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**ANC 3F RESOLUTION OPPOSING ZONING CASE NO. 06-37,
APPLICATION TO ESTABLISH C-1 ZONING ON THE NORTH SIDE
OF THE 4000 BLOCK OF CHESAPEAKE STREET, N.W.**

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3F
North Cleveland Park, Forest Hills & Tenleytown
4401-A Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Box #244
Washington, D.C. 20008-2322

WHEREAS, at the request of the D.C. Office of Property Management, the D.C. Office of Planning (OP) filed a petition "to establish C-1 zoning for a site including part of Lots 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 29, 28, and 27, Square 1765" in order to use a red brick building located on "part of Lot 1" for offices for the Street and Alley Cleaning Division of the D.C. Department of Public Works (DPW); the other lots are currently unimproved or contain tennis courts and, as the set down report states on page 1, the subject property "is unzoned and located within Fort Reno Park" (Exhibit 1 in the case file); and

WHEREAS, although the set down report describes this property as consisting of 6,600 square feet of land extending "east from the west side of Belt Road to a closed segment of Sheridan Street on the north of Chesapeake Street, or almost to present day 41st Street", in fact the subject property extends east from the *east* side of Belt Road almost to present day 40th Street, N.W.; and

WHEREAS, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3F (ANC 3F) is affected by this petition, not only because the subject property is within 200 feet of ANC 3F (40th Street and Chesapeake Street serve as the boundary between ANC 3E and ANC 3F), but also because ANC 3F residents use this area for recreation and because residents and ANC 3F have long understood it to be part of Fort Reno National Park, for which ANC 3E and ANC 3F share advisory jurisdiction;¹ and

WHEREAS, ANC 3F has serious questions that must be addressed before the merits of this petition are considered:

1. What precisely is the land area to be zoned in this case?

The set down report gives no specific boundaries or dimensions of this land, only the total land area of 6,600 square feet. On page 4 the report does show a computer-generated quadrilateral covering an area that includes all of the red brick building and the lawn between the tennis courts and roadbed of Chesapeake Street. This area easily could be larger than 6,600 square feet. No survey appears to have been done.

¹ Although it is within 200 feet of the subject property, ANC 3F did not receive official notice of this case from the Office of Zoning.

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
06-37
CASE NO. 06-37
EXHIBIT NO. 13
ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 06-37
EXHIBIT NO. 13

The plat of the subject property at Exhibit 3 in the case file shows not only Lots 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 29, 28, and 27, but also a “Lot 4” between Lots 3 and 5. The placards posted on the red brick building also list a “Lot 4”, as does the notice of the hearing in the September 22, 2006, D.C. Register. Yet, there is *no* Lot 4 on the 1960 Baist Map at Exhibit 2 in the case file, nor on the plat of Square 1765 on file at the D.C. Surveyor’s Office.² See Attachment A.

Although the set down report petitions to zone *part* of these lots, the plat at Exhibit 3 does not delineate what part of the lots is to be zoned, leaving the real possibility that the Zoning Commission could establish zoning for the lots in their entirety. If so, the land to be zoned would total 30,850 square feet (28,350 square feet if “Lot 4” does not exist), or more than half an acre – not the 6,600 square feet recommended for set down. The full area of these lots includes not only the red brick building and lawn, but also a significant portion of the three tennis courts and a stand of shade trees. See Attachment B.

Such a rezoning would have an enormous impact on the park and on the surrounding area. ANC 3F believes that most of this land is federally-owned and not subject to zoning and that the rest of the land has been incorporated into Chesapeake Street.

2. Where is the District-owned land located, and is any of it north of Chesapeake Street, as the Office of Planning claims?

In fact, numerous maps and documents show that all of the land immediately north of Chesapeake Street is part of federally-owned Fort Reno National Park. The August 1995 map of the Park System of the Nation’s Capital and Environs identifies this land as park land and indicates that it is part of federal Reservation 470. See Attachment C.

The U.S. Department of the Interior’s *Final Environmental Assessment, Athletic Field Construction and Renovation at Fort Reno Park, Washington, D.C.* (September 17, 2001) describes Fort Reno as “bounded on the south by Chesapeake Street, on the north by Fessenden Street, on the east by Nebraska Avenue, and on the west by Belt Road”, page 2, and asserts that “Fort Reno Park is under the jurisdiction and management of the National Park Service, which classifies it as a multiple-purpose park offering ‘a variety of activities’” including “three tennis courts on the southwest corner of the park”, page 16. A map at Appendix B of the *Environmental Assessment* further indicates that all of the land north of Chesapeake Street is part of Fort Reno National Park. See Attachment D.

In addition, the 1996 D.C. Zoning Map shows all of the land on the north side of the 4000 block of Chesapeake Street as within the “Fort Reno Recreation Center” and identifies it as a federal holding. See Attachment E.

The National Park Service (NPS) has taken actions consistent with ownership of the land north of Chesapeake Street. NPS built the tennis courts and maintains the property surrounding them. In the 1980s, it demolished a barn on the northern part of Lots 1 and

² Following adoption of this resolution by ANC 3F, Rick Dreist, the D.C. Surveyor, acknowledged that Square 1765 was recorded in 1877 and that Lot 4 never did exist.

2. See Attachment F. Community groups that used the red brick building on the corner between the 1970s and 1990s believed that they occupied the building at the discretion of NPS, which sought to evict them in 1991. See Attachment G. Even though the red brick building has been vacant since that time, the Park Service still has a key to it. Just this past summer, staff from Rock Creek Park used the key to admit members of the Tenleytown Historic Society into the building.

The District's own property tax records do not support District ownership of any lots in Square 1765. None of these lots shows up in the tax records, either by lot number or by street address.³ The tax records do give a listing for Fort Drive as a whole and indicate that it is owned by the United States of America. This is a large parcel, which may include Fort Reno Park. The complete absence from the tax records of any lots in Square 1765 raises the question whether they still exist as separate entities.⁴

OP bases its claim to District ownership on Map No. 8094, dated January 2, 1957, and entitled "Closing of Public Highways and Public Alleys, also Transfer of Jurisdiction". (Book 129, page 27, on file at the D.C. Surveyor's Office) Among other things, this map shows that roughly 20-30 feet of the southern portion of Lots 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 29, 28, and 27 (no "Lot 4" is shown) is marked for transfer of jurisdiction from NPS to the District in order to widen Chesapeake Street to 74 feet.⁵ See Attachment H. To date, OP has not been able to produce any other documentation, such as a deed, to show that the District holds the title or fee to this land.

Significantly, the transferred land shown on the 1957 map is *south* of the northern boundary of Chesapeake Street, and thus *within* the property lines for Chesapeake Street itself, not north of it, as claimed in OP's set down report on pages 1 and 4. In sum, ANC 3F knows of *no* transfer of jurisdiction or ownership from NPS to the District for land north of or outside of Chesapeake Street.

³ The tax records do show District ownership of lots in the 3900 block of Chesapeake Street, not the 4000 block, where the lots subject to this petition are located. These are in Squares 1759 and 1768. Because the uses of these properties are listed as "special purpose" and "school", they are presumably the reservoir and Wilson High School.

⁴ Typically, when a lot is subdivided, each piece of the lot is given a new lot number. In this case, though, the fragments of lots could have disappeared as separate entities when they were consolidated into a larger piece of land, such as Reservation 470. Such a consolidation is also called a subdivision.

⁵ Accompanying the map are several explanatory statements, including:

Department of the Interior NPS

DC _____ 195 _____

In accordance with Public Act 143, approved May 20, 1932, I hereby accept the transfer from the Commissioners of the District of Columbia of the area shown hereon in hatched lines and I hereby transfer to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia the area shown in cross hatched lines.

Signed: E. T. Scoyen, Acting Director, NPS

In addition to the transfer of the cross-hatched area to widen Chesapeake Street, this map shows the closure of Belt Road from Chesapeake to Davenport Street and its transfer from the District to the National Park Service. The map of the Park System at Attachment C shows Belt Road as part of the park.

