



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

January 9, 2003

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Montgomery County Planning Board

**VIA:** John A. Carter, Chief *JAC*  
Community-Based Planning Division

Khalid Afzal, Team Leader, Georgia Avenue Team  
Community-Based Planning Division *KA*

**FROM:** Lyn Coleman, Master Planner *Lyn*  
Tanya Schmieler, Planner-Supervisor  
Countywide Planning Division

Frederick Vernon Boyd, Community Planner *FV*  
Georgia Avenue Team (301) 495-4654

**SUBJECT:** Planning Board Worksession #4 on the Upper Rock Creek Area Master Plan—Park Trails and Other Issues

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**RECOMMENDATION:** *Approval* of Public Hearing Draft recommendations for Park Trails and specified Park Development projects, with modifications outlined in this memorandum; *approval* of recommendation for H&S Leasing property outlined in this memorandum

**Discussion**

The fourth worksession on the Upper Rock Creek Area Master Plan seeks the Planning Board's approval of Public Hearing Draft recommendations for Park Trails and for those Park Development recommendations that do not involve proposed acquisitions on the Dungan, Casey, Freeman, Hendry, Fraley and Woodlawn properties. Staff proposes to defer discussion and review of those recommendations until the next worksession, which will focus on proposals to increase the inventory of affordable housing in the Upper Rock Creek Master Plan Area and on the large, undeveloped properties. This worksession also seeks Planning Board approval of a recommendation for the H&S Leasing property on Gude Drive.

This packet contains the following:

- This memorandum, which summarizes Park Trails and Park Development issues to be discussed at the worksession, and outlines a recommendation for the H&S Leasing property;
- A summary, with planning staff responses, of public hearing testimony on Park Trails issues (Attachment 1);
- Maps showing park development, trail corridors and parkland recommendations with accompanying legend tables (Attachment 2);
- A decision matrix for Park Trails and Park Development recommendations (Attachment 3);
- A letter from representatives of H&S Leasing outlining a request that their property, currently zoned I-2, be classified in the I-1 Zone (Attachment 4); and
- A map showing the H&S Leasing property location (Attachment 5).

### **Park Development and Park Trails Recommendations**

Future park and trail needs are addressed in the Public Hearing Draft of the Upper Rock Creek Area Master Plan. It includes major recommendations from “A Park and Trail Analysis for the Upper Rock Creek Vicinity” (recommendations are summarized in Attachment 2). The draft Analysis Report was prepared in conjunction with the update to the Upper Rock Creek Area Master Plan to provide more detailed analysis and discussions on park and trail needs in relation to Upper Rock Creek and surrounding areas. It will be printed in final form after the Master Plan worksessions and will include any requested Planning Board additions. A brief overview of the major park and trail issues in the Upper Rock Creek Planning Area, and comments made at the public hearing (Attachment 1) are also included in this memorandum.

#### Overview of Park Issues

The draft Park and Trail Analysis Report considers needs for recreation and trails while balancing the desire to protect sensitive environmental areas and provide stewardship of natural resources. It recommends where additional parkland should be acquired to meet plan objectives related to: a) Recreation Opportunities; b) Resource Protection; c) Trail Corridors; and d) Settings for Historic, Archeological and Cultural Features. It also recommends amendments to the Countywide Park Trails Plan.

#### Future Park and Recreation Needs

The Upper Rock Creek Master Plan Area includes over 4,100 acres of parkland, encompassing approximately 36 percent of its total land area. The majority of this parkland is undeveloped stream valley or recreational parkland.

#### Public Hearing Testimony (Attachment 1)

A review of testimony indicated that there were no specific comments made related to future park and recreation needs other than a request to address needs for facilities like

skate parks. Comments made at Master Plan Advisory Group meetings indicated that there was significant interest in this issue. Additionally, a survey completed by more than 250 Granby Woods Civic Association members on quality of life issues included questions on future recreation needs, and future needs for currently undeveloped parkland. Results of the survey indicated that most Upper Rock Creek residents visit Montgomery County Parks two or three times a month or more. Most frequent reasons given for visiting parks were 1) to be outdoors and enjoy nature; 2) use playground or other children's recreation facilities; 3) walk on trails/nature walks; and 4) picnic. Residents requested more conservation areas, trails, nature centers, historic areas, playgrounds, and ball fields. A large majority of respondents felt that park facilities fulfilled the recreation needs of their households, are well maintained and safe during the day. Some respondents felt that parks were overcrowded.

