



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

MCPB Agenda Item 14
September 20, 2007

MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 14, 2007

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Mary Bradford, Director, Department of Parks *WB*
Mike Riley, Acting Deputy Director, Department of Parks *M*
Doug Alexander, Acting Division Chief, Park Development Division (PDD) *ma*

FROM: Mary Ellen Venzke, CIP Manager, PDD *mev*

SUBJECT: Proposed FY09-14 CIP Work Session #2

Staff Recommendation

Approve staff recommendations of projects for the FY09-14 Capital Improvements Program (CIP).

Work Session Schedule

This is the second work session which will focus on the projects that are continuing from the FY07-12 CIP and any new projects with approved facility plans.

The first category of stand-alone projects presented will have no changes in funding from the FY07-12 CIP except for normal inflation adjustments. A second category of continuing stand-alone projects will propose changes in cost estimates. Staff will begin presenting recommendations for new projects and seek the Board's approval to include continuing and new projects in the proposed CIP.

The third and final work session is scheduled for October 4th. Staff will present recommendations for the remainder of the new projects. The Board will receive a complete set of project description forms (PDFs), including operating budget impacts (OBI), for final approval. The recommended FY09-14 CIP will be forwarded to the County Council by November 1st, as required by State Law and County Executive with a favorable recommendation.

I. Continuing Stand-Alone Projects with No Funding Changes

1. Black Hill Trail Renovation and Extension

The renovation portion of this project upgrades an existing 2.38 mile hard surface trail along the eastern shore of Little Seneca Lake from Wisteria Drive north to Spinning Wheel Drive. The existing 6-foot wide trail does not meet park standards and is seriously deteriorated.

The trail renovation and upgrade provides an eight-foot wide trail that will fully comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (except in one area where full ADA compliance is not possible without extensive tree-clearing) and park construction standards. The project has been delayed one year, and is now scheduled for completion in FY10.

The trail extension project is a 1.2 mile extension from Spinning Wheel Drive to Parking Lot 6, near the picnic area. The new eight-foot wide trail will connect two existing segments of trail and provide the only hard surface trail connection from the Water's Landing community to the developed area of Black Hill Regional Park. The trail extension portion of this project is scheduled to be completed in FY10.

Project Status: Design is currently underway and is approximately 80% complete.

Cost Estimate: \$4,205,000

Expenditure Schedule: Design through FY08; Construction of both phases will occur in FY09-10.

2. Broadacres Local Park

This is a renovation of an existing park adjacent to Broadacres Elementary School. New park facilities will include a multi-use court, a multipurpose field that replaces one of the existing softball fields, trails, landscaping, and a new entrance.

Project Status: Design will be complete in FY08. Construction is scheduled in FY09, which is a delay of one year due to shifting of staff resources for other priority projects.

Cost Estimate: \$1,247,000

Expenditure Schedule: Design through FY08; Construction in FY09.

3. East Norbeck Local Park

East Norbeck Local Park is a 25 acre park located on the north side of Norbeck Road, east of Georgia Avenue. An additional 15 acres were added to the existing park to provide more recreation facilities and expand the undersized parking lot. New facilities include a path network connecting the parking lot to the facilities, a natural surface trail, picnic pavilion, restrooms, lighted tennis courts, lighted basketball court, playground, soccer/lacrosse field, expanded and realigned baseball and softball fields that do not overlap.

Project Status: Detailed design is underway; Construction in FY09-10.

Cost Estimate: \$3,400,000

Expenditure Schedule: Completion is scheduled in FY10, a delay of one year due to shifting of staff resources for other priority projects to provide assistance to the Development Review Division, partnership and developer projects.

4. Elmhirst Parkway Neighborhood Park

This is a replacement park for the Locust Hill Estates community. Locust Hill Neighborhood Park was developed approximately 50 years ago in an environmentally sensitive area along a tributary to Rock Creek prior to the current regulations regarding protection of the environment. The park was cut off from maintenance access when the capital beltway was constructed. Facilities have deteriorated significantly.

