



**MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** May 15, 2014

**TO:** Montgomery County Planning Board

**VIA:** Mary Bradford, Director of Parks *M Bradford*  
Michael F. Riley, Deputy Director, Administration

Dr. John E. Hench, Ph.D., Chief, Park Planning and Stewardship Division (PPSD) *J Hench*

**FROM:** Brooke Farquhar, Supervisor, Park and trail Planning, (PPSD) *Brooke Farquhar*  
Rachel Davis Newhouse, Planner Coordinator, Park and Trail Planning, (PPSD) *Rachel Davis Newhouse*

**SUBJECT:** Ovid Hazen Wells Park Master Plan Update: Objectives, Schedule, and Outreach

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**Recommended Action:**

1. Approve proposed plan objectives
2. Approve proposed plan schedule
3. Approve outreach strategy

**Background**

**Purpose**

Ovid Hazen Wells Recreational Park is located in the northern portion of Montgomery County in the Clarksburg Planning Area (**Figure 1**).

The major focus of the Ovid Hazen Wells Recreational Park Master Plan Update will be to:

1. Develop a concept plan and Preliminary Program of Requirements (PPOR) for a family destination area that will include the carousel that is currently in Wheaton Regional Park;
2. Determine whether the future Clarksburg Community Recreation and Aquatic Center could be located in the park; and
3. Develop a general concept plan and PPOR for the central and eastern areas of the park. (**See Figure 2**).

## The Park Today

Ovid Hazen Wells Recreational Park is 290 acres in size and partially developed. Since the *Ovid Hazen Wells Recreational Park Master Plan* was adopted in 1995, the proposed active recreation area along Skylark Road has been completed. This area includes a large recreational complex consisting of 2 soccer fields, a baseball field, 2 softball fields, a group picnic area with three picnic shelters and a large playground. The picnic shelters can each accommodate up to 100 people and there are portable restrooms provided from April through October. There are looped hard surfaced trails connecting the amenity areas to each other and parking for 285 cars (**See Figure 2**).

The park is home to two historic properties listed in the [\*Montgomery County Master Plan of Historic Preservation\*](#): the Ned Watkins House in the central area of the park and the Oliver Watkins house in the eastern area of the park. The eastern area of the park also includes the Red Wiggler Community Farm, a public-private partnership with M-NCPPC Department of Parks. The community farm provides “gainful employment for adults with developmental disabilities through a unique horticulture program that uses organic agricultural practices” (**See Figure 3**). The partnership was approved by the Montgomery County Planning Board in 2002 (See Planning Board Memo PDF file at:

[http://www.montgomeryplanningboard.org/meetings\\_archive/02\\_meeting\\_archive/agenda\\_013102/item5\\_012802.pdf](http://www.montgomeryplanningboard.org/meetings_archive/02_meeting_archive/agenda_013102/item5_012802.pdf) )

## History of the Park

In 1981, the Commission received a donation of a 290-acre property known as Ovid Hazen Wells, located west of Ridge Road (route 27) and abutting Skylark Road in Clarksburg, Maryland. The Deed of Conveyance states that the property is to be maintained as open space, for parkland, and/or for recreation. The deed also requires the Commission to move the Wheaton carousel to this park:

*“At such time as [Ovid Hazen Wells] is serving sufficient numbers of park users to justify the placement of a carousel on the property, [the Commission] agrees to relocate the Ovid Hazen Wells carousel to [Ovid Hazen Wells] provided that this carousel has not been destroyed by fire, vandalism, act of God or other means.”*

In 1995, Parks staff completed a master plan, which recommended a three-phased implementation approach. Most of Phase I development, the “Active Recreation Area” identified in the master plan, was completed in 2006 and includes the facilities mentioned above. See **Figure 4** for concept development plan per the 1995 Master Plan.