3. If the subject property is part of the right-of-way for Chesapeake Street, does the Zoning Commission have the authority to zone it, or is the appropriate action to seek a permit from the Public Space Committee of the District Department of Transportation (DDOT)?

The 1957 transfer to increase the width of Chesapeake Street is corroborated by DDOT's public space records. The computerized street map maintained by the Public Space Office shows this strip of land within the boundaries of Chesapeake Street and without separate lot designations. This map also shows that, while most of the red brick building sits within Fort Reno Park, part of it projects into the right-of-way for Chesapeake Street. *See Attachment I.*

Measurements on the ground indicate that the red brick building projects approximately 17 feet into the right-of-way for Chesapeake Street, leaving most of it on federal park land.⁶ The boundary between Chesapeake Street and the park falls approximately one foot north of the building's large multi-paned first floor window (one foot to the left the window in the photograph on page 3 of the set down report). Because the building projects into the right-of-way for Chesapeake Street, the roadbed curves to the south to avoid it.

ANC 3F knows of no provision authorizing the Zoning Commission to establish zoning for District streets. If the Zoning Commission were to zone land within a street, how would bulk regulations be applied? What precedent would such an action set for other structures projecting into public space? It is ANC 3F's understanding that an applicant seeking to remodel and occupy a projection into a District street must apply for a public space permit.

4. Is it appropriate for the D.C. Zoning Commission to zone federally-owned land, such as this portion of Fort Reno Park?

The D.C. Code specifically prohibits the Zoning Commission from regulating federally-owned property. Instead, review authority rests with the National Capital Planning Commission:

The [Zoning Regulations] shall not apply to federal public buildings; provided, however, that, in order to ensure the orderly development of the national capital, the location, height, bulk, number of stories, and size of federal public buildings in the District of Columbia and the provision for open space in and around the same will be subject to the approval of the National Capital Planning Commission.

D.C. Code § 6-641.15 (2001 Ed.)

Thus, the National Capital Planning Commission is the appropriate agency to review any changes to the red brick building and the open space surrounding it, not the D.C. Zoning

⁶ The west facade of the building measures 48 feet. Its present length indicates that an addition and rear porch were added after the walls of the building were drawn on the plat at Attachment A.

Commission. (And as the Tenleytown Historic Society points out, because the building is located within Reservation 470, which has been landmarked, any alterations to the structure will also have to be reviewed by the D.C. Historic Preservation Review Board.)

and

WHEREAS, establishing commercial zoning for these lots would allow this area to be developed for far more than the red brick building: one or more office buildings could be built, as well as a parking lot for employee cars or DPW trucks; the tennis courts could ultimately be demolished and trees removed to make way for more profitable commercial uses; any of these changes would destroy the use of this area for recreation and open space and could have a detrimental impact on the rest of the park; and

WHEREAS, Fort Reno Park lies within a large R-1B zone district, low density residential use (*see* the Zoning Map at Attachment E); no other properties immediately adjacent to the park are commercially zoned; rather, all adjacent properties are homes zoned R-1B or are schools, which are allowed as a matter of right in an R-1B zone (11 DCMR § 201.1 (k)); and

WHEREAS, commercial or office use for this site is inconsistent with the D.C. Comprehensive Plan, which states that

Public facilities planning for Ward 3 must be sensitive to the retention of green space, compatible in use and scale, respect architectural qualities, including historic district and landmark protections, and be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan (10 DCMR § 1405.3 (b)) and

In the decision-making to locate public facilities, there shall be a presumption that open space land should be retained or increased for park or recreational purposes. (10 DMCR § 1405.8 (a))

and

WHEREAS, the Generalized Land Use Map confirms that this site is intended for parks, recreation, and open space – not commercial or office use (*see* Attachment J); and

WHEREAS, commercial or office use within Fort Reno Park would conflict with policies of the Federal Elements of the Comprehensive Plan (*see* Attachment K) and with the purposes of the Fort Circle Park System, of which Fort Reno is a part, as set forth at page 8 of the Final Management Plan for the Fort Circle Parks (September 2004):

- to preserve and interpret historical resources related to the Civil War defenses of Washington
- to conserve this linkage of urban green spaces that contribute to the character and scenic values of the nation's capital
- to provide recreational opportunities compatible with historic and natural resource values

The Final Management Plan specifically indicates that the part of Fort Reno Park where this land is located is to be managed for recreational use (see Attachment L); and

WHEREAS, the District has no compelling or overriding need to use the red brick building or the surrounding area for offices for DPW's Street and Alley Cleaning Division; this division serves the entire District; its office needs could be accommodated anywhere in the city, as is shown by the fact that its current offices are located in another ward; and

WHEREAS, for a number of years, residents have been asking that the red brick building be used for restrooms, storage of sports equipment, and other recreational needs as an adjunct to use of the park and the ball fields soon to be built there; others have asked for space in the building for historic displays about Fort Reno; and

WHEREAS, the uses that the community desires are recreational in nature, and thus consistent with the District and Federal Elements of the Comprehensive Plan as well as the Final Management Plan for the Fort Circle Parks;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT: ANC 3F requests that the Zoning Commission grant it the status of affected ANC for this case and accord it great weight, as required by *Neighbors United for a Safer Community v. DC Board of Zoning Adjustment*, 647 A. 2d 793, 797-798 (DC 1994)⁷; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: ANC 3F joins with ANC 3E in requesting that the Zoning Commission continue this case; specifically, ANC 3F requests that all preliminary questions about land area and location, the existence of Lot 4, the present status of any of these lots, ownership of the land, and the Zoning Commission's authority to zone it be resolved before the case is heard; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: based on the foregoing discussion, ANC 3F recommends that this petition be withdrawn or denied for lack of jurisdiction; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: ANC 3F strongly opposes commercial zoning or use for Lots 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 29, 28, and 27 in Square 1765 (and Lot 4 if it exists) and urges that any further action for commercial use or development of this area be denied as inconsistent with both the District and Federal Elements of the Comprehensive Plan and with the Final Management Plan of the Fort Circle Parks; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: ANC 3F urges that District agencies and the National Park Service work with the community to find a more suitable use for the red brick building and one that is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and purposes of the Fort Circle Park system; and

⁷ In *Neighbors United for a Safer Community*, the Court recognized that "it would be manifestly unreasonable to conclude that the area represented by an ANC which is physically located directly across the street from the proposed facility for which the special exception is sought would not be affected by it," 647 A2d at 797, and held that "it would defy both logic and common sense to conclude that an ANC can be 'affect[ed]' but its written opinion not entitled to 'great weight'." *Id.* at 798.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: ANC 3F appoints Commissioners Cathy Wiss and Karen Perry to represent it at all proceedings in this case.

This resolution was adopted by a vote of 4-0-0 at a duly-noticed public meeting on November 20, 2006, with a quorum present (a quorum being four).



