



**Mandatory Referral (MR2019016) for a Salt Storage Facility at the Montgomery County Department of Transportation's Gaithersburg Depot, 17000 Crabbs Branch Way**



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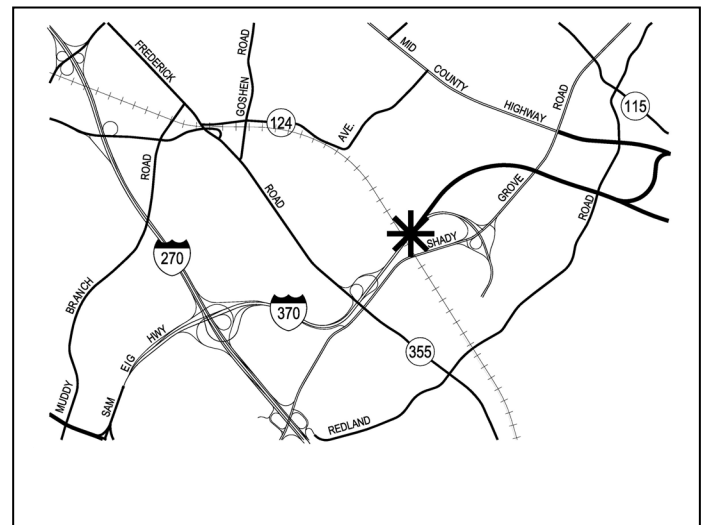


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Completed: 5/14/19

**Description**

- The expansion of a salt storage facility to include a new salt storage building is proposed for construction at Montgomery County Department of Transportation's Gaithersburg Depot; part of the David F. Bone Equipment Maintenance and Transit Operations Center (EMTOC).
- Located within the 2006 *Shady Grove Sector Plan* area; in the EOF 0.5, H-45 Zone.
- Filing Date: April 2, 2019.
- Applicant: Montgomery County Department of General Services (DGS).



**Summary**

Staff recommends the Planning Board approve this Mandatory Referral and approve transmittal of comments to the Montgomery County Department of General Services, including:

The Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (DPS) recommends that a storm drain study be submitted for its review and approval.

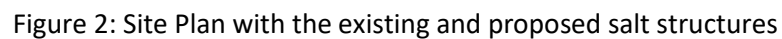
## OVERVIEW

The 2006 *Shady Grove Sector Plan* had an aspirational vision to transform a light industrial area into a new mixed-use community to take advantage of proximity to the Shady Grove Metrorail Station. To implement the Plan's vision, the County Service Park had to be relocated. The County initiated a relocation effort, with funding, known as the Smart Growth Initiative. The County purchased property north of Shady Grove Road (formerly Robert's Oxygen) to relocate some of the Department of Transportation's facilities. In 2013, the Department of Transportation's Equipment Maintenance and Transit Operations Center (EMTOC) opened at 17000 Crabbs Branch Way, as shown on the map below. The EMTOC is on two parcels that are bisected by the ICC (MD 200). Today, facilities at the EMTOC include administrative buildings, bus parking, bus service maintenance bays, heavy equipment storage, salt and gravel storage, and fueling stations. The northern portion of the EMTOC is adjacent to the Town of Washington Grove.



Figure 1: 2006 *Shady Grove Sector Plan* area with EMTOC properties highlighted

The County's Department of General Services proposes to construct a new 25,000-ton salt storage building at the EMTOC, near an existing salt storage building, which also has a capacity for 25,000 tons of salt. The new salt storage building will replace a facility in the east County that is no longer available. Located on a 5-acre parcel (P743) adjacent to the Town of Washington Grove, the new salt storage structure will be located west of the existing salt storage building, as shown below. These facilities store bulk salt that is used for treating roads during winter weather events.





