



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

ITEM 13

MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 14, 2004

TO: Rachel Newhouse, CWP, Park Planning and Resource Analysis

VIA: Mary Dolan, CWP, Environmental Planning *MD*

FROM: Marion Clark, CWP, Environmental Planning *MC*

SUBJECT: Winding Creek Local Park Renovation Plan

Environmental Planning staff recommends **approval** of this Park Plan with the following comment addressing nonconforming use within the floodplain:

- The following best management practices should be pursued to mitigate development within the floodplain:
 - Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) should pursue rain gardens or other bioretention facilities for stormwater water quality control during the development of Stormwater Management Plans.
 - Afforestation should be accomplished in cleared areas of the stream valley.

Discussion

This park site is nearly completely within the floodplain, but was developed prior to our current regulations. Since the existing development will be removed and rebuilt within a similar sized foot print, staff considers the new facilities to be non-conforming and requests the use of best management practices to mitigate new development within the floodplain. The stream valley buffer, not including the floodplain, falls in the middle of the site, leaving some cleared property available for development. All facilities proposed by the plan are located outside the stream valley buffer. Existing parking, currently located within the stream valley buffer, will be removed. The new facility locations indicated on this plan do not impact existing forest.

Forest Conservation

A Forest Conservation Plan exemption was issued, since the proposal modifies an existing development without disturbing more than 5000 square feet of forested area, there will be no forest clearing within a stream buffer or on property subject to Special Protection Area Water Quality Plan requirements; and does not require a new subdivision plan. A Tree Save Plan is not required because the proposal will not impact any specimen trees.

Environmental Guidelines

This plan is in compliance with all Environmental Guidelines, with the exception of floodplain restrictions. The site is located within the Lower Rock Creek Watershed, designated Use I, suitable for water contact recreation and protection of aquatic life, by the Maryland Department of the Environment. The Montgomery County Countywide Stream Protection Strategy (CSPS) places the site in the Randolph Hills subwatershed with fair stream and habitat conditions. CSPS considers this tributary a Watershed Restoration area where efforts are ongoing to identify and implement stream restoration projects.

Stormwater Management

WSSC will be responsible for developing Stormwater Management Plans as part of the construction document phase of the project. The Department of Permitting Services will approve these plans prior to issuing building or sediment and erosion control permits.

**MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
FOREST CONSERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS**

TO: Plan review staff, Environmental Planning Section, County-wide Planning Division

SUBJECT: Project Name Winding Creek Local Park Date Recd 12/10/03
NRI/FSD # 4-04151E

The above-referenced plan has been reviewed by the Environmental Planning Division to determine the requirements of Chapter 22A of the Montgomery County Code (Forest Conservation Law). A determination has been made that the plan qualifies for the following exemption:

EXEMPTION:

X **Modification of Existing Developed Property** – no more than a total of 5,000 square feet of forest will be cleared; no forest clearing within a stream buffer or on property subject to SPA WQP requirements; and does not require new subdivision plan.

***NOTE:** Per section 22A-6(b) of the Forest Conservation Law, Tree Save Plans may be substituted for Forest Conservation Plans on properties where the proposed development is exempt from Forest Conservation except that it involves clearing of specimen or champion trees.*

This property may be subject to a Tree Save Plan.

This property is not within a Special Protection Area.

Comments: **This exemption applies only if the proposed park renovation does not involve clearing of forest.
A tree-save plan may be required and will be determined by Environmental Planning staff as part of the review for the mandatory referral project.**

Signature: Candy Bunnag^{CB}
, Environmental Planning

Date: 1/2/04

cc: Rachel Newhouse, M-NCPPC

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January 20, 2004

Montgomery County Planning Board
Montgomery County Department of Park and Planning
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Planning Board Members:

On behalf of the Mid-County Recreation Advisory Board (MCRAB), I am writing this letter to express our support and concerns about the renovations to the Winding Creek Local Park. On January 8, 2004, as part of our monthly meeting, MCRAB held a public meeting regarding the proposed plan for the park's renovations. Approximately 11 community members attended the meeting, including members of the Viers Mill Civic Association and representatives from Montgomery Soccer Incorporated (MSI).

The public meeting included presentations by Tanya Schmieler of M-NCPPC, Rachel Newhouse of M-NCPPC, and Sgt. Joe Parsons of the United States Park Police. Following the presentations, community members were asked for their questions and comments. Finally, Board members asked questions of both the presenters and the community members.

After discussing the issues as a Board, MCRAB has the following statement:

In light of the fact that the park will be closed for approximately 18 months and that WSSC will bear some of the cost of the proposed renovations, the Board views this as an opportunity to improve the facilities in the park.

We support the renovations to the existing Winding Creek Local Park facilities. We specifically support the:

- renovation to the parking lot to include approximately 30 additional spaces
- renovations to the two existing soccer fields
- renovation and improvement of the playground
- renovation of the two basketball courts
- creation of a grass volleyball court
- addition of new maps and kiosks to provide park users with more information
- addition of at least one portable enclosed restroom
- addition of a park sign with landscaping at the park entrance
- reforestation of a portion of the park along Rock Creek
- addition of bicycle racks

While we support the renovations to the park's physical facilities, we are concerned about several issues raised by the citizens. Specifically, citizens stated that:

- the park is heavily overused,
- adult users often leave trash in the park, including alcoholic bottles,
- park users sometimes urinate in the park, and
- people from outside of Montgomery County use the park.

There were several suggestions as to how to alleviate these concerns. Staggered start times for permitted soccer games will help alleviate parking problems and would lessen the number of users in the park at a given time. MSI seemed willing to work with M-NCPPC to consider these staggered start times. The addition of a portable restroom may help users from using the nearby woods.

In sum, while the concerns of the citizens are certainly legitimate, they should not be seen as an impediment to improve the physical facilities of the park. The Board fully supports the proposed improvements.

Sincerely,



Ruth Jaure
Chairperson