



## Final Forest Conservation Plan Amendment for Montgomery Blair High School, MR2020017

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### Description

- Final Forest Conservation Plan associated with a request to construct a Public Safety System Modernization (PSSM) radio communications tower at 111 University Blvd E
- Zone: R60
- Property Size: 42.6 Ac
- Master Plan: *1996 Four Corners Master Plan*
- Part A - Forest Conservation Plan: Modernization of Potomac Elementary School

### Staff Recommendation: Approval with conditions



- The review of this Mandatory Referral is in two parts:
  - Part A –Final Forest Conservation Plan Amendment MR2020017**, and
  - Part B - Mandatory Referral MR2020013**, discussed in a separate staff report.
- Construction of a new 195 foot Monopole tower.
- The forest conservation requirements have all been previously met at the time of the High School Construction.
- This Amendment is only to add the new construction activities to the Final forest Conservation Plan.

Recommendation: **Approval with conditions** of the Final Forest Conservation Plan Amendment

1. The Final Sediment Control Plan must depict the limits of disturbance (LOD) identical to the LOD on the approved Final Forest Conservation Plan.
2. The Applicant must comply with all tree protection and tree save measures shown on the approved Final Forest Conservation Plan. Tree save measures not specified on the approved Final Forest Conservation Plan may be required by the M-NCPPC forest conservation inspector.

## SITE DESCRIPTION

The generally vicinity of the Property is the confluence of Colesville Road (MD 29), University Boulevard (MD 193) and the Beltway (I-495). The Property is located immediately adjacent to Montgomery Blair High School in the south east corner of the triangle. The surrounding vicinity is almost entirely zoned R60 except a small pocket of CRT to the north.

The Montgomery Blair High School Site consists of approximately 42 acres, consisting of Parcel 360, Parcel 430, Parcel 384, on Tax Map JP342 ("Property") and zoned R60. The Site is currently developed as a High School

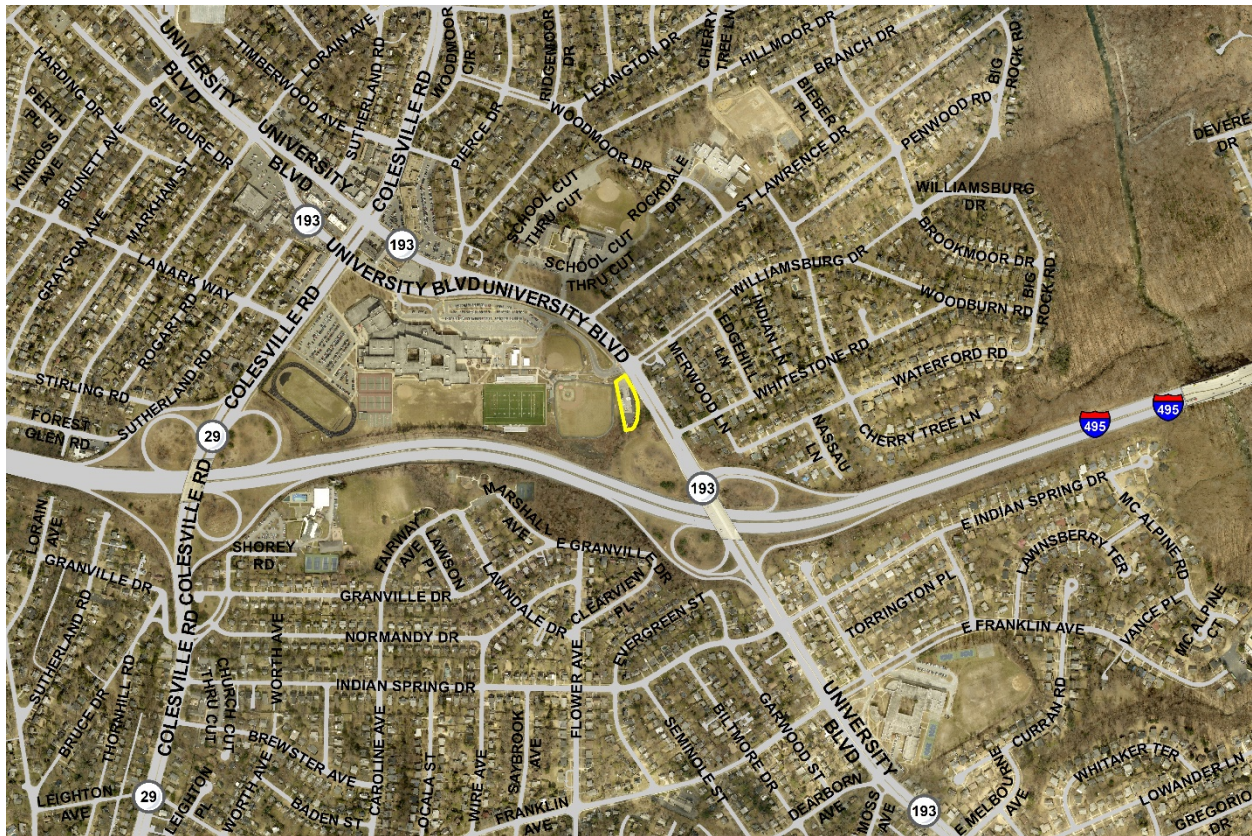


Figure 1: Aerial Photograph of the Vicinity



Figure 2: Aerial Photograph of the Site

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Public Safety Systems Modernization (PSSM) Program will replace the older communications systems with a new system that supports the County's public safety agencies and personnel to protect the lives and ensure the safety of the public. The PSSM Program is a multi-department/agency multi-year \$110M capital project.

The Montgomery County Department of Technology Services (DTS) under the PSSM program has applied for a Mandatory Referral construct a 195 foot self-support tower at 111 University Blvd E, Parcel 384 in Silver Spring. The applicant states that, "the current system fails to provide adequate radio coverage in several areas in the County" and that the, "new base stations are sited and designed to provide complete and effective coverage according to a '95/95' coverage mandate: 95 percent coverage reliability in 95 percent of the County service area." The applicant further states that in areas where existing radio coverage is inadequate, "there are significant consequences for emergency response

personnel. A lack of radio service can increase response time, the number of personnel required to effectively respond to an emergency situation, and the amount of time it takes to resolve an incident.”

All new construction activities will be taking place on parcel 384 in the southeast corner of the property within the existing parking lot for the fire station.

## **FOREST CONSERVATION PLAN ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS**

The Forest Conservation Plan Application meets all applicable requirements of Chapter 22A of the Montgomery County Forest Conservation Law.

### Review for Conformance to the Forest Conservation Law

The Application was previously subject to the Montgomery County Forest Conservation Law (Chapter 22A of the County Code) under Section 22A-4(d) as a project by *“a government entity subject to a mandatory referral on a tract of land 40,000 square feet or larger...”* The site included both the high school parcel and the fire station parcel under one application. This Application is to bring the previously approved plan into compliance with the new construction activities.

### Environmental Guidelines

There are no environmental impacts associated with this amendment

### Forest Conservation Plan

A Forest Conservation Plan Amendment (“FCP”) for the Site was submitted as part of the Mandatory Referral Application (Attachment B).

The FCP proposes no additional forest clearing or tree impacts. All new construction activities are being conducted on an area of the Property that is developed as a fire station and parking lot.

## **CONCLUSION**

Staff recommends the Planning Board **Approve with conditions** the Forest Conservation Plan and the variance request.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- A. Final forest Conservation Plan Amendment (FCP)