



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

MCPB Item # _____

Date: 7/16/09

MEMORANDUM

July 6, 2009

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Mary Bradford, Director of Parks
Mike Riley, Deputy Director of Parks for Administration

FROM: John Hench, Chief, Park Planning and Stewardship Division
Brooke Farquhar, Park and Trail Planning Supervisor
Rachel Newhouse, Planner Coordinator

SUBJECT: Sligo Creek Golf Course Reuse Plan: Objectives, Outreach Strategy
Recommendations and Plan Schedule

Requested Planning Board Action:

1. Approve the Objectives, Outreach Strategy and Plan Schedule.
2. Re-affirm the Planning Board's acceptance of the Revenue Authority's decision to close Sligo Creek Golf Course on October 1, 2009.
3. Approve the development of the Staff Draft Reuse Plan with 4 alternative long term planning themes based on community input, including golf as one theme.

Background

The 9-hole Sligo Creek Golf Course is located on 65 acres just south of the beltway adjacent to Sligo Creek Park, and is the oldest operating course in Montgomery County. (see Figure 1). The Montgomery County Revenue Authority (MCRA) has operated the course since 2006 and because it has not been profitable, will return operational control and maintenance responsibility of the area to the Parks Department on October 1, 2009.

Prior to deciding to discontinue operating the Sligo Golf Course, the Revenue Authority held meetings on a proposal to increase revenues by adding a driving range and miniature golf course at Sligo (see Attachment 1), and met with a Stakeholders Group for several months. There was strong opposition from the adjacent community for the addition of these amenities.

The MCRA lease agreement with the Commission provides that upon determination by tenant (MCRA), based upon an independent financial analysis of the entire Golf System that indicates any of the Park Golf Courses is adverse to the entire Golf System, MCRA shall have the right to extract any of the Park Golf Courses from the lease and return it to the Commission. In addition, the lease prohibits the Commission from operating Sligo as a golf course if MCRA reasonably determines that it is in competition with MCRA's golf system.

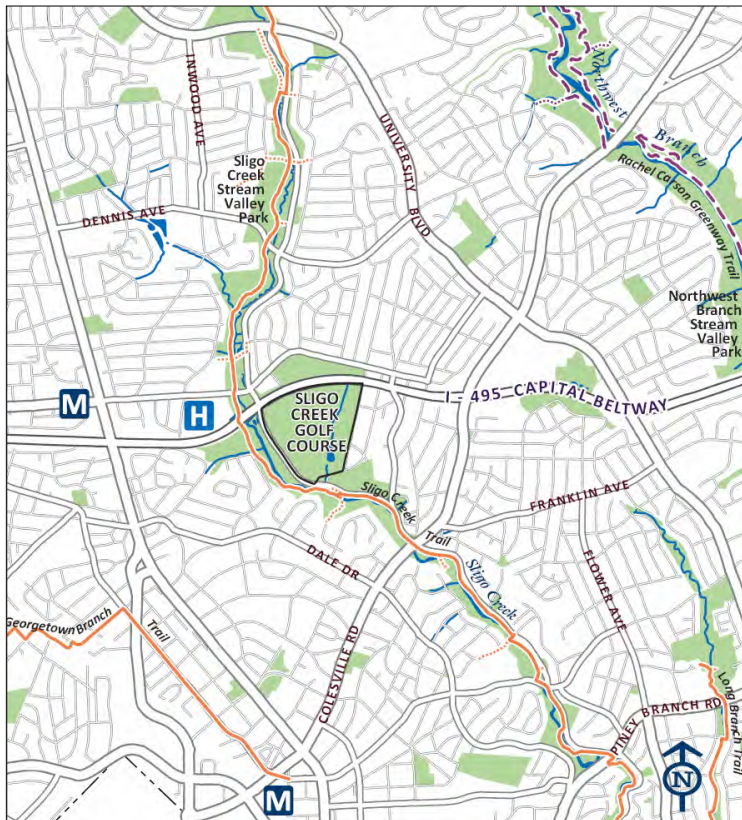
The National Golf Foundation (NGF) performed an independent financial analysis on behalf of MCRA to determine whether any of the Park Golf Courses could be clearly identified as being adverse to the entire Golf System. NGF submitted its findings to MCRA in a report dated January 5, 2009. Pursuant to this report, NGF determined that Sligo was identified as being adverse to the entire Golf System. Subsequent to the NGF report, the MCRA Board of Directors passed a resolution dated January 27, 2009, directing that Sligo be extracted from the Lease.

On February 26, 2009, the Planning Board approved the proposal to terminate the lease for Sligo with MCRA as of October 1, 2009, and agreed with the financial analysis report submitted by MRCA. The Montgomery County Council held a public hearing on the lease amendment on March 17, 2009 and the Montgomery County Council PHED committee voted on March 23, 2009 to approve the lease amendment to the MCRA lease that allows Sligo to be extracted (*see Attachment 2*).

A plan for the proposed reuse of the Sligo Creek Golf Course is needed by October 1, 2009 that will set the vision for the park and recommend interim and long range uses. The Planning Board received a copy of a work program for the Reuse Plan on February 26, 2009 (*see Attachment 3*). The park is an important down-county open space that can complement other existing parks in the area.

Under the current lease, the property cannot be a golf course. Although there were a few requests for other facilities, approximately 90% of those persons attending the May 26, 2009 public meeting requested it continue as a golf facility. Thus, staff is recommending golf be one of the themes included in the potential long term analysis proposals. This would ultimately require an approved re-negotiated lease and funding for re-start costs including funds for staff and equipment needed to operate the golf course.

Figure 1: Locational Map of Sligo Creek Golf Course



Overview

The purpose of this item is to provide the Montgomery County Planning Board the opportunity to review the proposed Sligo Golf Course Reuse Plan objectives, proposed planning themes, schedule and outreach and recommend any changes. The Plan will review environmental constraints, proposed service area, recreation needs and transportation impacts.

The primary service area of the Sligo Creek Golf Course is determined to be the Silver Spring Team Area which includes the Planning areas of Silver Spring, Takoma Park and the lower portion of Kemp Mill. The 2005 census data for this area was approximately 90,000 persons with an additional 20,000 +/- persons anticipated by 2020. This service area was chosen because Wheaton Regional Park serves the area to the north. The area south of the beltway in Silver Spring does not have a Regional or Recreational Park. While it is understood that this park will attract people from outside this boundary, this service area is being used for the purposes of examining future facility needs. The boundaries are consistent with those used to estimate recreation needs in the 2005 Park Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan (also known as the Land, Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan).

Figure 2: Service Area Map for Sligo Creek Golf Course

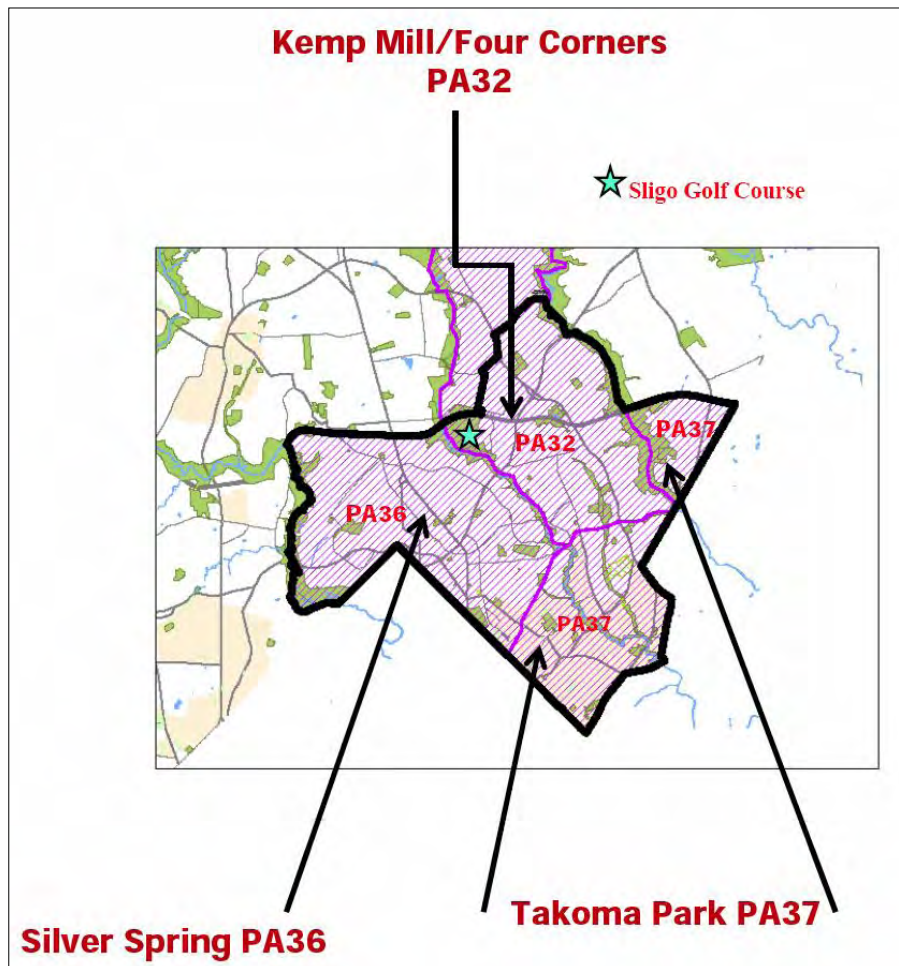


Figure 3: Environmental Analysis of Sligo Creek Golf Course



Plan Objectives

The proposed Sligo Creek Golf Course Reuse Plan will focus on achieving the Department of Parks' mission which is to: "Protect and interpret our valuable natural and cultural resources; balance the demand for recreation with the need for conservation; offer a variety of enjoyable recreational activities that encourage healthy lifestyles; and provide clean, safe, and accessible places for leisure-time activities."

