



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

**MCPB Item No. 12**

**Date:** June 6, 2013

**MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** May 30, 2013

**TO:** Montgomery County Planning Board

**VIA:** Mary R. Bradford, Director of Parks *MRB*  
Michael F. Riley, Deputy Director *MR*  
Mitra Pedoeem, Chief, Park Development Division *(RMP) for MP.*  
Michael Ma, Construction Services Chief, Park Development Division *MM*

**FROM:** Eileen Emmet, Architect, Park Development Division 301-495-2550 *EE*

**SUBJECT:** Facility Plan for Josiah Henson Park

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Approve the Recommended Facility Plan, including the cost estimate.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

**Introduction**

The purpose of the project is to provide a facility plan and cost estimate to rehabilitate the existing Josiah Henson Park. The project work includes converting the historic Riley/Bolten House to a public museum; constructing a new visitor orientation building, bus-drop off area and small parking lot; and new landscape sitework that will make the park more accessible for visitors. The museum's exhibit storyline will focus on the first-person narrative of Josiah Henson, a former slave who escaped from the Riley Plantation to freedom in Canada and whose autobiographical life story inspired Harriet Beecher Stowe to write her world-famous novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

This project seeks to make the house and park a destination for historic education and international tourism and tie the story of slavery to the Montgomery County Public School's 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade Social Studies curriculum. The historic house will not be a traditional house museum with furnished rooms, but a more experiential and interactive place, with exhibits not only in the house but outside along the path and grounds. Docent tours will still be provided.

*Note: There are several facility plan documents that are attached to this memo. In that case, this memo acts as the link to these facility plan documents: A) Architectural/Engineering Facility Plan Report, B) Part 1: Architectural/Engineering Facility Plan Drawings and Part 2: Visitor Center Alternate Drawings, C) Interpretive Program/Exhibit Design Facility Plan Report, and D) Parks Supplemental Information.*

## Background

The 1.5 acre park is located at 11420 Old Georgetown Road in North Bethesda, Maryland just south of Tilden Lane. The park is bounded by Aish D.C. a Jewish Family Learning Center to the north, single family residential development in the Luxmanor neighborhood on the south and west, and townhouse development at Old Georgetown Village on the east. The park is a small portion of the original Riley plantation where Josiah Henson lived and worked as a slave from 1795 to 1830.

The park is comprised of two parcels of land. The first parcel, at 11420 Old Georgetown Road, was acquired in January 2006. It consists of the historic "Riley/Bolten House" (an 1800-1815 wood frame, two-story house) and the log kitchen (a one-story wing with log walls dating to 1850-51), both remodeled to varying degree in 1936 by architect Lorenzo Winslow. Its historic period-of-significance is 1800-1939. The parcel has a detached one-car garage from the 1970s and landscaping and mature trees that primarily date to the second half of the 20th century. The parcel with the historic house is listed on the National Register of Historic Places for its historic significance. The second parcel at 11410 Old Georgetown Road was purchased in July 2009. Although once part of the original plantation, the former Rozier property is not historically significant; a house and detached garage from post-World War II were demolished by Parks in June 2011 to make room for the approved master plan park.



Figure 1: Josiah Henson Park

Figure 2: Vicinity Map

## Project Funding and Timing

The facility planning study was funded with \$538,000 from the Capital Improvements Program in the Restoration of Historic Structures PDF, \$100,000 from a Save America's Treasure grant, and \$50,000 from a State of Maryland Bond Bill. Facility planning represents thirty-percent complete construction documents, including the proposed design, cost estimate and determination of regulatory feasibility. LSC Architects was hired in 2011 to prepare the facility plan for architecture, engineering and site design. Experience Design, Inc. was hired under a separate contract to prepare the interpretive plan and exhibit design. If approved, the project will be proposed for design and construction in the Fiscal Year 2015-2020 Capital Improvement Program (CIP). The schedule to complete this work will be determined during review of the CIP.

## **MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Montgomery County Master Plan for Historic Preservation, 1979**

The 1979 Master Plan for Historic Preservation and the Locational Atlas and Index of Historic Sites (M-NCPHC, 1976) identified the property as Resource #30/6, "Uncle Tom's Cabin." The Planning Board approved the name change from "Uncle Tom's Cabin" to Josiah Henson Special Park in the December 2010 park master plan. Properties that are designated are protected under the Historic Preservation Ordinance, Chapter 24-A of the Montgomery County Code as administered by the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC). The HPC also holds a design covenant on the property as a result of one of the Save America's Treasures grant conditions.

### **2012 Park Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan, July 2012**

The 2012 PROS Plan identifies the following recommendations and future priorities for cultural resources on Page 101:

*The Department of Parks' Cultural Resources Program will continue to make historical, archaeological, and landscape properties useful to residents and visitors now and in the future in the following ways:*

*Continue to tell the county's story through its best 8-10 public interpretive sites, including, but not limited to: Woodlawn Manor and the Underground Railroad Experience Trail, Oakley Cabin, Josiah Henson Special Park, the Agricultural History Farm Park, Kingsley School, and Blockhouse Point.*

On Page 98, it identifies this specific project as follows:

*Other future programs for the public include a museum dedicated to the subject of slavery and the life of Josiah Henson at the Josiah Henson Special Park and a Visitors Center at Woodlawn Barn dedicated to the themes of the Quakers, the Underground Railroad, and the Free Black populations in the County.*

### **Approved and Adopted White Flint Sector Plan, April 2010**

The following is stated on page 60 of the plan:

*The redesign of Wall Local Park should incorporate the sizable trees and include a pedestrian connection to the Josiah Henson/Uncle Tom's Cabin site, a cultural site of international significance, about one quarter-mile south on Old Georgetown Road and one half-mile from the Metro Station.*

### **From Artifact to Attraction: A Strategic Plan for Cultural Resources in Parks, Jan. 2006**

(an internal staff-level document)

The 2006 Strategic Plan for Cultural Resources in Parks inventoried historic buildings and site as well as requirements for stewardship and long-term goals for public interpretation. The plan included a "Top 20 Priority Project" list. On page 47, the following goal is identified for future planned work:

*Restore/rehabilitate the house in order to celebrate the life and accomplishments of Josiah Henson in the form of a museum or educational center.*

### **Josiah Henson Special Park Master Plan, December 2010**

On Page 11, the plan recommendation was stated as:

*A public museum that ...*

- celebrates the challenging and inspiring life of Reverend Josiah Henson, the man who inspired the fictional character “Uncle Tom;”
- educates visitors about the enslavement of African Americans in Maryland; and
- promotes a greater appreciation of history in Montgomery County.

