

January 16, 2002

MEMORANDUM

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Jeffrey Zyontz, Chief, Countywide Planning Division
John E. Hench, PhD., Supervisor, Park Planning and Resource Analysis Unit, Countywide Planning Division *JEH*

FROM: Rachel Davis Newhouse, Landscape Architect, Park Planning and Resource Analysis Unit, Countywide Planning Division *RDN*

SUBJECT: **Woodstock Equestrian Park Master Plan Worksession**

STAFF RECOMMENDED BOARD ACTIONS:

Discuss and approve the Master Plan for the Woodstock Equestrian Park recommended by staff with any modifications, or additions requested by the Board as part of this worksession.

WORKSESSION AGENDA

1. Review Summary of Public Hearing Testimony from December 20, 2001, Staff Response to Major Concerns and Summary Chart – **Attachment A**
2. Review additional information to be placed in Master Plan on the number of estimated park users and estimated economic impact of the horse industry in Montgomery County from the *Montgomery Horse Survey* – **Attachment B**.
3. Revise Countywide Park Trails Plan to include equestrian corridors – see **Attachment C** (A finalized map showing the amendments to the Trail's Plan will be available at the worksession).
4. Review updated schedule for plan implementation – *revised from Public Hearing Draft* – **Attachment D**.

5. Review list of next steps for master plan:
 - Presentation to County Council PHED Committee after MNCPPC.
 - Creation of Park Friends Group
 - Pursue public art possibilities for park.

PLANNING BOARD ACTIONS:

1. Approval of additions to language in master plan to include *Montgomery Horse Study* survey results on *Estimated Economic Impact of the Montgomery County Horse Industry*.
2. Approve revisions to Countywide Park Trails Plan.
3. Approve revisions to the Implementation Table.

ATTACHMENT A

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENT

- Of the 19 comments received, all supported the preservation of open space and equestrian use of the park. Many individuals and equestrian clubs offered to help maintain trails and future facilities, if built.
- Concerns were mainly focused on the future development and uncertainty of the types of facilities, traffic impact and numbers of park users.
- Second largest concern was over the safety of the at-grade trail crossing. Many stressed the need to move forward with plans for a trail underpass at Rt. 28.

STAFF RESPONSE TO MAJOR CONCERNS

Typically with park master plans, future development phases are studied more comprehensively during facility planning. At the facility planning stage, details such as size and types of facilities, anticipated numbers of users, peak use time, traffic impact studies, well and septic feasibilities, preliminary grading, stormwater management concepts, preliminary forest conservation plan and better cost estimates are all determined. The public is informed and involved, through public meetings, park advisory groups and recreation advisory boards. The Planning Board has to approve the facility plans before construction documents can be prepared. Funding for future development is also part of the Planning Board and County Council approval process. Funding can come from county or state bonds, park bonds, public/private partnerships or private gifts.

The development of an at-grade trail crossing on Rt. 28 is recommended as a temporary solution to access trails on either side of the park. The crossing could include a change in pavement material (concrete) or a striped crosswalk, signs warning motorists of the upcoming crossing, and possibly a flashing signal that is activated by riders or hikers. MNCPPC will also ask the state to review the possibility of reducing the speed limit on Rt. 28. The SHA has reviewed the master plan recommendations and will review the detailed plans to be prepared as part of the facility plan for phase I. SHA will need to approve the plans before MNCPPC constructs the crossing. The facility plan will also do a more detailed analysis of the proposed trail underpass at Rt. 28. The analysis will be presented to the Montgomery County Planning Board and the State Highway Administration for determination of if and how to proceed.

