



MCPB
Item No. 2
6-20-02

June 14, 2002

MEMORANDUM

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Jeffrey Zyontz, Chief
County-wide Planning Division

Richard C. Hawthorne, Chief
Transportation Planning

RCH

FROM: Larry Cole: 301-495-4528, for the Park and Planning Department

PROJECTS: Columbia Pike (US 29) at Briggs Chaney Road
Mandatory Referral No. 02802-SHA-1

REVIEW TYPE: Mandatory Referral

APPLICANT: Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA)

APPLYING FOR: Plan Approval

COMMUNITY-BASED PLANNING TEAM AREA: Eastern County

RECOMMENDATION: APPROVAL WITH COMMENTS TO SHA

The following comments are recommended on the proposed project (see Attachment 1: Vicinity Map), with the condition that there is an approved SPA combined preliminary and final water quality plan:

1. Provide a written, documented explanation of any and all reasons why SHA will not build the US 29 Commuter Bikeway underpass at Briggs Chaney Road.
2. The segment of the US 29 Commuter Bikeway proposed to be constructed south of Briggs Chaney Road should be open to use by pedestrians and northbound bicyclists. Appropriate signing should be provided to prohibit its use by southbound bicyclists until the off-road bikeway has been extended to another public street.

3. Enlarge the island at Ramp C and Briggs Chaney Road and extend the median on Briggs Chaney Road at this location to provide a refuge to accommodate bicyclists waiting to cross these roads.
4. Evaluate the proposed lighting along Briggs Chaney Road east of US 29 and provide additional fixtures as necessary.
5. Create a follow-up project to complete the median priority bus lanes between the US 29/New Hampshire Avenue (MD 650) interchange and the Howard County line and the commuter bikeway between Tech Road and Spencerville Road (MD 198) consistent with the Planning Board's previous recommendations.
6. Reconstruct and replace in kind all landscaping located in:
 - The buffer along the frontage of Montgomery Auto Sales Park;
 - The Avonshire development; and
 - The AutoPark

PREVIOUS BOARD ACTION AND BACKGROUND

The Planning Board has reviewed the conceptual design for the whole US 29 corridor from Stewart Lane to the Howard County lane several times as the preliminary design proceeded, including a discussion of bicyclist accommodation and bus priority lanes on June 28, 2001. These non-automobile aspects were also discussed as part of the Board's review on November 1, 2001 of the proposed interchanges at Randolph Road, Spencerville Road and Dustin Road. ***The design of this project is substantially in conformance with the Planning Board's previous guidance.***

The Board recommended that the project include a Commuter Bikeway that would be grade-separated at the Briggs Chaney Road interchange. ***The current plans include the commuter bikeway, but do not include grade-separation for the bikeway at the interchange***

A portion of the project is within the Paint Branch Special Protection Area (SPA). As such, a Preliminary and Final Water Quality Plan for the project must be approved by the Planning Board prior to the hearing of the Mandatory Referral. Environmental Planning staff has prepared a separate memo to the Board on the Water Quality Plan.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project would construct a grade-separated interchange at the existing intersection of Columbia Pike (US 29) and Briggs Chaney Road. Briggs Chaney Road would be carried over US 29. US 29 would be lowered by twelve feet to reduce impacts on adjacent properties.

Twelve-foot wide inside shoulders would be built in the median of US 29 to accommodate express buses. Outside shoulders and/or auxiliary lanes would be built

wide enough to accommodate buses on US 29. The number of through lanes on US 29 would remain at three in each direction.

Ramps would be built to and from northbound US 29 immediately adjacent to and parallel to US 29 (see Attachment 2). Ramps to and from southbound US 29 would intersect Briggs Chaney Road about 350 feet west of US 29. The two intersections of the ramps with Briggs Chaney Road would be controlled by traffic signals.

Segments of the US 29 Commuter Bikeway would be built beside the northbound ramps on the east side of US 29 (see Attachment 3). The bike path would either be eight feet wide, separated from the ramp by a curb and six-foot landscape panel, or ten feet wide separated from the ramp by a jersey barrier (see Attachment 4). The bikeway would diverge from the existing shoulder of US 29 about two thousand feet south of Briggs Chaney Road. The northern segment would tie into Wexhall Drive at Tapestry Circle, about twenty-two hundred feet north of Briggs Chaney Road (see Attachment 5).

An off-road bikeway would be built along the south side of Briggs Chaney Road from Old Columbia Pike to the eastern project limit. A sidewalk would be built on the north side of Briggs Chaney Road through the project limits. The existing sidewalk on the south side of Briggs Chaney Road west of Old Columbia Pike would be narrowed from eight feet to five feet.

The existing intersection of Old Columbia Pike and Briggs Chaney Road would be widened to accommodate projected traffic levels and patterns associated with the interchange construction (see Attachment 6). Construction activities along the west side of Old Columbia Pike and along Briggs Chaney Road west of the intersection at Old Columbia Pike would be in the Paint Branch SPA.

STAFF ANALYSIS

Staff supports this project as implementing one of the most significant transportation recommendations of the Fairland Master Plan.

Traffic

Staff concurs with the proposed lane configurations, which are as follows. Level of Service (LOS) calculations are noted as AM (PM).

Ramp A: The proposed new ramp from southbound US 29 would have three lanes as it intersects Briggs Chaney Road, one right-turn lane and two left-turn lanes. The intersection would be signalized. The 2020 LOS would be B (B).

Ramp B: The proposed new ramp to southbound US 29 would have two lanes at the intersection of Briggs Chaney Road. Two left-turn lanes would be provided from eastbound Briggs Chaney Road to Ramp B. The 2020 LOS would be B (B).

Ramp C: The proposed new ramp from northbound US 29 would have four lanes as it intersects Briggs Chaney Road, two right-turn lanes and two left-turn lanes. The 2020 LOS would be B (C).

Ramp D: The proposed new ramp to northbound US 29 would have two lanes at the intersection of Briggs Chaney Road. The 2020 LOS would be B (C).

Outlet Drive Intersection: A second left-turn lane would be added to this intersection. Traffic departing Outlet Drive would continue to be restricted to right turns only from the two right-turn lanes. The intersection would be signalized. The 2020 LOS would be A (A).

Automobile Boulevard/Castle Boulevard: One additional eastbound lane would be added. The intersection would be signalized. The 2020 LOS would be B (C).

Old Columbia Pike intersection: The size of this intersection would be substantially increased to accommodate the projected traffic so that the operation of the interchange is not adversely affected. An additional through lane would be added to the northbound and eastbound legs of the intersection. The bulk of the pavement increase though would be from the increase in the number of departure lanes.

The proposed size of this intersection is substantially less than originally designed however, and less than it would be if not for the constraints on the addition of impervious surface posed by the Paint Branch SPA. (The eastern boundary of the SPA in this area runs roughly along the centerline of Old Columbia Pike.) Because of these constraints on the amount of pavement that can be added, the 2020 LOS would be E (F), operating much more poorly in the design year than any of the other intersections on this project. The lane configuration has been determined in such a way that the intersection would accommodate westbound traffic sufficiently well that operation of the interchange at US 29 would not be affected, however, there will be delays for eastbound traffic on Briggs Chaney Road as well as for traffic on Old Columbia Pike.

Bicyclist Accommodation

The project includes off-road bike paths and on-road bike lanes on all roads within the project limits and would generally accommodate bikes very well. The area that still needs improvement however is the US 29 Commuter Bikeway crossing of Briggs Chaney Road. SHA staff has stated that they will not construct the Board-recommended underpass at this location because of concerns about cost, personal safety, constructibility, and usage. While the Planning Board and staff have continued to request supporting documentation to justify these concerns and refute the findings of a national study, particularly with respect to the personal safety issue, no information has been provided by SHA in the year or so that these discussions have taken place. The national study documented that, in almost every case, residents' initial concerns about

the safety of bikeway underpasses dissipated after actual experience proved that they were essentially incident-free.

Notwithstanding the positive experience with bikeway underpasses and their ability to alleviate the conflicts at at-grade crossings and to induce greater usage of the bikeway, in their latest letter dated April 18, 2002 (see Attachment 7), SHA states that they will not provide an underpass for the bikeway at Briggs Chaney Road because of "maintenance and enforcement issues". The number of issues has increased, but no substantiation of any of them has even been attempted by SHA. **Staff recommends that the Board request a written, documented explanation of any and all issues that are preventing the underpass from being built.** Even if an underpass would not be built as part of this project, the Planning Board and staff need to know SHA's rationale in its decision-making process on this topic in order for us to adequately evaluate future projects.

