



MCPB Item # \_\_\_\_\_

May 26, 2016

## MEMORANDUM

May 19, 2016

**TO:** Montgomery County Planning Board

**VIA:** Mike Riley, Director of Parks *MR*  
John E. Hench, Ph.D., Chief, Park Planning and Stewardship Division (PPSD) *JHench*

**FROM:** Matt Harper, Principal Natural Resources Specialist, PPSD *MHarper*

**PROJECT:** Snouffer School Road Improvements

**REVIEW TYPE:** Parkland Impact Associated with Mandatory Referral No. MR2014038

**APPLICANT:** Montgomery County Department of Transportation

**APPLYING FOR:** Plan Approval

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**RECOMMENDATION:** Approve parkland impacts associated with the widening of Snouffer School Road from Centerway Road to Alliston Hollow Way, the construction of associated sidewalk and shared use path, and stream restoration mitigation within a reach of the adjoining Crabbs Branch stream valley, located within Lois Y Green Conservation Park.

### Description

Mandatory Referral approval is requested of the Montgomery County Department of Transportation's (MCDOT's) project to widen and make improvements to Snouffer School Road between Centerway Rd and Alliston Hollow Way. The project includes a 5-foot sidewalk on the south side of the roadway and an 8-foot shared-use path to the north. Additional road resurfacing would occur from Alliston Hollow Way to 190 feet east of Ridge Heights Drive.

Roadway improvements will provide superior pedestrian and bicycle access along the roadway and improved vehicular access to the Montgomery County Multi-Agency Service Park.

To fulfill Section 404 requirements of The Clean Water Act, MCDOT identified a reach of Cabin Branch immediately upstream of the roadway crossing on M-NCPPC parkland (Lois Y Green Conservation Park) to fulfill their stream restoration mitigation requirements. The project would restore ¼ mile of Cabin Branch stream channel within Lois Y. Green Conservation Park.

## **Summary**

We recommend that the Board approve this project with the following comment to MCDOT:

1. Submit final roadway construction plans to the M-NCPPC Department of Parks for review as part of the park permit process to ensure that all work is performed in accordance with M-NCPPC standard details, specifications, and policies.

Park Department Staff recommend the approval of the use of approximately 1500 linear feet Cabin Branch within Lois Y Green Conservation Park for Section 404 mitigation requirements. MCDOT shall submit final mitigation plans to the M-NCPPC Department of Parks for review as part of the park permit process to ensure that all work is performed in accordance with M-NCPPC standard details, specifications, and policies.

## **Site Context**

The project is located in Gaithersburg, MD within the Use I Cabin Branch waters of Great Seneca Creek. Within the project limits, Snouffer School Road crosses the westerly flowing Cabin Branch and a tributary of Cabin Branch (Tributary 69) at the junction of Lois Y. Green Conservation Park to the east and Cabin Branch Stream Valley Park to the west (Figure 1).

## **Park Impacts**

The Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) widening of Snouffer School Road impacts Lois Y Green Conservation Park to the east and Cabin Branch Stream Valley Park to the west along public right of way frontage (Figure 2). While a portion of the roadway expansion is within this public right of way, work to relocate utilities, treat stormwater, and create stable stream connections also influences the impact footprint on parkland. A total of 0.94 acres of parkland would be impacted by the project. MCDOT will be required to obtain a Park Construction Permit from Montgomery County Department of Parks prior to commencement of any construction activities on parkland. Work will continue to be coordinated with Parks to minimize impacts to parkland and ensure that all stream crossings are properly stabilized upstream and downstream of the road. Stream crossings are designed to provide fish passage in baseflow conditions.

As part of the Park Construction Permit, Stormwater Management (SWM) facilities will be designed to provide adequate treatment of runoff while not unduly increasing impacts to natural resources. A combination of bioswales along the road Right of Way, Filterra treatment structures adjacent to proposed road inlets, and a bioretention facility are incorporated into the design to ensure adequate stormwater treatment at the site. All stormwater leaving the site will have a stable transition from the roadway to where it would tie into the existing Cabin Branch or Tributary 69 channel to prevent any potential floodplain erosion.