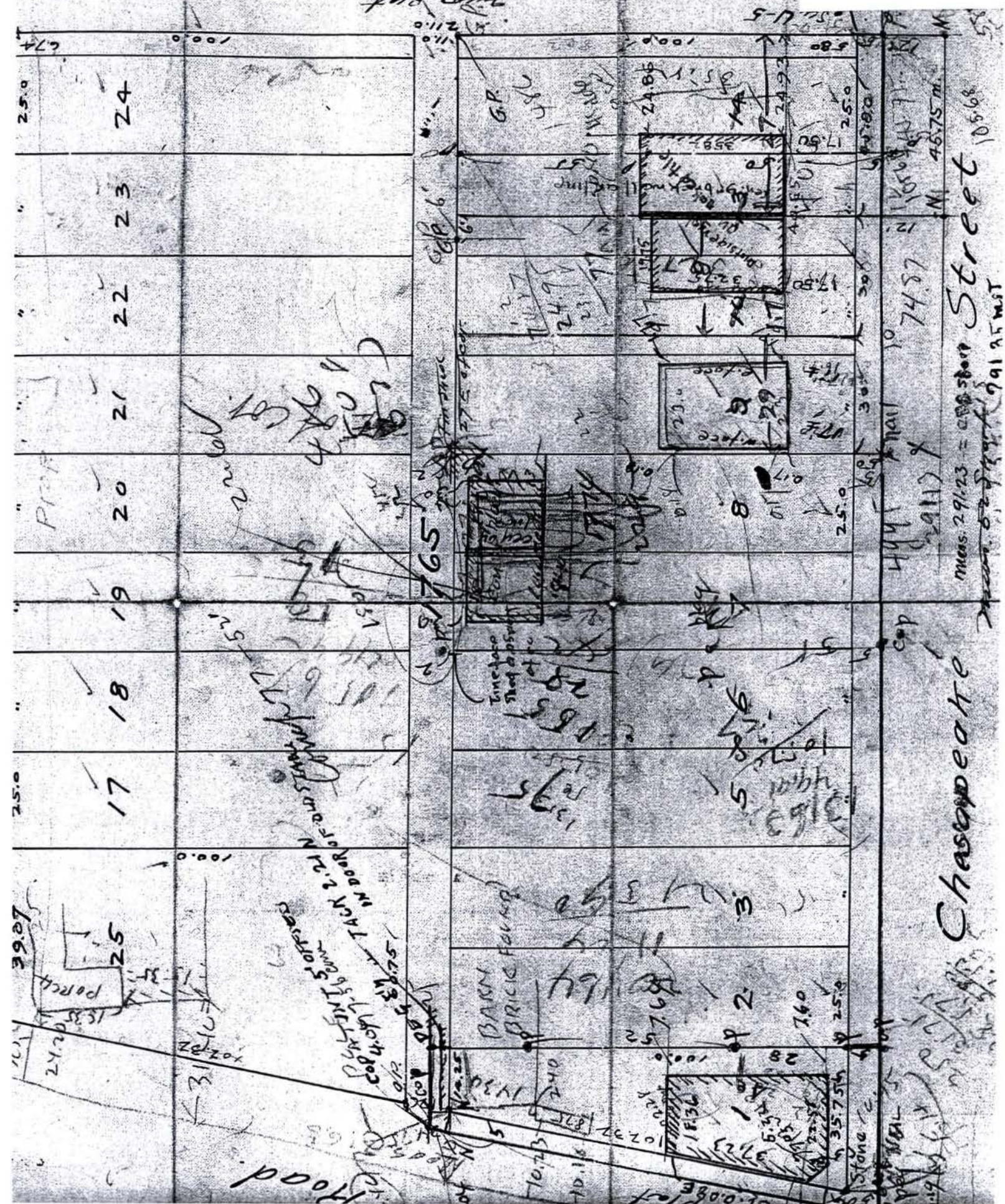
Cathy Wiss, Chair

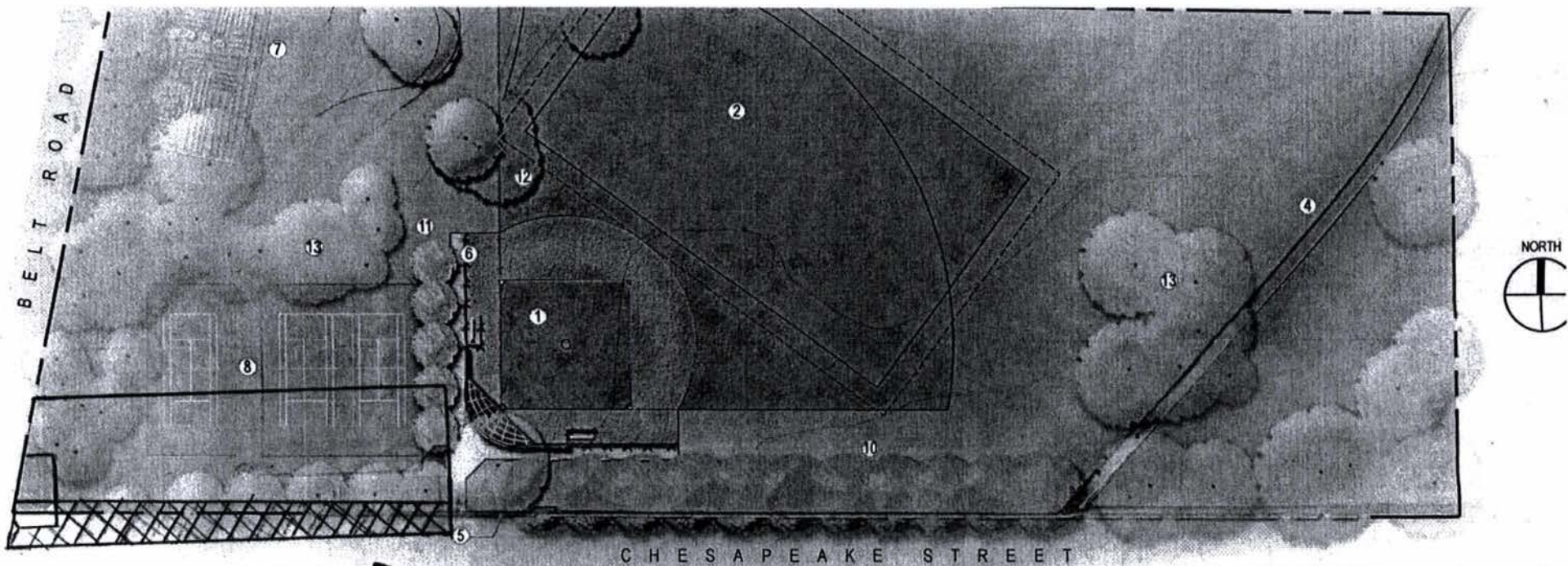


Daniel Klibanoff, Acting Secretary

Attachments:

- A – Plat of Square 1765 on file at the D.C. Surveyor's Office
- B – Land area of Lots 1-3, 5-8, and 27-29 superimposed on a plan of Fort Reno Park
- C – Detail from the map of the "Park System of the Nation's Capital and Environs under Jurisdiction of National Capital Area – National Park Service", August 1995 (lands shown in green are National Capital Parks)
- D – Excerpts from the Department of the Interior's *Final Environmental Assessment, Athletic Field Construction and Renovation at Fort Reno Park, Washington, D.C.* (September 17, 2001)
- E – Detail from the 1996 D.C. Zoning Map
- F – Picture of the Old Red Barn from Judith Beck Helms, *Tenleytown D.C.: Country Village into City Neighborhood*, second ed. (Washington, D.C.: Tennally Press, 2000)
- G – "Park Service Stirs a Hornet's Nest", *The Washington Post* (May 18, 1991)
- H – Map No. 8094, "Closing of Public Highways and Public Alleys, also Transfer of Jurisdiction", January 2, 1957, and detail
- I – D.C. Public Space map and street width dimensions for Chesapeake Street, N.W.
- J – Detail from the District of Columbia Generalized Land Use Map (areas shown in green indicate "parks, recreation and open space")
- K – Policies for Parks and Open Space from National Capital Planning Commission, *Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital, Federal Elements* (Washington, D.C.: 2004) 103-104
- L – The Plan for Section I of the Fort Circle Parks from National Park Service, *Final Management Plan, Fort Circle Parks* (Washington, D.C.: 2004) 29

