

**STRATTON
WOODS
PARK
MASTER PLAN
SEPTEMBER 1999
AMENDED
SEPTEMBER 23, 2009**



GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR STRATTON WOODS PARK

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Park Description

Stratton Woods Park is located on Fox Mill Road in Reston, Virginia, in the Hunter Mill Supervisory District (*see Figure 1*). This community park is 30.7 acres in size, approximately 20 of which are wooded. Most of the site is less than 2% slope and several small areas of wetlands occur on the park. A small concrete building and tower on the eastern portion of the site are leased by Bell Atlantic Mobile as a telecommunications facility.

B. Purpose and Description of the Plan

The purpose of this General Management Plan (GMP) is to serve as a guide for all future planning and programming. This document should be referred to before future planning and design projects are started.

This GMP describes the existing natural resources of the park, as well as other existing conditions. Management zones have been established, with accompanying lists of potential uses for each zone. The uses are described in general terms, so that as visitor needs change, the uses provided can change as well.

General Management Plans are meant to be flexible, to change with the changing needs of park visitors. Every GMP should be updated periodically, to reflect changes that have occurred both on and off-site.

II. PARK PURPOSE AND SIGNIFICANCE

A. Park Purpose: What is the purpose of the park?

Park Purpose statements are intended to provide an umbrella for planning and decision making. If a proposed use conflicts with any one of the purposes listed, it will be considered an incompatible use. By establishing park purposes, future plans can remain flexible, as legislative requirements and visitor preferences change.

The purpose of Stratton Woods Park is to:

- preserve, protect, and restore natural resources
- provide a variety of active recreation for all county citizens
- generate revenue to support the operation, maintenance, and restoration of park resources and facilities

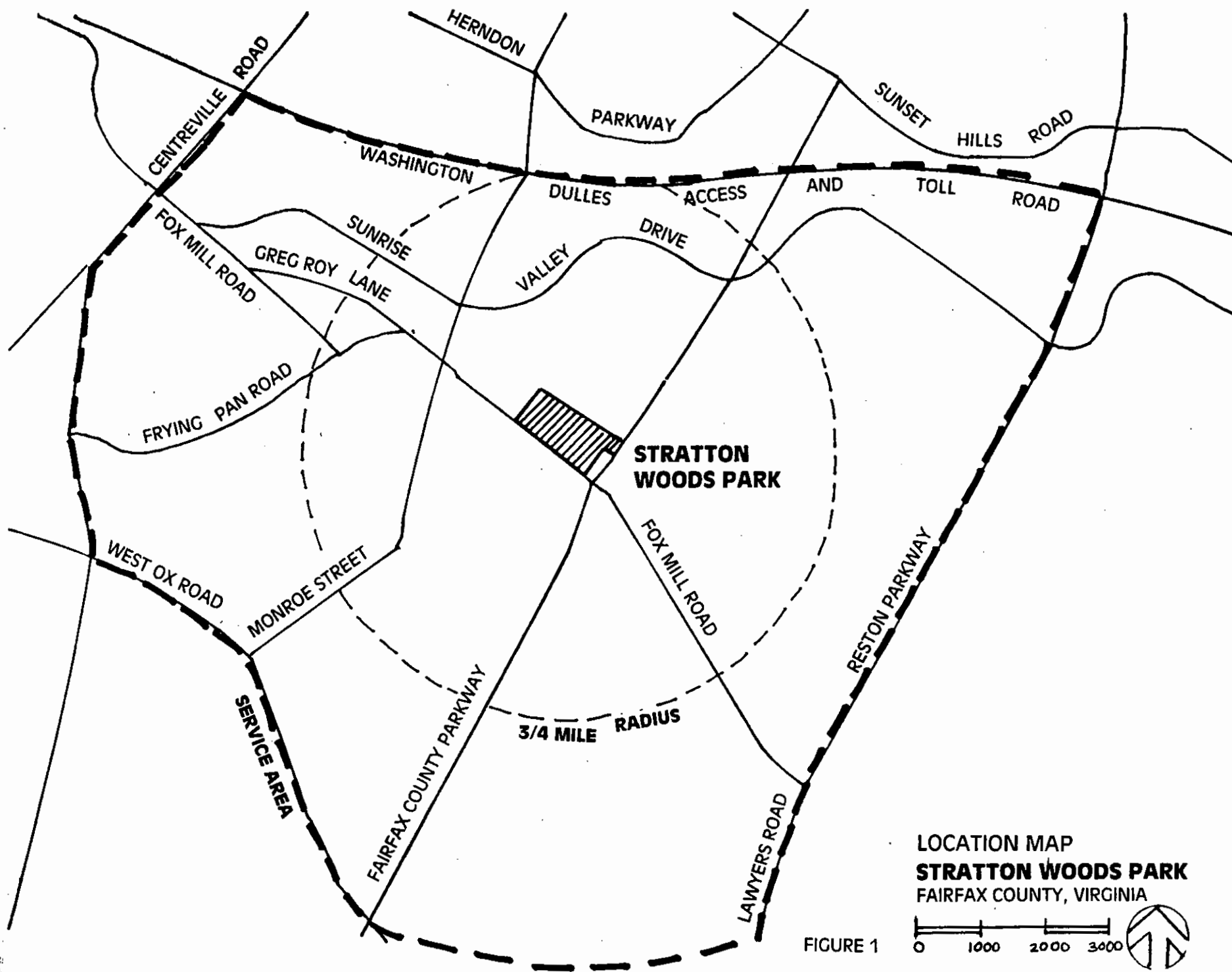


FIGURE 1

B. **Significance Statement: Why is this park important?**

Stratton Woods Park is important to the Fairfax County park system because it can provide this area of the county with a variety of outdoor active recreational opportunities and experiences not currently available.

