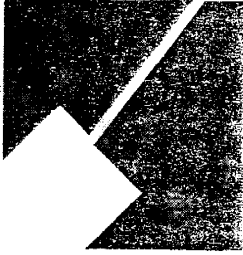


M-NCPPC



MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARK & PLANNING

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760

MCPB
ITEM NO. 4
10-23-2003

October 17, 2003

MEMORANDUM

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Jeffrey Zyontz, Chief
Countywide Planning Division

JZ/2003

Richard C. Hawthorne, Chief
Transportation Planning

RCH

Glenn Kreger, Team Leader for the Silver Spring-Takoma Park Team
Community-Based Planning Division

GK

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

PROJECT: Silver Spring Green Trail
From Fenton Street to Sligo Creek Parkway
C.I.P. No. 509975

REVIEW TYPE: Mandatory Referral No. 01814-DPW&T-1

APPLICANT: Montgomery County Department of
Public Works and Transportation

APPLYING FOR: Plan Approval

COMMUNITY-BASED PLANNING TEAM AREA: Silver Spring CBD, East Silver
Spring, and North and West Silver Spring

RECOMMENDATION: APPROVAL WITH COMMENTS TO DPWT

Staff recommends that the Board approve the proposed project (see Attachment 1: Vicinity Map) with the following comments to DPWT:

1. The crosswalks that form part of the trail at side streets should be made very visible to ensure that drivers are aware of the presence of the expected high number of pedestrians and bicyclists. Consideration should be given to providing alternative paving materials at the edge of the crosswalks to ensure that they are highly visible when installed and stay visible over time.
2. Construct the driveway to the office building on the corner of Cedar Street to match that of Whole Foods, extending the brick pavement two feet beyond the back of sidewalk. Use different color brick "stripes" at the northwest and northeast corners of Cedar Street to note the trail crossing the sidewalk on Cedar Street.
3. Ensure that all bus stops that are to remain are the safest locations for pedestrians to cross Wayne Avenue and provide marked crosswalks at these locations.
4. All intersections, including tee intersections, should be made handicapped-accessible to meet the requirements of ADA. Where pedestrian crossings are prohibited, signs to that effect should be placed directing them to the nearest crosswalk.
5. At tee intersections, parking should be prohibited along Wayne Avenue opposite the intersecting street and bumping out the curb should be strongly considered so that the pedestrian crossing distance is minimized (see Attachment 2)
6. Provide additional lighting as needed at intersections within the project limits to ensure that the lighting levels recommended by the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America (IESNA) are met.
7. Check the traffic signal warrants at the Whole Foods driveway on Wayne Avenue. If a signal is warranted, install the signal and move the existing mid-block crosswalk between Saint Michael's Church and School to the new signalized intersection.
8. Re-evaluate whether the bus stops to remain should get shelters and/or benches.
9. Provide a concrete wall with a stone formliner for the proposed retaining wall between Greenbrier Drive and Dartmouth Avenue. Consider constructing the steps to be parallel to Wayne Avenue to reduce impacts to the front leadwalks and consider replicating the existing stone facing on the leadwalks and steps in the new construction. Consider providing a concrete wall with a stone formliner for all proposed retaining walls other than at the Silver Spring International Middle School.

10. Consider providing brick corner treatments on the south side of Wayne Avenue at intersections.
11. Provide Washington Globe luminaires on the bridge over Sligo Creek.
12. Provide a medallion design that reflects the trail's location in Silver Spring.
13. Provide a concrete retaining wall with a stone formliner to reduce the proposed fill in the Sligo Creek floodplain adjacent to the bridge. Maintain a one-foot shy distance for the trail and provide a bike-safe railing atop the wall.
14. A Tree Save Plan must be approved by M-NCPPC, Environmental Planning prior to issuance of sedimentation and erosion control permit, per the County's Forest Conservation law. No construction materials should be stored within the critical root zones of trees that will remain.
15. Provide signs at the school/park parking lot directing users to alternate parking facilities on school property.
16. A park construction permit will be needed to work on Park Property. No storage of equipment/materials and no staging will be allowed on park property without prior approval from Park Inspector and/or Park Manager.
17. Continue to coordinate with staff on the design of this project.

