



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

January 28, 2003

MEMORANDUM

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board
VIA: John Carter, Chief, Community-Based Planning Division *JCC*
FROM: Glenn Kreger, Silver Spring/Takoma Park Team Leader *GK*
Margaret Rifkin, Planner Coordinator *MR*
Community-Based Planning Division

REVIEW TYPE: Mandatory Referral
PROJECT NAME: Revised Bridge Connection to Jesup Blair Park and Site Selection
for Cultural Arts Center
Montgomery College, Takoma Park Campus Expansion
APPLICANT: Montgomery College
CASE NUMBER: 01103-M-01
REVIEW BASIS: Article 28, Chapter 7-112 of the Regional District Act
ZONE: R-60, I-1, and CBD -1
MASTER PLAN: Silver Spring Central Business District Sector Plan
FILING DATE: December 2, 2002

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: **APPROVAL WITH COMMENTS**

COMMENTS:

1. Coordinate with the M-NCPPC to activate Jesup Blair Park using strategies such as providing inviting, activating uses on the College site that are oriented to the park. Address this in the College's Facilities Master Plan and the design for the future King Street Center.
2. Address parking and access for pedestrians, bikes and vehicles in the update of the College's Facilities Master Plan and the site plan for the Cultural Arts Center:
 - a. Include streetscape and pedestrian/bike path improvements in accordance with the Silver Spring CBD Sector Plan providing connections to campus destinations and transit, particularly on Burlington Avenue and Fenton Street.
 - b. Consider adding a parking structure on the former Giant Bakery site (future King Street Center).

CONDITIONS: Park-related - Changes to Jesup Blair Park require the approval of the Planning Board. Comments in this section are conditions of approval rather than advisory comments.

3. Implement the landscape plan as part of Phase One (the Health Sciences Building now under construction and the proposed bridge). If this is not possible, then at a minimum, plant the landscaping in Jesup Blair Park as part of Phase One, and plant the Fenton Street landscaping as part of Phase Two (the Student Services Center).
4. Coordinate with the renovation work on Jesup Blair Park by the M-NCPPC. Schedule construction of the bridge foundations to ensure the availability of staging areas. Provide appropriate language on the construction drawings to inform contractors of this requirement.
5. Coordinate with the M-NCPPC regarding the design of the remaining eastern portion of Jesup Blair Drive. The design should include a minimum of five parking spaces to serve the Park.

On May 31, 2001, the Planning Board reviewed and approved with comments, Phase One of the Montgomery College, Takoma Park Campus Expansion as well as the Cultural Arts Center Building Envelope and Location. The Planning Board's comments are included in the Board's letter to Montgomery College which was transmitted with the Staff Report. As part of that action, The Planning Board:

- Requested a future review of the College Facilities Master Plan including the former Giant Bakery Site.
- Approved the Cultural Arts Center Building Envelope and Location and the Pedestrian/Bike Bridge in the park, with conditions addressing tree preservation.
- Requested review of the 70% Design of the Pedestrian/Bike Bridge.

On November 1, 2002, the Planning Board reviewed and approved with comments the 70% Design of the Pedestrian/Bike Bridge. As part of that action, The Planning Board requested that the College review with the Planning Board any significant changes to the bridge, ramp or stair design.

OVERVIEW OF COLLEGE EXPANSION

The Montgomery College Expansion project includes the following phases including review of Mandatory Referrals:

- Phase One - Health Sciences Building (under construction), Fenton Street Realignment (open to traffic), and the Pedestrian/Bike Bridge (approved May 2001)
- Phase Two - Student Services Center (April 2003)
- Phase Three - Cultural Arts Center (2004-2005)

The College is also updating its Facilities Master Plan to incorporate the former Giant Bakery Site now called the "King Street Center." The Planning Board will review this Facilities Master Plan in April 2003. In 2004-2005, the Planning Board will also have an opportunity to review the former Giant Bakery, to be re-named the King Street Center.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This mandatory referral review addresses revisions to Phase One, as well as the site selection for the Cultural Arts Center which will come back to the Planning Board for more detailed review as Phase Three.

Selection of a new site for the Cultural Arts Center: The new site is at the corner of Georgia Avenue and East-West Highway/Burlington Avenue (MD 410). This site replaces the approved site within Jesup Blair Park. The new site is bounded on the south by King Street and the Health Sciences Building.

Revisions to the bridge, ramp and stair design: The bridge spans the Metro and CSX tracks and connects Jesup Blair Park and Fenton Street by ramps and paths. The bridge is part of Phase One of the College Expansion and is a critical link between the existing Montgomery College Takoma Park Campus and the expanded campus along Georgia Avenue. The bridge also connects Jesup Blair Park with Takoma Park, East Silver Spring, and the Metropolitan Branch Trail.

This review is limited to the revised design of the bridge over the tracks, ramp and the open space in the immediate vicinity. This review does not include the bridge span over Fenton Street which has already been approved in concept and will be considered as part of Phase Two (the Student Services Center). The major revisions are:

- Moving the bridge further south and reconfiguring the ramp to preserve trees
- Removing the two stairways and their distinctive canopies, and reducing the bridge width to reduce costs
- Changing the proposed fence between the ramp and the tracks from wire mesh to black chain link to reduce costs.
- Lowering the bridge and shortening the ramps by a total of 100 feet

PLANNING BOARD ISSUES

There are two issues:

- Whether or not the design of the security fence along the ramp next to the train tracks should be changed from the wire mesh originally approved by the Planning Board, to black chain link.
- Whether or not the existing parking (see page 12) should be retained within the park on the former Cultural Arts Center site. This parking would replace parking spaces removed from Blair Road for tree preservation. This is relevant to this mandatory referral because the path from the bridge might need to be modified if the existing parking in the park is retained.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND COMMUNITY CONCERNS

The College held a public meeting on January 8, 2003, which included information on the revised design for the pedestrian bridge and the new Cultural Arts Center site. The College briefed the Gateway Coalition in October 2002 on these same topics.

Some citizens asked if the existing parking within the park on the former Cultural Arts Center site could be retained in order to support park use. They also asked if parking spaces along Blair Road could be removed instead to preserve trees better. Five spaces along Blair Road have already been removed from the design to preserve trees. Condition #5 recommends that they be replaced with five parking spaces along Jesup Blair Drive.

PROJECT ANALYSIS – FINDINGS

FINDING #1 – The project will be consistent with the Sector Plan and Environmental Guidelines if the recommendation below is implemented.

The new location of the Cultural Arts Center will be consistent with the Sector Plan provided the measures recommended below (in bold) are implemented. The Sector Plan recommends:

- *“Ensure an active and animated corridor by rezoning gateway and corridor properties to encourage redevelopment.”* (Page 77, SSCBDSP.) Georgia Avenue is a corridor and the proposed site for the Cultural Arts Center was rezoned from CBD 0.5 to CBD-1 to create redevelopment opportunities. Placing the CAC on this site is consistent with the goal of redevelopment.
- *“Complete the approved design concept for Jesup Blair Park. Along Georgia Avenue the park would have a ceremonial character, which, coupled with proposed street-facing College buildings and proposed special streetscape features, would mark this gateway.”* (Page 78, SSCBDSP.)

The new location of the Cultural Arts Center is consistent with the Sector Plan recommendation that street-facing College buildings enhance Georgia Avenue.

At the time that the Jesup Blair Park design concept was approved, the Giant Bakery was not moving. Placement of the Cultural Arts Center within the park was a key element tying the two sides of the campus together, activating the park and contributing to the revitalization of South Silver Spring. After the Sector Plan was approved, the Giant Bakery moved. The College then purchased the former bakery site in order to have new opportunities for campus expansion. At the same time, the College was looking at the design changes needed to build the Cultural Arts Center in the park. The College determined that it could better achieve its goals by moving the Cultural Arts Center out of the park to this new site. The new site will allow the Cultural Arts Center to be a more prominent public facility and it will still contribute to the revitalization of South Silver Spring.

The connectivity and activation of Jesup Blair Park which were goals of the park design concept shown in the Sector Plan are no longer provided by a Cultural Arts Center in the park. **To meet these goals, the College should develop its Facilities Master Plan and site design for the new King Street Center, to include inviting and activating uses oriented toward the park. This will achieve the general objectives of the Jesup Blair Park design concept and meet the intent of the Sector Plan (Comment #1).**

In regard to the Environmental Guidelines and requirements of the Forest Conservation Law, the proposed design meets and exceeds them.

FINDING #2 – The project will be consistent with the Development Standards for the Zone: As a publicly owned and operated use, the Cultural Arts Center is permitted in both the CBD-1 and I-1 zones.

For the bridge design, the Planning Board made this finding with comments, on May 31, 2001. No changes to that finding are recommended for this revised bridge design.

FINDING #3 - Compatibility with existing and proposed adjacent uses and structures: The new Cultural Arts Center site and the revisions to the bridge and ramp design are compatible with the surrounding uses and structures. The original designs approved by the Planning Board were found to be compatible and these changes have an even lower impact on the park and its historic and natural features. Changes to the ramp configuration were made to further tree preservation. Tree removal by the College has now been reduced from four to zero. In addition, a different type of footing is being used in specific locations to reduce impacts on trees.