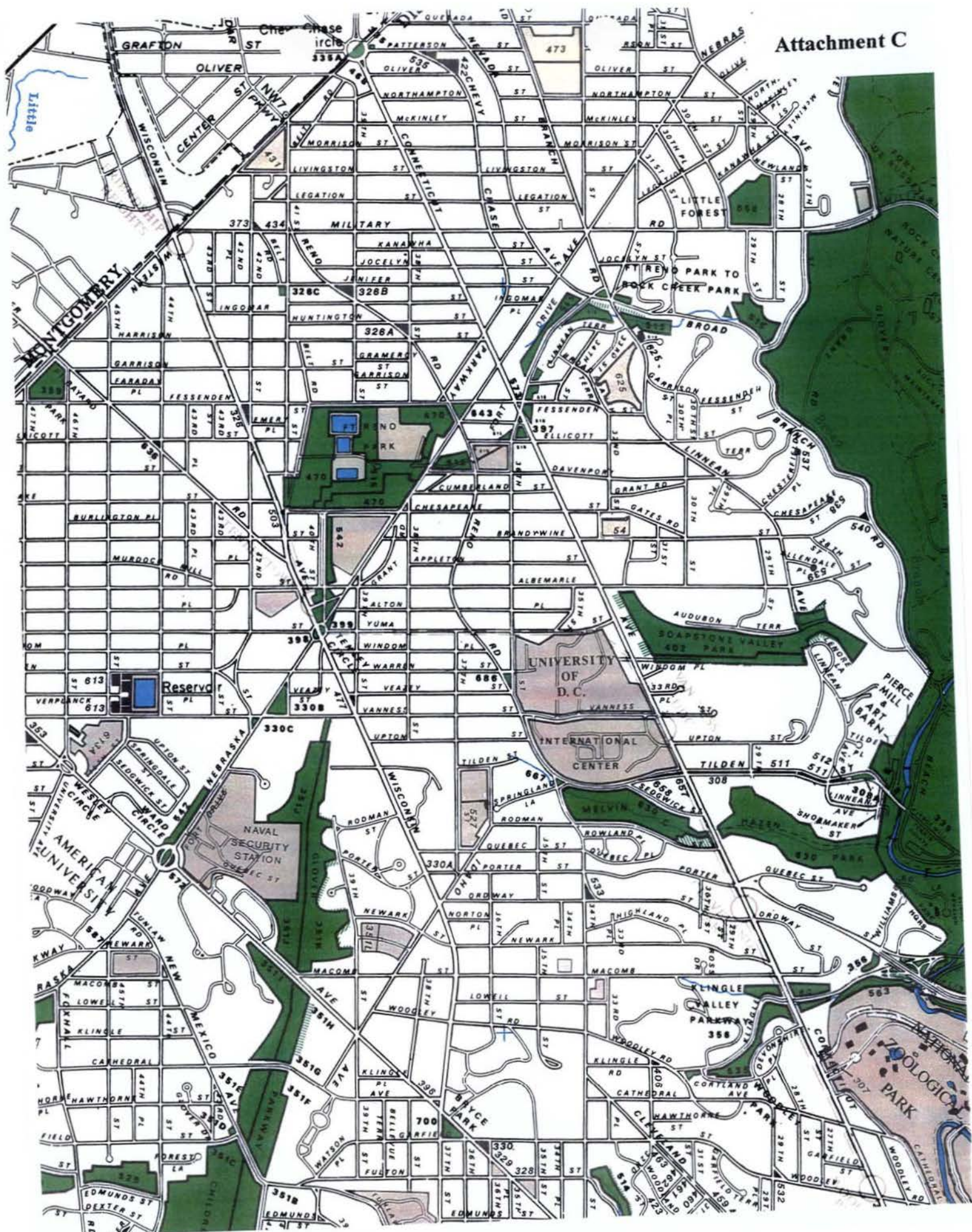




BALL FIELD FINAL CONCEPT
FORT RENO PARK

Lots 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 29, 28, and 27

This is a detailed street map of the University of the District of Columbia (U.D.C.) area. The map shows a dense grid of streets, including major thoroughfares like Wisconsin Avenue and various local streets. Key landmarks and areas are highlighted, such as the University of D.C. building, the International Center, the Naval Security Station, and several parks including Rock Creek Park, Audubon Park, and Pierce Mill Park. The map also shows the Potomac River and the Washington Monument in the background. The map is labeled 'Attachment C' in the top right corner.



September 17, 2001

**U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**

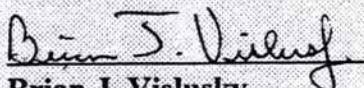
FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

**ATHLETIC FIELD CONSTRUCTION AND RENOVATION
AT FORT RENO PARK
WASHINGTON, D. C.**

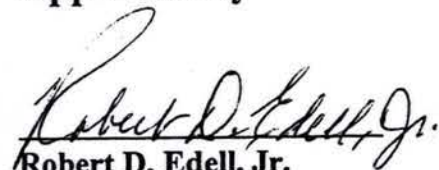
Prepared by BREGMAN & COMPANY, INC.
Under Contract To:

architrave p.c., architects
420 10th Street, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20003

Prepared By


Brian J. Vislusky
Environmental Scientist

Approved By


Robert D. Edell, Jr.
President

2.0 PURPOSE AND NEED

The proposed project involves modifications to existing Fort Reno Park to provide multi-functional athletic fields. The need for improved soccer fields and softball/baseball facilities was identified in a 1997 report prepared for the National Park Service entitled "Rapid Ethnographic Assessment for the Anacostia Park Management Plan and the Civil War Defenses of Washington Management Plan." This study utilized, among other strategies, field interview methodology to identify park users and their concerns.

The National Park Service classifies Fort Reno Park as a multiple use facility. The use of Fort Reno Park by organized soccer leagues has increased as available space for such activities has dwindled in the greater Washington, D. C. area. The urban location and accessibility of Fort Reno Park have made it an attractive location for participants in organized sports. In addition, Woodrow Wilson High School and Alice Deal Junior High School utilize the park for athletic activities.¹

3.0 DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT AND ALTERNATIVES

Existing Facilities

Fort Reno Park occupies approximately 45 acres of an approximately 80 acre trapezoidal section of Northwest Washington, D. C., bounded on the south by Chesapeake Street, on the north by Fessenden Street, on the east by Nebraska Avenue, and on the west by Belt Road (see Figures 1 and 2). Located in the Tenleytown neighborhood of Ward 3, this tract also includes Alice Deal Junior High School and the Reno Reservoir within its boundaries: with the exception of these facilities, the entire area is under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service.

Existing facilities in the park include a 250' x 350' combination soccer/baseball field on the south side of the park adjacent to Chesapeake Street, three tennis courts to the west of the soccer field, a community garden located just north of the tennis courts, and a small concert stage used in a summer concert program. A small athletic field is located adjacent to the wooded area in the northeast corner of the park, west of the Alice Deal Junior High School athletic field. An unpaved path, used mainly by junior high school students as a shortcut to the Tenleytown Metro station, runs through the park from the school to Chesapeake Street (see "Detailed Plan of Proposed Alternatives" - Appendix B).

¹National Park Service "Rapid Ethnographic Assessment for the Anacostia Park Management Plan and the Civil War Defenses of Washington Management Plan" (1997) p. 175.

4.4.2 Land Use

Fort Reno Park is under the jurisdiction and management of the National Park Service, which classifies it as a multiple-use park, offering “a variety of activities and attract[s] people of various ethnic groups who live in different parts of the city and region.”¹⁵ Fort Reno Park occupies an approximately 80 acre tract which also includes the Reno Reservoir at its center, and Deal Junior High School in the northeast quadrant. At present, the majority of the park is grassy, undeveloped land with scattered stands of trees and open spaces utilized as sports playing fields.

