




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

MCPB Item # 3
Date: 10 / 8 / 2020

MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 1, 2020

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Michael F. Riley, Director of Parks *mr*
Miti Figueredo, Deputy Director, Administration *mf*
John Nissel, Deputy Director, Operations
Andrew Frank, Division Chief, Park Development Division (PDD) 

FROM: Brenda Sandberg, Real Estate Management Supervisor, PDD
Henry Coppola, Real Estate Specialist, PDD

SUBJECT: Land Acquisition Recommendation: Black Hill Regional Park
Farquhar-Bennett Property
15000 West Old Baltimore Road
Boys, MD 20841
18.54 acres, more or less, improved

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff requests the following action by the Montgomery County Planning Board:

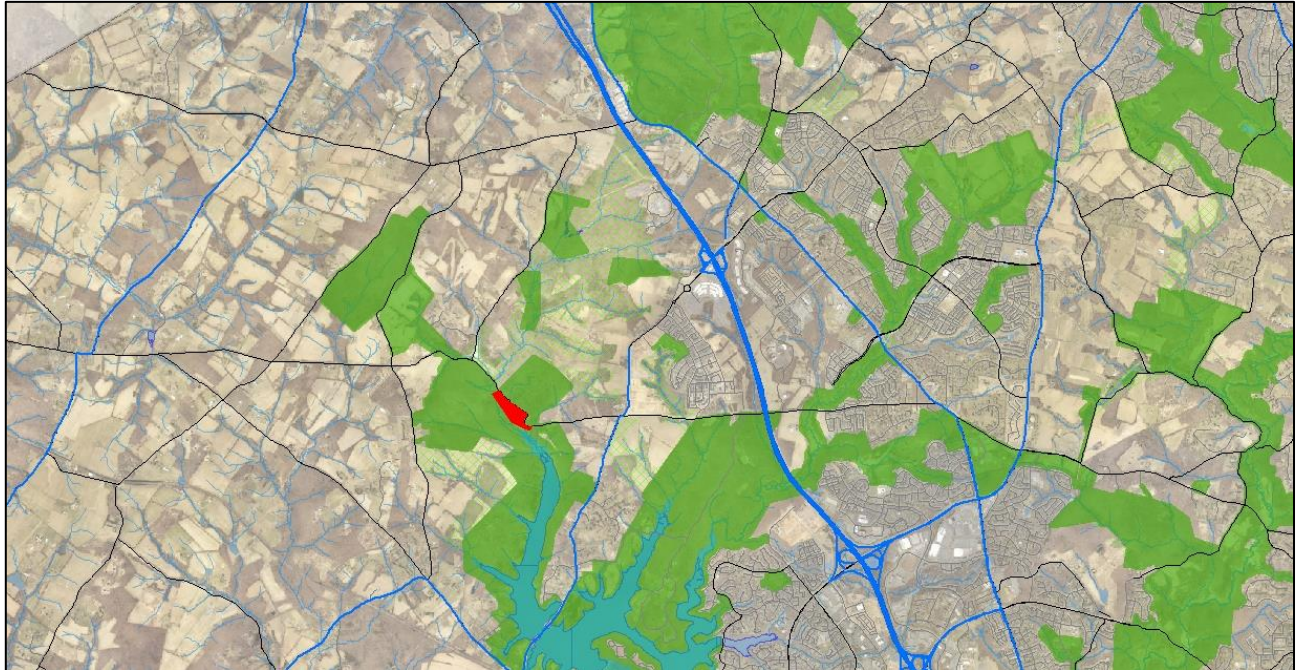
Approve Resolution No. 20-109 to acquire the Farquhar-Bennett property as an addition to Black Hill Regional Park for a negotiated purchase price of \$743,000 to be funded with grant money from Maryland's Program Open Space (POS).

The Farquhar-Bennett property is outlined in red on Figure 2, and Resolution No. 20-109 is attached to this memo.

SUMMARY

The Farquhar-Bennett property is one of two remaining in-holdings within Black Hill Regional Park and contains a portion of the main stem of Ten Mile Creek. Acquisition of this property will help further the protection of the Ten Mile Creek and Little Seneca Reservoir watersheds and provide the opportunity for resource restoration and enhancement within those watersheds and adjacent to the Black Hill Best Natural Area. Additionally, the property will provide the opportunity for enhanced public access along Ten Mile Creek and to the existing trail network on the West side of Little Seneca Reservoir as well as future trails connecting Black Hill and Little Bennett Regional Parks.

