



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

MCPB
Item: 7
Date: 02/07/19

January 10, 2019

MEMORANDUM

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Michael F. Riley, Director of Parks *MR*
Mitra Pedoeem, Deputy Director of Parks *Mitra Pedoeem*
Patricia McManus, Acting Chief, Park Development Division *pm*

FROM: Linda Komes, Acting Design Section Supervisor, Park Development Division *LK*
Ching-Fang Chen, Landscape Architect/Project Manager *CFC*

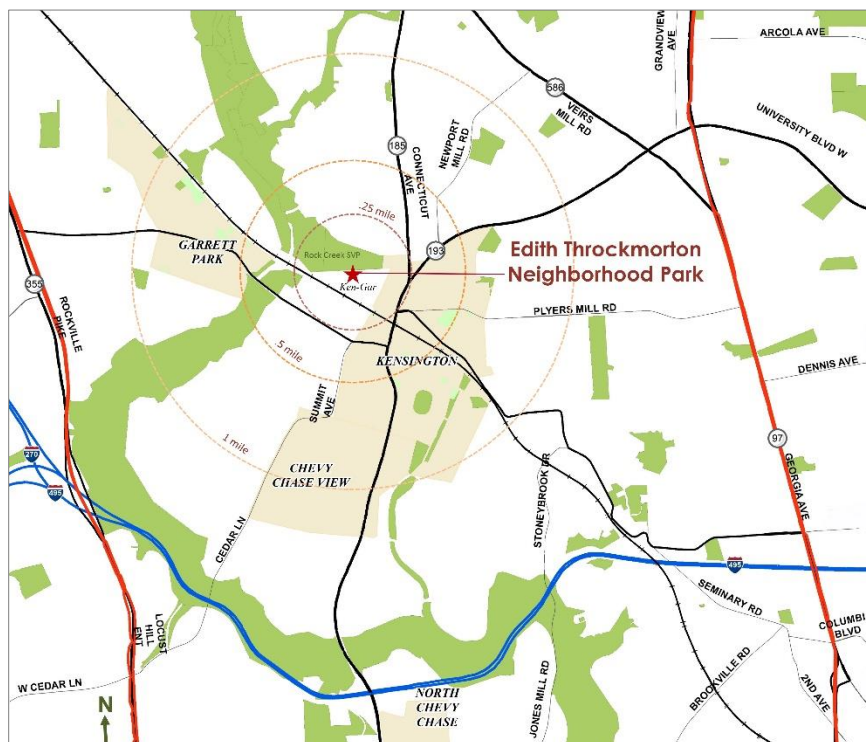
SUBJECT: Facility Plan for the Renovation of Edith Throckmorton Neighborhood Park

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE the Recommended Facility Plan, including the cost estimate.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

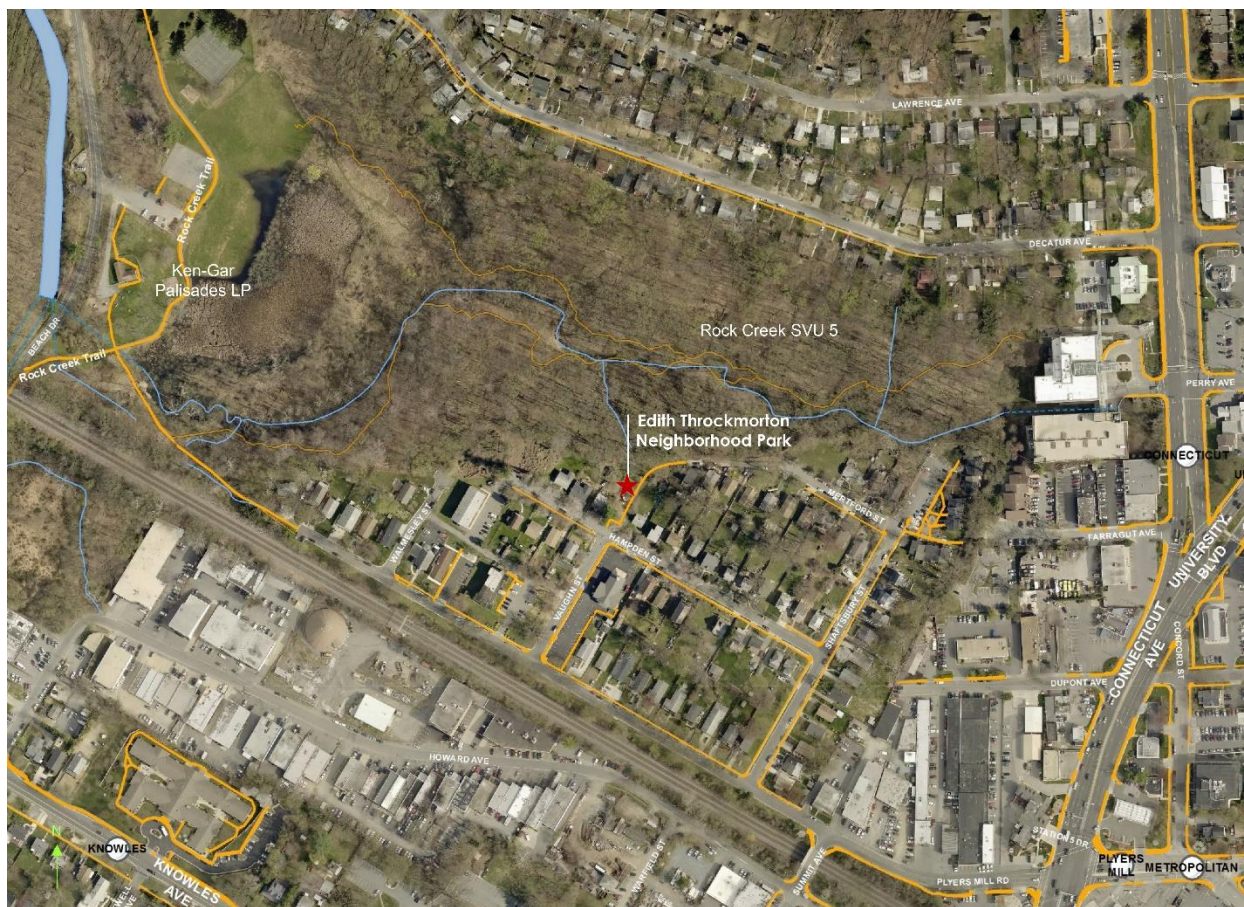
Introduction

The purpose of this project is to prepare a facility plan for the renovation of Edith Throckmorton Neighborhood Park located at 3925 Hampden Street in Kensington, Maryland. A companion Preliminary Forest Conservation Plan, as well as a variance for impacts to trees 30 inches or larger in diameter, will be presented to the Planning Board for approval prior to presentation of the subject Facility Plan.