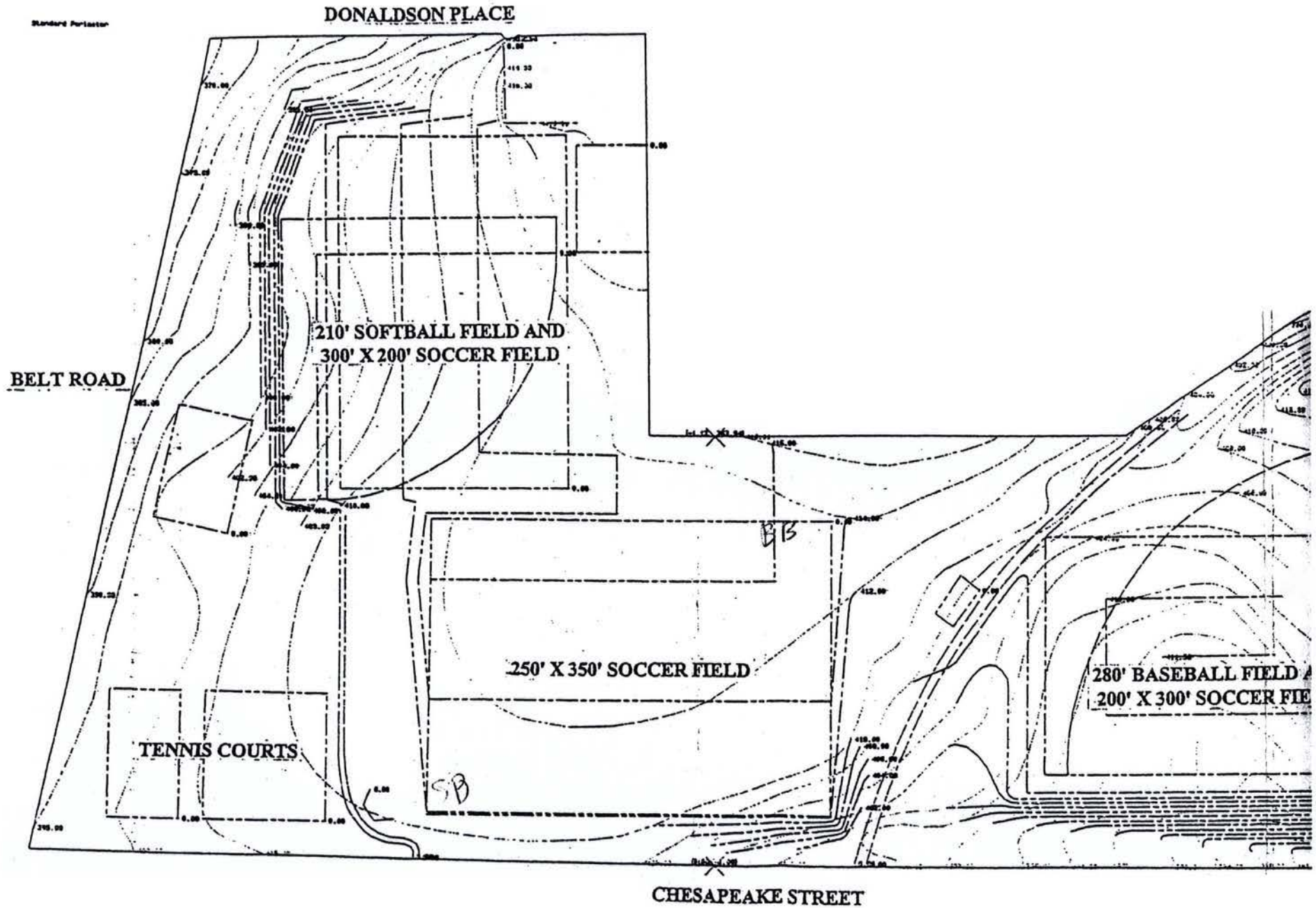
In addition to the spaces utilized by organized sports leagues and local schools, the park also includes three tennis courts on the southwest corner of the park, a wooden bandstand which is utilized in the summer concert series and a community garden, which was established in the 1940's by the Civilian Conservation Corps. The community garden is approximately 100' x 100' surrounded by a six foot high fence that would protect the garden from any impediments. Produce grown by the Fort Reno gardeners include vegetables, teas, herbs, flowers, and fruit. None of the project alternatives will negatively impact these facilities, although two alternatives (2 and 4) involve the realignment of the path and relocation/reconstruction of the bandstand to an adjacent area of the park. This assumes that proper sediment and erosion control measures, following the District of Columbia regulations, are taken in conjunction with the construction work.

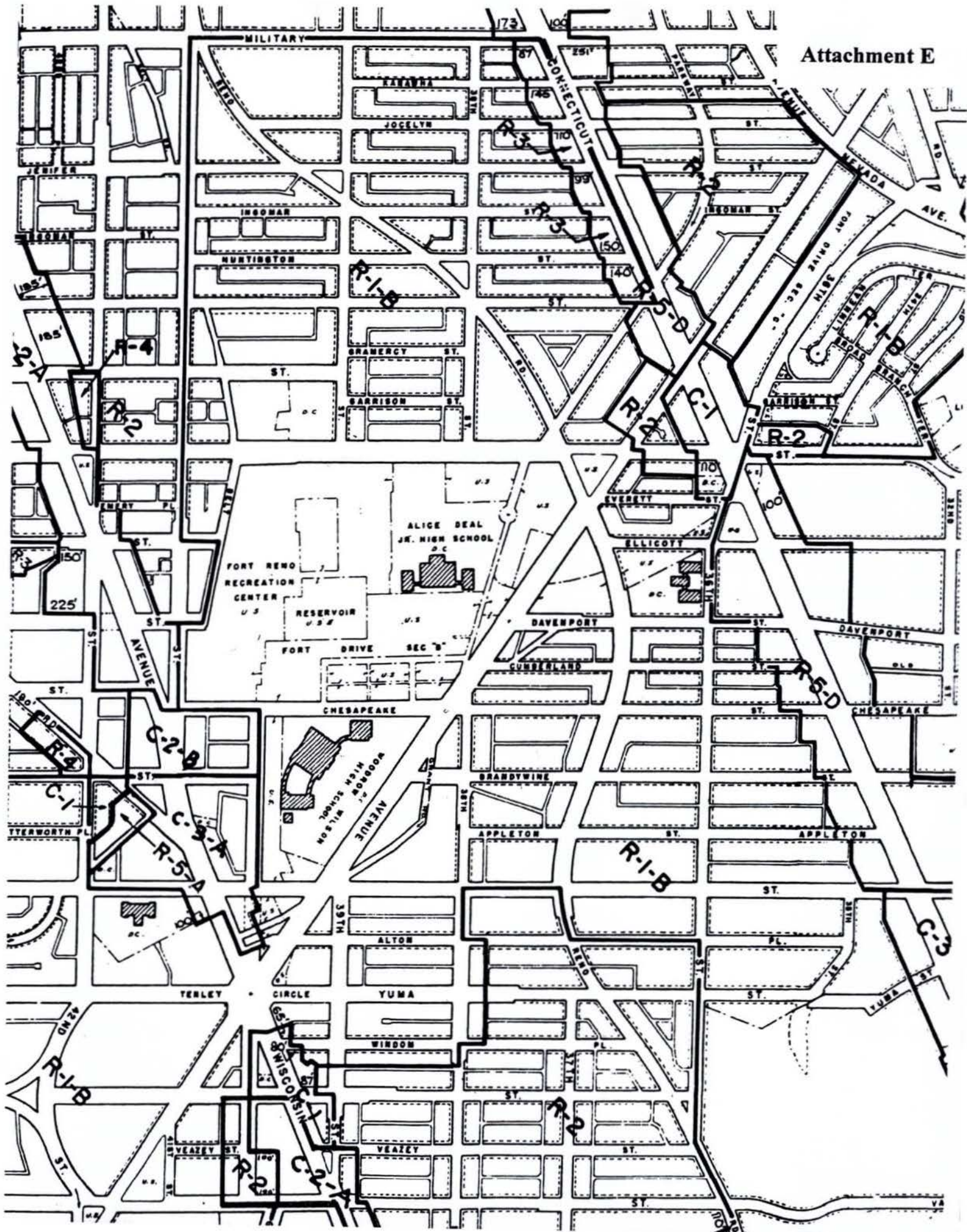
4.4.3 Aesthetics

Fort Reno Park is an open, green space in the midst of a heavily populated urban area. While not densely wooded, a variety of trees are scattered around the perimeter of the park, particularly on the southeast corner and the west side. The presence of these trees and the grassy park provide a contrast to the surrounding urban area. While the towers and other structures associated with the Reno Reservoir provide an interesting visual element, this is somewhat mitigated by the unappealing chain link fence surrounding it. A complex of large radio/television towers across Chesapeake Street at the southwest corner of the park also detract from the overall ambience of the park.

¹⁵National Park Service “Rapid Ethnographic Assessment” p. x.

FORT RENO PARK





From Judith Beck Helms, *Tenleytown D.C.: Country Village into City Neighborhood*, second ed. (Washington, D.C.: Tennally Press, 2000)

The Tenley Citizens Advisory Board, organized in 1974, comprises delegates from nearly a dozen citizens groups, including the Wisconsin Avenue Corridor Committee; the Friendship Citizens Coalition; the Chevy Chase, American University Park, Friendship, North Cleveland Park, and Forest Hills Citizens associations; St. Ann's Church; McLean Gardens; and Citizens for City Living. The Tenley CAB concerns itself with National Capital Planning Commission plans for the area, land use, zoning, traffic, the Metro, the environment, development, and historic preservation.

