

MR 2022009 – ADDITIONS TO WILLIAM TYLER PAGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Description

Mandatory Referral review for the construction of additions to William Tyler Page Elementary School, part of the Northeast Consortium, located in Colesville, MD. The application was submitted by Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), pursuant to the Maryland Land Use Article, Section 20-301. The proposed additions will increase the program capacity of the school and provide an enhanced learning environment for students.

NO. 2022009

COMPLETED: 12-30-2021

MCPB

Item No. 5

January 6, 2022

2425 Reddie Drive

Floor 13

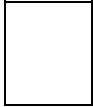
Wheaton, MD 20902



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LOCATION:

13400 Tamarack Road, Silver Spring, MD
20904

MASTER PLAN, ZONE

1997 White Oak Master Plan; R-90 Zone

PROPERTY SIZE

9.56 acres

APPLICATION

Mandatory Referral

ACCEPTANCE DATE:

November 5, 2021

REVIEW BASIS:

Maryland Land Use Article, Section 20-301



Summary

- Staff recommends approval of the Mandatory Referral and transmittal of comments to Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS).
- The proposal is exempt from Chapter 22A, Forest Conservation Law, and does not require a Forest Conservation Plan.
- The Planning Board review of a Mandatory Referral is advisory.

SECTION 1

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends approval and the transmittal of the following comments to Montgomery County Public Schools:

1. Conduct a pre-construction meeting as required by the approved Forest Conservation Plan Exemption Request No. 42022084E.
2. The Sediment and Erosion Control Plan and Storm Water Management Plan must be consistent with the limits of disturbance and the associated tree preservation measures on the Tree Save Plan.
3. Coordinate with the Montgomery County Department of Transportation to widen the sidewalks to six feet along the school's frontage with Tamarack Road.
4. Provide a total of 37 short-term bicycle parking spaces within the limits of disturbance on the site (U rack or equivalent).
5. Chamfer the façade of the proposed one-story addition to maintain a 10-foot distance from the building to the curb along the frontage of the proposed addition.

SECTION 2

INTRODUCTION

Review Process

In September 2021, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) submitted Concept Plan No. 520220050, which was reviewed by the Development Review Committee on September 28, 2021. Comments on the Concept Plan included recommendations to expand tree coverage and several transportation-related comments including improved sidewalks, bike parking facilities, and clarifications about Fire Department access to the proposed rear addition.

On November 5, 2021, this Mandatory Referral was accepted for staff review. After reviewing the submitted Mandatory Referral, Montgomery Planning staff and other reviewing agencies reiterated some of the comments provided at Concept Plan review that remained to be addressed. Several stated comments were addressed after communications between MCPS' team of consultants, reviewing agencies, and Planning staff.

School Design Work Group

Montgomery Planning began the School Design Working Group in summer 2021, an initiative to establish a shared vision that advances MCPS' and Montgomery Planning's goals for design and access to school facilities,

and to better coordinate and streamline the review process. This work group involves staff from MCPS, Montgomery Parks, the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT), and the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (DPS). The group is collaborating to develop a framework of best practices that advance priorities for safety, Vision Zero, civic and sustainable design, efficient circulation, equitable access to school sites, fiscally smart infrastructure and timely, streamlined regulatory review. Through a series of monthly facilitated discussions and working sessions, the group will jointly identify these shared goals and illustrate principles towards their achievement. The information produced will be compiled into a resource document to guide the county’s school design process.

SECTION 3

PROJECT DESCRIPTION



Figure 1: Existing School

Background

William Tyler Page Elementary School, part of the Northeast Consortium, was originally built in 1965. The structure is approximately 63,841 square feet and was last renovated in 2003. Current enrollment is 615 students, served by the existing school building and 13 portable classrooms. The property currently includes a bus loop, playfields, and a parking area with 74 parking spaces. The school’s vehicular access is from Tamarack Road, and a pedestrian access also exists from Brackley Terrace to the west.

Surrounding Neighborhood

William Tyler Page Elementary School (“Subject Property” or “Property” – shown in red in Figure 2) is in the Colesville neighborhood, at 13400 Tamarack Road, in Silver Spring. The Property is within a well-established

cluster of single-family residential development, bounded by Fairland Road to the north, East Randolph Road to the west and south, and the Paint Branch stream valley to the east.

