

MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARK AND PLANNING

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION*9500 Brunett Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20901*

July 10, 2003

To: Montgomery County Planning Board

From: Chief Elizabeth A. Kreiter
Montgomery County Park Police Division

Re: Development Plan for Woodlawn Special Park
Montgomery County Park Police – Special Operations

Executive Summary

The Officer Kristen M. Pataki Special Operations Training Center located at Woodlawn Special Park is in desperate need of renovation. The Park Police facilities at Woodlawn that were meant to be temporary structures when they were built in 1982 are too small and inadequate for our current needs. The responsibilities of the Special Operations Section have expanded greatly to make it a full service police unit. We now have many additional programs and details, such as marine operations, hunting enforcement, the urban horse mounted patrol in the Silver Spring CBD, youth programs and community events. Office space, lockers and storage areas need to be reconfigured. We also need an indoor arena for horse-mounted operations. Without an indoor arena we are unable to undertake all weather, all season training that is necessary for our mission.

The facilities we use are butler-type (pre-fab metal) buildings or cinder block structures that spoil the integrity of this historic farmland. An expansion of the equestrian usage at this site would blend nicely with the Rural Legacy Trail project and grant more access to private equestrian use. Pastures will remain the same size, allowing for adequate field maintenance while sustaining the rural character of the land.

We are concerned with protecting the richness and variety of this site and integrating it with the uses and needs of the Park Police and the community we serve.

Background

The Park Police Special Operations Unit moved to this location in 1978, into what were considered to be temporary quarters. By 1982 the construction of the existing horse barn and Police administration building were complete. A temporary aviation hangar for the Maryland State Police (MSP) helicopter, Trooper 8, was completed by 1990, and in 1992 a permanent MSP hangar was built at the far east end of the property. The temporary hangar was converted to a storage facility and maintenance facility for motorcycles, and an area of the interior was set up as a conference area for office training and meetings.

Design and construction of the police facilities were completed with minimal funding and did not take into consideration the desire to blend construction with the historic park setting. The police stables and administration building were cinderblock structures with flat roofs and were meant to be temporary. The administration building was not designed to accommodate an expanded police force that includes women officers who share a common locker facility, training or conference area, public ADA access, and public restroom facilities. The stables were not built to accommodate the current number of horses. The stables received a peaked roof in early 1990 to create some storage area for hay.

The current motorcycle storage area is the former hangar for the State MedEvac helicopter, which is currently housed in its own building. Other buildings in the PPSO campus include two temporary buildings for the additional horses not accommodated in the current stable, and the Manor House, historic tenant and springhouses, and two garages.

The site also contains a historic Stone Barn that was used for the police horses until Central Maintenance built the current stable. The Stone Barn is currently used as an additional hay storage area for the police; however, there are plans to develop the barn as a Visitors Center. That project was presented to the Board on June 5, 2003. A decision was made to approve stabilization of the Barn and to proceed with the design of the Visitors Center.

The Maryland State Police Aviation unit is located on the eastern most parcel of the Woodlawn property and is independent of the PPSO. A pilot and Trooper/Medic staff the facility twenty-four hours a day. One helicopter functions from the site responding to medical needs and police missions as called. The facility is located on park property and the building is owned and maintained by the Montgomery County Government. The operation is funded by the State of Maryland. This facility location and design will not change under current site planning.

In 1997, a charrette was held at Woodlawn to discuss the best possible arrangement of all the uses on the site incorporating an expansion of the PPSO function to a regional facility. The preferred alternative resulting from the charrette located the Park Police in the same part of the park within a greatly expanded area that would accommodate the larger facility. Since that time, the Park Police have scaled down their needs and no longer feel a Regional facility is necessary. Their current needs include a new barn which would house additional horses and a medical stall, new office space with lockers to accommodate women police officers, a meeting/training room area, an indoor horse riding arena, hay and motorcycle storage.