The 1998 Park, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan addresses the need for specific facilities. It indicated that existing recreation facilities would meet local recreation needs in the Upper Rock Creek Area through the year 2010. Additional local park development may be needed after that time, particularly as residential areas adjacent to Upper Rock Creek are more densely developed and use area facilities. There will also be additional needs to expand development of the existing recreational parks in the area, which serve adjacent communities as well as Upper Rock Creek residents.

Major park recommendations in the Plan include the following:

- A new local park at MD 108 and Muncaster Road, and development of a ballfield and playground at Winters Run Local Park;
- Development of larger parks, including use of part of Laytonia Recreational Park as a baseball complex, and using Muncaster Recreational Park for passive recreation as well as major recreation use along MD 124. The Agricultural History Farm Park is also suggested for additional historic farm activities; and
- Acquisition of additional parkland on major undeveloped properties that would preserve important environmental areas. As noted above, discussion of these proposals will be deferred until decisions on specific properties are final.

### Overview of Major Park Trail Issues

Trails are the County's most popular recreation facility and can be used by people of all ages, including the elderly and the very young. The Upper Rock Creek Area Master Plan provides for an interrelated trail and bikeway system that includes trails within the park system linked by connections to the community and nearby bikeways.

The Countywide Park Trails Plan (July 1998) and the Master Plan for Rock Creek Regional Park propose trail systems in the planning area. Revisions to the Countywide Park Trails Plan are recommended in the Upper Rock Creek Public Hearing Draft and are summarized below and included in Attachment 2.

The Countywide Park Trails Plan shows a natural surface trail through the Rock Creek Stream Valley Park, linking Rock Creek Regional Park to the Agricultural History Farm Park, Muncaster Recreational Park, and ultimately extending north to the Patuxent River. The North Branch of Rock Creek is shown as a hard surface trail corridor in the Countywide Park Trails Plan. Acquisition of additional parkland for trails is recommended outside of stream valley buffers, whenever possible, to avoid environmentally sensitive areas. The role of the ICC right-of-way in trail planning is also addressed in the Countywide Park Trails Plan, which recommends that a hard surface trail be provided in the vicinity of the right-of-way whether or not the highway is built.

### **Review of Public Hearing Testimony**

At the public hearing, speakers suggested that a wildlife corridor be provided instead of a hard surface trail in the ICC alignment. Safe access to the Rock Creek Trail from Olney was also requested.

### **Proposed Revisions to the Countywide Park Trails Plan**

- Use the Shady Grove Sector Plan to evaluate removing a proposed hard surface trail from the Crabbs Branch stream valley, relying instead on the bikeway proposed along Needwood Road by the Upper Rock Creek Area Master Plan for access to Metro;
- Remove a portion of hard surface trail from the most sensitive portion of the North Branch biodiversity area; using instead a bikeway along Emory Lane and Muncaster Mill Road to connect the North Branch trail system to Lake Frank and points south. Realign portions of the North Branch trail in conjunction with subdivision development on the Casey property to traverse less sensitive areas;
- Use a proposed Class I Needwood Road bikeway to link Rock Creek Trail to the ICC Alignment Bikeway.

### **Specific Trail Recommendations**

- Connect Needwood Road area between Rock Creek Park and the ICC right-of-way;
- Provide a safe connection from the Emory Lane bike path to the Rock Creek Trail system south of Muncaster Road;
- Provide safe road crossings; and
- Provide connector paths from new subdivisions to parks.

## **H&S Leasing Property**

The Public Hearing record for the master plan includes a letter from representatives of H&S Leasing, owners of a three-acre property at the intersection of Gude Drive and Southlawn Lane. The property owners seek the I-1 Zone for their property.