Although the future segment of the Commuter Bikeway between the Briggs Chaney Road interchange and Greencastle Road is outside the limits of this project, it is worth mentioning because our staff and the surrounding community have concerns about SHA's suggested alignment. SHA prefers to veer the bikeway away from the alignment adjacent to US 29 and run it along Wexhall Drive within the Greencastle Lakes community. Our staff and some residents of the community would prefer an alternate alignment that would keep the off-road bikeway parallel to, separated from, but within the right-of-way of the reconstructed US 29. SHA has shown such an alignment as part of their preliminary design of the Greencastle Road interchange, but have since stated that this is not their preference.

Under SHA's plans, this segment of the Commuter Bikeway would not be built until the proposed interchange at Greencastle Road is funded for construction. It is uncertain when that interchange would be built. Given that the Commuter Bikeway is part of the Fairland Master Plan, a follow-up or companion project, as recommended in the last section of this memorandum, is needed to build the bikeway alignment adjacent to US 29 in a timely manner.

The segment of the US 29 Commuter Bikeway north of Briggs Chaney Road that is proposed as part of this project would provide a great benefit to residents of the surrounding communities by providing a connection that would be safer and often much shorter than existing routes to the Briggs Chaney Shopping Center (see Attachment 8). Residents of this area do have concerns about the bikeway that are discussed below in Community Involvement.

The segment of the Commuter Bikeway south of Briggs Chaney Road, along Ramp C, that would be built as part of this project would provide an interim benefit to bicyclists and pedestrians who are now using the existing shoulder of US 29 by providing a path that is either offset from the ramp or protected by a barrier. SHA staff has said that this bikeway may be built but closed to use until it is extended to the south since southbound bicyclists would not be able to ride against traffic after the end of the ramp. **Staff recommends that the bikeway be open to use by pedestrians and northbound bicyclists and that appropriate signing be used to prohibit**

southbound bicyclists from using it. Southbound bicyclists may be directed to use the ramp to southbound US 29, which does have a striped shoulder. It is anticipated that bicyclists will continue to be allowed to use the shoulders after the construction of all the interchanges along US 29, in addition to having the Commuter Bikeway available for use.

The traffic island at the top of Ramp C is the crossing point for the US 29 Commuter Bikeway and the bikeway along the south side of Briggs Chaney Road (see Attachment 2). ***Staff recommends that this island be enlarged and that the median on Briggs Chaney Road be extended to provide a refuge to accommodate bicyclists waiting to cross these roads.***

At the Briggs Chaney Road/Old Columbia Pike intersection

On the south side of Briggs Chaney Road west of Old Columbia Pike, in front of the shopping center, an eight-foot wide sidewalk/bikeway exists. SHA proposes to reduce this width to five feet to offset some of the proposed impervious elsewhere on the project. By comparison, the new sidewalk being constructed on the north side of this segment of Briggs Chaney Road per M-NCPPC staff's request is greater in area than the partial sidewalk removal.

While the above segment of sidewalk on the south side is shown on the map in the Fairland Master Plan as an existing bikeway (see Attachment 9), no recommendation was made for any extension to the west to any particular destination. The current terminus of the eight-foot sidewalk/bikeway is not at an intersection and the next intersection to the west, Old Briggs Chaney Road, is unsignalized. Given the extraordinary difficulties encountered in this project in getting sidewalks included, staff believes that constructing a bikeway extension in the future is highly unlikely, particularly without any Master Plan support.

Staff believes that it is safest for bicyclists to transition from an off-road bikeway to an on-road bikeway at a signalized intersection and that the switch should therefore be made at Old Columbia Pike. While retention of the eight-foot sidewalk would have provided an additional benefit in front of a commercial establishment, staff believes that if impervious surface must be minimized, it is more important to get a continuous sidewalk on the north side to provide safe pedestrian access to the Old Briggs Chaney Road intersection. Bicyclists would be accommodated via on-road bike lanes.

Pedestrian Accommodation

Pedestrian accommodation would be improved by this project by the construction of continuous five-foot wide sidewalks (min.) on Briggs Chaney Road and four-foot wide (min.) sidewalks on Old Columbia Pike. The difference in proposed sidewalk widths reflects the classification of the former as an Arterial and the latter as a Primary. Pedestrian accommodation in the shoulders of US 29 would be retained during construction, and after construction until the completion of the Commuter Bikeway. Pedestrian signals and crosswalks would be provided at all signalized intersections.

The sidewalks would be separated from the roadway by six-foot wide landscape panels with street trees, except along the east side of Old Columbia Pike south of Briggs Chaney Road and along the north side of Briggs Chaney Road where the right-of-way is constrained. Although the sidewalk would be directly behind the curb through this area, pedestrians would be separated from traffic by the proposed four-foot wide on-road bike lanes. The Briggs Chaney Road sidewalk would also be one foot wider than typical outside the Special Protection Area.

Lighting

Staff has previously been concerned with lighting on the interchange projects because standard SHA policy is to light only intersections and often not all intersections. To improve general lighting conditions, the Montgomery County Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPWT) has become a partner on this project and will provide continuous lighting on Briggs Chaney Road. Because of this addition, the lighting on this project appears to be satisfactory with one exception. Along Briggs Chaney Road east of US 29 the light fixtures are spaced much farther apart than in the rest of the project. While some light spillover may be expected from the adjacent Montgomery County Auto Park and from the shopping center, not all of this light may reach the road since the road will now be higher than its current elevation. ***Staff recommends that SHA work with DPWT to evaluate the proposed lighting along Briggs Chaney Road and provide additional fixtures as necessary.***

Impacts to M-NCPPC Property

The proposed interchange would impact M-NCPPC owned property in the northwest quadrant of the proposed US 29/Briggs Chaney Road interchange (see Attachment 10). The property was purchased for active recreation uses for the future Airy Hill Local Park. A portion of the property would be required to construct Ramps A and B, but SHA has minimized the area that would be required. Parks staff expects that SHA will be making an offer on compensation for this land shortly.

Landscaping and Aesthetics

The aesthetic treatments to be used on this project will conform to the design guidelines created for all of the US 29 interchange projects, including stone formwork for bridge parapets and retaining walls, decorative lighting on the bridge, and substantial landscaping throughout the project area. These treatments are the same as approved by the Board on the two previous US 29 interchange projects, at Randolph Road and at Spencerville Road (MD198).

Environmental

Improvements to US 29 at the Briggs Chaney Road intersection fall within the Little Paint Branch watershed. This watershed has a use I classification by the County's guiding water policy document, the County-wide Stream Protection Strategy (CSPS). These waters are suitable for water contact sports; play and leisure time activities;

fishing, the growth and propagation of fish, other aquatic life, and wildlife; agricultural supply; and industrial water supply.

Noise walls will be provided in accordance with SHA policy.

Special Protection Area (SPA) Review

Roughly 3.5 acres of this project lies within the Mainstem sub-watershed of the Upper Paint Branch SPA. The SPA portion of the project includes that portion of Old Columbia Pike and adjoining sidewalk west of roughly the centerline of the road. It also includes the part of Briggs Chaney Road and its sidewalks west of Old Columbia Pike.

The current proposal includes adding 30,716 square feet of pavement and removing 9,827 square feet of existing impervious surfaces so that the net gain in impervious surfaces (of 1,660 square feet) in the project is minimized. Pavement will be added to create additional lanes on Briggs Chaney Road at the intersection, to reconstruct the curb and gutter portion of Old Columbia Pike, and to extend an existing sidewalk on the north side of Briggs Chaney Road to Old Briggs Chaney Road. Existing impervious surfaces will be removed by reconstructing some concrete stormwater conveyance channels as grassed channels and narrowing some existing sidewalks.

Staff's review and recommendations for the SPA combined preliminary and final water quality plan is the subject of the item that precedes this Mandatory Referral. The review is covered in a separate memorandum. The Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (DPS) has reviewed and conditionally approved its portion of the water quality plan.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

A meeting with area citizens was held by SHA on this project on April 29, 2002, but staff was not invited to attend. This meeting appears to be the source of several comments staff has received recently from members of the Greencastle Lakes Community Association (GLCA) expressing concern about placing the US 29 Commuter Bikeway on Wexhall Drive. These concerns have centered on the fear of outsiders coming into the neighborhood and on increased crime.

As indicated earlier, residents of areas through which proposed trails pass have often expressed these same fears, but once the trails are built, the fears have been shown to be unfounded and the trails are seen as assets to the community. Among others, this was the case with the now-overwhelmingly popular Capital Crescent Trail. Chairman Holmes in a recent response letter to Mr. Israel Putnam of the GLCA affirmed the Board's support of the US 29 Commuter Bikeway. The Chairman's letter is shown as Attachment 11. Mr. Putnam's letter and additional correspondence from other area citizens is shown as Attachment 12.

Some concern has been expressed by residents regarding SHA's placement of the US 29 Commuter Bikeway on Wexhall Drive, rather than parallel to US 29 as staff recommends. This segment of the bikeway is not part of this project but the Board will

have an opportunity to express its opinion on the location of the bikeway when the US 29/Greencastle Road interchange is submitted as a Mandatory Referral, unless a separate bikeway project is proposed first. The connection to Wexhall Drive is needed no matter which alignment of the main bikeway is chosen.