The park will be reconstructed in a section of the adjacent Elmhirst Parkway Neighborhood Conservation Area that is suitable for development. The existing Locust Hill Neighborhood Park will be converted to a Neighborhood Conservation Area, and a portion of Elmhirst Parkway Neighborhood Conservation Area will be converted to a neighborhood park. A playground with multi-age equipment, safety surfacing, benches, and parking lot improvements are included in the scope of the project. A bridge will provide access to the Parkview Estates community. The existing open natural area will be maintained for recreation.

Project Status: Completion scheduled in FY09. Detailed design is underway and will be complete in FY08.

Cost Estimate: \$489,000

Expenditure Schedule: Design through FY08; Construction in FY09.

5. Greenbriar Local Park

This project provides a new local park on a 25-acre tract of undeveloped parkland on Glen Road in Potomac. Facilities will include a regulation soccer/football field with spectator areas, a single basketball/multi-use court, a single grass volleyball court, a playground, asphalt loop path and pedestrian connections, central seating and entrance feature, picnic table areas, gazebo, 70-space parking area, portable toilets, bioretention stormwater management facilities, landscaping, and other miscellaneous amenities.

Project Status: Minor adjustments were made in costs and expenditure schedule. Design will begin in FY10, and project completion is expected as originally planned in FY12.

Cost Estimate: \$3,832,000

Expenditure Schedule: Design FY10-11; Construction FY12-13

6. Laytonia Recreational Park

First approved in the FY03-08 CIP, this projects funds design and construction of a 50-acre recreational park in the Rock Creek Master Plan area. Proposed facilities include four lighted and irrigated baseball fields, basketball court, restrooms, playground, picnic shelters, trails, and parking. Roughly seven acres of the site is reserved for the new County Animal Shelter.

Project Status: In 2005 and again in 2007, the Planning Board reviewed a public-private partnership proposal to develop the Park and approved an advertisement for public bids. Staff recommended and Council adopted a delay in the design and construction schedule to accommodate the timeframe for evaluating partnership proposals. The approved schedule

begins construction in FY10. DPWT is designing the Animal Shelter and will submit it to the Board for mandatory referral.

No cost increase is recommended at this time other than increases for inflation.

Cost Estimate: \$10,482,000

Expenditure Schedule: Design FY09-12; Construction FY11-13.

7. Montrose Trail

In conjunction with DPWT's Montrose Parkway Hiker-Biker Trail project, this portion of the project funds the design and construction of Stage 2, a 10-foot wide hiker-biker trail segment in the former Rockville Facility right-of-way from Tildenwood Drive to Old Farm Creek. It will connect to the hiker-biker trail constructed as part of DPWT's Montrose Parkway West project.

The schedule has been moved out one year because land needed for the segment has not been acquired.

Project Status: Design of trail will begin FY10.

Cost Estimate: \$649,000

Expenditure Schedule: Design in FY10-11; Construction FY12.

8. Takoma Piney Branch Local Park

This project renovates Takoma-Piney Branch Local Park. The park, located within the city limits of Takoma Park, is 17.4 acres and surrounded by three schools, the city government building, police department, library, single-family homes, and apartment buildings. The park was built in the 1970's. The site gains access from Grant Avenue to the south and Darwin Avenue to the west.

The proposed renovation includes a new playground and asphalt play area adjacent to the elementary school, replacement of the existing playground, basketball courts, volleyball courts and maintenance road, and a new loop path. In addition, entrance features will be added at Grant Avenue and Darwin Avenue, and lights will be provided at the Darwin Avenue parking lot. The existing shelter and attached restrooms will be replaced with an open shelter and portable toilets. One of the three existing tennis courts will be replaced. A portion of two remaining courts will be used as a stormwater management facility, and the remaining area will be converted to a skateboard park.