Needs Assessment

The Woodlawn site is centrally located to most service and high-use areas of the County. However, the facilities must be upgraded to provide for the following:

- Upgrade site security, especially after Sept 11 attacks, to be proactive against future terrorists threats.
- Initiate access control for the entire facility
- Co-locate of the motorcycle and horse-mounted function since all Special Ops officers are trained in both areas. These officers use both forms of patrol as needs dictate.
- Add physical building space using the same existing land area.
- Provide an adequate all-season, all weather training site for Park Police to meet officer in-service training demands, horse mounted and canine training requirements.
- Satisfy training requests from Park Police Volunteers, Montgomery County Police, Maryland State Police, and other local law enforcement agencies
- Fulfill community use requests, such as, High School Equestrian Club and interest groups, Boys and Girls Club, Pony Club, Expansion of Enterprise Usage

Park Police represent the **public safety** arm of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. By law, we have supervisory jurisdiction on property owned and

leased by the M-NCPPC. We also have extended authority as provided by Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) with state, local, and federal police agencies. We provide a critical service available to the County that should be considered a high priority.

Training Needs, Uses & Requests

Special Operation Officers are cross-trained in use of motorcycles, horses and boat patrol. Their function allows them into park areas inaccessible by patrol cars. Areas include regional parks, undeveloped areas, with emphasis on trails, both natural and paved. Increased trail development with connectors will increase the demand for trail patrol. The Division's "On the Trail" program tracks trail use and associated calls for service. Officers are deployed based on patterns and forecasting of needs for police service.

The Park Police have developed an expertise through deployment of horse, motorcycle, and canine search & rescue. That expertise is regularly called upon from area jurisdictions. Horses have been called upon in a number of missing person searches, to provide security at the monumental core of the National Mall during protests and presidential inaugurations. Motorcycles have been called upon to assist in VIP escorts, traffic control during major events/road closures and funeral escorts. The Park Police canine unit has assisted in a number of high profile incidents to include cadaver searches in the Michelle Dorr and Chandra Levy homicide cases, and to assist HIDTA and DEA in several major narcotic investigations.

This expertise translates to a continued need for training and demands from allied agencies to assist them in their training needs.

We attempt to schedule our basic horse-mounted training during the fall and winter season when park activity is somewhat reduced. Unfortunately, this is also the time when the weather is unpredictable and inclement. In fact, it is not unusual to shovel snow in the existing outdoor riding ring before it can be utilized. Local partnerships have been developed to use private facilities when available but we sometimes have to incur usage fees and are subject to scheduling restrictions imposed by the facility manager. Routine in-service training is on-going at this facility to improve and re-train necessary skill levels, which reduce the Commission's liability and help prevent accidents for horse-mounted officers.

Horse-mounted officers are used to patrol our park areas but are also used extensively on urban patrol in the Silver Spring Central Business District. Three years ago (FY01), at the direction of the County Council, officers, horses and equipment were allocated to

reinstitute this patrol. At the time, the Montgomery County Police had requested funds to handle this function. Since Montgomery County Park Police are recognized experts and already had the infrastructure, the request was denied and the funding was allocated to the Park Police Unit. This was important in order to avoid duplication of efforts and services. In 2002, we provided over 3200 hours of horse-mounted patrol to the Central Business District and handled 130 incidents, during which 340 law enforcement actions were taken ranging from warning to arrests. We also participated in over 30 community interactions including special events and meetings.

The PPSO receives numerous requests for mounted officers to provide police services to assist with state and federal agencies with demonstrations and crowd control. In return, those agencies assist us in Montgomery County. This Unit has also been reimbursed for participation at IMF (International Monetary Fund) and World Trade protests.