C. **Visitor Experiences: What will the visitor experience at this park?**

- Visitors will be able to participate in a variety of active recreation .
- Visitors will be able to participate in family recreation activities such as picnicking and walking

III. **EXISTING CONDITIONS**

A. **Developed Features**

Access - Existing limited access to the eastern portion of the site is a gravel entrance road from Fox Mill Road at the corner of the property just past the Fairfax County Parkway. Existing pedestrian access is from Club Pond Lane. Vehicular access for new development would be from Fox Mill Road at the existing median break, opposite Mill Heights Drive.

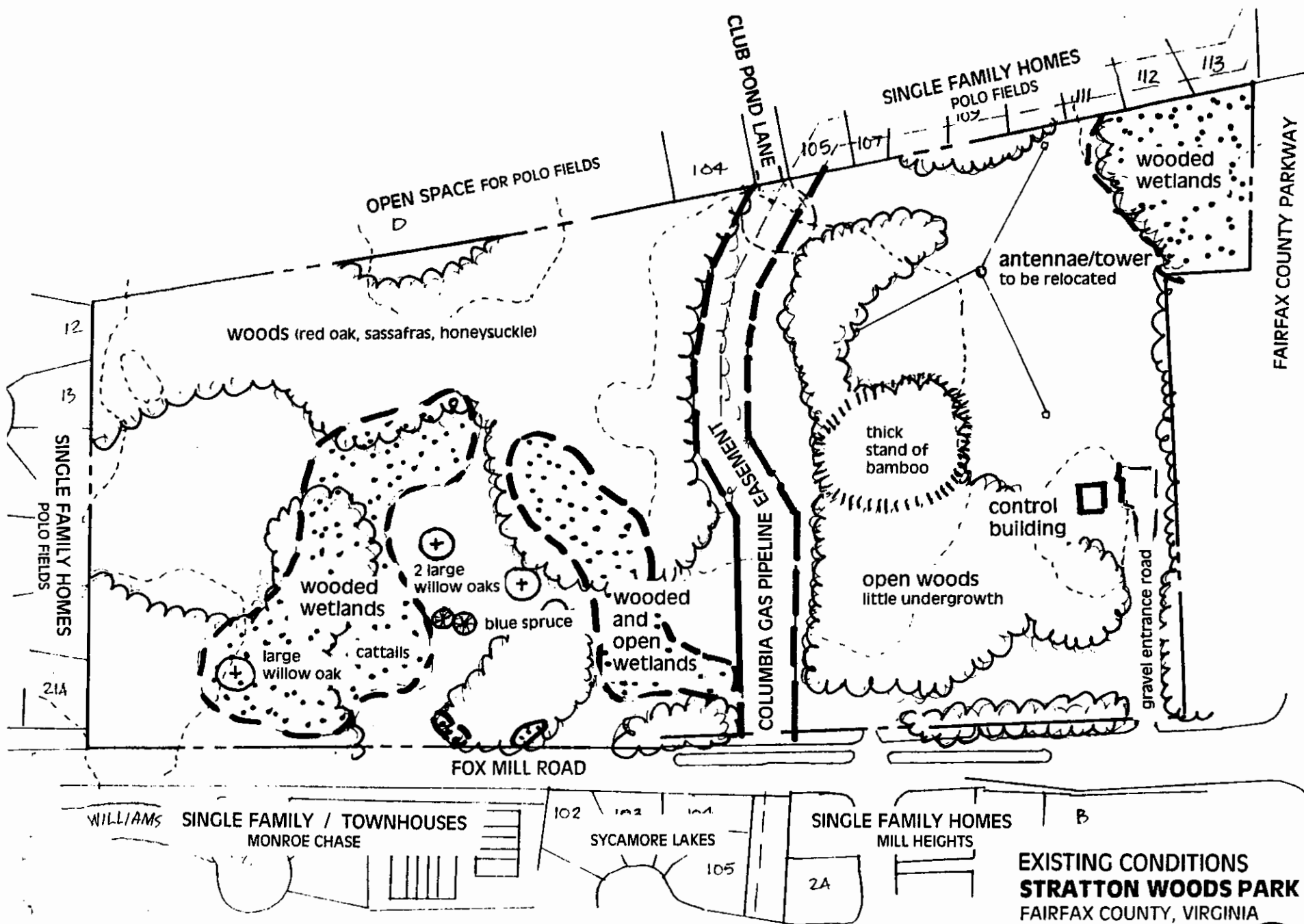
Utilities and Easements - A Colonial Gas Pipeline Easement crosses the site from Fox Mill Road to Club Pond Lane. The existing building has electric service, which is to be relocated along Fox Mill Road and the entrance road to the concrete building.

Facilities - Existing on the site is a small concrete building (approximately 40' x 50') and gravel driveway/entrance road, leased to Bell Atlantic Mobile for use in their cellular telephone system. Near the building is a tower also now leased for the Bell Atlantic Mobile operation (*see Figure 2*). This tower has been approved to be replaced by a monopole to be located adjacent to the building. Following the relocation, the tower, guy wires, cable lines, etc. will be removed and the electric service will be relocated underground.