Edith Throckmorton Neighborhood Park is an existing 0.2-acre neighborhood park located in Kensington, Maryland approximately two miles outside of the Capital Beltway, west of Connecticut Avenue, and north of Plyers Mill Road at the terminus of Vaughn Street at Hampden Street. The park parcel was originally an abandoned Vaughn Street right of way that was co-owned by the abutting properties. The abutting owners adopted the 1991 subdivision plan for Parcel "A" Block 6, Ken-Gar (Resolution No. 91-28AB by Montgomery County Planning Board) and agreed to convey the property to the M-NCPPC for use as a public, neighborhood park.

The 20.2-acre Ken-Gar Palisades Local Park which contains a playground, several athletic fields and restrooms is located approximately .5 miles to the west of the subject park. Access to the Rock Creek Trail near Beach Drive and to Ken-Gar Palisades Local Park is provided by neighborhood sidewalks and a hard-surface trail through a wooded area at the end of Plyers Mill Road. The Leonard D. Jackson Ken-Gar Center, a County-operated recreation center is located a short distance away on Plyers Mill Road.



2015 Aerial Map

Edith Throckmorton Neighborhood Park was originally acquired in 1991 and located within the historic Ken-Gar neighborhood. Ken-Gar was named for the two historic railroad towns that were located between, Kensington and Garrett Park, alongside the old Baltimore & Ohio railroad tracks. The seven-block, triangular shaped neighborhood was among the first in Montgomery County to be platted and recorded in 1893. Part of the land that makes up Ken-Gar was deeded at the turn of the century to a group of former slaves from Charles County in southern Maryland. It is the only one of Montgomery County's early black settlements that has survived

with much of its original structures and history preserved. The Leonard D. Jackson Ken Gar-Center, a County-owned recreation center for teens, is in the former Ken-Gar Rosenwald School.

Edith Throckmorton was a respected community leader and educator who was committed to equal opportunities for African-Americans in the County. She led the Montgomery County Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) for 16 years. The Ken-Gar Civic Association of Kensington, Maryland, dedicated the park in her honor.

Situated between two single family dwellings, the approximately 50-foot-wide by 160-foot-deep site gently slopes approximately seven feet towards the adjacent Rock Creek Stream Valley Park (SVU5) to the north. Single family homes and the First Baptist Church of Ken-Gar are located across the street from the park. A Housing Opportunities Commission (HOC) owned single-family dwelling is located adjacent to the northeast corner of the park property.

Existing facilities within the park include a playground and a picnic and sitting area. The aging facilities were installed in the early 1990's and are in poor condition, difficult to maintain and do not meet current accessibility standards. The main entrance to the park is from the Hampden Street frontage. A secondary informal entrance is provided from a private driveway at the terminus of Mertford Street, via a timber stairway along the edge of the Rock Creek stream valley park. Part of the timber stairway is located on the abutting HOC property

Project Funding

Facility planning represents thirty percent complete construction documents, including a proposed design, cost estimate and determination of regulatory feasibility. The facility planning study for the project was funded with \$90,000 from the FY 2017-2018 Capital Improvements Program in the Facility Planning Local Parks PDF.

A topographic survey and Natural Resources Inventory/Forest Stand Delineation (NRI/FSD) were prepared by A. Morton Thomas & Associates, Inc. Preliminary concept alternatives were developed by Park Development Division (PDD) staff after meeting with the community. Norton Land Design was hired in March 2018 as the project's prime consultant. If approved the project will be proposed for final design and construction and funded in the FY 2019-2020 Park Refreshers PDF.

Facility Planning Process

The facility planning process includes the following sequence of work:

Initiation

1. Collect data, prepare site survey and analyze existing site conditions.
2. Prepare and obtain approval of Natural Resources Inventory/Forest Stand Delineation Summary Map.
3. Meet with the community to gather input and ideas for the park.
4. Identify program of requirements and priorities.

Concept

5. Develop park renovation concept alternatives based on community's preferences.
6. Present design alternatives to the community, stakeholders and immediate neighbors.

Design Development and Preliminary Permits

7. Develop park renovation plan based on input received.
8. Perform geotechnical investigations.
9. Prepare stormwater management concept submission and obtain approval from the Department of Permitting Services.
10. Coordinate recommended plan with the community and stakeholders and resolve any outstanding issues with stakeholder groups and regulatory agencies.

Facility Plan

11. Develop preferred plan based on feedback from the community and regulatory agencies.
12. Prepare and submit Preliminary Forest Conservation Plan (PFCP).
13. Finalize facility plan and prepare 30% construction documents and cost estimate.

Final Documentation and Planning Board Approval

14. Prepare facility plan staff report, cost estimate and operating budget estimates.
15. Present facility plan recommendations and costs to the Montgomery County Planning Board for approval along with companion PFCP.

MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

Kensington Sector Plan, Approved and Adopted March 2012

Edith Throckmorton Neighborhood Park is located two blocks west of the busy Connecticut Avenue corridor in the historic Ken-Gar neighborhood. The neighborhood borders the Kensington Town Center behind service industrial uses in the Commercial Residential Neighborhood (CRN) zone. The park is approximately 0.5 mile from the MARC Train Brunswick Line Kensington Station located on the east side of Connecticut Avenue. The Rock Creek Trail near Beach Drive can be reached from the park via neighborhood sidewalks and a hard-surface trail at the end of Plyers Mill Road. There is an informal system of natural surface trails in the Rock Creek stream valley park that provide pedestrian access from Connecticut Avenue to the active use areas of Ken-Gar Palisades Local Park.

The Plan's vision is to reinvigorate the Town Center while preserving Kensington's scale and historic character. The Plan recommends promoting pedestrian and bicycle connectivity; redefining existing and new public spaces; protecting stable residential neighborhoods; and practicing sustainable design and building to protect and enhance the environment. The Plan seeks to create diversity in "*an active Town Center with new residential uses,*" and to promote "*the community's heritage through its buildings, spaces, and people.*"

Though beyond the Town Center District, Ken-Gar was recognized in the Sector Plan for its historic significance. The Plan makes the following recommendations:
Parks, Page 14:

Kensington is well-served by parks, including seven Town parks and six Montgomery County parks. This Plan recommends preserving the existing County parks: Kensington Cabin Local Park, Warner Circle Special Park, Edith Throckmorton Neighborhood Park, Kensington Parkway

Stream Valley Park, Kensington-Frederick Avenue Neighborhood Park, and the St. Paul Neighborhood Conservation Area.

- *Examine the existing Edith Throckmorton Neighborhood Park for future renovation.*

Environment, Pages 15 and 17:

All private and public development should practice sustainable design and building to protect and enhance the environment. A high priority should be placed on the following:

- *Treating stormwater runoff with environmentally sensitive design (ESD) or low impact development (LID)*
- *Design and construct sidewalks that disconnect runoff from conventional storm drain systems.*
- *Reduce the amount of impervious surface areas to maximize infiltration of stormwater and reduce runoff.*
- *Provide opportunities for collaborative efforts among public and private landowners to establish community gardens.*
- *Establish green corridors to connect parks, stream valleys, and trails with neighborhoods and destinations such as public facilities, civic places, shopping districts and institutions.*
- *Increase tree canopy cover along streets and within medians, within existing neighborhoods, commercial areas, and on parkland.*
- *Use the CRT and CRN Zones to provide incentives for vegetative layering through tree preservation and planting, green roofs, rooftop gardens, vegetated walls, planted biofiltration.*

Ken-Gar neighborhood, Page 40:

Ken-Gar is a stable residential community. This Plan recommends that the neighborhood be evaluated for inclusion on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation and that its community center, a Rosenwald School built in the late 1920s, be evaluated as an individual historic resource.