FINDING #4 – The location of the structure, open space and circulation will be adequate, safe and efficient. The Cultural Arts Center site is adequate, safe and efficient. There is access to the site from Georgia Avenue via King Street. The front of the site is along Georgia Avenue and is well located for transit and pedestrian access from Georgia Avenue and East West Highway/Burlington Avenue. There are sufficient opportunities for the provision of open space. The site in combination with the future King Street Center site, is an adequate size for the Cultural Arts Center and associated parking and loading.

The removal of the Cultural Arts Center site from Jesup Blair Park where it contributed to the safety of the park should be addressed by the College providing activating uses along the southern edge of the future King Street Center (former Giant Bakery site) (Comment #1).

The College should consider in its Facilities Master Plan, including a parking facility on the future King Street Center site. In addition, the College should participate in making improvements to the streetscape along the route connecting to the College parking structure on Fenton Street. Other improvements for pedestrians and transit users should be addressed at the time of the mandatory referral review of the site plan for the Cultural Arts Center and the Facilities Master Plan (Comment #2).

The landscape plan is adequate and should be installed during Phase One. It should not be removed from the base bid and included as an "add alternate." If this is not possible, then at a minimum, the landscaping in the park should be installed as part of Phase One and the remainder, which is on Fenton Street, installed as part of Phase Two, the Student Services Center. A delay in installing the landscaping along Fenton Street may be acceptable because the street trees on Fenton Street will already be installed along with grass in the open space at the base of the ramp (Comment #3).

The College should continue to coordinate with the renovation work on Jesup Blair Park by the M-NCPPC. The scheduling of the construction of the bridge foundations should ensure the availability of staging areas. Appropriate language should therefore appear on the construction drawings to this effect to inform the contractor (Comment #4).

In order to ensure the best protection for trees, staff have deleted from the park design five parking spaces along Blair Road. Staff recommends replacing those spaces with others to be located along Jesup Blair Drive. Therefore, the College is being asked to coordinate with the M-NCPPC concerning the design of the remaining eastern portion of Jesup Blair Drive, to include a minimum of five parking spaces to serve the park (Comment #5).

Some citizens had asked that all the existing parking spaces within the park be retained in order to replace the spaces removed from Blair Road. The existing parking spaces are being converted to pervious surface consistent with tree preservation efforts. The removal of the existing asphalt parking surface not only reduces the total impervious surface in the park, but also helps to reduce the extent and impacts of the stormwater management facilities needed to handle runoff. Therefore, the existing parking should be removed as planned.

FINDING #5 - Transportation – The Planning Board made this finding with comments on May 31, 2001.

No changes are recommended to that finding. The comments at that time recognized the importance of improving access between the campus and on-site and off-site parking areas. This staff report includes some additional suggestions as described in the preceding paragraph and in Comment #2.

Other relevant Planning Board comments and conditions from the May 31, 2001 and November 1, 2002 reviews still apply, as described in the letters to Montgomery College.

COMMENT: Historic Preservation

The Maryland Historic Trust (MHT), the state historic preservation agency, is required to review the plans for the bridge in Jesup Blair Park because the park is an historic resource and the College is a state entity required to coordinate with MHT. The MHT review is advisory and comparable in weight to the Planning Board's Mandatory Referral review. A letter from MHT (October 21, 2002) is included. It includes the finding that this project will cause "no adverse effect." An additional written comment

from the MHT Preservation Officer (January 27, 2003) addresses the specific matter of the design of the fence along the rail track which was changed from wire mesh to black chain link after the initial review. The change in the fence design did not alter the MHT's determination of "no adverse effect."

The Planning Board may choose to take into consideration historic preservation issues as part of this review to ensure compliance with the Sector Plan and compatibility with the surroundings as discussed above. The Planning Board may also address historic preservation issues associated with a park. With that in mind, the M-NCPPC Historic Preservation staff has reviewed the design revisions and raised concerns about the substitution of the black chain link fence for the wire mesh fence originally approved by the Planning Board. A security fence is required by CSX that meets specific standards subject to CSX approval.

The comments from the M-NCPPC Historic Preservation staff are found in the Memorandum (January 24, 2003). The primary concern is that "...much of the architectural interest and character of the original design concept for the ramp has been muted" and that the use of black chain link is "a concern from an aesthetic point of view and may diminish the overall character and quality of the structure located in Jesup Blair Park."

The Community-Based Planning Division finds the black chain link acceptable for the following reasons:

- It will have a relatively low impact on the park when compared to all the design changes that have been made to minimize impacts;
- It is relatively unobtrusive for a security fence. When viewed from within the park, it will recede visually, blending into the background;
- It is consistent with the fence being used elsewhere in the park for the tennis courts;
- In the future, it may be possible to enhance the fence with art; and
- It will be a significant cost savings to the College which is the primary reason for the change.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW PROCESS

Some citizens have requested that the College voluntarily submit to review by the County's Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) even though the official historic preservation review of this project falls under the jurisdiction of the State entity, the Maryland Historic Trust (MHT). The College is not planning to request review by the HPC. Even if the College chose to do so, the HPC would still need to decide if it would conduct an advisory review when a regulatory review is not required. Staff recommends that the Planning Board not request that the HPC review the project. The MHT and M-NCPPC reviews are sufficient.

ATTACHMENTS:

Location Map
Existing Zoning Map
Site Plan – phases
Landscape Plan
Site Plan Revisions
Summary of Changes - List
Elevations Revisions

Planning Board Comments

Letter of February 13, 2002
Letter of June 7, 2001

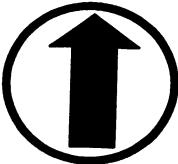
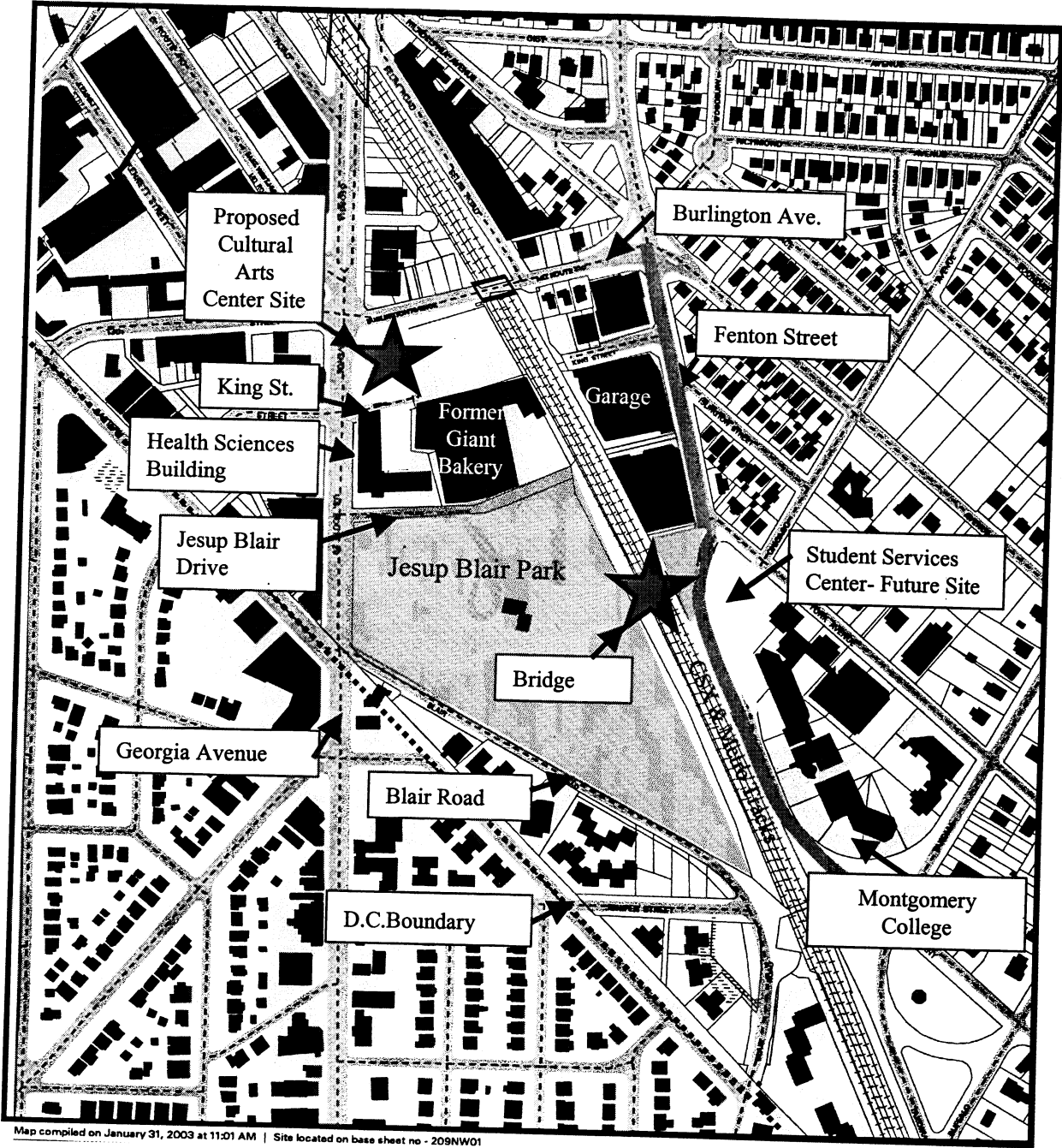
Historic Preservation Comments