RELATED ISSUES

In its review of the overall project, the Board recommended that SHA create follow-up projects to complete the median priority bus lanes and to complete the Commuter Bikeway, including underpasses at the major cross streets, by the time the third interchange is constructed along US 29. The proposed Briggs Chaney Road would be the third interchange, but SHA has not yet created this follow-up project. ***Staff recommends that the Board reiterate its recommendation to ensure that the entire length of both the median bus priority lanes and Commuter Bikeway are completed in a timely manner, rather than create pieces that would have only limited utility for sometime into the future.***

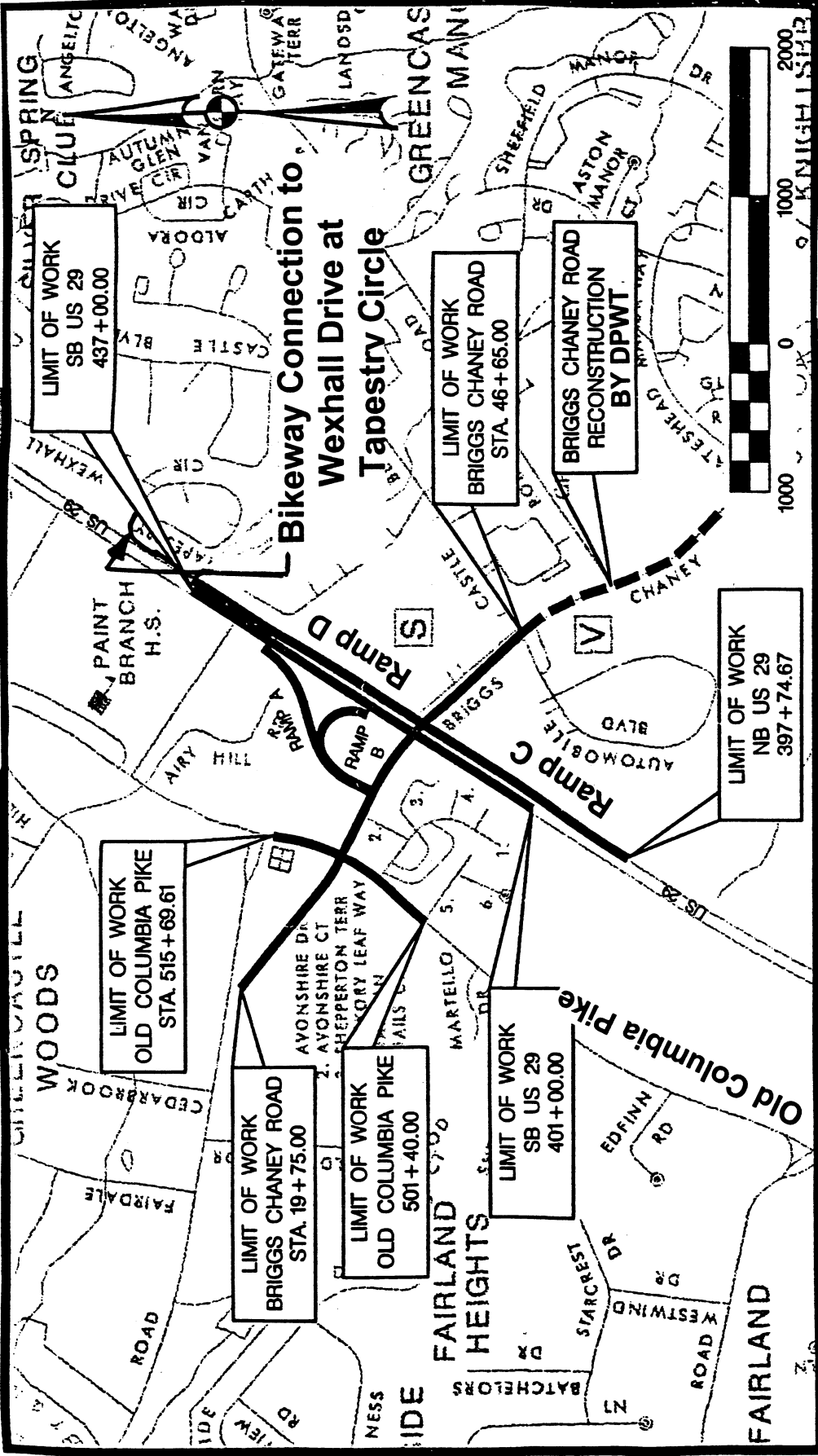
The Planning Board and staff have supported the highway component of the US 29 projects, but have also repeatedly stated that all components of this multi-modal transportation facility must likewise be completed in a timely manner. We are pleased that SHA is building segments of the Commuter Bikeway within the project limits of each of the three funded interchanges. However, long stretches of other parts of the bikeway may remain unbuilt for many years into the future until decisions are made to fund the construction of the rest of the proposed interchanges. It would be very undesirable, for example, to wait until some indeterminate future date when the very last interchange on US 29 is finally built before the missing links in the bikeway are built and the entire alignment is useable as a commuter facility.

Similarly, we are pleased that SHA is providing 12' shoulders next to the median so that express buses can eventually use them as priority lanes. For an indeterminate time into the future, however, SHA expects buses to continue to use the substandard 10' outside shoulders and face conflicts with vehicles accelerating and decelerating at every new ramp that is built in conjunction with the new interchanges. Staff does not believe that waiting until the very last interchange on US 29 is built before the bus priority lanes are shifted from the outside shoulder to the median shoulder of the highway is a safe or workable scenario.

Since there is no guarantee that each and every one of the proposed US 29 interchanges will be funded for construction, there is a possibility that the incremental construction of the Commuter Bikeway and the median shoulder bus priority lanes would not be completed for many years. Staff, therefore, recommends that the Planning Board continue to request that SHA implement a follow-up project that will assure construction of the entire Commuter Bikeway and also the shifting of the bus priority lanes from the outside shoulder to the median shoulder, consistent with previous Board recommendations and based on a timely and predictable schedule.

LC:cmd

MR US 29-Briggs Chaney Road.doc



MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MD PROJECT LENGTH 0.80 MILES

Vicinity Map

Avonshire

TO GOOD HOPE ROAD

BRIGGS CHANEY ROAD

Briggs Chaney Road

NORTH

Bikepath

US 29 SOUTHBOUND LANES

417+00

418+00

419+00

420+00

US 29 NORTHBOUND LANES

RETAINING WALL II

Staff recommends enlarging traffic island and extending median

2417+00

2418+00

1419+00

RAMP D

RAMP C

US 29 Commuter Bikeway

Bikepath

UNDER CONSTR. BRIGGS CHANEY RD.