In the early 1970s the D.C. Recreation Department inaugurated a very popular Summer in the Parks program, bringing various musical programs—including the National Symphony Orchestra—to the Reno recreation area as well as to other parks around the city.

The National Capital Parks also began a series of free outdoor rock music concerts whose popularity was widespread. Unfortunately, the loudness of the electronically-amplified music disturbed neighbors for blocks around, and the sight of hundreds of long-haired teenage rock fans, many drinking wine and beer and smoking marijuana, was not pleasing to many of these same neighbors. The rock concerts have continued regularly, however, for nine summers.

On Sunday afternoons those same fields at Reno are used by local international teams for soccer games. Again, large groups of people—very different from the Saturday night crowd—congregate to enjoy the recreation facilities at Fort Reno.

The one recreational facility missing at Reno was a public swimming pool, planned since 1935. In 1979 a southern wing to Wilson High School was completed that housed an indoor pool for use by the public as well as by students.

TWO TENLEYTOWN LANDMARKS



(1965 photo c/o Rosalie Rinis Miller)

Tenleytown Lives Again

Interest in Tenleytown as a place, and the revival of the name Tenleytown—instead of Friendship or “the upper Wisconsin Avenue area”—was very apparent in the 1970s. *The Uptown Citizen*, *The Washington Post*, and (the late) *Washington Star* have increasingly used the old name. The Tenley-Friendship Library council, formed in 1972, has consistently favored the name Tenley over Friendship.

The year 1974 brought a flurry of student research activity in the area. A University of Maryland graduate class in architecture undertook a study of the projected impact of the subway on Tenleytown, which included a survey of the residential and commercial architecture of the area.

Oral history students at George Washington University interviewed elderly blacks in Washington, including descendants of the Fort Reno community. Classes in urban history at American University and in urban studies at George Washington University concentrated attention on the urban development of the Tenley area.



(1973 photo by Priscilla McN.)

Top: Frank the Barber—Frank Errigo, whose shop on 41st Street closed in the late 1970s, was one of the most popular businessmen in the area.

Bottom: A committee to Save The Old Red Barn formed in 1976 to repair and preserve this relic on Belt Road near Brandywine. It was built about 1907 by the Grove family.

Park Service Stirs A Hornet's Nest

Tenleytown Unhappy With Eviction Notice

Re: Sections. Tenleytown & Parks

By Shaun Sutner
Washington Post Staff Writer

The National Park Service, under fire from neighborhood groups for expanding commercial uses of a tennis center in Rock Creek Park, is now entangled with a trio of Tenleytown groups over rights to a parks building that has served as a community center for 15 years.

Three weeks ago, the Park Service abruptly notified leaders of the local Advisory Neighborhood Commission and two neighborhood planning councils who run programs in the building that they must move out by Oct. 1 or face eviction.

The 1930s-era building on the edge of Fort Reno Park is owned by the National Park Service, but the councils and commission have occupied it rent-free and maintained it since 1976.

Park Service officials said they want the dilapidated two-story building on Chesapeake Street NW to house a support organization whose profits are channeled into Park Service programs.

"We just ran out of space," said Maria Spencer, executive director of the association. "We don't get a great deal of joy out of kicking anyone out."

Community leaders said they were stunned by the notice. They said there is no money for rent set aside in their combined \$60,000 a year budgets and no alternative at hand.

They also said the building, although in poor condition, offers an ideal location for youth programs that would be hard to duplicate, situated as it is at the hub of a four-school area and within walking distance of the Tenleytown Metro station.

The Parks and History Association that would use the building is one of 64 "cooperating associations" nationwide that are contracted by the Park Service to sell books and pamphlets at park facilities and then donate their proceeds to the Park Service.

The Parks and History Association serves the 23 park facilities in the Washington area, generating \$1.2 million in revenue last year and \$225,000 in profits for the Park Service.

It has been renting offices on MacArthur Boulevard NW for \$36,000 a year, and Park Service officials say it could even renovate the old Fort Reno Park building and still be ahead financially next year.

"These guys [association members] are well-heeled. They raise a lot of money and rent first-class office space," said Steve Raiche, chairman of ANCS. "They [probably] can gut and redo the building. I haven't even got enough money to hire a cleaning person."

The ANC occupies a tiny office in the building with room only for a desk and some file cabinets. Weekdays, the five small remaining rooms are jammed with youths from throughout the city who come there for computer training, job-search seminars and music and drama workshops run by the neighborhood planning councils. The councils, financed by the city recreation department, also help find jobs for local youths and administer recreation events such as tennis and open air concerts in Fort Reno Park.

"We need to be near this park, near these schools. The association can be anywhere in this city," said Paul Strauss, an ANC commissioner and the program director for the neighborhood planning councils. "Fort Reno Park may be a national park on paper, but to the people who live here, it's our local community park."

Park Service officials said they simply are space-strapped and were looking for a cheaper location for the association. Although their notice to the ANC offered no suggestions, they are now proposing that the ANC and neighborhood councils move to a vacant building at the top of the hilly park, a forbidding bulk of property owned by the District and in even poorer condition than the building on Chesapeake.

"Since these are District agencies, and that is a District building, we thought it would be a good idea for them to talk," said Burnice Kearney, director of local operations for the Park Service. "There was never any thought on the part of the Park Service that these kind of community operations would cease to operate."

Strauss said the alternative site is too far from the streets and inhospitable for young people, but it would be perfect for the association.

Ward 3 D.C. Council member Iim Nathanson (D), who residents turned to for help, agreed.

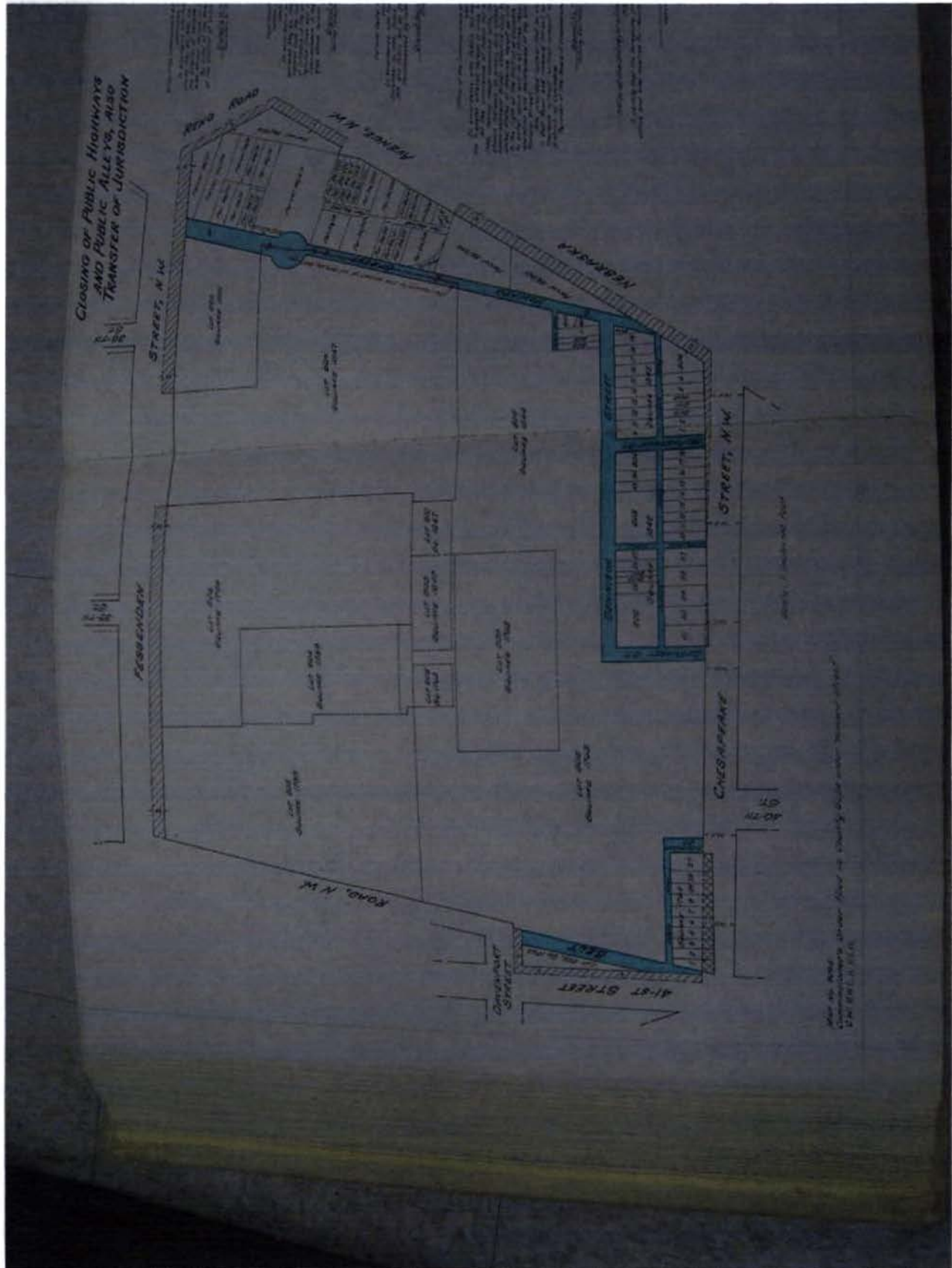
"There's no reason the Park Service people couldn't go up there," Nathanson said. "There would just be a swap in use."