Maryland Historic Trust Letter October 21, 2002
Maryland Historic Trust e-mail re: fence design - January 27, 2003
Memorandum from the M-NCPPC Historic Preservation Division

Citizens- Testimony

North Takoma Citizens Association Letter – Jim Evans
Montgomery College response to that letter
Montgomery Gardens Apartments, Letter from Peter Dean, Manager

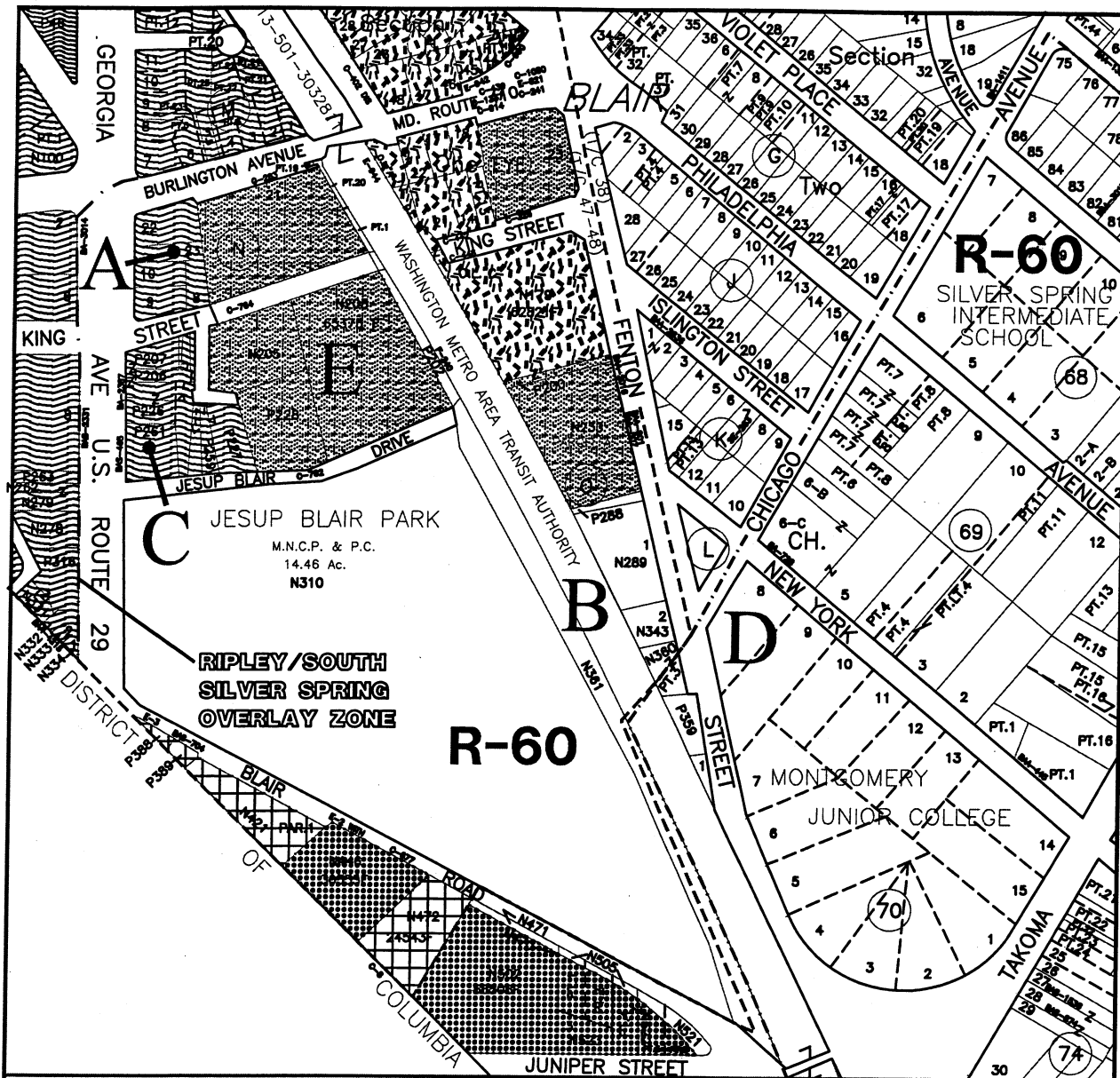
Location Map












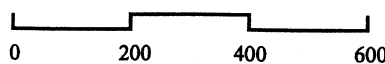
North
not to scale

M-NCPPC February 6, 2003
Montgomery College Expansion Staff Report

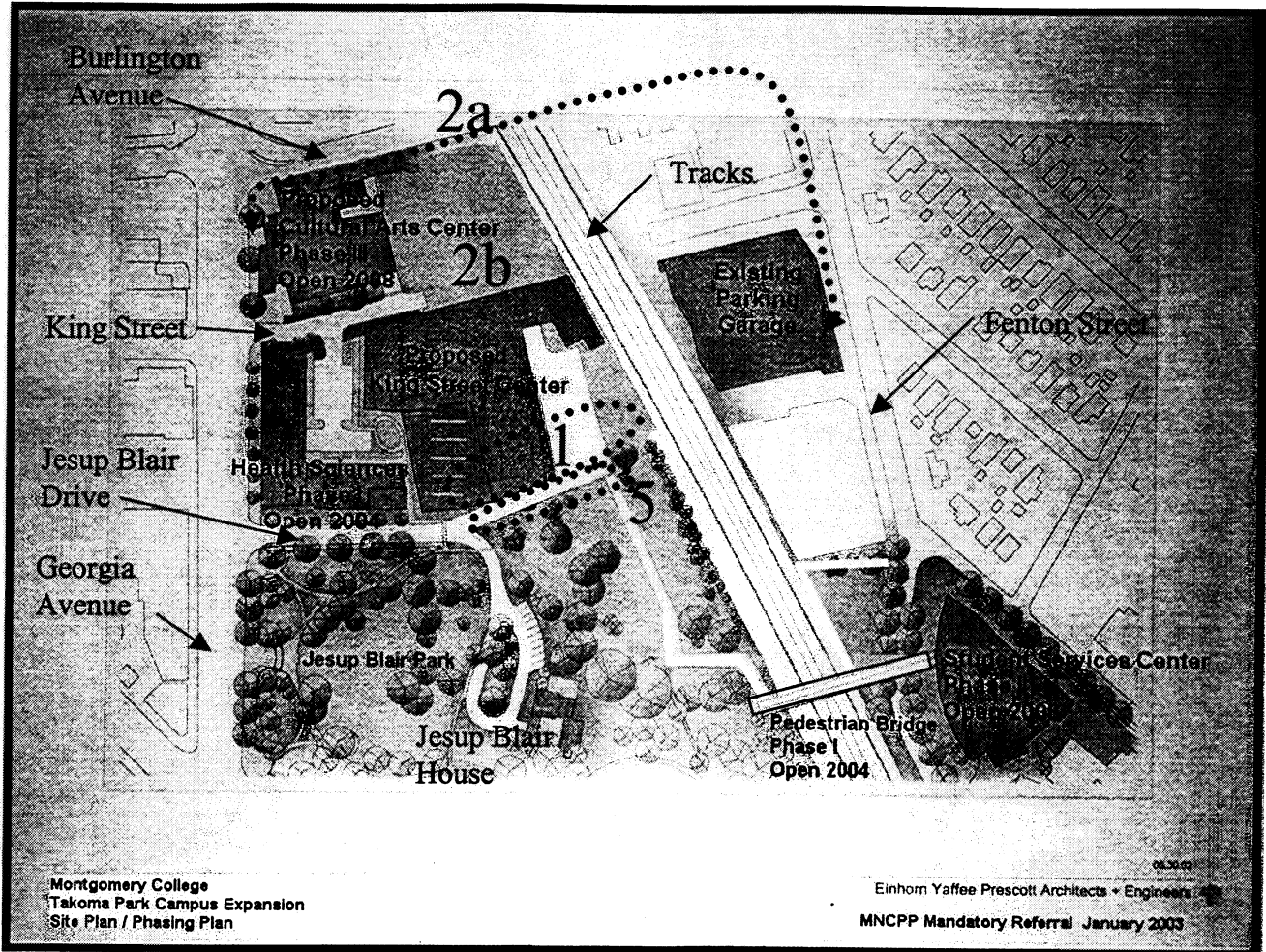
Existing Zoning



	R10		TAKOMA PARK BOUNDARY
	C2		RIPLEY/SOUTH SILVER SPRING OVERLAY ZONE
	CBD1		CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT BOUNDARY
	CBD2	A	CULTURAL ARTS CENTER
	I1	B	BRIDGE
	I4	C	HEALTH SCIENCES BUILDING
		D	STUDENT SERVICES CENTER
		E	FORMER GIANT BAKERY SITE



Site Plan



Montgomery College
Takoma Park Campus Expansion
Site Plan / Phasing Plan

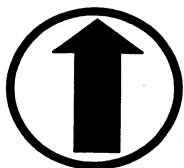
Einhorn Yaffee Prescott Architects + Engineers
MNCPP Mandatory Referral January 2003

Summary of Comments:

- 1 Provide activating uses oriented to the park
- 2a Provide streetscape and pedestrian/bike path improvements
- 2b Consider a parking structure

Summary of Conditions: (see Landscape Plan for conditions 3 & 4)

- 5 Coordinate the design of Jesup Blair Drive with M-NCPPC – include five parking spaces for the park.