B. **Natural Resources**

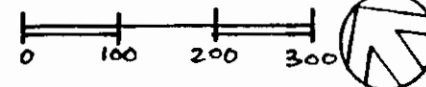
Wetlands - A wetlands determination was completed in 1994 in accordance with the Corps of Engineers 1987 Wetland Delineation Manual and pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act as administered by the Norfolk District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USCE). Six areas were delineated and mapped within the park. The total acreage in wetlands is approximately 4.7 acres. The largest area, near the western boundary of the park, is approximately 2.57 acres in size and is forested with some cattails present (*see Figure 2*). The other large area is in the far northeast section, adjacent to the Parkway, and is approximately 1.88 acres in size. Four additional areas, ranging in size from .21 acres to .005 acres were identified throughout the site.

SINGLE FAMILY HOMES
STRATTON WOODS



EXISTING CONDITIONS
STRATTON WOODS PARK
FAIRFAX COUNTY, VIRGINIA

FIGURE 2



Vegetation - The park is vegetated chiefly by upland hardwood forests and open fields. Dominant vegetation on the uplands consists of eastern red cedar, red oak, sassafras, Japanese honeysuckle, as well as a variety of grasses. There is also a significant stand of bamboo, an invasive non-native species to be removed (*see Figure 2*). In the transition from upland to wetland, the previously mentioned species are replaced by American elm, red maple, black gum, swamp chestnut oak, poison ivy, and soft rush. The wetland indicator species include willow oak, green ash, greenbriar, viburnum species, and cattails.

C. Cultural Resources

Before the Park Authority acquired this land in 1989, there were structures standing on the site. As a condition of acquisition, the structures, with the exception of the concrete control building and tower, were demolished. Reconnaissance surveys reveal the results of this demolition activity, numerous locations of mid-20th century deposits, trash middens, and thin scatters of domestic debris throughout the park. Archival research on the property has also been completed and nothing of historical or pre-historic significance was found.

D. Description of Adjacent Uses and Zoning

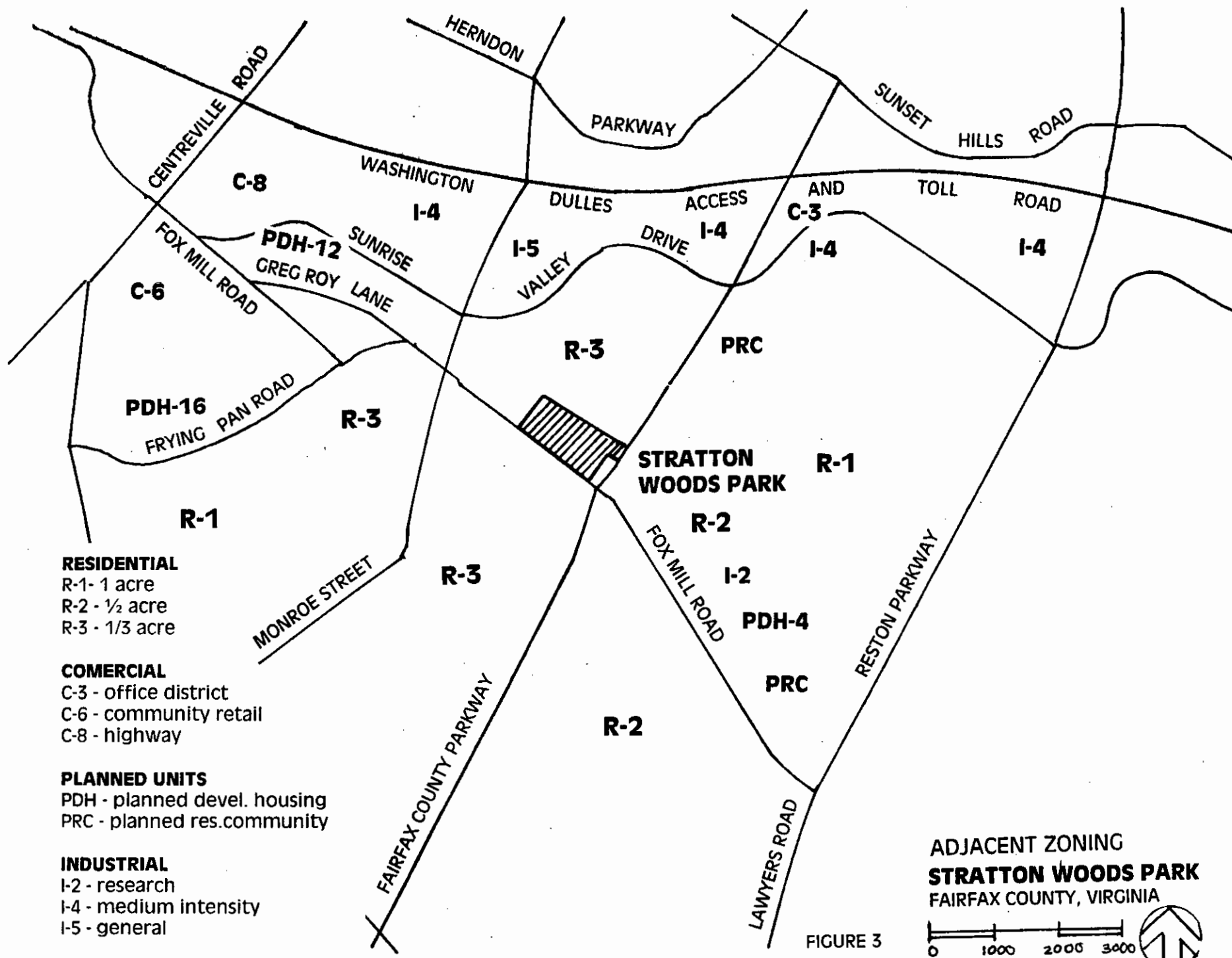
The Fairfax County Parkway is immediately adjacent to the east; Polo Fields subdivision is to the north and west. Fox Mill Road borders the park on the south, with Fox Mill Heights, a section of Sycamore Lakes, and Monroe Chase across the road. Stratton Woods subdivision is on the eastern side of the Parkway.