Recommended Plan objectives against which all alternatives will be evaluated include:

Stewardship Objectives

Recognize and protect environmental features and natural areas

- Improve storm water management and water quality
- Increase wildlife habitat
- Increase tree canopy
- Reduce/prevent pollution from park facilities
- Provide historical and cultural interpretation



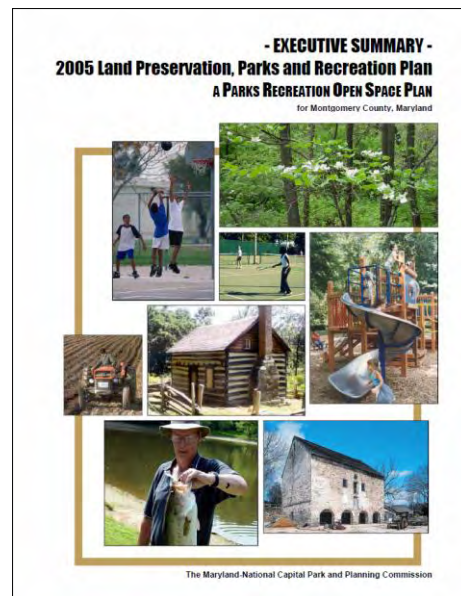
An environmental analysis of the park determined that there were approximately 13 acres on the site that includes stream buffer or steep slopes and should be protected (*see Figure 3*). There are also stands of specimen sized trees that will likely be afforded protection through the development process via the future Forest Conservation plan. All alternatives will look at developing the park using green techniques, and protecting a maximum amount of green space. It also may be possible to reduce environmental impacts of recreation facilities located in adjacent areas of Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park.



Recreation Objectives

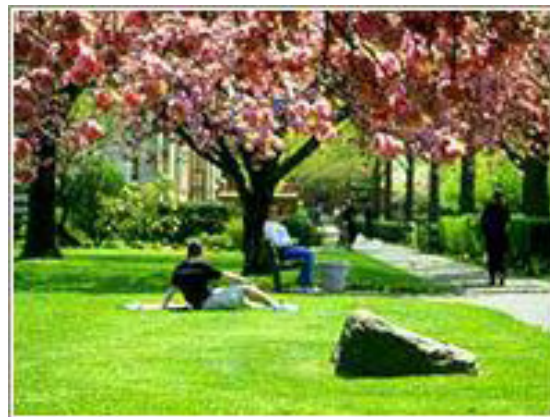
- Help satisfy recreation and open space needs, PROS needs, and needs as identified by the community
- Encourage more people to bike and walk to the park and to connect the park to the Sligo Creek hiker-biker trail
- Increase opportunities for interaction with nature through play and exercise

There are approximately 43 acres of the site that are potentially available for development. Recreation needs include active recreation, informal nature oriented recreation and fitness. The Plan will analyze recreation needs as estimated by the 2005 PROS Plan (*see Attachment 4*) and also look at informal un-programmed recreation. Walking and biking are among the most popular recreation activities of County residents. Adding opportunities for these uses as well as a heart smart trail will be considered.



Overall Planning Objectives

- Balance stewardship of important natural resources with recreational opportunities
- Ensure neighborhood compatibility
- Consider the effect of park development on traffic congestion
- Incorporate “Green Design” objectives



There are several other planning objectives that are extremely important to consider when developing alternative design themes for the park which include balance, neighborhood compatibility, and traffic. The balance of stewardship with recreational opportunities is an integral element in the Department's mission and also must be a primary element of the Plan analysis. Additionally, providing a sufficient buffer for the residents along Dallas Avenue will be an essential consideration.

Analysis of potential traffic congestion is paramount as the intersection of Sligo Creek Parkway and Colesville Road is already over capacity in the PM “peak period” (*see Figure 4 and Attachment 5*). However, Sligo's entrance is only one mile from the Forest Glen Metro station and .25 mile from an existing Ride-On bus stop on Forest Glen Road (*see Figure 5*).

Figure 4: Congested Intersection Map

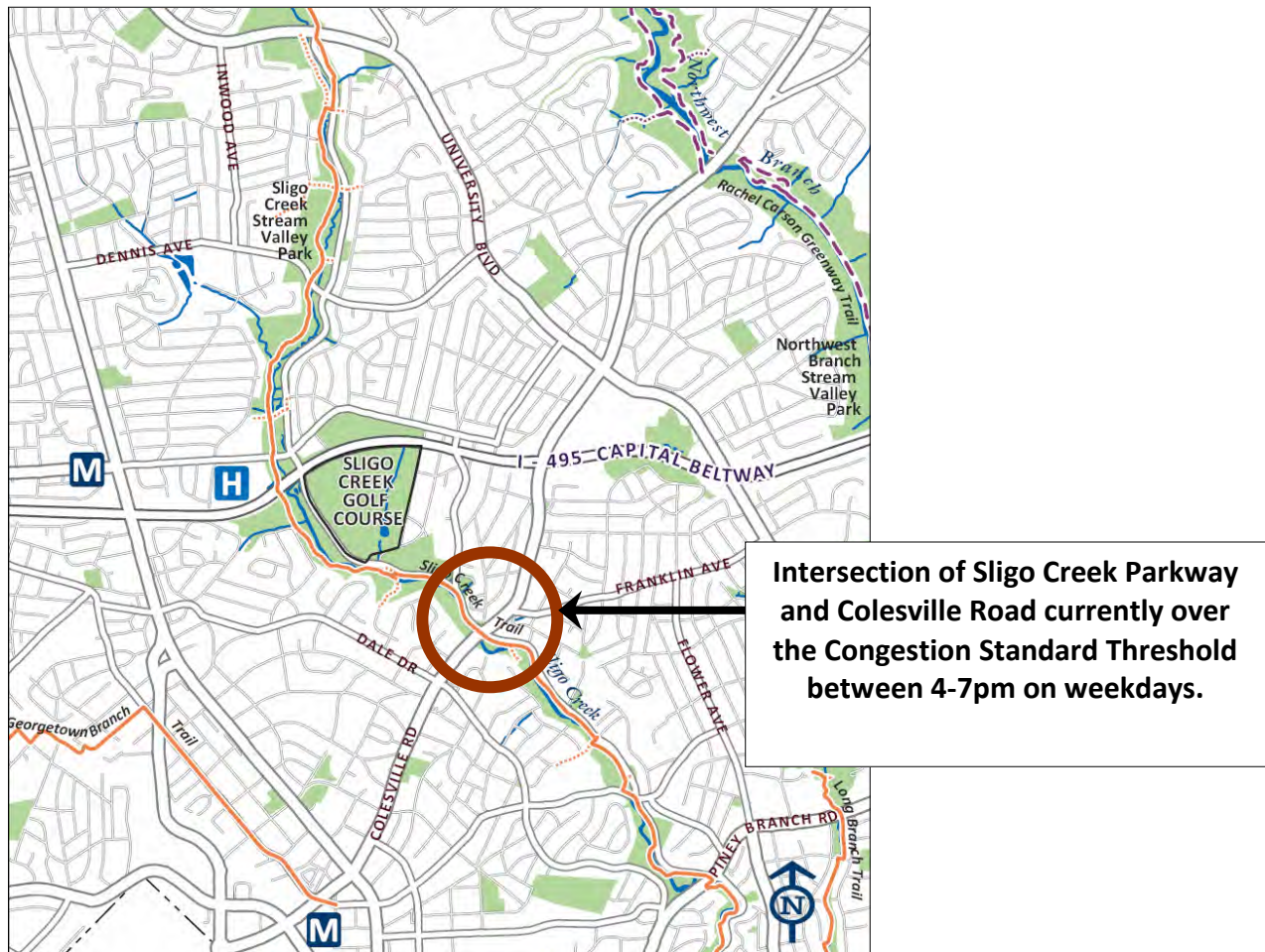
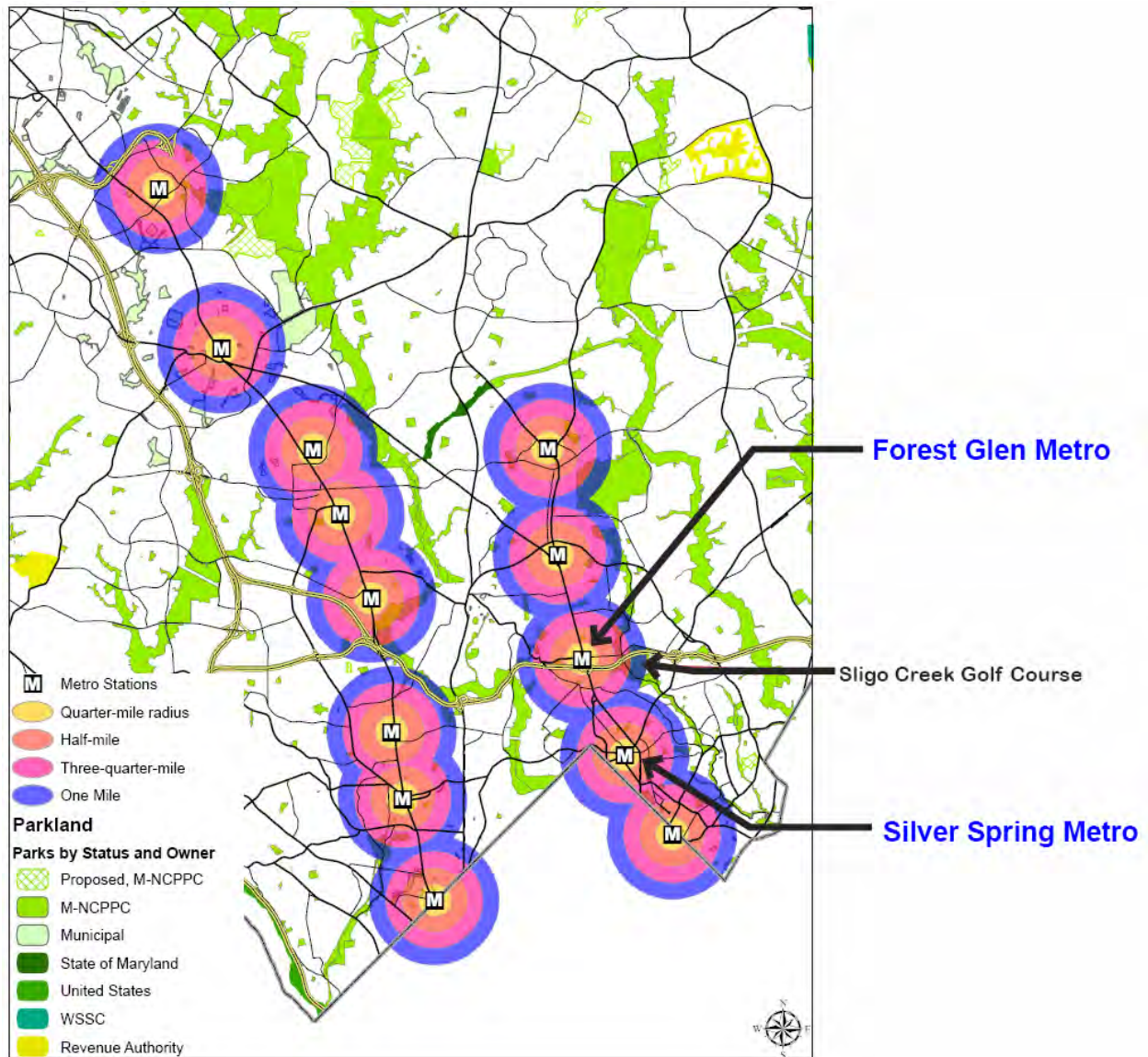