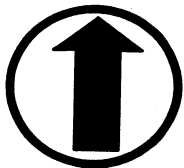
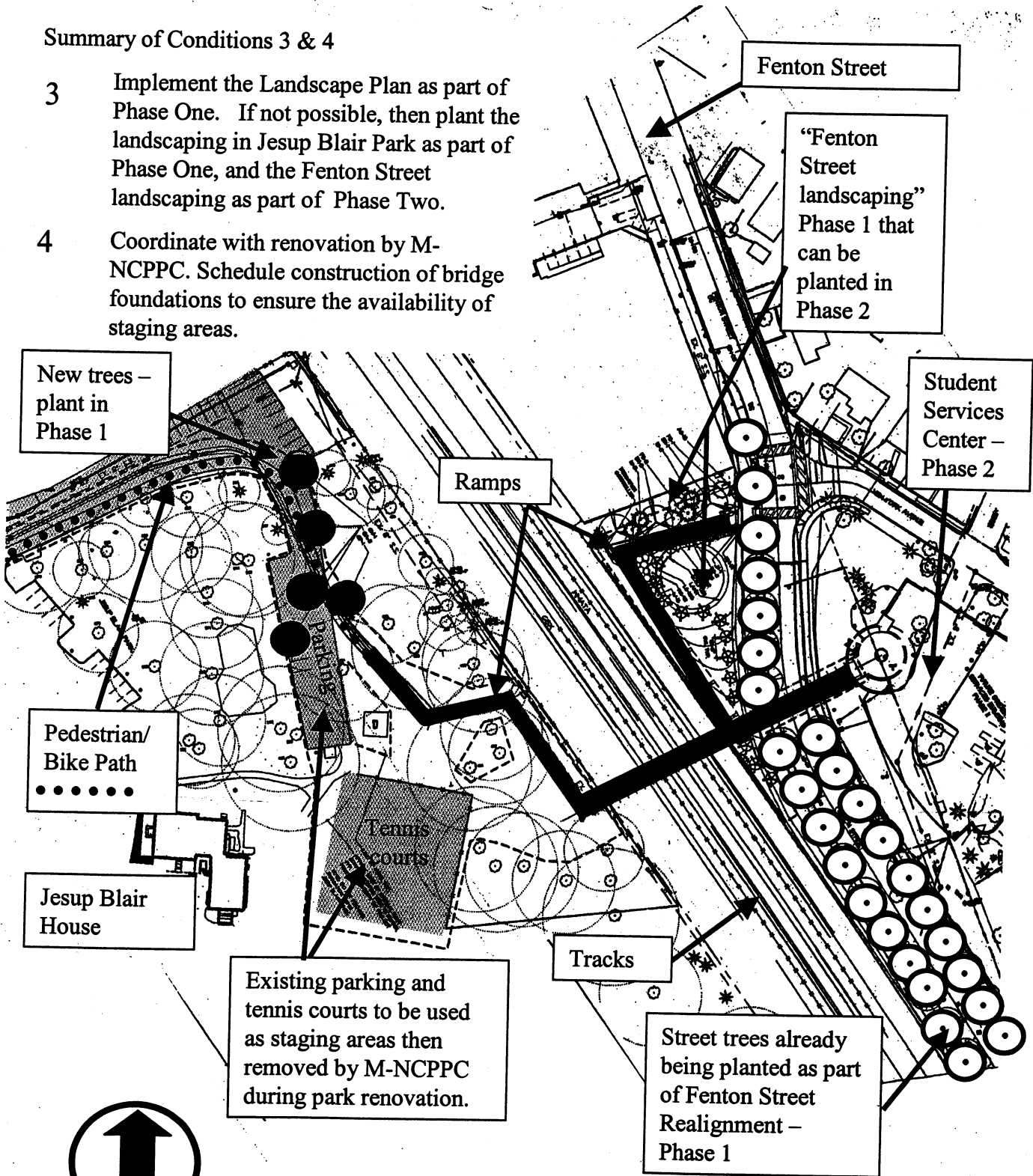
North
not to scale

M-NCPPC February 6, 2003
Montgomery College Expansion Staff Report

Landscape Plan

Summary of Conditions 3 & 4

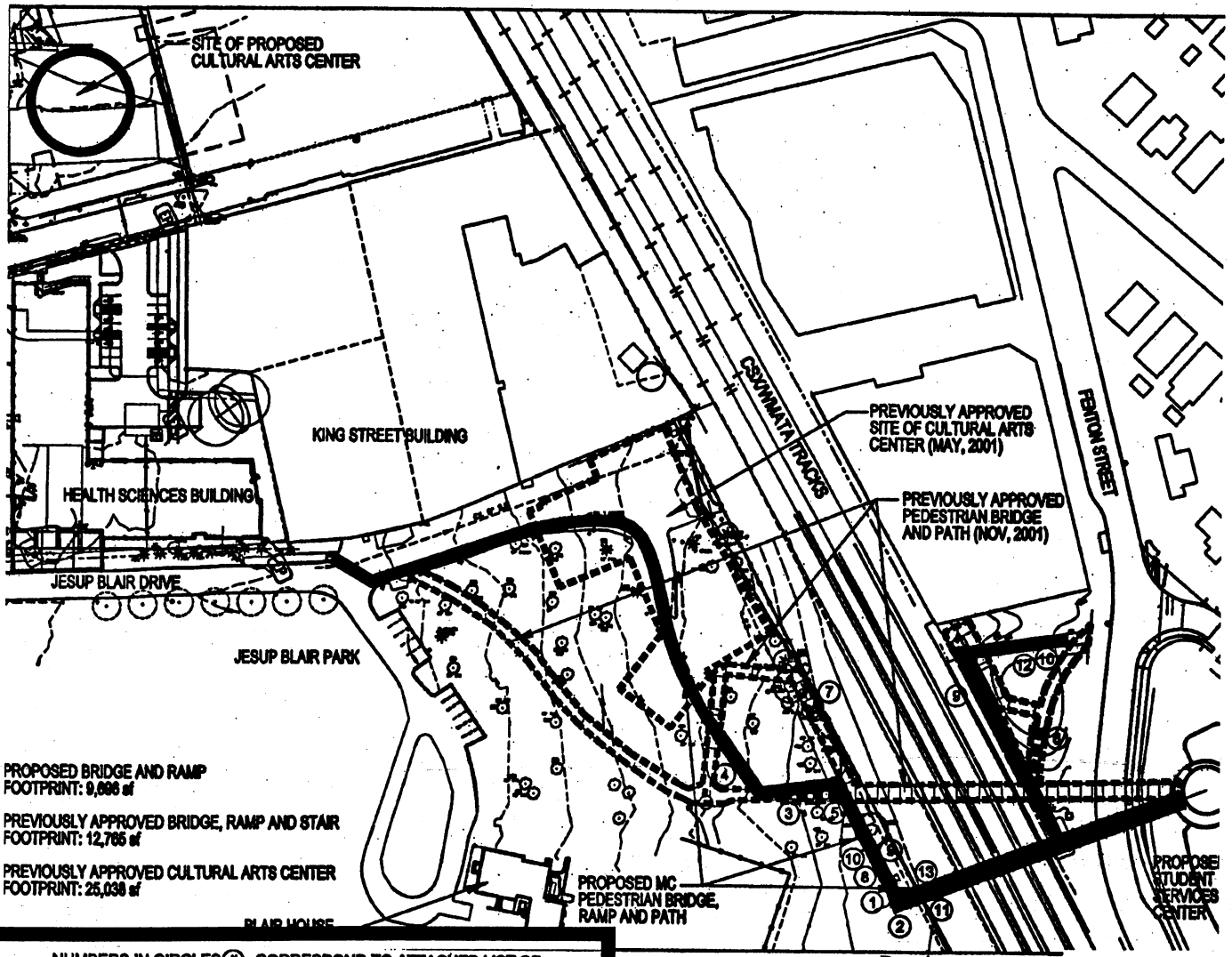
- 3 Implement the Landscape Plan as part of Phase One. If not possible, then plant the landscaping in Jesup Blair Park as part of Phase One, and the Fenton Street landscaping as part of Phase Two.
- 4 Coordinate with renovation by M-NCPPC. Schedule construction of bridge foundations to ensure the availability of staging areas.



