



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

MEMORANDUM

MCPB HEARING

DATE: October 6, 2011, Item

REPORT

DATE: September 21, 2011

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Mary R. Bradford, Director of Parks
Michael F. Riley, Deputy Director
Mitra Pedoeem, Chief, Park Development
Patricia McManus, Design Section Supervisor, Park Development

FROM: Linda Komes, Project Manager, Park Development, 301-650-2860

SUBJECT: Facility Plan for Seneca Crossing Local Park



STAFF RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE the Recommended Facility Plan, including the cost estimate, with the following conditions:

- 1) Obtain approval of the Stormwater Management Concept by the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services. The plan is pending final approval.

Note: The facility plan is presented at this time, in order to meet the schedule for inclusion of the project in the FY13-18 Department of Parks Capital Improvements Program.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Introduction

The purpose of this project is to provide a Facility Plan and cost estimate for a new local park known as Seneca Crossing Local Park. The 27.8 acre parcel is located at 11400 Brink Road, in Germantown, Maryland, at the intersection of MD 27 (Ridge Road) and Brink Road, east of Interstate 270. The linear-shaped property is bounded on the north by Brink Road and All Souls Cemetery and on the west by Ridge Road and Ridge Road Recreational Park. Abutting the park to the east is the planned extension of Maryland Route 83 (the Mid-County Highway). To the south are approximately 1,100 single-family homes in the communities of Cedar Valley (500 homes), and Strathford Knolls (600 homes). Seneca Crossing Drive, the main monumental entrance road into the adjacent Cedar Valley development, bisects the park into two discreet parcels.



In 1998, the land was deeded to the M-NCPPC by Winchester Homes, the developer of the Cedar Valley development (formerly known as Seneca Crossing), for use as a local park. The dedication was required as a condition of approval of Preliminary Plan 1-89172. The approved Site Plan #8-91013 for the Cedar Valley development included a plan for the park that illustrated four ballfields, and a forested buffer. Winchester Homes was required to rough grade the site for development of the future park, provide afforestation and landscape plantings in designated areas of the site, and provide specific depths of topsoil over the ballfield and afforestation areas. The park was rough-graded, and excess fill from the Cedar Valley development was deposited on the parkland. Based on soil testing completed during the subject Facility Planning process, it appears that the topsoil requirement was not fully met.

More recently, Artery Development, as part of a requirement to make improvements to Ridge and Brink Roads, was required to upgrade a stormwater management facility. This included an upgrade to storm water management quality measures in order to accommodate the aforementioned road improvements, as well as 3-acres of impervious area for the future park development. They also completed earthwork fill in one of the drainage-ways. Quantity management for the future park was planned to be accomplished with the nearby Seneca Crossing regional stormwater management pond, located to the south of the park. Refer to Attachment A for the facility plan report and Attachment B for community correspondence. Requirements for stormwater management have changed since the time the original site plan was approved and the park development must meet current standards.

Project Funding

The facility planning study was funded with \$330,000 from the FY 2010 – 2011 Capital Improvements Program in the Facility Planning: Local Parks PDF. Facility planning represents thirty percent complete construction documents, including a proposed design, cost estimate and

determination of regulatory feasibility. The consulting team of LSG Landscape Architecture, Burgess and Niple, and Straughan Environmental was hired in 2009 to prepare the facility plan.

The Facility Plan is the result of extensive site analysis and included the development of four different alternatives which were presented to the Community. If approved the project would be proposed for design and construction in the Capital Improvements Program (CIP.) The schedule of the project would be determined during review of the Fiscal Year 2013-2018 CIP.

