



MCPB Item #11
Date: 11 / 10 / 2022

MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 2, 2022

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

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

FROM: Brenda Sandberg, Real Estate Management Supervisor, PDD *BCS*
David Tobin, Real Estate Management, PDD

SUBJECT: Land Acquisition Recommendation: Long Branch Local Park
Hue T. Thai and Viet The Luong
8820 Glenville Road, Silver Spring, MD 20904
8,880 sf, more or less, improved

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

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

Approve MCPB Resolution No. 22-100 for the acquisition of the 8820 Glenville Road property as an addition to Long Branch Local Park for a negotiated purchase price of \$700,000 to be funded with Maryland Program Open Space grants and Commission Bonds.

A draft of Resolution No. 22-100 is attached.

SUMMARY

The Parks Department has created the *Long Branch Parks Initiative* (LBPI) to address the park, recreation, and public space needs of the entire Long Branch community strategically and holistically. Acquisition of the 8820 Glenville Road property will support the ongoing efforts of the LBPI by improving a key park in this historically underserved, diverse community identified as an Equity Focus Area (EFA). This addition to Long Branch Local Park will provide critical space to create an improved, more visible entrance into the park and will support larger and better recreational amenities to serve the Long Branch community. Long Branch LP is currently completely hidden from view behind houses and a community center, creating a situation where the park is largely unknown to and underused by the community. The lack of visibility into the park creates a situation that feels unsafe to potential park users and suppresses park visitation, leading to a cycle of increased safety concerns and reduced usage. The redevelopment of this park is a priority CIP project funded with a state grant and moving forward on an expedited timeline. Acquisition of this property at the current time is critical to addressing longstanding safety concerns and creating a more activated park for this diverse and economically challenged community.