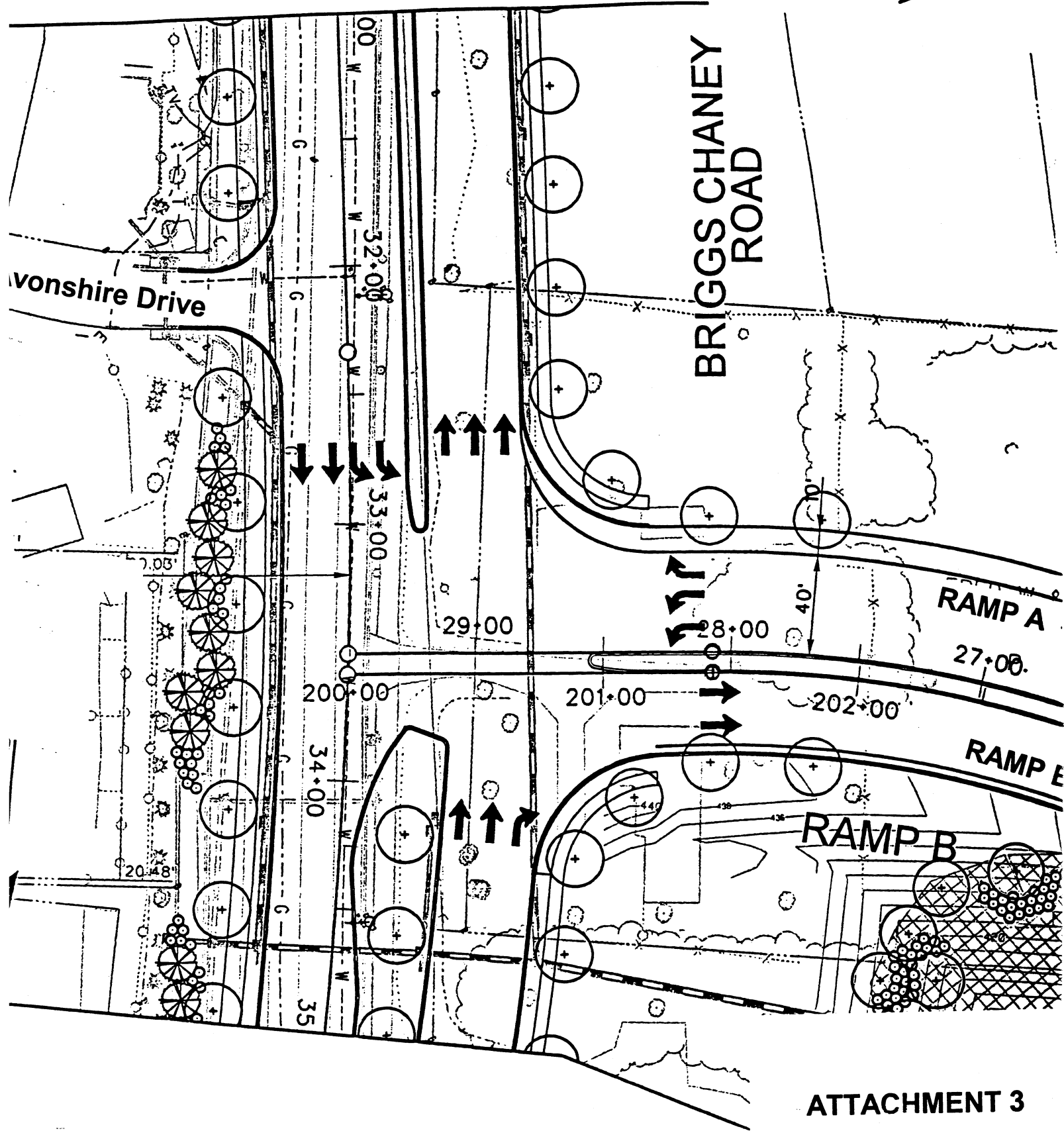
US 29 Commute Bikeway

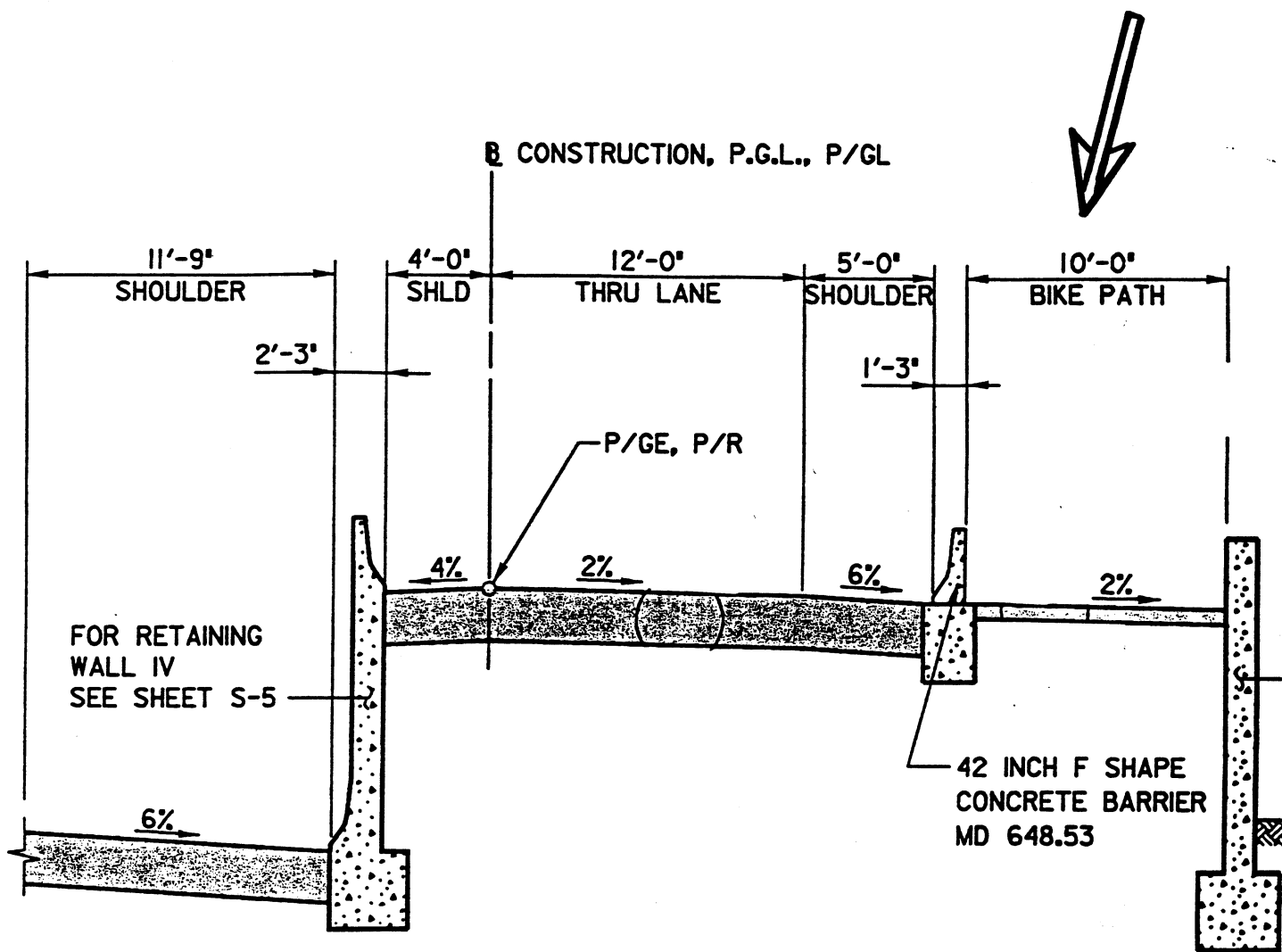
Briggs Chaney Shopping Center

40+00

ATTACHMENT 2

NORTH
→





US 29 Northbound
Lanes

RAMP D

STA. 1419+00 TO STA. 1424+50
NOT TO SCALE

438+00 +74.83 439+00 440+00 441+00 442+00 4

2" STEEL CONDUIT

US 29 N.B.R.

I
13-8

I
13-7

B34

18'

BIKE PATH

15'

RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF THRU HIGHWAY

10'

Tapestry Circle

1328200 E

LIMIT OF WORK
BIKE PATH, US 29 STA. 440+65
FAP No.
CONTRACT No. MO868B21

Wexhall Drive

NORTH
→

Shopping Center

Briggs Chaney Road

Fire Station

Old Columbia Pike

Existing Edge of Road

Avonshire

EXISTING WSSC WATER MAIN
& SEWER LINE EASEMENT
PLAT 14229

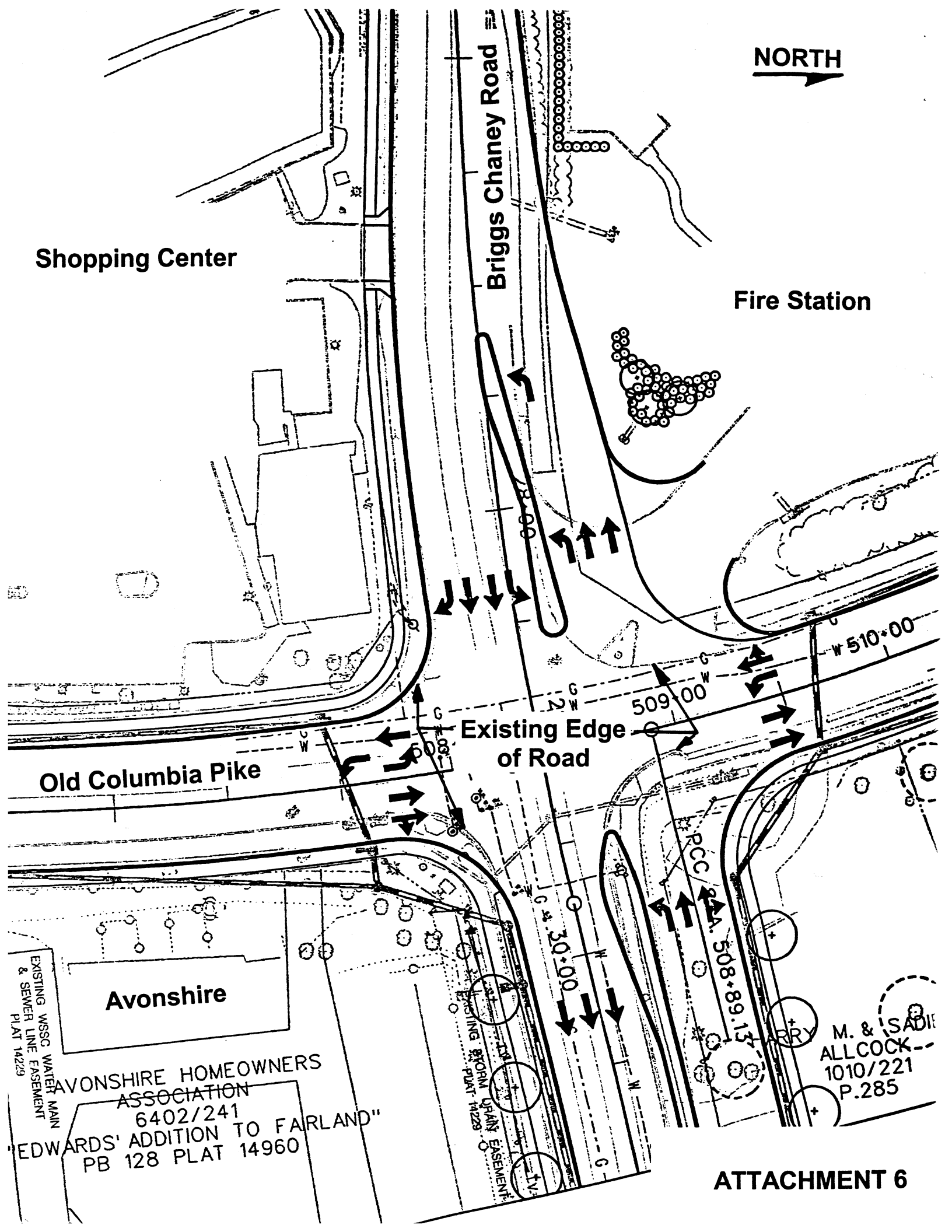
AVONSHIRE HOMEOWNERS
ASSOCIATION
6402/241
"EDWARDS' ADDITION TO FARLAND"
PB 128 PLAT 14960