The property is now in the I-2 Zone, and has been occupied for almost three decades by Smith Lithograph Corporation, a printing company. When the plant was established, printing was a permitted use in the I-2 Zone. Text amendments in the 1970s eliminated some generally light industrial uses from the I-2 Zone, which became more narrowly focused on heavy industrial uses that require significant volumes of heavy truck traffic. Printing activities were subsequently permitted in the I-1 and other light industrial zones, but not in the I-2 Zone. Smith Lithograph Corporation became a non-conforming use in the I-2 Zone. The property owners wish to end that status.

The Smith Lithograph property is in the Gude Drive-Southlawn Lane Special Study Area. The study, done by the Department of Park and Planning, reviewed industrial uses and analyzed land use patterns in this part of Montgomery County. It recommended parts of the study area that should be maintained for heavy industrial uses and indicated areas more suitable for light industrial uses. It delineated areas that would be appropriate for annexation by the City of Rockville and any subsequent change in the zoning status.

The study stated that northern quadrants of the intersection of Gude Drive and Southlawn Lane, where Smith Lithograph's property is located, are suitable for light industrial or other commercial uses because of the size and current uses of the properties. This recognizes that the printing plant is well-established, and acknowledges that the relatively small size of the property and the likely difficulties of assembling land in this area warrant its placement in a light industrial zone. Staff recommends reclassification of the H&S Leasing property to the I-1 Zone.

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Attachments

*Attachment 1*  
*Summary of Public Hearing Testimony*

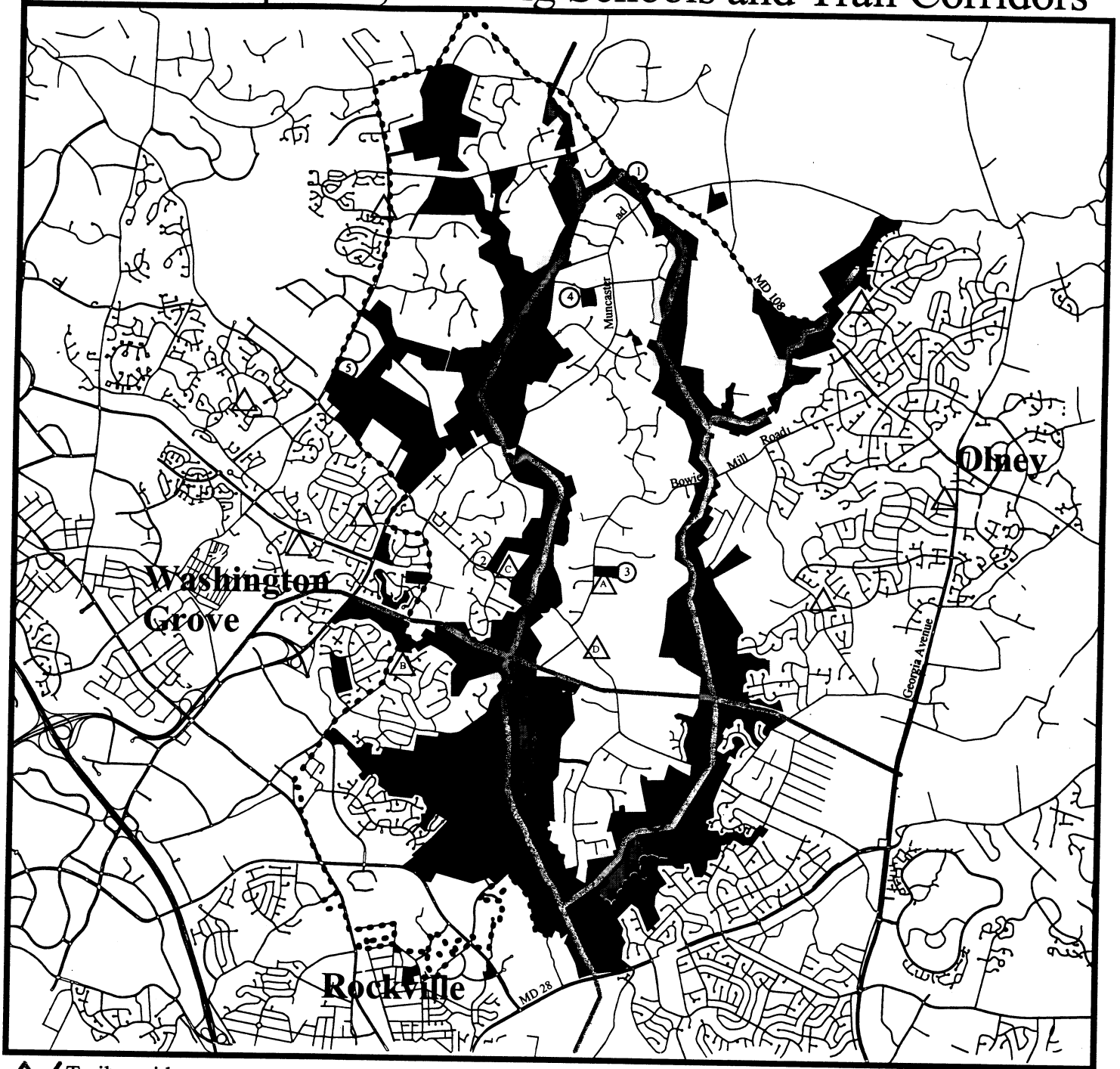
## Summary of Public Hearing Testimony—Upper Rock Creek Area Master Plan Park Trails