Kensington Sector Plan Design Guidelines, Approved and Adopted March 2013

The document provides design guidelines for property owners, community members, and planners to implement the vision and recommendations of the 2012 approved and adopted *Kensington Sector Plan*. Objectives in the guidelines that are related to parks include:

Highlight Kensington:

- *Manage and protect elements that are important to Kensington's identity.*
- *Provide new, predominantly green open spaces to reinforce the garden suburb theme in Kensington's layout.*
- *Express local history and identity through design elements and public art.*

Create a high-quality pedestrian network:

- *Improvement to the sidewalks, crosswalks, and trails is needed to encourage travel by foot and bicycle.*
- *Use trees and plants to complement the pedestrian character of the historic district.*

- *Increase tree canopy along streets and within medians, in existing neighborhoods and commercial areas, and on parkland.*

Create a variety of public open spaces.

A network of public open spaces should provide comfortable and attractive spaces that offer a range of experiences. Such a system will help create a healthier environment by mitigating the effects of pollution and providing opportunities for recreation, respite, and enjoyment. Public open spaces should incorporate features that engage all age groups from young children to the elderly. The Sector Plan seeks to create a system of parks and open spaces linked by bikeways and sidewalks to meet the increasing demand for outdoor gathering space.

- *Incorporate seating in public open space*
- *Design flexible spaces to accommodate a variety of activities*

Countywide Bikeways Functional Master Plan, Approved and Adopted March 2005

The Countywide Bikeways Functional Master Plan was developed with the goal of providing connectivity to major park destinations and the major park trail corridors. Edith Throckmorton Neighborhood Park is located within 0.5 miles of the Rock Creek Trail near Beach Drive. Figure 2-11 on page 38 of the plan identifies bikeways in the Wheaton/Aspen Hill area. Edith Throckmorton Neighborhood Park is two blocks north of the Plan's proposed countywide bikeway SR-24, Plyers Mill Road Bikeway. The routes are described on page 50 and are summarized below.

- **Route SR-24**, Plyers Mill Road from Georgia Avenue west to Rock Creek Park/Trail: This is proposed as a "signed and shared roadway" (Class III bikeway). The trail is part of the connection from Kensington to Wheaton CBD and Metrorail as well as between the Rock Creek Park/Trail and Kensington MARC. The bikeway would require bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements at Connecticut Avenue. A connection to Kensington MARC would be provided via Saint Paul Street and the redevelopment of the cement plant property along Metropolitan Avenue.

2017 Park, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan

The 2017 Park, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan serves as the planning policy for parks and recreation in Montgomery County to the year 2030 and beyond. It assesses needs and recommends strategies for the delivery of park and recreation facilities, protection of natural resource areas, and preservation of historic/cultural areas and agricultural lands. The goals are outlined on p3:

- *Optimize Existing Parks and Facilities; Utilize existing park and recreation facilities and lands more fully.*
- *Create Great, Activated Parks to Equitably Serve the County: Provide spaces and programs that bring people together.*
- *Steward and Interpret our Natural and Cultural Resources: Prioritize the management and protection of natural and cultural resources.*

The Plan promotes park and recreation equity for all citizens of the County.

- *Provide parks in areas of higher concentrations of lower income households with low walkable access to parks, recreation and open spaces, as identified to the Park Equity tool and staff analysis.*
- *Add Park Equity to the criteria for prioritization of the Capital Improvement Program to promote equitable access to parks for all.*

Edith Throckmorton Neighborhood Park is at the center of a historically African-American community. Some residents are descendants of the original black settlement. This was an under-privileged minority community that has become more diverse over the years to include white, Hispanic and other ethnicities. Renovation and activation of the park will promote social equity and accessibility for the neighborhood. The Park was recommended in the PROS Plan for facility planning in FY 2017 and 2018.

Vision 2030: The Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan, Approved and Adopted June 2011

Vision 2030 is a strategic plan for park and recreation services in Montgomery County for the next twenty years. The approved plan identifies Edith Throckmorton Neighborhood Park as located in the South-Central planning area. Volume 2 of the current draft (page 63) indicates that the South-Central area has the lowest level of service of all planning areas for parks and recreation compared to the density of population.

The Vision 2030 survey identified top program priorities to improve or expand. Among these are health and wellness, outdoor nature programs, children and youth activities, community gardens, and youth league sports. On page 22, the facilities that rated as top priorities to add, expand or improve include trails, playgrounds and natural areas. The Parks and Recreation Amenity Analysis Chart on page 75 (Appendix E), indicates that there is a higher demand for the following facilities in the South-Central planning area: community gardens, dog parks, picnic shelters, and playgrounds.

2018 Energized Public Spaces Functional Master Plan (EPS FMP)

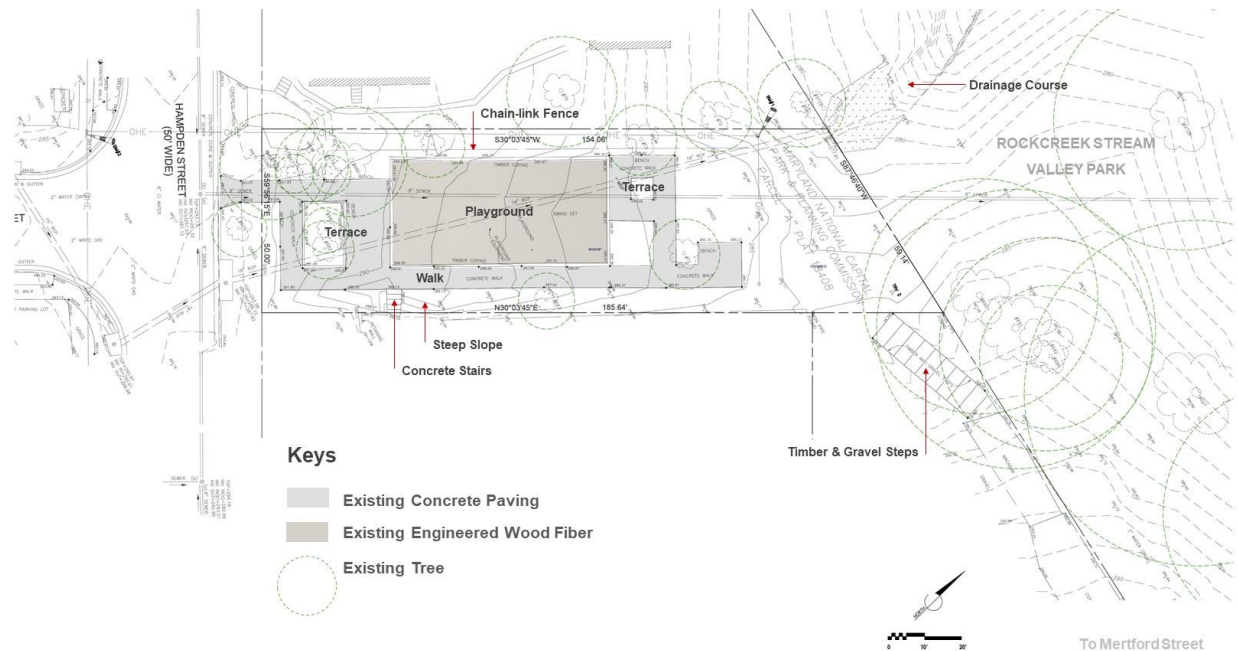
The Energized Public Spaces Functional Master Plan (EPS Plan) for Parks in Mixed Use and Higher Density Areas is a plan that applies an innovative methodology to identify areas with the highest need for parks and open spaces and recommends opportunities to increase the amount of parks and open space in those communities. The Plan promotes public spaces as platforms where people can share experiences and build a sense of community. The Plan develops a methodology to ensure equity in parks and opens spaces within specific geographic areas. On Figure 16, page 29, neighborhood parks are identified as Community Use Parks under the new Park Classification System – small parks providing informal recreation in residential areas. Typical Facilities include play equipment, play field, sitting area, shelter, tennis and multi-use courts. Kensington is not identified as a pilot study area.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