Facility Planning Process

The facility planning process includes the following sequence of work:

1. Collect data, prepare site survey, and perform geotechnical investigations.
2. Analyze existing site conditions.
3. Prepare and obtain approval of Natural Resources Inventory/Forest Stand Delineation Summary Map.
4. Meet with the community to discuss program of requirements.
5. Finalize program of requirements.
6. Prepare park design alternatives.
7. Present design alternatives to the community and stakeholders.
8. Develop preferred alternative based on input received.
9. Prepare stormwater management concept submission and obtain approval from the Department of Permitting Services.
10. Post Preferred Alternative on Department of Parks website and mail notices to the community and stakeholders soliciting additional input.
11. Finalize plan based on input received.
12. Prepare preliminary forest conservation plan submission.
13. Coordinate any outstanding issues with stakeholder groups and regulatory agencies.
14. Prepare facility plan report, cost estimate, and operating budget estimates.
15. Present facility plan recommendations and costs to the Montgomery County Planning Board for approval.

MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

Approved and Adopted Germantown Master Plan, July 1989

Seneca Crossing Local Park is located within Planning Area 19, of the Approved and Adopted 1989 Germantown Master Plan. It is situated very near both the Clarksburg (PA 13) and Goshen/Woodfield/Cedar Grove (PA 14) planning areas, just outside of the area covered by the 2009 Germantown Employment Area Sector Plan. The parkland is in the Northern Area - Region 1 of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) park system.

The Master Plan identifies the park area as part of the North Germantown Greenbelt Conservation Area. The greenbelt is intended “to provide an effective visual and physical border which establishes the edges of the Germantown community.” Its primary purpose is to

protect the stream valleys, steep slopes, and wooded areas around Germantown, while providing locations for active recreational facilities.

2005 Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan

The 2005 Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan (LPPRP) includes a park classification system and provides quantitative estimates of future recreational facility needs to the year 2020. Local parks are classified under the category of Community Use Parks, which provide everyday recreation needs for residents close to home and are defined on page III-13 of the plan as follows:

Local parks provide both programmed and informal recreation opportunities within reach of all area residents. Typically about ten to fifteen acres in size, these parks contain athletic fields, tennis and basketball courts, picnic and playground areas, and sometimes recreation buildings and other facilities. The major difference between neighborhood and local parks is that the local parks provide regulation size athletic fields that can be reserved for game play. Over 40% of the people visiting local parks in 1996 were either league players or league game spectators. Ballplayers attend games on fields near their homes, or travel to other parts of the County to challenge opposing teams. Therefore local parks often have large service areas. Many people drive to local parks, while many neighborhood parks are within walking distance.

Due to the location and size of Seneca Crossing Local Park, in addition to serving the needs of the immediate community, it may also serve residents of the overall Germantown planning area as well as residents of the adjacent areas of Goshen, Gaithersburg, Clarksburg, and Damascus.

On page III-23, a table entitled “Un-met Needs by the Year 2020 by Planning Area”, indicates no future need for additional basketball or tennis courts in the Germantown Planning Area. It does indicate that there is a need for 6.1 additional playgrounds. On page III-26, the table entitled “2020 Additional Field Needs by Community Based Team Area” indicates that in the I-270 Corridor Area (which includes this park), there is a need for two adult softball fields, three baseball fields, 19 adult, multi-purpose rectangular fields, and 10 youth, multi-purpose rectangular fields by the year 2020. Additional facilities that are needed countywide are identified on page III-28, and include skate parks, dog exercise areas, regional trails, picnic areas and natural areas within parks. Seneca Crossing Local Park will provide some of these needs through the provision of two large, multi-purpose rectangular fields, a multi-age playground, a skate spot, and picnic areas.

Vision 2030: The Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan

Vision 2030 is a strategic plan for park and recreation services in Montgomery County for the next twenty years. The current draft plan, dated June 2011, shows Seneca Crossing Local Park located in the North Central Sub-Area. The Vision 2030 plan states that following a Level of Service (LOS) analysis of the park and recreational facilities in the North Central Sub-Area, that the LOS is lower than in other parts of the County, when population density is considered. Coupled with the project growth increase over the next 20 years, the demand for park and recreational services in this area will also increase.

Vision 2030 recommends adding the following recreational facilities: Community Gardens, Multi-purpose Rectangular Fields, Playgrounds, Picnic shelters, Skate Spots, Trails, and Volleyball Courts (co-located with two or more).

