



## ATTACHMENT 5

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

### WMAL Property 1-20160290

#### Department of Parks Comments (July 24, 2016)

The Department of Parks recommends the WMAL applicant provide open space to meet unmet recreational needs that will be compounded by adding approximately 1,000 residents to an underserved area. The open space should consolidate recreational amenities adjacent to the proposed 5-acre school site to create efficiency and synergy between the school's functions and the recreational amenities. The result would be to lessen the stress to the already over utilized Stratton Local Park – the only park in the vicinity, while providing close to home recreation for the new residents. Although there may be no school development in the short term, if the five-acre site becomes developed with a school in the future, there is no guarantee that adequate open space will remain.

Options for delivering the open space could include:

- 1) Privately owned, required community open space
- 2) Land transferred to Parks
- 3) A combination of 1 and 2, above - privately owned open space plus parkland

Whether it remains in private ownership or is offered to the Department of Parks to create a colocated park and school, the open space area should include amenities typical of a local park, and should be on land unconstrained by Forest Conservation easements. Amenities typical of a local park that should be included in the open space include:

- Open field areas for practicing or playing sports, holding community events, and informal interaction
- Play area designed for 2-5 year olds
- Play area designed for 5-12 year olds
- Dog park
- Sheltered picnic and seating area, with shade
- Basketball court
- Looped walking and biking trails

Although the Department of Parks has constructed a number of new parks in the downcounty area over the past thirty years, growth in the park system has not kept up with community demand. Planning Board-approved policies such as the *Vision 2030 Strategic Plan for Parks and Recreation (2010)* and the *2012 PROS Plan* cite a need for amenities such as trails, playgrounds, courts, dog parks, fields, and community open space in this area.

The applicant's open space plan as currently proposed falls short of providing some of these needed amenities. The proposed amenities are too small, too few and in many cases would serve other purposes that would be counter to the provision of adequate and useable open space. The proposed perimeter loop trail of approximately 1.5 miles should be relocated along the edge of existing woods and not interior to the woods so as to limit tree impact, provide better incorporation and synergy with the community and to better align with CPTED principles.

Based on the proposed density of this plan, the existing population and the surrounding roads that create pedestrian barriers (Interstates 270 and 495, Democracy Blvd, Old Georgetown Rd), additional open space with

amenities typical of a local park is needed to adequately serve this proposed community and to minimize overuse of existing Park resources.



Vicinity Map- WMAL is the 75 acre “blank space” on the map.