**CHART – WOODSTOCK EQUESTRIAN PARK MASTER PLAN PUBLIC HEARING -
DECEMBER 20, 2001**

SPEAKER	COMMENT SUMMARIES
David Lamb <i>Chairman Park Planning Committee</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Land gifted to be an equestrian center. ▪ Stresses following the Park Planning Committee's recommendation and approve plan. ▪ Property preserves open space and history.
Jane Hunter <i>Sugarloaf Citizens Association</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The plan does not provide enough information to determine septic needs, infrastructure needs, cumulative impacts. ▪ Concern over number and locations of future wells and restrooms (septic fields) ▪ Lack of projected water needs. Property on sole source aquifer. ▪ Lack of traffic studies. ▪ Confusion over who will operate, MNCPPC or private ▪ Support concept of park as long as MNCPPC control.
Tim McGrath <i>TROT</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Offers support of TROT to establish and maintain trails ▪ Wants to see development on Rickman Farm Horse Park.
Tom Hoffman <i>Potomac Hunt</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Potomac Hunt supports park development. ▪ Offers to maintain trails.
Kevin Bowie <i>United States Pony Club</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ United States Pony Club supports park Includes - Seneca Valley and Potomac Pony Club ▪ Supports development of park and cross-country course.
Cliff Williams <i>Lawyer for Monacacy Cemetery</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Thanks to Mr. Greenberg and family for land donation to cemetery.
Joseph Muldoon <i>Member of Park Planning Committee</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encourages development of polo field at park. ▪ Offers to maintain polo field – if built. ▪ Offered to put on charity events to raise money for park. ▪ Supports park development.
Ms. Stephanie Banks <i>Potomac Valley Dressage Association</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supports development of Phase 2 and 3. ▪ Will not be active trail riders but still support Phase 1.
Suzanne Neal <i>Member of Park Planning Committee</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Concerned about at-grade crossing. ▪ Expedite the plans for the trail underpass for Route 28. ▪ Keep horse & foot traffic off of Route 28. Keep parking off of the sides of Rt. 28.
Tracy Morgan <i>Adjacent Resident and Member of PP Committee</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supports park because of open space and helps support equine industry.
Toni Koerber <i>PP Committee Member</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supports Park.

SPEAKER	COMMENT SUMMARIES
Laura Van Etten <i>Sugarloaf Citizens Assoc.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supports equestrian use facility in country. ▪ Concerned about clearing woods for fence. ▪ Preserve the cemetery area called Turkey Hill. ▪ Expedite process to build trails underpass on Route 28. Only construct facilities that can be maintained.
Ross Fields Owner of Boarding Riding Facility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supports parks because of open space, trails and future competition rings.
Ms. Erin Reilly <i>County Resident</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Thanks to Greenberg/Rickman for generous donations of Land. ▪ Support park especially phase one; likes history ▪ Supports future phases. Wants to be part of Friends Group. ▪ Supports saving open space
Jim Evans <i>Owner of Boarding and Riding Facility</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stresses need to develop Rickman Farm Horse Park. ▪ Concerned about lack of numbers for future phase uses. ▪ Concerned about at grade crossing of Route 28. ▪ Concerned about proposed indoor arena (too many in area). ▪ Plans do not address concerns over scope, traffic, and security.
Don Wollum <i>Poolesville Resident</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Confused about statement concerning horse "industry". ▪ Concerned about rustic roads and too much traffic. Suggests primary route to park be on Route 28 and 270. ▪ Concerned about trailer impact on bicycle routes. ▪ Emphasis should be placed on those who appreciate the agricultural reserve.

LETTERS RECEIVED SINCE PUBLIC HEARING

WRITER	COMMENT SUMMARIES
Garth Seely <i>Adjacent Resident</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Concerned about nighttime lighting and noise pollution
Stephen Gunnelfsen <i>Gaithersburg Resident</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supports Plan ▪ Wants to include jousting as an activity in park.
Joy D. Flo <i>Germantown Resident</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supports plan ▪ Offers to help in anyway
Eric Cronquist <i>Beallsville Resident</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Concern about lack of Traffic analysis

ATTACHMENT B

Estimated Economic Impact of the Montgomery County Horse Industry

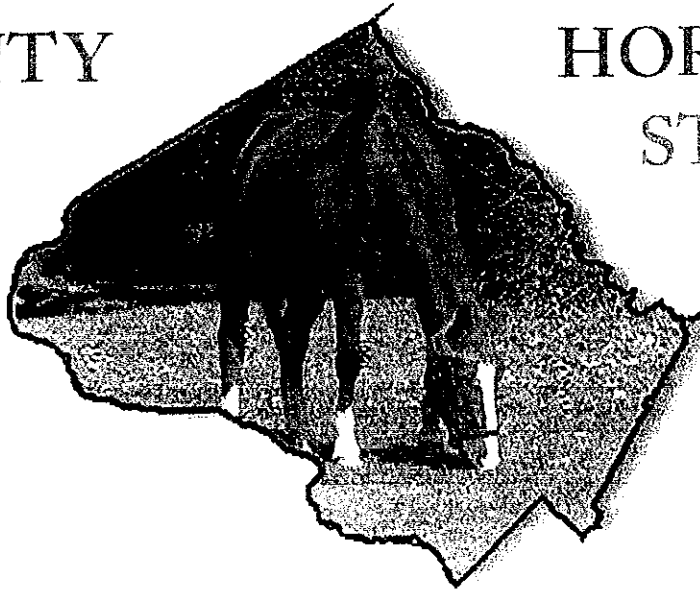
A detailed explanation of how each of these figures was derived appears in Appendix B page 11, of this report.