Park Police share resources and equipment, with an emphasis on multi-agency training through Memorandums of Understanding, and reciprocal agreements. The Montgomery County Police provides mandated entry-level training to Park Police at no cost to the Commission. In-kind services provided by the Park Police include instructors to their academy. Various other agencies also provide this training with associated costs. Special Operation Park Police officers provide specialized instruction to include horse-mounted, motorcycle, and police mountain bike training to various state and local agencies. The most popular course is the two-week basic motorcycle course taught by our certified instructors. The Woodlawn facility provides the various surfaces needed for these skills to be acquired. Agencies we have instructed include Montgomery County Police, Montgomery County Sheriffs, Gaithersburg City Police, Rockville City Police, Hagerstown Police, Prince George's County Park Police and various out-of-state agencies. About a dozen motorcycles and officers from the Montgomery County Police Wheaton District are housed at the facility, while their storage is under construction.

Our basic horse-mounted training conducted on-site encompasses a vigorous eight week class. Agencies we train included Prince George's County Division of Park Police, Maryland State Park Rangers, and Ocean City Police Department. Joint training skills competitions are also held at this site and have included U.S. Park Police, Baltimore City Police Department, and Hanover County, Virginia, to list a few.

Park Police canines are also in need of a suitable site for re-training and require monthly certifications that includes a working dog field, a fenced exercise area and agility course. This is being done at Woodlawn out of public view, with little if any impact on the site. The fencing is scheduled for installation.

Fields and adjoining trails are used for police bicycle and horse mounted training. The bicycles are currently stored in temporary sheds at the Park Police Headquarters facility. Under current site planning, the bikes will be moved to the Motorcycle Storage and Maintenance building which will provide more security, a work area, and immediate access to the site they currently utilize for training.

Training is often cited as one of the most important responsibilities of all law enforcement agencies. Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) standards also mandate that training is documented, remedial training needs are identified, instructors are certified, and specialized in-service training is mandatory. Indoor training facilities will assist us in coming into compliance with this CALEA standard. An indoor-lighted facility will extend the hours and reduce the seasonal nature of available training time.

Program of requirements

The following is a synopsis of the program of needs for the future buildings. It compares current needs to future needs for each of the buildings and parking lots. All of the current police buildings are scheduled for demolition.

- **Administration Building** - The current administration building is 48' x 23' or 1,104 square feet and contains two small offices, a small roll call area, two short rows of lockers and two small men and women's rest rooms. The two current squad sergeants share office space designed for one desk. The operations commander, a lieutenant occupies the second office. The locker facilities are not adequate to accommodate men and women officers and there is no changing area. The current staff consists of 15 officers. The projection for the future would include an extra shift, which would increase the number of officers by 9. Currently officers have no area in which to prepare paperwork and inadequate space for roll call. Roll call involves the briefing, assignment and inspection of officers prior to the start of their patrol duties and requires an area large enough to accommodate a supervisor and squad of officers. Briefings involve the review of teletypes and lookouts, crime analysis, special events and details, and officer patrol assignments.
- **Stables** - The stables dimensions are 97' x 39' or 3,783 square feet. The current stables have 11 stalls, a wash-stall and no medical stall. The average herd size is 18 horses and varies at times with the acquisition of donated horses or retirements. Of the 17 horses, eleven are housed in the stable, three are housed in temporary stable/shed and three horses

are kept in field turn-out without shelter. As a result, horses must get rotated through field turn-out and stable rest. During inclement and adverse weather, shelter is not available for all of the horses. The current stalls are 12' x 12' in size. The future stalls are projected to be 14' x 14' to accommodate the larger breed of horses now used by the police. The proposed stable will include a medical stall, which is not part of the current stable. The current barn staff consists of 1 Barn Manager, 1 full-time groom, 1 part-time groom and 1 seasonal groom. The future growth would expand to 1 Barn Manager, 2 full-time grooms, 1 part-time groom and two seasonal grooms.

