



MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARKS
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

MCPB 05/28/09
Agenda #: 6

May 22, 2009

MEMORANDUM

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Mary R. Bradford, Parks Director
Mike F. Riley, Deputy Parks Director *M*

FROM: Douglas Alexander, Acting Chief, Park Development Division *DA*
Michael Ma, Acting Supervisor, Project Management Section *MM*

SUBJECT: Shady Grove Maintenance Facility Relocation – Site Analysis

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Approve the Webb Tract (also known as Centerpark) as the site for relocation of the Shady Grove Maintenance Facility.

SUMMARY

As part of the County's Smart Growth Initiative and implementation of the 2006 Approved and Adopted Shady Grove Sector Plan, the Montgomery County Service Park, which includes Department of Parks' Shady Grove Maintenance Facility (SGMF), will be relocated. Staff has been studying suitable sites for relocation of SGMF, which included both parkland and non-park locations. The purpose of this memo is to present the staff's site selection analysis for the four non-park sites, and staff recommendation of the site for the relocated facility.

Staff presented an initial analysis of 14 potential parkland sites and information about 2 non-park sites for relocation of SGMF to the Planning Board in February 2009, and concluded that none of the 14 parkland sites was suitable for the relocation. The Planning Board directed staff to continue the search for relocation sites.

In addition to the two non-park sites previously presented, the Webb Tract and a cluster of properties located on 13700 Block of Travilah Road, over the past three months staff studied two more non-park sites, including McGown and Rock Creek Ridge Properties. Staff used accessibility, road capacity, developable land area, infrastructure, environmental constraints, and availability as the main criteria to evaluate these four sites.

To relocate facilities currently located in the Service Park and elsewhere, the County had proposed the Webb Tract (also known as the Centerpark Development) as a relocation site. The County's plan also included Parks' maintenance facilities as one of the four main uses on the site. The County is planning to retain a consultant to develop a master plan for the entire site to study the feasibility of co-location of these uses.

Based on the staff analysis of the four non-park sites and the County's relocation plan for its facilities, staff recommends the Webb Tract as the site for relocating SHMF.

SHADY GROVE MAINTENANCE FACILITY RELOCATION

Existing Facilities

SGMF is the largest maintenance facility for the Montgomery County Parks Department. It also includes the Northern Region's Shady Grove sub-region facility. The existing maintenance complex has been in service since 1976 on a 12-acre property owned by the County. It is located in the County Service Park, on the east side of Crabbs Branch Way in Gaithersburg.

SGMF includes 65,000 square feet of building space, with parking for 370 staff and visitors, as well as storage for 220 maintenance vehicles and motorized equipment of various types. It houses the staff and equipment to support maintenance of the Montgomery County Parks system in the areas of fleet management, trades shops including carpentry, plumbing, HVAC, painting, masonry, electrical, heavy equipment, and construction. It also includes office space, supplies and material storage areas, a large fueling station, and the Department's training facility.

SGMF operates Monday through Friday from 6:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Night meetings take place at the training facility occasionally. The new facility must be centrally located in the County. It requires approximately 20 acres of property to accommodate its current functions and projected future growth.

Relocation Need

The relocation of SGMF is part of the comprehensive relocation of County facilities from the County Service Park on Crabbs Branch Way. An integral part of the County's Smart Growth Initiative Program, relocation of the Central Maintenance Facility will also help to implement the 2006 Shady Grove Sector Plan, which recommends transit oriented, mixed use development on the County Service Park property in order to capitalize on the proximity of the Shady Grove Metro stop.

FUNDING FOR RELOCATION PLANNING

In November 2008, the County Executive forwarded a package of proposals for its Smart Growth Initiative to the County Council including FY09-14 CIP amendments and supplemental appropriations. The County Executive had originally recommended \$356,000 in a joint PDF for facility planning for County facilities including M-NCPPC. On December 9, 2008, the County Council introduced the series of amendments and supplemental appropriations, which included the Facility Planning PDF. On January 8, 2009, County staff presented the Smart Growth Initiative to the Board. At the presentation, Executive staff noted that the County had proceeded on the assumption that the Parks maintenance facility would be located on parkland and that no funding had been contemplated for acquisition for the Parks facility.

On January 19, 2009, the Chairman forwarded a request to the Council President requesting \$750,000 for facility planning the M-NCPPC facility. On January 22, 2009, the County Council held a hearing on the County's Smart Growth Initiative. At the hearing the Planning Board Chairman testified in support of the Board's request for \$750,000 in facility planning funds for the Parks facility relocation. On January 29, 2009, at a PS/T&E Committees worksession, Council staff noted the Chairman's request for \$750,000 in facility planning funding, but recommended that the County's Facility Planning PDF be renamed to Relocation Planning, that the M-NCPPC facility continue to be included, and that the funding be increased from \$356,000 to \$800,000 to provide for additional work for MCPS facilities.

At its regular February 5, 2009 Planning Board meeting on the sites analysis for the relocation, Parks staff also presented a Parks CIP Project Description Form for funding in the amount of \$250,000 for development of a Program of Requirements and continued sites analysis for the relocation, independent of the County's Smart Growth Initiative. The Board approved the PDF for submission to the Executive and County Council for adoption and on February 6, 2009, submitted a letter request to the Executive and County Council.

On February, 10, 2009, the PS/T&E committees met to consider the County's Smart Growth Initiative for relocation of the County Service Park facilities including M-NCPPC's request for a PDF to develop a program of requirements and sites analysis. The Board's request for approval of the Parks CIP PDF was discussed at the meeting, the Committees agreed to separate the M-NCPPC PDF from the County's initiative, but concurred with Council staff's recommendation for reducing the amount to \$150,000. On March 17, 2009, the full Council held a public hearing and adopted the PS/T&E Committees' recommended level of funding in the amount of \$150,000.