PREVIOUS BOARD ACTION: None.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Silver Spring Green Trail project would construct a 4,500 linear-foot urban green trail along the northern side of Wayne Avenue from west of Cedar Street to Sligo Creek Parkway. The proposed project includes an eight-foot-wide bituminous bike path, an adjacent five-foot-wide sidewalk, lighting and landscaping. The trail would provide access to the Silver Spring Transit Station and the future Capital Crescent Trail via the Metropolitan Branch Trail and would connect to the existing Sligo Creek Trail. The sidewalk west of Cedar Street would be brick; the sidewalk east of Cedar Street would be concrete.

Between Cedar Street and Mansfield Road, the number of travel lanes on Wayne Avenue would be reduced from four lanes to three lanes, including a two-way center turn lane. Parking areas would be provided on the southern side of Wayne Avenue. Approximately four parking spaces would be provided on the north side of the street in the block between Greenbrier Drive and Dartmouth Avenue where two of the houses do not have on-site parking. Wayne Avenue between Georgia Avenue and Sligo Creek Parkway would be reconstructed and/or resurfaced within the project limits.

This project would implement the recommendations of three Silver Spring Master Plans by constructing the proposed trail. The project would greatly improve bicyclist and pedestrian accessibility between the neighborhoods and the Silver Spring CBD and Metro Station. The trail would also provide an important connection between the Sligo Creek Trail and Metropolitan Branch Trail, and to the Capital Crescent Trail via the Metropolitan Branch Trail.

STAFF ANALYSIS

Traffic

Between the Whole Foods driveway and Mansfield Road, the number of travel lanes on Wayne Avenue would be reduced from four lanes to three lanes, including a two-way center turn lane. The reduction in the number of travel lanes was recommended in the North and West Silver Spring and East Silver Spring Master Plans.

The proposed lane configuration would be sufficient to meet existing and projected traffic volumes at Wayne Avenue/Cedar Street intersection (see Attachment 3). The traffic volumes in 2020 would slightly exceed the 1650 CLV threshold at Wayne Avenue/Dale Drive (see Attachment 4), but the recommended addition of a right-turn lane on westbound Wayne Avenue (see Attachment 5) would bring the intersection back into conformance with the CLV standard. Staff does not recommend that this improvement be done at this time.

Staff believes that the intersection of the Whole Foods driveway on Wayne Avenue needs to be checked to ensure that this is the safest configuration. While this project would delete an eastbound lane east of Cedar Street, it would add one at this intersection by changing the current lane configuration. Staff is concerned that the proposed lane drop east of the driveway would occur at the mid-block crosswalk between Saint Michael's Church and School, with drivers competing for the lane at this critical spot.

Also, the above-mentioned retail center appears far more successful than originally anticipated and drivers are regularly queuing up on Wayne Avenue to make a left turn into the parking lot. ***The warrants for a traffic signal at this location should be checked and, if a signal is warranted and installed, the mid-block crosswalk should be moved to the new signalized intersection.***

Bicyclist and Pedestrian Accommodation

Brick accents would be provided at the ramp areas at the north side of the intersections along Wayne Avenue, but the brick crosswalks originally anticipated would not be provided. While DPWT staff eliminated the brick crosswalks because of maintenance concerns, and there may also be concerns about ADA compatibility, the

brick crosswalks would have served an important safety purpose: to announce to drivers the presence of the trail crossing. Staff believes that it is important to use a very visible treatment different from that of normal crosswalks, which are regularly violated by drivers blocking them in part or in full while stopped at red lights or rolling through stop signs while making right turns. **Staff believes that extra effort must be made to ensure the safety of the proposed trail crossings at intersections.** One method that should be considered is to use a stone or concrete strip at the edge of the crosswalk so that drivers would note the unusual crossing and to ensure that the striping is not worn off over time.