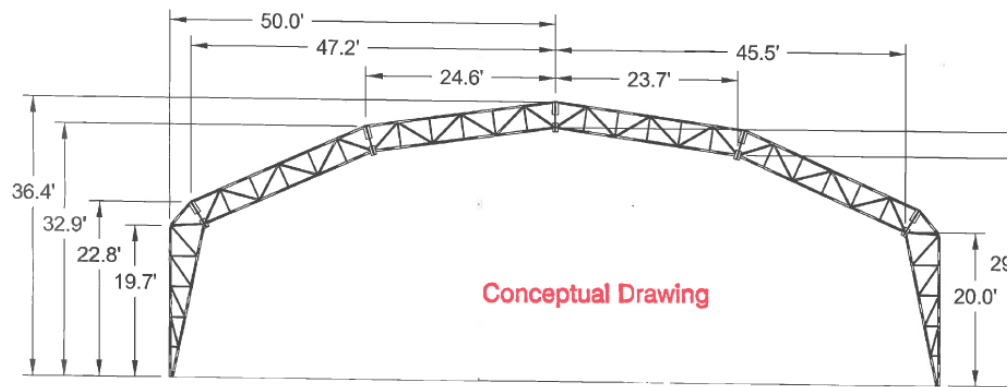


Figure 3: Conceptual cross-section and an example of the new salt storage structure

## MASTER PLAN

The proposed salt storage structure is located within an area that the 2006 *Shady Grove Sector Plan* referred to as Upper Mill Creek. Properties in Upper Mill Creek at the time the Sector Plan was adopted included Robert's Oxygen, the Casey 6 Property, and the Casey 7 Property. The Sector Plan had several different recommendations for this area, including relocation of some of the County Service Park uses, which is what was implemented. All of these properties were previously zoned light industrial and the 2006 Sector Plan recommended rezoning to an industrial park zone. As a result of the 2014 Countywide comprehensive rezoning, these properties were rezoned to the Employment Office Zone (EOF). The northernmost parcel of the EMTOC is zoned EOF, with a floor area ratio of 0.5 and height of 45 feet.

The 2006 Sector Plan recommended a 50-foot building setback for development that is adjacent to residentially zoned land and a 42-foot building height limit. The existing salt storage structure adheres to these recommendations, and the new salt storage structure will also be consistent with the Plan's recommendations. The new structure will be more than 200 feet from existing single-family properties in the Town of Washington Grove and the height will be 36.4 feet, as shown in the conceptual drawing in Figure 3 above.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Access to the EMTOC is provided by Crabbs Branch Way, which terminates at this facility. No additional staff will be needed at this site as a result of the additional salt storage facility; therefore, no additional traffic is associated with this operation. MCDOT is currently conducting a feasibility study to extend the current terminus of Crabbs Branch Way, east of the existing salt structure, to Amity Drive.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

The new salt storage structure will comply with the Forest Conservation Law, Chapter 22A, and with Montgomery County Planning Department's *Environmental Guidelines*. The disturbance associated with this Mandatory Referral is covered by a previously approved Final Forest Conservation Plan, MR2010709. The applicant has submitted a stormwater management concept to the Department of Permitting Services (DPS). DPS recommends that a storm drain study should be submitted for its review and approval.

## **COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

The applicant held a public meeting on April 10, 2019 and the Shady Grove Advisory Committee was notified about this proposal. The Planning Department also notified local civic and home owners associations, and other interested parties, including the Town of Washington Grove.

On May 9, 2019, Planning staff met with residents from Brown Street in the Town of Washington Grove. These residents expressed the following concerns with the existing EMTOC operations: noise, including beeping from trucks backing up, fumes from idling trucks, and vegetation planted for screening has died. Residents indicated that the proposed new structure will add to the existing operational issues associated with the EMTOC. The Deputy Director of DGS has informed Planning staff that DGS will address these operational issues with Brown Street residents and the Town of Washington Grove.

## **CONCLUSION**

DGS anticipates starting construction on this structure in September 2019, with completion in November 2019. Staff recommends approval of this Mandatory Referral and encourages the applicant to submit a storm drain study to DPS and to work with the Town of Washington Grove on the issues they have raised.