PREVIOUS SITES ANALYSIS

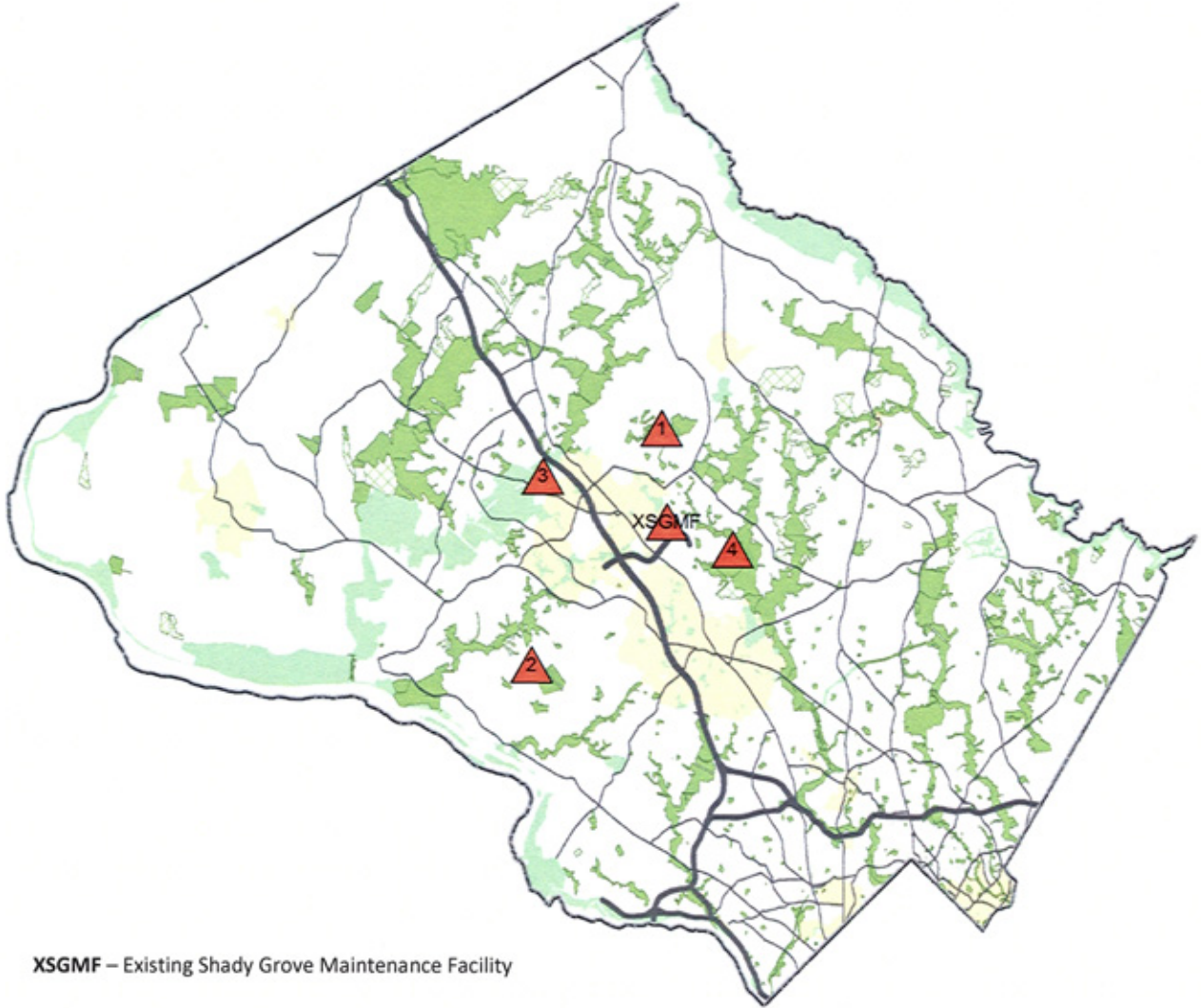
On February 5, 2009, Parks staff presented for Board review and discussion an analysis of 14 potential parkland sites for relocation of the Central Maintenance Facility as outlined in the staff report (see Attachment A). Of the total of 14 park sites that were analyzed, four sites were found by staff to have the greatest likelihood of fulfilling the requirement for relocation of the Maintenance Facility, while the remaining 10 sites were found to be unsuitable and were not recommended for further analysis. However, all four of the more suitable sites contain disadvantages as noted in the report, which led staff to conclude that no Parks sites should be recommended for the relocation.

In addition to the parkland sites, staff included information about two non-park sites that appeared to have potential for accommodating the relocation, the Webb Tract and a cluster of properties located on 13700 Block of Travilah Road. Based on review of the sites analysis, the Board directed staff to continue the search for relocation sites.

NON-PARK RELOCATION SITES

Following the Board's February 5, 2009 sites review, staff began looking at non-park sites for potential purchase. Staff included a number of sites in its initial analysis and prioritized four for detailed analysis. Of these sites, two had been included in the February 5 report. The four non-park sites are as follows:

1. Webb Tract (Snouffer School Road)
2. Travilah Road Properties (13700 Block of Travilah Road)
3. McGown Property (Game Preserve Road near Seneca Creek State Park)
4. Rock Creek Ridge/ICC (Needwood Road adjacent to the Rock Creek Maintenance Yard)

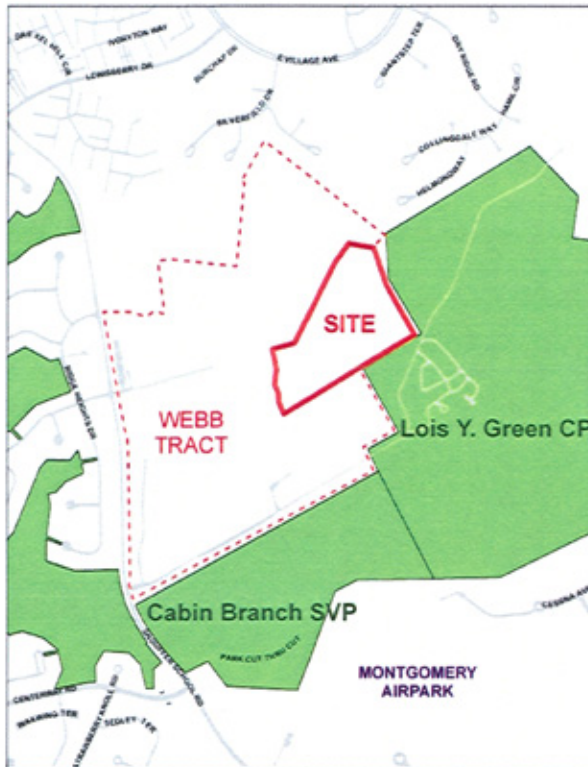


XSGMF – Existing Shady Grove Maintenance Facility

SITE EVALUATION

Staff used accessibility, road capacity, developable land area, infrastructure, environmental constraints, and availability as the main criteria to evaluate the four relocation sites. The Park Planning and Stewardship Division staff prepared a GIS-based analysis (Attachment B) to exam environmental constraints of these sites, including stream and wetland buffers, cultural resources, and WSSC Water and Sewer Envelope. The Planning Department's Transportation Planning staff provided an Access Evaluation (Appendix A to Attachment B) of these sites to determine if adequate public road access exists for individual sites. The results of these analyses were incorporated into the site selection evaluation, which is summarized below.

1. Webb Tract



Location: On the east side of Snouffer School Road, approximately 10,000 feet northeast of the intersection of Snouffer School Road and Centerway Drive.

Gross Area: 134 acres for the entire tract; the proposed site for Park facility is about 25 acres located in the northeastern corner of the tract.

Zone: I-4 (low-intensity, light industrial)

Adjacent Uses: East- M-NCPPC Lois Y. Green Conservation Park; North- residential properties in Montgomery Village; West- residential properties across Snouffer School Road; South- M-NCPPC Cabin Branch Stream Valley Park, to the south of the park is the Montgomery County Airpark.

Environmental Constraints: The tract is bisected by a stream and contains 27 acres of forest and 27.4 acres of stream buffer. The proposed 25-acre site for the SGMF is outside forest conservation and stream buffer areas.