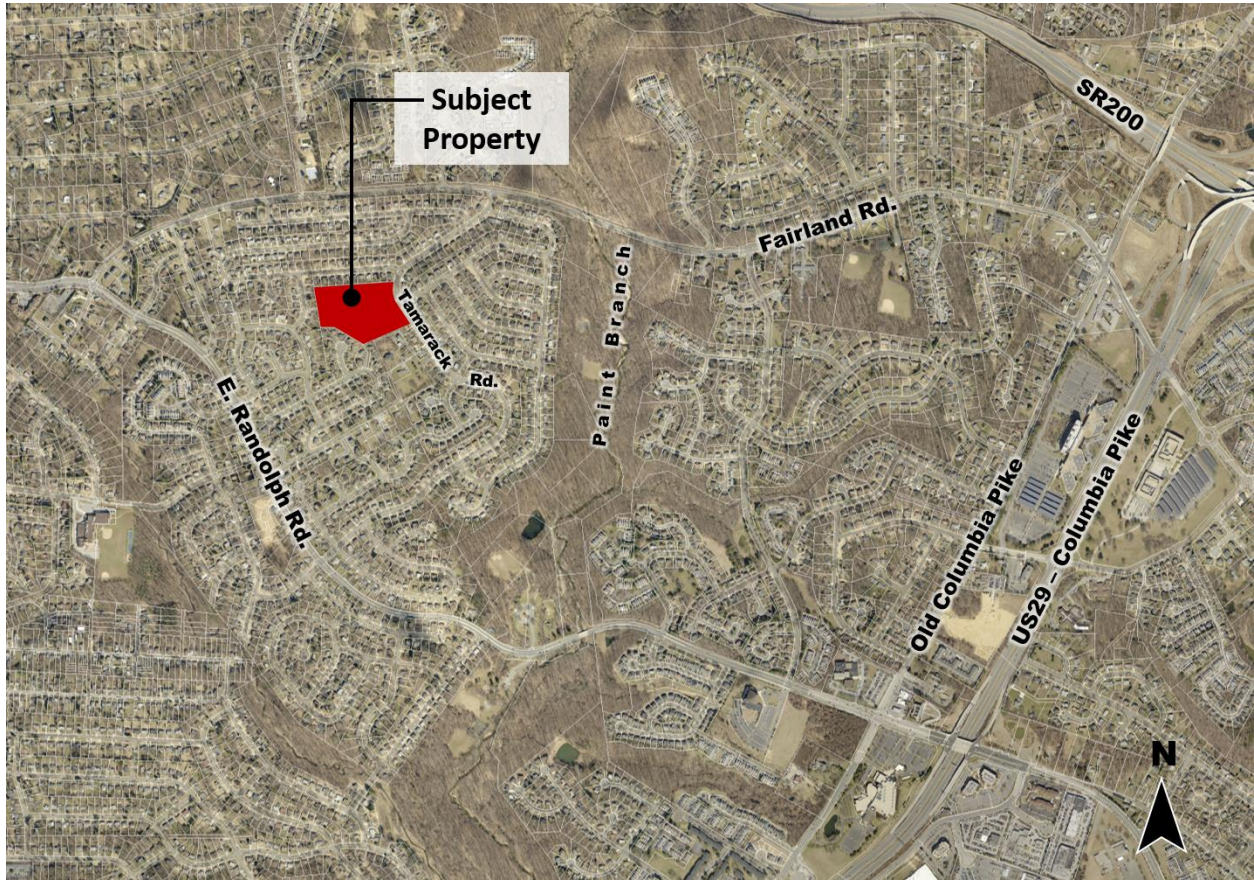


Figure 2: Location and Vicinity Map

Site Description

The 9.56-acre Property is immediately bounded by residential properties and Brackley Terrace to the west, residential properties and Canyon Road to the north, residential properties around a cul-de-sac at Cabinwood Place to the south, and residential properties across from Tamarack Road to the east. The Property slopes from the west and south to the northeast; existing improvements are located at a mid-level area accessible from Tamarack Road. There are no streams, wetlands, or floodplains within the Property. There is a small portion of forest that extends offsite to the south. There are no forests within the limits of disturbance for the proposed additions.