EXISTING SEWAGE PLANT 14229
EASEMENT

PCC

M. & SADIE
ALLCOCK
1010/221
P.285

ATTACHMENT 6





Maryland Department of Transportation
State Highway Administration

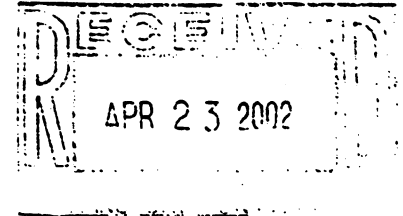
Parris N. Glendening
Governor

John D. Porcari
Secretary

Parker F. Williams
Administrator

April 18, 2002

Mr. Larry Cole
Transportation Planning
Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission
8787 Georgia Ave
Silver Spring MD 20910-3760



Dear Mr. Cole:

Thank you for your comments on the semi-final review plans for the US 29 at Briggs Chaney Road project. These plans were only complete to semifinal design. Therefore, not all cross walk locations had been identified. These details are being finalized now. Listed below are your comments with responses shown in bold.

1. General: Handicap ramps need to be shown for all crosswalks. Dual ramps and median refuges should be constructed wherever possible to reduce crossing distance. **Handicap ramps will be included on the final plans.**
2. All concrete finishes, lighting, and other streetscaping details should match those of the interchanges at Randolph Road and Spencerville Road. **All finishes will match the Randolph Road and MD 198 projects.**
3. PS-03: An underpass should be constructed for the US29 Commuter Bikeway at Briggs Chaney Road with appropriate connections to the bike facilities on Briggs Chaney Road. The further comments below address the plans as they now stand, which do not call for the underpass. **The State Highway Administration will not be constructing an underpass for the US 29 Bikeway due to maintenance and enforcement issues.**
4. PS-03: A sign needs to be installed at the top of Ramp C noting that the off-road bikeway is for northbound use only. Southbound bikes should not be allowed to enter this facility since it would put them adjacent to the northbound lanes with no barrier separation. **The State Highway Administration is reviewing two options. Sign the ramp as you suggest and also add signage to direct US 29 SB cyclist to the Loop Ramp-B for the SB access or provide a physical barrier at the bikeway entrance and terminus of along Ramp-C.**
5. PS-03: A larger traffic island is needed at Ramp C since this is where northbound (and eventually southbound) bikes will be stored waiting to cross the signal at Briggs Chaney Road. This is also the point at which eastbound-westbound and northbound-southbound bikes will cross. The median of the east leg of Briggs Chaney Road should be extended somewhat and a pedestrian/bicycle refuge needs to be shown.

My telephone number is _____

Maryland Relay Service for Impaired Hearing or Speech
1-800-735-2258 Statewide Toll Free

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 717 • Baltimore, MD 21203-0717
Street Address: 707 North Calvert Street • Baltimore, Maryland 21202

ATTACHMENT

The pork-chop island at the terminus of Ramp-C will be widened from the current size of 225sf to maximum size, which does not affect turning movements.

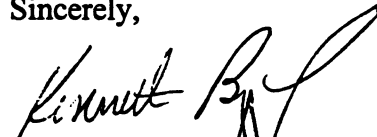
6. Per the AASHTO Highway Safety Design and Operations Guide, sidewalks in commercial areas should be eight feet wide when adjacent to the curb. Even if the sidewalk is typically constrained at the shopping center in the northeast quadrant of the interchange, it should be pulled away from the curb and/or widened as soon as the right-of-way opens up (Station 40+00 LT). Some area should be provided behind the sidewalk to allow for some landscaping. Widening the area between the curb and the wall may also reduce the length of retaining wall needed. The same concept applies in the southeast quadrant also. **In the area between Sta. 39+00 and Sta. 42+00, we will move the 6 foot sidewalk adjacent to the retaining wall and provide a two foot grass strip between the curb and the sidewalk. However, between sta. 43+00 and 44+50 we are constrained with the parking lot for the shopping center and can only provide a six foot sidewalk from the face of the curb to the back of the sidewalk. Any additional widening would impact the parking lot. From sta. 45+00 to 46+80, we are replacing the existing sidewalk to tie into the Montgomery County project east of Castle Boulevard.**
7. PS-06: The proposed sidewalk should be extended to the limit of work at Old Briggs Chaney Road. **The State Highway Administration is only providing the grading for future sidewalk construction. This portion was excluded, as it would put the additional impervious area above the 10% Special Protection Area cap.**
8. PS-07: The curb radii here should be reduced to 30' maximum. The 20' curb radius at the fire station should be reduced to the minimum possible to reduce the long pedestrian crossing of the west leg of Briggs Chaney Road. **The State Highway Administration will review the curb radii request and reduce the fillet radius to 30' providing turning movements are not compromised.**
9. PS-07: The sidewalk in the southwest quadrant of the intersection must be replaced. The sidewalk in the northwest quadrant will be affected by constructed of the proposed storm drain and will require some reconstruction. **The State Highway Administration will replace the existing bituminous sidewalk with a 5ft concrete sidewalk from EB BCR Sta. 27+00 to SB OCP Sta. 504+50. The existing bituminous sidewalk from EB BCR Sta. 24+50 to Sta. 26+60 will be removed and replaced with grass only. The sidewalk in the northwest quadrant (SB OCP) will be reconstructed.**
10. PS-08: The curb radii at the ramp should be reduced to 30' on the west side and 40' on the east side. Will a pedestrian crossing of Briggs Chaney Road be allowed here? If so, a ramp is needed on the south side of the road. **The State Highway Administration will review the request to reduce the west fillet to a 30ft radius. The east fillet must remain at 50ft due to the double right turn to Ramp-B. A pedestrian crossing will be installed here.**

11. PS-09: Additional right-of-way should be obtained to ensure that the proposed crosswalk at Outlet Drive is within the public right-of-way. **We will coordinate this with Montgomery County. If needed, right-of-way will be purchased to keep the crosswalk in the public right-of-way.**
12. PS-10: The proposed sidewalk on the west side of Old Columbia Pike should be extended to the project limit at Nalls Lane. More right-of-way is needed at the intersection (a truncated corner) to accommodate the proposed drainage pipe. **The State Highway Administration will construct the sidewalk on the west side of OCP beginning at Sta. 504+50 (Harry's Restaurant). The remaining portion to Nalls lane will be constructed as part of MCDPW&T sidewalk improvements. The proposed drainage pipe is constructed within a perpetual drainage easement.**
13. PS-11: The plans should show DPWT's planned sidewalk on the west side of Old Columbia Pike north of Old Briggs Chaney Road. **The State Highway Administration will indicate the planned sidewalk location on the Final Plan submission.**
14. Sheets 229 and 252: Why is a pedestrian crossing of the west leg of Briggs Chaney Road not shown? **A pedestrian crossing is not shown on the west leg of the intersection because the length a pedestrian would have to cross would be 145 feet verses 100 feet on the east leg. Therefore we are proposing a cross walk on the east leg.**
15. Sheet 230 and 254: As noted above, dual ramps should be used wherever possible. The proposed ramp in the southeast quadrant does not meet ADA requirements and does not allow easy movement to the north. No ramps are shown in the southwest quadrant. **The ramps on the east leg of BCR are being constructed with the MCDPW&T Briggs Chaney Road Extension Project.**
16. Sheet 231 and 254: A striped crosswalk should be shown at Outlet Drive. **The State Highway Administration will provide a striped crosswalk across Outlet Drive in the Final Plan Submission.**
17. Sheets 232 and 248: Striped crosswalks must be shown at Ramps C and D and across the east leg of Briggs Chaney Road. **The State Highway Administration will provide striped crosswalks at Ramp C &D and across the East and West leg of BCR in the Final Plan submission.**
18. Sheet 233 and 253: Striped crosswalks must be shown at Ramps A and B. **The State Highway Administration will provide a striped crosswalks at Ramp A &B and in the Final Plan submission.**