## Proposed Plan Objectives

Based upon the 1995 park master plan, the [\*Vision 2030 Strategic Plan\*](#), the [\*2012 Park Recreation & Open Space \(PROS\) Plan\*](#) and suggestions from both staff and the public, the following plan objectives are proposed:

1. Determine the final location for the Ovid Hazen Wells carousel (temporarily located in Wheaton Regional Park);
2. Develop a list of amenities that will support the carousel;
3. Develop a greenway link to other public facilities in the area including Cedar Grove Elementary School and Damascus Recreational Park;
4. Expand the existing trail system;

5. Explore options for locating the future Clarksburg Community Recreation and Aquatics Center in the park;
6. Develop recommendations for the uses of the two historic properties within the park - the Ned Watkins house and the Oliver Watkins house; and
7. Develop a PPOR for the eastern area of the park that would include and complement the strategic plan for the Red Wiggler Farm.

***The Plan Schedule***

<b>December 2013 - May 2014</b>	
<b>12-1-2013</b>	Staff meetings to review background
<b>1-27-2014</b>	Attended Clarksburg Civic Association Meeting
<b>2-19-2014</b>	Attended Upcounty Recreation Advisory Board Meeting
<b>3-29-2014</b>	Attended Clarksburg Kite Day
<b>4- 28-2014</b>	Attended the Upcounty Citizens Advisory Board
<b>5-1-2014</b>	Attended the Park Ridge HOA Meeting
<b>5-22-2014</b>	Planning Board <i>Issues and Outreach Report</i> : Staff presentation of the issues heard to date from the public and present and outreach strategy and date for the public meeting for the Planning Board approval
<b>5-22-2014</b>	Staff will attend the Arora Hills HOA meeting
<b>5-28-2014</b>	Public Meeting – Little Bennett Elementary School Cafeteria, 23930 - 7:30 – 9:00 pm
<b>July 2014</b>	Staff Draft to the Planning Board
<b>30 Day Review Period for The Public</b>	
<b>September 2014</b>	Public Hearing at the Planning Board
<b>October 2014</b>	Work session #1 with Planning Board
<b>November 2014</b>	Planning Board approves plan

## Community Outreach Strategy

The community outreach strategy will rely on several techniques to encourage citizen input and involvement. These include:

- Traditional media and press releases
- A [project web page](#) and an [online comment tool](#)
- Postings to [e-newsletters](#), social media channels like [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#), and the Parks Department [Media Center](#)
- Online Calendars - Parks, Planning, Patch Magazine, Gazette
- Attendance at regularly scheduled public events including *Kites Over Clarksburg*, and meetings with the Clarksburg Civic Association, Upcounty Citizens Advisory Board, Arora Hills Homeowners Association, the Upcounty Recreation Advisory Board and School PTA meetings to hear the issues
- Coordination with organized groups, public leaders, and county executive staff