Speaker	Comments	Staff Response
Douglas M. Duncan County Executive	Supports recommendation for development of park trails plan  Recommends review of County Recreation Facility Plan	Retain existing recommendation.
David Hamod Norbeck Conservation Society	Opposes hard surface trail along ICC right-of-way	The issue of a trail in the ICC right-of-way is addressed in the Countywide Park Trails Plan. The Plan notes the need for east-west trail connectivity which can be achieved by either a bikepath built in conjunction with the proposed Intercounty Connector, or if the ICC is not built, by providing a hard surface trail in the vicinity of the ICC right-of-way.
John Parrish Maryland Native Plant Society	Opposes hard surface trail along ICC right-of-way; supports creation of cross-county greenway park in right-of-way to facilitate plant and animal migration	If the ICC is not built, a hard surface trail in the right of way would facilitate environmental objectives relating to improving air quality by offering alternatives to automobiles and would provide one of our most popular park facilities: trails. Protecting plants and wildlife would be a key planning objective during the trail planning process.
Art Brodsky Greater Olney Civic Association	Plan should look closely at making Upper Rock Creek more accessible by bicycle from Olney  The need for specific facilities, like skate parks, should be assessed	Agree. The recommendations of the Upper Rock Creek Master Plan in conjunction with trail and bikeway proposals being developed as part of the Olney Master Plan process will provide more access to the park trail system from surrounding neighborhoods.  A skateboard park is recommended in the plan for Olney Manor. Aquatic facilities, ballfields and passive recreation are also addressed.
Jim Fary Sierra Club	Opposes hard surface trail along ICC right-of-way	See above responses.

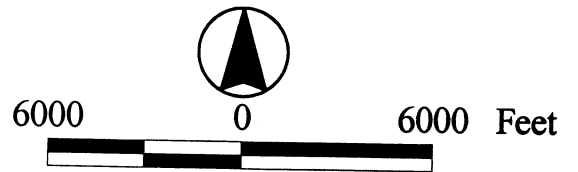
*Attachment 2*  
*Park Development and Park Trails Maps*



# Park Development, Existing Schools and Trail Corridors



- Trail corridors
- Schools
- Master Plan Area Boundary
- Parkland
- ① See table
- △ See table