The driveway to the office building on the corner of Cedar Street is the only driveway within the Silver Spring CBD to be reconstructed under this project. Staff recommends that the pavement at this driveway match that of Whole Foods, extending the brick pavement three feet beyond the back of sidewalk, giving drivers more notice of the trail crossing. Different color brick "stripes" should be used at the northwest and northeast corners of Cedar Street to note the trail crossing the sidewalk on Cedar Street. Attachment 6 shows the pavement treatment recommended for the driveway and sidewalk crossing.

The curbs at Cedar Street and at Dartmouth Avenue would be bumped out to reduce the pedestrian crossing distance and thereby increase pedestrian safety.

Bus Stops and Pedestrian Crossings

Legal crosswalks exist at all intersections of two or more public roads whether or not these crosswalks are marked. The proposed project would provide parking areas on the southern side of Wayne Avenue including the opposite side of tee intersections. Staff believes that **the plans should be revised to ensure that crosswalks are not blocked by parked cars** (see Attachment 2) as now occurs with the mid-block crosswalk at Saint Michael's church. Strong consideration should be given to bumping out the curb opposite the intersecting road and directing pedestrians to cross at one marked crosswalk. Where the legal crosswalk would be closed, there should be a sign stating this and directing pedestrians to the closest crosswalk.

Particular attention should be paid to the bus stops along Wayne Avenue to ensure that they are in the safest places for transit patrons to cross Wayne Avenue. DPWT staff has said that pedestrians should not be encouraged to cross at unsignalized intersections and that crosswalk striping would encourage them to do so. They believe that pedestrians should be directed to cross only at signalized intersections. Staff disagrees. Pedestrians will cross at unsignalized intersections to get to bus stops and they should be able to do so safely.

There are three bus stops that exist within the more than 1,500-foot distance between Cedar Street and Dale Drive, for instance. Staff believes that it is impractical to believe that pedestrians will go so far out of their way to use a signalized crosswalk and

avoid the legal crosswalks at the four intermediate intersections within these limits. It is dangerous to assume that people will do so.

Bus stops that are in locations where it would be unsafe to cross Wayne Avenue should be eliminated. The bus stops that are retained should have the nearest crosswalks striped. The bus stops that are retained should also be re-evaluated to determine which get a shelter and/or bench and which do not.

Aesthetics

A brick sidewalk would be provided only within the limits of the CBD, i.e. from the current terminus of the trail at the western edge of the Saint Michael's Church property to Cedar Street. The sidewalk throughout the rest of the project would be concrete.

Brick accents would be provided at the ramp areas at the north side of the intersections along Wayne Avenue, but the brick crosswalks originally anticipated would not be provided. Consideration should be given to using this treatment on the south side of Wayne Avenue also. These accents would help to announce to drivers that they are entering a more pedestrian-oriented area and would help to improve the look of this whole area. Rather than have the project "read" as a facility being built on one side of the street, it would be seen as an improvement to the whole right-of-way.

Another benefit of the brick crosswalks that would be lost is that they would have visually tied the whole project together. While the trail is intended to provide better bicyclist and pedestrian safety and accessibility, it has also been envisioned as a community enhancement and is described in the Master Plan as a "generously landscaped" "defining aesthetic feature".

Retaining Walls

While the traveled way would be narrowed through most of the project area, the curb-to-curb width would stay the same. Retaining walls would be required in some areas to create the space to accommodate the proposed trail.

Several areas of retaining walls are proposed. One would be in front of three houses between Greenbrier Drive and Dartmouth Avenue where approximately three feet of additional right-of-way would be required, leaving the homes slightly under twenty feet from the public right-of-way (see Attachment 7). Since these homes are a few feet above the road and accessed by steps, the steps would have to be rebuilt. The existing steps and leadwalks to the homes are in good condition and are attractively faced with Stoneyhurst stone, but the proposed project would replace them with plain concrete and would extend the work limits as close as nine feet from the face of the building. Staff recommends three things to improve the proposed condition:

- Consider constructing the proposed steps parallel to the face of the home to reduce the required work zone on private property and to preserve as much as

possible the existing leadwalks. A railing would be required on the street side of these steps.

- Consider duplicating the Stoneyhurst stone facing in the new step and leadwalk construction.
- Construct concrete retaining walls with the formliner pattern used for the Wayne Avenue Bridge parapets.