North
not to scale

M-NCPPC February 6, 2003
Montgomery College Expansion Staff Report

Plan – Comparison of Previously Approved and Proposed Cultural Arts Center Site and Bridge



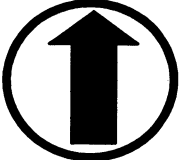
PROPOSED BRIDGE AND RAMP
FOOTPRINT: 9,686 sf

PREVIOUSLY APPROVED BRIDGE, RAMP AND STAIR
FOOTPRINT: 12,766 sf

PREVIOUSLY APPROVED CULTURAL ARTS CENTER
FOOTPRINT: 25,038 sf

NUMBERS IN CIRCLES (1-13) CORRESPOND TO ATTACHED LIST OF CHANGES SINCE PREVIOUS MANDATORY REFERRAL HEARING

Previous
Proposed
Einhorn Yaffee Prescott 01.20.03



North
not to scale

M-NCPPC February 6, 2003
Montgomery College Expansion Staff Report

Changes Since Previous (November 1, 2001) Mandatory Referral Hearing

Montgomery College Takoma Park Campus Pedestrian Bridge

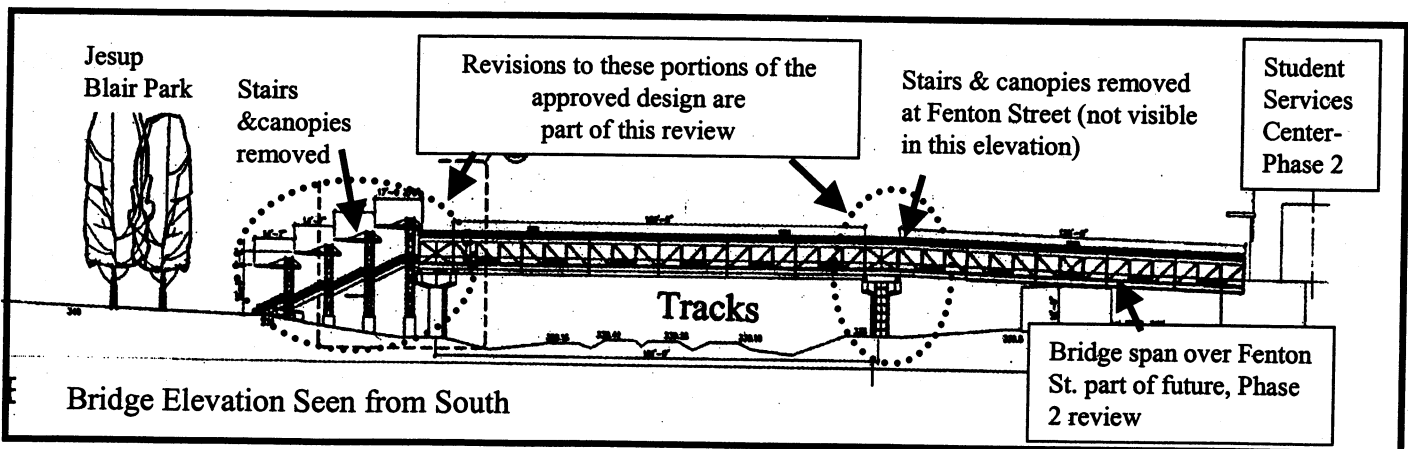
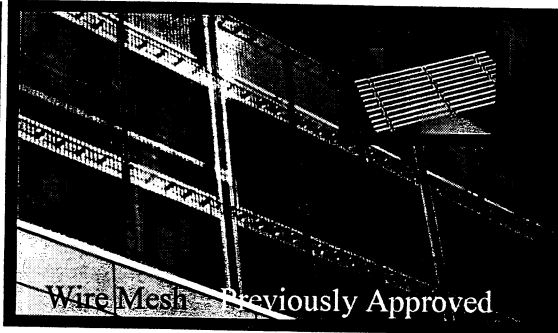
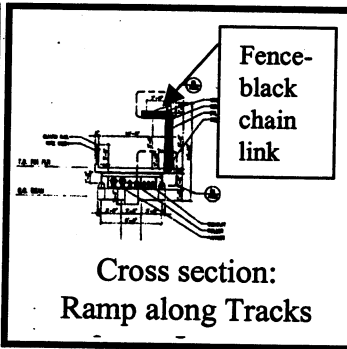
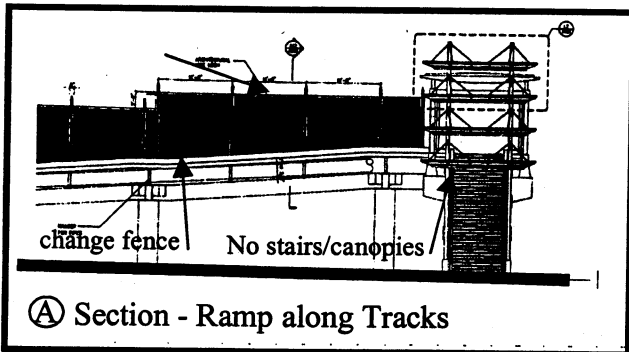
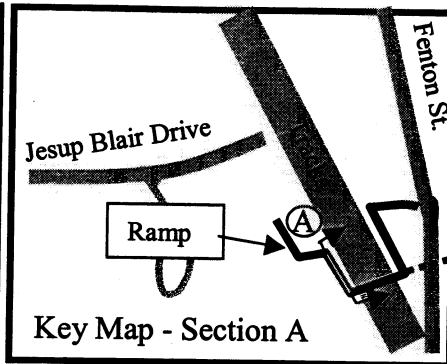
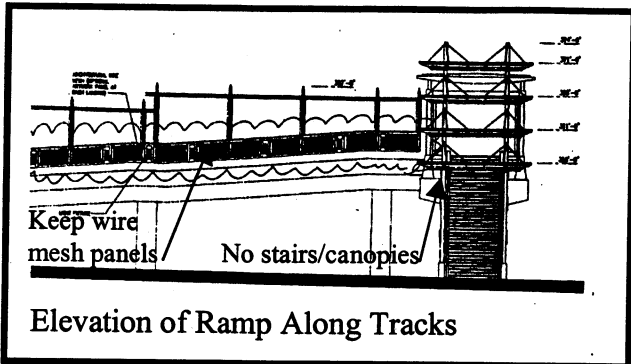
Mandatory Referral Submission – January 20, 2002

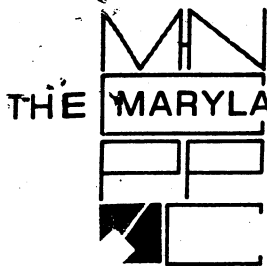
EYP Project Number 34499.04

Changes to Bridge Exterior and Site Development

1. West terminus of bridge moved approximately 106 feet to the south to reduce impact on trees in Jesup Blair Park (reduces length of bridge by 25 feet).
2. Bridge lowered by 2 feet (over railroad right of way) by deleting Central Plant piping from below bridge (reduces length of west ramp by 36 feet and east ramp by 72 feet). Height at Student Services Building lowered by 1 foot.
3. West stair with canopy in Jesup Blair Park eliminated to reduce overall visual impact on Jesup Blair Park and to reduce direct impact on trees in Jesup Blair Park.
4. West ramp and walk from ramp to Health Sciences Building reconfigured to reduce impact on trees in Jesup Blair Park. Walk routed primarily over areas that are currently paved. Buried communications conduit moved with walk.
5. Three spread footings support west ramp changed to caissons to minimize impact on existing trees.
6. East stair with canopy on Fenton Street side of bridge eliminated in order to maintain consistency with the west termination.
7. Trees to be removed in Jesup Blair Park as a result of Montgomery College construction reduced from 4 to 0. Does not include 2 Hollies that will be transplanted.
8. Ramp structure revised from steel to concrete (reduces depth by approximately 28").
9. Screen wall adjacent to railroad track revised to 1" x 1" black pre-coated chain link fence. Pre-coated chain link fence will be an upgrade to existing larger link uncoated chain link fence at railroad right of way and will be similar to proposed 1-1/2" x 1-1/2" black pre-coated chain link fence for Jesup Blair Park athletic facilities.
10. Guard rail finish revised from stainless steel to high performance (paint) coating to match metallic light green bridge finish which is unchanged from previous mandatory referral.
11. Bridge width reduced from 15'-0" to 13'-6" outside face of truss to outside face of truss (inside width reduced from 12'-0" to 10'-6" inside face of glass framing to inside face of glass framing).
12. Trees, shrubs, and plants removed from base bid and included as first add alternate. College will include in project during bid phase if base bid plus this alternate is within the budget.
13. Finished ceiling below bridge roof removed from base bid and included as second add alternate. College will include in project during bid phase if base bid plus first and second add alternate is within the budget. This change has minimal impact on the exterior appearance of the bridge.

Comparison of Revisions





THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

8787 Georgia Avenue • Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760

(301) 495-4605

Montgomery County Planning Board
Office of the Chairman

February 13, 2002

Owen D. Nichols, Chair
Board of Trustees
Montgomery College
900 Hungerford Drive
Rockville, MD 20850

SUBJECT: Planning Board Comments
Mandatory Referral #01103-M-1

Owen
Dear Mr. Nichols:

At the regular meeting of the Planning Board on November 1, 2001, the Planning Board reviewed and approved the mandatory referral proposal for the Bridge Connection to Jesup Blair Park, part of the Montgomery College, Takoma Park Campus Expansion, with the comments and conditions provided in Attachment One to this letter.

As part of the Planning Board's deliberation, two issues in particular were discussed: whether or not there will be a review by the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) and what further provisions should be taken to ensure tree preservation including binding agreements between the College and M-NCPPC.

The issue concerning HPC review is an issue to be resolved by the College and the HPC. However, if there is HPC review and it results in significant changes to the design of any of the College's structures in the Park, these changes should be brought back to the Planning Board for review.

The tree preservation issue is of particular concern to the Planning Board since we learned on November 1 that borings were made by the College in the park over the summer without proper tree preservation measures being taken. While the Planning Board understands that this was the result of human error and not deliberate, it is nevertheless a very serious matter. Due to the lack of finalized legal documents specifying the penalties to be paid by the responsible contractor, the Planning Board has asked its legal counsel to request fines based on current statute.