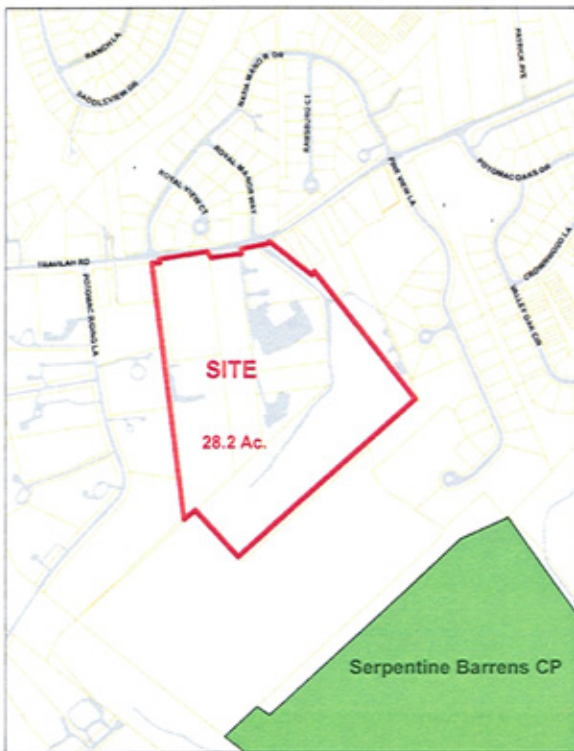
Utility: WSSC water and sewer services are available.

Accessibility: Snouffer School Road is classified as an Arterial in the Gaithersburg Vicinity Master Plan. The widening of this road has been through the Facility Planning process, but the project is not yet funded for design and construction. Direct vehicular access to the Park facility site will be via Turkey Thicket Drive, which is a proposed road internal to the Tract with an 80-foot-wide right-of-way. Turkey Thicket Drive will also provide access to Lois Y. Green Conservation Park. Mill & Smith has rough graded the Drive.

Prior Approval: Preliminary Plan 12004018 and subsequent amendments were approved by the Planning Board for a light industrial park proposed by Miller & Smith. Part of the tract and Turkey Thicket Drive have been recorded. A Final Forest Conservation Plan for the development was approved and subsequently amended in August 2008.

Conclusion: This is the most viable one of the four sites. It provides adequate developable area, access road, and water and sewer services. Sounffer Road may need to be widened to accommodate traffic generated by this and other County's facilities to be located on the Tract. The community's concerns about the impact of the proposed uses on surrounding neighborhoods must be addressed. The exact location and size of the site will depend on the County's co-location study for the entire Webb Tract.

2. Travilah Road Properties



Location: On the south side of Travilah Road (13700 Block), approximately 600 feet west of its intersection with Pine View Lane, opposite Natia Manor Drive and Royal Manor Way.

Gross Area: 28 acres for 9 parcels; not all the parcels are currently on the market for sale.

Zone: RE-2 (Residential, one-family)

Adjacent Uses: Surrounded by RE-2 or R-200/TDR zoned residential properties.

Environmental Constraints: The southern part of the site is bisected by an unnamed tributary from Sandy Branch. According to the GIS-based analysis, the developable area of the site is about 14 acres due to stream buffer and associated steep slope areas.

Utility: WSSC water and sewer services are available.

Accessibility: Travilah Road is classified as a Primary Residential Road in the Potomac Master Plan. The recent Road Code update included a new road classification of Minor Arterial. While no specific criteria have been developed for these roads, a reclassification of Travilah Road could be considered since it serves more of a regional function than most Primaries. However, residents in this area would likely oppose the use of this site and a road reclassification since they successfully campaigned to ban quarry truck traffic from the road and have worked over the last seven years to remove non-conforming landscape operations with mulch trucks from Travilah Road.

Prior Approval: This site consists of multiple properties, of which many are currently occupied by commercial uses under Special Exceptions.

Conclusion: This site does not appear feasible because (1) some of the properties are not available for purchase soon, (2) a large portion of the site is not developable, and (3) potential community opposition to reclassify Travilah Road to a minor arterial road.

3. McGown Property



Location: The site is bounded by Game Preserve Road to the north, I-270 to the east, and the future Watkins Mill Road Extended to the south, near Seneca Creek State Park.

Gross Area: 77.28 acres divided by a PEPCO right-of-way into northern (10.71 acres) and southern (66.57 acres) parcels.

Zone: Northern parcel - R-200 (Residential, one-family), Southern parcel - I-3 (Technology and Business Park)

Adjacent Uses: North- residential properties and Seneca Creek State Park; West and south- a proposed mixed-use development (Watkins Mill Town Center) in the City of Gaithersburg.

Environmental Constraints: A stream bisects the eastern portion of the southern parcel. According to the GIS-based analysis, the developable area of the site is about 34 acres due to stream buffer and steep slope areas.

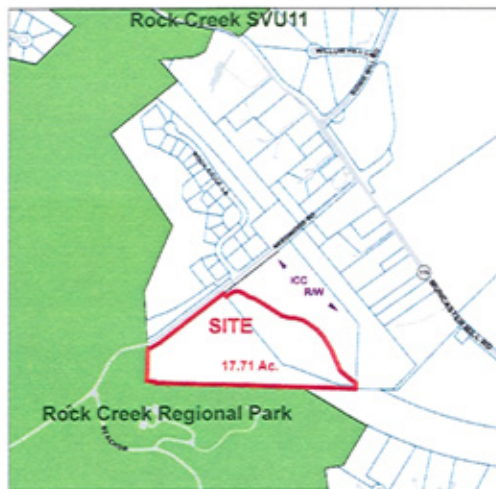
Utility: WSSC water and sewer services are available.

Accessibility: Access to the site is via Game Preserve Road, which is an unclassified street currently being proposed as a Rustic Road. The site frontage is bordered by steep slopes except for the southwestern corner where there is a driveway that runs along the southern border of the property. A stream makes a portion of the property inaccessible.

The proposed Corridor City Transitway (CTT) crosses the property, making less accessible the eastern 30% of the property that consists mostly of steep slopes. It would be difficult to build an access road from Watkins Mill Road because of the narrow space between the CCT and the CSX ROW and the grade difference at this location. If the Watkins Mill Road access can be resolved, this site would have good access, but would still have access problems across the site. Without a Watkins Mill Road access point, this site appears to be unacceptable.

Conclusion: This is not a suitable site due to inadequate road access and environmental constraints.

4. Rock Creek Ridge/ICC



Location: On the south side of Needwood Road, between Rock Creek Park and InterCounty Connector (ICC) right-of-way, approximately 15,000 feet west of Muncaster Mill Road.

Gross Area: 17.7 acres.

Zone: RNC (Rural Neighborhood Cluster)

Adjacent Uses: East- ICC right-of-way; South and west- M-NCPPC Rock Creek Park.

Utility: WSSC water service is available and sewer service will be available after Parks' Rock Creek Sewer CIP project is completed in the near future.

Accessibility: Needwood Road is currently classified as a Primary Residential Street in the Upper Rock Creek Master Plan (URCMP). It could be considered for reclassification to a Minor Arterial, a possibility that did not exist when the URCMP was approved. The average daily traffic (ADT) is less than what one might anticipate for a Minor Arterial, but the road already provides access to Rock Creek Regional Park and Lake Needwood and thus provides more than a purely residential function.