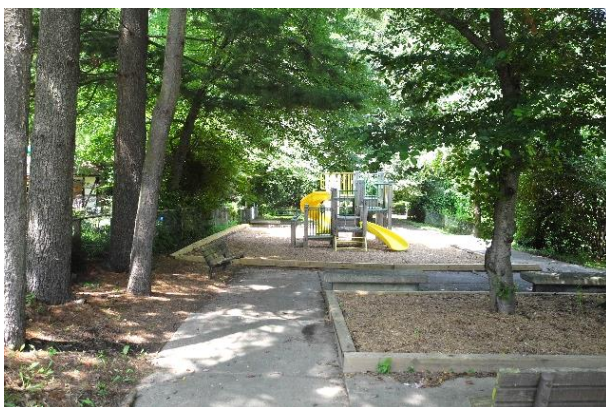


2015 Aerial Map

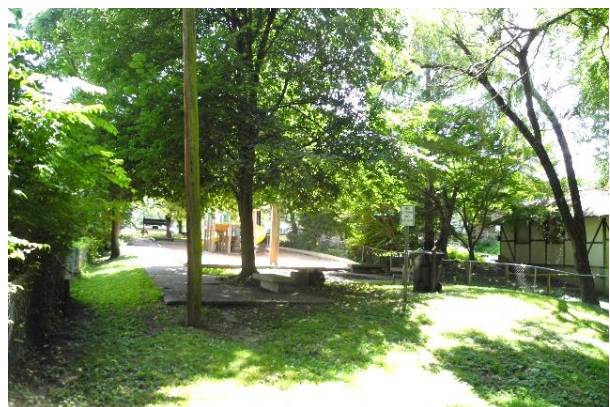
The approximately 50' by 150' site is oriented southwest-northeast with its entrance fronting Hampden Street on the south. The park gently slopes approximately seven-feet from the street towards Rock Creek Stream Valley Park (SVU5) to the north. Existing facilities include a playground, picnic and sitting area, which were developed in the early 1990's and are in poor condition. The northern portion of the park is currently undeveloped. A steep slope along the eastern property border is covered in invasive shrubs. The property owner abutting the park to the east at 3921 Hampden Street currently accesses the lower level of its home via a concrete stairway located on park property. An approximately four-foot-wide strip of park property along the western property line is inaccessible due to the existence of the neighbor's chain-link fence.



The current park is inefficiently designed. There is no open space for gathering or for unprogrammed, flexible use. The aging hardscape is in poor condition and does not meet the current Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines for accessibility. The aging timber playground equipment is outdated, difficult to maintain and does not meet current playground design standards. The park has poor visibility from the street due to overgrown vegetation, and the linear nature of the site creates a feeling of seclusion, making the spaces feel uncomfortable. Residents currently walk or push their bikes through the park to access the adjacent Rock Creek Trail and Ken-Gar Palisades Local Park. There is no accessible connection to the neighborhoods north of the park or to the adjacent Rock Creek Park. The community-built gravel and timber stairway at the end of Mertford Street is eroded and not ADA compliant.



View from south



View from north

There is currently no existing stormwater management provided in the park. An existing 18" storm drain pipe transects the park carrying stormwater from Hampden Street that outfalls into a swale outside of the northwest corner of the park. The swale also conveys stormwater runoff from nearby Mertford Street. The outfall area is severely eroded. Park staff are working to restore over 200 linear feet of the swale as a separate project.



Timber and gravel stairway to Mertford Street



Eroded drainage course downstream from park

FACILITY PLANNING PROCESS

Program of Requirements

Staff met with the community on several occasions to discuss the project and obtain input for the park renovation. The first public meeting was held in April 2017 to gather initial ideas. Preliminary concept alternatives, developed by the Parks landscape architect, were presented to the community in June 2017. Additional public comments were collected at the Ken-Gar 125th Anniversary Celebration held on September 16, 2017, and the recommended plan was presented to the community on June 12, 2018.

Community Outreach

Community Meeting #1

The first community meeting was held on April 24, 2017. The goal of this first meeting was to present the site analysis, background and present a preliminary program of development. An overview of the process and schedule was also discussed.

The following observations and preferences were expressed by the attending community:

- Improve visibility and presence of the park from Hampden Street.
- Provide multi-purpose program and activity spaces.
- Plan community space, terraces and seating areas near the street front.
- Include more and better play equipment for all ages. Love the swings!
- Create space that can accommodate gentle ball playing and games.
- Consider adding a gazebo for gathering or community events.
- Provide seating opportunities with shade and picnic areas.
- Consider stone retaining seat walls to contain the steep slope along property border.
- Incorporate natural materials.
- Upgrade landscape and incorporate garden opportunities.
- Provide a fence along the western border which is transparent or low in height.
- Provide a dog waste station with plastic bags.
- Retain and improve the existing lighting in the park.
- Control invasive plants, overgrown vegetation and mosquitos.

- Manage runoff from the park and surrounding neighborhood into Rock Creek and its tributaries.
- Address erosion problems for the existing steps northeast of the park and the stream embankment.
- Improve pedestrian connections to the surrounding neighborhood. Consider possible bicycle access.
- Provide signage about Edith Throckmorton and a community bulletin board
- Propose regular police surveillance of the neighborhood and the park.