Figure 5: Map of Metro Proximity



Proposed Plan Themes and Park Type

The Staff Draft Park Reuse Plan, to be presented to the Planning Board in October will recommend a concept park layout and a preliminary program of requirements, based on a preferred design theme.

Staff has evaluated public input and recreational needs for the service area to develop four design themes for further study between now and the October 1, 2009 presentation.

At the July 16, 2009 Board meeting, staff is asking the Board's approval of the following **four themes**:

1. **Natural Garden Preserve** - A natural open space with increased native plants and trees, that people can enjoy walking through, playing in, learning from and appreciating nature. A future nature center would be appropriate for this theme. A possible unique feature could include a restaurant located at the clubhouse site that would feature locally grown organic foods. A community garden may be located in the park. A picnic area overlooking the pond might also be included in this theme. Sculpture gardens have also been suggested for this theme.
2. **Fun for All Recreational Park** - Modeled after other Recreational Parks, this theme provides a wide variety of recreation opportunities, both active and natural, for all ages and abilities including: Disc Golf, Trails, Dog Park, Ball fields, Skate Park, Sprayground Water Park, Basketball, Volleyball, and Natural Play Areas.
3. **Down County Sports Complex** - This theme is based on providing multiple ballfields to meet the huge need in the down county area. A future indoor sports facility might also be appropriate for this theme in order to address winter activity space for baseball, volleyball, and basketball. A cross country track course may also fit into this park. This theme park could also have a healthy foods snack bar and booster sales in the renovated golf clubhouse.
4. **Golf Facility**- Retains and enhances the current golf course. Improvements could include renovations to the clubhouse, restaurant and maintenance yard. A cultural display of the history of the golf course would be an interesting feature to have as part of this theme.

A list of the potential activities for each theme is provided on *Attachment 6*.



Figure 6: Park Classification Table

Park Type

The Plan will recommend a future park type. Current thinking is that the site is most suited for either a recreational park or a special park.

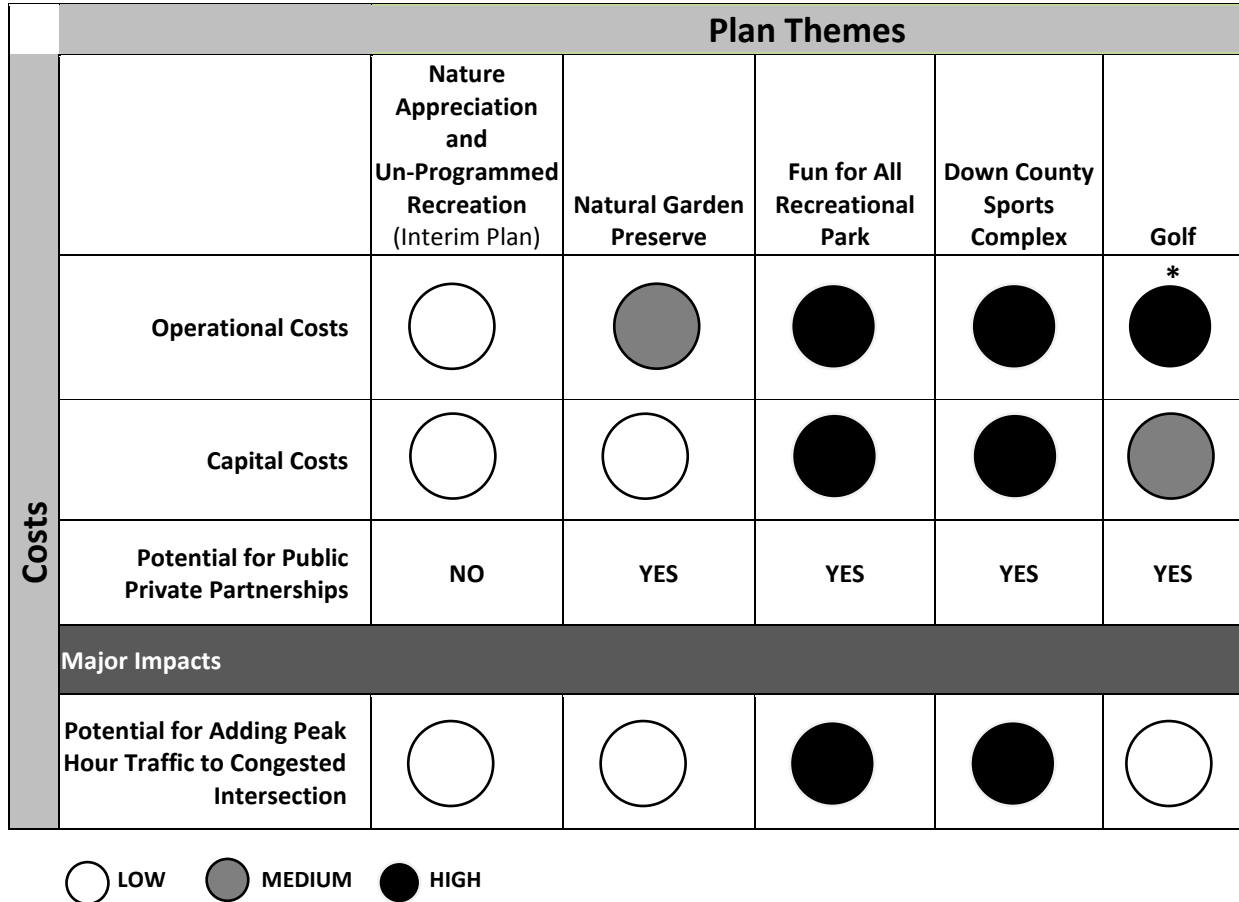
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PARK CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM			
PARK TYPE	PARK TYPE DESCRIPTION	TYPICAL FACILITIES*	APPROXIMATE SIZE
COUNTY-WIDE PARKS – Parks in this category serve all residents of Montgomery County			
- Recreational Oriented Parks			
Regional Parks	Large Parks that provide a wide range of recreational opportunities but retain 2/3 or the acreage as conservation areas.	Picnic / playground areas, tennis courts, athletic fields, golf course, campgrounds, water-oriented recreation areas.	200 acres or more
Recreational Parks	Parks larger than 50 acres in size that are more intensively developed than Regional Parks, but may also contain natural areas.	Athletic fields, tennis courts, multi-use courts, picnic/playground areas, golf course, trails, natural areas.	50 acres or more
Special Parks	These parks include areas that contain features of historic and cultural significance.	Vary, but may include agricultural centers, garden, small conference centers, historic structures, etc.	Varies
- Conservation Oriented Parks			
Stream Valley Parks	Interconnected linear parks along major stream valleys providing conservation and recreation areas.	Hiker-biker trails, fishing, picnicking, playground areas.	Varies
Conservation Area Parks	Large natural areas acquired to preserve specific natural archaeological or historic features. They also provide opportunities of compatible recreation activities.	Trails, fishing areas, nature study areas, informal picnic areas.	Varies
COMMUNITY USE PARKS – Parks in this category serve residents of surrounding communities			
Urban Parks	Very small parks, serving highly urban areas.	Landscaping, sitting/picnic areas, play equipment, courts, and shelters.	1 Acre
Neighborhood Parks	Small parks providing informal recreation in residential areas.	Play equipment, play field, sitting area, shelter, tennis and Multi-use courts. (Don not include regulation size ballfields).	2.5 Acre
Local Parks	Larger parks that provide ballfields and both programmed and unprogrammed recreation facilities.	Ballfields, play equipment, tennis and multi-use courts, sitting/picnic area, shelters, buildings and other facilities.	15 Acre
Neighborhood Conservation Areas	Small parcels of conservation oriented parkland in residential areas, generally dedicated at the time of subdivision.	Generally undeveloped, may include a storm water management pond and related facilities.	Varies

Figure 4.3 * this list is not all-inclusive, but includes facilities typical of each park type.

Costs and Potential for Partnerships for Each Theme Alternative

Below is a chart that compares the relative operating costs, capital costs and potential for public/private partnerships for each Planning Theme (see Figure 7). Traffic impacts are also compared for each planning theme. For the Down County Sports Complex, the high capital and operating costs could be off-set by a public/private partnership.