Since parking spaces for the two homes without driveways would be provided on the north side of Wayne Avenue in this area, the sidewalk in this short segment would be reduced to four feet. The trail would be built at the typical eight-foot width. Staff believes that this is acceptable.

A retaining wall is also proposed in front of the Silver Spring International Middle School opposite Mansfield Drive. In response to a Montgomery County Public Schools comment, a brick-faced wall is proposed in order to match the construction of the school.

The other segments of proposed retaining wall on this project would be made of stackable blocks. Staff believes that these walls would be more attractive than those constructed along Dale Drive just south of Wayne Avenue a few years ago. However, the end result would be less attractive than having a concrete wall with a stone pattern similar to that of the Wayne Avenue Bridge. **Staff recommends that DPWT consider providing a concrete wall with a stone formliner on these walls also.**

Lighting

Better lighting is needed through the project limits to ensure that people can safely cross the side streets traversed by the proposed trail and to safely cross Wayne Avenue to get to the trail. The existing lighting along Wayne Avenue is very poor. While the lighting along the proposed bike path and sidewalk may be sufficient to ensure users' safety outside the roadway, the intersections that they have to cross to continue on or to access to the trail are poorly lit. These existing conditions must be addressed to ensure that the proposed facility operates safely as a whole.

Signing

A signing plan should be created showing all proposed signage and all existing signage to remain. Signage should be coordinated with the Silver Spring Redevelopment Office. The proposed decorative trail medallions to be located at intersections should be shown on this sheet. A star logo is shown on the plans for the proposed medallions, but **staff recommends that a design be developed specifically for this project, perhaps incorporating the Art Deco fountain motif used on the CBD banners** (see Attachment 8).

Environmental

The project has an approved Natural Resource Inventory/Forest Stand Delineation. A Tree Save Plan must be approved by M-NCPPC, Environmental Planning prior to issuance of sedimentation and erosion control permit.

Forest Conservation

A Forest Conservation Plan exemption has been issued for this project because it is a single lot not subject to special exception; it does not disturb more than 40,000 square feet of forest; it does not violate a previously approved Tree Save Plan; and a declaration of intent has been filed with the Montgomery County Planning Director. A Tree Save Plan has been submitted to staff for review, but is not yet approved.

There are 26 specimen trees and 11 significant trees within the tree study area. Five of these trees are in poor condition. Ten of the significant and specimen trees in excellent/good or fair condition will be removed as indicated on the submitted Tree Save Plan. Environmental staff is working with the applicant to additionally save T33 (35" Silver Maple), T62 (28.5" Red Maple), T64 (46" Red Oak) and T81 (38.5" Tulip Poplar). To minimize adverse impacts, no construction materials should be stored within the trees' critical root zones.

Storm Water Management

Full storm water quality and quantity control shall be expected to protect the integrity of the Sligo Creek Watershed.

Parks Impacts

The eastern end of the project is at Sligo Creek Parkway within the limits of Sligo Creek Park. There is a parking lot west of the northern leg of Sligo Creek Trail that is partly within the park property. This lot serves users of the track and field immediately behind it (see Attachment 9). Nine spaces that are parallel to Wayne Avenue would be lost to construct the trail. To address the loss of spaces in the parking lot, staff recommends that signage be provided to direct users of the field to park in other parking spaces on school property behind the school.

The construction of the trail just north of the existing Sligo Creek Trail would require the existing slope to be cut. Staff recommends that the landscape panel be reduced to four feet in this area so that the existing trees in the park can be preserved. The proposed trail between the Sligo Creek Trail intersection and Sligo Creek Parkway should be reduced to ten feet in width to accomplish this goal (see Attachment 10). Since this segment operates as part of the existing shared-use Sligo Creek Trail, staff believes that maintaining the shared-use operation would be the best for safety so that

a change is not made for this short segment and so that the change does not happen at the Sligo Creek Parkway intersection.