A. Projected total number of horses in Montgomery County:	10,837
B. Estimated number of horses boarded out of county by Montgomery Countians:	3,500
C. Total estimated number of horses (A+B):	14,337
D. Total amount spent annual ly on horses and riding by survey respondents:	\$13,589,743
E. Projected amount of fixed horse-keeping costs:	\$145,829,500
F. Amount spent annual ly on horses and riding, extrapolated to entire county*:	\$71,935,046

*This figure includes an extrapolation of (D) as well as annual contributions derived from fixed horse-keeping costs (E).

MONTGOMERY
COUNTY

HORSE
STUDY



Compiled by the Montgomery Soil Conservation
District for the Montgomery County Department
of Economic Development

PRESS RELEASE

Horse Industry Thriving In Montgomery County, Maryland

March 6, 2001—A two-year study of the Montgomery County's horse industry reveals that the County is home to almost 11,000 horses, whose owners spend close to \$72 million annually on their animals and riding-related infrastructure, such as arenas, barns, and equipment. An estimated 3,500 additional horses are owned by County residents but kept outside of the County. The study was undertaken by the Montgomery Soil Conservation District while funded by the County's Department of Economic Development.

With the more than 80 boarding stables filled to capacity and new horse properties appearing almost daily, Montgomery County's horse industry continues to grow despite limited available land.

"As the equine or horse component of the agricultural industry has grown rapidly over the past 25 years, it became apparent that its contribution and importance to the County needed to be studied in depth." Montgomery County Executive Douglas Duncan said in his introduction to the study's final report. "With this upward trend in mind, it is important for public officials at all levels of government to better understand and identify the importance and benefits that horses provide."

As more and more houses crop up on rural land, policy makers are eager to find nontraditional forms of agriculture that will keep green spaces open. Horse properties not only achieve that goal, they also are keeping many traditional farmers in business.

"It is important to understand and recognize the connectivity between the 14,337 horses identified in the report and the traditional farming operations that produce hay, straw and grain to

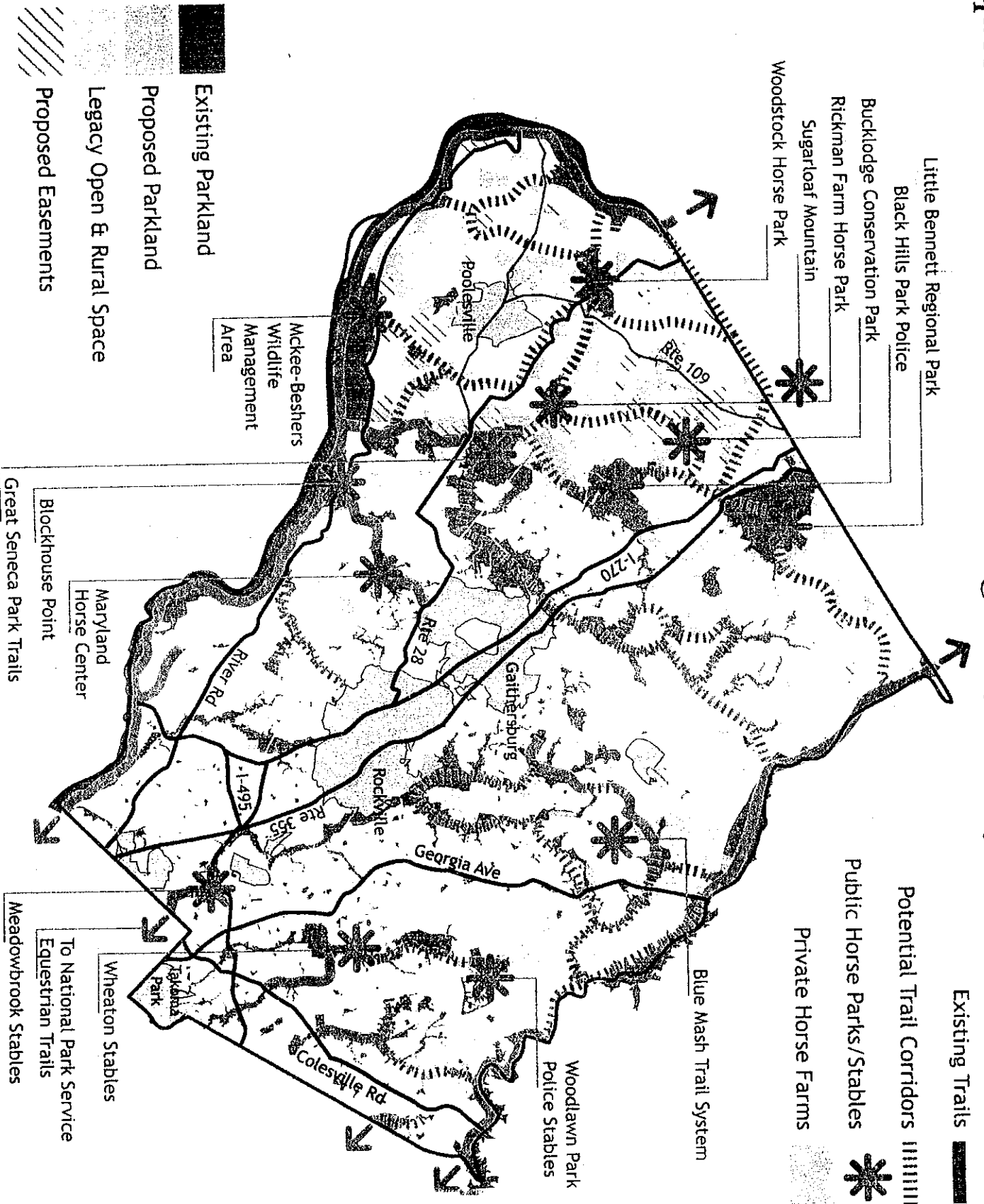
support these horses,” Duncan said. “Horses are an integral part of agriculture, and they should be incorporated into the definition of agriculture itself.”