Figure 7: Cost Comparison Chart



* Operational cost would be partially offset by the income generated by the golf course.

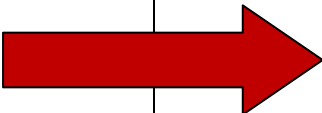
Interim Operations and Use

An Operation and Use Plan will also be done for the Sligo Creek Golf Course to determine an interim use of the park including what access can be provided to the public on October 1, 2009. The park will continue to be mowed, the clubhouse building will be closed and the maintenance facility will remain (*Attachment 8*). Interim costs for course closure and maintenance are estimated to be approximately \$56,000. A current month-to-month lease of 55 parking spaces to Holy Cross Hospital brings in \$3,153 per month to the Revenue Authority. It is the intention of Montgomery County Department of Parks to continue the lease of parking spaces and use the income generated to off-set the costs of maintaining the interim park uses. The following proposed interim uses could be supported:

- Walking
- Natural Area Appreciation – Wildflowers, Trees And Wildlife
- Open Lawns for Un-Programmed Recreation
- Bird Watching
- Dog Walking on Leash
- Picnicking
- Cross Country Skiing
- Sledding

Golf cannot be considered as an interim use unless the Revenue Authority and County Council successfully re-negotiate the lease and the Council approves a budget for start up costs, staff, equipment and utilities. Those costs would need to be calculated and presented as part of the “Golf Planning Theme” when all the themes and costs are presented to the public on September 9, 2009. ***April 1, 2010 is the earliest the golf course could be re-opened, if it were approved as an interim use.***

Figure 8: Long and Short Term Uses and Calendar for Sligo Creek Golf Course

October 1, 2009		November 2009	December 2009	January 2010 - ?
Short term Uses				
Interim Plan with No budget for improvements	Uses at Park: • Walking • Nature Appreciation • Bird Watching • Picnicking • Cross Country Skiing • Sledding	Interim Uses continue		
Long term Uses				
Reuse Plan and future CIP budget or Public / Private Partnership funding	Staff makes recommendation to MC Planning Board for future Uses	MC Planning Board holds Public Hearing to hear public response to staff recommendations	MC Planning Board approves future uses recommended in Reuse Plan and budget to develop the park	MC Council Approves CIP budget or Partnership for the development of Sligo

Proposed Community Outreach Strategy

There have been opportunities for public input on Sligo Golf Course both before and after the decision by the Revenue Authority to return it to the Department of Parks (*see on Attachment 2*). These include meetings held by the Revenue Authority, the Montgomery County Planning Board and County Council and a Montgomery County Department of Parks May 26, 2009 Public Meeting.

Primary opportunities for public input on this reuse plan include:

- **Web page-** A Parks Department website— www.SligoCreekGolf.org has been dedicated to providing information on the reuse plan and opportunities for public comment and questions.

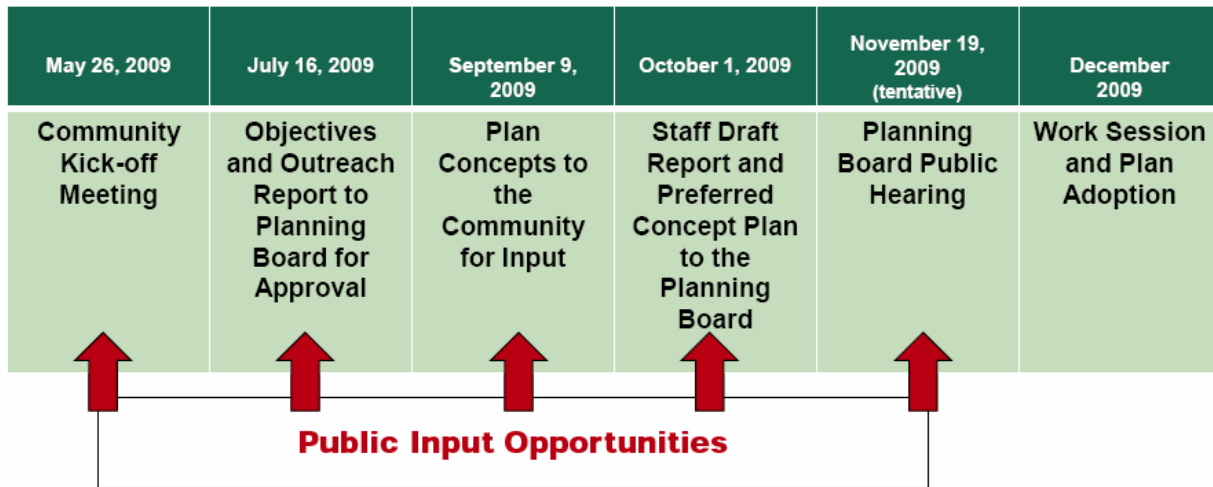
Interestingly, a group of concerned citizens has created a web site to circulate information and accept emails www.savesligogolf.com and there are two community-created *Facebook* pages (*Save Sligo Creek Golf* and *Preserve Sligo Creek Golf Course*) to go to for comments and information about the Sligo Creek Golf Course Reuse Plan.

- **Recreation Advisory Board Coordination-** Recreation Advisory Board members are County residents with an interest in recreation and parks that provide input on related issues. The Countywide Recreation Advisory Board has set up a special subcommittee to review information and provide input to the master plan. These meetings are open to the public. Montgomery County Department of Parks Staff attended the May 5, 2009 Western Area Advisory Board meeting to discuss the reuse plan and schedule.
- **Public meetings** - A public meeting was held on May 26, 2009. The great majority of those attending spoke in favor of retaining the golf course. (*see Attachment*) An additional public meeting is scheduled for September 9, 2009 to review alternative concepts for reuses along with the preferred concept plan and design theme. The meeting location still needs to be determined.
- **Civic Meetings** - Attend small group Meetings hosted by Civic and Interest Groups- staff attending the June 23, 2009 meeting hosted by the North Hills Civic Association and Neighbors of Northwest Branch. There were two presentations; one by Montgomery Soccer inc. and the other by the Disc Golf group (*see Attachment 10*).
- **Written and Electronic Communications** - Provide information on the project through email lists, individual mailings, media notices and the M-NCPPC Info Share.

Schedule

An accelerated Park Reuse Plan scheduled is proposed for the plan due to the need to provide a master plan by October 1, 2009 when the course is returned to the Department of Parks. The proposed schedule is shown below.

Figure 9: Sligo Creek Golf Course Reuse Plan Schedule



Attachments

1. 2007 Revenue Authority Concept Plan
2. Golf Course Decision Timeline
3. Sligo Park Reuse Plan Work Program and Accelerated Schedule
4. 2005 Park Recreation and Open Space Plan (PROS) Data
5. Preliminary Assessment/Comments from Transportation Planning
6. Summary of Recommended Future Activities
7. Public/Private Partnership Committee Comments
8. Golf Course Interim-Use Maintenance Tasks
9. May 26, 2009 Community Meeting Summary
10. June 23, 2009 Town Hall Meeting Summary

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Attachment 2

Golf Course Decision Timeline

A timeline of events leading up to the Sligo Golf Course Reuse Plan *

Timeline and Recommendations	
2006	Event
January 19, 2006	Montgomery County Planning Board directed staff to begin the process of transitioning the park golf course management from M-NCPPC to the MC Revenue Authority.
April 6, 2006	MCPB approved change in golf operations to transfer operation of the M-NCPPC golf courses to the Montgomery County Revenue Authority beginning April 15, 2006. These courses include Little Bennett, Needwood, Northwest, and Sligo.
April 15, 2006	MCRA begins operation of golf courses under an interim agreement. This interim agreement was anticipated to lead to the approval of a long-term lease between the Commission and the Revenue Authority that will result in one county organization providing a comprehensive public golf system. The public was offered an opportunity to review and comment on the draft Interim Operating Agreement lease during public hearings that were held by the Planning Board and the Montgomery County Council when the lease was under consideration by the respective bodies. The current urgency to begin the transfer on April 15 is in recognition of the start of the 2006 golf season and the cash flow that is necessary for the RA to sustain the operations.
October 26, 2006	The Commission entered into a lease agreement with the Revenue Authority to operate the Commission's four golf courses – Sligo, Needwood, Northwest and Little Bennett. Section 12.2 of the lease states that "upon determination by the Tenant, based upon an independent financial analysis of the entire golf system that indicates that any of the Park Golf Course is adverse to the entire Golf System, Tenant shall have the right to extract any of the Park Golf Course from the Lease and return it to landlord; provided however, Tenant shall first present such findings to the Planning Board and the County Council to consider alternatives to closing the Park Golf Course." Following public hearings, MCPB approved final lease with the Revenue Authority to operate golf courses.
2007	Event
March 17, 2007	The Revenue Authority presented a preliminary master plan to the Montgomery Planning Board of renovations to the four newly leased golf courses as required in the 2006 lease agreement. The plan for Sligo included reconfiguring the Sligo course and adding a large, lighted driving range and two miniature golf courses.
Spring/Summer 2007	Over the next nine months, MCRA met with various groups including golfers, community leaders, and County officials to present the concepts for the Sligo Golf Course
2008	Event
January 9, 2008	MCRA held a public meeting at which the concept was presented by the consultant.
Feb. 4, 2008	In a letter to the County Council the MCRA Board noted that "the meeting was attended by about 200 residents who spiritedly expressed their concerns and disagreement with the proposed concept."
Summer 2008	Due to the public concerns about the Sligo renovation plans and an unfavorable recommendation from the County Executive, MCRA withdrew its Capital Improvement Plan for FY09-14 for Sligo and the other three golf courses. Instead, it requested \$100,000 for Sligo Creek planning.
September 23, 2008	The Revenue Authority set up an Advisory Committee – Sligo Creek Stakeholders Advisory Group (SCSAG) made up of representatives from the local community, golfers, environmental groups, Montgomery Schools, The First Tee of Montgomery County, and The Countywide Recreation Advisory Board and MNCPPC. Their final recommendations