DPWT has said that the proposed trail across the bridge, which will be made of concrete thirteen feet wide, will have a ten-foot width tinted black to maintain the look of the asphalt trail. Marking the trail in this way would also provide a two-foot offset to the roadway for safety and a one-foot offset to the bridge parapet to account for users' normal shy distance. Staff agrees with this treatment.

The construction of the trail between the existing Sligo Creek Trail and the Wayne Avenue bridge over Sligo Creek would require a fill slope onto park property. While staff agrees that the trees on this slope should be removed, a retaining wall is needed so that the storage capacity of the floodplain upstream of the bridge is retained. The retaining wall would also minimize disturbance to parkland. Staff recommends that the retaining wall be built with a stone formliner that matches that of the bridge and a bike-safe railing atop the wall. The grading at the bottom of this wall should provide positive drainage to Sligo Creek. A minimum one-foot shy distance between the ten-foot trail and the retaining wall should be maintained

Landscaping in the park should use native species of shade trees only. Low-growing shrubs should not be used since they could pose personal security concerns. Ornamental trees should not be used as they could prove to be a maintenance problem.

A park construction permit will be needed to work on Park Property. No storage of equipments/materials and no staging will be allowed on park property without prior approval from Park Inspector and/or Park Manager.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

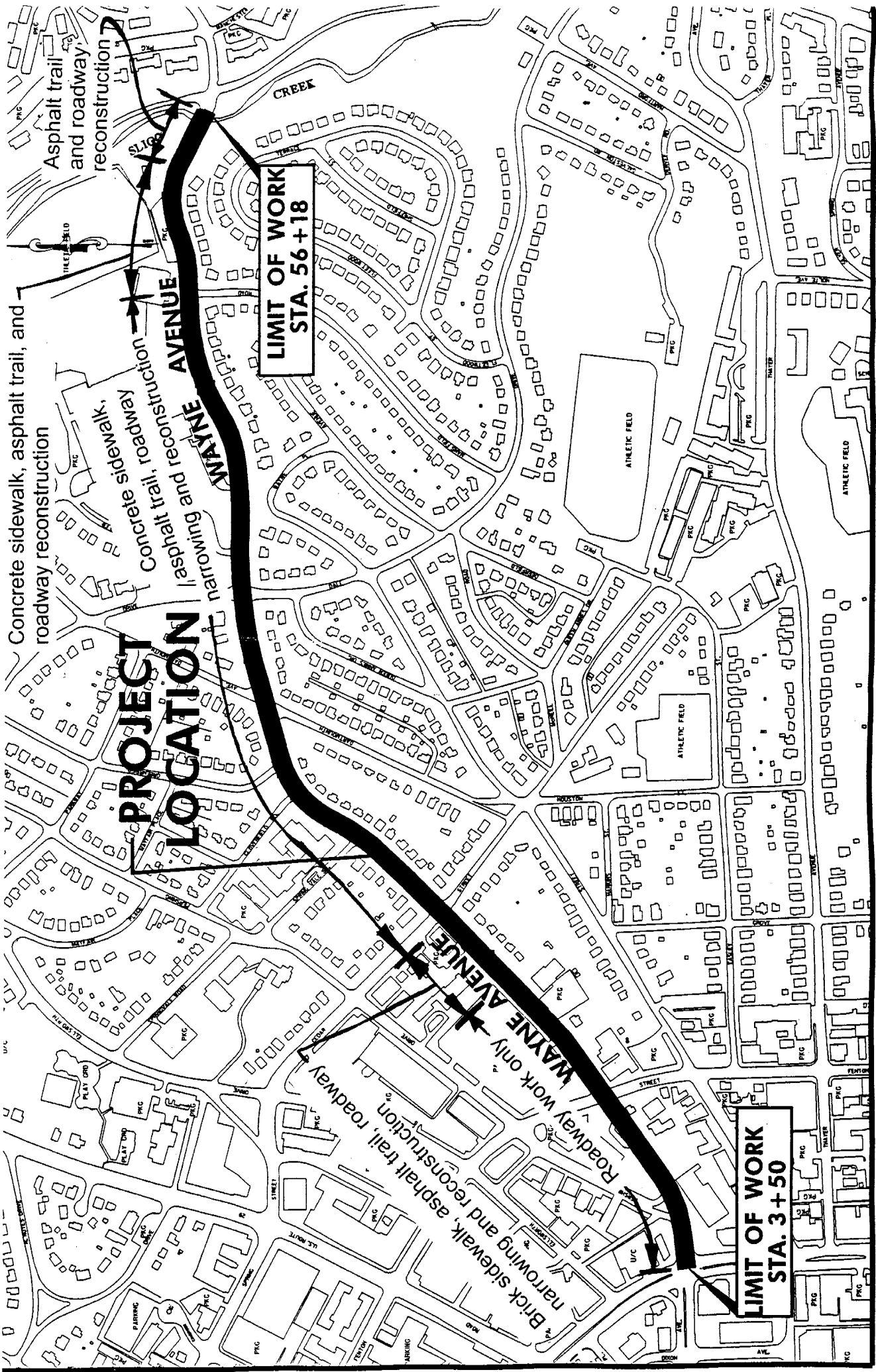
There were two public meetings for this project in 1998 and one on February 11, 2003. DPWT staff has also coordinated the proposed project with the affected property owners.

