



MCPB Item # _____

May 9, 2013

MEMORANDUM

April 30, 2013

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Mary Bradford, Director of Parks
Mike Riley, Deputy Director of Parks *MR*
John E. Hench, Ph.D., Chief, Park Planning & Stewardship Division *J. Hench*

FROM: Brenda Sandberg, Legacy Open Space Manager, Park Planning & Stewardship Division *BOS*
Rachel Newhouse, Planner Coordinator, Park Planning & Stewardship Division *Rachel Newhouse*

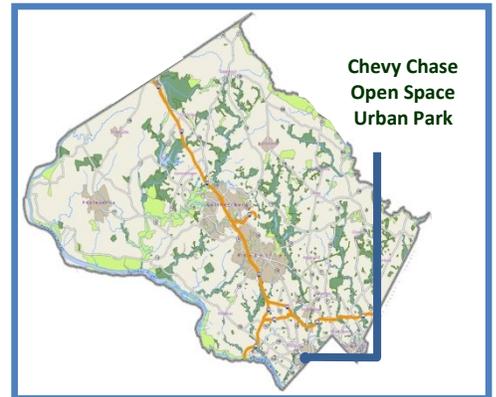
Subject: Chevy Chase Open Space Concept Plan Briefing & Discussion

Staff Recommendation

Presentation of the Concept Plan for Chevy Chase Open Space Urban Park, developed in partnership with Chevy Chase Village, and discussion of the proposed implementation strategy to create this green open space park. The briefing will be conducted by Park Planning and Stewardship staff, with representatives of Park Development, Southern Region, and Chevy Chase Village joining for discussion of the future implementation of the Concept Plan.

Briefing and Discussion Goals

- ❖ Update current Planning Board members on this park’s unique background, including Acquisition, Site Cleanup & Interim Improvements, all completed in partnership with Chevy Chase Village
- ❖ Present Board with Concept Plan and Program of Requirements
- ❖ Discuss and Receive Board Guidance on Proposed Implementation Strategy
 - Phased Implementation Strategy
 - Partner-Funded Facility Plan
 - Coordinated Funding Requests for Phased Implementation with Partner



Background

Chevy Chase Open Space was acquired as an Urban Open Space through the Legacy Open Space program in 2001. The two-acre single family home site, located adjacent to Friendship Heights CBD and within the limits of Chevy Chase Village, was acquired in partnership with Chevy Chase Village (“the Village”). The significant contribution of the Village towards the acquisition (\$1.25 Million, or 25%) created a unique park partnership with a municipality, as described in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) completed at the time.

The Department of Parks took control of the property in late 2007 after cessation of a life estate. Since that time, the house and associated structures have been demolished, the site has been analyzed from a park design and CPTED perspective, and large amounts of unsafe and non-native invasive vegetation have been removed. The MOU with the Village was amended at the time of demolition, through which the Village continued to support this park by reimbursing the Commission for 50% of the demolition costs (\$39 thousand).

In 2011, a Concept Plan process was undertaken to create a “Vision” for the park, a Concept Plan, and a Program of Requirements (P.O.R.) necessary to move forward with future Facility Planning. A liaison committee was created by Chevy Chase Village to work hand-in-hand with the Department of Parks, and an internal PDCO Team was established. During 2011 to 2012, multiple site visits, internal coordination meetings, and public meetings were held to develop the Concept Plan. The Concept Plan being presented to you today has been approved by the Board of Managers of Chevy Chase Village and the Director of Parks as guidance for moving forward with future development of the Park.

Following approval of the Concept Plan by the Director of Parks and the Chevy Chase Village Board of Managers, a list of quick, low-cost improvements was created that were compatible with the Concept Plan. These interim improvements were implemented over the Fall 2012 – Spring 2013 to create a safe, usable park in the interim until further development can be pursued. Projects included wood chip paths, remaining debris cleanup, interim landscaping improvements, and signage.