Timeline and Recommendations	
September 23, 2008 continued	to the Montgomery County Revenue Authority Board on the original concept to re-build the Sligo Golf Course included recommendations against a driving range and miniature golf course and a recommendation for a more environmentally sensitive program of operations. The MCRA Board was concerned that although the recommendation were good, they did not adequately address the financial challenges of the Sligo Golf Course.
2009	Event
January 5, 2009	MCRA hired an independent financial analysis by the National Golf Foundation for all the Golf Courses to determine if any were adverse to the Golf system. In its report the NGF identified Sligo as being adverse to the Golf system.
January 27, 2009	The MCRA Board passed a resolution (Resolution #290109) directing Sligo to be extracted from the lease, but to continue operations until October 1, 2009. The first Amendment to the Lease agreement is prepared.
February 26, 2009	MCPB meeting item to receive recommendations for lease amendment to return Sligo. The MCRA recommendations for the lease amendment are presented to the Montgomery County Planning Board as an information item.
March 17, 2009	The Montgomery County Council held a public hearing on the proposed return of Sligo Golf Course, and received testimony from several civic associations and concerned residents. Public comment focused on the desire for Sligo to remain a golf course because of it is a historic and unique recreational asset to the community.
March 23, 2009	The Montgomery County Council PHED committee voted to approve the amendment to the lease noting that the MCRA had the right to remove Sligo without the approval of Council. Council could have voted to provide a subsidy for the Sligo Creek Golf Course, which would have been contrary for the original decision to have the golf system self-supporting, but the money would have to come from another program and Council staff noted that the Recreation Department's budget had already been reduced by 5.1 percent for FY10.
April 2009	Staff began the master plan process for the Sligo Creek Golf Course Re Use plan. A website was created, a schedule and the first Community meeting was planned.
May 26, 2009	The first Community Meeting was held. Over 130 residents came and comments were mostly focused on keeping the property as a Golf Course. The public questioned the numbers provided in the NGF report and the "independent" analysis. The public also wondered why other recreational facilities such as athletic fields, tennis and basketball courts are subsidized but not the golf facility.
July 16, 2009	MCPC Meeting to review the Objectives, Outreach and Schedule for the Sligo Golf Course Reuse Plan.
September 8, 2009	Proposed date for the Public Meeting to review staff recommended proposal for the reuse of Sligo, meeting location TBD.
October 1, 2009	Proposed date for the Montgomery County Planning Board meeting to review the staff recommendations for the proposed future uses and approve the interim uses for the Sligo Creek Golf Course property.
November 2009	Proposed date for the MCPB Public Hearing on the proposed Re-Uses for Sligo Creek Golf Course.
December 2009	Proposed date for the MCPB to approve staff recommendations for the future uses for the Sligo Creek Golf Course property.
2010	Event
2010	Proposed date to present to County Council the approved Sligo Creek Golf Course Reuse Plan.

**This timeline is a work in progress and will be supplemented as new information is provided.*

Attachment 3

Sligo Park Reuse Plan Work Program and Accelerated Schedule

Objective: Staff Draft Reuse Plan in 8 months. Planning Board Adopted Reuse Plan in 2 Months

Assumptions: Preliminary planning work to begin March 2, 2009. Public Outreach efforts to begin after final Council Action

PHASE AND DURATION	REVIEW PROCESS	PRODUCT ELEMENTS (Major Products in Bold)
Phase 1: 1 month <u>Project Initiation</u> Add to Department of Parks Budget and Work Program		- List of Products - Project Schedule - Determine Plan Needs and final product - Establish timing of Plan. - Begin environmental analysis. - Begin Outreach Planning
Phase 2: 3 months <u>Purpose and Outreach Strategy Report and Work Program</u> Action Requested: Planning Board Approval of Report MCPB- July 16, 2009	A. Hold staff kick-off meeting to review draft work program, Environmental map, PROS Needs, Service Area, and plan principles to guide the process. Arrange on-site visit of park with PDCO team. B. Community “kick off” meeting (5/26/09) to brief community on process and objectives prior to developing Purpose and Outreach Report. C. PDCO Team refines Plan issues and Work Program D. Obtain input from Senior Park Staff E. Draft document placed on web	- Purpose and Outreach Report - Project Timeline - Establish Planning, Development, Construction and Operation Committee (PDCO) - Review past studies/plans - Develop outreach contact list - Prepare PROS Analysis/Needs - Initiate environmental analysis based on GIS information - Suggest preliminary goals and objectives to guide planning process - Identify opportunities and constraints - Community outreach program-coordinate with Recreation Dept and Advisory Boards - Determine Service Area - Collect Population Data - Collect Transportation/traffic info - Develop web site. - Draft material on key objectives/issues to be addressed in Plan/share with public - Prepare Planning Board document
Phase 3: 2.5 Months <u>Staff Draft Park Reuse Plan</u> Action Requested: Approval of Staff Draft Plan for purposes of Public Hearing MCPB – October 1, 2009	A. Staff sponsors community meeting(s) Sept 9, 2009, to review plan issues and responses and alternative big planning ideas. B. Staff prepares concepts for review by PDCO; concepts modified as needed. C. Brief Department of Parks Director and management staff D. Place Plan concepts on web E. Community meeting held to review concepts	Staff Draft Reuse Plan should include: - Introduction - Background Information - Environmental Analysis/Constraints - PROS Analysis/Development Opportunities/Service Area - Transportation/Traffic Analysis - Program of Requirements/Park Classification - Plan Concepts - Plan Recommendations - Implementation Strategies - Proposed Reuse Plan Map
Phase 4: 1.5 months	A. PDCO members attend Public	Public Hearing Draft Reuse Plan

PHASE AND DURATION	REVIEW PROCESS	PRODUCT ELEMENTS (Major Products in Bold)
<u>Public Hearing Park Reuse Plan:</u> Action requested: Planning Board Holds Public Hearing followed by worksessions-.November 19, 2009	Hearing and summarize public comments (public testimony will require a written staff response). B. Worksessions discuss testimony and recommended Plan revisions.	-Prepare Public Hearing Draft -available to public at least 30 days ahead of Public Hearing. - Prepare Interim Operations/Management Plan -Staff summarizes testimony and prepares packet for Planning Board worksession.
Phase 5: 1 month <u>ACTION: Planning Board approves Plan. (December 17, 2009)</u>	A. Staff amends Plan text to reflect the Planning Board actions. B. Staff works with County Council staff to schedule briefing of PHED Committee.	Planning Board Approved Reuse Plan Once the PHED Committee reviews the plan, it is published in final form and placed on the web.

Attachment 4

2005 Park Recreation and Open Space Plan (PROS) Data

Sligo Park Reuse Plan Recreation Needs

An analysis of estimated 2020 PROS facility needs indicates that the Sligo Golf Reuse Plan service area (the Silver Spring Community Based Team Area) will have a need for basketball courts and large rectangular, baseball and softball needs. Countywide PROS needs that could be met by Sligo include picnic shelters, natural areas and trails, skateboard facility, and dog exercise areas (*see tables below*).

There are other important types of recreation that many people enjoy but are not specifically identified in the PROS Plan including golf courses, informal play fields, informal picnicking, fishing, gardening, etc. Informal open spaces that can be used for pick up soccer or other sports are also important in the urban area. These can be used for practice and can reduce wear and tear on larger game fields. Community gardens are also another type of recreation that is increasing in popularity.

The PROS Plan anticipated that needs for golf and other enterprise sports would be addressed in a future Plan. Although there are several other public golf courses in the County, Sligo is the only course serving the down County area. A state planning survey estimated that 20 percent of suburban Washington households have individuals that play golf.

2020 Needs Analysis included in the 2005 Park Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan (also called the Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan)

1. ESTIMATED UN-MET NEEDS BY THE YEAR 2020 FOR "CLOSE TO HOME" FACILITIES SERVED BY PLANNING AREA

FACILITY	GEOGRAPHIC AREA		
	PA36 Silver Spring	PA 37 Takoma Park	PA 32 Kemp Mill 4 Corners
Neighborhood facilities evaluated by planning area			
Basketball Courts	1.1	1.5	0
Tennis Courts	0	0	0
Playgrounds	0	0	0

2. ESTIMATED UN-MET NEEDS BY THE YEAR 2020 FOR FIELDS BY COMMUNITY BASED TEAM AREA

TEAM AREA FACILITIES	
Ball fields	Silver Spring/Takoma Park Team Area
Youth Diamonds (Age 0-9)	-1.7 (No field deficit)
Baseball/Softball Fields (Age 10 +)	8.7
90 infield Baseball fields	4.1
Multi-purpose fields (Age 10 +)	10.8
Youth Rectangular fields	-3.4 (No field deficit)

3. ESTIMATED UN-MET NEEDS FOR FACILITIES SERVED ON A COUNTYWIDE BASIS (BASED ON 2002 INVENTORIES)

FACILITY	EXISTING PARK AND SCHOOL FACILITIES	2020 ESTIMATED NEEDS
Permit Picnic Shelters	78	21
County-Wide Group Picnic Areas	3	1
Nature Centers	4	2.3
Roller Hockey (Game Facilities)	2	0
Skate Parks (Including Informal Use Areas)	1 skate park has been built since 2002	16
Dog Exercise Areas	3	15
Natural Areas in M-NCPPC Parks	17,682 acres	5495 acres
Natural Surface Regional Trails	115.6 miles	105.4 miles
Hard Surface Regional Trails	73.5 miles	22.5 miles
Community Recreation Centers	18	11.5
Aquatic Facilities	4 indoor 7 outdoor	3-4

Attachment 5

Preliminary Assessment/Comments from Transportation Planning

ATTACHMENT



MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

July 6, 2009

MEMORANDUM

TO: Rachel Davis Newhouse, Planner/Coordinator
Park Planning and Stewardship Division

VIA: Shahriar Etemadi, Supervisor
Move/Transportation Planning Division

FROM: Cherian Eapen, Planner/Coordinator
Move/Transportation Planning Division
301-495-4525

SUBJECT: Sligo Creek Golf Course Reuse Master Plan
Preliminary Assessment/Comments

DKH for

CE

This memorandum presents our preliminary assessment and comments on the plan to develop a reuse master plan for Sligo Creek Golf Course, located adjacent to Sligo Creek Park in Silver Spring. Sligo Creek Golf Course is a 65-acre triangular shaped property that has Dallas Avenue along its eastern edge, Sligo Creek Parkway along its western edge, and Capital Beltway along its northern edge. Sligo Creek Parkway is a two-lane park roadway through Sligo Creek Park. Dallas Avenue is a secondary residential street to the north of Sligo Creek Parkway.