Upper Rock Creek Area Master Plan

## *Park Development, Existing Schools and Trail Corridors*



### **Existing Schools**

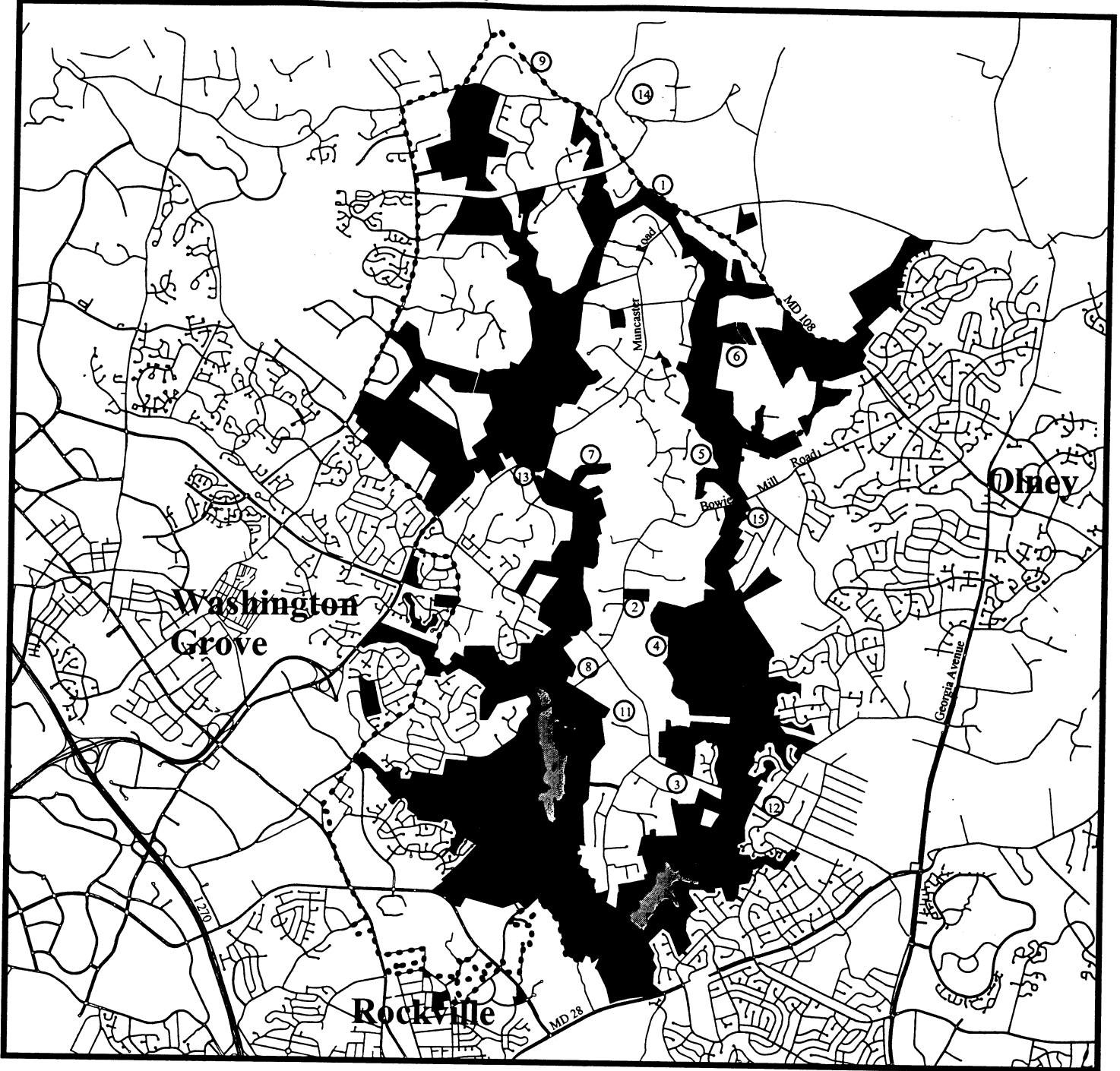
- A. Sequoyah Elementary School
- B. Candlewood Elementary School
- C. Redland Middle School
- D. Magruder High School



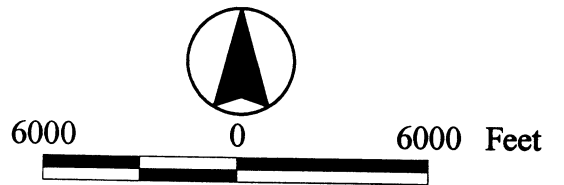
### **Parks Recommended for Future Development**