Countywide Park Trails Plan, Amended September 2008

The Countywide Park Trails Plan provides recommendations for park trails in Germantown in Corridor 8 for the Upcounty area. A map on page 42 of the plan shows existing and proposed hard surface recreational trails for Corridor 8. The plan proposes a hard surface trail through Seneca Crossing Local Park that will connect westward on Brink Road to an existing trail through Ridge Road Recreational Park, eventually extending through the North Germantown Greenway to Black Hill Regional Park. The trail at Seneca Crossing will connect on the east to the future shared use bikeway on MD 83 (Mid-County Highway) that will connect to Great Seneca Stream Valley Park and the Inter-County Connector. This trail will also be part of the road bikeway network described below.

Countywide Bikeways Functional Master Plan, Approved and Adopted March 2005

The trails at Seneca Crossing Local Park will be part of a larger bikeway network. The Countywide Bikeways Functional Master Plan identifies four bikeways along roads that would connect to this park. The routes are described on pages 60 and 61 of the plan and are summarized below.

- Route SR-62, Sundown Road/Brink Road: This is a signed, shared roadway (Class III bikeway) that provides a rare east-west route on Brink Road in this part of the county, connecting Laytonsville with the I-270 corridor.
- Route SP-70, Mid-County Highway (MD 83): This is a shared use path (Class I bikeway) on MD 83 that will extend from MD 355 to the Inter-County Connector.
- Route SR-39, Ridge Road (MD 27): This is a signed, shared roadway (Class III bikeway) on Ridge Road from Brink Road north to the Howard County line.
- Route SP-72, Frederick Road (MD 355) Upcounty: This is a shared use path (Class I bikeway) on MD 355 from Watkins Mill Road in Gaithersburg to Clarksburg. This path exists in segments on the west side of the road.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Demographics and Area Facilities

According to 2010 census results, Germantown is the fastest growing area in Montgomery County, adding 19,955 residents since the 2000 census. With a population of 86,395, Germantown is one of the three largest population centers in the County. The Vision 2030 plan included updated demographic data, although it divided the County into larger planning areas. The north central area, including Germantown, is anticipated to have the highest rate of growth, (30.6%) by the year 2030. Combined with prior statistics in the 2005 U.S. Census update, census results describe an area composed largely of families with two working spouses who commute by car to workplaces usually in Montgomery County. Similar to other parts of the County, Germantown residents are relatively affluent and well educated.

Key demographic characteristics in the provision of outdoor recreation facilities include age and cultural background. Athletic fields have the highest appeal to young to middle aged population segments, while loop trails and walking paths appeal to all, but particularly to older users.

Cultural background, including country of origin, plays an important role in determining types of recreation needs. According to Vision 2030, 33.5 percent of the population living in the North Central sub-area are foreign born, and within Germantown 12.4% speak English not very well, and 40.3% speak a language other than English. This type of demographic data supports the high degree of interest expressed in cricket at the first public meeting, and should not be unexpected as the County's diverse population seeks culturally familiar recreational facilities.

Site Conditions

The rectangular-shaped property is approximately 2,320 feet in length and 480 feet in depth. As previously described, the park is bisected into two separate parcels, (herein referred to as the eastern and western portion of the park), by Seneca Crossing Drive. The larger parcel, located on the east side of Seneca Crossing Drive, was previously graded and currently includes several large, level areas separated by drainage swales, and several areas with moderate to steep slopes. The level area in the eastern portion of the park is currently devoid of trees and covered by grass that is mowed once annually. The smaller westernmost area of the park is also maintained in annually mowed grasses. The high point of the site is approximately elevation 624, at the northwest corner of the site at the intersection of Ridge Road and Brink Road. The low point, approximately elevation 530, is at the outfall of the site on its south boundary with Cedar Valley.

Several areas within the park area were previously designated and planted as reforestation areas. The existing reforestation areas comprise approximately 9.5 acres, or 34 percent of the site; with approximately 6 acres in the larger (eastern) portion of the park and 3.5 acres on the west side of the park near Ridge Road. The reforestation area is approximately 150 feet in width, and extends along a steep slope at the southern border of the large parcel of the park, adjacent to existing residential lots. Unfortunately, the majority of the planting no longer exists, and what has survived is largely in poor condition and is further threatened by competing invasive vegetation. Much of these areas are covered in callery pear (*Pyrus calleryana*), tree of heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*), mimosa (*Albizia julibrissin*), and Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*).