Figure 3: Site Map

Project Description

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) proposes to expand the gross floor area of the existing structure to 97,195 square feet, expanding the school's capacity from 615 to 740 students. To accommodate this expansion, the two existing basketball courts, pre-K asphalt play area, and pre-K playground in the rear of the school will be removed along with all the relocatable classrooms. The proposed expansion, detailed in Attachment 1, will consist of:

- A two-story addition with a gross floor area of 31,054 square feet on the rear of the existing school. This addition will include three (3) playrooms for kindergarten and pre-K levels, eleven (11) regular classrooms, and supporting areas. This addition will wrap around and enclose the existing school courtyard. A new entry lobby will be provided to the rear of the school which will connect to the existing paved path connecting the school with Brackley Terrace to the west (for path, see Figure 3).
- A one-story addition with a gross floor area of 2,300 square feet is proposed on the front of the school at Tamarack Road, to expand an existing multipurpose room located immediately adjacent to the school's main entrance. Kitchen facilities and storage associated with this room are included in the proposed expansion.

- New basketball courts, pre-K play and kindergarten play areas will also be constructed, as shown in the proposed plan (Figure 4). New landscaping and stormwater management facilities will also be added. Existing vehicular areas on the Property will not be modified.



Figure 4: Proposed Site Plan

The exterior of the proposed additions will blend with the existing school architecture (see Figure 5). The additions will match the existing school’s materials and surface articulation. The proposal will not exceed the height of the existing structure.



Figure 5: Proposed View from East



Figure 6: Proposed View from North

SECTION 4

MANDATORY REFERRAL ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Mandatory Referral review is guided by the *2001 Montgomery County Department of Park and Planning Uniform Standards for Mandatory Referral Review*, as amended, and through the authority granted through the Maryland Land Use Article, Section 20-301, et.seq. As set forth in Sections 20-301 and -302, the Montgomery County Planning Board has jurisdiction over mandatory referral projects presented by Montgomery County government and Montgomery County Board of Education/MCPS, for (i) acquiring or selling land; (ii) locating, constructing or authorizing a road, park, public way or ground, public building or structure, or public utility; or (iii) changing the use of or widening, narrowing, extending, relocating, vacating or abandoning any of the previously mentioned facilities. The Planning Board must review such projects and approve the proposed location, character, grade and extent of the activity.

As described in the Uniform Standards for Mandatory Referral Review, the Planning Board considers all relevant land use and planning aspects of the proposal including, but not limited to, the following:

1. *whether the proposal is consistent with the County's General Plan, functional plans such as the master plan of highways, environmental guidelines, the approved and adopted area master plan or sector plan, and other public plans or programs for the area;*

The Subject Property is within the boundary of the 1997 *White Oak Master Plan*. The Plan does not include specific guidance for the Property, but some of its general recommendations are relevant, including:

- Provide sidewalk connections between all public facilities to promote the use of alternative forms of transportation.
- Provide bike racks which are easily accessible, secure, and at a safe location to public services.
- Protect and enhance the condition of existing trees in neighborhoods and stream valleys.

- Support shade tree planting projects for roadways, residential streets, and parking lots.

The proposal is in conformance with the 1997 *White Oak Master Plan*. The applicant proposes to maintain the existing pedestrian connections between the Subject Property and the surrounding neighborhood, including the existing path that connects the school with Brackley Terrace to the west. In addition to maintaining this pedestrian connection, the entrance to the proposed rear addition directly aligns with the existing path, creating an unimpeded pedestrian connection for students entering the school from the west. To further promote the use of alternative forms of transportation, the applicant proposes to install bike racks at a few locations on the Property.

The proposal also seeks to protect and enhance the existing trees as well as provide additional shade trees. The applicant proposes to protect the 0.10 acres of forest located on the southern portion of the site as well as add trees, where feasible, within the proposed limits of disturbance.

2. *whether the proposal is consistent with the intent and the requirements of the zone in which it is located;*

The Subject Property is in the R-90 Zone. Public schools, as a publicly owned or publicly operated use are permitted uses in the zone. The proposed school is consistent with the development standards of the zone, including the maximum lot coverage and front, side, and rear setbacks.