- 1. Upper Rock Creek Local Park
- 2. Winters Run Local Park
- 3. Bowie Mill Local Park
- 4. Muncaster Manor Local Park
- 5. Muncaster Recreational Park
- 6. Gude Recreational Park
- 7. Laytonia Recreational Park
- 8. Rock Creek Regional Park
- 9. Agricultural History Farm Park

# Parkland Recommendations



- ⋯ Master Plan Area Boundary
- Ⓛ See table
- Parkland
- Existing Parkland
- Proposed Parkland



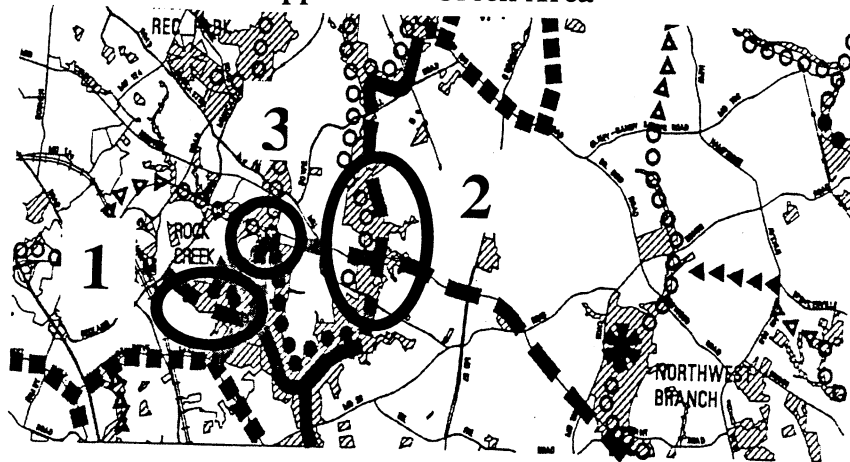
## RELATION TO COUNTYWIDE PARK TRAILS PLAN

The Countywide Park Trails Plan, adopted by the Montgomery County Planning Board in 1998, proposes an interconnected system of park trails. To reflect the environmental, bikeway and land use recommendations of the Rock Creek Master Plan, amendments to the Countywide Park Trails Plan are being proposed. The rationale for these proposed amendments is presented in the Park and Trail Analysis for the Rock Creek Area Master Plan.

The proposed changes to the Countywide Park Trail Concept map for the Rock Creek Corridor are shown below.

1. Remove hard surface trail from Crabbs Branch; rely on bikeway along Needwood Road for access to Metro.
2. Remove portion of hard surface trail from most sensitive portion of the biodiversity area; rely on bikeway along Emory Lane and Muncaster Mill Road for connectivity. Prepare portion of trail on Casey and Dungan properties to least sensitive areas.
3. Rely on proposed Class I bikeway in park setting to link Rock Creek Trail to the ICC Alignment Bikeway.

### Countywide Park Trails in the Upper Rock Creek Area



	EXISTING	PROPOSED
NATURAL SURFACE RECREATIONAL TRAILS	●●●●	○●○●○
HARD SURFACE RECREATIONAL TRAILS	————	■ — ■ — ■
NON-PARK CONNECTOR BETWEEN RECREATIONAL TRAILS		
Bikeway	■ ■ ■ ■	□ □ □ □
Other (See Text)	▶▶▶▶	▶▶▶▶
REGIONAL/RECREATIONAL PARK DESTINATIONS	✱	✱