The following Preliminary Program of Requirements was developed for the park based on input from the community and staff team and guidance from master plans:

- Community Open Space/Terrace – Provide open area for small gatherings and picnicking.
- Accessibility – Provide accessible paths within the park and connect to the sidewalks.
- Play elements – Create play opportunities for all ages.
- Stormwater Management and Landscape Improvements
- Site furnishings – Provide site furniture to accommodate flexible uses.
- Improved visibility and incorporation of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles

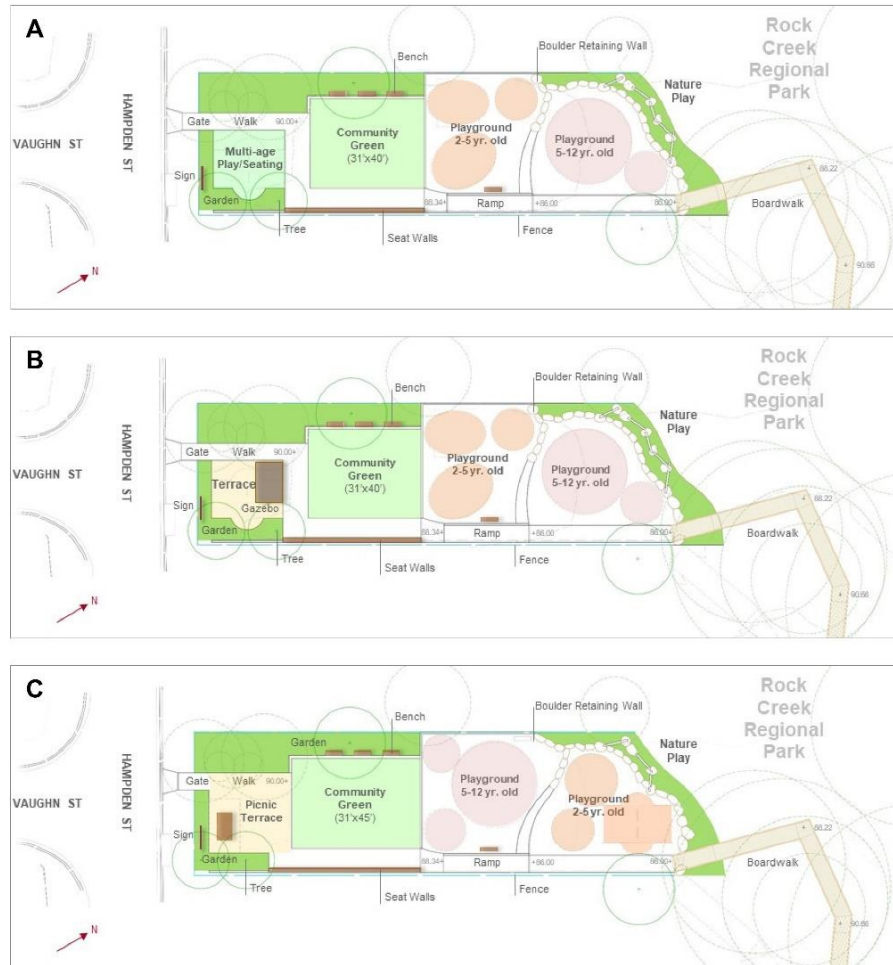
Three alternative concept plans were developed based on feedback from the first public meeting. The preliminary program included an open area for small gatherings and picnicking; accessible paths; play opportunities for all ages; stormwater management; landscape improvements; and site furniture to accommodate flexible uses.

The concepts all take advantage of the existing sloping topography by incorporating a series of terraced spaces in a garden-like setting which fit well into the neighborhood context. Program elements include a multi-purpose terrace/open space near the Hampden Street entrance, playgrounds for 2 to 5-year-olds and 5 to 12 year-olds, a nature play area incorporating stormwater mitigation, accessible paths and ramps, a boardwalk connection through the forest edge to Mertford Street, seating, retaining walls, signage, fencing, spaces to garden and landscape improvements. Unfortunately, due to severely steep slopes on the abutting Rock Creek Stream Valley park property a direct trail connection was determined to be infeasible at this time.

Community Meeting #2

The second community meeting was held on June 27, 2017 during which the three design alternatives were presented for public feedback. Photographic images of similar types of facilities were shared at the presentation to convey the ideas.

- Concept A proposes a playground for younger children located near the community open space facilitating easy supervision and features multi-age swing/seat at the front to activate the park.
- Concept B is similar to Concept A but includes a gazebo and terrace in place of the multi-age swing/seat.
- Concept C proposes a picnic terrace at the front, a playground for younger children further away from Hampden Street, and a playground for older children near the community open space in the central area.



The community generally preferred Concept A and was in favor of a multi-purpose community open space towards the front of the park and in locating the younger children's play area nearby for safety and easy supervision. They reiterated a desire that the park be designed for all age groups and that it includes areas for gathering, seating and where parents can comfortably watch their children play.

The community supported the idea of consolidating and expanding usable space within the park. Recommended strategies included creating level, useable space along the eastern property line where steep slopes currently exist, reclaiming the area currently unavailable along the western property line and incorporating the currently unused area at the northern forest edge. Neighbors expressed a concern that natural lawn would not be maintainable. There was a suggestion to provide a paved area for children with scooters. The community liked the idea of a nature play theme and there was a suggestion to integrate it with the existing forest edge. Other input included a preference for the quality of shade provided by a natural tree canopy and adequate lighting for safe pedestrian passage. A request was made to replace the Cherry trees currently in decline.

Access to the park was also discussed. A boardwalk connection along the forest edge on park property was proposed. A request was made to explore providing a more direct connection to the park from Mertford Street through the RAD 6 Development Corporation lot (which is a HOC property). There was also a request to study the feasibility of providing connections from the park to the natural surface trail system in the adjacent Rock Creek stream valley park.

Neighbors also expressed interest in exploring alternative hard surface materials for the park, such as permeable paving and synthetic turf. A smaller park sign either mounted on a fence or relocated to the side of the Hampden Street frontage was also suggested.

Community Outreach – Ken-Gar 125th Anniversary Celebration

On September 16, 2017, staff attended the Ken-Gar 125th Anniversary Celebration to provide information about the upcoming park renovation and obtain additional community feedback. Concept plans were available for review, along with image boards with activities that could be included within the park. During the celebration staff spoke with between 50-75 people, including a number of neighborhood residents and children that were not able to attend prior community meetings.

The desire that the park be designed to accommodate the needs of different ages was heard throughout the day. It was noted that the neighborhood includes households with elderly parents who would use the park if it had facilities for them. Many people liked the images of comfortable seating areas. A labyrinth as part of the community open space was suggested several times. There were multiple requests for shaded seating and picnic areas. There was a request for movable furniture and picnic tables. An outdoor ping-pong table and game tables also received positive feedback. Adequate lighting was also requested.

