



## **MEETING REPORT**

**MEETING DATE:** October 15, 2013

**STAFF ATTENDING:**

Patricia McManus	M-NCPPC PDD Design Section Supervisor
Ching-Fang Chen	M-NCPPC PDD Landscape Architect
Clare Runkles	M-NCPPC PDD Engineering Technician
Wendy Hanley	M-NCPPC Park Manager
Andrew Simmons	M-NCPPC Park Manager
Robert Turnbull	M-NCPPC Park Trail Specialist
William Newman	M-NCPPC Park Police
Patricia Shepard	Montgomery County, Dept. of Transportation
Gabrielle Myers	Charles P. Johnson & Associates, Inc.

**PROJECT:** Little Bennett Trail Connector-Facility Planning

**SUBJECT:** Community Meeting #1

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Staff briefed project background, existing conditions, master plan recommendations and ongoing and future trail projects in Clarksburg. Staff presented trail alignment study with sections, profiles and considered materials. Community members participated in discussion afterwards.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION**

Specific comments and suggestions are summarized below.

- The boardwalk areas need to be at least ten feet wide. Boardwalk slopes of 7-8% seem steep and will be slippery. Deck slopes need to be flatter if possible for safety. Consideration of concrete decking was mentioned by Park staff.
- Express interest of facilitating realization of Clarksburg Greenway system. It's important that the trail connector project be implemented at the same time as the Day Use Area.
- Concerns were expressed for the sharpness of turns and curved areas shown on the plans. Curves along raised boardwalk section are undesirable. Widen these areas or keep the curve gentle if possible and provide good sight distance for safety.
- The Mount Vernon Trail between the marina and Mount Vernon has similar characteristics to this trail. Look at this trail as an example.
- The trail connections to the town center appear to go through residential areas and residential streets. Provide more information about connectivity to existing and proposed trails and sidewalks in the Clarksburg Town Center.
- Twelve feet is the standard bikeway width per AASHTO standards. A ten foot wide trail would be more desirable than an eight-foot wide connection. A dashed striped line down the middle to direct the traffic flow would make the trail safer for kids to use.

- Trail signage was requested. Staff conveyed that signage will be addressed in the detail design stage. Provide signage for safety where the trail crosses the campground entrance road. The road crossings along the Capital Crescent Trail provide good examples of signage.
- Concerns were raised for pedestrian safety where trail alignment is close to the road. Provide safety separation from road traffic. Staff explained that the trail is currently aligned behind existing utility poles and elevated to avoid steep banks of MD Route 355.
- Concerns were expressed for additional traffic due to development in progress, specifically Snowden Farm Parkway. When Snowden Farm Parkway opens up, there will be even more traffic along Route 355 and through Snowden Farm Parkway to Route 355. Truck traffic currently starts at 4:30am daily. Consider providing natural surface trail connections from the town center to the day use area. This would provide another option for connectivity with a more park-like experience.
- Trail alignment closer to embankment in ravine was also suggested.
- Confirm the location of property boundaries. The adjacent property owner pointed out that the property line is different from the right of way line. The property line should be 23 feet from the road centerline, rather than the right of way width of 33 feet from the road center line as noted on the 1965 property survey. Requested copy of plat.
- There may be another alternative trail connection through non-wooded areas of the park from Route 121 through the power line easement area and the former Church of God property. Confirm whether there is a better connection to Stringtown Road and Clarksburg village through park property.
- Concern of roots damage by hard surface trail was mentioned. Examples of materials used under trail near trees on Black Hills or Boyd's project are also suitable here. Staff conveyed the above-grade trail surfacing design approach.
- Concerns of night time safety was brought up. Residents said trail will inevitably be used after dark.
- Erosion at the ravine was discussed. Community observed down-cutting of the drainage way worsening over time.

**NEXT STEP:**

- Develop and refine trail design alternatives per community input.
- Coordinate with the Clarksburg Area 3 planners and the Montgomery County, Department of Transportation to facilitate pedestrian connectivity in Clarksburg area for future CIP projects as well as private-funded development projects.
- Involve Park Natural Resource experts to investigate environmental sensitive area in the ravine area. Include stabilization of the waterway if found necessary.
- Prepare facility plan report with recommendations.