19. **Signing: Have the signing plans been coordinated with the landscaping plans? The State Highway Administration will coordinate the signing and landscaping.**
20. **LS-03: More landscaping is needed at the top of Retaining Wall VI. The State Highway Administration can provide additional landscaping along Retaining Wall VI.**
21. **LS-04 and LS-06: Street trees should be planted between the curb and sidewalk on Briggs Chaney Road and Old Columbia Pike wherever possible. Where this is prevented by the presence of storm drains, the trees should be planted behind the sidewalk. The State Highway Administration will review the location of the street trees to determine the best location that avoids utilities.**

Thank you again for your comments on this project. If you have any questions or need any additional information, please feel free to contact Melinda Peters, the Project Manager, who can be reached at (410) 545-8772.

Sincerely,



Kenneth T. Briggs
Chief, Highway Design Division

cc: Ms. Melinda Peters, SHA, Highway Design

NORTH ↑

Greencastle Road

Old Columbia Pike

Wexhall Drive

**Segments of US 29
Commuter Bikeway
proposed to be built**

**Briggs Chaney
Shopping Center**

Robey Road

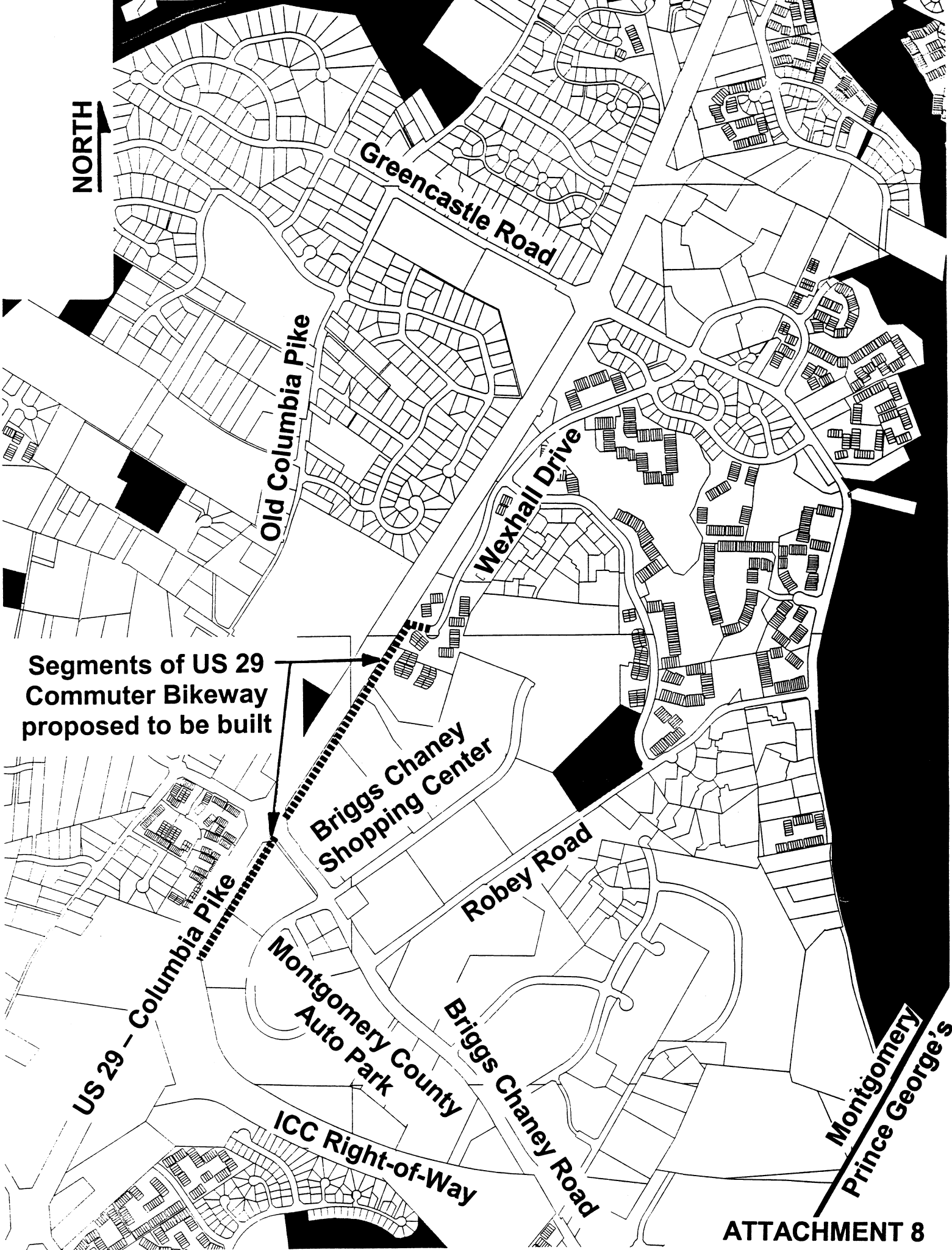
US 29 – Columbia Pike

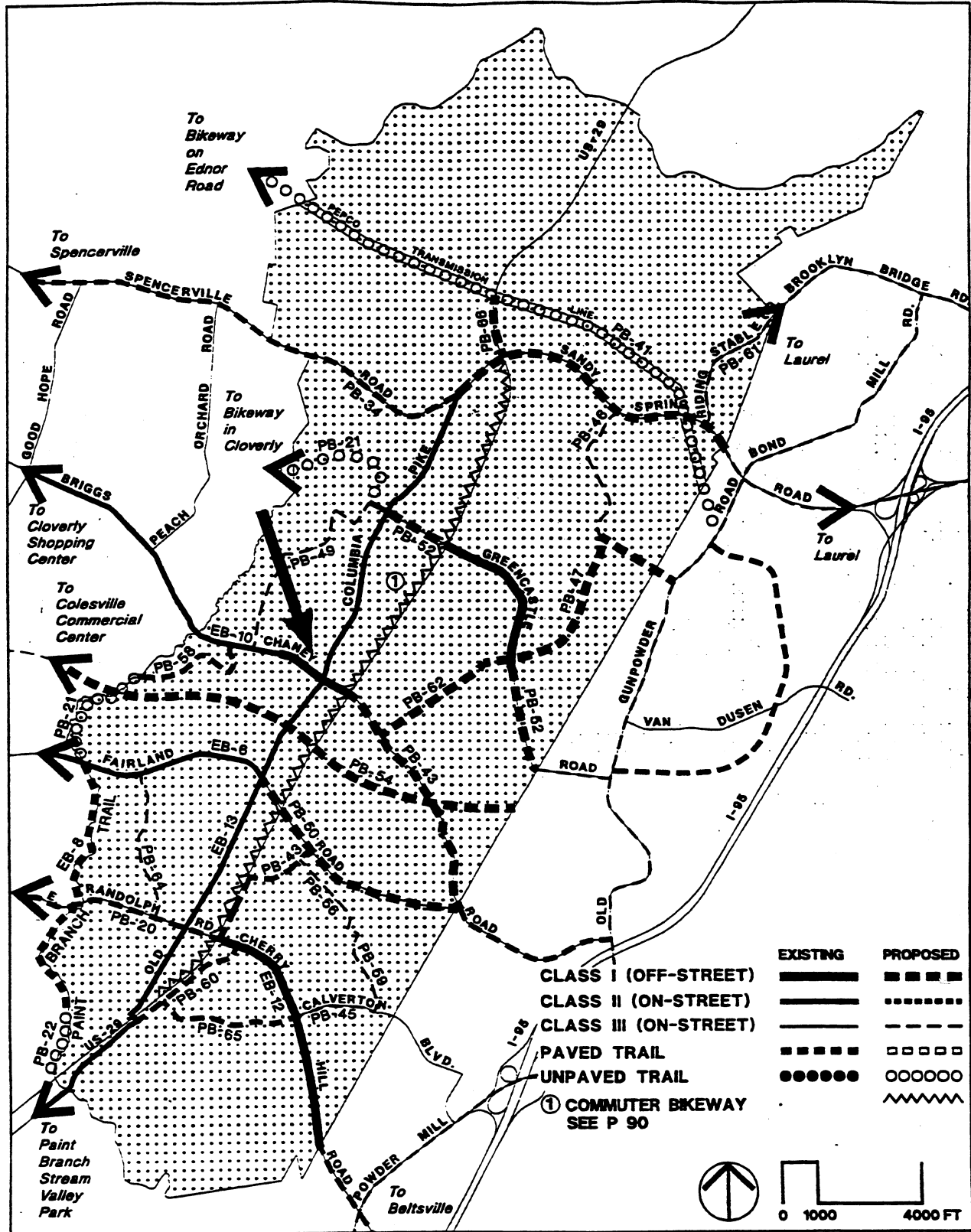
**Montgomery County
Auto Park**

Briggs Chaney Road

ICC Right-of-Way

**Montgomery
Prince George's**







Future Park Acquisitions

Old Columbia Pike

**Current M-NCPPC
Parcels**

Briggs Chaney Road

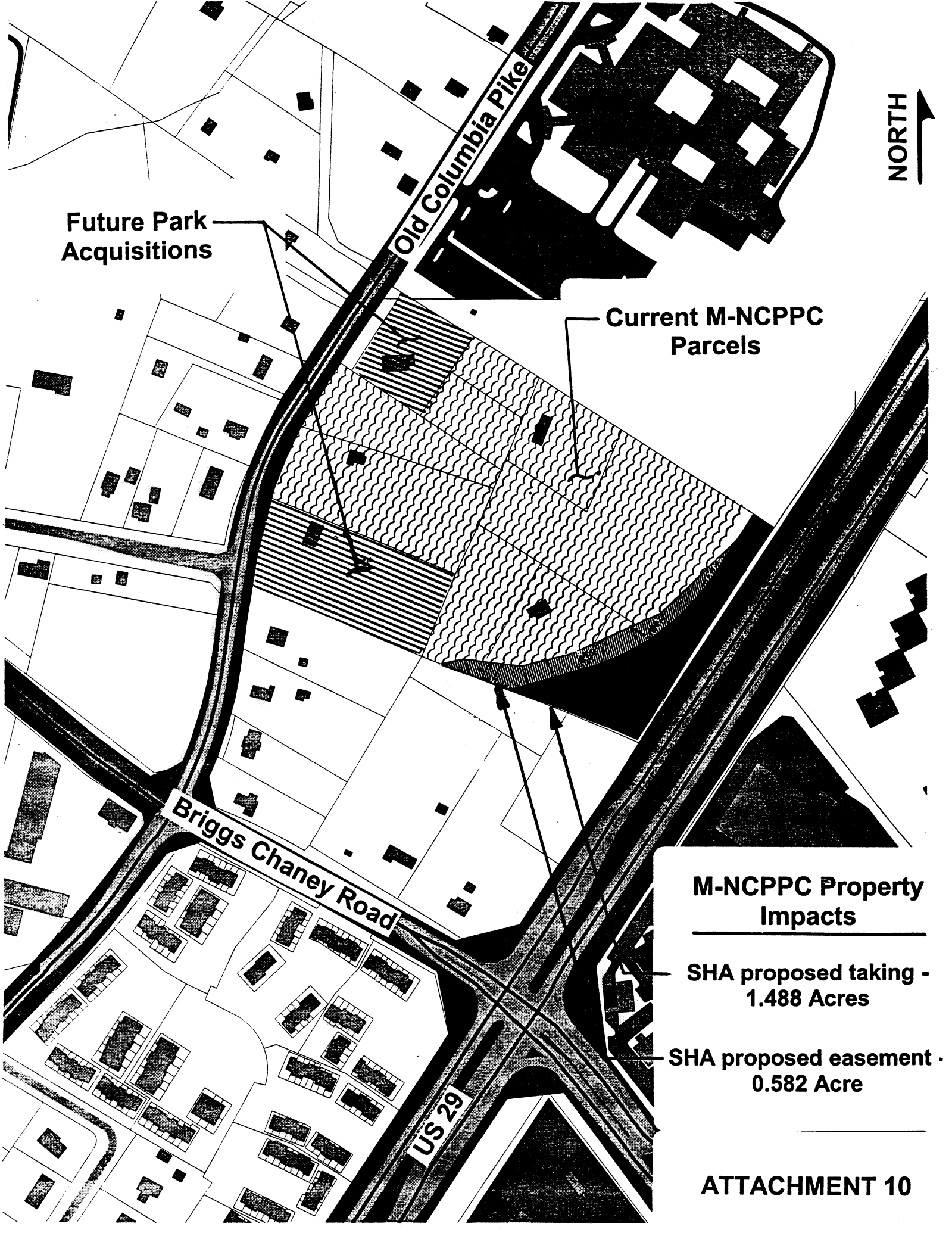
US 29

**M-NCPPC Property
Impacts**

SHA proposed taking -
1.488 Acres

SHA proposed easement -
0.582 Acre

ATTACHMENT 10





THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
Office of the Chairman, Montgomery County Planning Board

May 29, 2002

Mr. Israel Putnam
Greencastle Lakes Community Association
C/o The Management Group Associates, Inc.
One Bank Street, Suite 250
Gaithersburg, MD 20878

Dear Mr. Putnam:

Thank you for your recent letter that expressed your concerns about the State Highway Administration's (SHA) proposed location for a segment of the Commuter Bikeway along US 29. Our staff has similar concerns about placing the bikeway on Wexhall Drive, and would instead prefer an alternate alignment that keeps the off-road bikeway parallel to and within the right-of-way of the reconstructed US 29. I understand that you and the residents in your community would prefer the alternate alignment as well.


The Planning Board has strongly supported construction of the Commuter Bikeway, which is described on page 90 of the Fairland Master Plan. SHA's current plans for the Briggs Chaney Road interchange show a short connection for the Commuter Bikeway at the end of Wexhall Drive, which we generally support because of the importance of providing non-auto connections to communities near the larger hiker-biker paths such as those planned for US 29.

However, SHA's plans for continuing the bikeway northward along the edge of Wexhall Drive are not part of the Briggs Chaney Road interchange project, but actually part of the proposed interchange at Greencastle Road, which is not yet funded for construction. If the Greencastle Road interchange is funded and brought to the Planning Board for mandatory referral review at a future date, the location of the bikeway will be discussed in detail. Until then, our staff will make SHA aware of the shared concerns over the location of the Commuter Bikeway in the vicinity of Greencastle Lakes and a preference for the alternate alignment.