Project Status: Detailed design is at 30% completion.

Cost Estimate: \$3,578,000

Expenditure Schedule: Design through FY08; Construction in FY09-10.

II. Continuing Stand-Alone Projects with Changes

1. Brookside Gardens Irrigation System

This project provides for the reconstruction of the garden's water distribution system. Irrigation protects the Commission's investment in plants and provides proper maintenance of the gardens. The current system is antiquated, provides low water pressure, does not provide water to all garden areas, involves a high annual maintenance and repair costs, and does not comply with current code requirements. The system breaks and leaks periodically throughout the year. The water pressure is not high enough to water more than one area of the gardens at a time, and many areas are watered inefficiently by hand or with water trucks.

This project includes a first phase to provide a main water distribution system throughout the gardens, which would provide more reliable water service to all facilities for visitor needs, fire safety, and plant health. The second phase will provide an irrigation and sprinkler system for each area of the gardens that will reduce annual costs for watering, improve water conservation and improve plant growth and health.

Project Status: Design for this project began in FY05, and was taken to a 90 percent completion level. Funding for construction was not initially approved with the design, so staff did not proceed with obtaining permits for the project, since the permits would expire prior to the next funding cycle. Funding for construction was approved in FY07. The remaining design work included obtaining permits for the on-site distribution system and meters from WSSC. When staff re-initiated the design to obtain permits, WSSC had made major changes to their design requirements, requiring substantial re-design of the system. This re-design has delayed the completion of design and has contributed to project cost increases for design and construction. The re-design has been completed, and permits have been approved. The project will be advertised for construction this fall.

Cost Increase: The revised cost estimate calls for an increase of \$726,000. The design and construction costs have increased from \$1,406,000 adopted by the County Council to \$2,132,000, due to the industry-wide increases in costs experienced since the approval of the initial project, as well as required revisions to the design.

Expenditure Schedule: The expenditure schedule has been adjusted to reflect lower construction expenditures in FY07 and FY08, and increased expenditures in FY09. The construction is proposed for FY08 and FY09, with completion in FY09, as originally anticipated.

2. Germantown Town Center Urban Park

This project provides a park in the Germantown Town Center, situated at the northern end of an 8.80-acre parcel of land owned by Montgomery County and shared with the new Germantown Regional Library. The site is challenging to develop due to the presence of existing wetlands, existing stormwater management facilities, and steep slopes. The new park creates large open space areas by placing adjacent residential stormwater management facilities underground. There will be two additional water features in the central area of the site, in addition to an existing wetland that serves stormwater management functions. Features of this park include interpretive trails and boardwalks, lighting along main pathways, overlook terraces with retaining walls and stair connections to the park and the library, a pavilion for community festivals and events, public art,

landscaping, and enhanced wetland plantings. The Board approved the facility plan for this project in June 2005, contingent upon staff working with Executive Branch agencies to resolve their concerns about operating costs with respect to the stormwater management structures.

During review of the FY07-12 CIP, and prior to approving any funding for this project, the County Council directed staff to work with Executive Branch staff to evaluate additional stormwater management alternatives for this park, which might be less costly from both a capital and operating perspective. In 2006, staff met with representatives from the Department of Permitting Services (DPS), the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), and the Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPWT) to evaluate potential alternatives with respect to their relative costs and benefits. DEP staff will be responsible for the maintenance of stormwater structures within the park. Agency staff agreed to an approach which was consistent with the approved facility plan and would be studied for feasibility during the detailed design phase for the park. The primary visible modification to the approved park design is that the smaller of the two existing residential stormwater management ponds would not be placed underground and would remain as a surface pond. The additional open space that would be captured by placing this pond underground would be desirable for the park but is not critical to the design and function of the park. This change reduces construction costs by approximately \$1.25 million and would also reduce future operating costs for maintenance.

Upon completion of this analysis, Councilmember Knapp requested a supplemental appropriation to the FY08 budget to advance the design of this park from FY09 to FY08. The Council funded design in FY08.