On Pages 12-16 the plan identified major the following interpretive themes and strategies to guide programming for the park: Early Life of Enslaved People, Work & Living Conditions, Freedom / Emancipation, Isaac Riley Plantation, and Myth, History, Literature, & Stereotypes. The following goals were identified for the project based on public input:

- Goal #1: Interpret Reverend Josiah Henson’s life and the history of slavery in Montgomery County**
- Goal #2: Retain the integrity of the historic architecture and landscape**
- Goal #3: Create a safe, accessible site**
- Goal #4: Develop advocacy and fundraising strategies to ensure the viability of the site**

The Master Plan developed three options for development and future interpretive programming that met the vision and goals for the park, but differed based on the cost and amenities. The approved plan was the Moderate Development Option, ranging from \$3 to 5 million for final design and construction. The plan included the following amenities: off-site parking at Wall Local Park; wayside interpretive signage from Wall Park to the Josiah Henson Park; view of the Log Kitchen from Old Georgetown Road; trees and low shrubs in the Old Georgetown median; vehicular ingress/egress from Old Georgetown Road, one-way in and one-way out driveway to access a bus-drop off area and five (5) vehicle gravel parking lot; landscape screening to and from surrounding 20<sup>th</sup> century development; historic house and log kitchen with museum-quality exhibits; outdoor kitchen garden exhibit; and new visitor orientation space on the historic parcel (inside a 326 sf existing non-historic garage) or an alternative to build a new 1,250 sf building at the location of the former non-historic Rozier property garage.



**Figure 3: Josiah Henson Park - 2010 Approved and Adopted Master Plan**

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

### Demographics and Area Facilities

Surrounding suburban, land-use patterns do not reflect the historic early 19<sup>th</sup> century period the house museum will interpret. The land-use to the south and west of the park is single-family residential, R-200 zone, with the exception of Aish, D.C., a Jewish Learning Center with a Montessori school on the abutting property to the north. Townhouse developments are located to the east across Old Georgetown Road. Wall Local Park and the Kennedy Shriver Aquatic Center at 5900 Executive Boulevard share a surface parking lot across the intersection of Old Georgetown Road, Tilden and Nicholson Lanes. Future development north of Wall Park will incorporate a structured parking lot where the Henson, Wall, and Aquatic Center parking will be relocated.

Commercial development is within a half-mile to the east surrounding the White Flint Metro station on MD-355 (Rockville Pike) and approximately one mile north and two miles south on Old Georgetown Road. Within one-half mile are a medical center, a bank, two restaurants, a grocery store, two fitness centers, and two cleaners. Within one-half mile there are several schools and places of worship: Luxmanor Elementary School, Tilden Middle School, Montessori School Manor, Trinity Lutheran and Benamou Jacob.

### Property Conditions

The park has numerous site constraints including setbacks, steep slopes, archaeological areas, critical root zones, and existing structures. The historic parcel's ground elevation is as much as ten feet lower than Old Georgetown Road due to the raising of Old Georgetown Road over time. The house cannot be seen from passing vehicles because of the steep grade change but also because vegetation blocks the view. A narrow five foot wide sidewalk along the noisy, busy road includes a few opportunities for pedestrians to see the house. The existing driveway has poor visibility for ingress and egress and requires a hair-pin turn to enter the site. From there, cars must proceed down a long driveway that passes the front of the house and ends at a turn-around adjacent to the log kitchen and non-historic garage.

The non-historic former Rozier parcel is approximately level with Old Georgetown Road and the driveway is perpendicular to the road. The previous house's foundation walls and basement slab were removed to four-feet below grade and buried below rough grading.

There is extensive archaeological potential at the property, most documented on the historic parcel. An excavation led by Parks is ongoing. There are several important mature trees that need to be protected, many which likely date to the period-of-significance. If underground utility installations cannot avoid root zones, directional boring will be required.



**Figure 4: Riley/Bolten Historic House w/attached Log Kitchen**

## PROGRAM OF REQUIREMENTS

M-NCPPC staff defined a preliminary program of requirements for consideration in the design of the Josiah Henson Park based on recommendations in a 2008 Historic Structures Report, the 2010 park master plan, and detailed programmatic recommendations of the staff and consultant teams during the facility plan process. Staff and consultants also visited and researched analogous facilities to understand physical conditions and interpretive programs at other regional facilities: Sotterley Plantation in southern Maryland and the Banneker Douglas Museum in Annapolis. Two staff visited the Henson Site in Ontario, Canada. Other staff visited Historic London Town and Gardens in Edgewater and the Hampton National Historic Site in Baltimore.

The final program of requirements is consistent with a historic house museum for a small urban cultural park on a busy regional road adjacent to a subdivision of private residential homes. Early programmatic elements were refined during the facility planning process as the consultants proposed and the staff team analyzed different options within the existing budget and site constraints.

### Physical Features

#### Site Design:

- Off-site wayside interpretive signage from Wall Local Park to the site
- Vehicle and bus drop off (two buses stacked at curb) on Old Georgetown Road
- On-site parking (5 spaces – 2 ADA, 1 staff, 1 visitor, 1 staff/visitor), lighting
- ADA-compliant circulation throughout buildings and grounds
- Reinforced turf for maintenance vehicle access
- Outdoor gathering areas for groups
- Outdoor museum exhibits with interpretive graphic rails (Portal, Archaeology Excavation Area, Farming exhibit, former Meat house exhibit, Archaeology Activity Area, Kitchen Garden, Historic House)
- Minimal exterior lighting for after-hours use by staff from entry plaza to historic house
- Preservation and protection of significant trees
- Micro-bioretenement facilities (4-5)
- Sidewalk widening on Old Georgetown Road from 5 feet to 7.5 feet along property frontage
- Water and Sewer connections in Old Georgetown Road and Tilden Lane

#### Visitor Orientation Building:

- Ticket Desk, “What’s Here” exhibit, Introductory Film
- Public Restrooms (2 stalls men, 2 stalls women), Drinking Fountain
- Mechanical, electrical, plumbing, electrical and lighting, telecommunications, fire suppression and alarm systems, intrusion detection, [Fire Department Connection \(FDC\)](#)

#### Historic House:

- First Floor: Primary interpretive program exhibits in south-wing, living room, study, dining room, west-wing and minimal, select artifacts only
- Second Floor: Staff office and Research Library (by appointment only)
- New zoned mechanical system
- New plumbing, fire suppression and alarm systems, new intrusion detection system, new telecommunications system
- Utilize existing sewer and electrical service
- Fire Department Connection (FDC), new water service, new electrical wiring and lighting

Log Kitchen:

- Living history interpretive program space dedicated to antebellum enslaved space
- Archaeology interpretation of former kitchens, below visitor floor
- New mechanical system, electrical, and lighting
- Fire suppression and alarm system, intrusion detection