3. *whether the nature of the proposed site and development, including its size, shape, scale, height, arrangement and design of structure, is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood and properties;*

The existing school is compatible with surrounding residential uses. The proposed expansion will not change access points, vehicular areas, or exceed the height of the existing structure.

4. *whether the locations of buildings and structures, the open spaces, the landscaping, recreation facilities, and the pedestrian and vehicular circulation systems are adequate, safe, and efficient;*

The location of the existing building and open spaces are adequate and safe. The proposal does not modify the main building access or vehicular circulation on the Property. As previously stated, the entrance to the proposed rear addition directly aligns with an existing pedestrian connection to the neighborhood west of the school, creating a safe and efficient pedestrian connection for students entering the school from the west.

5. *whether the proposal has an approved NRI/FSD and a preliminary SWM concept plan, and meets the requirements of the Forest Conservation law (Chapter 22A of the County Code). Forest Conservation Plan, if applicable, must be approved by the Planning Board, either before or at the time of the Board's mandatory referral review and action on the project. Unlike the mandatory referral review by the Board, the conditions of the Forest Conservation Plan are binding on all county projects.*

This project is exempt from Article II of the Montgomery County Code, Chapter 22A (Forest Conservation Law), Section 22A-5(T1) because the activity is a modification to a (1) non-residential property with (A) no more than a total of 5,000 square feet of existing forest cleared at one time or cumulatively; (B) the modification does not result in the cutting, clearing, or grading of any forest in a stream buffer or any forest on a property located in a

special protection area which must submit a water quality plan; (C) the modification does not require the approval of a preliminary plan, administrative subdivision plan, or conditional use/special exception; (D) the modification does not increase the developed area by more than 50 percent, and any existing principal building, as defined in Chapter 59, is retained; and (E) the application does not propose any residential uses.

The proposal includes a stormwater management concept plan, which is currently under review by the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services. The approval of the stormwater management concept plan is pending the review of a downstream storm drain analysis by the Montgomery County Department of Transportation.

6. *whether a Preliminary or a Final Water Quality Plan has been reviewed by the Planning Board if the project is located in a Special Protection Area. In addition, for a Water Quality Plan for a project on public property, the Board must determine if the plan meets the standards of Article V. WATER QUALITY REVIEW IN SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS, of the County Code (pursuant to Section 19-65(d)(4));*

The subject property is not located in a Special Protection Area.

7. *whether or not the site would be needed for park use if the proposal is for disposition of a surplus school.*

The proposal is not for the disposition of a surplus school.

8. *whether alternatives or mitigation measures have been considered for the project if the proposal is inconsistent with the General Plan or other plans and policies for the area, or has negative impacts on the surrounding properties or neighborhood, the transportation network, the environment or other resources.*

The proposal is consistent with the 1997 *White Oak Master Plan* and does not have negative impacts on the surrounding neighborhood, transportation network, environment, or other resources.

[Transportation Vehicular Access](#)

Tamarack Road is classified as a Primary Residential street in the *Master Plan of Highways and Transitways*, with a 70-foot right-of-way and two travel lanes.

Currently, there are two vehicular access points to the school from Tamarack Road: one provides access to staff/visitor parking, and a second access point functions as a dedicated bus loop. Existing vehicular areas on the Property will not be modified by this proposal.

[Local Area Transportation Review](#)

A Local Area Transportation Review (LATR) study was conducted to analyze the traffic impacts of the proposed expansion, including two intersections in the site's vicinity. The school is in the Fairland/Colesville Policy Area (Yellow), which requires critical lane volume (CLV) level of service standard analysis for intersections with CLV capacity of 1,475 or fewer. CLV capacity was analyzed for two nearby intersections: E. Randolph Road/Tamarack Road, and Fairland Road/Tamarack Road. Both intersections operate within acceptable congestion levels in both the morning and evening peak hours.

[Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities](#)

The existing sidewalks along Tamarack Road are five feet wide and should be widened to six feet wide to meet Americans with Disabilities Act regulations and Montgomery County standards.