The park and the land surrounding it is zoned and constructed residential. The park is zoned R-1. The surrounding neighborhoods are zoned R-3 on the west of the Parkway, with R-2 predominating on the east side (*see Figure 3*).

E. Site Issues and Constraints, Opportunities

Slopes - Almost the entire site is between 0 and 2% slope. The only exceptions to this flatness are small areas of 2 to 5% slope located near the Club Pond Lane cul-de-sac and on either side of the existing building (*see Figure 4*).

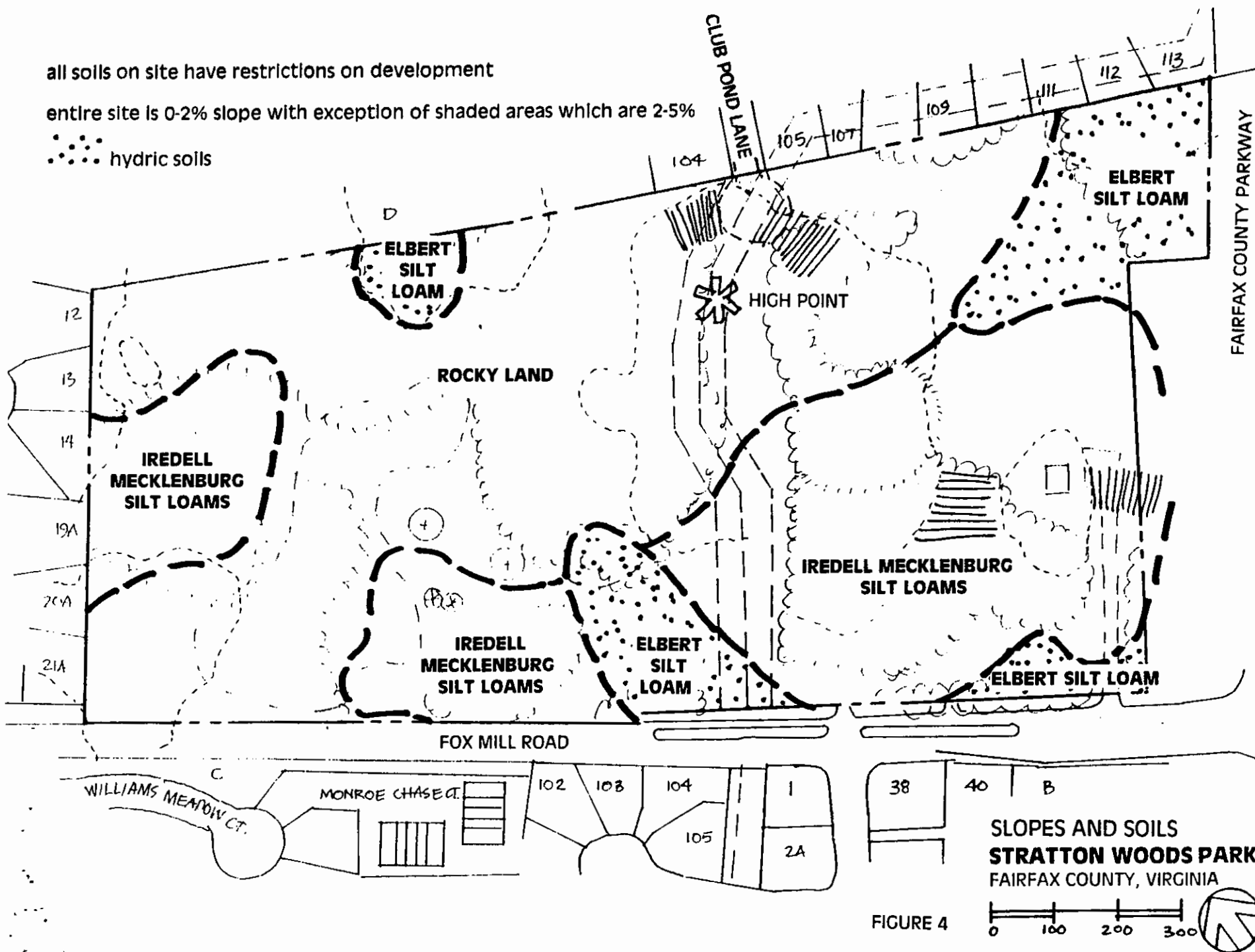
Soils - There are potential problems with development due to two of the soils on the site: Iredell-Mecklenburg Silt Loam and Rocky Land; the other soil, Elbert Silt Loam, is a hydric soil (*see Figure 4*). There are perched high water tables, shallow depth to bedrock, low bearing capacities, and shrink-swell clays. Prolonged wetness (seasonal as well as after heavy rains) can be expected in the Iredell-Mecklenburg and Elbert soils. The Elbert soils have a probability of jurisdictional wetlands occurring within them. Anticipated problems in the Rocky Land include stoniness and intermittent rock outcropping; these soils also restrict downward water movement.