An NRI-FSD was completed for the site in early 2010. There is no floodplain or non-tidal wetlands within the park boundary. However, there are a few low, wet areas mainly associated with improperly graded drainage swales. There are no specimen trees located within the park property.

A geotechnical study was recently completed which included nine soil borings and five infiltration tests. The major finding of the geotechnical study was the near absence of topsoil, which measured from 0 inches to 1.5 inches. Soil chemistry was tested, with soil pH varying from 5.39 to 7.98. As part of site development as a park, additional topsoil will need to be imported or existing topsoil amended with additional organic material and soil chemistry adjusted. The absence of topsoil surely helps to explain why so little of the originally planted afforestation and landscape plantings are present on the site today.

Seneca Crossing Local Park will have excellent vehicular access provided by a network of existing and planned public roads. The park is located off Maryland Route 27 (Ridge Road), 1.5 miles northeast of I-270, in the southeast corner of the intersection of Ridge Road and Brink Road, a major lighted intersection. The section of Brink Road which fronts the park was improved and widened during recent years, and is currently a divided road with curb and gutter, storm drains, and an extra lane of pavement. Ingress/egress to the park will be provided by two entrances off Brink Road and one entrance from Seneca Crossing Drive. The Seneca Park

Drive entrance will provide access to facilities in the western portion of the park and will be located south of an existing curb cut and paved pull-off. While the western park boundary is significantly lower than adjacent roads, the main park frontage with Brink Road is relatively even with roadway elevations. The future extension of Mid-County Highway (Maryland Route 83) is planned contiguous with the eastern boundary of the park.

Pedestrian access to the park is provided by existing sidewalks along alternating sides of Brink Road, on both sides of Ridge Road (toward Milestone), Seneca Crossing Drive, and the neighborhood roads of the Cedar Valley development. Seneca Crossing Park trails and connections will have a direct relationship to master planned bikeways and other existing and proposed paths and sidewalks in the area. It is noted however, that in response to neighbors concerns over park visitors parking on Seneca Forest Circle, no pedestrian access is shown from Seneca Park Circle to the proposed facilities within the park.

PROGRAM OF REQUIREMENTS

M-NCPPC staff defined a preliminary program of requirements (POR) for consideration in the planning and design of Seneca Crossing Local Park based on typical local park facilities, area needs, nearby facilities, and site character. The defined program was consistent with the approved site plan for the park, and attempted not to duplicate facilities available at the nearby Ridge Road Recreational Park. These project elements were later refined during the facility planning process in the process of developing a preferred plan. The project team – consultants and staff – jointly developed the following Program of Requirements following early public input and a review of applicable planning guidelines and standards. It was summarized as part of the February 2011 public presentation.

The complete POR is listed below, including some items considered in alternatives presented to the public, but later eliminated from the final preferred scheme.

- *Recreational ballfields* (soccer, softball, cricket) with adjacent spectator space and layout flexibility for potential field rotation
- *Hard surfaced courts* and/or facilities such as a *small skate park*
- *Unique playground areas* for tots and school-aged children
- *Sledding hill* opportunity
- *Pedestrian circulation and loop paths* that are safe, inviting, accessible (hard-surface), and may include *heart-smart distance markers and exercise stations*
- *Focal point areas for the community*, for gatherings and events, that may include place-making elements such as hardscape features and unique landmark structures
- *Community Garden* co-op area
- *Informal open space* areas for a variety of lawn games and activities
- *Small dog-park area* located near Brink Road frontage
- *Picnic areas and shelters*
- *A welcoming arrival setting* that is attractive, visible, and well defined
- *Landscaped spaces* that enhance views, improve the prominent park frontage, provide a pleasing sequential experience, complement park uses, create year-round interest, minimize maintenance, include deer resistant material, and are designed sustainably
- *Vehicular parking, access, and circulation* in the park that addresses functions of emergency access, maintenance/service access (ten feet minimum width), park use and associated stacking distances