Vehicular Access

Vehicular access to the existing golf course is from Sligo Creek Parkway via a driveway called Omaha Creek Drive, located between Dallas Avenue to the southeast and Capital Beltway/Forest Glen Road to the northwest.

Depending on use(s) that will ultimately be proposed on the site, new and/or enhanced access options must be considered for the site.

Pedestrian Access

Sligo Creek Trail, between Dallas Avenue to the southeast and Forest Glen Road to the northwest, runs parallel to and off-set approximately 360 feet to the west of Sligo Creek Parkway. Currently there are no sidewalks/paths along Sligo Creek Parkway within this section. Therefore, there are no lead-in sidewalks or paths from Sligo Creek Parkway to the site.

The closest sidewalk to the existing golf course (along Sligo Creek Parkway) is a sidewalk that comes off from the Sligo Creek Trail near Dallas Avenue, which at its closest point is approximately 300 feet away from the site access driveway. To the north, the sidewalk along Forest Glen Road at its closest point is approximately 1,800 feet away from the existing golf course access driveway. Pedestrians along Forest Glen Road could however use the Sligo Creek Trail to access the site from the north, using the sidewalk that comes off the trail.

Depending on use(s) that will ultimately be proposed on the site, new lead-in sidewalk or path access options into the site from Sligo Creek Parkway and Dallas Avenue must be explored.

Transit

Currently, there is no transit service along Sligo Creek Parkway to the front of the golf course. However, RideOn Route 8 services Brunett Avenue (to the southwest, approximately 2,300 feet from the existing golf course driveway) and Forest Glen Road, and has bus stops near Sligo Creek Parkway intersections with both Brunett Avenue and Forest Glen Road.

The reuse plan for Sligo Creek Golf Course must consider and pursue via Montgomery County Department of Transportation's Division of Transit Services (DTS) the possibility of shifting either the northbound or southbound RideOn Route 8 service in the area via Brunett Avenue to Sligo Creek Parkway, to improve transit accessibility/serviceability to the site. The above option must be carefully studied through coordination with DTS since even minor changes to an existing service route could affect area transit serviceability and bus headways, and may require large capital investments (such as new bus(s) to maintain existing level of service).

Parking

Currently, approximately 130 parking spaces exist at the golf course parking lot along Sligo Creek Parkway. Out of these, 55 parking spaces are currently leased by Holy Cross Hospital for use by the hospital employees. Sligo Creek Parkway also has a parking area across from the golf course parking lot, which has approximately 26 parking spaces.

Depending on use(s) that will ultimately be proposed on the site and the site transit serviceability, additional parking needs at the site must be investigated.

Adequate Public Facilities Review

Adequate Public Facilities (APF) review associated with a development consists of the Local Area Transportation Review (LATR) and the Policy Area Mobility Review (PAMR) tests. These are described below:

- Local Area Transportation Review

Based on the *Local Area Transportation Review (LATR) and Policy Area Mobility Review (PAMR) Guidelines*, new use(s) proposed at the Sligo Creek Golf Course would require a traffic

study for LATR purposes if the use(s) proposed on the site will generate **30** or more total additional peak-hour trips during the typical weekday morning (6:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.) and/or evening (4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.) peak periods.

Our review of data available from recent traffic studies and other sources for intersections in the area indicate that during the afternoon (i.e., the PM) peak-hour, the Colesville Road (US 29)/Sligo Creek Parkway/St. Andrews Way intersection is operating above the Critical Lane Volume (CLV) congestion standard for the Silver Spring/Takoma Park Policy Area (1,600 CLV; intersection count data from March 2008).

Under the above scenario, if trips related to use(s) proposed at the golf course that pass through the intersection will increase the existing CLV, then the LATR requirements of the APF test would require mitigation of 150% of impact from these use(s).

- Policy Area Mobility Review

Based on the *LATR and PAMR Guidelines*, under the FY2010 requirements, new use(s) proposed at the Sligo Creek Golf Course would require mitigation of 10% of “new” peak-hour trips generated by the use(s) to satisfy the PAMR requirements of the APF test.

- Potential LATR/PAMR Mitigation Options

Potential mitigation options that can be considered to offset/mitigate site-related LATR and/or PAMR impacts of the APF test (depending on the level of impact) include:

- New off-site sidewalks,
- New off-site bike paths and/or trails,
- New off-site/on-site bike-lockers,
- New area transit services, and
- New area bus shelters.

SE:CE:tc

cc: Chuck Kines
Larry Cole
Tanya Schmieler

mno to RN re SCGC Reuse.doc

Attachment 6

Summary of Recommended Future Activities

This list represents a summary of Ideas from staff, from PROS and from the community that were used to develop the proposed planning themes discussed in this memorandum.

Interim Uses

These uses can be incorporated into all the Planning Themes for Future Development

- Walking
- Plant Appreciation
- Natural Area Appreciation – Plants, wildlife, wildflowers
- Open lawns for un-Programmed recreation
- Bird watching
- Dog walking on leash
- Picnicking
- Cross Country Skiing
- Sledding
- Lawn Bowling/Bocce Ball Courts
- Archery Range
- Adventure Playground
- Natural play Area
- Hard surface Trails
- Picnic shelters
- Skate Park – skateboards, bikes, rollerblades
- Dog Park
- Spray ground – Sculptural

Natural Garden Preserve

- Nature Center
- Trail interpretation for wildlife, interesting flora/fauna, existing tree specimen
- Natural Foods Restaurant featuring locally grown organic foods
- Natural Play Areas
- Water Play – Garden and Pier
- Public Art
- Display Areas for Native Plants
- Community Gardens
- Cultural Displays – interpretation and oral histories

Fun for All Ages Recreational Park

- Athletic fields
- Snack Bar
- Disc Golf
- Volleyball Courts
- Basketball Courts

Down County Sports Complex

- 6 rectangular fields (220 x 360) – 4 artificial turf with lights
- Indoor Sports Training Center
- Sports Snack Bar and Booster Sales
- Pond Pier and Picnic Pavilion
- Playgrounds
- Natural Play Areas
- Trails
- Cultural Displays

Golf – Youth and Seniors

- Keep Golf Course as is?
- Golf Course – small expansion or revision – 3 par executive with driving range
- Renovated Golf learning Center – expanded first Tee involvement

Shared Use Activities

- Shared use - golf – disc golf
- Shared use - golf – walking trails and nature enjoyment

* All uses, Interim and Future will include a Maintenance Yard, Parking and Rain Gardens as best management practices for storm water management

Attachment 7

Public/Private Partnership Committee Comments



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

MEMORANDUM

DATE: July 2, 2009

TO: Rachel Newhouse, RLA
Park Planning & Stewardship Division

FROM: Terry Brooks, Chairman THB
Public/Private Partnership Committee

SUBJECT: Proposed Concept Development Plans for Sligo Creek Golf Course - Comments

Introduction

As part of the staff deliberations in considering the future development of the Sligo Creek Golf Course; staff reviewed public comments and recommendations and identified possible Public/Private Partnership opportunities that may be possible using private entity resources in concert with the overall goals and objectives of each concept development theme. Past experience with other public/private partnerships have proven to be complimentary and useful in instances where the Commission did not have the necessary financial, operational and/or maintenance resources to support needed park development.

Suggested Possible Public/Private Partnerships:

1. Nature Appreciation & Un-Programmed Recreation Development Concept

YES – potential to solicit partnerships with:

- a. U.S. EPA (Public/Public – check on their programs, grants and demonstration projects);
- b. Maryland DEP (Public/Public – check on their programs, grants, and demonstration projects);
- c. Local Universities (outdoor classrooms for professors and students to conduct studies and share their observations and findings with the public); and
- d. National Audubon Society (check with John Hench about potential public/private benefits).

2. Natural Garden Preserve Development Concept

Yes - potential to solicit partnerships with:

- a. Local Garden Landscape Companies to create and demonstrate their gardening capabilities; and
- b. Partnership Opportunity to solicit a local landscape gardening design competition amongst landscape companies in exchange for publicity and an award from the Commission, perhaps voted upon by the park visiting public. Each landscape competitor would be required to maintain their design for 1 year. A new competition could be conducted each year.

3. Fun for All Recreation Park Development Concept

Yes - potential to solicit partnerships with:

- a. Park playground manufacturers who would supply one or several playgrounds at their own expense in exchange for advertising rights to display their name as a donor at the site;
- b. Park adventure sports manufacturers who would supply one or several adventure sports facilities within the park at their own expense in exchange for giving them advertising rights to display their name as a donor;
- c. Other partnership possibilities include: Park water sports activity facilities, benches, fountains, picnic pavilions, etc.; and
- d. A prefabricated park activity building and snack-bar or restaurant.