ATTACHMENT 11

If you wish additional information on this topic, please contact Alex Hekimian of our transportation planning staff at 301-495-4525.

Sincerely,



Arthur Holmes, Jr.
Chairman

AH:AH:cmd

Letter to Putnam re CTRACK 2002-0803.doc

GREENCASTLE LAKES COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

c/o The Management Group Associates, Inc.

One Bank Street, Suite 250

Gaithersburg, Maryland 20878

(301) 948-6666 FAX (301) 963-3856

May 16, 2002

Planning Board
MNCPPC
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

RECEIVED
0803
MAY 17 2002

**OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION**

Dear Mr. Holmes and Fellow Commissioners:

I represent the Greencastle Lakes Community Association. Greencastle Lakes is a community of 822 homes located in Burtonsville, Maryland. Our community is located on the land bordered by US 29 on the west, Greencastle Road to the north, and Robey Road to the east. We recently invited the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) to our community to provide an overview of the US 29 upgrades for Briggs Chaney Road and Greencastle Road. At this meeting, our residents noticed a bike path had been added to the plans for our community that were not noted during past meetings with the SHA. The representative for the SHA stated that this was part of the "Master Plan" for the area.

These plans show that some of our community would be ceded to the County so that a bike path could be constructed from Wexhall Drive to the corner of Briggs Chaney Road and US 29. No one ever asked our opinion on this topic. On the behalf of a majority of the residents of Greencastle Lakes, let me state that this is unacceptable and we do not wish this path to be constructed.

Our reasons for objecting to this plans are as follows:

- The first bike path constructed in East Montgomery County (~1968) follows Old Columbia Road. This path follows the length of US 29 from Burtonsville to White Oak. The path is an average of 4' wide in each direction (north and south) and is only one block west of the proposed path.
- According to the Fairland Master Plan from 8/96 on page 107, no documentation of this bike path exists.
- Recent improvements and upgrades to Robey Road include 9' shoulders and sidewalks, making this route very safe for bicycles. This road is about one-quarter of a mile to the east of the proposed path.

ATTACHMENT 12

- Opening our community to through bicycle/pedestrian traffic could increase safety issues that we, as a community, have not had to address in the past, possibly implicating homeowners by increased insurance costs to our Association.
- This path would open our community to easier access to possible criminal activity. Presently, Wexhall Drive is a dead-end street in the community. Having a well-lit, 8' wide bike path will create an open access to the community that does not presently exist.
- Under Montgomery County regulations, such a walkway/path will require snow and ice clearing. Montgomery County officials have stated that the community, residents and its management are responsible for clearing such areas. During severe winters, the cost for clearing this path could cost thousands of dollars. If current bike paths were used, no additional funds would be required because the County maintains those areas.