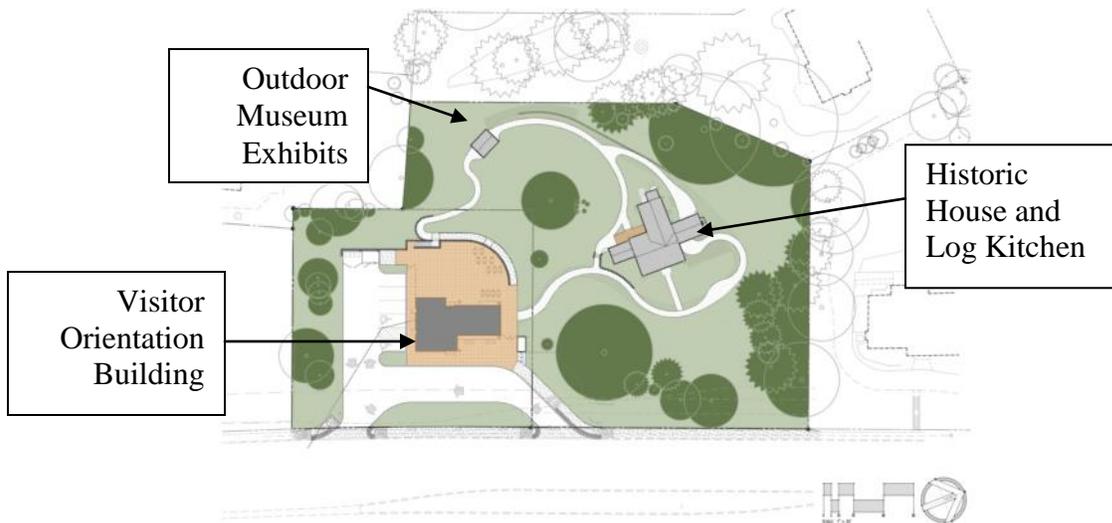
**Interpretive Program/Exhibit Themes**

The life of Josiah Henson’s slave experience in Montgomery County as expressed in major and minor themes, all radiating from Henson’s own words in his autobiographies:

- **Isaac Riley Plantation**  
Archaeology, Maryland Slaving Family, History of Plantation Architecture & Landscape
- **Early Life of Enslaved People**  
Childhood, Family, Spirituality
- **Work & Living Conditions**  
Punishment & Resistance, Travel & Independence, Leadership & Responsibility
- **Freedom/Emancipation**  
Manumission, Self-Purchase, Free Black Communities, Escape (Underground Railroad)
- **Myth, Literature, History & Stereotypes**  
Slave Narratives, Harriet Beecher Stowe

**RECOMMENDED PLAN**

The recommended facility plan includes converting the historic Riley/Bolten House to a public museum that celebrates the story of Josiah Henson’s life. The primary project work will construct a new visitor orientation building, a bus-drop off area and small parking lot, convert the existing historic house to a museum, and rehabilitate associated landscape sitework that will make the park more accessible for visitors. The narrative of Henson’s life will unfold in an orchestrated manner through way-finding exhibits, an exhibit and introductory film inside the new building, outdoor museum exhibits, and primary exhibits in the rehabilitated historic house and living-history in the log kitchen.



**Figure 5: Site Plan**

## Site Circulation/Visitor Circulation

Guests will be introduced to the Josiah Henson Park at the new building where they can use the restrooms, purchase a ticket at the admissions desk, peruse free brochures and sales items, and find interpretive graphics that will offer a sense of what the exhibit program is about. The visitor orientation room will have space to sit or stand to view a new introductory film created especially for this project.

As guests exit the building they move through outdoor plaza space to a meandering path that winds across what remains of the Riley plantation where Josiah Henson worked. To provide transition from indoors to outdoors, a “portal” (with dimensions like a slave quarter) offers a walkthrough experience which creates a place for visitors to connect emotionally and make the cognitive switch between the present day and the past before starting on the journey through the remainder of the park museum. A series of outdoor exhibit clusters will be set in the landscape to promote learning about plantation life; these exhibits will be shielded from neighbors with greenery.

Once visitors reach the historic Riley house, visitors step inside through a rear entrance to discover a variety of exhibits that will offer a powerful and lasting impression of Josiah Henson’s life. The rear entrance is purposeful to make the point of an enslaved person’s experience of the plantation’s “big house.” From large-scale interactive timelines to audio, Henson’s experience “comes to life” through narrated quotes from his autobiography and other exhibits..

Back outside, guests loop around the house and enter the rear door of a working log kitchen made of 1850’s logs installed after Henson’s time, but with at least three earlier earth floors that may indeed date to his time on the plantation. The original floors will be exposed through glass windows in the floor. Visitors will be able to explore archaeology exhibits, a recreated loft, and observe living history docent-led interpretation.

After exiting the log kitchen through its front door, visitors will be introduced to a kitchen garden, and two final outdoor interpretive panels, one focused on the history of the house and the other about the experience then Reverend Henson had when he returned to the house a free man in 1878.

## Sitework

Existing curb cuts from Old Georgetown Road will be consolidated into one entry. A new curb cut for exiting will be provided at the south end of the non-historic former Rozier parcel. The new driveway provides the bus drop-off and arrival plaza in front of a new visitor orientation building. The driveway connects to on-site parking. The drop-off area will be depressed approximately two feet below Old Georgetown Road to reduce ground plane transitions on the remainder of the site while still providing handicapped accessibility. Visitors enter the building or circulate around it to a courtyard on the west side of the building. From there the Henson story transitions to outdoor exhibits.

Visitors descend to the historic parcel via a ADA-compliant ramp with retaining wall, then to tar and chip paths that are provided to access outdoor exhibits. The location of the path was determined by site constraints mentioned previously. The tar and chip walking surface is a minimum of 4 feet wide with additional width for stabilized turf for maintenance, a maximum width of 12 feet wide. Much of the existing vegetation is not considered historic, is in poor condition and will be replaced; otherwise the property will be kept as lawn. Important trees will

be retained and screening between the non-historic parcel and the historic house will be reestablished. Site lines to neighboring residential homes will be screened wherever possible. Stormwater management will be provided throughout. New utilities for electric, water, sewer and telecommunications will be provided underground.

### Sidewalk

Two and one-half feet of limited sidewalk widening (from 5 feet to 7.5 feet) is proposed in front of the park frontage but may not be feasible. Additional widening from the park frontage to Tilden Lane will be explored in final design if the sidewalk widening at the park frontage is feasible. Widening is possible within the Old Georgetown Road right of way. Widening outside the right-of-way will require an easement from the adjoining property owner.