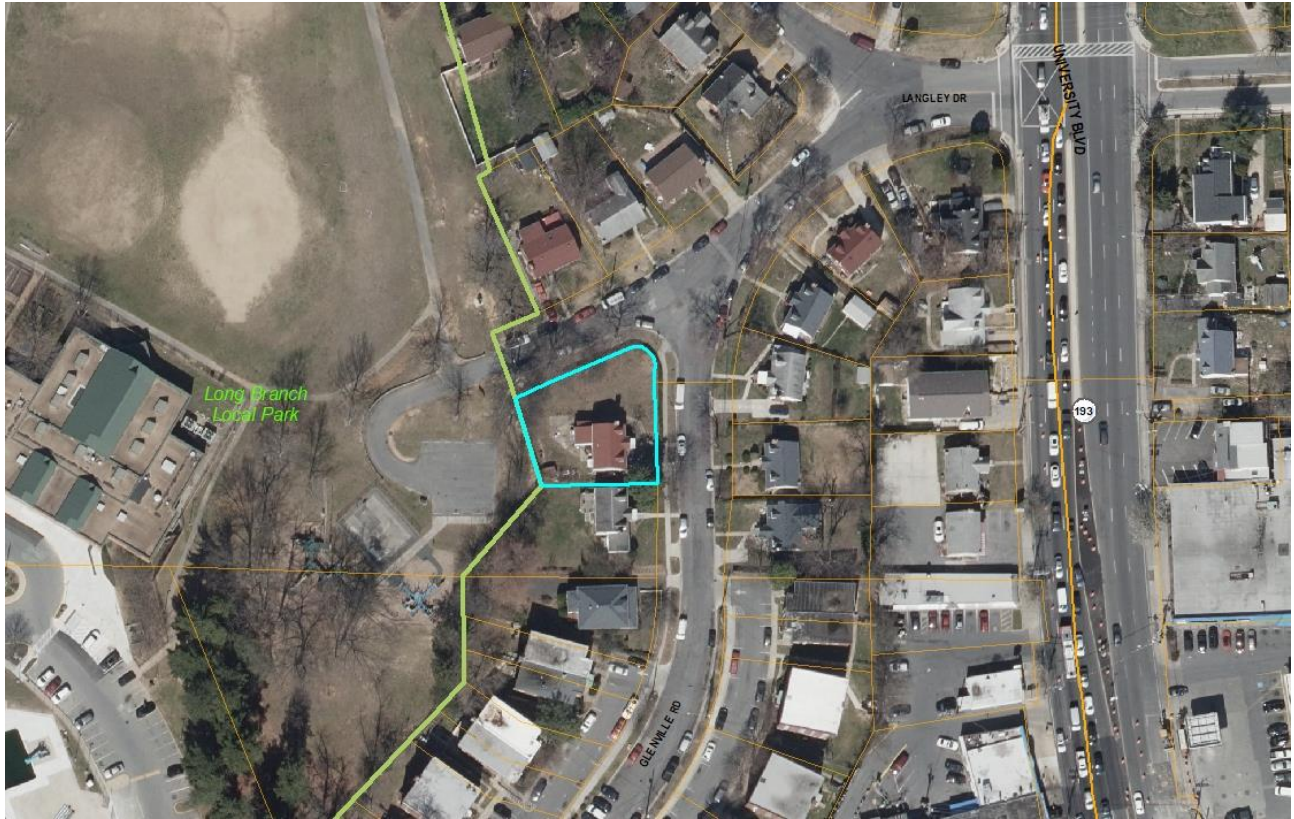


Figure 1: Vicinity Map, Hue T. Thai and Viet The Luong Property

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

The subject property, zoned R60, consists of 8,880 square feet or 0.20 acre of land, more or less, improved. It is located on the east side of Glenville Road and adjacent to Long Branch Local Park to the west. The property address is 8820 Glenville Road and is legally described as Lot 2, Block 5 in the "Pickwick Village" in Silver Spring, Maryland. The property includes a 1,777 sq. ft. cape cod dwelling built in 1948. The residence is in average physical condition and is currently occupied. The owner is a willing seller, and the property is being acquired through negotiation in fee simple.



Figure 2: Building Photos, 8820 Glenville Road

LONG BRANCH LOCAL PARK EXISTING CONDITIONS

Long Branch Local Park (LBLP) is located behind the Long Branch Community center and next to the Long Branch stream valley. Significant topographic changes separate the park from the community center and the neighborhoods to the north and east of the park. The main pedestrian and vehicle entry to the park is at the end of Langley Place and is completely hidden from view. Existing amenities in the park are outdated and in poor condition and are underused because community members feel they are unsafe or don't even know about them.

Of note, many of the local residents contacted during public outreach for this park redevelopment project did not even know the park was there due to how well it is hidden behind the community center and the homes surrounding it. The main entry and parking area are accessed off a dead-end street (Langley Drive) that is off another cul-de-sac (Glenville Road), making it challenging to find the park from a street with any regular traffic flow. In addition, the steep slope downward into the park makes it completely invisible until a driver or pedestrian is almost in the park (Figure 3). Pedestrians trying to reach the hidden park from the community center side must use a tall set of stairs or take an unsafe "people's choice" path along a steep slope (Figure 4). In addition, Google Maps does not even show this land as a park (Figure 5).



Figure 3: Existing Primary Entrance to LBLP from Langley Drive and Glenville Road



Figure 4: Existing Pedestrian Entrance from Long Branch Community Center Parking Lot