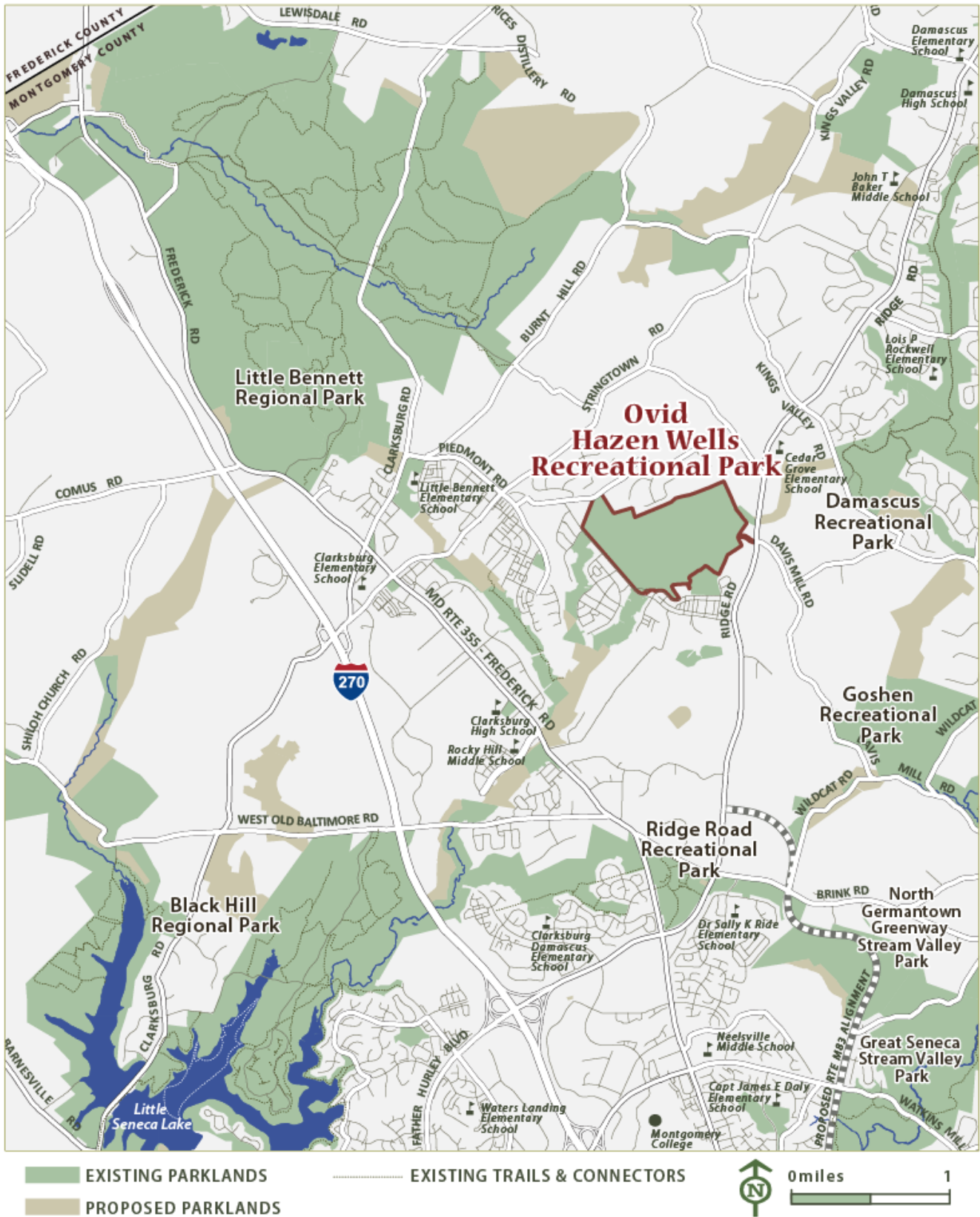
A public meeting is proposed for May 28, 2014 to show preliminary concepts and programs for the park and to get initial comments from the public for the Staff Draft.

*Right: Project web page and Online Comment Tool, Calendar listing, and Social Media outreach opportunities.*

The collage consists of four overlapping screenshots from the Montgomery Parks website:

- Top Screenshot:** The main project page for the "Ovid Hazen Wells Recreational Park Master Plan Update". It includes a navigation menu, a map of the park, and introductory text about the project and upcoming public meetings.
- Middle Screenshot:** The "Online Public Comments" section, which provides "Guidelines for Online Commenting" and instructions on how to use the comment tool.
- Bottom-Left Screenshot:** The "Events Calendar" showing a "PLANNING BOARD PRESENTATION - Ovid Hazen Wells Rec Park Master Plan Update" on Thursday, May 22nd at the M-NCPPC Montgomery Regional Office Auditorium.
- Bottom-Right Screenshot:** Social media outreach options, including icons for a "NEWSLETTER", "FACEBOOK", and "TWITTER".

