



June 6, 2013

MEMORANDUM

May 30, 2013

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Mary Bradford, Director of Parks *M Bradford*
 Mike Riley, Deputy Director of Parks *MR*
 John E. Hench, Ph.D., Chief, Park Planning & Stewardship Division *JEH*
 Mitra Pedoeem, Chief, Park Development Division *KMP For MP.*

FROM: Brenda Sandberg, Legacy Open Space Program Manager *BBS*
 William E. Gries, Park Development Division *weg*
 Dominic Quattrocchi, Park Planning and Stewardship Division *DQ*

SUBJECT: Land Acquisition Recommendation, Legacy Open Space Program Glenfield Local Park
 Pilgrim Church, United Church of Christ (Pilgrim Church Property)
 3.4 acres, more or less, unimproved

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The staff recommendations with respect to the subject Pilgrim Church Property are as follows:

- 1) Approve the designation of the 3.4 acre, unimproved Pilgrim Church property as a designated Natural Resource within the *Legacy Open Space Functional Master Plan (2001)*.
- 2) Approve the resolution to acquire the Pilgrim Church property as an addition to Glenfield Local Park for the negotiated purchase price of \$625,000.00 to be funded through the Legacy Open Space CIP.

Staff requests that the Board approve the acquisition of the subject property as an Urban Wooded Area addition to Glenfield Local Park. (Urban Wooded Area is a new facility type in the 2012 PROS Plan.) The resolution is attached to this memorandum.

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BACKGROUND

SITE DESCRIPTION

This property located at 2206 Briggs Road on the north side of the Glenmont Sector Plan area. The Pilgrim Church Property proposed for acquisition is a 3.4-acre portion of the total property owned by the Church. The property was subdivided to create a single lot for the church and 5 developable single-family residential lots. The proposed 3.4 acre acquisition consists of all the property other than Lot 1 that is retained for the church and is outlined in red on Figure 1 below. The proposed acquisition is entirely composed of mature forest with one small stream and associated wetlands.

Figure 1: Pilgrim Church Property and Immediate Vicinity



LEGACY OPEN SPACE AND MASTER PLAN SUPPORT

The *Legacy Open Space Functional Master Plan* (2001) establishes a program to conserve the “most significant open space as a means of protecting the County’s environment, quality of life, and economic vitality” (p. 1). As noted below, the Glenmont Forest is proposed for designation as a Legacy Natural Resource in the *Glenmont Sector Plan Public Hearing Draft* currently under Planning Board review. The Draft Sector Plan clearly describes the importance of this urban forested area in the selection from the Plan (pp. 51-52) below. See Figure 2 for a visual of the proposed Glenmont Forest.

Forested Parcels Adjacent to Glenfield Local Park

A wooded area of approximately 30 acres, which contains nearly half of all the forest within the Sector Plan area, is located adjacent to Glenfield Local Park and the Glenmont Metro Station Maintenance Yard. It consists of six parcels, including two County-owned parcels and others owned by WMATA, a Home Owners Association, and a private landowner. This area contains mature upland forest directly adjacent to existing parkland. The forest also contains headwater streams and people’s choice trails connecting Glenfield Local Park to the neighborhood north of Briggs Road. The majority of the WMATA acreage is already preserved as forest through a Category I Forest Conservation Easement, but public access is currently not provided to this forest.

This forested area is the largest, contiguous tract of land with forest and natural resources within the Plan area. It should be preserved to provide opportunities for natural resource-based recreation, such as natural surface trails and nature interpretation. On May 21, 2012, the Legacy Open Space (LOS) Advisory Committee unanimously endorsed this forest for designation as an LOS Natural Resources Candidate Site in support of the need to provide natural recreation spaces for the County’s urban residents.

Within the Plan area, there is no other forested area of similar size and quality potentially available for parkland acquisition. In addition to its size and the potential for protection of high quality natural resources, this forested area is directly adjacent to Glenfield Local Park and would be a logical expansion of parkland to provide increased natural resource-based recreation for the local community.