RELATED PROJECTS

The Mandatory Referral for the Wayne Avenue Bridge project, which is at the eastern limit of this project, was administratively approved by staff on March 6, 2001. The bridge project will replace the superstructure of the bridge, including the construction of a decorative parapet. Conduit will be placed for the future installation of Washington Globe luminaires under the Silver Spring Green Trail project. The sidewalk to be reconstructed under the bridge project would be further widened by the Silver Spring Green Trail project. The bridge project is scheduled to begin construction in November 2003.

LC:kcw
Attachments

mmo to mcpb MR Silver Spring Green Trail.doc



PROJECT LOCATION

WAYNE AVENUE

**LIMIT OF WORK
STA. 56+18**

**LIMIT OF WORK
STA. 3+50**

Concrete sidewalk, roadway reconstruction
Asphalt trail, roadway, and reconstruction
Asphalt trail, roadway, and reconstruction

Concrete sidewalk, roadway reconstruction
Asphalt trail, roadway, and reconstruction
Asphalt trail, roadway, and reconstruction

Brick sidewalk, asphalt trail, roadway narrowing and reconstruction
Roadway work only
Wayne Avenue

ATHLETIC FIELD

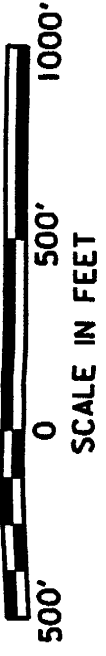
ATHLETIC FIELD

ATHLETIC FIELD

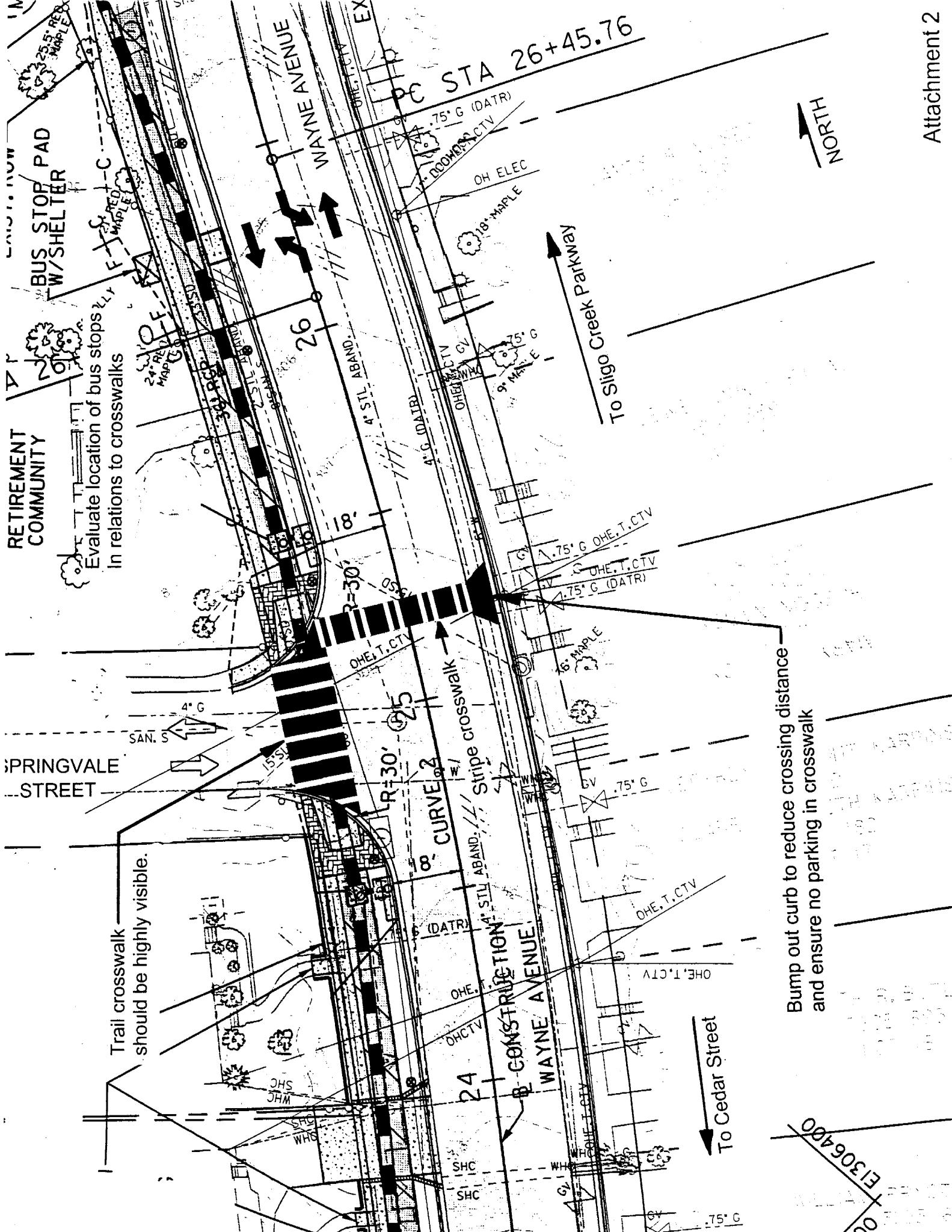
CREEK

VICINITY MAP

PROJECT LENGTH = 5268 FEET



MONTGOMERY CO.



RETIREMENT COMMUNITY

Evaluate location of bus stops in relations to crosswalks

Trail crosswalk should be highly visible.

Stripe crosswalk