This site is in a low density residential area (mostly RE-2) that is recommended to continue as such. A park maintenance facility would constitute a significant expansion of an already existing park facility, but also a change in character that could be seen by the community as being out-of-scale. To help stymie the use of this site, opposition to a road reclassification should also be expected.

Prior Approval: The site is approved by the Planning Board as the disposal site for the Lake Needwood Dredging project.

Conclusion: Locating the proposed new facility on this site would require changes to the approved Lake Needwood Dredging Plan and the proposed Rock Creek Maintenance Yard renovation plan. It also requires coordination with the State Highway Administration on the availability of the site. Reclassification of Needwood Road to a minor arterial road may be difficult due to potential community opposition. Therefore, this is not a feasible site.

COUNTY RECOMMENDED SITES

As part of the County's Smart Growth Initiative for relocation the Service Park, the County had proposed the Webb Tract (also known as the Centerpark Development) as a site for County PSTA, School Food Warehouse, and Fire Safety Training facilities. During the course of the County's relocation efforts, the Webb Tract site was also proposed for relocation of the M-NCPPC facility. At the time of writing, staff understands that the County has an option to purchase the property, including land adequate to accommodate the M-NCPPC facility.

In discussions with the County regarding purchase of the Webb Tract, County staff proposed including the use of M-NCPPC ALARF funds. Park staff noted that County General Obligation Bond should fund the purchase of the relocation site for the M-NCPPC facility, and that use of ALARF lacked the necessary master plan recommendation. At the time of writing, the County's strategy for funding the acquisition of the Webb Tract is unclear.

The County is planning to retain a consultant to develop a master plan for the entire Tract to study the feasibility of co-location of four major uses of three agencies. Some facilities, such fueling stations, may be shared between agencies. The plan will determine the acreage and exact location for individual uses.

RECOMMENDED RELOCATION SITE

Staff recommends the Centerpark site on the Webb Tract as the most suitable site for the relocation. This site is centrally located, contains approximately 25 acres of buildable area, has access to sewer and water, and is the only site with adequate existing roadway access. However, until further coordination with the County, staff is not able to determine if the site is large enough to accommodate the PSTA, School Food Warehouse, Fire Safety Training, and M-NCPPC Central Maintenance facilities.



MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARKS
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

MCBP Item # 14
02/05/09

MEMORANDUM

February 2, 2009

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Mary R. Bradford, Montgomery County Director of Parks
Michael F. Riley, Deputy Director of Parks

FROM: John E. Hench, Chief, Park Planning and Stewardship Division
Doug Redmond, Principal Natural Resources Specialist
Park Planning and Stewardship Division

SUBJECT: Site Selection for future Relocation of the Department of Parks' Shady Grove
Central Maintenance Facility

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

- 1) Approve submission of a Project Description Form (PDF) to the County Council to fund feasibility analysis and site selection for the relocation of the Parks' Shady Grove Central Maintenance Facility.
- 2) Present, for the Planning Board's review, the process and results of the Department of Parks' preliminary efforts to find a potential site on parkland for relocation of the Shady Grove Central Maintenance Facility.

BACKGROUND:

The Funding Request

The County Executive has submitted a number of PDFs to the County Council to fund the planning, design, construction, and /or land acquisition necessary to relocate 11 publically owned facilities at the County Service Park at Shady Grove in anticipation of implementation of the

Shady Grove Master Plan. The funding requests are presently under review by the joint Public Safety / Transportation, Infrastructure, Energy, and Environment Committees of the County Council. The effort is called the Property Use Study / Smart Growth Initiative. The committees' next work session is February 12th.

One of the facilities to be relocated is the Department of Parks' Central Maintenance Facility. It is located on the east side of Shady Grove Road on approximately 12 acres of county owned land. As recently as six months ago, County Executive staff informed the Department of Parks that the facilities on the east side would likely move as part of a later phase and there was little urgency to begin planning the move. Most recently, the plan is to vacate the east side facilities as soon as possible, perhaps as early as three years. In order to meet this aggressive schedule, immediate planning and design work needs to occur which requires capital funding. Funding is needed to:

- Prepare a detailed program of requirements;
- Identify and assess available publically and privately owned sites;
- Prepare conceptual layout of proposed facilities on the preferred sites;
- Conduct due diligence activities such as preliminary environmental, geotechnical, and traffic studies at the preferred sites;
- Solicit community / stakeholder input;
- Develop preliminary construction and (if needed) land acquisition cost estimates;
- Fund necessary consultants and the salary of the Commission's project manager; and
- Present findings to Planning Board and County Council.

The PDF # 360902 submitted by the Executive titled "Smart Growth Initiative – Facility Planning" included \$295,000 for various studies to relocate the Parks facility, in addition to funding planning studies for other county owned facilities. Since the evaluation of sites for the Parks facility will entail careful consideration of parkland in order to avoid land acquisition costs, it is preferable to have the Department of Parks lead the site selection studies. Therefore, staff recommends that the planning funding for the parks facility be appropriated in a separate PDF in the Parks Capital Improvements Program. If the Planning Board concurs, a PDF will be transmitted to the Council with the expectation that the appropriation will be shifted from the PDF #360902 submitted by the Executive. The new PDF will be handed out at the Planning Board meeting.

Preliminary Site Selection Efforts

The Central Maintenance complex at Shady Grove currently contains the Shady Grove Maintenance and Training Facility, as well as elements of the Northern Park Region and the Horticultural Services Division. These functions are housed in several buildings totaling approximately 76,000 square feet on 12 acres on Crabbs Branch Way (Figure 1). A more complete description of the facilities and functions of the complex can be found in Attachment A.

The Central Maintenance Division provides support to the Department of Parks, and indirect services to park patrons, by providing services that enhance the quality of park facilities for the

enjoyment of County residents and visitors. The division is composed of three functional sections. The Fleet Maintenance Section provides centralized maintenance and repair to allow the other divisions to perform park maintenance and planning functions more efficiently. The Trades/Construction Management Program provides centralized maintenance, repair, and remodeling services for facilities and utility systems. Additionally, this unit is responsible for construction of new facilities and exhibits. Administration provides leadership, general support, and administrative services for the division.

The Shady Grove Maintenance and Training Facility was designed and constructed in the early 1970s, when the park system was approximately 18,000 acres, or half the size it is today. The current 1970s era facility is undersized and was not built to accommodate future growth. Nevertheless, over the years Central Maintenance staff has added “second story loft areas” inside many of the buildings in order to provide additional storage and/or work space.

In 2004, Central Maintenance staff contracted with Loiederman Soltesz Associates, Inc. to prepare a Space Utilization and Land-use Study for possible relocation of the maintenance yard (Attachment B). The report details current patterns of space utilization, notes the addition of loft areas for storage space in many of the buildings, and projects the acreage needed for future relocation. On page 11 of Attachment B, the consultants recommended a future site of 18-22 acres.

Independently, park staff (Hench, Astorga, and Riley) used information similar to that contained in the Loiederman Soltesz Associates’ report, along with estimated growth in the County park system (including land and future capital improvements) projected out to the year 2020 to estimate acreage needed for the relocation. Staff’s estimate was 20-25 acres (Attachment C). This estimate included land necessary for parking, stormwater management, and reforestation. See Attachment D for related calculations.