all soils on site have restrictions on development

entire site is 0-2% slope with exception of shaded areas which are 2-5%

..... hydric soils



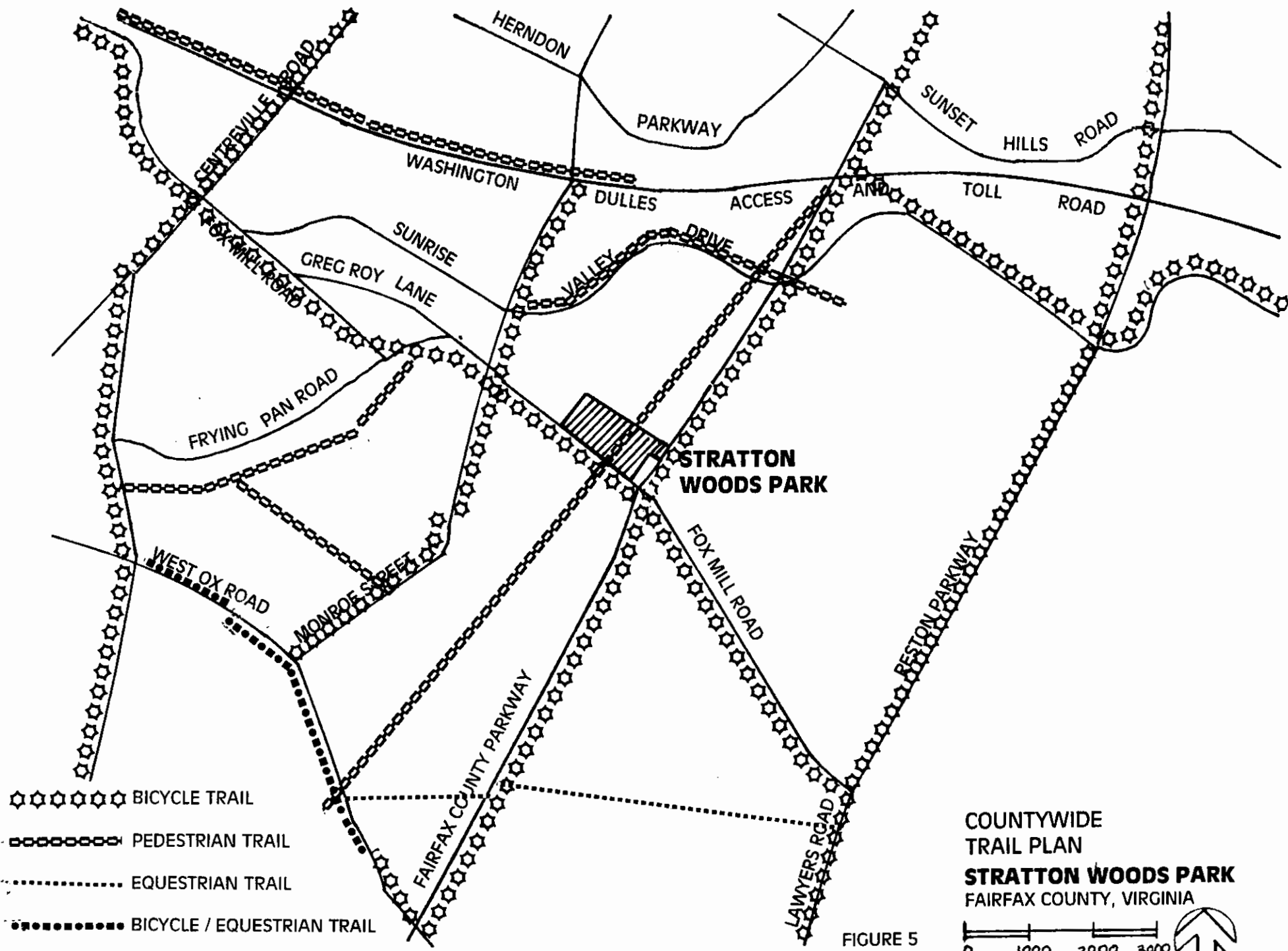
Countywide Trail Plan - The County Comprehensive Plan requires a countywide biking trail along the south side of Fox Mill Road. There is also a pedestrian trail connection from Fox Mill Road across Stratton Woods Park along the gas line (see Figure 5).