Project Status: Staff is preparing a two-part scope of work for design services. The first phase would be to prepare and obtain permitting approval for a revised stormwater management concept. After the scope of revisions to the design of the park is determined and a revised stormwater management concept is approved, staff will present amendments to the facility plan to the Planning Board for approval. Following Board approval, staff would proceed with completing the detailed design for the park.

Cost Estimate: \$6,990,000. The FY07-12 CIP included funding for design costs only. This recommendation would include construction costs.

Expenditure Schedule: The project is proposed for design in FY08-10 and construction in FY10-12.

3. North Four Corners Local Park

North Four Corners Local Park is a 13.9-acre park located near the commercial node of Four Corners in Silver Spring. The Board approved the facility plan for this project in September 2005. The plan provided improvements to the new undeveloped six-acre park tract including a rectangular sports field, 50-space parking area with vehicular access from University Boulevard, a playground, a Class I bikeway from University Boulevard to Southwood Avenue, paved loop walkways, a plaza with seating areas and amenities, portable toilets, fencing, landscaping, and stormwater management facilities. The existing 7.9-acre park area would be renovated to provide additional parking, a renovated field, trail connections, underground stormwater management facilities, landscaping and other minor improvements.

Project Status: At the direction of the County Council, staff is studying alternatives to the approved facility plan. Staff is recommending that the existing PDF be re-submitted without changes; however, staff will present alternatives to the approved facility plan in November, after the CIP is submitted to the County. If the Board approves the revised facility plan, staff will amend the language in the PDF to reflect the changes and submit the revised PDF to the County Executive and County Council.

Cost Estimate: \$6,122,000

Expenditure Schedule: The project is proposed for design in FY12-13 and construction in FY13-15.

4. Pope Farm Nursery Utilities Upgrade

This project funds a new water line, sewer line and drip irrigation system to serve the facilities at Pope Farm Nursery, located in the Rock Creek Stream Valley, at 7400 Airpark Road in Gaithersburg.

The facility supplies the majority of trees, shrubs, annuals, perennials and interior plants for the park system. The site includes 60 acres in nursery production, an office building, five heater greenhouses, four over-wintering houses, three equipment storage buildings, a farm house and a historic cemetery.

Project Status: Detailed design for the project began in FY05. Staff is in the process of finalizing the bid documents. The project is to be advertised for bids this fall and construction will begin this winter.

Cost Increase: The revised cost estimate calls for an increase of \$605,000. The design and construction costs have increased from \$1,583,000 adopted by the County Council to \$2,148,000, due to the industry-wide increases in costs experienced since the approval of the initial project, as well as required revisions to the design as requested by the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission.

Expenditure Schedule: The expenditure schedule has been adjusted slightly. The construction is proposed for FY08 and FY09, with completion in FY09.

5. Rock Creek Trail Pedestrian Bridge

The proposed pedestrian bridge will provide a grade separated crossing for the Rock Creek Hiker-Biker Trail over Veirs Mill Road at its intersection with Aspen Hill Road. The project will provide a safe pedestrian crossing for residents attempting to access bus transportation on the south side of Veirs Mill Road.

The Rock Creek Hiker-Biker Trail extends 15 miles from Beach Drive at the District of Columbia line to Lake Needwood in Rock Creek Regional Park. The trail currently crosses Veirs Mill Road at grade at its signalized intersection with Aspen Hill Road. To the north of Veirs Mill Road, the trail is on street for approximately 0.2 miles traversing Aspen Hill Road, Adrian Street, Baltic Avenue and finally the access drive to Aspen Hill Local Park before continuing northward as a trail.

Project Status: Detailed design for the project began in FY05. Staff is in the process of obtaining the required permits from all regulatory agencies and final approvals from the Maryland State Highway Administration. The project will be advertised for construction this winter and construction will begin in early part of 2008.