- *Park trails and connection(s)* that are directly related to planned regional bikeways, including a Class I bikeway within parkland along Brink Road
- *Pedestrian and vehicular connections* to the surrounding area that are safe, attractive, and logical, with consideration for site constraints, roadway sight distances, proximity to intersections, proximity to homes, locations of nearby streets and paths, and layout of the surrounding neighborhood and adjacent properties
- *Possible improvements within road rights-of-way* for pedestrian crossing(s), traffic calming, and vehicular ingress/egress that is visible, accessible, safe and attractive
- *Details and materials* that are compatible with surroundings and also incorporate 'green' methods and technologies such as using recycled materials, pervious pavements, rain-gardens, and sustainable plants
- *Overlook possibilities and consideration of views*
- *Site Grading* that balances earthwork on-site and incorporates terracing
- *Storm water management/bio-retention measures* with potential for interpretive features and/or signage, and incorporating low impact development principles such as above-ground storm water flow through buffers or rain gardens
- *High quality site furnishings* such as benches, trash receptacles, kiosks, porta-johns, water fountains, bike racks, signage, etc.
- *Interior visibility* for surveillance, and park design in accordance with Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles

FACILITY PLAN DESIGN STUDY

Community Outreach

The facility planning process for Seneca Crossing Local Park included two very well attended community work sessions and a significant volume of follow-up comments and messages. The work sessions were held to gather community input which was then used to develop a Program of Requirements (POR), four conceptual plans and a final preferred alternative as the Facility Plan.

The first work session was held on February 18, 2010 at the Upcounty Government Center. Staff introduced the project and described the facility planning process. The consultant team then presented existing site features and conditions through photographs, analysis diagrams, and summaries of the completed NRI-FSD and other research.

Participants were subsequently divided into five small brainstorming groups. The groups were asked to identify what they would like to see included in the park. Participants were encouraged to suggest as many ideas as they wished. A large group of cricket advocates was present at the meeting and expressed an ardent desire for cricket facilities in the park. Each group then voted for their top five ideas and shared them with the larger group. Staff and the design team answered audience questions and recorded additional feedback. At the conclusion of the meeting, staff distributed comment forms and provided contact information so the public could continue to provide input and comments.

The most popular ideas (in no particular order) included cricket, discourage parking in the adjacent neighborhood, tennis, landscape buffer to adjoining residences, skatepark, bike paths and trails, football and rugby fields, adequate onsite parking, batting cages, indoor basketball, restrooms, picnic facilities, and covered seating. The community expressed serious concerns with existing neighborhood cut-through traffic, speeding, and over-parked neighborhood streets.

They also asked questions regarding the projected timing of park construction. A complete record of the meeting minutes is included in the Appendix of the facility plan report. Following the meeting, staff received comments via telephone calls, emails and completed comment forms. Staff consolidated these with comments received prior to the meeting – some interested parties were unable to attend and provided comments beforehand. Additional suggested facilities included a dog park, swimming pool and volleyball. Two petitions supporting cricket, with over 125 signatures were received.

In addition, staff received copies of a survey, prepared anonymously, which was distributed to nearby residents. Of the 59 completed surveys received, 9 were submitted without names or addresses and were not included in the tabulation. Of the remaining, 33 were from Seneca Forest Circle, 8 from Virginia Pine Terrace, 6 from Settler's Circle, two from Seneca Crossing Drive, and one from Brink Road. Unfortunately, the survey did not fully or accurately represent all possibilities available to the community, and presented some potential program elements unfavorably. It is also noted that the survey was seemingly distributed to the area immediately around the park and did not include the complete service area. Nevertheless the survey does provide additional insight into the preferences of those living around the park indicating that the majority of the respondents do not support cricket, soccer or football, recreational sports league play, basketball, or restrooms. Support was shown for nature, walking and bike trails, reforestation plantings, community gardens, and for leaving the land area undeveloped. For a complete summary of survey results, see Appendix in the facility plan report.