The 2018 *Bicycle Master Plan* recommends a sidepath nearby on Fairland Road, a quarter mile north of the school, and on E. Randolph Road, west of the school, but no bicycle facilities are proposed on Tamarack Road. To accommodate students who travel to the school via bicycle, staff recommends providing bicycle parking equivalent to the requirement for private educational institutions (5 percent of the student population), which equates to 37 short-term bicycle parking spaces. The Applicant should continue to coordinate with MCDOT regarding the LATR study and construction of future pedestrian and bicycle improvements, as discussed in Attachment 2.

[Public Transit Service](#)

Transit stops on Tamarack Road are served by Ride-On Route 21, which operates between Fairland and the Paul S. Sarbanes Transit Center in downtown Silver Spring.

[Parking](#)

The existing school has 74 parking spaces in a surface lot on the north side of the property. There are 65 staff positions associated with the school, including 50 professional staff and 15 support staff. The Zoning Ordinance does not provide specific parking standards for public schools and final determination of parking adequacy is at the discretion of MCPS. The proposal does not modify the existing parking totals or parking areas on the property, and the number of spaces is adequate for current and future school operations.

Environment

[Environmental Guidelines](#)

The Property contains no streams or stream buffers, wetlands or wetland buffers, hydraulically adjacent steep slopes, 100-year floodplains, or known habitats of Rare, Threatened and Endangered species, or historic resources. There is 0.10 acres of forest connected to off-site forest. The Property is within the Paint Branch Watershed, which is a Maryland State Use Class III stream. This Property is not in a Special Protection Area. The submitted Mandatory Referral is in conformance with the Montgomery County Planning Board's Environmental Guidelines.

[Forest Conservation](#)

This project is exempt from Article II of the Montgomery County Code, Chapter 22A (Forest Conservation Law), Section 22A-5(T1) because the activity is a modification to a (1) non-residential property with (A) no more than a total of 5,000 square feet of existing forest cleared at one time or cumulatively; (B) the modification does not result in the cutting, clearing, or grading of any forest in a stream buffer or any forest on a property located in a special protection area which must submit a water quality plan; (C) the modification does not require approval of a preliminary plan, administrative subdivision plan, or conditional use/special exception; (D) the modification does not increase the developed area by more than 50 percent, and any existing principal building, as defined in

Chapter 59, is retained; and (E) the pending development application does not propose any residential uses. No disturbance is proposed in the forested areas on the property.

Staff confirmed an exemption request for a Simplified Natural Resource Inventory/Forest Stand Delineation (NRI/FSD No. 42022084E) on October 12, 2021 (Attachment 3).

Stormwater Management

The Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (DPS) is currently reviewing a stormwater management concept plan for this proposal. The stormwater management plan includes planter box microbioretention areas and enhanced microbioretention facilities to serve the proposed building additions and new paved areas. Existing stormwater management facilities on site will be retained.

Sustainability

The proposed additions will be built with an emphasis on environmental sustainability and will comply with Green Globe standards, although an actual certification will not be pursued. Architecture and engineering systems will follow MCPS facility management sustainability principles and will comply with the 2012 International Green Construction Code (IgCC). MCPS proposes features including but not limited to the following to further building and site sustainability:

- Highly reflective roof surfaces to reduce heat gain inside the building;
- Installation of water conserving and low-flow plumbing fixtures;
- Optimizing energy performance of building and HVAC equipment;
- Use of regionally manufactured construction materials with recycled content; and
- Manage stormwater on site to reduce surface runoff and improve quality.

Parks Department

The Montgomery County Department of Parks has no issues with this application.

SECTION 5

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

MCPS held two virtual community meetings on April 8 and April 22, 2021 to present options for the proposed additions for community input and discussion. The materials presented as well as recordings of the meetings are available on the MCPS Division of Design and Construction webpage.

After staff accepted the Mandatory Referral for review, Montgomery Planning notified local civic and homeowners' associations and other interested parties of this proposal. As of the date of this report, staff has received no requests for information or correspondence on the proposal.

SECTION 6

CONCLUSION

Staff recommends approval of the submitted Mandatory Referral and the transmittal of comments to Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS).

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Mandatory Referral

Attachment 2: Montgomery County Department of Transportation Letter

Attachment 3: Confirmation of Exemption Request