks
 Att: Karl Heilmann, Peachwood Project Coordinator
 1109 Spring Street, Suite 800, Silver Spring MD, 20910

Appendix 3 – PB-114A Concept 1



Appendix 5 – PB-114A Concept 3



Appendix 6 – Letter to SHA from Peachwood Civic Association

**PEACHWOOD CIVIC ASSOCIATION
Silver Spring, MD**

May 31, 2010

Mr. John Sales
Office of the Intercounty Connector
Maryland State Highway Administration
11710 Beltsville Drive, Suite 200
Beltsville, MD 20705

Re: Project PB-114A (Peachwood Park)

Dear Mr. Sales:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the alternative plans for the construction of a storm water management drainage pond in Peachwood Park (Project PB-114A) on May 25, at Briggs Chaney Middle School. Residents of the Peachwood and Peachwood Estates communities, including members of the Peachwood Park Committee, were able to discuss the alternatives with both SHA and M-NCPPC representatives and a Park Police Officer, and then the Committee members were able to discuss which alternative would be the best and most acceptable both for our community and for the State interest in storm water management.

Please be advised that we prefer Alternative Plan 3 in which one basketball court would be relocated directly adjacent to and on the east side of the modified park parking lot. This alternative was favored because it comes closest to the requirements set forth in my e-mail to Karl Hellmann of M-NCPPC on May 12th which I understand he forwarded to SHA prior to the May 25th meeting to aid in the development of the alternative plans. Specifically, Alternative Plan 3 is favored because it separates the teens and adults playing basketball from the younger children using the park playground area as well as from the people using the tennis courts; it provides the Park Police with a clear sightline onto the court for safety checks, and it allows us to retain the handball court (next to the tennis courts and the playground area) to convert it into a multi-purpose play area for our children (per our discussions with the M-NCPPC representatives).

A disadvantage of Alternative Plan 3 is that the drainage pond would be somewhat smaller than in Alternative Plan 1. However, it is somewhat larger than in Alternative Plan 2, and the SHA representative indicated that although not optimal, the Alternative Plan 3 drainage pond will be adequate for storm water management purposes. Another disadvantage is that the relocated basketball court will be closer to the homes on Piping Rock Drive. However, the M-NCPPC representatives indicated that additional landscape buffering could be installed to minimize the noise impact on the Piping Rock Drive homeowners. Finally, although 0.03 acres of tree area would be disturbed under Alternative Plan 3, this is negligible compared to the tree loss caused by construction of the ICC. M-NCPPC representatives stated that transplantation of trees in the park is possible. The SHA representative also confirmed that the gradual slope of the pond will support transplanted trees. Furthermore, trees could be transplanted around the children's playground area to provide shade for the children and their parents, thereby minimizing even more tree loss.

As you can see, Alternative Plan 3 represents a good compromise between what the community wants in its park and what the SHA needs to do about storm water management. The advantages are substantial with relatively minimal disadvantages. Accordingly, we reject Alternative Plans 1 and 2 which in comparison to Alternative Plan 3 have substantial disadvantages with relatively minimal advantages. Your confirmation that Alternative Plan 3 will be the selected re-development plan for Peachwood Park will be appreciated.

As quid pro quo for the loss of park area and one of our basketball courts, the Peachwood Park Committee, on behalf of the Peachwood and Peachwood Estates communities, per our discussions with the SHA and M-NCPPC representatives, requests that SHA and M-NCPPC will do the following in the Peachwood Park area:

- Remove the exercise equipment installed along the walking trail in the park and enhance or improve the trail to ensure comfortable use by our people. The trail should remain as far away from Harvest Lane as possible. If any new trails could be added, we will work with M-NCPPC on this.
- Refurbish the tennis courts. The surface is cracked and deteriorating.
- Buffer the basketball court and the new parking area to the fullest extent possible with landscaping. Would a low fence around the basketball court be needed to keep the ball from going onto the parking lot or into the adjacent treed area or the drainage pond? Also, sufficient curbing or landscaping in addition to fencing may be necessary to keep the car thieves from driving stolen cars onto the basketball court to strip them (this has happened several times during the past year on the current basketball court).
- Provide (transplanted) shade trees around the playground area.
- Add “monkey bars” or some other suitable playground equipment for the older children (we will work with the M-NCPPC on this).
- Refurbish the handball court and turn it into a multi-use play area for children of all ages. This would include: removing the fence and possibly installing a children’s rock climbing wall against the concrete wall and striping the pavement for games such as “4 square” and “hopscotch” (we will work with the M-NCPPC on this).
- Protect our children from the drainage pond by appropriate fencing or other protection.

We very much appreciate the consideration shown to us by SHA and M-NCPPC and the extent to which our input has been considered in the development of this storm water management project in Peachwood Park. We look forward to continuing to work closely with the SHA and M-NCPPC representatives as this project moves from the planning stage to the construction stage and beyond.

Very truly yours,

Richard V. Meyers
President
Peachwood Civic Association on behalf of the Peachwood Park Committee
14809 Peachwood Drive
Silver Spring, MD 20905
301-384-6170
Peachwood1270@verizon.net

cc: Karl Hellman

PC:

Gene Giddens, Deputy Director, Department of Parks

Mike Horrigan, Chief, Northern Region, Department of Parks

Jeff Humerick, Operations Manager, Northern Region, Department of Parks

Mike Little, Park Manager, Olney Manor, Department of Parks

Mitra Pedoeem, Chief, Park Development, Department of Parks

Mark Pfefferle, Chief, Environmental Planning, Department of Planning

John Carter, Chief, Community Based Planning

Andy Frank, Environmental Engineering Section Leader, Park Development, Department of Parks