Rationale for Move: Relocation of the Shady Grove complex is required as part of the implementation of the County’s Smart Growth Initiative. One of the elements of the initiative will be accomplished by the implementation of the Shady Grove Sector Plan, which will create thousands of new housing units near the Shady Grove Metro Station, as well as cleaning up a brownfields site, modernizing public facilities (including, but not limited to the Shady Grove complex), reducing payments for rented facilities, and creating opportunities to protect the Agricultural Reserve by providing an attractive alternative to sprawl development.

Possible Relocation to Parkland: As requested by the County Executive, Department of Parks’ staff performed an analysis of existing park sites to determine if an appropriate site could be found on existing parkland; GIS was used for this effort. The basic requirements for a suitable site were that it be at least 25 acres in size, that it not contain Best Natural Areas, Biodiversity Areas, Stream and Wetland Buffers, historic resources (including Locational Atlas Resources, Master Plan Historic Districts, Master Plan Historic Sites, Master Plan Individual Sites, National Register Historic Districts, National Register Individual Sites, and Park owned historic sites), that it be located within the WSSC Water and Sewer Envelope, and it be accessible from an appropriate sized roadway (larger than Primary Residential and not Controlled Access).

Using these criteria, 14 potential park sites were identified and subjected to further analysis. Nine of the sites were determined to be geographically unsuitable, primarily from the standpoint of remoteness (too far from the center of the County and/or major highways) and another site has conflicts with planned Park amenities and the Intercounty Connector. The remaining four sites were subjected to additional study. Two sites in the Lois Y. Green Conservation Park were deemed unusable due to deed restrictions attached to the donated property, a site in the Crabbs Branch Stream Valley Park would require construction of an access road through either an environmentally sensitive area or through the Needwood Golf Course, and a site in Rock Creek Stream Valley Unit 6 would require substantial improvements to an existing park road which is located in an environmentally sensitive area as well as the construction of a bridge over the mainstem of Rock Creek.

Detailed analysis, including maps of the 14 potential park sites, can be found in Attachment E.

Possible Non-Park Sites: When it became evident that none of the park sites evaluated was likely suitable for the relocation of the Shady Grove Complex, two non-park sites were looked at as possible alternatives. These sites are the Centerpark development (formerly the Webb tract), which is located adjacent to the Lois Y. Green Conservation Park, and a site on Travilah Road, part of which is currently occupied by a landscaping business.

The Centerpark site is already being developed as a commercial/industrial area, and a portion of the site, large enough to house the central maintenance complex, is available (Figure 2).

At the Travilah Road site, there are four parcels, totaling 21.88 acres, which are currently available for purchase, with another four parcels, totaling 6.32 acres, which might be available in the future (Figure 3). The combined 28.20 acres contain 15.47 developable (environmentally unconstrained) acres.

Conclusion: Staff requests the Planning Board's approval to transmit a PDF to the County Council to complete the feasibility analysis and site selection for the Parks Central Maintenance Facility at Shady Grove.

Pc: Al Astorga
Sue Edwards
Mike Horrigan
Gene Giddens

Table 4 - Results of the GIS-based analysis and comments

Site #	Site Name	Park Type	Region	Acreage of Site	Comments/Recommendations
1	Crabb's Branch SVP	Stream Valley	N-RC	32.4	Designate Candidate C
2	Damascus Recreational Park Location A	Recreational	N-LB	65.3	Site not geographically suitable, too remote
3	Damascus Recreational Park Location B	Recreational	N-LB	29.0	Site not geographically suitable, too remote
4	Damascus Recreational Park Location C	Recreational	N-LB	25.9	Site not geographically suitable, too remote
5	Lois Y. Green CP Location A	Conservation	N-SG	65.2	Designate Candidate A
6	Lois Y. Green CP Location B	Conservation	N-SG	46.6	Designate Candidate A
7	North Germantown Greenway SVP Location A	Stream Valley	N-LB	96.9	Site not geographically suitable, too remote
8	North Germantown Greenway SVP Location B	Stream Valley	N-LB	37.2	Site not geographically suitable, too remote
9	Northwest Branch Recreational Park	Recreational	N-OM	135.0	Conflicts with planned amenities/planned ICC
10	Patuxent River Watershed CP Location A	Conservation	N-OM	31.0	Site not geographically suitable, too remote and in Patuxent Primary Management Area
11	Patuxent River Watershed CP Location B	Conservation	N-OM	30.4	Site not geographically suitable, too remote and in Patuxent Primary Management Area
12	Rock Creek SVU 6	Stream Valley	S-WH	40.9	Designate Candidate B
13	South Germantown Recreational Park Location A	Recreational	N-BH	48.8	Site not geographically suitable, too remote
14	South Germantown Recreational Park Location B	Recreational	N-BH	33.8	Site not geographically suitable, too remote

Discussion of Results:

The GIS-based site selection process initially identified fourteen sites as possible candidates. Careful examination of each site with an eye towards the planned goals for this facility winnows that list down to three Candidates (4 sites). Lois Y. Green Conservation Park (2 sites) should be considered the best due to its proximity to the existing yard and geographically central location. It is designated Candidate A. Rock Creek SVU 6 is the second-most suitable site due to its relatively centralized location and access to a major road. It should be designated Candidate B. Crabb's Branch SVP is the third-most suitable site and should be designated Candidate C.

The other sites identified as potential candidates are too far removed from the major county transportation routes and will add to higher fuel costs as longer trips will be necessary to reach job sites. An isolated site is not conducive to the mission of a Central Maintenance facility and these sites should be discounted from consideration.

In addition to being far removed from the rest of the park system, some of the discounted candidates have other issues that make them even less suitable candidates. Specifically, the Patuxent River Watershed Conservation Park sites are within the Patuxent River Primary Management Area, a designation similar to a Special Protection Area which strictly limits the amount of impervious surface that may be constructed. Northwest Branch Recreational Park is currently in the final stages of the park master-planning process. The addition of a maintenance facility is not consistent with this park master plan and with the plans for the proposed Inter-county Connector (ICC) which is planned for the area.

Further analysis of candidate sites A, B and C revealed additional problems. Access to the site in Crabb's Branch SVP (Candidate C) is impossible without building a road either through the environmentally sensitive areas of the stream valley or through the adjacent Needwood Golf Course. Rock Creek SVU 6 (Candidate B) would require substantial improvements to an existing park road which travels through environmentally sensitive areas as well as construction of a larger bridge across the main stem of Rock Creek. Also, 1.6 acres of land in Rock Creek SVU 6 has been reserved as a reforestation site as part of the mitigation package for the planned pedestrian bridge carrying the Rock Creek Trail over Veirs Mill Road. The exact location of the 1.6 acre parcel has yet to be determined. Lastly, certain future improvements at Lois Y. Green Conservation Park (Candidate A) are precluded by deed restrictions.

**GIS-based Analysis of Four Non-Park Candidate Sites for
Relocation of the Department of Parks' Shady Grove
Maintenance Facility**

Prepared by:
Joseph B. Davis
Senior Natural Resources Specialist
Doug Redmond
Principal Natural Resources Specialist
Park Planning & Stewardship Division
Montgomery County Department of Parks
May 8, 2009

Recommendation: Based on the following analysis, it appears that the Centerpark site on the Webb Tract would be the most suitable site for the relocation of the Shady Grove Maintenance Facility.