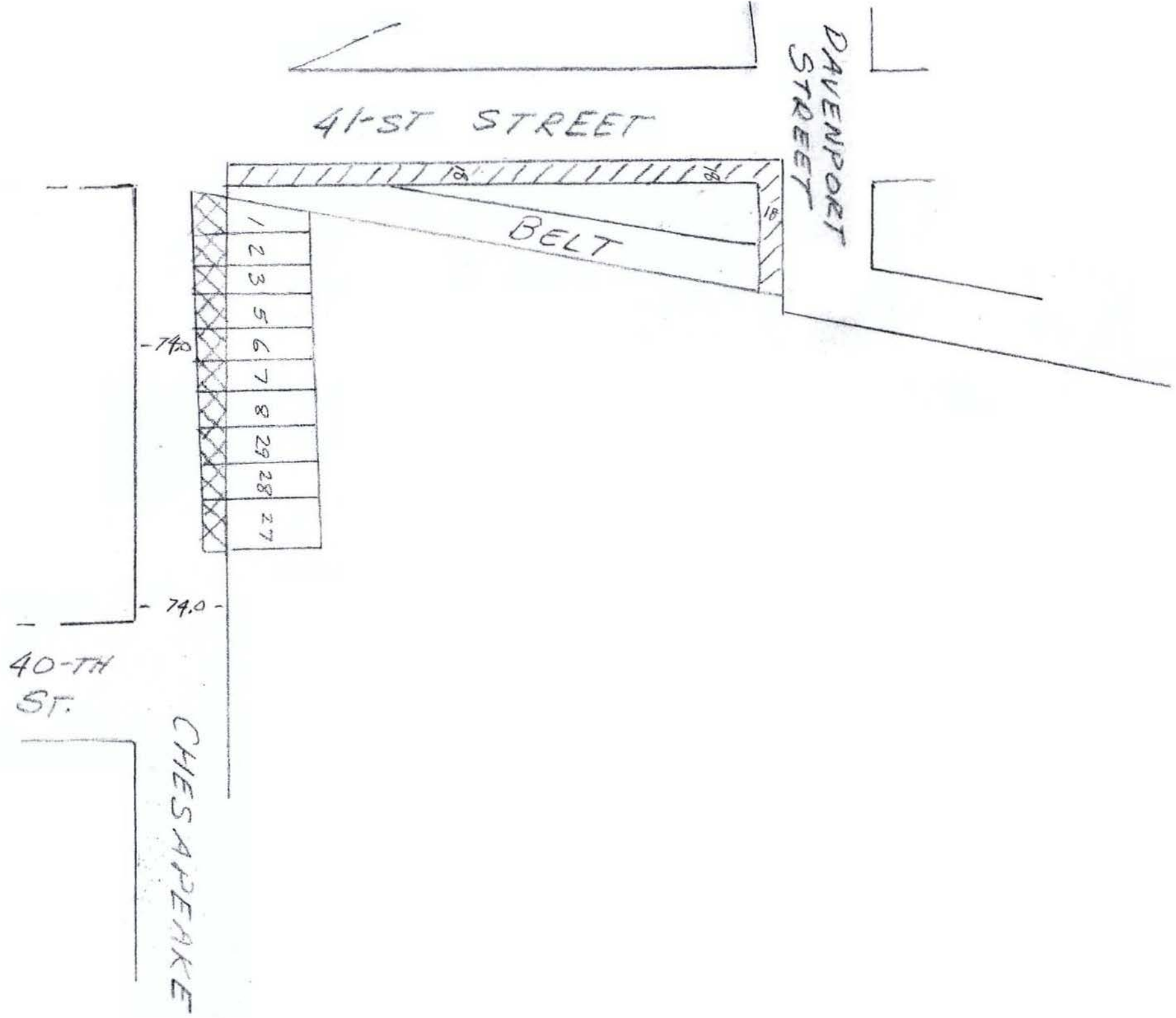
This week, Park Service officials said they would extend the 90-day deadline, but stopped short of saying they would either back down on their proposal or compromise.

Charles Atherton, the association's chairman, said he would much prefer the Chesapeake Street site. But D.C. Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D) said she will try to broker a compromise.

"It's hot in the summer and probably cold in the winter, but yet there's this incredible attachment to it in the community," said Norton after a visit to the Chesapeake Street building this week when it was bustling with youngsters in various workshops.

Turning to Kearney, she added: "Unlike the community, you're not attached to this bit of space."







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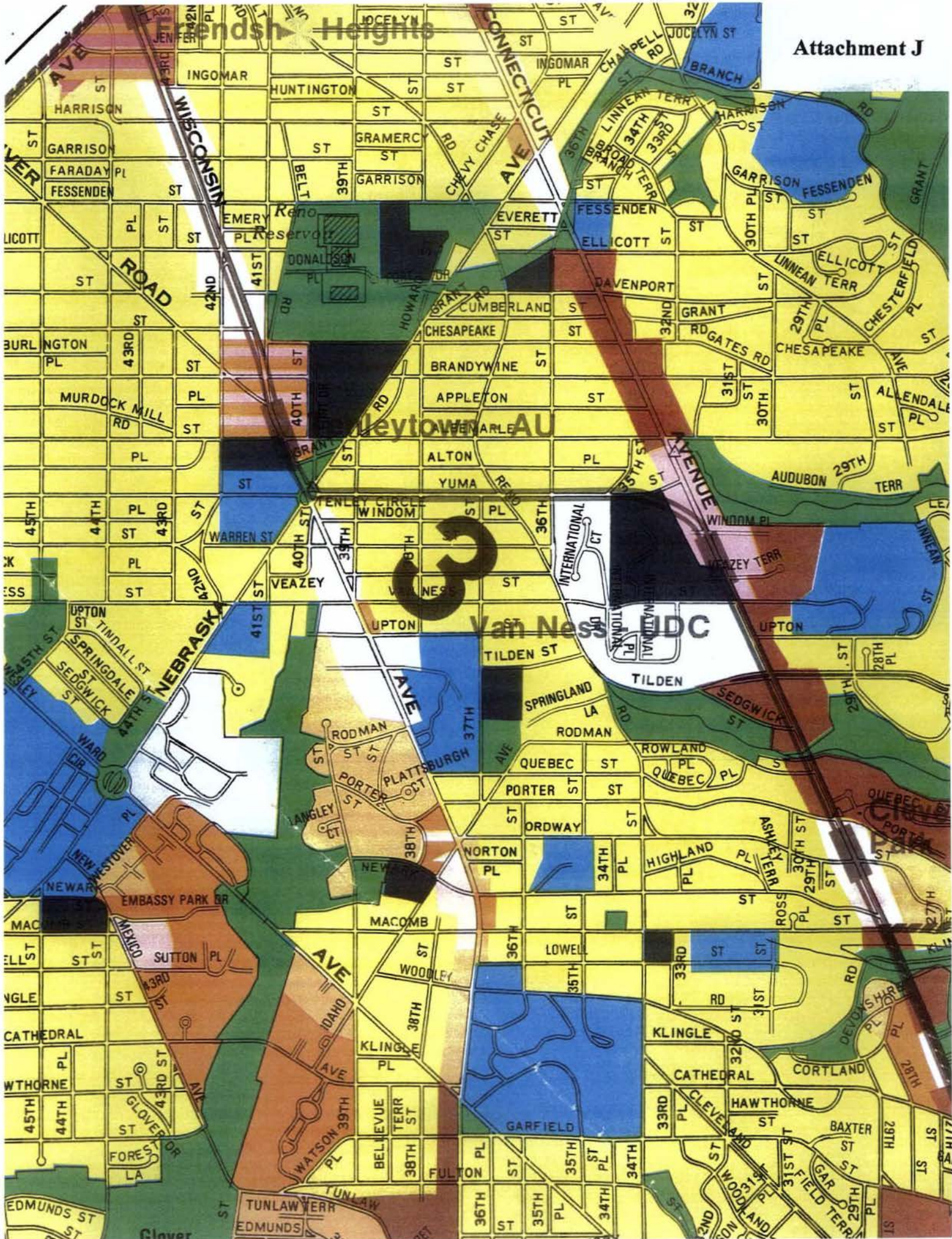
STREET WIDTHS