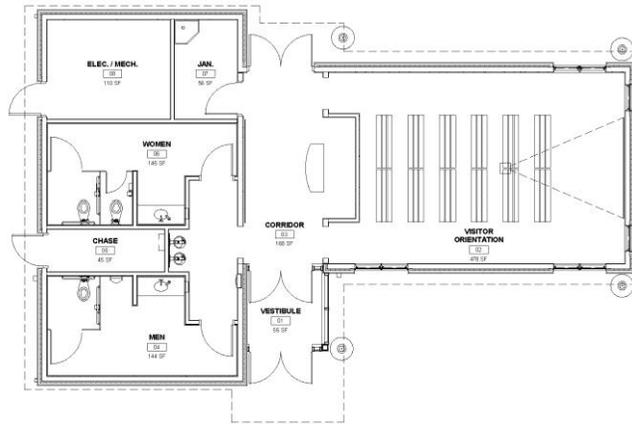
### Visitor Orientation Building

The visitor orientation building has been kept to the smallest possible footprint while addressing the moderate-option amenities and cost established by the 2010 Master Plan. Minimum interior space requirements have been provided to accommodate visitors at the same time addressing the need for sidewalks, circulation, and gathering spaces around the perimeter, plus views from the staff desk to the outdoor activity. The building has been strategically placed to create a buffer from Old Georgetown Road street noise as well as bring natural light and air into the building in an effort to reduce energy costs. The goal is to get visitors inside the building or behind the building quickly so verbal instructions to groups can be heard. At the visitor building groups will be split up into smaller groups, 15-17 persons in size, to circulate through the site and small rooms of the historic house.

The proposed one-story building is 1,522 sf. The staff desk, restrooms and drinking fountain are placed near the front door for visibility. The remainder of the orientation room has a “What’s Here” exhibit and space for visitors to hear and see a video program that introduces Josiah Henson’s story. Approximately 35 people can be seated on movable benches and chairs and an additional 15 can stand. The adjacent courtyard on the west side of the building is designed so groups can easily flow out of the building or reverse flow if needed in nice weather or when event programs are underway. This plan was developed after the community meeting. It consists of the same primary program elements as Option 1 and Option 2 that were presented, but without the multi-purpose theatre wing.



**Figure 6: Visitor Orientation Building Front Elevation**



**Figure 7: Visitor Orientation Building Plan**

### Outdoor Museum Exhibits

After leaving the visitor orientation building, visitors transition down a path to the first outdoor exhibit, the Portal, and an adjacent archaeology excavation area. These exhibits reset the tone and mood of the visitor experience and begin to establish Josiah Henson's outdoor life experience.



**Figure 8: The "Portal"**

### Historic House and Log Kitchen

The facility plan proposes to retain the exterior 1930's colonial revival character of the house with few changes or alterations as dictated by the historic preservation goals of the county, state, and federal regulators. Per code a maximum of 49 persons will be allowed in the building at one time.

The interior will have a minimal amount of rehabilitation work to convert the interior to a house museum with the accessible public exhibit spaces on the first floor and private staff offices and research library on the second floor in former bedrooms. The house will be provided with new handicapped-accessible ground-level entries into the south-wing and Log Kitchen.



Figure 9: Riley/Bolten House - Rear Elevation

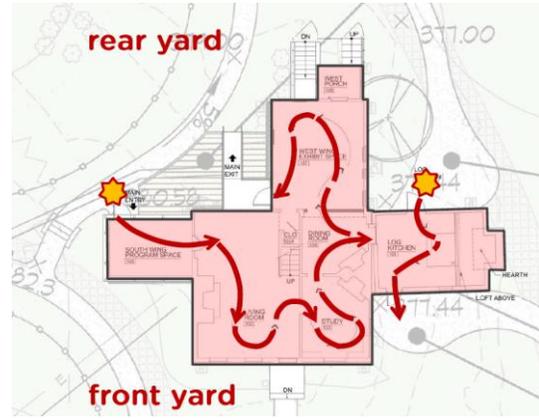


Figure 10: House Museum Internal Circulation

### South-wing Exhibit Space

Full-height glass infill within similar rhythm and massing of screen porch posts. The timeline will be the first exhibit visitor's encounter when entering the south-wing exhibit space (former porch).

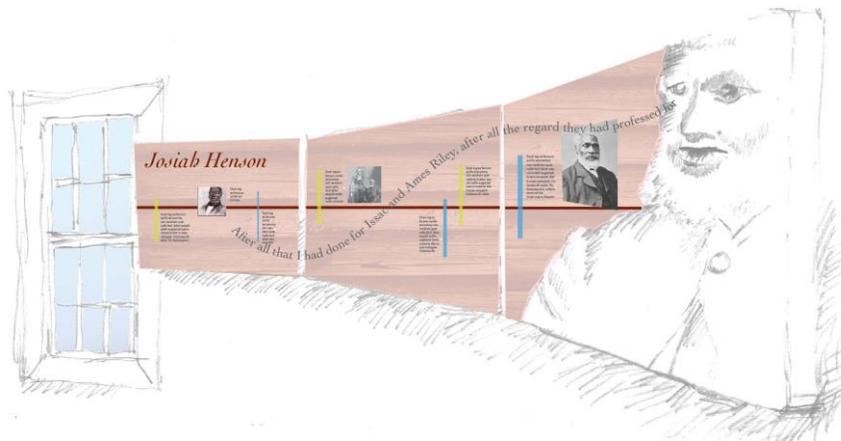
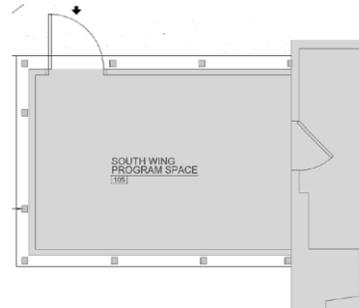
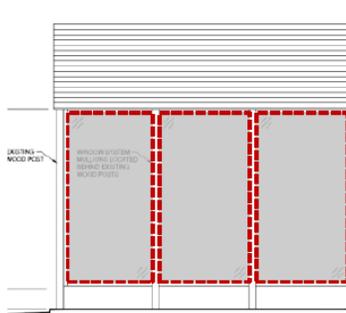


Figure 11: Timeline

## Log Kitchen

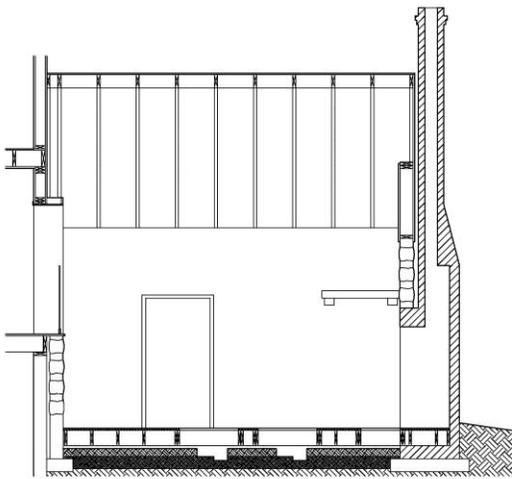
Re-establish original exterior doors, lower floor for visitors to walk on and look through glass viewports to original earth floors and archaeological artifacts, reconstruct partial loft if allowed by code.