Purpose: The purpose of this study was to conduct a GIS-based analysis of four non-park candidate sites for the relocation of the Department of Parks' Shady Grove Maintenance Facility.

Introduction: Implementation of the 2006 Approved and Adopted Shady Grove Sector Plan requires relocation of the Montgomery County Services Park, an industrial area that includes the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission's Shady Grove Maintenance Facility. This facility has been in service since 1976 on land owned by the Montgomery County Government. Serving as headquarters for the Central Maintenance division and the Northern Region's Shady Grove sub-region, the current maintenance facility contains trade shops, vehicle maintenance bays, office space, supplies and materials storage, a large fuel handling facility and the Department's training facility. Any site chosen for the replacement facility must be able to accommodate all current uses with space for future expansion. A study was carried out by the Department of Parks in an attempt to find a location on currently held parkland that would be suitable for this facility (GIS-based Analysis of Candidate Sites within the Montgomery County Park System Suitable for a New Maintenance Facility, January 30, 2009). This study yielded no completely suitable candidate sites. The Parks Commission directed the Department to begin examining candidate sites outside of the park system.

Site Selection: Four candidate sites were identified by senior Commission staff - including William Gries, land acquisition specialist for the Department of Parks. The location of these sites in the County is shown in Figure 1. The sites were then examined using the same methodology used to evaluate candidate sites in the January 2009 study; in the January 2009 study, sites were evaluated for adequate size (minimum of 20 useable acres; this was relaxed somewhat for the current study), environmental constraints, the availability of public sewer and water, and the adequacy of transportation infrastructure.

Environmental Constraints: The Department of Parks used GIS to analyze the selected sites, checking for environmental constraints as identified in the 2005 Land Preservation, Parks and Open Space Plan (LPPRP). These constraints include:

Table 2. Recommended Buffers for Wetlands Springs and Seeps Outside of Special Protection Areas

Stream use & Order	Wetlands of Special State Concern	Wetlands with Steep Slopes**	Wetlands with Erodible Soils***	Other Wetlands
Use III, First & Second Order	100'	50-100'	50-100'	50'
Use III, Third & Higher Order Streams	100'	25-100'	25-100'	25'
Use IV, First & Second Order Streams	100'	40-100'	40-100'	40'
Use IV, Third & Higher Order	100'	25-100'	25-100'	25'
Use I, First & Second Order	100'	25-100'	25-100'	25'
Use I, Third and Higher Order	100'	25-100'	25-100'	25'

NOTE: Isolated farm ponds, existing stormwater management ponds or man-made drainage ditches are exempt from these expanded buffer recommendation.

**Nontidal Wetlands of Special State Concern, as identified by the Maryland Department of the Environment (COMAR 26.23.06) are subject to a minimum 100-foot buffer.*

***Buffer for wetlands adjacent to steep slopes will be expanded to include the steep slopes up to 100 foot maximum. For wetlands outside SPSs, steep slopes are defined as 25% or greater on the steepest 50 feet within the 100 feet adjacent to the wetland.*

****Buffer for wetlands adjacent to erodible soils will be expanded to include the erodible soils up to 100 foot maximum.*

Table 3. Recommended Buffers for Wetlands Springs and Seeps within Special Protection Areas

Stream use & Order	Wetlands of Special State Concern*	Wetlands with Steep Slopes**	Wetlands with Erodible Soils***	Other Wetlands
Use III, First & Second Order	150'	150'	150'	150'
Use III, Third & Higher Order Streams	100'	60-100'	25-100'	25'
Use IV, First & Second Order Streams	100'	75-125'	76-125'	75'
Use IV, Third & Higher Order	100'	60-100'	25-100'	25'
Use I, First & Second Order	100'	60-100'	50-100'	50'
Use I, Third and Higher Order	100'	60-100'	25-100'	25'

NOTE: Isolated farm ponds, existing stormwater management ponds or man-made drainage ditches are exempt from these expanded buffer recommendation. The buffer widths for Use III first and second order streams are in accordance with the recommendations of the Upper Paint Branch Technical Work Group.

**Nontidal Wetlands of Special State Concern, as identified by the Maryland Department of the Environment (COMAR26.23.06) are subject to a minimum 100-foot buffer.*

***Buffer for wetlands adjacent to steep slopes will be expanded to the outer edge of the steep slopes up to the maximum distance shown in the table. For wetlands inside SPAs, steep slopes are defined as greater than 15% on the steepest 50 feet within the 100 feet adjacent to the wetland.*

****Buffer for wetlands adjacent to erodible soils will be expanded to include the erodible soils up to the maximum distance shown in the table.*

Locational Atlas Resource- A district, site, building, structure or object, including its appurtenances and environmental setting, which is significant in national, state or local history, architecture, archaeology or culture. This includes, but is not limited to, all properties on the “Locational Atlas and Index of Historic Sites in Montgomery County.” <http://www.mc-mncppc.org/historic/index.shtm>

Master Plan Historic Districts- A group of historic resources which are significant as a cohesive unit and contribute to the historical, architectural, archaeological or cultural values within the Maryland-Washington Regional District and which has been so designated in the master plan for historic preservation. <http://www.mc-mncppc.org/historic/index.shtm>

Master Plan Individual Sites- Any individual historic resource that is significant and contributes to the historical, architectural, archaeological or cultural values within the Maryland-Washington Regional District and which has been so designated in the master plan for historic preservation.

<http://www.mc-mncppc.org/historic/index.shtm>

National Register Historic Districts- A district possesses a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites, buildings, structures, or objects united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development. http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb15/nrb15_4.htm#district

National Register Individual Site- A site is the location of a significant event, a prehistoric or historic occupation or activity, or a building or structure, whether standing, ruined, or vanished, where the location itself possesses historic, cultural, or archeological value regardless of the value of any existing structure. http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb15/nrb15_4.htm#district

Park Owned Historic Sites- Cultural Resources in Parks encompass historic properties that may or may not be designated. While some of these properties are listed on the *Locational Atlas of Historic Sites* or the *Master Plan for Historic Preservation*, others are not. But they all have been deemed to contribute to the unique telling of Montgomery County’s history. Stewardship of these resources involves acquisition, research, stabilization, interpretive or activity programming, architectural and engineering programming, restoration/rehabilitation, and maintenance. The Cultural Resources in Parks inventory is meant to be a living, changing repository, wherein new acquisitions of a cultural or historical nature can be added to the inventory. These additions will occur as new parkland is acquired and/or as buildings come of age.

Other Constraints:

WSSC Water and Sewer Envelope- It was decided that any new maintenance facility of this scale must have access to public water and should have access to public sewer. WSSC’s service area is documented in M-NCPPC’s GIS system and GIS analysis was used to exclude candidate sites not inside the water or sewer service area.

Adequate Transportation Infrastructure- The Department of Parks consulted with the Montgomery County Planning Department, Transportation Planning Division on the suitability of certain categories of roads to handle the type of traffic generated by a new maintenance facility. The identified sites were submitted to Transportation Planning. Their reply is included as Appendix A.