Figure 1: Vicinity Map, Parkland in the Clarksburg area and the Bennet-Farquhar Property in red

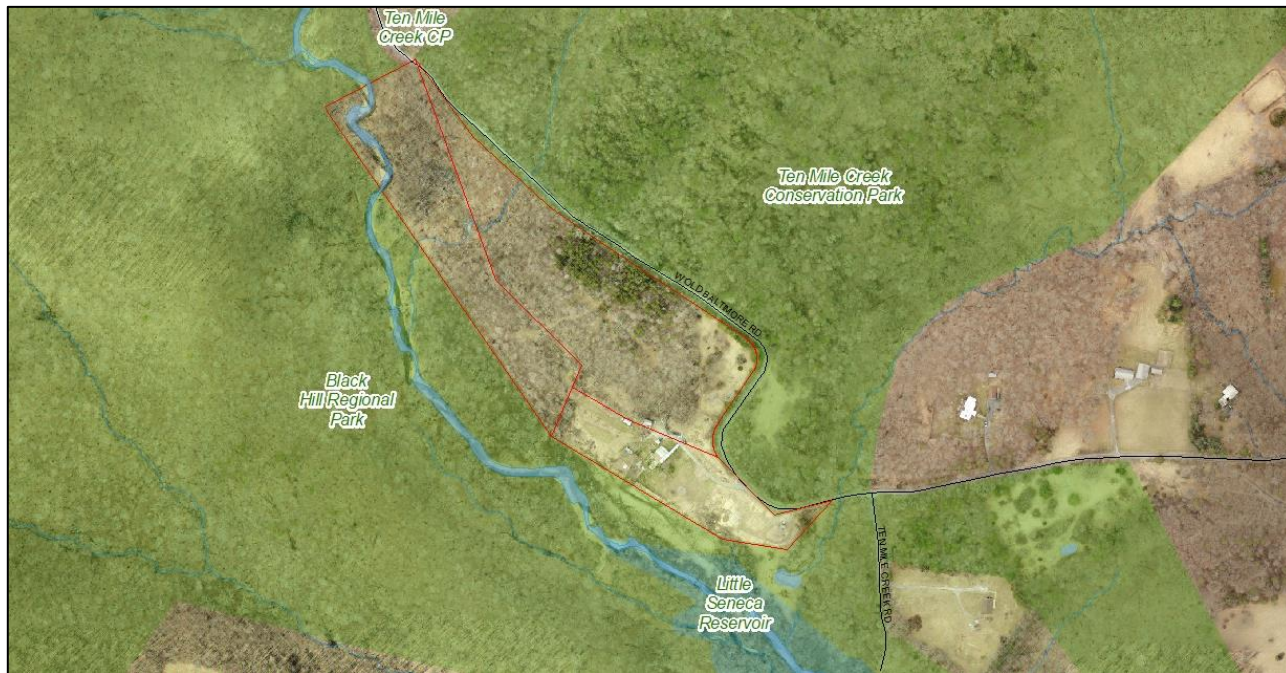


PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

The Farquhar-Bennett property consists of three parcels of land containing a total of 18.54 Acres, more or less, improved. The subject property, zoned Rural, is located on the southern side of West Old Baltimore Road (an Exceptional Rustic Road) west of Clarksburg Road (MD Rte. 121) with a stretch of Ten Mile Creek running through the northwest corner. The property address is 15000 West Old Baltimore Road and it is legally described as Parcels P381, P384, and P533, Tax Map DV62, in Boyds, Maryland. The property contains a residential home with a gross square footage of 1,500 square feet the origins of which are not certain, purportedly built ca. 1930, as well as multiple support buildings and sheds. The house has been substantially renovated including a complete gutting of the interior. The residence is in average physical condition and is currently occupied by the sellers. The buildings are not subject to any historic designation. The property may contain portions of a historic mill site, most of which is already on existing parkland.

Most of the property is heavily wooded and lightly to moderately rolling with a cleared area around the residence and outbuildings. A small stretch of Ten Mile Creek runs through the northwest corner of the property and the adjacent riparian area contains wetlands, and portions of the property closer to the creek are within the 100-year floodplain. The dwelling is on a private well and septic system with no access to public water or sewer services. The owner is a willing seller and the property is being acquired through negotiation in fee simple with a life estate for Elizabeth Farquhar only.

Figure 2: Farquhar-Bennett Property surrounded by parkland



POLICY RATIONALE AND PARK BENEFIT

The Farquhar-Bennett property is surrounded completely by parkland, lies within the Ten Mile Creek watershed and contains a portion of the main stem of Ten Mile Creek. To the south the 2,000 plus acres of Black Hill Regional Park provide resource protection for the Little Seneca Reservoir and an array of outdoor recreation activities with a focus on trails and boating; there are also picnic shelters, playgrounds, volley ball courts, a dog park, and a visitor center. The land for Black Hill Regional Park was acquired beginning in 1982 and the reservoir was created by WSSC in 1984. To the north of the property, Ten Mile Creek Conservation Park protects the main stem of Ten Mile Creek; land acquisition for that park started in 2002 and continues today, primarily through dedication.