*Attachment 3*  
*Decision Matrix*

## Park and Trail Development Proposals in Upper Rock Creek Public Hearing Draft

PUBLIC HEARING DRAFT	PUBLIC HEARING TESTIMONY	RECOMMENDATION
<b>Local Parks</b>		
<p><b><i>A New Upper Rock Creek Local Park</i></b> Proposed on existing parkland at Muncaster Road and Rt.108.</p>	none	Approve Public Hearing Draft recommendation
<p><b><i>Winters Run Local Park</i></b> Proposed development of a soccer lacrosse field and playground to supplement the recreation facilities at the adjacent Redland Middle School.</p>	none	Approve Public Hearing Draft recommendation
<p><b><i>The Bowie Mill Local Park/Sequoyah Elementary Site</i></b> Proposed enlargement from the Casey Property to permit the ballfield expansion.</p>	none	Approve Public Hearing Draft recommendation
<p><b><i>The Muncaster Manor Local Park Site</i></b> Keep in agricultural lease for possible long-term park use.</p>	none	Approve Public Hearing Draft recommendation
<b>Regional/Recreational Parks</b>		
<p><b><i>Muncaster Recreational Park</i></b> Develop area adjacent to MD 124 for active recreation. Preserve majority of park for passive recreation.</p>	none	Approve Public Hearing Draft recommendation
<p><b><i>Gude Recreational Park</i></b> Defer development indefinitely because of settlement, methane gas and inadequate sealing.</p>	none	Approve Public Hearing Draft recommendation
<p><b><i>Laytonia Recreational Park</i></b> Develop as a softball/baseball complex with roller hockey court, basketball court, and playground.</p>	none	Approve Public Hearing Draft recommendation
<p><b><i>Rock Creek Regional Park</i></b> Develop additional trails, renovate older facilities.</p>	none	Approve Public Hearing Draft recommendation
<p><b><i>Agricultural History Farm Park</i></b> Update park master plan.</p>	none	Approve Public Hearing Draft recommendation

## TRAIL RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE UPPER ROCK CREEK MASTER PLAN

PUBLIC HEARING DRAFT PROPOSAL	PUBLIC HEARING TESTIMONY	RECOMMENDATION
<b>Proposed Revisions to the County-Wide Park Trails Plan</b>		
1. <b>Remove hard surface trail proposal</b> from Crabbs Branch; rely on bikeway along Needwood Road for access to Metro.	none	Defer removal until concept receives further study during Shady Grove Master Plan process. The issue of whether a trail in a portion of Crabbs Branch Stream Valley Park would help provide safe access to Metro station will be examined.
2. <b>Remove portion of hard surface trail</b> from most sensitive portion of the North Branch biodiversity area; rely on bikeway along Emory Lane and Muncaster Mill Road for connectivity. Locate trail on Casey and Dungan properties in least sensitive areas.	none	Final recommendations will depend on land use recommendations in vicinity.
3. <b>Rely on proposed Needwood Road Class I bikeway</b> to link Rock Creek Trail to the ICC Alignment Bikeway.	Oppose hard surface trail in ICC right-of-way	Final recommendations will depend on future ICC Recommendations.
<b>Specific Trail Recommendations</b>		
1. <b>Develop connector in Needwood Road area between Rock Creek Park and the ICC Right of Way.</b> This connectivity is so important that the Countywide Park Trail Plan proposes that the ICC right-of-way be considered for a hard surface trail whether or not the ICC is built. A safe trail connection is needed between Rock Creek Park and the ICC right of way. An area is designated for parkland south of Needwood Road to allow this connection.	Oppose hard surface trail in ICC right-of-way	Approve Public Hearing Draft recommendation.

PUBLIC HEARING DRAFT PROPOSAL	PUBLIC HEARING TESTIMONY	RECOMMENDATION
<p>2. <b>Muncaster Road and Emory Lane. Connector.</b> An area of potential future park acquisition related to the Rock Creek Trail Corridor has been identified in Olney. The property is located at the corner of Muncaster Mill Road and Emory Lane. In order to provide a safe connection from the bike path planned along Emory Lane to the Rock Creek Trail system south of Muncaster Mill Road, a park trail may be needed in this vicinity.</p>	<p>none</p>	<p>Acquiring additional parkland to make this connection will not be necessary if the proposed Class I bikeway can accommodate park trail users at this location.</p>
<p>3. <b>Safe road crossings.</b> This Plan recommends that opportunities for providing safe trail crossings be included in any planned improvements for the following roadways: 1) Bowie Mill Road; 2) Muncaster Mill Road 3) Muncaster Road, and 4) Maryland 108.</p>	<p>Make Upper Rock Creek more accessible from Olney</p>	<p>Approve Public Hearing Draft recommendation.</p>