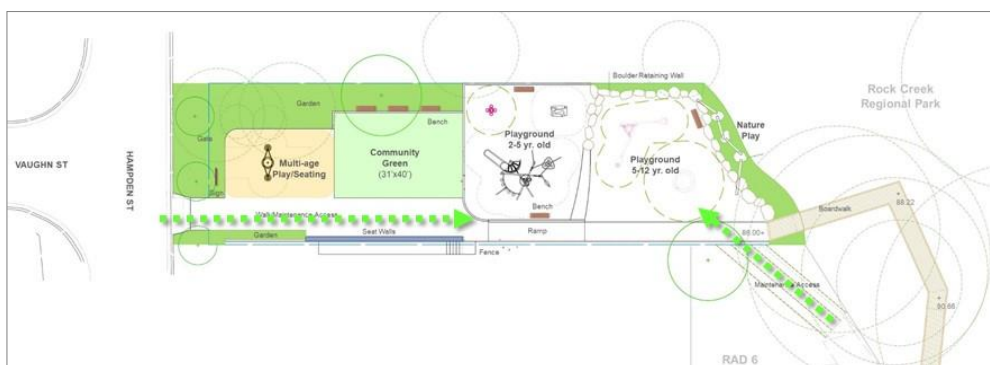
Many of the children requested swings. Additional requests for playground equipment included a climbing structure, big slide, zip line, rock-climbing structure, monkey bars, a loop path for tricycles, and water play elements. Younger boys requested a basketball hoop and there were several requests for a soccer goal for shooting practice. People liked the idea of nature-themed play as well as stormwater integrated natural play opportunities. There was also a suggestion to include an area for a children's flower or vegetable garden.

Most people supported a formal boardwalk connection to the driveway extension at Mertford Street, and it was requested that there be benches/seating along this connection. Several people requested trail connections to the natural surface trail system within the adjacent Rock Creek stream valley park with a link to the nearby Kaiser Permanente site and the active use areas of Ken-Gar Palisades Local Park.

There were individual suggestions for artwork and interpretive signage on the history of Ken-Gar, information about Edith Throckmorton, or about local wildlife and nature. A suggestion was made to interpret history at the front of the park and nature at the rear towards the Rock Creek stream valley park.

Community Meeting #3

The third community meeting was held on June 12, 2018 during which staff presented the design development plan for public input. The plan refined prior schematic concepts based on community



feedback as well as addressed operational needs and site constraints. Program components and spatial strategies were similar to the earlier schematic concepts with an important exception- the revised plan relocates the park entrance to the southeast corner, aligning the entire accessible route along the southeastern property line to avoid bisecting the community open space. Three variations of the plan using different materials and features were presented at the meeting.

In general, most participants seemed supportive of the design development plan. The spatial limitations of the park were again discussed it was noted that that the community needs small to medium-size gathering spaces as large neighborhood events are usually held in nearby church parking lots. The proposed terrace and community open space within the park could serve this purpose for neighbors, nearby churches and the adjacent Leonard D. Jackson Ken-Gar Center. Neighbors expressed the desire to pave the community open space to provide greater flexibility for its use, but to still preserve the quiet, neighborhood character of the park and maximize the amount of remaining green space. A concern was raised regarding over-programing the park with play equipment, and there was a preference to remove the proposed swing from the park near Hampden Street.

Staff solicited input for each of the proposed features including materials, surfacing, play equipment, furnishings and landscape planting. These comments were incorporated into the recommended plan.

Agency Coordination and Regulatory Approvals

The following is a summary of agency coordination performed for this project:

M-NCPPC Department of Parks

Staff met with various stakeholders within M-NCPPC throughout the planning process as part of the Planning, Design, Construction and Operations (PDCO) team process. This included staff from Park Police, Area 2 Planners, Facilities Management, Southern Region, Urban Forestry, Playground Safety, ADA, Environmental Engineering, Water Resources, and Park and Trail Planning.

M-NCPPC Department of Planning / Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

A Natural Resources Inventory/Forest Stand Delineation (NRI/FSD) was approved on April 26, 2017 (File #420170960) for the renovation of the park. A Preliminary Forest Conservation Plan (File #PP2019001) was submitted in December 2018 and is currently under review. An application for a variance was submitted to DEP on December 10, 2018 for impacts to the critical root zones of five trees having a diameter of 30 inches or greater. Excluding a tree that is in decline with a rotten base and trunk, four other trees are proposed to be protected and preserved. PP2019001 is a companion case to the subject facility plan and will be reviewed by the Planning Board prior to review of the Edith Throckmorton Neighborhood Park Facility Plan.

Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (DPS)

The stormwater management concept plan for the park was approved on November 8, 2018 (File #284154). There were no feasible locations within the park property to provide traditional stormwater management facilities. As allowed in the Maryland Department of Environment's stormwater manual, stream restoration projects can be credited towards stormwater management requirements. As such, a waiver of the on-site stormwater management

requirements was approved based on site limitations. The plan proposes to perform stream restoration on a drainage course located at the northwest corner of the property leading to Rock Run Stream as well as to improve the eroding pipe outfall located just outside of the northwest corner of the subject property.

The Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County (HOC)

A meeting was held at the park on April 10, 2018 to coordinate access improvements between the park and the Mertford Street neighborhood to the northeast. The current access, an existing gravel and timber stairway, lies within both the park and the adjacent HOC owned parcel located at 3920 Mertford Street. The existing stairway is in poor condition.