This property was approved as proposed parkland and as a designated Legacy Open Space Natural Resource in the 2014 *Ten Mile Creek Limited Amendment to the 1994 Clarksburg Master Plan*. The 1994 *Clarksburg Master Plan* recommended the public acquisition of all main stem branches of Ten Mile Creek and that a greenway trail system on parkland connect Black Hill and Little Bennett Regional Parks. The 2014 Amendment includes this property along the proposed route of the trail and suggests a trailhead with parking in the area of the property.

The property will provide an additional ~18 acres of mostly forested buffer for the main stem of Ten Mile Creek in addition to bringing a portion of the main stem under public control which will immediately provide resource protection benefits through the limitation of potential future development on the property. Once Parks receives full control of the property, the potential for additional conservation enhancement and restoration projects will exist as well.

While Ten Mile Creek still rates as one of the County's highest quality stream systems, measurable declines in stream conditions have been documented over the last 20 years due to changes in land use and

associated development across the watershed. Moving forward, protection of existing forested and wetland areas in the watershed and application of conservation management practices to previously disturbed land will help buffer this stream from further degradation of water quality and ecological function. Adding the Farquhar-Bennett property to Black Hill Regional Park will provide opportunities to advance both these goals.

In addition to resource protection, this acquisition will provide support to the expanding natural surface trail network in this area of the County. The existing driveway will provide an ideal location for future trailhead parking and an interpretation area. This trailhead can serve as an access hub for both the current trail system in Black Hill Regional Park near where Ten Mile Creek enters Little Seneca Reservoir and the planned trail connection between Black Hill and Little Bennett Regional Parks.

Figure 3: Farquhar-Bennett property seen from West Old Baltimore Road



START UP COSTS & OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (OBI)

After cessation of the life estate and management responsibility is turned over to the Parks Department, the property will go through site cleanup. Initial tasks may include removal of the dwelling and outbuildings, necessary tree maintenance, Non-Native Invasive removal, and debris removal to make the property safe and accessible, and may cost up to \$150,000. These start-up costs will be funded with CIP funds set aside for site cleanup and interim improvements.

After management responsibility is turned over to the Parks Department and the initial site cleanup completed, Operating Budget Impact (OBI) is expected to be approximately \$13,000 per year. Tasks to keep the property maintained after initial start-up costs include regular mowing, non-native invasive plant control, and other general maintenance duties.

Improvements to create a new trailhead and other amenities associated with existing and future trails in this area will be prioritized and implemented by the Trail Planning section within the Park Planning & Stewardship Division. Estimated OBI for those improvements will be determined at that time.

Acquisition of the Farquhar-Bennett property will provide significant benefits to Black Hill Regional Park and the Ten Mile Creek and Little Seneca Reservoir watersheds for natural resource conservation as well as provide a platform for future trail connectivity at this junction of several park corridors.

CC: Doug Ludwig
Mike Little
Jai Cole
Darryl McSwain
Jim Poore

Kristi Williams
Shuchi Vera
David Vismara
Megan Chung

ATTACHMENT

MCPB No. 20-109

Acquisition of the Farquhar-Bennett Property as an Addition to Black Hill Regional Park

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, the Montgomery County Planning Board received and considered a recommendation from staff of the Commission, in closed session on October 1, 2020, that it approve the acquisition of 18.54 acres of land, more or less, improved, from Elizabeth H. Farquhar, Trustee under The Elizabeth H. Farquhar Revocable Trust U/A dated October 9, 1990, as Amended and Restated January 2, 2007, and Jacob Bennett (collectively, “Seller”), identified as Maryland Department of Assessment and Taxation’s Tax Account Numbers 02-00027783, 02-02171940, and 02-02171951 (the “Property”), as an addition to Black Hill Regional Park; and

WHEREAS, the Property meets parkland acquisition criteria as an addition to Black Hill Regional Park; and


WHEREAS, there are sufficient Program Open Space grants available in the Commission’s FY21 Acquisition: Local CIP to pay the \$743,000 negotiated purchase price for the Property; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the acquisition of the Property from the Seller as described above, for a purchase price of \$743,000, in accordance with a proposed Land Purchase Agreement between the Commission and Seller, is hereby approved by the Montgomery County Planning Board on this 8th day of October, 2020 and the Executive Director is authorized to execute said Agreement on behalf of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission.

* * * * *

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 Commissioner _____, with Commissioners _____ voting in favor of the motion, at its regular meeting held on Thursday, October 8, 2020 in Silver Spring, Maryland.

Casey Anderson, Chair
Montgomery County Planning Board

Signature: 

Email: andrew.frank@montgomeryparks.org

Signature: 

Email: miti.figueredo@montgomeryparks.org

Signature: 

Email: mike.riley@montgomeryparks.org











PB Memo: BHRP Bennett-Farquhar Property OPEN Session memo

Final Audit Report

2020-10-07

Created:	2020-10-02
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"PB Memo: BHRP Bennett-Farquhar Property OPEN Session memo" History

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