On behalf of our community, please do not add this path to the planned renovation for the Briggs Chaney overpass, as it does not exist on the Fairland Master Plan and it does not serve the community it would pass through.

Sincerely,



Israel Putnam, President
Greencastle Lakes Community Association

IP/vl

GC – III6, IIe

f:\assoc\gc\mncppc.doc

cc: Residents of Greencastle Lakes
Douglas Duncan, Montgomery County Executive
Marilyn Praisner, County Councilmember, District 4

-----Original Message-----

From: Carol Badwah [mailto:CBadwah@bna.com]
Sent: Monday, June 03, 2002 3:45 PM
To: Cole, Larry
Subject: Objection to bikepath at Greencastle Lakes

I am a homeowner at the Greencastle Lakes community in Burtonsville and am writing to express my objection to the proposal of making a bike path through our community (from Buck Hill Court and Tapestry Circle to Greencastle Road). This, in my opinion, is not a very good idea as it opens up the community to a lot of "outsiders" which in the long run can have a negative effect on our community. It is bad enough that we are bordered by apartments in the Castle Boulevard area and to have this bike path added to our community will do more harm than good. The recent widening of Robey Road on the eastern side of development provides adequately for bike riding and the addition of sidewalks are a great addition for pedestrians. In my opinion another bikepath is unnecessary and would only help decrease our property value.

I suggest that this proposal be dropped.

Thank you.

-----Original Message-----

From: Genevieve Dayes [mailto:GDayes@bna.com]
Sent: Monday, June 03, 2002 2:54 PM
To: Cole, Larry
Subject: Greencastle Lakes Comm.

I am responding to a letter I received from Greencastle Lakes Comm. Assoc. regarding the bike path that is being planned in my neighborhood. I am very concerned about what this bike path is going to do to my neighborhood. You see, I live on Tapestry Circle, already the traffic that comes pass my house is already out of control. Not too long ago one morning I got into my car to go somewhere the four wheels on my car were loosened, one wheel came off completely I had to call for road service. this was very frightening. From time to time I have to pick up Mcdonalds boxes and paper from in front of my house. Putting a bike path in our neighborhood is going to affect the value of our property. I am saddened by this proposal, and I wished the bike path would be re-consider.

Cole, Larry

From: trobinson@olg.com
Sent: Wednesday, May 29, 2002 10:05 AM
To: Cole, Larry
Cc: ocmail@co.mo.md.us; tmgainc@themgmtgroup.com
Subject: Greencastle Lakes Bike Path

Dear Mr. Cole,

I was provided your name as a contact person for the Columbia Pike Project at Briggs Chaney Road, Contract No. MO868B21. It is my understanding that there is a hearing planned for May 30th to discuss this issue. If I am unable to attend I would like this messages submitted for the record.

As a resident of Greencastle Lakes I have several concerns regarding the National Capital Park and Planning Commissions' Planning Board decision to add an extended Bike Path to the Fairland Master Plan. While the addition of bike paths may seem like a very mundane addition, it is not the case when it exposes a community to one of the highest centers of crime in the county. The county has invested heavily in a number of recreational outlets surrounding this community that after dark become the home to unsupervised children and teens who lack sufficient jobs and recreational outlets. The result has been increasing crime in a community that is a growing tax base for Eastern Montgomery County. The addition of this bike path would just become an additional haven for children, who while they are victims are poverty are also perpetrators of crime. It is clear from the my conversations with the Eastern County Police Substation, on Briggs Chaney Road following the theft of automobiles of neighbors to my right and left, that they are unable to address the crime that exists within the community. Unlike in Bethesda, I have not heard of any plans to have these bike paths patrolled by Police on bicycles. It is also rare to see these Officers patrolling the neighborhood at all. In fact after 5pm it is rare to find anyone at the substation at all.

The improvements on Robey Road provide a sufficient bike path for most cyclist and more people are using it for that purpose. The street is well lit and safer because of regular automobile traffic. Further it leads people to the Fairland Park which has become a very positive addition to our community. The improvement of Rt29 is extremely positive for our community, however your "minor" addition would lock our community into a den of crime that our current local government has not yet gotten a handle on. Without commitments from other agencies, for which the MNCPPC has no control over your plan

is not
a workable solution.

Thank you for your time.
Tira Robinson
14170 Aldora Cirle
Burtonsville, MD 20866

cc: County Executive Office
Greencastle Lake Community Association

Cole

RECEIVED
JUN 13 2002

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

15016 Timberlake Drive
Silver Spring, Md. 20905
12 June 2002

Arthur Holmes, Jr., Chairman
Montgomery County Planning Board
8787 Spring Street
Silver Spring, Md. 20910

Dear Chairman Holmes:

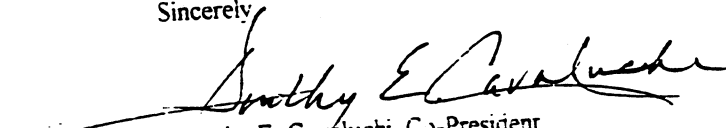
On behalf of the Peach Orchard Heights Citizens' Association, we are deeply concerned about the apparent willingness of the Planning Board to approve SHA's proposal to increase the imperviousness levels in their construction projects, especially the most recent project involving the improvement of the Briggs Chaney and Old Columbia Pike intersection. We live in the Right Branch of the North Fork of the Paint Branch Special Protection area, and have already suffered significant damage to the trout population and ecosystem due to the housing development upstream, which supposedly complies with the ten percent imperviousness limit. More damage and destruction will be evidenced as road and housing construction continues.

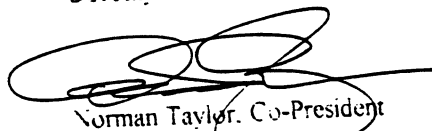
There should be a commitment on the Planning Board's part to preserve and protect our natural resources, and to adhere to the strict guidelines developed in 1981. SHA, as well as all other agencies, should be held accountable regarding these guidelines. We request that, at the hearing on June 20th, the same approach for evaluating impervious levels used for all projects in the past be used for this project, as well as all future projects. There are ways SHA could comply with this project, such as setting land aside as a "pervious reserve" to bring the overall imperviousness into compliance. SHA could utilize property it currently owns at the corner of Peach Orchard Road and MD 198, the Peach Orchard Ailnutt property, as a "pervious reserve." This solution would also serve as a buffer zone to protect our section of the Paint Branch from further erosion and destruction.

In addition, we request that the Planning Board defer any action until the conclusions and recommendations of Council Member Marilyn Praisner's Upper Paint Branch Technical Work Group are available. The Planning Board has an honorable reputation of maximizing its influence to protect and preserve the pure natural resources in Montgomery County. To do any less is a betrayal of the residents the members of the Board represent.

Please distribute this letter to all members of the Planning Board. Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely


Dorothy E. Cavaluchi, Co-President


Norman Taylor, Co-President

cc: Steve Silverman, President, Montgomery County Council

Dr. and Mrs. Jeffrey D. Whall
15529 Thompson Road
Silver Spring, Maryland 20905
301-989-1795
MJDKTWHALL@AOL.COM

RECEIVED
JUN 14 2002

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

June 12, 2002

Arthur Holmes, Jr., Chairman
Montgomery County Planning Board
8787 Spring Street
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Chairman Holmes:

We are writing this because we were made aware of a significant action being taken by the managers at the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. The rules are being ignored to accommodate the State Highway Administration's agenda. We are referring to the expansion of the intersection at Briggs Chaney Road and Old Columbia Pike. The Upper Paint Branch Special Protection Area is being ignored.

The law that established the Upper Paint Branch Special Protection area clearly states that the imperviousness of any project must be no more than 10 percent, that this limit applies to *all* projects both public and private, and explicitly states that it is applicable to road projects. Imperviousness has been calculated consistently for every project since 1981. Why is MNCPPC treating this project differently?

It seems the Upper Paint Branch is no longer considered a protected area if this were to happen as planned. Why do we make these rules? Is it only for some and not all? Why is this protection being taken away and threatened?

Please take action and stop this injustice of bending rules for certain projects over others. On June 20, we ask the Planning Board to state at the hearing that the same method and rules be used to evaluate impervious for all projects, including this one. Please defer action until a recommendation from Council member Marilyn Praisner's Upper Paint Branch Technical Work Group is available. Please consider the tremendous impact of this particular project. It will set a dangerous precedent: bending the rules for *all* road projects, (biased of course to who's agenda it is). We urge you to consider this action.

Sincerely,

J D Whall *Mary D Whall*