On February 9, 2011, a second community meeting attended by over 70 community members, was held at the Up-County Government Center. At the meeting, staff and the consultants summarized the planning process to date, and then introduced four concepts which were developed based on community input.

Alternative Plans Considered

Each option proposed different ideas for the play area, general site layout and supporting elements. The following table summarizes features included in the alternatives.

Option One	Option Two	Option Three	Option Four
Unprogrammed, open space in the shape of a circular lawn on the west side of site.	Unprogrammed, open space in the shape of a circular lawn on the west side of site.	Smaller unprogrammed, open space in the shape of a circular lawn on the west side of site.	Unprogrammed, open space in the shape of a circular lawn on the west side of site.
Playground on west side of site with 15 space parking lot	Slightly reduced play area on west side of park with 20 space parking lot	Slightly expanded playground with 16 space parking lot.	Large Multi-Age playground on west side of site and 15 space parking lot.
Picnic shelter on west side	Larger picnic shelters on west side	Two shelters on west side	Small gazebo on west side.
	Community garden area on west side of parking with access to water	Two (2) Tennis Courts	
10,000 sf Skate Park on east side of site	13,000 sf Skate Park on east side of site	8,000 sf Skate Park on east side of site	Elliptical open lawn space. No skate park.
330' x 210' multi-purpose rectangular field on east side	Two (2) 320' x 210' multi-purpose rectangular fields with optimal orientation on east side.	320' x 210' multi-purpose rectangular field on east side	330' x 210' multi-purpose rectangular field on east side
Practice/Youth Cricket Field 450' x 300' on east side	Unprogrammed, open space with playground and large gazebo on east side of site.	360' x 220' multi-purpose rectangular field on east side	Practice/Youth Cricket Field 450' x 300' on east side
143 parking spaces on east side	160 parking spaces on east side	142 parking spaces on east side	139 parking spaces on east side
Two (2) Picnic shelters on east side	Room for large picnic pavilion and/or restroom facilities on east side.	Two (2) Picnic shelters on east side and small playground	Two (2) Picnic shelters on east side
Reforestation buffers on both sides of park	Reforestation buffers on both sides of park	Reforestation buffers on both sides of park	Reforestation buffers on both sides of park
Paved paths	Paved paths with fitness stations	Paved paths with boardwalk	Paved paths with fitness stations.

Following the presentation, the audience was given the opportunity to comment and ask questions, and attendees were encouraged to review each of the four schemes in more detail. There was an apparent overall preference for Option 4, especially the loop trail that was configured not to cross driveway entrances and the elliptical open space that provided an additional buffer between homes and the parking area. Most favored the location of the parking closest to Brink Road, however Option 4 did not include a skate facility. There was support for a

skate facility and a preference that it be located near Brink Road and away from neighboring residences, similar to the configurations shown in Options 1-3. The surrounding community did not support the trail connection from the park to the neighborhood shown in Option 3 and was concerned that this would encourage people to park on neighborhood roads. Neighbors supported the forested buffer and asked whether it could be planted before the park is constructed to establish a mature landscape screen prior to construction. Summaries of input received are included in the Appendix of the facility plan report.

Following the meeting, copies of each of the Options were posted on the project website and comments were solicited. All comments were reviewed and considered in development of the preferred scheme. At the second meeting, a group of volleyball enthusiasts were present, and expressed a strong interest and preference for the provision of a multi-court volleyball arrangement. That request was analyzed for feasibility by staff and has been included in the recommended plan.

The Recommended Plan



Option Four was refined, incorporating a number of features from the other options, many of the comments received from the community, and input from applicable review agencies, into a Recommended Facility Plan. Unfortunately it was determined following careful analysis that there is not sufficient area to provide a functional cricket pitch within the park. The recommended plan now includes the following features:

West Side of the Park

- Four sand volleyball courts in a multi-court arrangement.
- A picnic shelter/shade structure. This structure will function as a small gathering spot as well as provide a place for users to sit out of the sun. The structure is envisioned as a

custom structure that will be a placemaking feature for this portion of the park as well as a unifying element with the structures on the east side of the park. Picnic tables either in a lawn area or on a small patio area will also be provided.

