



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
8787 Georgia Avenue • Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760

MEMORANDUM

May 24, 2004

TO: Richard Weaver, Subdivision Review, Development Review Division
Michael Ma, Site Plan Supervisor, Development Review Division

FROM: Doug Powell, Plan Review Coordinator for Park Issues, Countywide
Planning Division

SUBJECT: Cabin Branch Subdivision, Plan # 1-03058

Park Planning and Resource Analysis staff recommends approval of the Preliminary Plan with the proposed parkland dedications for the reasons as set forth herein.

The Clarksburg Master Plan, approved and adopted in 1994, provides for a local park, referred to as Clarkmont Local Park by the Master Plan, in the area that comprises the Cabin Branch development. This park is one of only two parks master planned for the west side of Interstate 270, and Clarkmont Local Park is intended to adequately accommodate the active recreational needs of the communities west of Interstate 270 and north of Old Baltimore Road. The nearby Black Hill Regional Park has considerable passive recreational opportunities but does not include ball fields and hard surface courts.

Clarkmont Local Park was intended in the Plan as a 10-15 acre community-use park that would include badly needed recreational facilities such as playing fields, hard surface courts, playgrounds, picnic areas, pathways and parking. Because this part of Clarksburg currently has no community-use parks, it is considered important by Park Planning and Resource Analysis staff that needed recreational facilities be provided at the time of construction of the planned development of the Cabin Branch area to provide the needed park amenities for the new residents.

The land being offered to M-NCPPC for this park by the developers of the Cabin Branch development project includes about 8-9 acres of land suitable for active recreational facilities and an additional 40-50 acres of environmentally sensitive land suitable for some types of low impact passive recreation. A portion of the buildable park area is adjacent to Homeowners Association property that contains a proposed retaining

wall bordering the parkland that is over 20' tall in places. Staff believes that the wall can create some safety issues if not properly addressed and will also somewhat limit the park design opportunities. The Applicant, however, has worked with staff to address some of the park design issues and has agreed to provide, at Applicants expense, all recreational facilities and park amenities for a completed local park to immediately serve the needs of the community. The safety issues created by the retaining wall can be addressed by the Applicant through the use of appropriate fencing. In addition, it may be possible to reduce the wall's height by reducing the amount of grading adjacent to the sensitive stream valley park area.

Staff concludes, therefore, that the proposed area offered by the Applicant for the local park, although somewhat small and limited in the areas available for active recreation, is acceptable and appropriate since the total park area provides considerable passive recreational opportunities as well as the active recreational amenities, and since the entire park will be provided by the Applicant in usable form at the time the development is constructed.

Park Planning and Resource Analysis staff would therefore request the following Conditions of Approval:

- Applicant to dedicate to M-NCPPC the agreed area of contiguous land that is located between the proposed elementary school site and proposed Street J and is south of, and adjacent to, proposed Street G and Street H, and continues south along the Little Seneca Tributary to Old Baltimore Road. The northern portion of the dedicated land to be sufficiently large and suitable for active recreation in order to accommodate the agreed active recreation facilities and park amenities to be provided by Applicant as set forth below. Dedicated parkland to be of a unified configuration, divided only by the historic home (including driveway and front yard of home) that is to be dedicated to the HOA or other party acceptable to M-NCPPC staff. Recreational facilities and grading for said facilities to be located outside of stream buffers and other environmentally sensitive areas. Parkland to be conveyed by time of record plat and conveyed free of trash and unnatural debris and park boundaries staked and signed to distinguish from private properties.
- Within the dedicated local park acreage, Applicant to provide, at Applicants expense, the park's active recreational facilities and amenities to include at least one (1) adult sized softball field, one (1) adult sized soccer field, multi-age playgrounds acceptable to M-NCPPC staff, a hard surface court or picnic area with 2 shelters, 8' wide hard surface trails within the park to serve the various facilities, a drinking fountain, park signage and information kiosk, portable restroom pad and enclosure, appropriate fencing for safety purposes along the fields and retaining wall (acceptable to M-NCPPC staff), park landscaping, and parking lots on dedicated parkland for between 80-120 cars (as determined to be necessary by M-NCPPC staff). Parallel parking spaces along the park side of the adjacent roads should be appropriately striped and

marked to delineate the individual parking spaces available for park users. Visual screening to be provided between the park parking area south of the community pool and the adjacent private property. Park layout to be substantially as set forth on the attached plan sketch, with final details of park design and layout as well as final grading and stormwater management plans to be determined in coordination with M-NCPPC staff prior to site plan approval. Facilities to be constructed to park standards and specifications after procurement by Applicant of appropriate park permit. Copies of applicable standards and specifications will be provided to Applicant by time of site plan.

- No retaining walls or stormwater management ponds or facilities to be located on dedicated parkland. Applicant to work with M-NCPPC staff on park grading issues at time of site plan to minimize the size of needed retaining walls adjacent to parkland.
- Applicant to construct hard surface and natural surface trails on dedicated parkland and throughout the community to connect open spaces, elementary school and parkland together in an accessible, pedestrian friendly manner. Applicant to work with M-NCPPC staff prior to site plan approval to establish exact locations of needed trails in order to provide recreational opportunities to the communities and businesses within the subdivision. Trails within parkland to be constructed to park standards and specifications.
- Trail access from the community to Black Hill Regional Park to be provided by the applicant, including construction by Applicant of an 8' wide hard surface trail along Newcut Road and south along Street W to Old Baltimore Road. Applicant to work with M-NCPPC staff to provide a park like entrance setting and character to Street W since this street will be the primary point of access to Black Hill Regional Park. Layout and buffering of office buildings along Street W to provide a pleasant and aesthetic entrance to Black Hill Regional Park.