Construction access from the Lois Y Green Conservation Park parking lot entryway (Figure 2) will be maintained throughout construction of the new Snouffer School Road lanes and the Cabin Branch stream restoration. Any work at or around the entrance to Lois Y Green Conservation Park that would impede access into or out of the park would require a flagger to maintain ingress and egress.

Figure 1. Snouffer School Rd Widening Project Location Map



Figure 2. Snouffer School Rd Widening Parkland Vicinity Map and Cabin Branch Stream Restoration Mitigation





## **Maintenance of Traffic During Construction**

During the first three phases of construction, which includes work to widen the road and construct the sidewalk and the shared-use path, a single lane in both directions will be maintained along Snouffer School Rd. During the final phase of the project, which includes installation of a traffic signal at Alliston Hollow Way and resurfacing of existing roadway, there will be times when a flagger will be utilized to maintain access along Snouffer School Rd.

## **Wetland and Stream Impacts**

There are two (2) streams that will be impacted by this project. The first is a perennial unnamed tributary of Cabin Branch (Tributary 69) that originates above the County's Multi Agency Service Park and flows within the existing Montgomery County ROW, beneath Turkey Thicket Drive and into the project site through a Category 1 Easement and onto parkland before it flows under Snouffer School Road. The roadway project proposes 408 linear feet of permanent impacts and 44 linear feet of temporary impacts to Tributary 69. Of the 408 linear feet of permanent impacts, 315 linear feet are on parkland. The second is the perennial Cabin Branch stream that flows west through the project site within Lois Y Green Conservation Park and west of Snouffer School Road through Cabin Branch Stream Valley Park. The roadway project proposes 313 linear feet of permanent impacts and 319 linear feet of temporary impacts to Cabin Branch.

MCDOT and the Department of Parks have coordinated efforts to ensure that natural resources impacts are avoided or minimized to every extent possible while still meeting the goals of the project.

Numerous field reviews have taken place to ensure that access, grading, and landscaping do not unduly impact natural resources.

No impacts to jurisdictional wetlands are anticipated within the project site.

Wetland and stream impacts are being coordinated as required with the Maryland Department of Environment and the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers.

## **Mitigation Requirements**

The Clean Water Act prohibits the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States (e.g. streams and wetlands) unless a permit is issued by the Army Corps of Engineers and Maryland Department of the Environment. Through this joint permit, impacts to wetlands, streams and other aquatic resources must be avoided and minimized to the extent practicable. For unavoidable impacts, compensatory mitigation is required to replace the loss of, and impact to, streams and wetlands. The widening of Snouffer School Road would have permanent impacts to approximately 721 linear feet of stream and temporary impacts to approximately 363 linear feet of stream. To fulfill Section 404 requirements, MCDOT identified a reach of Cabin Branch immediately upstream of the roadway crossing on M-NCPPC parkland (Lois Y Green Conservation Park) to fulfill their stream restoration requirements (Figure 2). The project would restore 1,483 linear feet of Cabin Branch stream channel.

The Department of Parks agrees that this site is a good candidate for stream restoration due to the highly eroded stream banks and incised channel that are characteristic of a watershed that has seen significant development within the last 30 years. The goals of the restoration would be to implement natural channel stream design methods to stabilize the existing eroded banks, re-establish a better floodplain connection along the stream valley, and create aquatic habitat to improve ecological function. This would be achieved using instream revetments (cross vanes, j-hooks, riffle grade controls, etc.), bank grading/protection, and installation of woody material.

The use of this park for MCDOT's Section 404 mitigation requirements is considered, "Non-park use of parkland" under M-NCPPC's 'Policy for Parks', and therefore use of this site by MCDOT needs to be approved by the Planning Board.

## **Public Meetings**

MCDOT held a public meeting for the project on May 20, 2013, with newsletters distributed in advance of the meeting. MCDOT held an additional public hearing on April 23, 2015.

## **Implementation**

The project is anticipated to begin construction in October 2016 and be substantially complete by mid-January 2018.

PC:

Mitra Pedoeem, Acting Deputy Director, Department of Parks

John Nissel, Deputy Director of Operations, Department of Parks

Doug Ludwig, Chief, Northern Region, Department of Parks

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