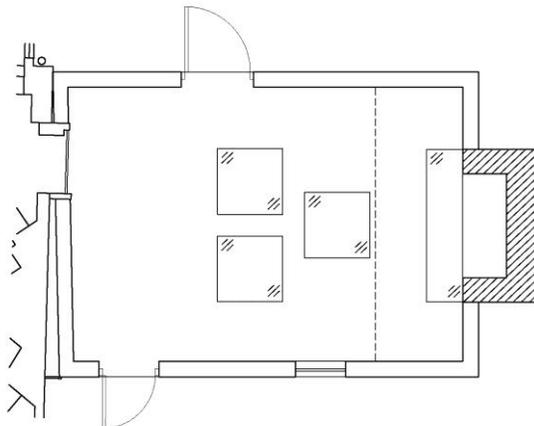
**Figure 12: Log Kitchen, Visitor Exit**



**Figure 13: Log Kitchen Visitor Entrance**



**Figure 14: Cross Section w/Loft**



**Figure 15: Log Kitchen w/viewports in floor**

## Facility Use and Operating Hours

The Josiah Henson Park grounds will be open without charge from dawn to dusk, 365 days per year. As the park will maintain a museum on site, operating dollars will need to be dedicated to a professional Facility Manager and Educational Program Interpreters. With that staffing, the museum buildings will be open regularly on weekends from February through November, for a typical program fee during four (4) annual special programs and by Group Tour requests, primarily 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade levels, between the hours of 10:00 am and 4:00 pm. Staff will use the facility year-round, 8:00 am to 6:00 pm. Researchers shall be accommodated by appointment only 11:00 am to 3:00 pm.

Special programs are free, publically-announced gatherings held several times a year, primarily on weekends. The number of visitors can range from 100-400 for Emancipation Day (1 day in November), Heritage Days (June), and Black History Month (February). A neighborhood-sponsored Art Show, previously held in the historic house one evening in the spring, could be held inside the visitor orientation building, as can other appropriate community events for a reasonable rental fee.

A 3-4 minute orientation film will be shown in the Visitor Orientation Building to introduce Josiah Henson, the Riley plantation history and an overview of slavery in Montgomery County. Parks will also continue to show the 30-minute educational video, "Father Henson – His Spirit Lives On" produced by Uncle Tom's Cabin Historic Site in Ontario, Canada. The majority of Josiah Henson's story will be incorporated into outdoor exhibits and primary exhibits inside the historic house museum where self-guided, staff or docent-led tours will occur.

Outdoor archaeology investigations and programs will continue and be incorporated into the visitor experience.

New property acquired through acquisition will enhance the historic environmental setting of the former plantation landscape in accordance with the adopted park master plan will enhance the historic environmental setting of the former plantation landscape and provide room for plantation crops, gathering/picnicking, and/or landscape-style amphitheater educational programming. Existing improvements on any newly acquired property are not required for the successful implementation of the master plan vision. The plan remains to locate the bus drop off and accessible space on Old Georgetown Road and for visitor parking to occur north of Wall Local Park.

## **ALTERNATIVE PLANS CONSIDERED**

The number of alternative plans studied was limited by the 2010 Master Plan, existing site constraints and historic preservation requirements.

Sidewalk Widening: Widening the sidewalk along the park's Old Georgetown Road frontage to better comply with the current Road Code standards was discussed during the Development Review Committee meeting but was found to be unfeasible because the required width (six feet of grass, plus six feet of new sidewalk) would destroy the steep historic edge of the property.

Landscape/Site Circulation: The circulation path for visitors was established by the location of the visitor arrival point and the desire to have visitors enter the house from the rear. The existing driveway offered an alternative circulation path, but was preferred to be converted to lawn in front of the house and stabilized for maintenance vehicles because other areas of the site had too many constraints. The only alternatives studied were slight variations of where to locate the path, the materials of the path (pervious concrete vs. tar & chip), the width of the path (eight feet vs. five feet) and where the placement of outside museum exhibits should be located.

Historic House: The appearance of the house is regulated by its National Register status and for the most part cannot be altered. The primary alternatives studied were options for the screen porch (south-wing) wall enclosure and where to enter, circulate and exit from the house and Log Kitchen. The project team presented options to the Historic Preservation Commission to fill in the screen porch (south-wing) with solid panels or a combination of materials and where to

place the rear entry door. The floor is required to be raised in all options to provide handicapped accessibility. The roof line and massing cannot be changed. The HPC strongly encouraged the use of glass infill so it is included in the project.

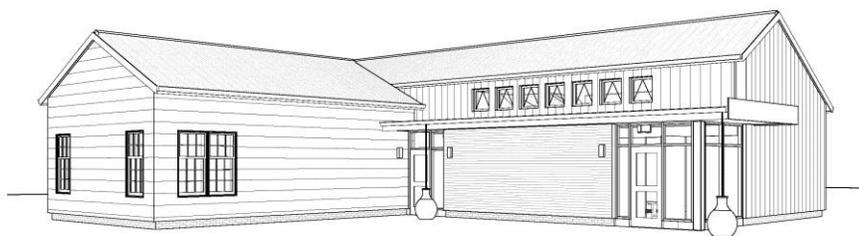
Log Kitchen: An option to both enter and exit the Log Kitchen from a single rear, west-facing door where one previously existed, was carried as an option for some time; it was rejected because it would impede the visitor flow. The presence of an existing historic door on the front, east-facing, facade made the possibility of entering and exiting from separate doors easy to select, and made sense as a place for the kitchen garden immediately outside the front door.

Master Plan Visitor Orientation Building Options: Two options for the location of the visitor orientation building were identified in the 2010 Park Master Plan. One option located the building on the historic parcel. This was rejected because the purpose of the building is to provide restrooms and an orientation video before visitors are introduced to the Henson story. Furthermore, construction of a new structure on the historic parcel would require extensive input from the historic preservation regulators and compete with views of the historic house. Last, the footprint of the existing Riley House garage was too small for public restrooms and a video viewing room combined.