*Attachment 4*  
*Letter from Representatives of H&S Leasing*

# SHULMAN ROGERS GANDAL PORDY & ECKER, P.A.

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Robert B. Canter  
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Kevin P. Kennedy  
Alan B. Sternstein  
Nancy P. Regelin

Samuel M. Spiritos +  
Martin Levine  
Worthington H. Talcott, Jr. +  
Fred S. Sommer  
Morton A. Faller  
Alan S. Tilles  
James M. Hoffman  
Michael V. Nakamura  
Jay M. Eisenberg +  
Douglas K. Hirsch  
Ross D. Cooper  
Glenn C. Etelson  
Karl J. Prottil, Jr. +  
Timothy Dugan +  
Rebecca Oshway  
Ashley Joel Gardner  
Michael J. Froehlich

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Patrick M. Marryn  
Elizabeth A. White  
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Christine M. Sorge  
Sean P. Sherman +  
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Gregory D. Grant +  
Jeffrey W. Rubin  
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Karl W. Means  
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Simon M. Nadler  
Matthew M. Moore +  
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Gary I. Horowitz +  
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• D.C. only  
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Montgomery County Planning Board  
For inclusion in Public Hearing Record  
Re: UPPER ROCK CREEK MP  
Date of Hearing: 10-10-02  
Date Rec'd: 10-24-02  
Corres. No.: \_\_\_\_\_

October 22, 2002

RECEIVED  
OCT 24 2002

Mr. Derick P. Berlage, Chairman  
Montgomery County Planning Board  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

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

Re: Upper Rock Creek Master Plan Staff Draft; Public Hearing; H & S Leasing  
Property; Lot 2, Block A, Burgundy Park; 1011 East Gude Drive ("Property")  
Our File No: 029077.0075

Dear Mr. Berlage:

This Firm represents H & S Leasing, the owner of the captioned property. The purpose of this letter is to place in the public record of the public hearing on the above-referenced master plan ("Plan") a request that the zoning on the Property be changed from I-2 to I-1.

The Property is currently zoned I-2. Its current usage is as a printing plant, a use no longer permitted in the I-2 zone. The Property has been owned by H & S Leasing for well over 25 years. It was built as a warehouse, and has been used for a printing plant for the entire time the current owner has owned the Property. The principals of H&S Leasing are also the owners of the tenant printing company, Smith Lithograph Corporation. At the time the Property was purchased and the use instituted, the zoning ordinance was cumulative and all I-1 uses were permitted in the I-2 zone. That policy changed in the mid-1970's when the cumulative aspects of the zoning ordinance were deleted and the I-1 and I-2 zones each had their own uses. The printing uses were allowed in the I-1 zone only, thus making the printing plant on the Property a legal non-conforming use.

The Plan proposes that the I-2 land west of Gude Drive is suitable for annexation by the City of Rockville, which has placed such annexed properties in the light industrial zone (I-1) (Page 28). The Property is west of Gude Drive and adjacent to I-1 property in the City limits of Rockville. The owner does not want to petition the City for annexation but does wish to end its legal non-conforming status within the County.

It is requested that the Plan consider the Property for the I-1 zone, and to include the Property in that zone when the comprehensive rezoning is proposed after adaption of the Plan.

SHULMAN  
ROGERS  
GANDAL  
PORDY &  
ECKER, P.A.

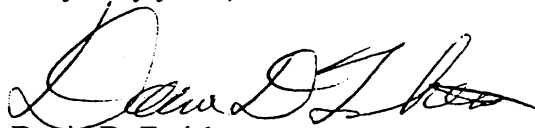
Mr. Derick P. Berlage, Chairman

October 22, 2002

Page 3

I will be present at the work sessions on the Plan to respond to any questions you may have.

Very truly yours,



David D. Freishtat

DDF/grs

cc: Donald R. Rogers, Esquire  
Mr. William Hodges  
Mr. Charles Smith  
Mr. Fred Boyd ✓

*Attachment 5*  
*H&S Leasing Property Location Map*

# H&S Leasing Property



 Master Plan Area Boundary  
 H&S Leasing property

