



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

MCPB
Item # 12-A
7/30/09

MEMORANDUM

Date: July 16, 2009

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Mark Pfefferle, Acting Chief, Environmental Planning *MP*

FROM: Marco Fuster, Senior Planner, Environmental Planning *[Signature]*

REVIEW TYPE: Forest Conservation Plan Review

APPLYING FOR: Preliminary Forest Conservation Plan (FCP) – Proposal for renovation project at Battery Lane Urban Park

PLAN NAME: Battery Lane Urban Park

PLAN NUMBER: FCP #SC2009028

REVIEW BASIS: This property is subject to the Chapter 22A Montgomery County Forest Conservation Law

LOCATION: Located in park land on Battery Lane in the Bethesda CBD

APPLICANT: Montgomery County Department of Parks

ENGINEER: VIKa, Incorporated

HEARING DATE: July 30, 2009

RECOMMENDATION: Approval of the preliminary forest conservation plan.

SITE DESCRIPTION

Battery Lane Urban Park is located on Battery Lane in Bethesda, within the edge of Bethesda Central Business District (CBD). The park is bordered to the north by Battery Lane, to the east by Battery Gardens low rise apartment buildings, to the west by Sussex House condominiums, and to the south by the intersection of Glenbrook Road and Rugby Avenue. The park currently includes a tennis court, basketball court, playground, walking paths and numerous trees occurring as individuals and in groves. Although areas of tree canopy are present within the park setting, none of the areas meet the forest definition due to the open areas beneath the canopy consisting of grass, woodchips or pavement.

The site is within the Rock Creek watershed (a tributary to the Potomac River). No environmentally sensitive features occur within the immediate vicinity; however the site contains 2 large Leland cypress trees, one which is approximately the size of the current County champion and another which is apparently larger than the current champion.



March 2008 Air photo. Park boundary highlighted with Red outline.

BACKGROUND

Montgomery County Department of Parks is proposing to renovate the existing urban park per the recommendations of The Woodmont Triangle Amendment to the Sector Plan for the Bethesda CBD (2006). The project is designed to improve numerous aspects of the park while also preserving mature trees.

ENVIRONMENTAL GUIDELINES

The applicant submitted a Natural Resources Inventory/ Forest Stand Delineation (NRI/FSD) number 420091450 and received approval on May 8, 2009. No streams, wetlands or associated buffers occur on the site, and project is not located within a Special Protection Area (SPA) or the Patuxent Primary Management Area (PMA).

FOREST CONSERVATION

This project is subject to the Chapter 22A Montgomery County Forest Conservation Law and a Forest Conservation Plan has been submitted for approval. The net tract area for the project is 2.28 acres, which includes 0.33 acres of offsite work. No existing forest will be disturbed by the project; however there is an afforestation requirement of 0.34 acres. The Parks Department will meet the forest conservation planting requirement by a combination of tree preservation and credit for new plantings of native trees.

TREE SAVE

There are approximately 16 large or specimen trees identified within the study area. The proposed work includes the removal of 4 trees which measure 24" in diameter or greater. Each of the 4 larger trees proposed for removal are located towards the core of the park where the renovation impacts are unavoidable. Specimen trees shown for retention (including the 2 champion sized leland cypresses) and numerous smaller trees also retained by the plan are to be appropriately protected throughout the demolition and construction process. Supplemental tree preservation measures/techniques may be required at the time of final forest conservation plan approval.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of the preliminary forest conservation plan # FCP #SC2009028.