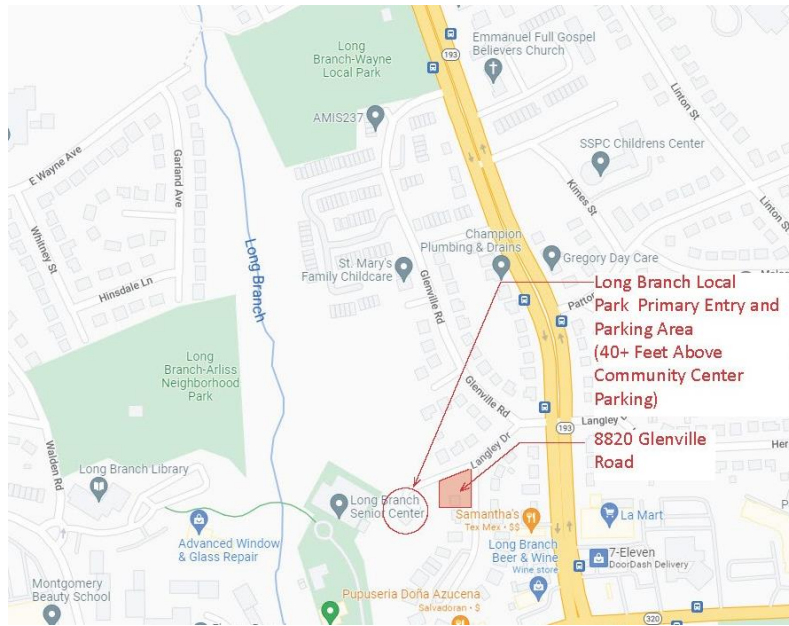


Figure 5: Google Maps Not Showing Long Branch Local Park

BENEFITS TO PARK REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT

The above-described conditions in LBLP have resulted in this park being prioritized for a major redevelopment project in the current Parks CIP. This project, located in one of Montgomery County's Equity Focus Areas and within the Long Branch Park Initiative area, will provide an updated active recreation park for the Long Branch community by upgrading outdated existing park amenities, adding facilities to provide high-quality recreation opportunities, and making efficient and effective use of parkland. Other improvements will focus on improving vehicular and pedestrian access to and within the park, enhancing sight lines and internal pedestrian circulation, and increasing visibility and viability of this important but underused community resource.

The acquisition of the property at 8820 Glenville Road will allow the park redevelopment project to better address many of the challenges in LBLP through creating a more open and defined entrance to the park, effectively opening the park entry to the community in stark contrast to the current condition where the park is simply not visible. A new primary entry and enhanced connections to the community will highlight the park and add value to the improvements being planned for this park. Acquisition of this property will also allow for more space to accomplish ADA access to the park and its amenities despite the significant topographical challenges.

In combination with a more visible entrance to the park and accessible circulation within the park, new high-quality facilities will provide much-needed active recreation and social gathering space for the community and will attract a more diverse group of users to the park. The draft design provides for new and exciting active recreational opportunities including a skate park, sport courts, a much-improved soccer field and plentiful family picnic and playground opportunities (see Figure 6).