Description of the GIS-based Methodology:

Each site was rapidly examined using the Department of Parks Resource Atlas GIS application. The Resource Atlas serves to rapidly and accurately show the natural and cultural resources present on any given parcel of land in Montgomery County. Maps were produced showing available areas in each candidate site. The maps are enclosed as figures 2-5.

Results of the GIS Analysis and Transportation Planning Analysis

Four sites were examined: The Centerpark site on the Webb Tract, the Travilah Road site, the McGown tract, and The Rock Creek Regional Park “dewatering” area. Visual examination of Resource Atlas maps for the sites revealed that all had adequate unconstrained area for the maintenance facility, that all had access to WSSC water service and that all but one had access to WSSC sewer service.

Transportation Planning found that only the Centerpark/Webb Tract site had adequate existing transportation infrastructure, the McGown Tract could be made accessible if an access from Watkins Mill Road were developed, and that the roads serving the other two sites would need to be reclassified to make them accessible. A full transportation analysis is contained in Appendix A.

The complete results of the GIS analysis are summarized and shown in Table 4.

Table 4 - Shady Grove Maintenance Facility Relocation - Non-Park Candidate Sites

ID	Site Name	Vision	Approximate	Archaeological	Inside WSSC Water Area	Near Existing WSSC Sewer Line	Nearby roads suitable**
		Division Team Area	Planning Area	Unconstrained* & Unimproved Acreage			
1	Centerpark/Webb Tract Site	Red	20	25.00	No	Yes	Yes
2	Travilah Road Site	Blue	25	14.00	No	Yes	No
3	McGown Tract Site	Red	20	34.00	No	Yes	No
4	Rock Creek "Dewatering" Site	Green	22	14.00***	No	Yes	No

* Unconstrained means outside of Sensitive Areas Buffer, Best Natural Areas, Biodiversity Areas and Historic Sites and their Environmental Settings. Additionally, sites are of a suitable shape for a Maintenance Facility (i.e., high volume to surface area ratio, round or square and not sinuous.)

** Park is near a road classified larger than "Primary Residential" and is not Controlled Access.

*** Site would be a 14-acre addition to the existing Rock Creek Maintenance Facility. Total acreage of the combined site is more than 30 acres.

Conclusion: Based on the GIS analysis and input from Transportation Planning, the Centerpark site is the only suitable location for the relocation of the Department of Parks’ Shady Grove Maintenance Facility.