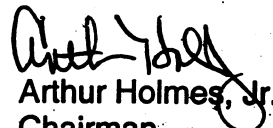
In addition, prompted by concern over ensuring the highest level of protection for the trees while still accommodating the approved construction, the Planning Board requested the addition of Condition #5 shown on Attachment One to this letter. This

condition requests detailed contractual agreements between the College and M-NCPPC with a particular focus on tree preservation measures and penalties for infractions. As you will see, all comments and conditions from the Planning Board review on May 31, 2001, still apply with the exception of Condition #18 which is superceded by the comments and conditions in Attachment One to this letter.

The Planning Board continues to support the overall concept for the College's expansion of which the pedestrian/bike bridge is a key part. The bridge will not only link two parts of the college campus, but will contribute to the success of the Jesup Blair Park renovation. It will also enhance the nearby Silver Spring and Takoma Park neighborhoods for the benefit of the larger community.

The Planning Board's staff report is enclosed. It provides a detailed discussion of the issues related to the bridge design. We appreciate the revisions to the design of the bridge made by the College, and look forward to the day the bridge opens.

Sincerely,


Arthur Holmes, Jr.
Chairman

AH:MR:ha: g:\rifkin\mandatory referral letter Bridge.doc

Attachment and Enclosure

1. Comments and Conditions from November 1, 2001
2. Staff Report – November 1, 2001

cc: Steven Silverman, President, Montgomery County Council
Dr. Charlene Nunley, President, Montgomery College
David Capp, Chief Facilities Officer
Stephen Spurlock, Chairman, Historic Preservation Commission

ATTACHMENT 1

Comments and Conditions for Montgomery College
Bridge Connection to Jesup Blair Park
Montgomery College, Takoma Park Campus Expansion
Mandatory Referral No. 011003-M-1

COMMENTS:

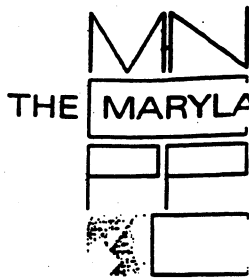
1. All comments and conditions from the Planning Board review on May 31, 2001, still apply with the exception of Condition #18 which is superceded as follows:

Modify the circulation and design on the Fenton Street side to:

- a. Eliminate the switchback at the top of the ramp to improve the route for those with bicycles and wheelchairs
- b. Ease the intersection of the ramp path as it joins the main path so that ramp users—like stair users—do not need to turn a sharp corner.
- c. Ease the corners where the path meets the Metropolitan Branch Trail and widen if possible.

CONDITIONS: Park-related:

2. Continue to work with M-NCPPC staff to identify a color scheme for the bridge that will successfully tie the high tech/industrial form and materials to the naturalistic setting of the park.
3. Provide a final plan for the location of security features, such as cameras and emergency telephones, and for additional enhancements under the ramps and stairs, before a Park Permit is issued.
4. Review with the Planning Board any significant changes to the bridge, ramp or stair design.
5. Enter into umbrella operational agreement with Commission to ensure compliance by College and all employees, agents and subcontractors with park regulations, park permit requirements, and all other construction obligations and limitations.



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

8787 Georgia Avenue • Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760

(301) 495-4605

Montgomery County Planning Board
Office of the Chairman

June 7, 2001

Dr. Robert E. Shoenberg, Chair
Board of Trustees
Montgomery College
51 Mannakee Street
Rockville, MD 20850

Re: Mandatory Referral Proposal # 01103-M-1

Dear Dr. Shoenberg:

At the regular meeting of the Planning Board on May 31 the Planning Board reviewed and approved the mandatory referral proposal for Phase 1 of the expansion of the Takoma Park Campus and the Cultural Arts Center Building Envelope, with the attached comments and conditions pertaining to:

- The Health Sciences Building - design, size and location
- The Realignment of Fenton Street - design and location
- The Pedestrian/Bike Bridge, Ramps and Stairways - size and location
- The Cultural Arts Center Building Envelope - size and location
- Utility Lines in the Park - locations

The Planning Board continues to support the overall concept for the College's expansion, which will help to provide educational opportunities for the diverse citizens of our county. The Board also wishes to see Jesup Blair Park activated and South Silver Spring revitalized for the benefit of the larger community.

The Planning Board particularly wants to express our continued support for the College's cultural arts facility in Jesup Blair Park. While the Board acknowledges the value of the Park's green space, we believe that the Violet Blair Janin Cultural Arts Center will enhance the Park and make South Silver Spring a better community. The building is part of the expansion concept that has been discussed publicly for several years. It is specifically shown within the park in the Approved and Adopted February 2000 *Silver Spring (CBD) Sector Plan*. The concept of an arts facility in a park has been successful elsewhere. The Board feels that the siting of such a facility is consistent with our practice of selectively placing buildings and other facilities in our parks, which enhance the use of the park itself.

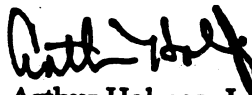
Dr. Robert E. Shoenberg, Montgomery College
June 7, 2001, MR # 01103-M-1
Page two

The Planning Board's discussion included the idea of asking the College to wait and take the entire Giant Bakery site into consideration to look for ways to preserve more trees and green space in the Park. However, the Board decided not to ask the College to do this for several reasons. The former Giant Bakery Site is not vacant. There is already a building on it that would have to be razed at considerable cost. We also understand that the College is planning to use the building for its programs. There would be a long time delay to allow for academic planning and a revision to the College's master plan (3-4 years) to determine the use and design of the site. This would delay the expansion plans and their benefits.

The Planning Board also believes that the revised plans and construction strategy presented by the College are essentially sound. We appreciate the College's responsiveness to the concerns previously expressed by the Planning Board focusing on the trees and the ramp from the pedestrian/ bike bridge into the Park. The impact on the trees has been reduced and could be considered minor relative to the Park as a whole. The Board also believes that the College has done what it can in this regard without actually removing the former Giant Bakery building. The fact that the College will stage construction on the former Giant Bakery site is important in limiting impacts on the Park. We encourage the College to give more thought to the protection of our historic resources, Jesup Blair House and its setting.

The Planning Board's staff report on the mandatory referral is enclosed. It provides a detailed discussion of the issues that may be helpful to you in the future. We endorse the recommended comments and conditions in the staff report and look forward to a successful partnership between the M-NCPPC and the College. We appreciate the hard work of your staff and look forward to working with them on future phases of the College's expansion.

Sincerely,


Arthur Holmes, Jr.
Acting Chairman

cc: Blair Ewing, President, Montgomery County Council
Dr Charlene Nunley, President, Montgomery College
David Capp, Chief Facilities Officer
Stephen Spurlock, Chairman, Historic Preservation Commission

Attachment and Enclosure
1. Comments and Conditions
2. Staff Report

**Comments and Conditions for Montgomery College,
Takoma Park Campus Expansion, Phase 1 and
Cultural Arts Center Building Envelope and Location
Mandatory Referral No. 01103-M-1**

COMMENTS

A. Overall

1. Coordinate with M-NCPPC in the future on a revised College Facilities Master Plan, to include the former Giant Bakery Site recently acquired by the College. This Plan should be brought to the Planning Board for review before approval by State authorities.
2. Develop a Parking Management Program to improve security for users of the College's parking garage. Consider means for improving access to parking areas as identified in the memorandum from the M-NCPPC Transportation Planning Unit (Staff Report Attachment page 6).
3. Participate in a coordinated public art program with M-NCPPC, the Public Arts Trust, citizens and others to include creating pedestrian gateways for the campus and park at Jesup Blair Drive/Georgia Avenue and on Fenton Street at the bridge entrance.
4. Participate in the Silver Spring Wayfinding Program and in creating a coordinated signage system for Jesup Blair Park and the College, with M-NCPPC.
5. Provide a final Forest Conservation Plan and Tree Save Plan for approval by M-NCPPC staff as identified in the memorandum from the M-NCPPC Environmental Planning Unit (Staff Report Attachment page 11).
6. Provide a final landscape, lighting and signage plan for review by M-NCPPC staff.

B. Fenton Street Realignment & Access to Pedestrian/Bike Bridge

7. Coordinate with M-NCPPC staff as final revisions to the street design are made as part of the Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T) and City of Takoma Park permitting processes.
8. Design any pedestrian crossings of the realigned Fenton Street to discourage jaywalking by creating direct paths to building entrances and locating transit stops appropriately subject to DPW&T approval.

9. Create an entry feature for Jesup Blair Park and the west campus including information about performances at the Cultural Arts Center, as part of the open space and ramp design on Fenton Street.
10. Build the Metropolitan Branch Trail within the full limits of the work for the Fenton Street realignment.

C. Health Sciences Building on Georgia Avenue & King Street (except Park edge)

11. When the College submits their proposed revision to the College Facilities Master Plan to the Planning Board, the College should include public use space and density calculations for the entire College-owned property west of the railroad tracks, included the Health Sciences Building site.
12. Provide an interim green space along Georgia Avenue between King Street and Burlington Avenue. Identify the site through signage as the location for future construction.
13. Coordinate the streetscape design on Georgia Avenue with the Department of Housing and Community Affairs, (DHCA), M-NCPPC, Montgomery County of Public Works and Transportation and the State Highway Administration.
14. Design an attractive pavement pattern for the corners where the brick pavers used on King Street and Jesup Blair Drive transition to the concrete pavers used on Georgia Avenue.

CONDITIONS

Changes to Jesup Blair Park require the approval of the Planning Board; therefore, what follows are *conditions of approval* rather than advisory comments.