CONSTRUCTION

Bump out curb to reduce crossing distance and ensure no parking in crosswalk

NORTH

E1306400

Table 5: Intersection Critical Lane Volumes

Intersection	Existing		2020 No-Build		2020 With Recommended Improvements	
	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM
Silver Spring CBD						
16th Street @ Eastern Avenue	1190	1515	1276	1616	1276	1616
16th Street @ East-West Highway	1605	2151	1700	2307	1663	1752
16th Street @ Spring Street	700	963	727	1003	727	1003
Cedar Street @ Wayne Avenue	678	603	924	872	924	872
Colesville Road @ 16th Street	865	1284	1119	1526	1057	1462
Colesville Road @ East-West Highway	1340	1539	1841	1954	1537	1647
Colesville Road @ Fenton Street	952	1101	1492	2028	1432	1737
Colesville Road @ Spring Street	1197	1239	1501	1563	1441	1596
Colesville Road @ Wayne Avenue	1026	959	1596	1353	1522	1246
Fenton Street @ Philadelphia Avenue	988	1131	1154	1434	1354	1434
Fenton Street @ Wayne Avenue	868	942	1217	1416	1160	1349
Georgia Avenue @ Colesville Road	1451	1526	2080	2195	1769	1874
Georgia Avenue @ Eastern Avenue	965	994	1015	1076	904	965
Georgia Avenue @ East-West Highway	1687	1466	1799	1556	1614	1595
Georgia Avenue @ Sligo Avenue	904	941	1070	1147	885	1036
Georgia Avenue @ Spring Street	1230	1314	1805	1841	1536	1603
Georgia Avenue @ Wayne Avenue	1404	1282	2298	1997	1810	1495
Second Avenue @ Cameron Street	311	424	351	459	351	746
Spring Street @ Cameron Street	700	837	700	837	700	1089
Spring Street @ Second Avenue	320	721	431	847	431	847