4. Down-County Sports Complex Development Concept

Yes - potential to solicit the development of the total park development under a public/private partnership arrangement, similar to the SoccerPlex where the private partner develops the entire park and all the sports facilities within it, manages and maintains the park.

5. Golf Development Concept

Yes – solicit, with the PGA (Professional Golfers Association), an offer for a golf celebrity and/or PGA to partner with the Commission to develop, operate and maintain an 8-hole executive golf course which would include a first tee teaching facility for youth, adults and the elderly.

Attachment 8

Golf Course Interim-Use Maintenance Tasks

The following includes the Southern Region Parks anticipated maintenance activities at the former Sligo Golf Course until the management planning process is complete.

- A. The Clubhouse will be closed, but the security and structural integrity need to be preserved. An alarm system is present, and needs to be maintained in good working order. The building has nice landscaping around it, and we need to make sure that the entrance and parking lots do not become an eyesore. In the same manner, it needs to be very clear that the golf course is no longer open, so some signage and possibly some fencing would be needed. Weekly inspections and possibly some repairs and custodial work will be necessary from time to time.
- B. The maintenance shop area and the house (which is used for offices) should remain in use; the gas pump should be opened to Commission use. Utility costs, routine building maintenance, trash removal, litter and leaf removal will be the additional costs
- C. Radio tower and support structure maintenance will include maintaining access, security and mowing. Pesticide application around the fence and litter control.
- D. Paths, bridges, and boardwalks will remain until a final plan for ultimate use is determined. These will also be used by our crews to access the maintenance activities.
- E. Storm water management structures (pond, dam, riser, trash rack, and outfall) will be taken care of, and kept secure.
- F. Turf areas of the golf course should be mowed monthly. Often enough so that they are not overtaken by invasives and trees, yet kept long enough to obviate any golf activities. In the fall, when we take over, leaf removal will be a huge task.
- G. The bordering fence lines and the areas between the fences and the community roads needs to be mowed weekly, and the fence kept clear of weedy growth using pesticides and weed whackers. Fence repairs and trash pickup will be a constant task.
- H. Road and parking lot are already in poor shape, and there is an agreement with Holy Cross for employee parking on a large section. Leaf removal, snow and ice, as well as litter will be issues, and CM might need to make repairs. With HCH using the parking lot, it will be impossible to close the entrance gate.
- I. The rows of trees that currently line the various fairways are subject to a lot of stresses, and will continue to decline, resulting in branches and woody debris that has to be removed prior to mowing operations, really impacting the time it takes to mow.

Attachment 9

May 26, 2009 Community Meeting Summary



MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARKS

THE MARYLAND - NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

Sligo Creek Golf Course Public Meeting

May 26, 2009

Below is a summary of the PowerPoint Presentation and initial responses from staff to questions from the audience. This is followed by a detailed summary of each question from the audience, staff's response and comments that were received from the audience.

Summary of Staff's Presentation and Response

- Park is 65.5 acres
- The park is a County-wide park and will be classified as either recreational or special use
- Sligo and Colesville intersection exceeds threshold for congestion between 4-7pm on weekdays
- The only foregone conclusion is that Sligo park land will be returned to Park and Planning
- It will cost approximately \$60,000 per year to maintain the property as is
- Parks staff is committed to again opening its past financial records for Sligo Park for the public. Staff will ask the Revenue Authority to do the same
- Would like to meet the objectives of the State's : No Child Left Inside Act of 2007 and the other stated objectives
- Staff agrees to do a cost benefit analysis for an alternative of keeping the Golf Course in operation as part of the first phase of the planning process

Summary of Community Comments

- Many residents want the park to remain a golf course.
- The LPPRP (Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan) has not been thoroughly reviewed by County Council. Some residents question the assumptions and statistics in the plan.
- The area has too many trees and hills for the land to be graded for baseball, rectangular fields, and basketball.
- Surplus park uses in areas beyond the service area should be considered as meeting the recreation needs generated by this area, because residents sometimes use parks outside of their service areas.
- Do we have to attach a fee to using a golf course? Why can't it be subsidized like a basketball court and rectangular fields?
- Why aren't golf courses included as a recreational need in the LPPRP?
- Citizens should consider advocating for alternative financing strategies such as revenue sharing.
- Sligo golf course is a great course because of its small 9-hole size
 - o Allows players to comfortably walk around the whole course
- Great for women players who don't hit the ball as far

- Wasn't there a partnership offer years ago (Golf Etc?), why not consider a public/private partnership again?
- Little Bennett is also operating at a loss but unlike Sligo Park, Little Bennett is subject to bonds and the County would rather keep it in operation as a golf course than risk ruining its bond rating
- The Revenue Authority didn't listen to the community's suggestions on funding solutions (revenue sharing, etc). Residents hope that Park and Planning staff will consider the community's suggestions more than the Revenue Authority did.

- The Revenue Authority wasn't happy to leave it as a golf course. They wanted to turn it into an "amusement park" for golf by having putt putt golf and serving alcohol and adding lighting.
- The financial information (account books) need to be accessible to the public.
- Woodside Civic Association is in attendance.
- Did anyone analyze why the course failed?
- Has a feasibility study occurred?
- Could the property become residential?
- In PG county the golf course are operated by the Rec department and are subsidized by the County
- Sligo's retail should stay open longer to earn more money
- The course has a nice following; people who use it probably won't go out of their way to use others.
- Ten-twelve years ago the Park was turning a profit. What happened since then?
- What's the point of changing the use of the land when it costs money to build something new?
- What are the next steps for those who want to keep the park?
- Some residents feel that Councilmember Ervin is ignoring their emails
- The independent golf research group is the same group that surveyed the Course's golfers; therefore they had an interest in the results.
- Revenue Authority is a public agency so their books should be available to the public.
- It appears that many in the audience are unaware of the public meetings that MCRA had with the community last year. All of the comments being expressed by the community today were aired out during MCRA's process last year.
- Parks has received a number of ideas
- Disk golf would be a great alternative, in some residents' opinions.
- The course has had inadequate investment. There is a rectangular field across the street from the golf course and it is poorly maintained.
- The people may make noise but that won't be as effective as having an independent consultant do a cost benefit analysis for keeping the park a golf course. The consultant should be able to think creatively about different types of golf course if the current set up isn't working.
- It seems that the biggest problem is having the golf course in the Enterprise program.

Detailed Questions/Answers

Q= question, C= comment, A= answer from Parks staff

- Q: What can be done to un-do the golf course lease?
 - A: Staff has been told this is off the table. Citizens can go to elected and appointed officials with this idea. Staff can prepare a golf course option.
 -

- Q: Facilities that don't produce revenue—why are they okay, but not golf?
- A: Other recreation facilities typically considered tax-based.
- Q: What are the accurate figures for SGC as a stand-alone facility?
 - A: Parks will provide.
- C: SGC has not been advertized by signage or in the brochure.
- C: Kids growing up in the area may create a need for golf facilities that is currently not recognized.
- C: Revenue Authority should look at revenue sharing.
- A: Keep a “next best” option besides golf.
- C: Parks should have a liaison with golf advocates.
- Q: Does Parks consider golf a recreation need?
- A: Since it is considered an Enterprise: No.
- C: Women golfers need separate course and this is a good one for them.
- C: Public/Private Partnerships/revenue- Generating uses may be considered.
- C: The community needs specific guidance on lease:
 - A: The only foregone conclusion is property comes back to parks.
 - A: Re-negotiation would be required
 - A: Background on the Lease: Expectation way that golf would continue to be financially viable for the Revenue Authority
- Q: Little Bennett- Why not close it instead?
- A: We can't default on the bonds.
- Q: Isn't there room in the language?
 - A: If there's a will, there's a way. If there is a decision that golf is the right use for the property, there are ways to do it. (Would have to be re-negotiated).
- Q: Ballpark figure on operating costs interim?
 - A: \$56,000. We will review \$\$ of each alternative.
- C: Hope P&P is willing to listen.
- Q: Any targets for stewardship objectives of H2O quality or habitat?
 - A: Interagency agreements for water quality include this watershed.
 - A: US Army Corps of Eng/DEP working group on-going.
 - A: LPPRP discusses best natural areas, etc. Part of this process will be to articulate how to achieve these objectives.
- C: Remind P&P that Revenue Authority was not content to renovate ex. Golf course, but had proposed an “amusement park”.
- Q: How can golfers communicate?
 - A: Website with e-mail list.
- C: Montgomery County Civic Fed. Parks Committee contact: Carol Ann Barth, Cbarth@mindspring.com
- Q: Why not look at it like PG County? Where golf is considered a public service. Mgmt. and financial issues need to be transparent.
 - A: We can make \$ records available on our website.
- C: Woodside Forest Civic Association and Woodside Park listserv we need revenue figures to help us make a decision.
 - A: We will make public what info we can get.