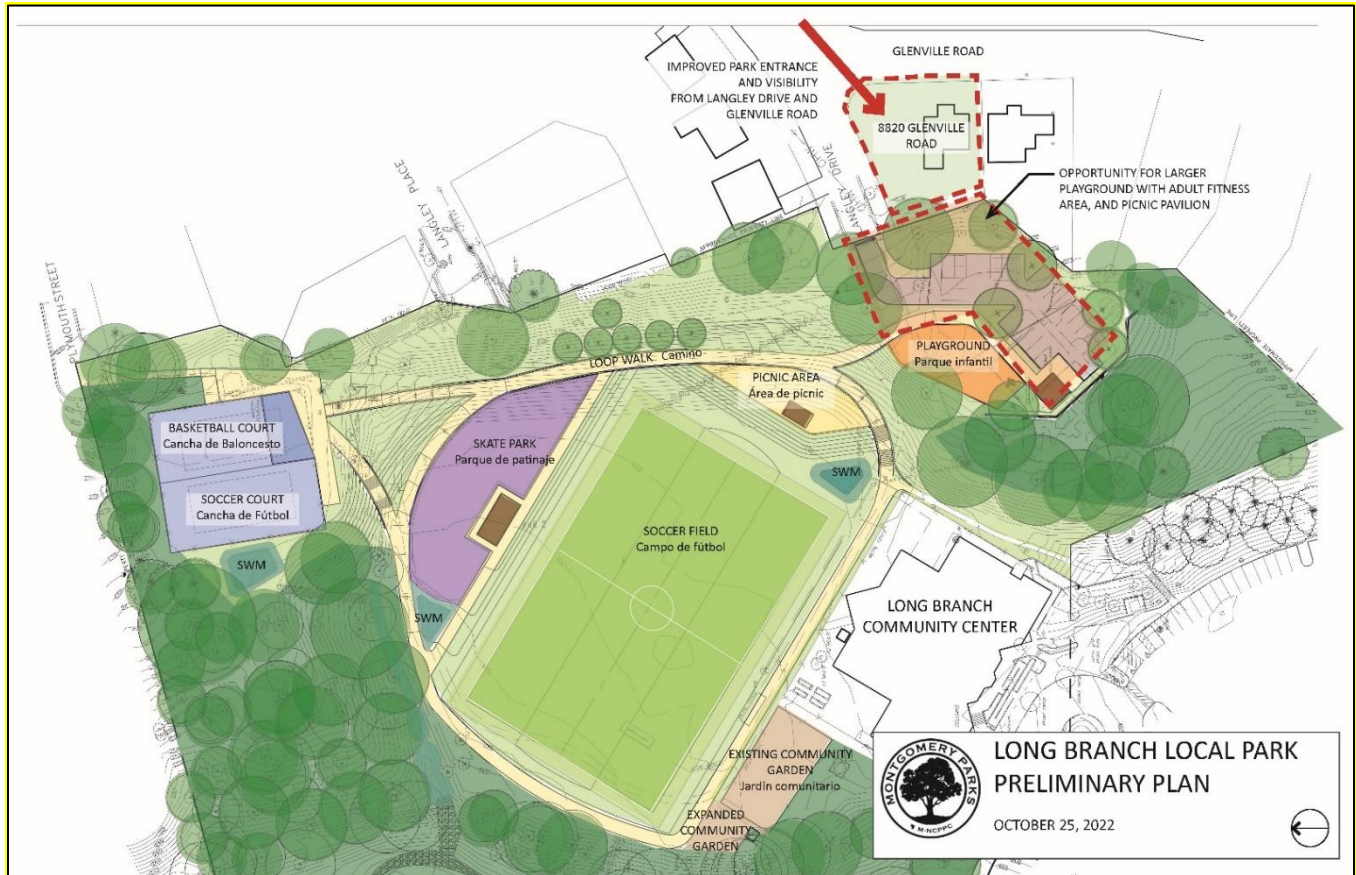


Figure 6: Concept Plan for Park Improvements, Long Branch Local Park (October 2022)

MASTER PLAN/POLICY RATIONALE

The proposed acquisition of 8820 Glenville Road as an addition to Long Branch Local Park responds to and furthers the park planning efforts being done through the *Long Branch Parks Initiative*, as well as supporting many adopted policies and plans adopted by the Planning Board and County Council.

Equity Focus Areas Analysis (EFA): Countywide Special Designation for Focused Investment

Montgomery County's Equity Focus Areas are the result of a comprehensive study to identify and map communities that do not have equitable access to amenities, resources, or opportunities in the county. Through the identification of these communities, the county can assess and address potential racial and social inequities. This includes access to resources and opportunities for employment, transportation, education, health, and government services that support a good quality of life. The Long Branch community is within one of these equity areas and is characterized by high concentrations of lower-income people of color, who may also speak English less than very well.

A public outreach and park planning effort is underway in this community known as the Long Branch Park Initiative to help identify the most needed amenities and park access to offer equitable access to active recreation, open spaces, and natural areas. Recommendations to meet identified needs in this EFA will include a variety of new/upgrades amenities, activation programming, and priority land acquisition. The addition of 8820 Glenville to Long Branch Local Park has been identified by this initiative as a priority for meeting park equity goals in this community.

Thrive Montgomery 2050: General Plan

One focus of Thrive Montgomery is creating high-quality urban parks to promote active lifestyles, offer equitable and accessible recreation opportunities, and foster social connections. One implementation strategy recommended by Thrive Montgomery is to update park facility standards and acquisition strategies to align with infill development and adaptive reuse. The acquisition of this property directly supports provision of more opportunities for active and healthy lifestyles.

In addition, Thrive Montgomery recommends improved coordination among County agencies to encourage the accommodation of multiple needs including recreation, education, community-building, and resource stewardship. The plan recommends use of tools such as colocation, co-programming, and other forms of combined or shared uses of public land, buildings, and related infrastructure. The adjacency of Long Branch LP and the community center provide many opportunities for shared programming and recreational opportunities for residents using both facilities.

