


February 1, 2002

MEMORANDUM

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Jeff Zyontz, Chief
County-wide Planning DivisionJorge A. Valladares, P.E. Chief
Environmental Planning/County-wide Planning Division FROM: Joe Anderson for Department of Park and Planning
(301) 650-4373SUBJECT: **Mandatory Referral** No. 01003-SHA-1—State Highway Administration
(SHA) Congestion Relief Study—Intersection Improvements—**Veirs Mill
Road (MD 586) at Connecticut Avenue (MD 185) and at Randolph
Road**

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Planning Board approve the project with the following comments:

1. All intersections within the project limits must be made ADA accessible.
2. Where sidewalks along Randolph Road are directly behind the curb, they should be a minimum of 8'-3" wide per AASHTO recommendations for commercial areas.
3. Prepare final landscape plans in coordination with staff, with attention to the following:
 - a. medians of six feet in width or greater should be landscaped,
 - b. design aesthetic treatment for exposed surfaces of retaining walls and monolithic concrete medians,
 - c. where specified, provide ornamental fencing on top of retaining walls,
 - d. retaining walls and landscaping in this area should also be coordinated with the county's Department of Housing and Community Development.

4. Preserve as many trees as possible, in the northeast and southeast quadrants of Connecticut Avenue at Veirs Mill Road, where construction encroaches on mature tree stands; submit a tree protection/preservation plan to M-NCPPC Environmental Planning showing protection details and reduced impacts.
5. Extend the retaining wall in the southeast quadrant of Connecticut Avenue and Veirs Mill Road to protect the existing stand of mature trees and minimize disturbance to delineated wetlands and stream buffer.
6. Design the stormwater management facility at Connecticut Avenue and Veirs Mill Road to minimize disturbance to the stream valley buffer.
7. Street lighting should be included in the project and be designed to meet IESNA standards.
8. If temporary sidewalk closures are necessary during construction, safe pedestrian detours must be provided.
9. Redesign or eliminate the free right turn lane in the northeast quadrant to reduce vehicle speed and improve the safety of pedestrian crossings.
10. Provide standard commercial (concrete) driveways or striped crosswalks at all commercial entrances in order to better delineate crossing areas and improve safety.

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

The State Highway Administration (SHA) is proposing improvements at Veirs Mill Road's intersections with Connecticut Avenue and Randolph Road, combined as one project submittal.

At Randolph Road the improvements are confined to minor widening along Veirs Mill Road. The widening will extend left turn storage space west bound and extend the existing third through lanes in each direction on the west leg of Veirs Mill Road, in the vicinity of Gridley Road.

At Connecticut Avenue the improvement will add a second exclusive left turn lane on Connecticut Avenue in both directions and a third through lane on Veirs Mill Road westbound to Ferrara Drive.

The project is in the semi-final design stage and the schedule currently has construction beginning in the summer of 2003, although it is a candidate to be advanced to fall 2002.

BACKGROUND

The proposed project has been developed by SHA under their Congestion Relief Study program. The improvements are intended to address the existing congestion problems.

Staff convened a special public meeting in the community to present the proposal and answer questions. The meeting was held on June 4, 2001, a copy of the meeting invitation is attached. Relatively few citizens attended the meeting.

The scope of the project has been significantly reduced from original design concept proposals, due to cost and community/residential impact concerns. The project has also been modified and designed to not interfere with or preclude the county's proposed Veirs Mill "queue jumper project" for transit priority.

STAFF EVALUATION

The proposed transportation improvements are in conformance with the *Kensington-Wheaton Master Plan* although the Plan makes no specific recommendations for these intersections. The current and projected service levels for the intersections are as follows:

INTERSECTION	AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour	
	Existing	Projected	Existing	Projected
Veirs Mill Road at Connecticut Avenue	F	E	F	E
Veirs Mill Road at Randolph Road	F	D	D	D

Currently, the Connecticut Avenue intersection operates at Level of Service (LOS) F in both the morning and evening peak hours. The improvement anticipates LOS E in both peaks. The Randolph Road intersection operates at LOS F in the morning and LOS D in the evening peak hours. Improvements here are projected to provide significant improvement only for the morning peak, to LOS D.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Accommodation

The master plan does not identify or propose bikeways along Veirs Mill Road or Connecticut Avenue. However, there are existing sidewalks throughout the area. The project will replace/rebuild sidewalks wherever they are disturbed by the redesign. All intersections within the project limits should be made ADA accessible, including tee intersections.

Landscape and Tree Preservation

Existing stands of mature trees will be impacted in the northeast and southeast quadrants of the Veirs Mill Road/Connecticut Avenue intersection. A tree protection/preservation plan should be prepared to minimize impact. This should include, but not be limited to, tree-save measures such as pre-construction watering and fertilizing, fencing, root pruning, and dead-wood pruning of any trees impacted by construction activities; as well as a time frame for implementation of all tree-save measures. The retaining wall in the southeast quadrant should be extended further to protect mature trees and remove the limits of construction disturbance from the delineated wetlands and stream valley buffer. Modification to the stormwater management facility may be possible to reduce disturbance to the stream valley buffer.