Cost Increase: The revised cost estimate calls for an increase of \$434,000. The design and construction costs have increased from \$6,320,000 adopted by the County Council to \$6,762,000, due to the industry-wide increases in costs experienced since the approval of the initial project, as well as required revisions to the design as requested by the Maryland State Highway Administration.

Expenditure Schedule: The construction is proposed for FY08, FY09 and FY10, with completion in FY10, as originally anticipated.

III. New Projects

1. Darnestown Square Urban Park

Darnestown Square Urban Park is a 0.6-acre tract of undeveloped parkland located on a triangular-shaped parcel situated on Route 28 near the intersection with Seneca Road. In November of 1995, the park property was received in dedication from Darnestown Limited Partnership, the adjacent property owner and developer. Area residents requested that the property be dedicated for community use as a park for their town center and as a condition of approval for the initial development of the Darnestown Shopping Center (Seneca Highlands). Representatives from the Darnestown Civic Association further requested that M-NCPPC develop the park into a focal point for their community to provide seating areas, space for community gatherings, and to showcase local heritage.

The facility plan was presented to the Board on September 6, 2007. The plan for the park includes the following features: historical interpretation of the town, the on-site graveyard and local Civil War events; inviting spaces for passive recreational use; an attractive and noticeable landmark along Route 28; opportunities for public art; safe pedestrian and bicycle visitor access; maintenance access; and sustainable landscaping.

Project Status: The facility plan was approved by the Planning Board on September 6, 2007.

Cost Estimate: \$875,000

Expenditure Schedule: The project is proposed for design in FY09-10 and construction in FY10-11.

2. Evans Parkway Neighborhood Park

Evans Parkway Neighborhood Park was built in the 1960's. The site is accessed from Evans Parkway to the South, Cascade Place to the east, and Georgia Avenue to the west. The park provides a walk-to facility for the single-family homes surrounding the park as well as nearby apartments on Georgia Avenue. It includes an informal play field, playground, swings, two tennis courts, basketball court, open field at the east end, and the additional property fronting Georgia Avenue, which was added to the park by the recent acquisition. The concrete-lined Wheaton Branch stream bisects the site in the eastern portion of the park.

The proposed design emphasizes a more natural treatment of the park. Structured, paved areas are kept to a minimum, instead offering many natural areas such as colorful butterfly and rain gardens, sunny open lawn areas, riparian plantings at the restored stream, and shady woodland and mature tree areas. Several of these design elements are sited along a central open space, lending a sense of structure and order to the overall informal character of the park. This central open space interconnects the individual elements and further serves to improve visibility within the park for the safety of park users.

As part of this renovation, a 300-foot section of concrete-lined stream that bisects the park, will be naturalized. This will significantly improve the park setting and function as a unified facility. Furthermore, this new stream would serve as a demonstration project for future naturalization efforts within the County and invite greater community interest in watershed improvements in the area.

Project Status: The facility plan was approved by the Planning Board on January 18, 2007.

Cost Estimate: \$3,375,500

Expenditure Schedule: Design is scheduled in FY09-10, and construction in FY11-12.

3. Rock Creek Sewer System Improvements

The approved Facility Plan for this project proposes to restore and improve the on-site sewer line serving east-side Lake Needwood facilities within Rock Creek Regional Park. The existing sewer system, built in the 1960's, serves the visitors center, three bathhouses, and the maintenance facility. The facility plan generated innovative, economical and environmentally sensitive options for the restoration and re-design of the sewer lines. The alternative selected will replace the existing system with a new alignment along the park road.

Project Status: The Facility Plan was approved by the Planning Board in January 2007.

Cost Estimate: \$1,474,000

Expenditure Schedule: Planning and design in FY09-10 and construction in FY11-12.

Conclusion

Staff seeks approval of the recommended funding levels for the continuing stand-alone projects from the FY07-12 and new projects for the proposed FY09-14 CIP.