



MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARKS
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

Agenda Item # 6
Agenda Date: June 22, 2017

June 15, 2017

MEMORANDUM

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Michael Riley, Director 
Mitra Pedoeem, Deputy Director 
Michael Ma, Chief, Park Development Division 
John Hench, Chief, Park Planning and Stewardship Division 

FROM: Joshua W. Kaye, Land Acquisition Specialist 
Brenda Sandberg, Legacy Open Space Program Manager 

SUBJECT: Resolution authorizing the purchase of 0.57 acres, more or less, improved, from J. Emlen Myers, by Montgomery County, MD, as an addition to Josiah Henson Special Park

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Montgomery County Planning Board approve the attached resolution, shown as Exhibit "A", recommending Montgomery County, MD to execute a Land Purchase Agreement with J. Emlen Myers to acquire 0.57 acres, more or less, improved, as an addition to Josiah Henson Special Park.

BACKGROUND

The Myers property adjoins the western property boundary of Josiah Henson Special Park. This acquisition is being made to expand Josiah Henson Park from the current constrained 2.78-acre configuration, to a larger, more functional park for future programmable space. The park is an internationally significant cultural resource focused on the real-life story of Reverend Josiah Henson (1789-1883). The existing park and the subject property are part of the former Isaac Riley plantation where Reverend Josiah Henson, an enslaved person, grew from early childhood to adulthood.

The Board designated the Josiah Henson Special Park as a Heritage Resource under the *Legacy Open Space Master Plan* on May 28, 2009. The acquisition of the Myers property is consistent with the objectives of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission's Josiah Henson Special Park Master Plan. This Master Plan was approved and adopted by the Commission on December 2, 2010. In part, the Master Plan recommends expanding the park to "reflect its historic and/or cultural landscape significance". The action recommended to achieve this objective includes "consider possible future expansion of existing park boundary based on the presence of contributing historical and/or archaeological features....."

The archaeological potential of the Myers site is extremely high. Preliminary excavations on the site resulted in finding significant period artifacts. Historic aerial photography from 1927 also shows outbuildings from the original Riley plantation existed on what is now the Myers property, as shown in Exhibit "B.

The Commission's mission to interpret this resource as well as the history of slavery in Montgomery County and the State of Maryland to park visitors will be significantly facilitated by this acquisition project. The initial decision to acquire Josiah Henson Special Park in 2006 as an historic site worthy of preservation and interpretation was supported by the Montgomery County Council, the Montgomery County Executive, the Montgomery County Planning Board, organizations such as the Montgomery County Historical Society, Heritage Montgomery, the Conference and Visitors Bureau of Montgomery County, Inc., as well as other interested individuals and groups. The Maryland Board of Public Works also showed its support for Josiah Henson Special Park in March of 2006 when it approved a POS grant that funded the first acquisition to create the park. The acquisition of the Myers property is yet another important step in helping to achieve the goals and objectives of the Josiah Henson Special Park Master Plan.

The property will be acquired for a purchase price of \$880,000 which will be funded through the Commissions FY-17 Legacy Open Space Acquisition Program CIP with G.O. Bonds.

Details of this recommended parkland acquisition were presented to the Board in closed session on June 15, 2017.

cc: John Nissel
Antonio DeVaul
Kristi Williams

Megan Chung
Jeff Devlin
Joey Lampl

David Vismara
Jim Poore
Bill Tyler

Shuchi Vera

MCPB
17-049

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission ("Commission") is authorized by Md. Code Ann., Land Use, §17-101 (formerly Article 28, Section 5-101), to acquire, develop, maintain and operate a public park system within the Maryland-Washington Metropolitan District; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery County, Maryland (the "County"), has appropriated certain funds from the County's General Obligation Bond proceeds to fund the Commission's Legacy Open Space Acquisition Program; and

WHEREAS, the Commission identifies properties that are eligible for acquisition with funds from the Legacy Open Space Acquisition Program and recommends that the County acquire such properties with such funds; and

WHEREAS, J. Emlen Myers owns certain property identified as Tax Account #04-00084885, containing 24,961 square feet, more or less, improved (the "Property"), located in Rockville, Maryland; and

WHEREAS, the Property meets parkland acquisition criteria suitable for acquisition as an addition to Josiah Henson Special Park which serves all of Montgomery County; and

WHEREAS, the Josiah Henson Special Park also was designated a Heritage Resource by the Montgomery County Planning Board under the Legacy Open Space Master Plan on May 28, 2009; and

WHEREAS, the Montgomery County Planning Board on behalf of the Commission recommends that the County acquire the Property from the J. Emlen Myers, all as described above; and