- Q: Did anyone do an analysis of why it failed?
 - A: Parks owned golf courses which were losing money. Leased to Revenue Authority.
- Q: Have feasibility studies been done on any of the possible uses?
 - A: Not yet because we have not gone beyond asking for input, but we will.
- Q: Parks is locked into managing this for parkland? Could it be housing?
 - A: Our mission is to come up with a plan for a park.
- C: The way the golf course is right now works.
- C: We should be talking to the county council.
- C: PG County courses lose money but are subsidized by taxes.
- C: One reason SGC lost money is because operating hours are too short.
- C: If SGC closes, people may not go to other courses. It is a good course for beginners. Good exercise: 2.1 miles.
- Q: 11-12 years ago, why did SDC go downhill so fast?
 - A: We can look at it.
- Q: Wouldn't redeveloping the land lose money?
 - A: Yes, but anything we do will.
- Q: Lease doesn't stop P&P from running it as a golf course?
 - A: Revenue Authority opinion was that it was in competition with other courses.
- Q: When in process was it determined?
- Q: What are next steps for proponents of golf?
 - A: July we will be in front of PB.
 - A: Call or e-mail council members.
- Q: What about the "independent study"? Might have been a vested interest.
- Q: What more does P&P need to hear?
 - A: We have to revisit financial records, marketing opportunities and take the option to MCPB, along with other options.
- C: Setting up a website – Will parallel P&P website.
- C: Silver Spring Civic Association (umbrella org of several civics): We want to see this golf course saved. The only course in the county that serves a diversity of users: young, old, disadvantaged, and disabled.
- C: Heather Phipps: Neighbors of NW Branch- Stakeholder advisory group vetted these points with MCRA in 2008. MCPB and PHED were open to the public.
- Q: Why we are here is to talk about formal proposals. Has Parks recommended others?
 - A: Mostly informal: Dog walking, trails, track meets.
- C: Bethesda Bungalows' proposed for a disc golf course: Would include trails, community gardens, and other "green: facilities.
- C: Usually natural environment loses out in the "balance". Suggest supporting existing course with other slight improvements.
- A: Process shown in the PowerPoint slide is the process to take the proposal through MCPB.
- Q: Already is a soccer field across the street- Why should the GC be taken away? Lack of marketing?
- Q: Is there any capacity in the short-term to get meaningful money analysis, to accompany the planning process?
 - A: We will have to put this info together soon. Can't commit to consultant, but will consider it.

- C: With a little investment, could be re-designed to be a real destination.
- C: Best approach for citizens would be to take it out of the enterprise category so it does not have to break even.
- C: Change the thinking.
- C: How about Golf Et Cetera?
- C: If golf course is not an option: driving range or 9-holes plus nature preserve.
- C: Disc golf could be a good interim use, even if regular golf considered for long-range.
- C: Timing issue: If you let the golf course deteriorate, it will be costly to renovate it.
 - A: We need to re-look at the schedule, if Parks taking it over is not a done deal.

Attachment 10

June 23, 2009 Town Hall Community Meeting Notes



MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARKS

THE MARYLAND - NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

At the Margaret Schweinhaut Senior Center, 1000 Forest Glen Road, Silver Spring, MD at 7:30 pm
Hosted by: North Hills Civic Association and Neighbors of Northwest Branch

Mike Welsh – Welcome

Purpose of Meeting is to hear two proposals for the reuse of Sligo Creek Golf Course.

Facebooks to go to for comments and information about the Sligo Project:

Save Sligo Creek Golf

Preserve Sligo Creek Golf Course

Meeting Format:

½ hour presentation

20 min Q & A

Heather Phipps – this meeting is not to ignore the Golf Community. The Keep Golf Group needs to email County Council.

Presentation by Doug Schuessler -Executive Director of MSI (Montgomery Soccer Inc)

Also present: Steve Ertle Chair of MSI Board and Vice Chair of MSI Board (did not get his name)

MSI met with parks to learn opportunities for their proposal.

MSI has

- Been around since 1971 Largest sports club in Montgomery County – 14,000-15,000 kids
- Open registration for all children
 - Rec soccer league has 9,000 Soccer players
 - Classic League has 5,000 soccer players
 - Premier League has 1,000 players
 - Special Needs league has 150 players

MSI also has 100's of teenagers to help with leadership programs at camps

Montgomery County fields are:

- Overplayed to deployable condition
- Need to find ways to fix this situation

There is a shortage of fields in Middle to Eastern part of the county

MSI Knows the Environmental Issues

MSI Know about the Traffic Issue

Want 6 soccer fields – Not trying to use Entire Park – only 1/3 needed.

MSI is proposing: 4 Synthetic turf fields and 2 Natural turf fields

MSI would participate in cost of fields and in the maintenance of fields.

There would need to be more parking spaces added.

Primary use- Youth soccer: MSI, and other soccer clubs could use as well.

They envision a partnership with Mont. CO. Schools:

Academic Enrichment Programs teamed with Soccer (rewards of playing on a team)

They want to partner with Mont. Recreation

Synthetic turf- Vastly expands access to fields

Benefit in no fertilizers

Exceptional quality surfaces

Once built, less expensive to maintain

Not Soccer Plex South

1/3 parking/fields/space around fields

Questions from Audience

Why do you think community would support lighted fields?

How much would it cost? Who would pay for? Community has heard from lighting vendors.

- Not sure but know it is in the millions

Have you talked to the schools? Have you considered doing this to other fields in area at schools with fields already?

- The time was too limited and could not line. Did not get much from schools.
- Existing fields to converts? Convert baseball to soccer
- Ind. Fields not possible because community nearby with lights and protection is issue.

SWM can be addressed better at Sligo. Elem Schools more restrictive.

What is # of parking spaces needed to support 1 field?

- MSI would try to stagger start times to avoid peak parking problems
- Need 40-50 spaces for fields.
- Dept of Parks says 75 spaces are ideal.

What is # of bathrooms needed?

- Would need additional bathrooms, 1 portable per field.

You said you would bring substantial money- How much?

- Cannot be more specific. Capital cost is paramount parks likes.

Question from Bruce Sidwell- Friends of Sligo Creek

Q. Interested in what new impact would be on site as far as grading?

A. MSI Would use the more level areas for field construction

Q. Would there be expanded parking?

A. MSI Needs to know what additional complimentary uses would be in addition to fields?

Complimentary uses may be able to share parking.

Q. Do you anticipate other structures needed?

A. Synthetic need maintenance equipment, turf fields need maintenance equipment, bathrooms, and maybe picnic shelters.

Q. How long does it take to install synthetic?

A. Already graded spot- 6 weeks. New areas- 1 summer or winter season.

Q. How tall would lights be?

A. Range up to 90 feet. SoccerPlex – has tall lights around 90 feet.

Q. Explain SWM issues to control synthetic turf. Is it viewed as impervious?

A. The County Permitting staff views synthetic turf as impervious. Turf is channeled and tunnels under synthetic turf.

C. Connecticut has good models of natural turf.

Q. Synthetic T. fields require disposal costs for rubber/synthetic.

A. Yes. Natural turf is also expensive to maintain. Best local example is at SoccerPlex and those fields cost a fortune.

Q. When we met with Steve, he said \$600,000 too high for grass and \$250,000 more realistic.

A. MSI estimates around \$600,000 for synthetic turf. Not sure why it costs the County \$1.2 million to install synthetic turf. May be due to additional costs for SWM/cisterns installed under fields.

Q. We need answers sooner than what you have now.

A. Appreciate the tight timeline and will have more answers when we get them.

Q. How will you get back to us?

A. Try to get back sooner.

C. Biggest concern is lighting for community.

Q. Part of problem with lights because I have dark in my yard but I am looking at used car lot. Lights are raised high and would become problem.

A. MSI understands the adjacent community list of concerns is same: Lights, traffic, Nocturnal wildlife disturbance.

Presentation by BRAD BEESON for Disc Golf Course

He Received an Email from environmental DNR staff person supporting disc golf.

Disc Golf is an Affordable, environmental friendly sport

VISION: Arboretum, Sculpture Garden, disc golf, solution with synergy

He worked to force the closure of Seneca Trap N Skeet in Seneca National Park due to negative environmental impacts to site.

Is a member of PDGA- 13,000 members now. It includes casual and league play. They

have a course at Seneca Creek State Park. The recently released Tiger Woods Game for Wii has disc golf.

Proposed Interim Plan

- Install metal sleeves in ground for baskets
- Need to establish disc golf club

- Need to secure funding \$1,000 per hole, \$18-20,000 includes high quality signage.
- Craig Gangloff will design course.
- Different layout than existing course but potential for top in nation.

Interim:

- 3 sleeves per hole
- 3 tees/ use ex. Turf for tee markers
- Temp sign/ later install concrete tee pad. Maybe use boy scouts to design.
- Takes 3 days to install.

Long Term:

- Permanent tees
- Permanent signage
- Practice area
- Skill shot course
- Disc golf education programs in schools
- Leagues and tournaments

Arboretum:

- Want 300-400 trees for obstacles
- Who leads? Mission?

Long Term Sculpture Garden:

- Create unique art space
- Rugged sculptures could be obstacles for disc golfers

Questions in Presentation:

- What happens to Pro Shop?
- Where are sculptures coming from?
- 18 or 27 holes?
- Other facilities could be accommodated.
- Course would need to be Marketed or facilitated to keep active.

Questions from Community

Q. How much of course would you need?

A. If 27: All; if 18: 2/3 3/5 of course. No parking expansion needed. No club house expansion needed.

C. Frisbee golf is a blast.

Q. Cost to play?

A. Free to play.

Q. Bruce (?)

A. Seneca has 27 holes 15 years championship lead. \$2.00 to get in park, no cost for disc golf. State foes not maintain.

Q. How would this be maintained?

A. Mowed once every 2 weeks. Let wild flowers grow.

C. Many of us do invasive plant removal – do not want this to happen to course.

Q. Minimum space needed if other uses are proposed.

A. 18 holes could use ½.

Q. Do you envision lighting? What is the interaction of people with golf and sculpture?

A. One idea is to close down disc golf for sculpture garden viewing or split use of course or walking path around property.

No lights are needed but can play night disc golf with blinking disc and baskets.

Q. How many rounds at Seneca in 1 week?

A. Guessing 500 rounds - 9-hole rounds. Seneca can get 30 people at night during week.

Q. How do you manage groups?

A. Self management

Q. Who would manage/maintain?

A. M-NCPPC

Q. Who is liable for course?

A. County

Q. Can soccer be combined with disc?

A. Yes, if the number of fields is a limited installation.

Q. When you talk sculpture gardens are you to Anne Marie at Sullivan's Island?

A. Not familiar with.

Q. Would it be safe for young children to wander around?

A. Not un-attended but youth can start playing disc golf - Age range to start 4-5 years old.

Q. Frisbee golf would limit use of passive space.

A. Yes- Golf Frisbee does not allow people to walk through.