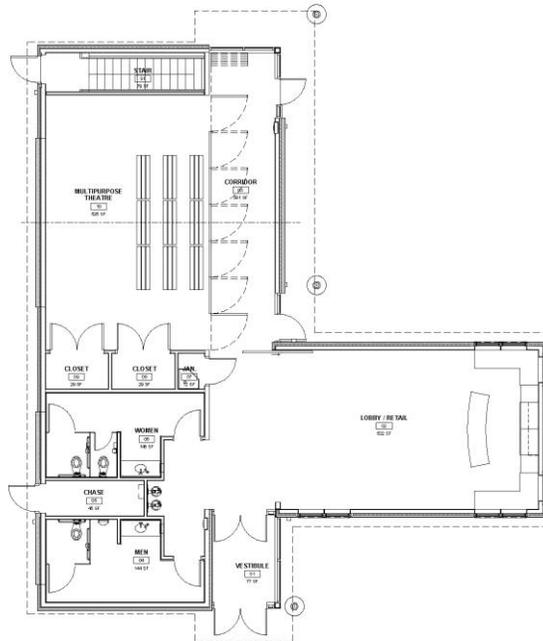
The second master plan option put the visitor orientation building on the former Rozier parcel near the bus-drop off. However, the location of parking and building square footage needed to be changed to improve the visitor arrival experience and site circulation sequencing.

Facility Plan Visitor Center Building Alternate: A programmatic need for a full “Visitor Center” building with restrooms, retail/lobby area, and a multipurpose theatre that would accommodate two bus-loads of school group visitors (100-120 persons arriving at one time), indicated a larger building footprint than the master plan envisioned. An alternative for a larger 2,390 sf one-story building included two wings and a 510 sf basement for mechanical equipment and storage was studied. It would accommodate 50-85 persons seated and 10-15 persons standing in the multipurpose theatre plus 28 persons standing and 10 persons seated in the retail/lobby.

This Visitor Center option, which staff and consultants explored thoroughly in the facility plan process, is what is truly need to make the museum function at its best as a public educational institution. The full visitor center footprint fits the site but based on the consultant’s cost estimate it exceeds the Master Plan-approved Moderate Option estimate. This larger footprint alternative will be explored during final design to see if the additional square footage can be incorporated into the overall budget. For more information about this option refer to the Architectural/Engineering Facility Plan Report and Drawings.



**Figure 16: Visitor Center (Alternate), Courtyard Elevation**



**Figure 17: Visitor Center Building (Alternate) w/Multipurpose Theatre**

## **PUBLIC OUTREACH**

The facility plan project benefitted from extensive public outreach during the previous 2010 Master Plan phase. The master plan focused on limiting the amount of new components in the park, residential buffers, and site access issues such as visitor parking and crossing Old Georgetown Road. The subsequent facility plan public outreach allowed the project team to concentrate its outreach on input described below. Attachment D, Parks Supplemental Information contains additional information about public outreach.

### **Interpretive Program/Exhibits Feedback**

- Heritage Days Event, June 2011  
The exhibit designer and staff were present to discuss interpretive theme concepts and answer questions. Contact information for Montgomery County Public Schools Social Studies Curriculum was established.
- Website Questionnaire, June 2011  
The exhibit designer prepared a series of general audience questions to find out what visitors and potential visitors already know about the subject matter expected to be interpreted at the park. Visitors filled in the questionnaire during Heritage Days and on ParkProjects.org over a 30-day period. The majority of the respondents expressed an interest in learning more about the Underground Railroad via the interpretation of Reverend Henson's life story. (Note: Henson returned as a "conductor" and this theme will be explored.)

- MCPS Teacher Survey, Fall 2011  
The exhibit designer prepared a survey for 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade Social Studies teachers within the Montgomery County public schools to discover what they expect to be interpreted at the site that will incorporate Maryland Common Core State Curriculum goals and objectives. The majority of responses addressed a strong desire to have the site to interpret the establishment of slavery and how it shaped life in Maryland, and provide a comparative analysis of the experiences of the enslaved and free Blacks.
- Focus Group #1, June 2011  
Staff and the exhibit designer conducted a focus group comprised of members of local historical organizations, current Henson and archaeology volunteers, and local and regional historians. Comments from the group included these key interpretive themes: interpreting Henson's achievements; the life of enslaved children; and integrate the site in context with other local historical sites.
- Focus Group #2, July 2012  
Staff and the exhibit designer conducted a second focus group comprised of members of local historical organizations and current Henson and archaeology volunteers and local and regional historians. Comments from the group included these key interpretive themes: emphasize Henson's character and achievements – especially as a comparison to the stereotypical image of "Uncle Tom" which grew out of Stowe's 1852 fictional character; interpret the life of enslaved children; and illustrate the plantation as it was in the 1800s.

### **National Park Service / Maryland Historical Trust**

As a result of the Save America's Treasure grant the project received, the project is required to comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. In order to comply, the project team submitted Preliminary Plans to the National Park Service and Maryland Historical Trust before proceeding with the schematic design phase to make sure they supported the project's historic preservation approach. Project documents were submitted May 21, 2012. On June 8, 2012, the Maryland Historic Trust determined that the project work will have "No-Adverse-Effect" on the Riley/Bolten House historic resource.

### **Historic Preservation Commission**

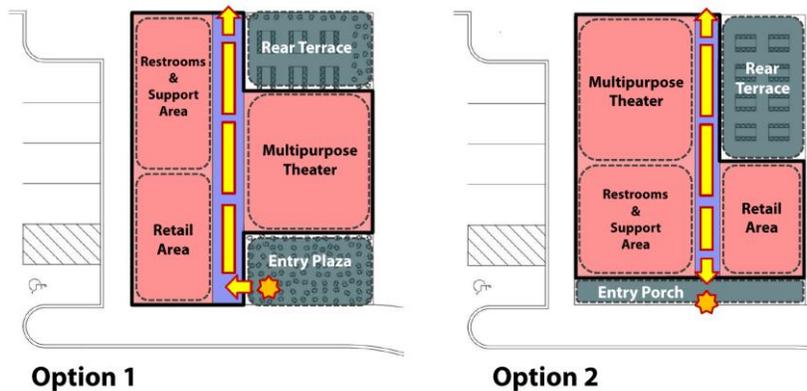
Consultants and staff attended a Preliminary Consultation hearing with the Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission in June 2012. The Historic Preservation Commission was pleased with the proposal to locate new facilities on the non-historic parcel. They had no issues with outdoor museum exhibits and graphic panels or paths throughout the site. The Commission expressed an interest in retaining a sense that the side porch was indeed a porch after it will be converted to an interior room. They recommended a majority of glass infill be used.

