



October 22, 2004

MEMORANDUM

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Jeffrey Zyontz, Chief *JZ*
Countywide Planning Division

Callum Murray, Team Leader *CM*
Community-Based Planning Division

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

PROJECT: Quince Orchard Road/Spot Improvements
From Darnestown Road (MD 28) to Muddy Branch Park
CIP No. 509337

REVIEW TYPE: Mandatory Referral No. 03819-DPW&T-1

APPLICANT: Montgomery County Department of
Public Works and Transportation

APPLYING FOR: Plan Approval

COMMUNITY-BASED PLANNING TEAM AREA: Potomac Subregion

**RECOMMENDATION: APPROVAL WITH COMMENTS TO DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC WORKS AND TRANSPORTATION (DPWT)**

Staff recommends that the Board approve the Mandatory Referral of the proposed project, with the following comment to DPWT:

- Prior to the start of construction, the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) Plan Inspector must be included in field-locating the limits of disturbance in order to minimize the loss of individual specimen trees.

DISCUSSION: The project would provide safety spot roadway improvements along 1.6 miles of Quince Orchard Road from Darnestown Road to Muddy Branch Park. An eight-foot wide shared-use trail would be constructed along the west side of the road within these limits and additional segments of sidewalk would be constructed on the east side of the road.

The Forest Conservation Plan and the Mandatory Referral of this project were reviewed by the Planning Board on March 4, 2004. Staff presented the project, public testimony was received and the Board questioned DPWT staff. Just prior to the Board's vote on the Forest Conservation Plan, DPWT requested and was granted a deferral of the Board's decision.

Shortly thereafter, the project was discussed by the Council, who decided to drop the proposed realignment of Quince Orchard Road through Muddy Branch Park from the project along with the proposed work south of the park. The proposed improvements in the park had caused concern for residents, who were worried that a straighter road might reduce safety by encouraging higher vehicular speeds, and for environmental staff, who were concerned about the amount of proposed slope work and tree removal in the park. DPWT subsequently deleted this segment from their plans.

The plans have now been resubmitted with improvements proposed only north of the park. As such, the amount of disturbance has been greatly reduced and the project no longer requires a park permit or Forest Conservation Plan. A Tree Save Plan has been submitted and has been approved by our staff.

The tree impacts include the loss of twenty-six individual specimen trees along the roadside, primarily due to the proposed construction of the trail. The sole comment recommended above is intended to ensure that the goals of the Tree Save Plan are achieved and that the tree impacts are limited to those specified in the plans.

LC:gw

mno to MCPB re 03819-DPW&T-1 Quince Orchard Road