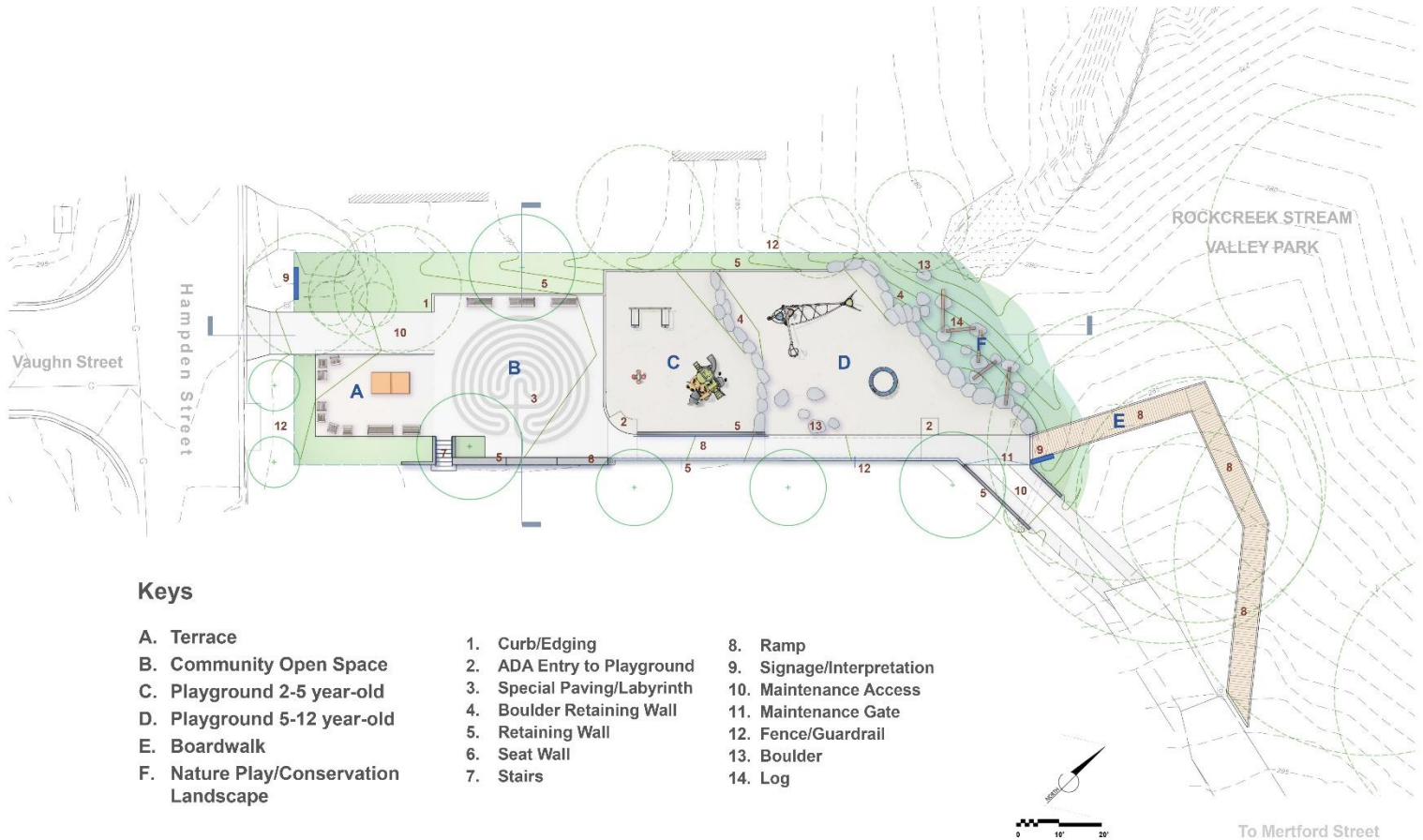
Montgomery Parks proposes to acquire an easement from the HOC to build maintenance access for the park. In a letter dated December 4, 2018 (See Attachment A13), the HOC agrees to support the proposed plan and to grant an easement for access, construction, maintenance, inspections and repairs of the park.



2015 Aerial Map

Recommended Facility Plan

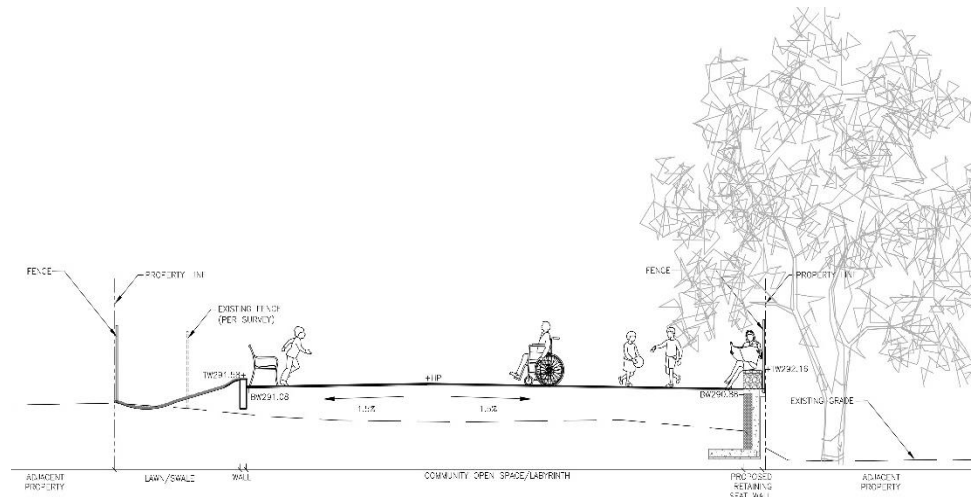
The Recommended Facility Plan for Edith Throckmorton Neighborhood Park envisions a series of terraced spaces in a garden-like setting which honors the unique, intimate scale and character of the site while promoting a sense of community. The plan recommends expanding the useable park area to accommodate a variety of experiences that engage all age groups and includes the following: an open area for small gatherings and picnicking, accessible paths and ramps, play opportunities, stormwater mitigation, landscape improvements, and updated furnishings and amenities. The renewed park will promote community engagement and provide opportunities for recreation, respite and enjoyment. The plan promotes connectivity to the surrounding neighborhoods and incorporates the principles of *Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design* (CPTED) to achieve a safer and more accessible park.



Key elements include:

Entry Terrace -located at the Hampden Street frontage, the terrace is visible, accessible and welcoming. The space serves as an outdoor living room for casual seating, gathering and picnicking.

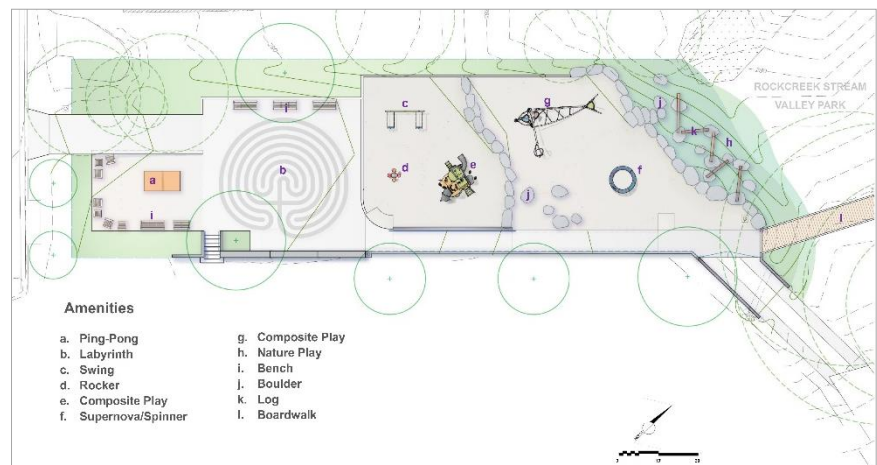
Retaining Walls – a series of walls enable expansion of useable parkland.



Community Open Space – a flexible space that can accommodate a variety of activities: gentle ball playing, games, scooter riding or labyrinth walking. Shaded by trees and located within view of the younger children's playground, caretakers can sit nearby and supervise play while enjoying the park or engaging in social interaction. This space also serves as an overflow space for the entry terrace and play area as well as the maintenance access for the 2-5-year-old playground.

Play Experience – two separate but adjacent play areas specifically designed with age-appropriate, challenging play activities that can be easily monitored and observed from the seating areas and can accommodate a single child or group play. The 2-5-year-old playground includes a toddler swing, a 4-seat rocker and a composite play structure. The low-profile play structure allows for an unobstructed view through the park. The 5-12-year-old playground includes a spinner and a composite structure for more challenging play as well as a perch for children to view the park. The transparent design enables the play structure to blend with the environment and allows the landscape to be seen through it from all directions.

Amenities – a variety of seating opportunities including a set of seat walls, benches and movable tables and chairs are provided. The ping-pong table in the front terrace offers play opportunities for all age groups and helps to activate the park. The park will include interpretive signage and a dog waste station. Existing lighting will be upgraded for safe passage at dark.