### **Community Meeting**

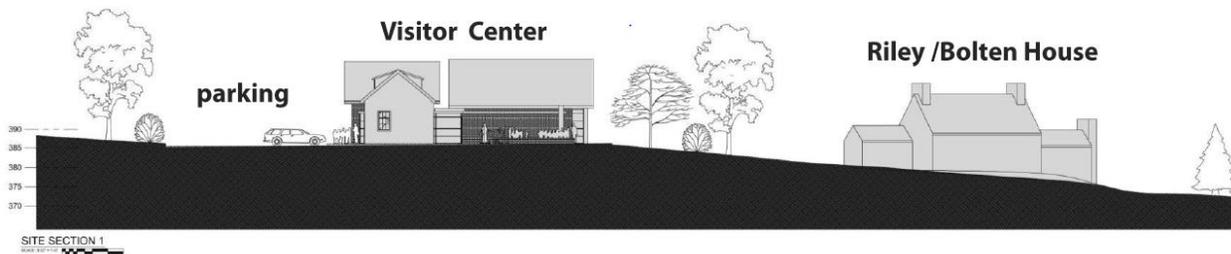
Participants were interested in the scope of interpretation proposed for the new museum and articulated their desire that the exhibits will address the history of all the occupants on this plantation, both the Riley family, Josiah Henson and the entire enslaved community, and an emphasis that this farm was part of the larger Rockville community throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century. They were equally curious about the logistics of handling large groups of school children along

with typical everyday patrons at this relatively small site. Additionally, the overarching concerns voiced by neighbors, primarily from the Luxmanor community, were issues of parking overflow onto neighborhood streets, the Tilden/Old Georgetown intersections, increased noise levels, and visual disturbances (i.e. car lights) created by the removal of the Rozier House.

Following the meeting, the consultant’s presentation was posted on the project website and the public was given one week to submit comments. Comments from one adjacent neighbor supporting the project but concerned about a vegetated buffer between properties were received.



**Visitor Center – Multi-purpose Theatre Wing Options presented at the Community Meeting**



**Visitor Center Site Section presented at the Community Meeting**

### Countywide Recreation Advisory Board

The Park Project Manager and Cultural Resources Stewardship Section Manager presented the schematic design plans at regular meeting of the Countywide Recreation Board. They were pleased that the project will draw a different kind of recreational audience. The relationship to Wall Local Park and the Kennedy Shriver Aquatic Center was also discussed. The Board supports the need for a safer, improved crossing at the Old Georgetown Road and Nicholson Lane intersection and suggested they work with Parks to encourage MCDOT and SHA to provide a safer crossing.

### Adjacent Neighbors

Park staff works consistently with adjacent neighbors on an ongoing basis to address any and all concerns.

## **ADDITIONAL COORDINATION**

### **M-NCPPC Department of Planning, Area 2 (For additional information, refer to Attachment D)**

The project team has incorporated comments of the Department of Planning's Area 2 staff, primarily transportation planning, into the project work. The project satisfies the Adequate Public Facilities Test because no new peak-hour trips are planned. Old Georgetown Road is a major highway with a 120-foot right-of-way with no bike lanes. Nicholson Lane is an arterial road with bike lanes, BL-27. Tilden Lane is a primary residential street with bike lanes BL-27. Bike storage racks will be provided at the park. The nearest bus stop north of the park's property line should be improved in coordination with MCDOT, Division of Transit Services.

Old Georgetown Road, Tilden Lane, and Nicholson Lane intersection's pedestrian crosswalk timing is deemed adequate but the actual crosswalks themselves are not up to current standards. Parks should continue to encourage MCDOT and SHA to study and fund additional improvements in the future to address concerns of the park's neighbors and future pedestrian volume generated by the park. Ultimately SHA is responsible and must approve improvements to this intersection (although MCDOT maintains the traffic signal network). Signal timing and handicapped ramps at the intersection should be modified in the future based on the projected future pedestrian volumes generated by the redeveloped Wall Local Park and Josiah Henson Park uses. The facility plan's October 20, 2011 Pedestrian Impact Statement's study and analysis could be used by MCDOT to modify the traffic signal timing with SHA's ultimate approval.

A separate project, The White Flint District West (CIP No. 50116) includes the realignment of existing Executive Boulevard, Market Street design and improvements to Old Georgetown Road and Hoya/Towne Road. The project is at 35% engineering design and MCDOT is the lead agency. The project work includes improving Old Georgetown Road north of Nicholson Lane-Tilden Lane: upgraded sidewalks, landscape panels with street trees, and bike lanes that would provide an upgraded pedestrian connection between Nicholson Lane, Tilden Lane, the Josiah Henson Park and the future off-site parking for both parks. The Planning Board could recommend that this project provide pedestrian crossing(s) be brought up to standard for the remainder of the intersection.

Under the category of Historic Resource Preservation, Commercial/Residential (CR) zone public benefit credits may be used by nearby subdivision applicants for off-site improvements needed for the Josiah Henson Park,

### **M-NCPPC Park Planning and Stewardship Division, Park and Trail Planning**

Montgomery Parks, the Department of Recreation, and Gables Residential (owner of the existing surface parking lot immediately north of Wall Local Park) have developed concept plans that would facilitate structure parking on the Gables property for Wall Park, the Josiah Henson Park, future Aquatic Center expansion and a future Recreation Center. Gables has indicated that they would dedicate the space for the garage but they will not build the garage for the public uses. There are many details to work out on this concept.

Park planners will continue coordination to provide future structured parking for both parks. To date this has included providing them with historical information. A "freedom path" will be an integral part of the redesigned Wall Local Park being designed by Park and Trail Planning staff.

This path will link people from the structured parking to the corner where Nicholson meets Old Georgetown Road. It will have “footsteps in time” and interpretive and way-finding signage highlighting the experience to come at the Josiah Henson Park. The revised Wall Local Park also includes open space opportunities for extended educational programming linked to the Henson program.

#### **M-NCPPC Planning Department - Development Review Committee (Pre-DRC and DRC)**

Staff met with this committee on two occasions: Pre-DRC on February 13, 2013 and DRC on February 25, 2013. The majority of the discussion centered on the improvements within the right-of-way. Curb ramps at the entrance driveway are to be revised to better meet ADA requirements. The sidewalk widening was discussed and it was suggested to provide some sort of vegetated buffer between the walk and the road; however after review of the very minimal space between the curb and the property line it became apparent that such a buffer was not possible. The proposed widening was also questioned beyond the property frontage as it would require an easement for installation since the limit of work would match the property line.

