



October 15, 2004

MEMORANDUM

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Lester Straw, Superintendent of Parks *MS*
William Mooney, Chief, Enterprise Division *W Mooney*
Michael F. Riley, Chief, Park Development Division *MR*

FROM: Kathleen Dearstine, Landscape Architect, Park Development Division *KD*

SUBJECT: Request by Bethesda-Chevy Chase Rotary Club to Enter into Partnership with M-NCPPC to Renovate the Playground at Norwood Local Park

RECOMMENDATION

Approval - Staff recommends approval to accept a donation from the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Rotary Club to renovate the playground at Norwood Local Park.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Bethesda-Chevy Chase Rotary Club is proposing to undertake the funding, acquisition, and installation of accessible playground equipment as their Rotary International Centennial Project to celebrate the worldwide eradication of polio. (Refer to Attachment A: Memorandum from Pamela K. Cudahy, President of the B-CC Rotary and Laura Rich, Interim Director of the Montgomery County Parks Foundation, dated October 14, 2004). The intent of the project is to make a significant contribution to the Bethesda-Chevy Chase community that will help improve the lives of children with mobility problems. The Rotary Club, working with staff, selected Norwood Local Park as their preferred project location and would like to open the playground in June 2005. Norwood Local Park is included on the Commission's playground renovation schedule for FY 2008. Norwood Local Park is located at 4700 Norwood Drive in Bethesda, Maryland. (Refer to Attachments B and C for Vicinity Plan and Existing Conditions Map).

Commission staff met with representatives of the Rotary Club in August and September to define the scope of the project and the budget. The intent of the project is to replace the playground equipment in kind, but to include elements, such as

ramps, which increase the accessibility of the playground equipment. The preliminary playground program includes the following elements:

Preliminary Playground Program

- Five foot wide accessible walkways, designed to comply with requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act
- Multi-age play structure with accessible elements, including ramps
- Two spring toys
- Freestanding climber
- Freestanding upper body equipment
- See saw
- Whirl/Merry-Go-Round
- Benches
- Relocation of existing swing sets nearer to main playground for parental observation
- Timber edging, wood fiber surfacing, and subsurface drainage system
- Storyboards to promote community service and recognize the Rotary Club's mission
- Donor recognition, such as bricks or a plaque

The preliminary playground program is defined primarily for budgeting purposes. Staff intends to obtain community input for the final selection of playground equipment.

PROJECT FUNDING AND SCHEDULE

The total cost of the project is estimated to be in the range of \$80,000 - \$95,000. The average cost for a local park playground renovation is approximately \$50,000 - \$60,000. The existing playground at Norwood Local Park is larger than the average local park playground and receives very heavy use from the community and from the day care center within the park. The combined factors of renovating a larger playground, as well as using ramps on the new play structure to increase accessibility, have increased the total cost for the project. The total project cost is reasonable, given these considerations.

The Bethesda-Chevy Chase Rotary Club has agreed to raise approximately \$50,000 - \$60,000 to fund the purchase and installation of new playground equipment, commemorative storyboards, and means for donor recognition. The Commission would fund approximately \$30,000 - \$35,000 of the project cost from the PLAR: Local Parks Play Equipment PDF. CIP funds would be used for site improvements, including demolition, relocation of existing equipment, drainage improvements, playground edging and surfacing, and accessible sidewalks. The Commission has prepared a property survey and will be designing the project.

If the Planning Board approves the project, staff would develop an agreement with the Montgomery Parks Foundation and the Rotary Club in October. The project would proceed on the following schedule:

- Staff would proceed with a preliminary concept plan in cooperation with the Rotary Club and hold a public meeting in November to obtain community input.
- The plan would be revised based on community comments and reviewed informally with the community in December or January.
- Competitive bids would be solicited for the supply and installation of equipment in January.
- The Montgomery Parks Foundation would purchase equipment in February.
- Design staff would complete construction documents by the end of March.
- Central Maintenance staff would remove existing equipment and prepare the site in April.
- The Contractor would install the new equipment in April and May.
- Central Maintenance would complete the site work in May, so that the playground can be opened in June 2005.

CONCLUSION

Staff recommends approval to enter into a public-private partnership with the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Rotary Club to renovate the playground at Norwood Local Park. The funds in the Parks CIP that were earmarked for this purpose in FY 2008 would then be utilized to renovate another priority playground.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment A: Donation Letter from B-CC Rotary Club and Parks Foundation
- Attachment B: Vicinity Plan
- Attachment C: Existing Conditions Map