The study is based on the results of a six-page questionnaire mailed out to more than 1,800 property owners throughout the County. Approximately half of the addresses were known to have horses, while the balance were agriculturally assessed properties that might have horses. Half of the questionnaires were filled out and returned. In addition to the financial questions, respondents also were asked about the horse-related issues of concern to them and the land- and horse-management practices they incorporate.

The Montgomery Soil Conservation District also has compiled a Montgomery County Directory of Equine Services. Copies of the Directory and the Study, are available from the Soil Conservation District office or via the internet at www.farmerlink.com.

For more information on the Montgomery County Horse Study, contact Allison Rogers at the Montgomery Soil Conservation District, (301) 590-2855.

Equestrian Trail Corridors in Montgomery County, MD



ATTACHMENT D

UPDATED SCHEDULE FOR PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Design and Implementation of Entrance to Rickman Equestrian Center *\$100,000 (Gift from Bill Rickman to Foundation)*

1. MNCPPC to develop design for entrance walls and entrance road into park. Parking area should be included. **February 20, 2002**
2. Review with SHA for state access permit. **End of February 2002**
3. Get approval of concept from Rickman, Board, and Parks. **March 2002**
4. Foundation to hire engineering firm to prepare construction plans – grading, stormwater management plans, Forest conservation plan etc. Engineering firm also applies for state and county permits. **April 2002**
5. Once engineering plans are completed and permits received (6 months), Foundation to hire contractor to build entrance. **Fall 2002**

Phase I Implementation of Woodstock Equestrian Park *\$600,000 (State Bond monies approved by County Council)*

A. Fence Installation

1. Procure topographic and boundary survey – **boundary survey completed on Greenberg side**. Bid topography and remaining boundary for Rickman side – **Spring 2002**.
2. Bid out fence installation project – **Spring 2002**.
3. Fence installation to begin – **Fall 2002**

B. Facility Plan for Phase I

1. Prepare R.F.P. to hire equestrian consultant for Facility Plan for Phase I park features – Entrance and parking to Greenberg Equestrian Center, at-grade trail crossing on Rt. 28, trail bridge and trail stream crossings, historic structures report, phase one archaeological study and trail signage/historic markers. Include feasibility study/design for future equestrian facilities such as Rt. 28 trail underpass, competition/schooling rings, cross country course, indoor arena, polo field and infrastructure to support restrooms.
2. Bid RFP for Facility Plan consultant
3. Facility Plan completed

4. RFP for Engineering consultant to prepare construction plans and permits for phase one site development.
5. Construction Plan completed.
6. Bid out construction documents.
7. Construction of Phase I of Woodstock Equestrian Park complete.
8. Greenberg to construct entrance to Greenberg Equestrian Center.