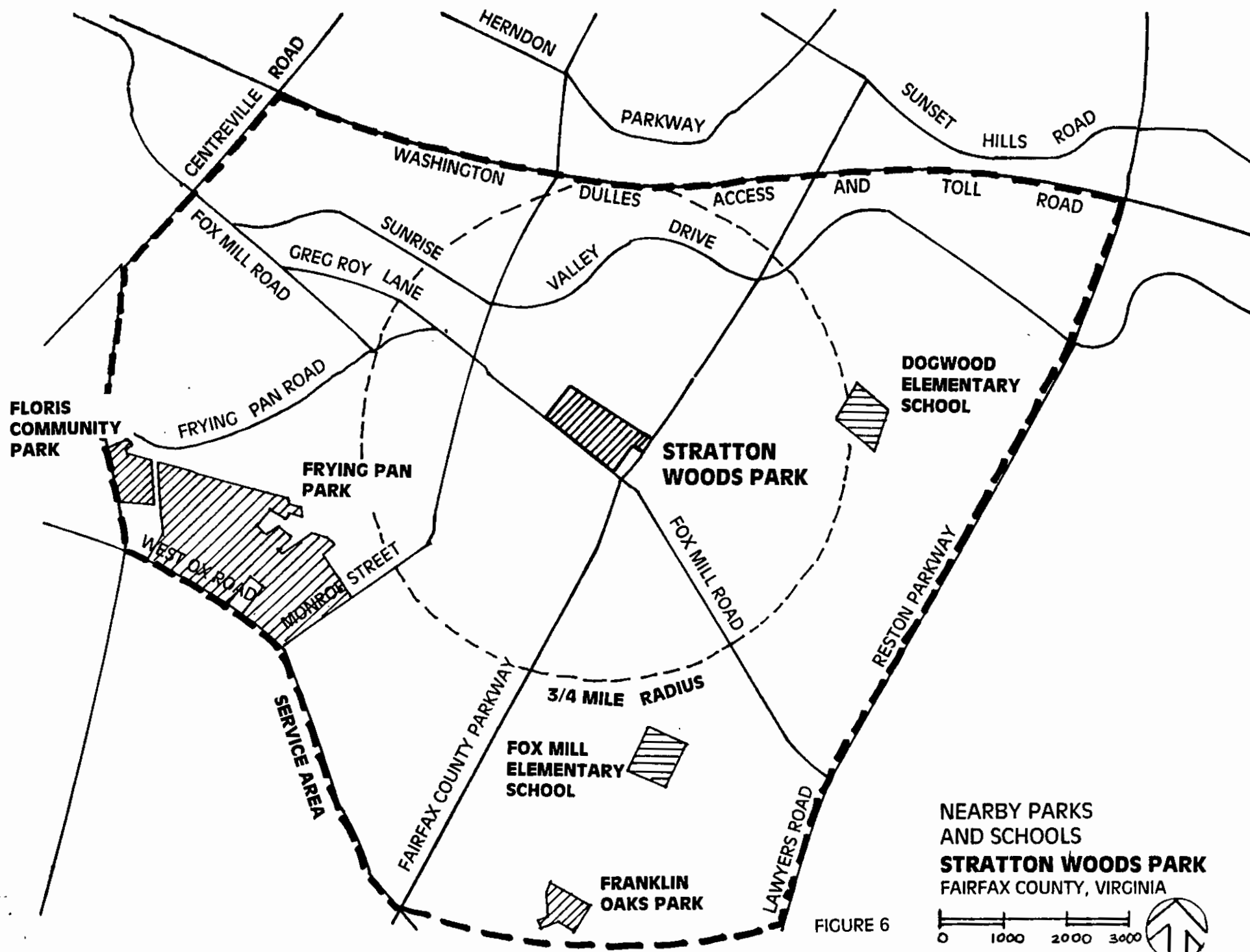
Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan - This park lies in Area III, within the Upper Potomac Planning District, the Reston Community Planning Sector. The service area also encompasses the West Ox Community Planning Sector. Generally, additional development in these areas is planned to be single-family detached dwelling units. Limited areas near the Dulles Airport Access Road are planned for mixed-use development. The plan recommendation for Stratton Woods Park is "Initiate a master planning process and develop in accordance with an approved plan for active recreation including an athletic field complex to serve projected population for this sector." There is also a recommendation for acquisition of an additional community park in the Reston area for development of active recreation facilities.

Demographics - Hunter Mill District has a population of more than 100,000 persons. In 1997, 16,336 residents lived in 5,621 households within a 1.5 mile radius of Stratton Woods Park. 32% of this population is under the age of 17 - 60% of the households include children. The median household income is \$72,346, with 80% of the workers employed in white collar jobs.

Needs Assessment - Based on a 1993 Recreation Demand Survey, inventory of existing facilities, and the 1996 Demographic Reports prepared by the Fairfax County Office of Management and Budget, the Hunter Mill District is shown to be deficient in recreational facilities. In fact, the district is the least well-served in the county overall, and especially is lacking in 65 foot and 90 foot diamond fields (30% and 15% of the expressed need, respectively). There is also a shortage of 60 foot diamond fields (67% of the need) and a lesser need for rectangular fields (90%). There are no public volleyball courts and only a 30% supply of tennis courts. Basketball and playgrounds (50% and 46%) are also in short supply.

There are no Fairfax County Park Authority parks within a 3/4 mile radius of this park - some facilities exist on Reston HOA land. Within the service area is Floris Community Park with a trail and parking lot. Frying Pan Park is developed as a model farm and equestrian center, and Franklin Oaks Park is not master planned or developed (see Figure 6). Dogwood Elementary School is within the 3/4 mile radius and Fox Mill Elementary School is within the service area. They are developed with typical school facilities such as playing fields, playgrounds and multi-use courts.





IV. **MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK**

The management framework integrates research, site analysis, and basic data presented in this document and in the previous report. Management zones have been defined to provide a framework for decision making. Existing uses, existing conditions, and recommendations from a wide range of professionals were considered in the development of the management zones. The framework provides broad flexibility within a range of potential uses for each management zone (*see Figure 7*).