D. Park-Related Cultural Arts Center and Bridge (Including Tree Preservation and Historic Preservation)

15. Use the "Preservation Techniques" (Staff Report Attachment page 35) to ensure the survival of the mature trees not authorized for removal. Provide landscape plans for each phase, that include new trees to compensate for trees that are removed.
16. Include a penalty clause in each construction contract, identifying the amount to be paid by the contractor(s) for not following the tree preservation techniques. The penalty should be proportional to the infraction.
17. Ensure for the Cultural Arts Center building envelope and location shown in Staff Report Attachment pages 22-24, that:

- a. The trees identified in Staff Report Attachment pages 24-26 for preservation are preserved and that the critical root zones of those trees will be affected to no greater extent than shown in a final tree impact analysis accepted by M-NCPPC.
 - b. The character of the building, when designed in Phase 3, is compatible with, and complementary to, Jesup Blair House.
 - c. There are windows from active areas within the building overlooking all parts of the pedestrian and bike routes between the bridge and the proposed Cultural Arts Center entrance to provide "eyes-on-the-park" for the comfort and safety of users.
18. Pedestrian/Bike Bridge and Park Access (Ramp and Stairs): Provide more detailed design:
- a. To minimize the mass of the stair structure in the park, the steps should not be enclosed. If the College determines that a roof is absolutely necessary it should be transparent. Means other than roofing for avoiding costly snow and ice removal should be explored. The steps should be designed to ensure compatibility of the structure with the park setting.
 - b. The wire mesh fence that is required by WMATA/CSX along the ramp adjacent to the railroad tracks should be designed to contribute to the gateway image for both Jesup Blair Park and the Silver Spring CBD. A similar approach should be considered for the ramp from Fenton Street.
 - c. The design of the bridge and ramps and stairway at both ends should be brought to the Planning Board for mandatory referral review at 70% completion. At that time, the following should be addressed: The stairway and ramp design should be compatible with, and complement Jesup Blair House and the park. Their design should inform the overall design of the bridge as well as the ramp and stair tower on Fenton Street. The bridge and gateways to the bridge should have a consistent and recognizable character unifying both sides. The spaces underneath the ramps and stairs should be designed using CPTED¹ principles and security features compatible with the park and campus character.
19. Utility Lines - The location of utilities should be designed to minimize the impact on trees during construction/installation and maintenance of the utilities.
20. Path to Health Sciences Building from the Bridge – show the interim design for the time period after construction of the bridge but before the Cultural Arts Center and final path will be built in Phase 3. The design should minimize tree impact and is subject to M-NCPPC approval.
21. Jesup Blair Drive - Provide a design along the northern edge that "brings the park across the drive" as follows: locate the northern curb 24 feet from the existing southern edge of pavement. Provide a well-landscaped "park" edge along the northern curb with a 10-foot

¹ Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

(minimum) sidewalk beyond it.

22. **Operations: Include in a Memorandum of Understanding with M-NCPPC concerning maintenance, security and management of all areas within Jesup Blair Park, the goals and objectives identified in the Memorandum from Montgomery Parks (Staff Report Attachment pages 31-33).**

G:\RIFKIN\AttachmentOneLettertoCollegefromPB.doc



**Maryland
Department of
Housing and
Community
Development**

*Division of Historical and
Cultural Programs*

100 Community Place
Crownsville, Maryland 21032

410-514-7600

1-800-756-0119

Fax: 410-987-4071

Maryland Relay for the Deaf:

711 or 1-800-735-2258

<http://www.dhcd.state.md.us>

Parris N. Glendening
Governor

Raymond A. Skinner
Secretary

Marge Wolf
Deputy Secretary

RECEIVED

OCT 30 2002

Montgomery College
Facilities

October 21, 2002

Ms. Chahnaz McRae
Senior Project Manager
Central Administration
Montgomery College
900 Hungerford Drive
Rockville, MD 20850

RE: Montgomery College, Takoma Park Campus Expansion, Pedestrian Bridge

Dear Ms. McRae:

The Maryland Historical Trust (Trust) received the 45% Construction Document for the above-referenced undertaking on September 16, 2002. Pursuant to Article 83B, Sections 5-617 and 5-618 of the Annotated Code of Maryland, we have reviewed the undertaking to assess potential effects to historic properties.

According to your submission, Montgomery College (College) decided to explore alternative alignments for the pedestrian bridge following our earlier effect determination and the decision to relocate the Cultural Arts Center from Jesup-Blair Park to the corner of Burlington and Georgia Avenues. On September 12, 2002 Ms. Patricia Blick of the Trust's Office of Preservation Services, met with you on site to review the pedestrian bridge design objectives and considerations. In addition to the meeting on site with the College, Ms. Blick met with concerned community representatives at Jesup-Blair Park on September 30, 2002. We have received and reviewed comments from several groups both in support of and in opposition to the undertaking.

Based upon the adverse effect determination rendered by the Trust on the original bridge plan (see Trust's letter dated May 29, 2002) the College went back to the drawing board with Einhorn, Yaffee and Prescott (EYP), their architecture and engineering firm. The College had EYP develop plans that not only fulfilled several program requirements (i.e. to unify campus, provide access for all users, provide security and safety) but also took into consideration

Ms. Chahnaz McRae

October 21, 2002

Page 2

numerous constraints (i.e. impact to historic property, avoidance of existing sewer line, approved budget, CSX/WMATA requirements). EYP developed seven options for consideration and based upon a comparison of all of the options, the College selected Bridge Option 7 as their preferred alternative. This option was selected for the following reasons:

- No trees lost
- Less impact on tree canopies
- Clearance from sewer line
- Short bridge
- Short ramp
- Direct path
- Reuse existing paving
- Meets schedule
- Meets budget.

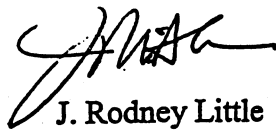
With respect to impacts on historic properties, the Trust concurs that this option is the best of those under consideration. The preferred option will relocate two young holly trees, but will not require the removal of any historic trees. EYP proposes caissons rather than spread footings to minimize tree stress. The bridge is perpendicular to the CSX/WMATA tracks, and therefore has a smaller profile from the historic property. The preferred option has eliminated the massing and bulk associated with the stairs of the original pedestrian bridge and has reduced the mass of the bridge and ramps from 4,500 square feet to 3,200 square feet. The College has also developed a strategy to protect the historic trees during construction of the project.

Based upon a review of the historical documentation on the Jesup-Blair House, the revised plans for the pedestrian bridge, consultation with the local preservation staff, and our site visits, the Trust concurs that the proposed undertaking, construction of the pedestrian bridge Option 7, will pose *no adverse effect* on historic properties. The undertaking does not diminish the qualities that qualify the Jesup-Blair House for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

Ms. Chahnaz McRae
October 21, 2002
Page 3

The Trust applauds the College for revising the plans for the bridge to avoid and minimize impacts to the historic property. If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Patricia Blick at 410-514-7637 or at blick@dhcd.state.md.us.

Sincerely,



J. Rodney Little
Director/State Historic Preservation Officer

JRL/PMB/200203627

cc: Gwen Wright (MNCPPC-Mo. Co.)
George French (Coalition to Preserve Jesup Blair Park)
Marcie Stickle (Coalition to Preserve Jesup Blair Park)
Russell J. Shew (East Silver Spring Citizens Association, Inc.)
Jim Fary (Sierra Club, Mo. Co.)
Daniel Meijer (Gateway Coalition)
Gracie Baten (Gateway Coalition)
Sarah Brookhart (Woodside Civic Association)
R. G. Steinman (Sustainable Montgomery)
Wayne Goldstein (Maryland Preservation Inc.)
Jerry McCoy (Silver Spring Historical Society)

Written Comments Sent January 27, 2003 7:47 AM via e-mail from:

Patricia M. Blick
Preservation Officer
Review & Compliance
Maryland Historical Trust

Re: Jesup Blair Park and Montgomery College

"Margaret,

Thank you for your note and phone call. The Trust was made aware of the proposed changes to the bridge design by the MNCPPC, we followed up with a phone call to Montgomery College. Based upon the response that the college provided we understand that there was a decision to change the footers for the bridge to further reduce potential impacts to trees and due to budget constraints the screen material for the portion of the bridge that crossed the railroad tracks had been changed. Based upon our review of the changes and the documentation on the significance of the historic property, the Trust determined that the proposed changes would not alter our determination of effect for the undertaking. The Trust believes that the undertaking will not diminish the qualities that qualify the Jesup Blair property for the National Register of Historic Places, therefore we maintain our no adverse effect determination.

If you have any questions, or if the project is modified, please do not hesitate to contact me again.

Sincerely,
Patricia M. Blick
Preservation Officer
Review & Compliance
Maryland Historical Trust"



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

January 24, 2003

MEMORANDUM

TO: Margaret Rifkin, Planner
Community-Based Planning Division

FROM: Gwen Wright, Historic Preservation Supervisor *GW*
Countywide Planning Division

SUBJECT: Mandatory Referral for Montgomery College Bridge and Ramp at Jesup Blair Park

Historic Preservation Section staff has reviewed the 70% Submission Drawings prepared by Montgomery College for the Bridge and Ramp at Jesup Blair Park.