- **Hay Storage** - Hay is currently stored in the loft above the current stables and in the historic Stone Barn. The new plan calls for a separate drive-through building for hay storage that will allow a tractor to pull through. The separate building will reduce stable construction costs and will not impact or increase the area currently occupied by the Park Police.
- **Indoor Arena** - (200' x 100') The police are currently unable to safely train horses in inclement weather. (Though the Park Police train in all weather conditions, inclement weather hampers the ability to keep the horses exercised, healthy and at the peak of fitness especially during the winter months when snow and ice are prevalent. Since their deployment needs are year round, maintaining the fitness of the horses is critical to their ability to meet their police assignments. Additionally, there is an ever-increasing need to be able to train the horses and officers in various police tactics, out of view of the public, to ensure officer safety. This is especially critical with regard to crowd control tactics. The design and placement of the building provides a smooth transition for the horses from the new stable and will not impact or increase the area utilized by the Park Police operation. An indoor arena would allow the police to better schedule when they train by providing them the ability to train 24 hours a day.
- **Motorcycle Storage and Maintenance** - Motorcycles are currently stored and maintained in the old State MedEvac helicopter hanger. The future plan is to provide a separate storage facility for them designed for security and maximum efficiency. The design uses less space than currently utilized and ensures the security of tools and parts.

- **Pastures** - There are four horse pastures varying in size and totaling approximately 29 acres. The future plan calls for 5 paddocks and 1 medical paddock while maintaining the existing pastures.
- **Tractors and sawdust storage** - These are outbuildings, which will be demolished under the new plan. The sawdust storage will be re-designed to accommodate the size of sawdust deliveries and ensure the sawdust remains dry and out of the elements. Sawdust is used as bedding for the horses. Tractor storage has been incorporated into the design of the stables. The new design utilizes less space than currently needed and will not impact or increase the area utilized by the Park Police operation.
- **Visitor parking to the site** - The current visitors parking lot has a capacity of 53 cars. The reconfigured lot would hold 73 cars. The parking areas will serve a dual purpose, providing a training area for Park Police motorcycles. The training currently takes place on a 120' x 120' asphalt pad, formerly a part of the temporary State MedEvac hanger. The dual utilization meets the needs of current and future parking and accommodates the motorcycle training needs with out impacting or increasing the area utilized by the Park Police operation.
- **Canine training area** - Previously, the Park Police canines were trained at a facility in Baltimore County. That facility is no longer available, forcing the training to take place locally on Park Police grounds. The Park Police train their canines for drug detection and in a "passive alert" which is citizen friendly and works well with the Park Police Community Policing philosophy. This differs from canine training done by other local police agencies and necessitates their own training area. Currently, the pastures and temporary aircraft hanger are utilized for canine training. There is a need for a large fenced canine training area. Coupled with the proposed classroom area in the Administration Building and the concept of the Kristin M. Pataki Special Operations Training Facility, logic dictated incorporating the canine training into the proposed facility. The fenced area will be located next to the existing Maryland State Police hanger near the tree-line, out-of-site of the historic area of the park and buffered by the Park Police buildings and stream valley.
- **Bicycle training area** - Fields and adjoining trails are used for police bicycle and horse-mounted training. The bicycles are currently stored in temporary sheds at the Park Police Headquarters facility. Under current site planning, the bikes will be moved to the Motorcycle Storage and

Maintenance building providing security, a work area and immediate access to the area they currently utilize for training.

Alternative Sites

Four additional sites were considered for relocating all, or part of our Park Police functions. The various sites were visited and analyzed for size, usage, and environmental concerns. For efficiency of operation and to minimize costs, it makes sense to keep all of the Special Operations functions on one site. Criteria considered include pasture acreage, location and environmental impacts.

- 1) Black Hill
 - The barn is too small.
 - There are plumbing problems.
 - There is insufficient pasture area.
 - There are environmental concerns.
 - This location would only serve the Up-county area.

- 2) Rickman Farm (Pooleville)
 - This location adds to travel response time.
 - The Commission already has an Up-county barn at the Black Hill Sub-station.
 - This location extends transportation time to down-County sites.