Table 5: Intersection Critical Lane Volumes (continued)

Intersection	Existing		2020 No-Build		2020 With Recommended Improvements	
	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM
East Silver Spring and Takoma Park						
Carroll Avenue @ Ethan Allen Avenue	1112	1109	1400	1292	1400	1292
Dale Drive @ Wayne Avenue	794	597	1658	1383	1526	1383
New Hampshire Avenue @ Adelphi Road	1860	2212	1984	2416	1401	1798
New Hampshire Avenue @ Northampton Drive	1126	1135	1279	1296	1279	1296
New Hampshire Avenue @ Oakview Drive	1563	2333	1684	2461	1541	1776
New Hampshire Avenue @ Piney Branch Road	980	1360	1038	1591	1038	1591
Philadelphia Avenue @ Carroll Avenue	1124	999	1229	1283	1229	1283
Philadelphia Avenue @ Maple Avenue	954	1479	1347	1946	1005	1266
Piney Branch Road @ Arliss Street	1151	1159	1419	1439	1419	1439
Piney Branch Road @ Barron Street	965	900	1233	1181	1233	1181
Piney Branch Road @ Carroll Avenue	805	950	995	1181	995	1181
Piney Branch Road @ Dale Drive	969	864	992	876	1525	1478
Piney Branch Road @ Flower Avenue	1281	1334	1502	1503	1502	1503
Piney Branch Road @ Greenwood Court	802	808	1070	1089	1070	1089
Piney Branch Road @ Philadelphia Avenue	1349	1622	1682	1952	1682	1952
Piney Branch Road @ Sligo Avenue	757	773	782	785	969	1151
Piney Branch Road @ Sligo Creek Parkway	1043	897	1066	908	1574	1406
University Boulevard @ Carroll Avenue	1025	1344	1060	1365	1060	1365
University Boulevard @ Franklin Avenue	1377	1254	1390	1310	1390	1310
University Boulevard @ New Hampshire Avenue	1512	1467	1547	1502	1547	1502
University Boulevard @ Piney Branch Road	1653	1991	1965	2330	1949	2120

Note: Intersection CLVs exceeding current congestion standard noted in bold text under "Recommended Improvements"

Table 6C. Recommended Improvements - East Silver Spring

Location	Recommended Improvements	Comments
Piney Branch Road/Sligo Avenue	- Current configuration or reconstruct Piney Branch Road as three-lane section with exclusive turn lanes at intersection (L, T, R)	
Piney Branch Road/Dale Drive	- Current configuration or reconstruct Piney Branch Road as three-lane section with exclusive turn lanes at intersection (L, T, R)	
Piney Branch Road/Sligo Creek Parkway	- Current configuration or reconstruct Piney Branch Road as three-lane section with exclusive turn lanes at intersection (L, T, R)	Intersection also in Takoma Park
Wayne Avenue/Dale Drive	- Restripe both Wayne Avenue approaches to remove thru traffic from left turn lane (L, TR) as part of reconstruction associated with Wayne Avenue Green Trail. Add right turn lane to westbound Wayne Avenue (L, T, R).	
University Boulevard/Piney Branch Road	- Add right turn lane to EB Piney Branch Road (L, T, T, R) - Add right turn lane to WB Piney Branch Road (L, T, T, R)	
New Hampshire Avenue/Adelphi Road/Dilston Road	- Add thru lane to NB New Hampshire Avenue (L, T, T, T, TR) - Add second left turn lane to SB New Hampshire Avenue (L, L, T, T, TR)	
New Hampshire Avenue/Oakview Drive	- Add thru lane to NB New Hampshire Avenue (L, T, T, T, TR) - Add left turn lane to EB Oakview Drive (L, TR) - Add left turn lane to WB Oakview Drive (L, T, R)	