



HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING

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TECHNICAL STAFF REPORT

Planning Board Meeting of December 3, 2020

File No./Petitioner: SDP-19-025/Howard County Government

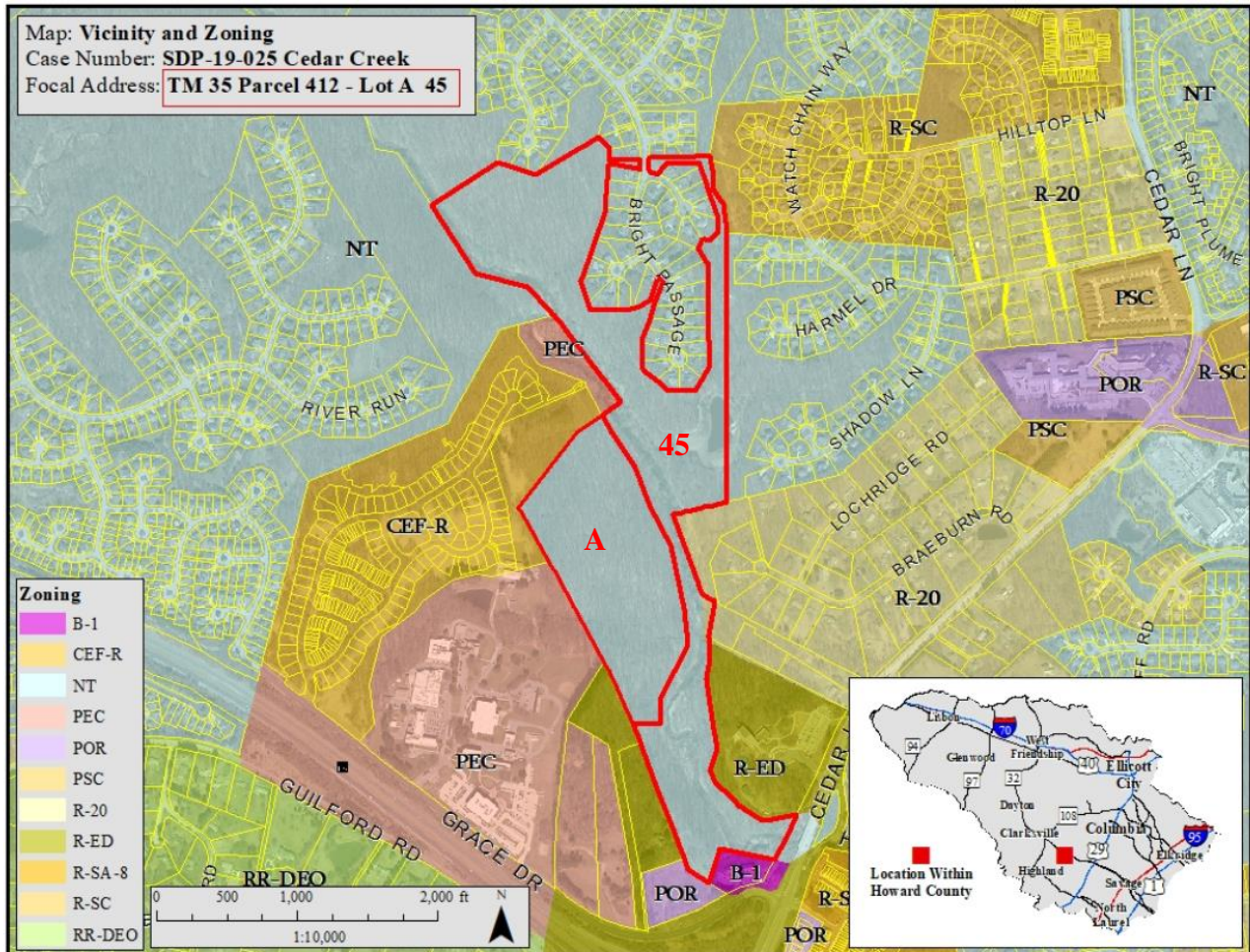
Project Name: Cedar Creek Suspension Bridge and Trail

DPZ Planner: Julia Sauer, Planning Supervisor

Request: Approval of a Site Development Plan for a 300-foot long suspension bridge and 35-foot long single span bridge associated with the Cedar Creek community enhancement trail system.

Recommendation: **Approval**, subject to complying with the remaining Subdivision Review Committee (SRC) comments and any conditions by the Planning Board.

Location: The New Town (NT) zoned properties are located at the northwest intersection of Grace Drive and Cedar Lane; identified as Tax Map 35, Parcel 412, Parcel 'A' and Open Space Lot 45. Parcel A is landlocked and owned by WR Grace and Open Space Lot 45 is within the Middle Patuxent Environmental Area and owned by Howard County. This plan is being processed under the existing NT-Open Space designation in accordance with FDP-181-A Part 7 and per Section 125.0.G of the Zoning Regulations.



Vicinal Properties:

North: Single-family detached lots (NT-Single-Family Low-Density)

East: The Robinson Nature Center and single-family detached lots (R-20 and NT-Single-Family Low-Density).

South: Cedar Lane, commercial office (B-1) and Housing Commission Housing Development project to be developed with apartments (POR).

West: Grace Corporate Headquarters (PEC), single-family detached lots (R-ED), and the Cedar Creek subdivision (CEF-R).

Legal Notice: The property was properly posted by DPZ in accordance with the legal requirements.