- 3) Mills Property (Derwood)
 - It is situated in a subdivision, which would require using residential streets for access and egress.
 - The horse stalls are too small.
 - There is a lack of storage buildings.
 - There are insufficient pastures.

- 4) Red Door Store (across Norwood Road from Woodlawn)
 - There are environmental concerns.
 - There are wetlands and hazardous terrain.
 - The commercial operation breaks up the flow of the site and limits the area for potential construction.
 - Pastures would be located in an area that would be workable and accessible to buildings.

With the recent acquisition of the Red Door Store property, consideration was given to relocating all or part of the Park Police functions to that property. The property was

determined to be inappropriate for Park Police operations, due to wetlands, the physical layout of the property and the fact that a commercial operation continues on a key portion of the property not acquired by the Commission.

Consideration was also given to the Black Hill Northern District Station. The size of the current facility was deemed inadequate to house the on-going police activities at Woodlawn and the up-county location would make travel time to down-county calls excessive. Commitment to the Silver Spring detail would also suffer with an increased travel time to and from the Silver Spring central business district. Demand for expanded down-county policing continues to grow.

The Woodlawn site is centrally located and provides easy access to the Routes 495 and 95 as well as the down County and Washington, D.C. The 83-acre property provides the opportunity to turn the horses out in a location that is close policing areas.

Police buildings that are compatible with the historic setting can accommodate both the public use and enjoyment of the property, while allowing for a fully functional police operation.

SUMMARY

The current facilities at Woodlawn lack the basic conveniences and resources necessary for special operations to efficiently deliver services. The police were moved to this location twenty-five years ago and housed in buildings that were deemed "temporary." They are still there, with only minimal renovation over the years.

With the continued development and expansion of the park system, particularly the construction of large trail systems, there is a need for a police presence in more remote areas that are not accessible through traditional policing methods resulting in the need for an expanded Special Operations Unit. In addition, there is an increasing need for the PPSO unit to supplement County and metro area policing particularly in light of current events.

The proposed development plan allows the police to continue their operation at a unique site that provides easy access to all the main transportation arteries as well as sufficient pasture land for an enlarged mounted operation, while not negatively impacting any of the proposed public uses of the property. The new plan blends the historic setting with the police function by allowing the public to continue to access the Rural Legacy Trail, Manor House and Stone barn while securing the police operations. The plan enables the Special Operations Unit to conduct the necessary training for the mounted, canine, motorcycle and bicycle functions more efficiently, thereby improving

the ability of the police to do their jobs. This facility will not be of sole benefit to the Park Police. It will also contribute to the training and professionalism of the Prince George's Division of Park Police, Montgomery County, Prince Georges County, Gaithersburg City, Rockville City, Hagerstown, Ocean City, Maryland State Park Rangers, and both police and civilian Search & Rescue Teams.

The current local and national need for an increased police presence heightens the urgency for this project. The police cannot continue to deliver adequate services from an inadequate facility. We respectfully request the immediate approval of the funding for the facility plan.

VICINITY MAP FOR
WOODLAWN SPECIAL PARK



Map compiled on May 28, 2003 at 6:15 PM | Site located on base sheet no - 222NW01

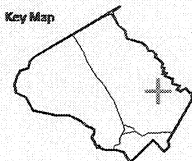
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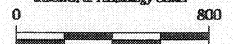
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Key Map