#### **Montgomery County - Department of Permitting Services (DPS)**

The project has been entered into DPS’s Case Management Program for unique or high profile projects. The project team met with building permit officials on September 28, 2011. The purpose of the meeting was to have a preliminary building code review of the proposed new and existing structures. The meeting established that the historic house can be classified as Business Use occupancy if the number of occupants remains below 50. This is significant because the house has a limited live load capacity and higher classifications would require significant structural changes. The meeting also established that the second floor is exempt from handicapped access regulations because it falls under an 8,000 sf exemption under the Maryland accessibility code. This signifies that the second floor is for staff use only and the Research Library can be available by appointment only.

#### **Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Services (MCFRS)**

MCFRS will require a 20’x60’ fire apparatus staging area within 200 feet of hose pull off the furthest side of the buildings. This staging area will be located at the bus-drop off but must also be within 400 feet of a hydrant. This will require installation of a new hydrant on a water main extended either from Sedgwick Lane to the south to the site or extended to the southwest corner of the intersection of Tilden Lane and Old Georgetown to the north. The location is dependent on the WSSC fire flow test. Two Fire Department Connections (FDC) will be required, one at the historic house and one at the visitor orientation building.

#### **State Highway Administration (SHA)**

SHA’s Access Management Division provided approval for the two proposed access locations in a letter dated October 22, 2011, SHA Tracking No. 11-AP-MO-062ss. The proposed sidewalk widening was discussed with SHA’s Scott Newill at the February 15, 2013 DRC meeting; the limited right of way makes it impossible to meet current sidewalk standards. Limited widening was found to be unfeasible. SHA will review the proposed widening during final design. For curb cuts, the project work will require an access permit from SHA.

## **Washington Sewer and Sanitary Commission (WSSC)**

The project team met with WSSC staff on October 12, 2011, in person and by conference call.

**Water:** The existing historic house does not have sufficient water service to convert the facility to commercial public use. Fire suppression installations require a larger, minimum 4" diameter water lines to be installed. Unfortunately water service infrastructure does not exist in Old Georgetown Road. Fire Flow tests are needed to determine whether new water service is available to be piped from Sedgwick Lane to the south or from Tilden Lane to the north. Test requests were paid for by Parks on April 26, 2013 and testing should be initiated soon. Additional testing may be necessary and costs to the project to provide new lines may be known before the project is presented to the Planning Board.

**Sewer:** The existing historic house will continue to be serviced by the existing 4" sewer house connection that connects to the sanitary sewer main in Tilden Lane to the north. The proposed Visitor Orientation Building will connect to an existing 8" sanitary sewer main in Old Georgetown Road to the south.

## **REGULATORY APPROVALS**

### **Natural Resources Inventory/Forest Stand Delineation (NRI/FSD)**

The NRI/FSD Plan No. 420121950 dated June 12, 2012 was approved by the M-NCPPC on August 2, 2012 and will expire on August 2, 2014.

### **Forest Conservation Plan Exemption (FCP) / Tree Save Plan**

Section 22A-S, Article II Forest Conservation requirements do not apply to modifications to existing developed property if no more than 5,000 square feet of forest will be cleared, if the modification does not affect any forest in a stream buffer, is not located on property in a special protection area, and if the modification does not require approval of a new subdivision plan.

The Tree Save Plan dated March 27, 2013 documents the Forest Conservation Plan Exemption. The Tree Save Plan, labeled FC Exemption No. 42012195E was approved by M-NCPPC on April 5, 2013.

### **Stormwater Management Concept Plan**

The stormwater management concept plan for the park was submitted to the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (DPS), on March 15, 2013 (File No. SM #251651). Letters to two downstream neighbors were mailed May 10, 2013. At the time of this writing, the plan is under review.

## COSTS

### Final Design and Construction Costs

A summary of final design and construction costs are provided in the table below. More detailed information is included in Attachment A – the Architectural/Engineering Facility Plan Report (Buildings and Sitework) and Attachment C – the Interpretive Program/Exhibit Design Facility Plan Report.

Buildings and Sitework	\$ 2,559,916.00
Interpretive Program/Exhibit Design	\$ 473,801.00
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<b>Net Construction Subtotal:</b>	<b>\$ 3,033,717.00</b>
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Insurance (1%), Profit & Overhead (6%), Bond (1%)	\$ 242,697.36
Contingency (25% Net)	\$ 758,429.25
Final Design Fees (18% Net)	\$ 541,474.23
Staff Chargebacks (5% Net)	\$ 150,000.00
Construction Management (4% Net)	\$ 120,000.00
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<b>Total Design and Construction:</b>	<b>\$ 4,846,318.84</b>
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Note that the Montgomery Parks Foundation has agreed to conduct a capital campaign on behalf of the project, seeking by its mission to provide enhancements to the project beyond what taxpayer support can provide.

### Operating Budget Impact

The Moderate Option Development Plan approved by the Planning Board in 2010 approved an operational model in keeping with the realities of the Department and County budgets. It achieves operational benchmarks with a reasonable request to hire one full-time Senior History Specialist/Museum Manager to run the facility day-to-day from an office in the historic house. As mentioned above in the Facility Use and Operations section, additional operating dollars will need to be dedicated to educational program interpreters. At this time, that is envisioned as one part-time 20-hour career position who assists the facility manager but focuses solely on educational programming. That person(s) would also be located on site. Such pairing of a facility manager and educational programmer is the norm in the M-NCPPC's Prince Georges County Department of Parks and Recreation and is a successful model the Cultural Resources Section of Montgomery County Parks wants to emulate.

The Operating Budget Impact (OBI) was not completed at the time of this report and will be presented to the Montgomery County Planning Board with the CIP process

## 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 historic preservation goals for the property, and after listening to the focus group, the historic preservation regulators, and community suggestions and concerns. The plan takes into account safety, accessibility,

maintenance, operations, and aesthetics. When constructed, this park will meet the needs of the park users and will be an important community gathering place and cultural amenity for the resident of Montgomery County, the State of Maryland and beyond.

Attachments

- Attachment A – Architectural/Engineering Facility Plan Report
- Attachment B – Part 1: Architectural/Engineering Drawings
  - Part 2: Visitor Center Building (Alternate) Drawings
- Attachment C – Experience Design, Interpretive Program/Exhibit Design Facility Plan Report
- Attachment D – Parks Supplemental Information

Appendices – Included by Reference Only

- Appendix A1 – Architectural/Engineering, Design Reports and Specifications
- Appendix A2 – Architectural/Engineering, Existing Condition Reports
- Appendix A3 – Architectural/Engineering, Regulatory Agency Coordination
- Appendix B – Not used
- Appendix C1 – Interpretive Program/Exhibit Design Appendix
- Appendix D1 – Interpretive Program Research, Book 1 of 2
- Appendix D2 – Interpretive Program Research, Book 2 of 2