Vision for the Park

The first step in the Concept Plan process was to work with the community and staff to create a vision for the park. As written by the Village Liaison Committee, the Concept Plan envisions a park that:

- ❖ Provides a **nature-based, green space park**, a unique resource in the surrounding area and consistent with the purpose of the Legacy Open Space plan
- ❖ Offers the public a respite from the stresses of urban life through enjoyment of a **tranquil, garden-like open space**
- ❖ Enhances the **beauty** of the natural contours of the land and existing garden plantings
- ❖ Increases **connectivity** between the Belmont Trail and existing sidewalks to encourage walking, biking, and the use of public transportation
- ❖ Offers a **range of amenities** to maximize usage by attracting office workers, commuters and neighbors from the high rises and single family homes
- ❖ Appeals to the **many generations** that live and work in the surrounding area, being friendly to children and teens, adults, and seniors

Summary of Program of Requirements

This summary of the Program of Requirements will be explained in more detail during today's presentation. Analysis of the site during the Concept Plan process included consideration of CPTED, ADA compatibility, tree protection, and other park design guidelines, but complete evaluation of the proposal against those guidelines/regulations will be completed at later design stages.

- ❖ **Main Pedestrian Walkway and Woodland Walkway** – Provide main hard-surface connections through park
- ❖ **Lighting Along Walkways** – Provide safety for commuters during dark hours
- ❖ **Informal Gathering Space** – Retain natural slope for seating and play
- ❖ **Azalea Hill** – Preserve and enhance existing garden of azaleas and shade trees
- ❖ **Great Lawn** – Preserve large open area for un-programmed play (Community Open Space)
- ❖ **Natural Play Area** – Support creative play through area with all natural materials
- ❖ **Birch Grove** – Preserve as quiet buffer between Park and Western Avenue
- ❖ **Seating/Picnic Plaza** – Provide area with moveable furnishings for meals and meetings, and Wi-Fi for mobile device usage
- ❖ **Park Entrances (from Belmont Buffer, Grove Street, Western Avenue, and Main Entrance)** – Support design aesthetic through entry designs with features such as gardens, plantings, stone pillars, gates
- ❖ **Western and Eastern Edge Planting Buffers** – Create broken screening along urban and church sides of park, using variety of plant materials
- ❖ **Birdhouse Garden** – Create garden around existing birdhouse; potential location for optional amenities
- ❖ **Western Avenue Fence** – Provide a transparent fence to prevent accidental entry into Western Avenue from the play areas while preserving visibility into/out of park
- ❖ **Optional Amenities: Sculptural or Enhanced Garden Features** – Consider adding sculptures or elaborate gardens through partner or private funding for installation and maintenance
- ❖ **Optional Amenities: Water Features** – Consider adding a water feature that integrates with the garden theme through partner or private funding for installation and maintenance

The Concept Plan is attached to this Memorandum.

Attachment: Chevy Chase Open Space Urban Park, Concept Plan, April 2013

Montgomery County Parks - Park Planning and Stewardship Division

cc: Bill Tyler, Chief, Southern Region
Steve Chandlee, Southern Region
Mohammed Turay, Southern Region
Kevin Hagberg, Southern Region
Mitra Pedeem, Chief, Park Development
Linda Komes, Park Development
Tricia McManus, Park Development
David Vismara, Chief, Horticulture, Forestry & Environmental Education
Phil Normandy, Horticulture, Forestry & Environmental Education
Antonio DeVaul, Chief, Park Police
Brooke Farquhar, Park Planning & Stewardship
Pat Baptiste, Chair, Board of Managers, Chevy Chase Village
Meredith Wellington, Chair, Chevy Chase Open Space Committee, Chevy Chase Village
Michael Younes, Operations Director, Chevy Chase Village

CHEVY CHASE OPEN SPACE URBAN PARK

Concept Plan

April 2013