Landscape plans, which are not prepared in detail until final design, should be coordinated with staff. Streetscape features in the Randolph Road/Veirs Mill Road intersection should also be coordinated with the county Department of Housing and Community Development's recent area projects. Wherever medians exceed six feet in width, landscaping should be provided.

cc: Marion Clark
Marilyn Clemens
Larry Cole
Bob Simpson, DPWT
Ken Briggs, SHA

Attachments

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M-NCPPC



MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARK AND PLANNING

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760

June 4, 2001

Re: Intersection Improvements for MD 586 (Veirs Mill Road)/ at
Randolph Road and at MD 185 (Connecticut Ave)

Dear Community Member:

The State Highway Administration (SHA) is planning a project to improve conditions at the intersections of MD 586 (Veirs Mill Road) at MD 185 (Connecticut Ave) and at Randolph Road. SHA would like public comments on this proposal.

You are invited to a public open house to view the design concept for the intersection of MD 586 (Veirs Mill Road) with MD 185 (Connecticut Ave) and with Randolph Road. The meeting will be held:

Tuesday, June 19, 2001, 7:00 to 9:00 PM
Aspen Hill Library
4407 Aspen Hill Rd
Rockville, MD 20853

The session will be informal and designed to show attendees the proposal and to take comments. Staff from the SHA and the Montgomery County Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPWT), along with M-NCPPC will be on hand.

For your further information, the Planning Board is tentatively scheduled to review the proposals during its regular meeting of Thursday, July 19, 2001. The public may direct comments on the projects to the Planning Board. If you are interested in attending or testifying, as always, please double check on the Board's date and time prior to attending, at 301-495-4600, during the week of their meeting. Submit any formal comments on the project to the Chairman of the Montgomery County Planning Board, 8787 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20910-3760, also, please send me a copy at the same address.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joe Anderson', written over a white background.

Joe Anderson, Planner
County-wide Planning Division
Telephone: 301-650-4373

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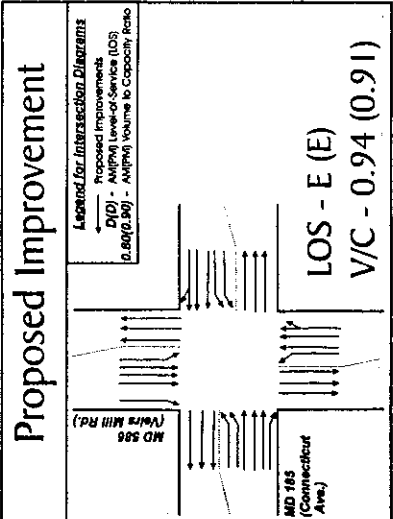
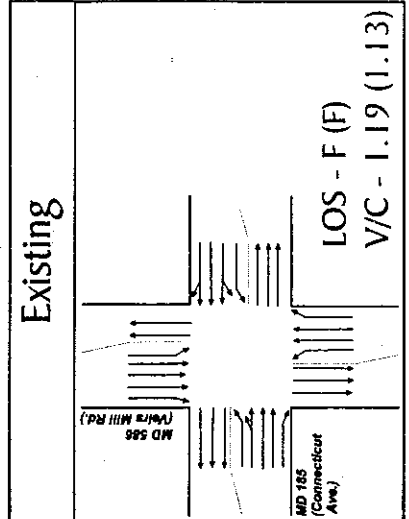
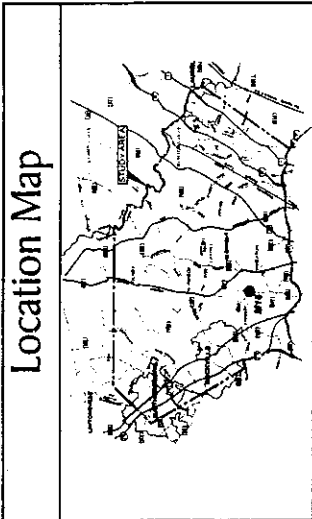
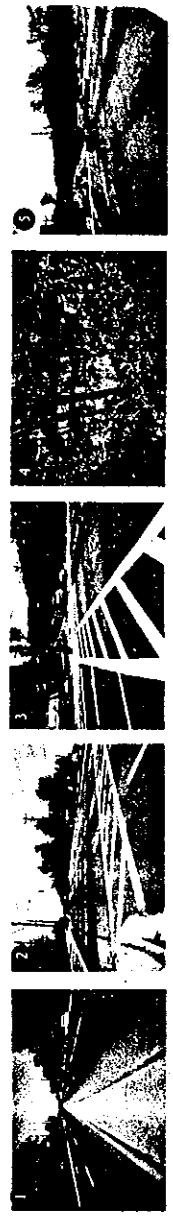
CC: Ken Briggs, SHA
Bob Simpson, DPWT
John Carter, Community Based Planning
Larry Cole, Countywide Planning