Long Branch Local Park will be an early and important example of providing active recreational opportunities to growing communities as well as the benefits of close coordination between County agencies.

2017 Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Plan (PROS)

The 2017 PROS plan defines strategic goals for parks and recreation. One of the primary goals includes creating a variety of quality recreational environments and opportunities that are accessible to all citizens for the opportunity to contribute to their physical and mental wellbeing (pp. 86, 105). Equitable distribution and access to these facilities is a priority in the plan. PROS also provides guidance to the Department's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) highlighting the importance of land acquisition of parkland to meet these goals for equitable distribution of an adequate supply of facility-based recreation.

The Long Branch Local Park redevelopment project directly addresses these goals by providing a more flexible, visible, and much improved park for an Equity Focus Area community. The proposed acquisition of the house at 8820 Glenville Road will provide additional park area for a larger playground and new picnic area and pavilion, which in turn will provide more space in the park for active recreation facilities such as a soccer field, skate park, updated and flexible basketball and soccer court space as well as outdoor fitness.

2013 Long Branch Sector Plan

The Long Branch Sector Plan recommends renovation of existing area parks to improve safety, discourage crime, provide space for recreation, and reflect the culture of the diverse community in the Long Branch Area. One of the main recommendations for parks in this plan is to consider purchasing properties adjacent to existing parks to create better connections, expand urban green space, and provide greater active recreation, social gathering, and contemplative space opportunities for residents (p. 28). Long Branch Local Park specific recommendations in the Sector Plan include improving views from surrounding neighborhoods, improving pedestrian connections to the neighborhood and community center, and creating a loop trail around the rectangular field (p. 28, 29).

The proposed Long Branch Local Park project, and especially the acquisition of 8820 Glenville Road, directly address these recommendations by creating improved physical and visual connections to the community and updating amenities and access to the park which will address safety and enhanced opportunities for recreation.

START UP COSTS & OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (OBI)

Start-up costs to incorporate this property into Long Branch Local Park will cover demolition of the existing structure and construction costs for any park improvements to be placed on this property as part of the ongoing park development capital project. It is anticipated that all of these costs will be funded through the current CIP project that is funding the major improvements to the entire park.

Operating Budget Impacts for this property will be minimal during the interim period between acquisition of the property and initiation of the Long Branch Local Park redevelopment project with construction anticipated to start in FY24. Tasks to keep the property maintained after acquisition and prior to park construction would only include mowing the property, keeping it trash-free, and securing the structure. Since this property only makes up a small portion of the Local Park (0.2 acre), the long-term OBI for this lot will be included as part of the OBI calculations for the entire rebuilt Long Branch Local Park and cannot be separately estimated.

CONCLUSION

Acquisition of this property will provide a significant benefit to a public park undergoing redevelopment in the Long Branch community, thus assisting the Parks Department in providing public facilities to address critical equity issues across the County.

Attachment: Draft MCPB Resolution No. 22-100

CC: Trish Swann
Todd Holmes
Darren Flusche
Darryl McSwain
Kenny Black
Kristi Williams
Shuchi Vera
David Vismara
Megan Chung

--- Attachment ---

MCPB No. 22-100

**Acquisition of the 8820 Glenville Road Property as an
Addition to Long Branch Local 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 November 10, 2022, that it approve the acquisition of 0.20 acre of land, more or less, improved, from Hue T. Thai and Viet The Luong (collectively, "**Seller**"), identified as Maryland Department of Assessment and Taxation's Tax Account Number 13-01451665 (the "**Property**"), as an addition to Long Branch Local Park; and

WHEREAS, the Property meets parkland acquisition criteria as an addition to Long Branch Local Park; and


WHEREAS, there are sufficient Program Open Space grants and Commission Bonds available in the Commission's Acquisition: Local Parks CIP to pay the \$700,000 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 \$700,000, in accordance with a proposed Land Purchase Agreement between the Commission and Seller, is hereby approved by the Montgomery County Planning Board on this 10th day of November 2022, 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 _____ in Wheaton, Maryland.

Jeffrey Zyontz, Chair
Montgomery County Planning Board

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