Figure 1 -Park Vicinity Map



**Figure 2 - Focus Areas of the Master Plan Update**



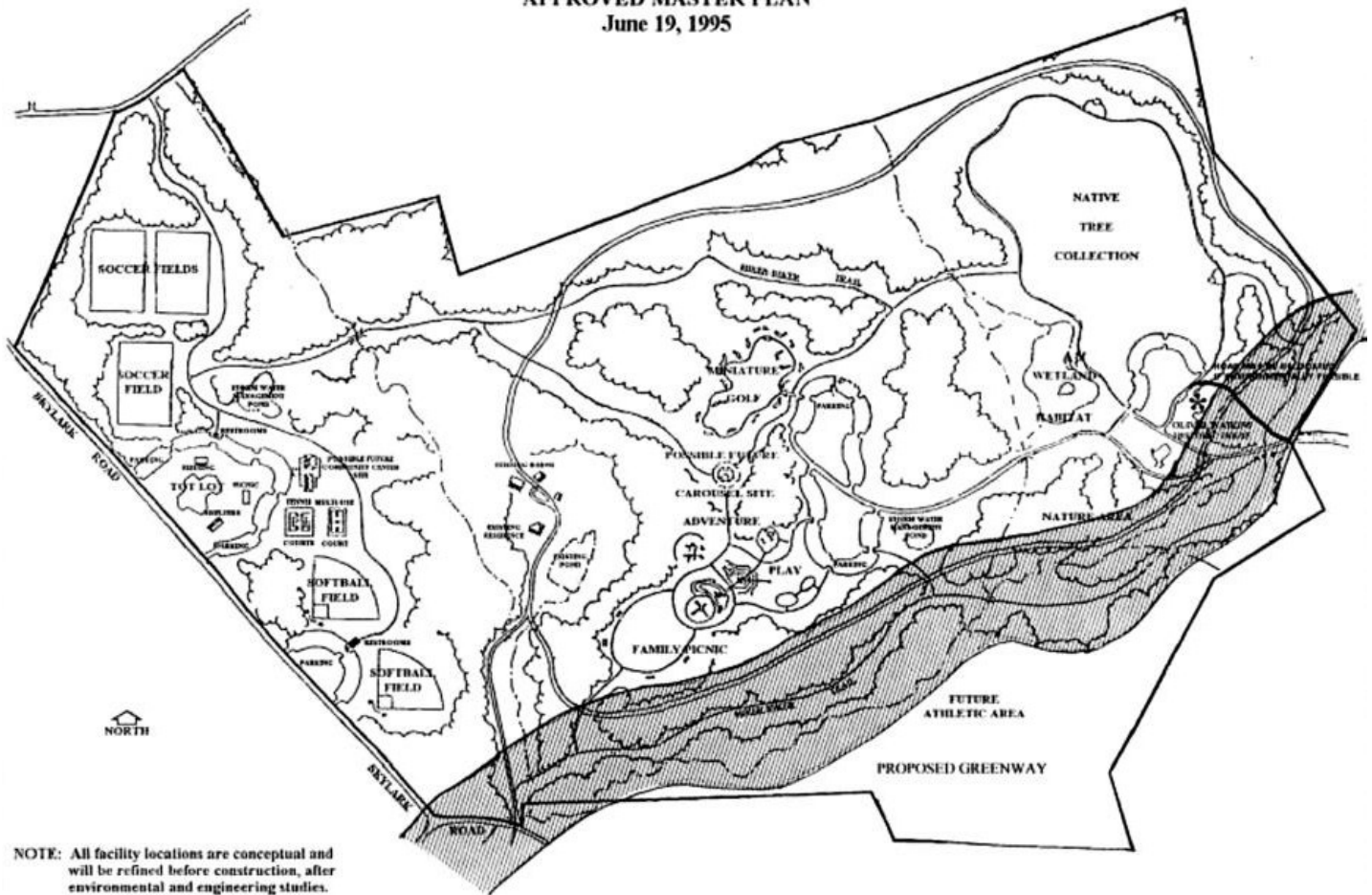
***Focus Areas of the Master Plan Update***

#1 - Carousel and Recreation Area, #2 - Central Area including the historic Ned Watkins House, #3 - Eastern Area including Red Wiggler Farm and the historic Oliver Watkins House

Figure 3 - 1995 Concept Development Plan

# OID HAZEN WELLS RECREATIONAL PARK

APPROVED MASTER PLAN  
June 19, 1995



NOTE: All facility locations are conceptual and will be refined before construction, after environmental and engineering studies.

CC:  
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