16

Street CHESAPEAKE STREET, NORTHWEST

PLEASE DO NOT CREASE OR FOLD

LOCATION	REMARKS	STREET	ROADWAY	SIDEWALK		PARKING	
				NS	SS	NS	SS
Linnean Ave. Eastward	15' Res.	60	30	12	12	3	3
Linnean Ave. Westward	15' Res.	60	30	10	10	5	5
On Cul-De-Sac	6' radius Center Pking	50' Rad.	29	Outer	10'	Inner	5'
31st to Angle east of 32nd	15' Res JAS 3/9/55	60	34	10	10	3	3
Angle east of 32nd to 38th St.	15' Res.	60	30	10	10	5	5
38th to Neb. Ave.	15' Res. S.S.	var.	33	var.	10	—	5
Neb. Ave. to 41st		74	36	9	9	2	18
Wis. Ave. to River Rd.		90	30	12	12	18	18



Comprehensive Plan *for the National Capital*



Federal Elements

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Expansion and Enhancement *Policies*

The federal government should:

1. Plan for new parks as part of the park system of the region.
2. Acquire parks and open space as necessary to augment the open space system.
3. Use easements, donations, purchases, exchanges, or other means to acquire land or to enhance parks and open space. Examples of areas or park systems where further acquisition is desirable include:
 - South Capitol Street
 - Anacostia River waterfront and tributaries
 - Georgetown Waterfront Park
 - Areas immediately south of Meridian Hill Park where significant view corridors are blocked
 - Sites at or near the topographic bowl ridge line, as seen from the monumental core
 - Fort Circle Park system
 - Sites at the periphery of Manassas National Battlefield Park
 - An outer greenbelt ring of major open space at the periphery of the region
4. Coordinate planning and development of federal parkland with local parkland in order to optimize recreation, open space preservation, and resource protection.

Preservation and Maintenance

Existing parks often suffer from chronic overuse, which contributes to the decline of the condition of the park and further burdens the already dwindling resources available for park maintenance. For example, the Mall Complex, a major open space setting for the nation's capital, plays host to millions of visitors who use it for a variety of symbolic and recreational uses. However, the use of the Mall as a gathering place for civic celebrations, peaceful demonstrations, and recreational uses is gradually being displaced by new memorials and museums. To counter this effect, the Mall Complex, from the U.S. Capitol to the Lincoln Memorial and from the White House to the Jefferson Memorial, should be considered essentially complete, and any improvements necessary in this area should be limited in scope and sensitively designed. Paradoxically, other parks are underutilized due to the lack of access and the poor condition of the parks. Examples include parkland along the Anacostia River and the waterfront park in Georgetown.

Shifting demographic and emerging development patterns mean that some parks no longer meet the needs of their users. Some parks in downtown Washington, for example, did not always serve a residential base and are not necessarily meeting residents' needs. Additionally, some federal parks and open space are in need of maintenance. Federal partnerships with local agencies, such as the District's Department of Parks and Recreation, business improvement districts, and nonprofit organizations, are key in developing a strategy and approach to upgrade these spaces, thereby improving their aesthetic and function, and adding vitality to their locations. Park use and development must strike a balance between recognition of national significance in designation, and local needs. Federal-local partnerships should focus on fulfilling shared goals, but not at the expense of impairing federal interests. Thus, a re-examination of federal open space in the District of Columbia should be considered so that federal open space that is essentially local in character can be more effectively integrated into the fabric of the District's neighborhoods.



Many parks and open spaces in the National Capital Region are also threatened by adjacent development pressures and the encroachment of inappropriate new development along park borders, conversion of the land to different uses, and a lack of resources for adequate maintenance. For example, Manassas National Battlefield Park—a significant historical Civil War landmark and cultural landscape—should be protected from unsympathetic development adjacent to it, as such adverse adjacent uses next to parks threaten their integrity and can cause adverse environmental impacts. Greater emphasis should be given to coordinating federal park and open space master plans with development plans for the jurisdictions that surround them.

Historically, dwindling resources often leave little money for the development and upkeep of federal and nonfederal parks and open space. Because public funding is limited for land acquisition and maintenance, new sources for these essential activities need to be developed and novel solutions shaped. New park and open space planning initiatives that have emerged in recent years, for example, have allowed the federal government to work and partner with a variety of entities. Among these, a nonprofit organization has entered into an agreement with the National Park Service to assist in restoring and enhancing the National Mall; local business improvement districts are addressing small federally owned reservations in downtown Washington; and regional planning agencies are devoting more resources to thinking comprehensively about the regional open space network in its entirety and the importance of adequately planning for and acquiring open space in a growing metropolitan area.

Preservation and Maintenance

Policies

The federal government should:

1. Enhance parks and preserve open green space for future generations.
2. Maintain and conserve federal open space as a means of shaping and enhancing urban areas.
3. Preserve open space that is crucial to the long-term quality of life of a neighborhood or the region.
4. Conserve and maintain the essential open space character of areas in the region with significant park, open space, cultural, or natural qualities that contribute to the setting of the National Capital Region. Such areas include the National Arboretum, Beltsville Agricultural Research Center, and McMillan and Dalecarlia Reservoirs.
5. Conserve portions of military reservations that add significantly to the inventory of park, open space, and natural areas and should, to the extent practicable, be used by the public for recreation. Examples include Andrews Air Force Base, Fort Belvoir, U.S. Soldiers' and Airmen's Home, Fort Meade, and Marine Corps Base Quantico.
6. Maintain wildlife refuge areas in the region as critical natural open space and protect these areas from potential adverse impacts from surrounding developments, including major highway or other transportation projects.
7. Maintain and conserve trees and other vegetation in the landscaped buffer areas on federal installations in a natural condition. Perimeter roads and cleared areas on these sites should be kept to a minimum, carefully landscaped, and managed in a manner that addresses security, aesthetics, and natural character.
8. Enter joint ventures to acquire and manage parks and open space.



-  Earthworks (existing)
-  Earthworks (presumed location)
-  NPS site

-  Non NPS ownership
-  Self-guided walking tour (Construct Trail where feasible route shown is conceptual)
-  Visitor Contact Facility
-  NPS Lands

Management Zones

-  Administrative zone
-  Cultural zone
-  Connecting corridor zone
-  Recreational zone
-  Special use zone
-  Natural zone