In general, staff feels that the design of the Bridge and Ramp will not adversely affect the historic structure in Jesup Blair Park or its environmental setting. Some good aspects of the current design include:

- The impact on existing trees has been greatly reduced by the current design, with no trees being removed and only two Holly trees requiring relocation. Only nine trees will be impacted by the construction, with percentage of impact reduced to 2.5% to 12% of critical root zone.
- The Ramp is designed to hug the rear property line as much as possible.
- The guard rail for the Ramp will be a custom woven mesh which will recall the industrial character of the rail line while making a contemporary architectural statement.

Staff's only major concern with the proposed design is that, in the effort to meet budget and other kinds of constraints, much of the architectural interest and character of the original design concept for the Ramp has been muted. Most specifically, staff is concerned about the current proposal to use black-coated chain link fencing as the Ramp's screen wall adjacent to the railroad track. The previous proposal included a custom woven mesh screen wall, which has been eliminated for budgetary reasons. Although staff understands the budget constraints of the project, the use of chain link fencing for a length of over 100 feet along the upper part of the Ramp is a concern from an aesthetic point of view and may diminish the overall character and quality of the structure located in Jesup Blair Park.

Rec'd
1/9/03
cp

NORTH TAKOMA CITIZENS ASSOCIATION
703 New York Avenue
Takoma Park, MD 20912
(301) 495-0313

JAMES E. EVANS
PRESIDENT

December 18, 2002

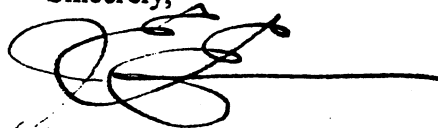
Dr. Charlene R. Nunley, President
Montgomery College

SUBJECT: Montgomery College Expansion

The North Takoma Citizens Association encompasses an area with approximately 350 households adjacent to two sides of the current Montgomery College campus. Our Association continues to support the College expansion, both in our immediate neighborhood and west of the tracks. Utilizing available land west of the tracks provides the needed space without undue expansion into established residential neighborhoods and has the added benefit of enhancing the South Silver Spring development efforts. We applaud the College for its community outreach (we are currently participating in regular meetings with College personnel, in particular with respect to the design of the Student Services Center and related issues) and for its attempt to address citizens' concerns with various aspects of development in Jesup Blair Park. We also greatly appreciate the Agreement the College recently signed with the City of Takoma Park, Historic Takoma, and Montgomery County to formalize the historic preservation review process within the City's current and future boundaries.

However, many of our members are very concerned with the College leaving the Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) process that it had entered for Jesup Blair Park. We would greatly appreciate it if the College would extend its spirit of cooperation to our neighbors and return to the HPC process voluntarily, soliciting the views of the HPC and abiding by its decisions subject to the appeal process. We feel the College's plans and design could benefit from the Commission's insights, our citizens would have an opportunity to testify in a public hearing, and the community would have the added measure of protection for our neighboring historic resources. In keeping with the precedent-setting agreement between the College, City of Takoma Park, the County, and Historic Takoma, it seems appropriate to extend this same courtesy to Silver Spring and Historic Jesup Blair Park.

Sincerely,



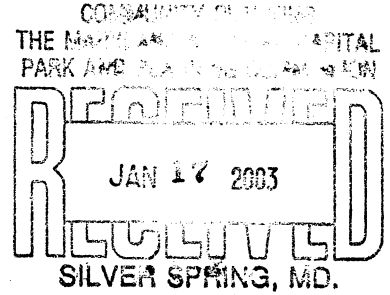
James Evans, President





Montgomery
College

January 13, 2003



Mr. James Evans
North Takoma Park Citizens Association
703 New York Avenue
Takoma Park, MD 20912

Dear Mr. Evans:

I am responding to your letter of December 18, 2002 addressed to Dr. Charlene Nunley, President of the college, in which you voiced the concerns of some of your members. I appreciate this opportunity to clarify the College's position on this matter. The agreement signed between the College and the City of Takoma Park was clearly in the best interest of both parties. The College has no intention of expanding into the neighboring historic community and the agreement simply served to further solidify that intention.

The situation west of the tracks is quite different. The College, with the strong support of the County, made the decision six years ago to expand across the tracks into Silver Spring. A condition of that decision was, always has been, and remains that the College would be permitted to build a pedestrian bridge in Blair Park. The Montgomery County Planning Board through the mandatory referral process formally approved that plan in November of 2001. Additionally, the County Executive, the County Council and all applicable members of the General Assembly have shown their support for that plan.

The College's Facilities Office has worked very closely with the staff at Maryland National Capital Park and Planning (MNCPPC) and the staff at the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) to design the most acceptable and appropriate bridge. Both staffs are pleased with the design. The College has made numerous concessions on this construction project to minimize the impact on the Park. The most recent accommodation was the College's decision to absorb a \$25,000 cost increase of the bridge construction in order to change the construction techniques for the footers of three ramp piers in the park. The change to these footers will reduce the impact on the root zones of three trees from 13% (a percentage that is well under the upper allowable limit of 20% set by the Planning Board) to 5%. Because of these efforts, and many others similar to these, the Maryland Historic Trust (MHT) has ruled that the construction of the bridge in the Park has no adverse impact on the Park.

31

Central Administration
900 Hungerford Drive
Rockville, MD 20850
(301) 279-5000

Germantown Campus
20200 Observation Drive
Germantown, MD 20876
(301) 353-7700

Rockville Campus
51 Mannakee Street
Rockville, MD 20850
(301) 279-5000

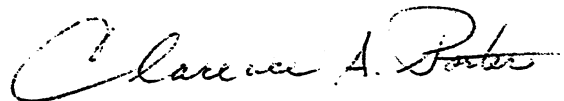
Takoma Park Campus
7600 Takoma Avenue
Takoma Park, MD 20912
(301) 650-1300

Continuing Education
51 Mannakee Street
Rockville, MD 20850
(301) 279-5188

Mr. James Evans
January 13, 2003

Finally, the State Attorney General as well as a Circuit Court Judge have opined that the College, as a State entity, falls under the oversight responsibility of MHT and not the local HPC. The College would be making a mistake to voluntarily place itself in a position where two totally different historic preservation agencies could direct the design process. Given the strong potential for conflicting guidance, the chance that the design process would be even more expensive and extensive is a risk that the College is not willing to take. I am fully confident that the College's staff has taken every reasonable action to ensure that the project in the Park will be a success without adversely affecting the Park.

Sincerely,



Clarence A. Porter, Ph.D.
Vice President/Provost
Takoma Park Campus

CRN:DJC:rd

Cc: Dr. Charlene Nunley, President, Montgomery College (MC)
Mr. William Campbell, Executive Vice President, MC
Mr. David Capp, Chief Facilities Officer, MC
Ms. Susan Madden, Chief, Governmental Relations, MC
Mr. Clyde "Rocky" Sorrell, Legal Counsel, MC
Mr. Steven Spurlock, Chairman, Montgomery County HPC
Mr. Ken Ernst, Chief, Natural Resources, Montgomery County Parks
Department, MNCPPC
Mr. Bob Kane, Park Planning and Development, MNCPPC
Ms. Margaret Rifkin, Community Based Planning, MNCPPC

Rifkin, Margaret

From: Peter Dean [peteridean@yahoo.com]
Sent: Tuesday, January 07, 2003 1:38 PM
To: Rifkin, Margaret; jwells@mc.cc.md.us; cmcrae@mc.cc.md.us
Subject: Montgomery College Expansion

Margaret Rifkin
Montgomery County Planning Board/MNCPPC
Phone: 301-495-4583 Margaret.Rifkin@MNCPPC-MC.org

Ms. Jennie Wells, Montgomery College, Community
Outreach
Phone: 301-563-3904 jwells@mc.cc.md.us

Ms. Chahnaz McRae, Montgomery College, Sr. Project
Manager
Phone: 301-251-7374 cmcrae@mc.cc.md.us

Dear Ms. Rifkin, Ms. Wells and Ms. McRea:

I am writing to support the expansion of the Montgomery College Campus into Jessup Blair Park. As a long time resident of Montgomery Gardens and now working with management the expansion into the Park will positively impact the lives of those who live in the neighborhood adjacent to the park. By increasing activity in the park it will become safer and more inviting.

The changes to the bridge seem to be positive. Lowering it will make it more inviting and moving it south will make it closer to community users. Moving the Cultural Arts Center is a negative for the community but I gather that it is necessary. Any work that can be done to encourage evening activity, both pedestrian and slow vehicular, between the bridge and the Health Science Center would be positive. The future use of the Giant Bakery should include uses that bring activity that helps tie the campus together, especially in the evening.

Anything that can be done to encourage college use of the park would be a plus for the community. We need more activity in the park especially in the evenings. For instance outdoor concerts in the park or an outdoor film festival on summer evenings would be a great benefit. Even if these were geared toward students they would benefit the community.

We are looking forward to the re-uniting of the College with South Silver Spring once a bridge once again spans the tracks between the campus and the park. Of course it will be further north but it is an important resource that will be much appreciated by residents as well as by students.

I will be unable to attend the Montgomery College meeting on January 8th, but would appreciate my views being shared with those that do attend and included in the record. I will try to attend the Planning Board meeting on February 6th but if I were unable I would appreciate your sharing my comments there and including my comments in the record.

Sincerely,

Peter L. Dean
Montgomery Gardens Apartments
7521 Blair Road, Takoma Park, MD 20912
301-434-8888