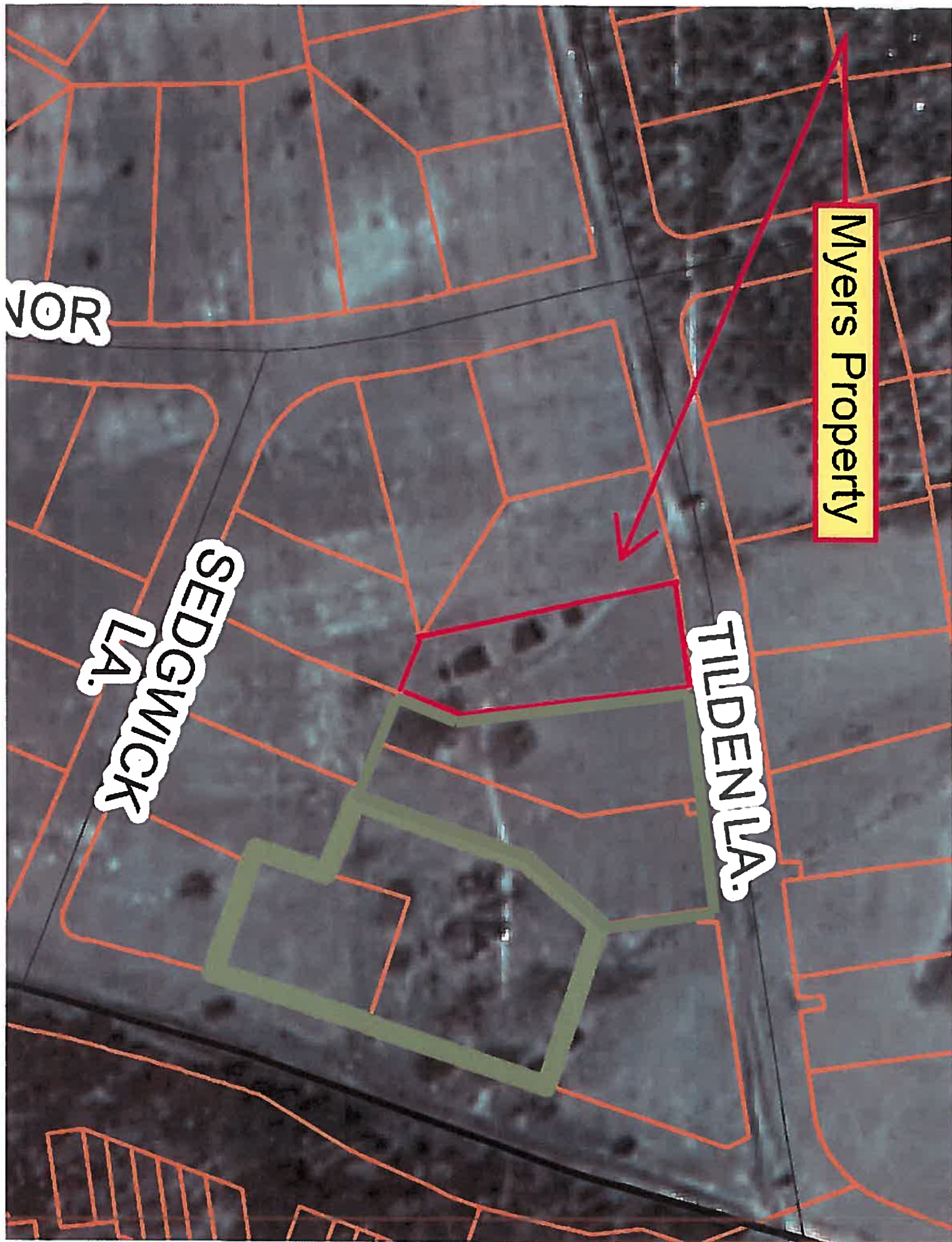
WHEREAS, there are sufficient monies available in the Commission's Legacy Open Space Acquisition Programs CIP to pay for the acquisition of the Property.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Montgomery County Planning Board recommends that the County execute the Land Purchase Agreement, on such terms acceptable to the Commission, to acquire the Property from J. Emlen Myers for the purchase price of Eight Hundred Eighty Thousand Dollars (\$880,000) and other valuable consideration.

* * * * *

This is to certify the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted by the Montgomery County Planning Board of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission on motion of Commissioner _____, seconded by Commisioner_____, with Commissioners _____, _____, _____, and _____ present and voting in favor of the motion, at its regular meeting held on Thursday, June 22, 2017 in Silver Spring, Maryland.

Casey Anderson, Chair
Montgomery County Planning Board



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Myers Property