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CONNECTICUT AVENUE

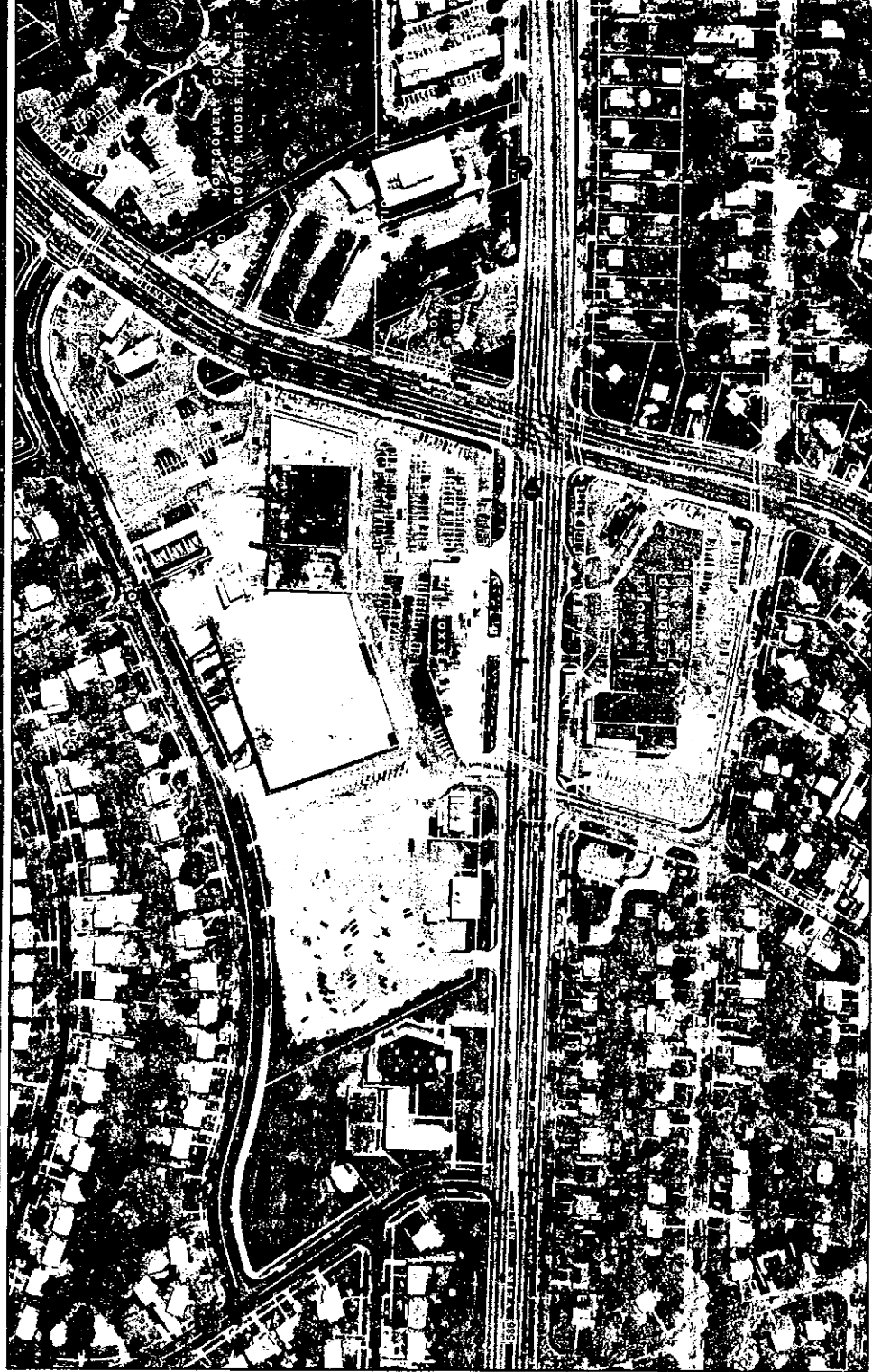
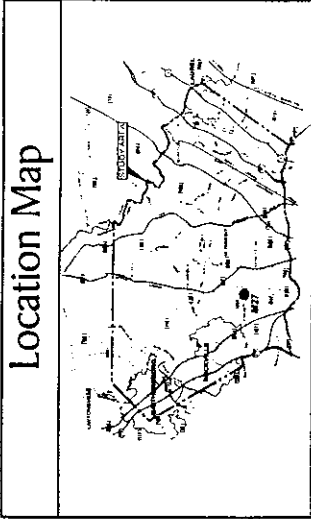


- Historic Properties
- Wetlands and Recreational Areas
- Community Resources
- Streams/Open Water



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MD 586 (Vets Mill Road) at Kirkwood



- Historic Properties
- Parklands and Recreational Areas
- Utilities
- Community Resources
- Streams/Open Water