The "Potential Uses" stated for each zone describe what uses are acceptable for each zone. If a use is not listed for a zone, by its omission it is considered an incompatible use for that zone. The potential uses are intentionally general to allow flexibility when making decisions.

A. **Resource Protection Zone**

Areas of valuable natural resources (wetlands) will be protected by a Resource Protection Zone (RPZ). These areas may include areas in the wetland delineation as well as buffer zones around the perimeter of the park. Human impact in this zone will be kept to a minimum. Some of the RPZ may include cultural resources as well. Management of the natural resources will be allowed, but degradation of this zone shall be prohibited.

POTENTIAL USES:

- Trails
- Wildlife and Habitat Management
- Research, Interpretation, and Education
- Passive Recreation

B. **Entrance Zone**

The proposed vehicular entrance to the park will be off Fox Mill Road at the existing median break across from Mill Heights Drive. The Entrance Zone (EZ) draws visitors into the site and allows them to view the park as they enter.

POTENTIAL USES:

- Park Buildings (not to include maintenance buildings)
- Parking
- Trails
- Roads and Road Improvements
- Utilities

C. **Recreation Zone**

The Recreation Zone (RZ) will contain the active uses for the site. The primary purpose of this zone is to provide visitors with active and passive recreational experiences.

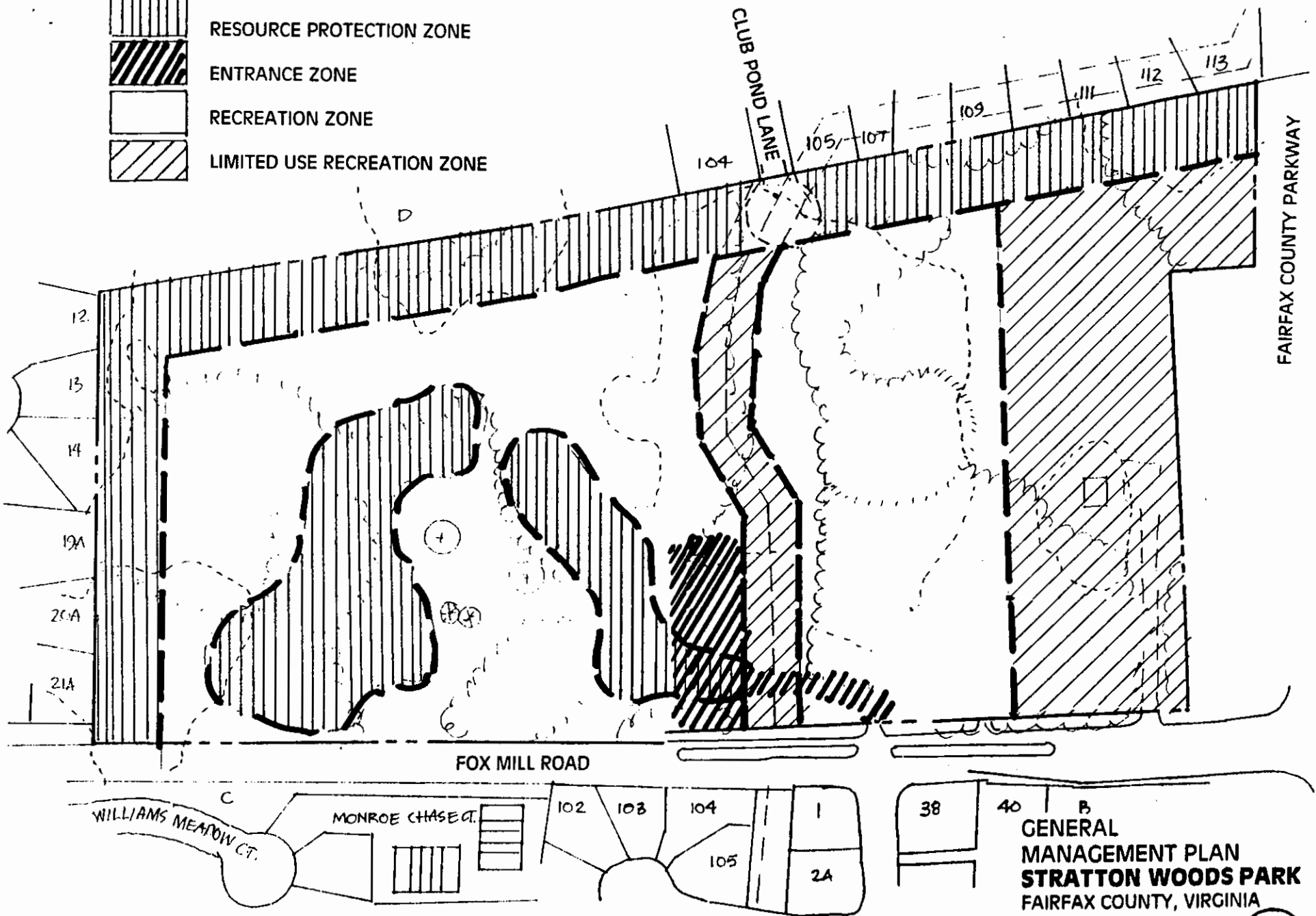
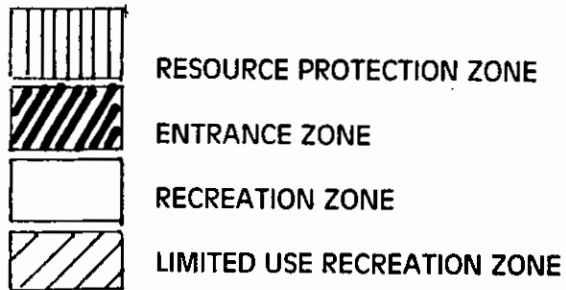
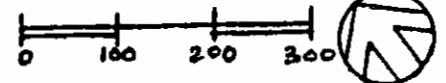