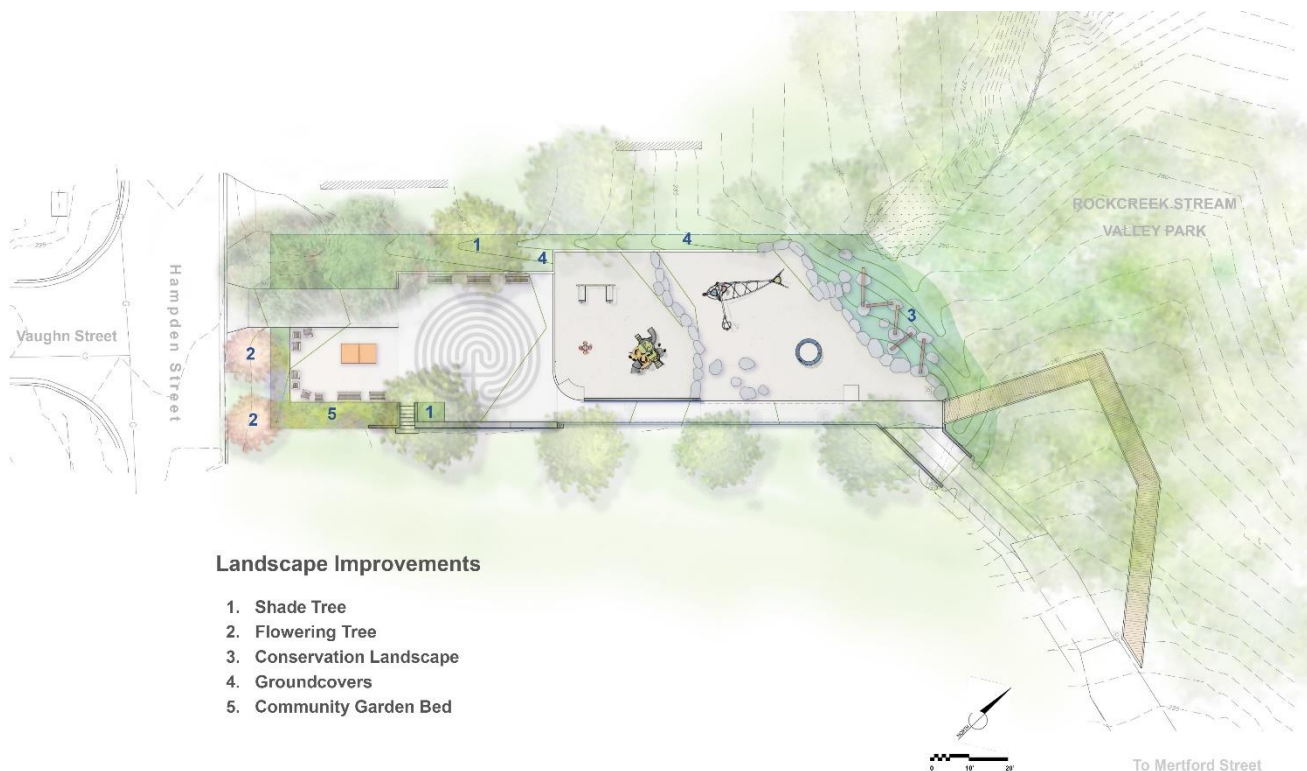
Nature Play – Boulders, logs and native planting is included to help define space, act as a placemaking feature and create a nature play area. Deep-rooted native planting promotes water absorption and helps to filter stormwater. The unique setting and natural materials reflect and reinforce the forest and stream context and provide alternatives for children to explore and interact with nature and each other.

Access Improvements – A five-foot-wide ADA compliant walkway with ramps provides access throughout the expanded park area. An elevated boardwalk connects the Mertford Street neighborhood to the park while protecting the critical root zone of existing trees. Maintenance access is provided off Hampden Street and by the new maintenance route provided from Mertford Street.



Landscape Improvements – Tree protection strategies guide the design, construction and long-term tree care for the renovated park. Cherry trees will be planted at the main park entrance at Hampden Street and medium size shade trees, in scale with the intimate size of the park, will be planted to provide shade for the community open space and terrace. Low maintenance groundcovers will be used along the peripheral swale to enhance the space and provide environmental benefits. A community garden bed will be created at the southeast corner of the park. The garden will provide a meaningful activity for park users and a place for children to learn and play.

Stormwater Mitigation – due to the low infiltration capacity of the site's soil and site limitations, an existing, eroded storm drain outfall and drainage swale located just outside of the northwest corner of the park will be stabilized, benefitting the overall area hydrology.



COST ESTIMATE

Design and Construction Costs

A summary of design and construction costs is outlined in the table below. A detailed cost estimate is included in the attachments section.

Item	Total Cost
Site Preparation and Demolition	\$64,600
Tree Protection	\$37,900
Sediment and Erosion Control	\$9,400
Earthwork	\$46,300
Stormwater Management & Drainage	\$42,400
Lighting and Electrical	\$15,000
Paving (walkways & terraces)	\$134,200
Structures (walls, stairs, boardwalk, fence & railing)	\$210,800
Site Amenities (playground, furnishings, signage & artwork)	\$133,330
Landscape Improvements	\$66,600
Miscellaneous	\$9,000
CONSTRUCTION SUBTOTAL	\$769,530
General Contractor Overhead & Profit @ 8%	\$61,600
Construction Contingency (15% of Construction Subtotal)	\$115,500
CONSTRUCTION TOTAL (Subtotal plus Contingency)	\$885,030
Design Cost	\$65,000
Staff Chargebacks for Detail Design	\$16,000
Construction Management & Inspections (3% of Construction Total)	\$26,600
TOTAL PROJECT COST	\$992,630

Operating Budget Impact

The total operating budget impact is estimated at \$11,000 per year starting in fiscal year 2021. A detailed estimate is included in the attachments.

CONCLUSION

Staff recommends approval of the Facility Plan and associated cost estimate. Edith Throckmorton Neighborhood Park is an important link in the open space network in the Ken-Gar area associated with Rock Creek Park and is at the center of a historically African-American and under-privileged minority community. Renovation and activation of the park will promote social equity, accessibility, and environmental sustainability and will help meet the recreational needs of the neighborhood. The proposed project greatly improves the function and appearance of the existing park.

Attachments:

1. 30% Construction Documents- Site Work
2. Natural Resource Inventory / Forest Stand Delineation
3. Natural Resource Inventory / Forest Stand Delineation Approval Letter
4. Preliminary Forest Conservation Plan
5. Tree Variance Approval Letter
6. Stormwater Management Concept Narrative and Calculation
7. Stormwater Management Concept
8. Geotechnical Report
9. Detailed Cost Estimate
10. Operating Budget Impact
11. Community Meeting Report
12. Stormwater Management Concept and Water Quality Inventory Approval Letter
13. Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County Easement Consent Letter