Recommendation

- Designate these six properties as a Legacy Open Space Natural Resource Candidate Site and add to Glenfield Local Park

The Pilgrim Church Property is one of only two properties within the proposed Glenmont Forest that are not already in some form of public agency ownership. The acquisition of this property is a critical first step in implementing the goal of a large forested green park to serve the current and future residents of Glenmont, as envisioned in the draft Glenmont Sector Plan.

AGENCY AND CITIZEN SUPPORT

The Legacy Open Space Advisory Group and the Legacy Open Space Internal Implementation Team unanimously support designation of the Glenmont Forest including the Pilgrim Church Property as a Legacy Open Space Natural Resource. This acquisition is further supported by management staff of the Department of Parks, the Southern Region managers and Area 2 Planning Department staff.

Figure 2: Proposed Glenmont Forest Legacy Open Space Natural Resource, Draft Glenmont Sector Plan



PROPOSED USE OF THE PROPERTY

The acquisition of the Pilgrim Church property is intended to preserve a small but significant area of urban forest adjacent to existing parkland as an addition to Glenfield Local Park. The acreage will be considered an Urban Wooded Area, a new facility type in the 2012 PROS Plan.

OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (OBI) ESTIMATE

OBI for the management of this acquisition in both short and long term will be minimal. As conservation-oriented land within a local park, the only anticipated improvements would be natural surface trails. Initial OBI may include some minor expenses for posting the property, minimal site cleanup, and control of Non-Native Invasive (NNI) plants where necessary.

cc:

John Nissel	Bill Tyler	Megan Chung
Dave McGrady	Kate Stookey	Sean Dixon
Antonio DeVaul	Janis Thom	
Glenn Kreger	Steve Chandlee	



MCPB
13-100

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (“Commission”) is authorized by Maryland Code Annotated, Land Use §17-101 (formerly Article 28, Section 5-101 of the Annotated Code of Maryland) to acquire, develop, maintain and operate a public park system within the Maryland-Washington Metropolitan District; and

WHEREAS, the Montgomery County Planning Board received and considered a recommendation from staff of the Commission, in closed session on June 6, 2013, that it approve the acquisition of 3.4 acres, more or less, of unimproved land (the “Property”) from Pilgrim Church, United Church of Christ (“Pilgrim Church”), located at 2206 Briggs Road, Silver Spring, MD 20906, as an addition to Glenfield Local Park; and

WHEREAS, the Property meets parkland acquisition criteria as a Natural Resource Area under the Legacy Open Space (LOS) Functional Master Plan of 2001 and staff of the Commission further recommended that the Property be designated as a Natural Resource Area under said Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, there are sufficient Commission General Obligation Bond monies available in the Commission’s Legacy Open Space (LOS) Capital Improvement Program (CIP) to pay the \$625,000.00 negotiated purchase price for the Property;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Montgomery County Planning Board hereby designates the Property consisting of 3.4 acres, more or less, of unimproved land as a Natural Resource Area under the Legacy Open Space Master Plan of 2001; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Property be acquired as an Urban Wooded Area addition to Glenfield Local Park; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the acquisition of the Property from Pilgrim Church as described above, for a purchase price of \$625,000.00, in accordance with a proposed Land Purchase Agreement between the Commission and Pilgrim Church, is hereby approved by the Montgomery County Planning Board on this 6th day of June, 2013 and the Executive Director is authorized to execute said Agreement on behalf of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission.

* * * * *

This is to certify the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted by the Montgomery County Planning Board of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission on motion of Commissioner _____, seconded by Commissioner _____, with Commissioners _____, _____, _____, _____, and _____ voting in favor of the motion, at its regular meeting held on Thursday, June 6, 2013 in Silver Spring, Maryland.

Françoise M. Carrier, Chair
Montgomery County Planning Board