- An area of unprogrammed open space adjacent to the volley ball courts. This area will function as an informal play area and could potentially become an area for community gardens.
- A drinking fountain with a dog bowl. This will also include a hose bib and could also be used as a water source for future community gardens.
- A parking lot with approximately 40 spaces. This parking lot is designed with a vehicular turnaround and will ensure that adequate parking exists for visitors to this portion of the park. It will include accessible parking spaces, internal green planting islands, and will be attractively screened from Seneca Crossing Drive.
- A system of sidewalks and paths. These will provide access between the public sidewalk along Seneca Crossing Drive and the park facilities, as well as link both sides of the park. The loop path will also function as an exercise path.
- A landscape buffer. The buffer will be provided between the adjacent single-family homes and the active recreation areas as well as along Ridge Road
- Upgraded furnishings and amenities to include benches, bicycle racks, trash receptacles, and an information kiosk.

East Side of the Park

- A large, (320' x 210') multi-use rectangular field with ample perimeter space for spectators and players. The field will be partially enclosed with an attractive fence to contain errant balls. The field is planned to be irrigated.
- A large, (340' x 240') multi-use rectangular field with ample perimeter space for spectators and players. This field will also be partially enclosed with an attractive fence to contain errant balls. The field is planned to be irrigated.
- An ellipse, surrounded by a specially paved walkway, with a central green open play area for unprogrammed, informal play. The ellipse is located in the center of the site between the two rectangular fields. A playground is located on each end of the ellipse. This arrangement separates the younger tots from the older children, but allows them to be close enough together to facilitate adult supervision.
- A custom designed pergola structure with a specially paved walkway. The pergola will provide an important focal point and an iconic place-making feature in the park. This structure could also include plantings and seating.
- A parking lot with approximately 144 parking spaces. This parking lot has been sized to accommodate the overlap that occurs between games and will provide adequate visitor parking. The parking lot is accessed by two entrances off Brink Road. Each entrance has one inbound and two outbound lanes.
- An extensive system of trails and paths. The trail system connects the neighborhood to the park and will provide barrier-free access to park facilities. A loop trail within the park with exercise equipment will provide excellent pedestrian access as well as a fitness opportunity. This trail could become a "heart smart" trail. A multi-use trail extends across the property frontage along Brink Road, with an access trail linking the multi-use trail with the center of the park. Walkways also parallel the drive entrances. Pedestrians entering from the Cedar

Valley neighborhood may enter from a trail spur that connects to Seneca Crossing Drive and dips down to the loop trail system. All trails are graded to be fully accessible.

- Two (2) custom designed picnic pavilions. The pavilions will provide opportunities for picnicking, resting and community gatherings in proximity to the active recreational facilities. These structures will be designed using the same design vocabulary as the pergola and gazebo/shelter on the west side of the park functioning as unifying, placemaking elements.
- A skate spot. The skate spot is provided near the park entrance off Brink Road. The location was chosen for visibility and for its separation from other park facilities.
- A 150-foot wide, afforestation area. The buffer (which includes an existing sand filter), will be planted and provide a greenbelt adjacent to the residential lots in the Cedar Valley community.
- A number of micro bioretention facilities will satisfy stormwater management requirements. Reconfiguring the existing unattractive rip rapped drainage swale to appear as a dry stream bed will also be explored during the design phase.
- Extensive landscape planting with an emphasis on native vegetation. Shade trees will line all trails and sidewalks. Trees and shrubs will shade and screen the parking lot. Masses and groves of trees will define and create spaces. Planting will be used to frame and screen views.
- Upgraded furnishings and amenities. These will include benches, bicycle racks, trash receptacles, a drinking fountain, information kiosks, and potentially public art.