Figure 1 - Shady Grove Maintenance Facility Relocation
Non-park Candidate Sites

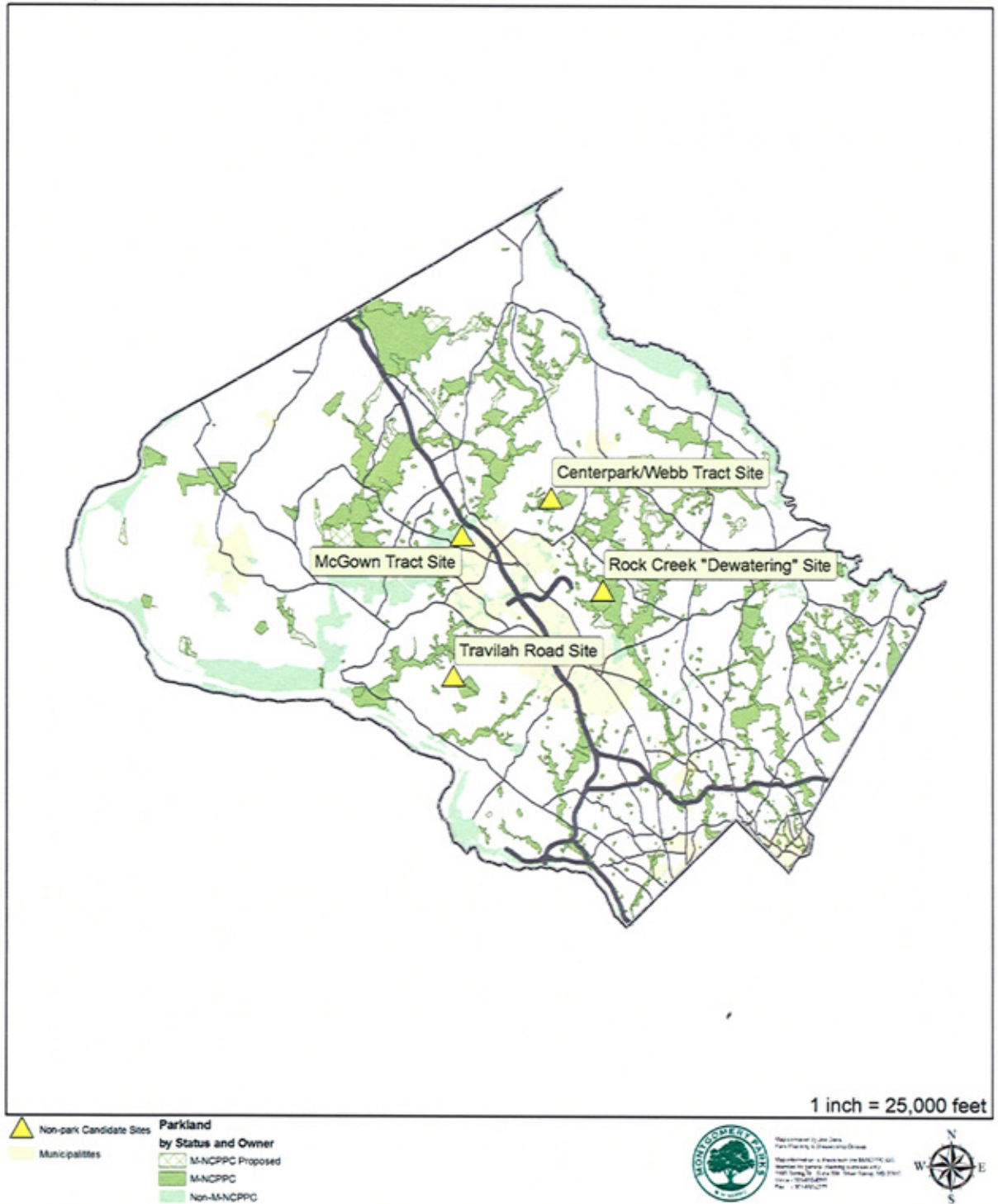


Figure 2 - Centerpark/Webb Tract Site



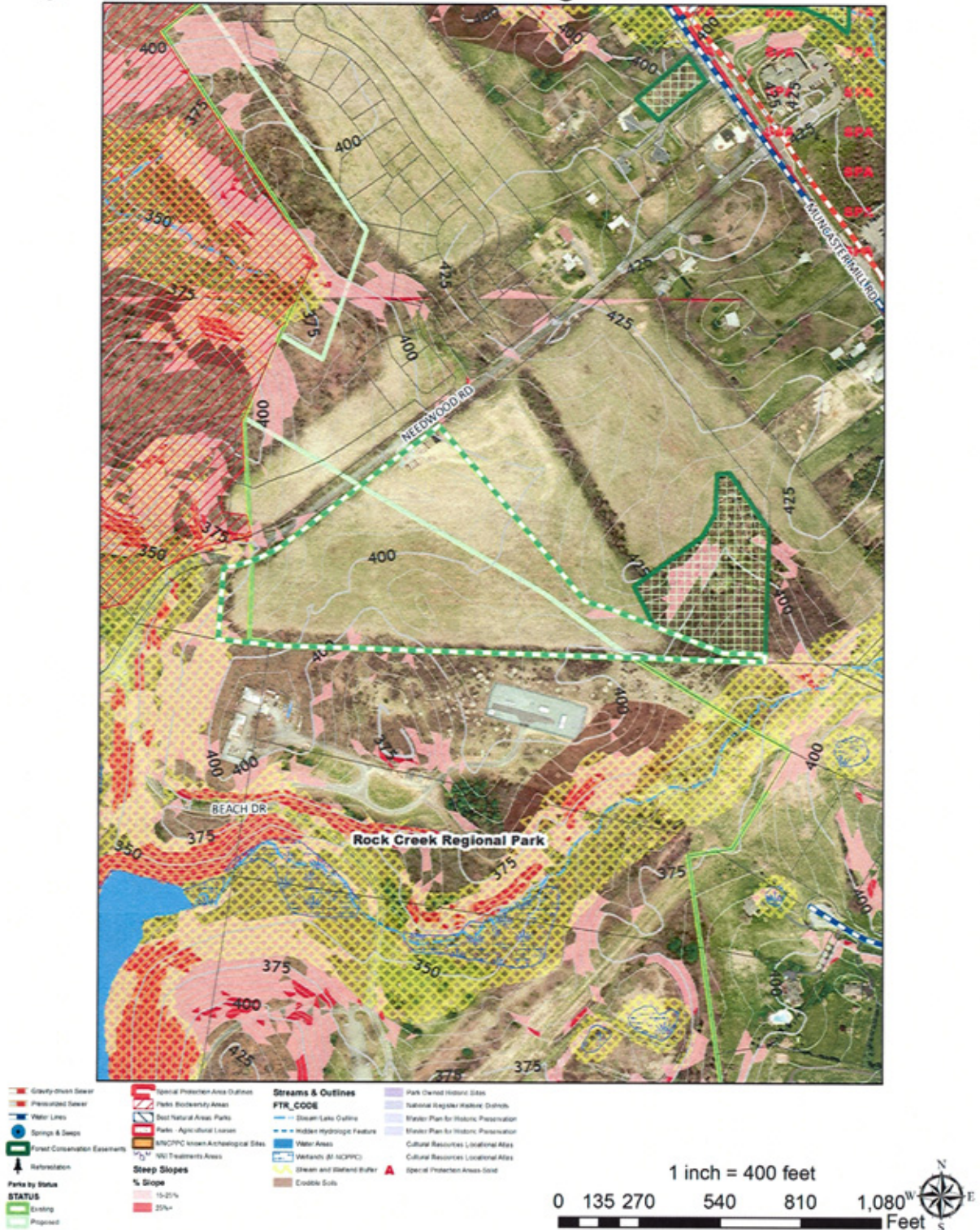
Figure 3 - Travilah Road Site



Figure 4 - McGown Tract Site



Figure 5 - Rock Creek "Dewatering" Site



Appendix A

Park Maintenance Sites Access Evaluations

Prepared by Larry Cole, 3/20/09

Summary

It seems that from an access perspective, Centerpark is clearly the best, McGown has the greatest potential for future access if the State and Feds are willing partners in interchange design (not at all bankable). The roadways providing access to the other two sites (Travilah and Rock Creek) should be proposed for reclassification to be more consistent with the new Road Code, which could pass if communities wanted us as a new neighbor but fail if they don't. Needwood may be a close third over Travilah based on its proximity to MD 115, but operational access restrictions might be required to keep our traffic from heading west – and the potential for speed humps on Minor Arterials might be an issue.

Miller and Smith Centerpark site

Access would be via Snouffer School Road, either directly or indirectly via an existing park access road to Cabin Branch SVP and Lois Y. Green Conservation Park or via the unbuilt segment of Alliston Hollow Way. A new traffic signal on Snouffer School would likely be required.

Snouffer School Road is classified as an Arterial in the Gaithersburg Vicinity Master Plan. The widening of this road has been through the Facility Planning process, but the project is not yet funded for design and construction.

McGown Tract

Current access is via Game Preserve Road, an unclassified street currently being proposed as a Rustic Road. All of this frontage is bordered by steep slopes except for the southwestern corner where there is a driveway that runs along the southern border of the property; it does not directly tie into Game Preserve Road, but passes through the adjacent Casey property to intersect the road just north of the CSX underpass. A driveway with an acceptable grade could be constructed entirely on this property however.

A portion of the property is north of the PEPCO ROW, but presumably an easement for an access road could be obtained. A stream makes another small portion of the property inaccessible; it appears not to be worth building a bridge for. The CCT crosses the property, making the eastern 30% of the property less accessible, but in addition to the aforementioned portion cut off by the stream, it consists mostly of steep slopes. Tertiary Residential Streets appear to be platted in the City of Gaithersburg at the southern boundary but may be unusable for the purpose of this facility..

It would be difficult to build an access road from Watkins Mill Road because of the narrow space between the CCT and the CSX ROW and the grade difference at this location. Anything east of the CCT would have to cross the CCT and at least one stream. Building an access road adjacent to the SB I-270 ramp to Watkins Mill Road would avoid the additional stream crossing, but it's not easy to see how access at the intersection could be resolved. The segment of Watkins Mill Road is classified as an Arterial and would therefore be considered as suitable for access to the site. Whether or not a new traffic signal would be required depends on ramp/interchange access.

Without a Watkins Mill Road access point, this site appears to be unacceptable.

Travilah Road Properties

Access would be via Travilah Road, which is classified as a Primary Residential Road in the Potomac Master Plan. Two alternatives are being considered for purchase, one of which would exclude some of the center parcels. Driveways exist at either end of the site opposite Natia Manor Drive and opposite Royal Manor Way. The center parcels that may or may not be included have an additional mid-block driveway off Travilah. A new traffic signal would likely not be required.

The recent Road Code update included a new road classification of Minor Arterial. While no specific criteria have been developed for these roads, a reclassification of Travilah Road could be considered if it serves more of a regional function than most Primaries. A reclassification could be considered, and if done, the "Nearby Roads Suitable" in the last column of the assessment chart would change from a "No" to a "Yes".

Rock Creek RP Site

Access would be via Needwood Road, currently classified as a Primary Residential Street in the Upper Rock Creek Master Plan. A new traffic signal would likely not be required.

As with the Travilah Road candidate above, Needwood Road could also be considered for reclassification to a Minor Arterial, a possibility that did not exist when the URCMP was approved. The ADT is less than what one would might anticipate for a Minor Arterial, but the road already provides access to Rock Creek Regional Park and Lake Needwood and thus provides more than a purely residential function. A park maintenance facility would constitute a significant expansion of an already existing park facility. A reclassification appears possible, meaning that the "Nearby Roads Suitable" in the last column of the assessment chart would change from a "No" to a "Yes".