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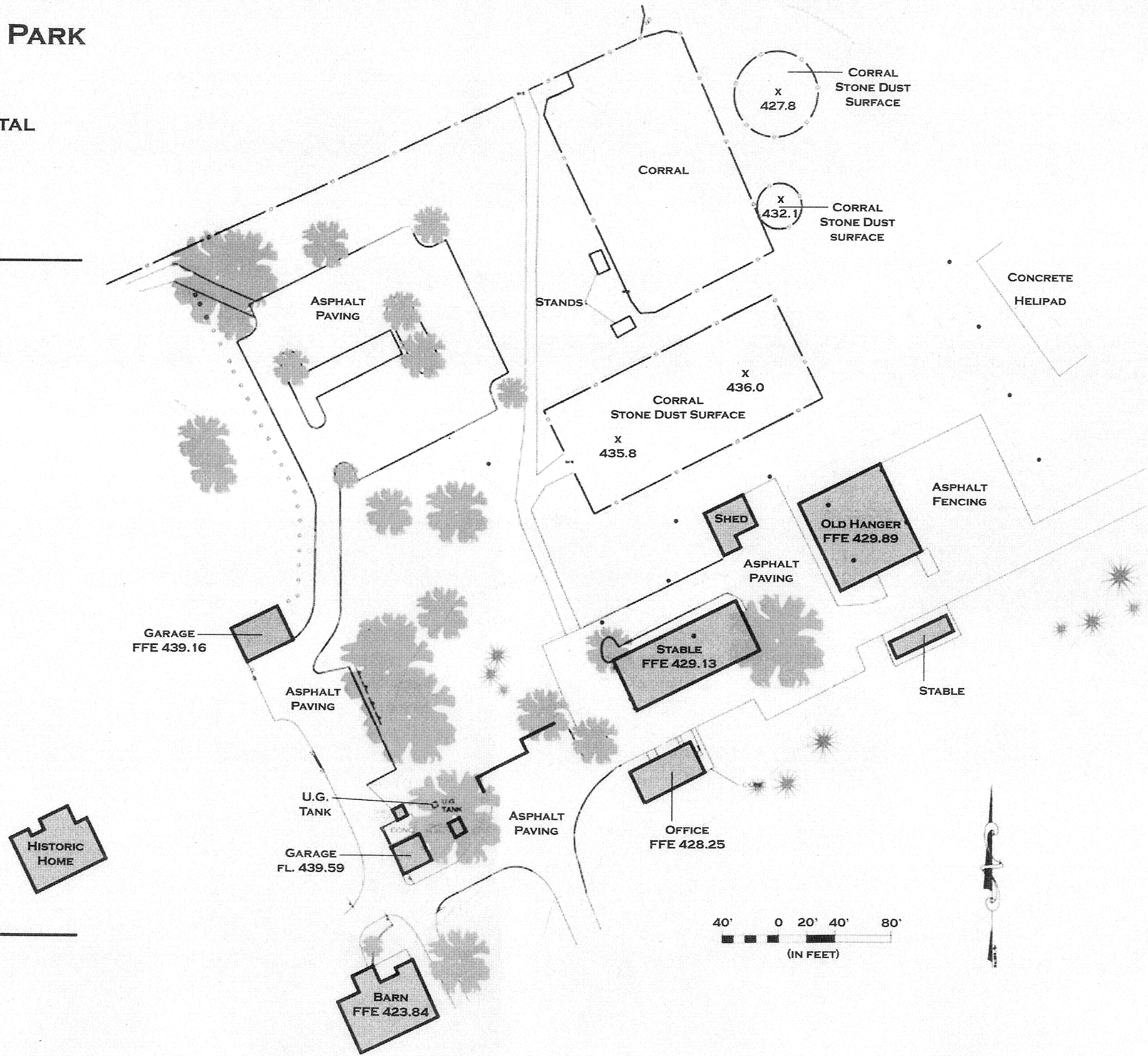


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WOODLAWN CULTURAL PARK DEVELOPMENT PLAN

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK & PLANNING COMMISSION

RHODESIDE & HARWELL, INCORPORATED
BLACKBURN ARCHITECTS
REENA RACKI ASSOCIATES
URS CORPORATION
ZIMAR & ASSOCIATES, INCORPORATED



4 EXISTING CONDITIONS

MAY 2003