Additional Coordination and Regulatory Approvals

Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MC-DOT), Division of Traffic Engineering and Operations

On August 19, 2010, the Consultant submitted a Site Distance Evaluation to the Division of Traffic Engineering and Operations, Montgomery County Department of Transportation. The application sought concurrence that the two existing curb cuts on Brink Road and the existing single curb cut on Seneca Crossing Drive were adequate to serve the intended park use. Based on their review, the use of either or both of the Brink Road entrances was approved. MC-DOT staff requested that the distance from the entrance to the western portion of the park site on Seneca Crossing Drive be moved approximately 100 feet south of the current location to provide better site distance and separation from the Brink Road intersection. The site distance evaluation was modified and a revised application submitted October 14, 2010, which was subsequently approved. Because Brink Road had been constructed with two travel lanes in front of the park plus left turn lanes for the cemetery on the opposite side of the road, additional frontage improvements were not deemed necessary for the park. The approved Sight Distance Evaluations are included in the Appendix of the facility plan report.

Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services

The stormwater management concept plan for the park was submitted to the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (DPS), on September 1, 2011 (File #241000). At the time of this writing, the plan is under review and it is unlikely that the plan review will be completed prior to the Planning Board hearing. The recommendation for approval of the facility plan is conditioned upon approval of the stormwater management plan by the Department of Permitting Services.

The stormwater management facilities have been designed to fully comply with Environmental Site Design standards. The best management practices include nine micro bioretention facilities, two grass swales, and four areas of non-rooftop disconnect. Additionally, the project will improve water quality by promoting infiltration through the enhancement of the site's topsoil and reforestation of the steep slopes that are currently bare of vegetation. Staff met with Rick Brush and Tom Weadon of DEP on September 14, 2011.

M-NCPPC Department of Planning

A Natural Resources Inventory/Forest Stand Delineation (NRI/FSD) was approved for the park on March 16, 2010 (File #420101010.) A preliminary forest conservation plan was submitted on July 27, 2011. At the time of this writing, the preliminary forest conservation plan is under review. It is anticipated that a recommendation will be presented to the Montgomery County Planning Board by Department of Planning staff with the park facility plan.

M-NCPPC Area 3 Transportation Planning

A Traffic Analysis was completed for Seneca Crossing Local Park. A finding was made that the proposed park satisfies the Local Area Transportation Review (LATR) test and will have no adverse effect on nearby roadway conditions or pedestrian facilities with the proposed roadway improvements. See memo in Appendix of facility plan report.



COSTS

Construction Costs

A summary of construction costs is outlined in the table below. A detailed cost estimate is included in the Appendix of the facility plan report.

Item	Subtotal
Site Preparation and Demolition	\$340,000
Sediment and Erosion Control	\$273,600
Earthwork	\$1,101,600
Stormwater Management	\$414,400
Utilities (water, electric service)	\$421,700
Vehicular Pavement	\$349,200
Pedestrian Hardscape (paving, walls)	\$409,300
Recreation Facilities (playground, fields, volleyball, fitness equipment, skate spot, signage, furnishings)	\$1,004,100
Structures (trellis, picnic shelters, pavilions)	\$585,500
Landscaping (includes 2 years maintenance for plant establishment)	\$810,400
As Built Drawings	\$35,000
Construction Subtotal	\$5,744,800
Construction Contingency (30% of Construction Subtotal)	\$1,723,400
Construction Total (Subtotal plus Contingency)	\$7,468,200
Design Contract with Contingency (10% of Construction Total)	\$746,800
Staff Chargebacks for Design (20% of Design Contract)	\$149,400
Construction Management & Inspections (3% of Construction Total)	\$224,000
TOTAL PROJECT COST	\$8,588,400

Operating Budget Impact

The operating budget impact was not completed at the time of this report and will be presented to the Montgomery County Planning Board at the meeting on October 6, 2011.

CONCLUSION

Staff recommends approval of the Facility Plan and associated cost estimate. The proposed plan was developed after a careful analysis of the site's features, the recreational and open space needs for this area of the county, and after listening to the community's suggestions and concerns. The plan takes into account safety, accessibility, maintenance, and aesthetics. When constructed, this park will meet the needs of the park users and will be an important community gathering place and recreational amenity for the residents of northern Montgomery County.

Attachments

- Attachment A: Facility Plan Report
- Attachment B: Community Correspondence