I. General Information:

Site History:

- **F-87-105, Village of Hickory Ridge, Section 3, Area 14, Lots 1 – 44**, recorded May 4, 1987.
- **FDP-181-A Part 7, Village of Hickory Ridge, Section 3, Area 14**, recorded March 3, 1999.
- **F-99-122, Village of Hickory Ridge, Section 3, Area 14, Open Space Lot 45 and Parcel A**, recorded March 5, 1999 (Plat No. 13640). A resubdivision of Open Space Lot 44.
- **ZB-1104-M, Simpson Oaks (now known as Cedar Creek)**, approved April 6, 2015. To rezone the adjacent parcel from PEC to CEF-R. The rezoning was approved subject to a community enhancement trail system on the subject parcels.
- **S-15-007, Simpson Oaks (now known as Cedar Creek), Lots 1-184, Open Space Lots 185-191, and Village of Hickory Ridge, Section 3, Area 14, Parcel 'A' and Open Space Lot 45**, signed on December 17, 2016.
- **P-17-002, Simpson Oaks, Phase 1, Lots 1-129, Open Space Lots 130-140, Non-Buildable Bulk Parcels A-F, and Village of Hickory Ridge, Section 3, Area 14, Parcel 'A' and Open Space Lot 45**, signed October 5, 2017.

Existing Site Conditions: Both parcels are wooded and contain wetlands, streams, their buffers, 100-year floodplain and steep slopes. The Middle Patuxent River traverses Open Space Lot 45, which is in the Middle Patuxent Environmental Area.

Regulatory Compliance: The project must comply with Section 125.0.G of the Zoning Regulations, the criteria listed in FDP-181-A Part 7, the amended Fifth Edition of the Howard County Subdivision and Land Development Regulations, the Howard County Design Manual, the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance, and the Howard County Landscape Manual.

II. Description of the Site Development Plan Proposal and Analysis:

Proposed Site Improvements: After construction, Howard County will maintain a bridge and trail system that connects the Cedar Creek subdivision with the Robinson Nature Center. The plan proposes a 5-foot environmental trail (natural surface or trail tread) that meanders through Parcel 'A', spans over the Middle Patuxent River via a 300-foot suspension bridge, and connects to the Robinson Nature Center trail system. The proposed trail system also contains a 35-foot long single span bridge that crosses an unnamed intermittent stream channel.

Community Enhancement Floating District (CEF): On April 6, 2015, the Howard County Zoning Board approved a petition to rezone the adjoining property (Cedar Creek) from the Planning Employment Center (PEC) to Community Enhancement Floating – Residential (CEF-R) Zoning District. To achieve the CEF zoning the proposed development must contain one or more off-site design features or enhancements that benefit the community and are

open and free to the general public. A trail system was approved by the Zoning Board as an offsite community enhancement because it provides a pedestrian link between the adjoining community and Middle Patuxent Environmental Area and Robinson Nature Center. Minor modifications to that system were incorporated at the request of the Department of Recreation and Parks (DRP) to improve connectivity to the Robinson Nature Center, better conform to the Land Preservation, Park, and Recreation Plan, and allow for a future connection under Route 32. Since the parcels subject to this petition are zoned NT-Open Space, any new structures must comply with the FDP.

Permitted Uses: Per the FDP, these parcels are to be used for all open space land uses, including pedestrian and bicycle pathways.

Setback Requirements: Per the FDP, structures shall not be within 30 feet of a right-of-way of any public street, road or highway, or within 25 feet of any property line. The suspension bridge and single span bridge are within 25 feet of the property lines; however, since the adjoining properties are part of the Cedar Creek development and encompass the trail and bridge pedestrian system, they are treated as a single parcel for development purposes and the internal setbacks do not apply per Section 128.0.A.10 of the Zoning Regulations. The trail is considered a use and the FDP does not restrict the location of uses.

Building Height: The FDP does not impose a height limit if the structures are constructed in accordance with a site development plan approved by the Howard County Planning Board.

Lot Coverage: Per the FDP, no more than 10% of the open space land use shall be covered by buildings or major structures. The structures do not exceed the 10% requirement.

Roads: No new roads are proposed. The bridge and trail system will be accessed from the Cedar Creek subdivision or Robinson Nature Center.

Parking: Per the FDP, no parking requirements are imposed for open space land uses.

Landscaping: Existing wooded vegetation is being credited for perimeter landscaping requirements.

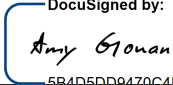
Stormwater Management: The bridge and trail system will be treated by an infiltration trench and disconnection of non-rooftop runoff.

Environmental Considerations: The site contains wetlands, streams, their buffers, 100-year floodplain and steep slopes. Necessary disturbances to the steep slopes and stream buffer were approved by DPZ per Section 16.116(c) of the Subdivision and Land Development Regulations.

Forest Conservation: The property is exempt from Section 16.1200 of the Howard County Code for Forest Conservation because it is zoned NT and received preliminary plan approval prior to December 31, 1992, per Section 16.1202(b)(1)(ii).

SRC Action: The SRC recommends approval, subject to minor review comments.

Recommendation: **Approval**, subject to complying with the remaining SRC comments and any conditions by the Planning Board.

<p>DocuSigned by:  <small>5B4D5DD9470C4D4...</small></p>	<p>11/19/2020</p>
<p>Amy Gowan, Director Department of Planning & Zoning</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>Date</p>