FIGURE 7

GENERAL
MANAGEMENT PLAN
STRATTON WOODS PARK
FAIRFAX COUNTY, VIRGINIA



Limited Use Recreation Zone

The Limited Use Recreation Zone (LURZ) may also be used for active recreation. Because of the proximity to the Fairfax County Parkway, the noise level may be high and noise mitigation may be required in order for outdoor recreation to be conducted at a reasonable comfort level. The Columbia Gas Pipeline also has restrictions concerning its use, such as a limit to the amount of excavation, requirement of 5' depth of soil cover, plantings within the easement, construction of above ground structures and other underground structures, etc.

POTENTIAL USES:

Active Recreation

Passive Recreation

Utilities

Parking and Park Buildings

MASTER PLAN FOR STRATTON WOODS PARK

I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Master Plan is to describe what facilities should be developed, how they fit into the established management framework and where they will be constructed. The Master Plan is subject to review and revision as needed. Reviews based on changing county demographics, facility use and demand, technological innovation or neighborhood changes could result in needs or uses for the park unforeseen at the time of this report. Any changes to the plan will be done via the Master Plan Amendment process.

II. DESIGN CONCERNS

A. Task Force Recommendations

This Master Plan was created in cooperation with the Stratton Woods Task Force, representing the neighborhoods and organized athletic groups in the service area of the park. The Task Force does not believe that lighting is appropriate for this park and recommends that lights not be considered for any facilities. The existing trees should be saved wherever possible; additional trees should be planted even before construction begins to buffer between the adjacent communities and future development. Pedestrian and bicycling connections from the surrounding areas to the park should be pursued, with recommended pedestrian crosswalks at the Fairfax County Parkway, Fox Mill Road, and Monroe Street. Recognizing that the planned parking lot may impact the wetlands, the Task Force recommends a variety of wetland plants as a buffer between the parking lot and wetlands. When designing stormwater management on the site, the park design team should consider a rain garden or other bio-engineering solutions if feasible to the project budget.

A1. The Master Plan Amendment process was initiated in January 2009. The Park Authority was asked by facility users to consider upgrading SWP facilities that are designed to support the field and court users. Specifically, youth and adult baseball players in the Herndon/Reston area recognize that the Class A 90' diamond field at SWP can't be fully utilized because it does not align with the user needs. Due to conflicts of work hours, users and parents can't begin play until 6 pm. Games take two hours to play. In Fall and early Spring, daylight runs out before 7 pm requiring that play occur on lit fields located further away in the County.

In providing athletic field facilities, the Park Authority has to be responsive to users and make the most efficient use of the facilities while balancing that use with impacts to the neighbors. New field lighting technology will provide non-intrusive lighting on the field and provide additional field capacity nearer to the users.

Racquet sports in the Reston/Herndon area are also in high demand and users have asked to enhance racquet facilities in the area. The proposed court complex is a complement to the existing tennis facility and the infrastructure is already in place to support this use. This complex is unique to Fairfax County and ideally suited in the Reston area because of an existing strong racquet sports community in the Herndon/Reston area.

The proposed lighting on the tennis court complex and parking lot will use similar non-intrusive lighting and enhance the usability of those facilities and provide safe access to these lit facilities.

Additional traffic, noise and activity are growing pains that will affect all who live in Fairfax County. Upgrades and efficiencies to public facilities that serve a broad community are necessary in such a dynamic region such as Fairfax. These issues can be mitigated to an extent through additional landscaping and design considerations and then managed operationally if they become a nuisance. Mitigation efforts proposed include:

- Addition of a picnic shelter to focus park users away from park edges
- A commitment to enhanced screening and planting
- A commitment to work closely with the neighbors on designing the park facility lighting plan

B. Wetlands

A thorough wetlands delineation was completed for this park in October 1994. The wetlands on the site are associated with areas of poorly drained Elbert soils and topographic lows. Six areas were identified, totaling approximately 4.7 acres. The wetlands perform some of the classic wetland functions such as flood buffering, water purification, etc. They provide a necessary habitat for some species and could also be used as educational examples of non-tidal wetlands. Wetlands so delineated should be avoided if at all possible. If avoidance is impossible, impact should be minimized or mitigated as required.

C. Problem Soils

All of the soils on the site are problem soils. There are perched high water tables, shallow depth to bedrock, low bearing capacities, and shrink-swell clays. Prolonged wetness (seasonal as well as after heavy rains) can be expected in the Iredell-Mecklenburg and Elbert soils. Stoniness and intermittent rock outcropping in the Rocky Land will make grading expensive and difficult and will restrict downward water movement.

D. Restrictive Noise Levels Along Fairfax County Parkway

According to *The Comprehensive Plan for Fairfax County, Virginia*. (Area III, Table 2), playgrounds, neighborhood parks, and outdoor spectator sports are not allowed in areas above 70 dBA Ldn noise levels. The model used to project noise levels adjacent to the Fairfax County Parkway predicts a **70 dBA Ldn at 460** feet from the centerline. That measurement is approximately **280** feet into the site on the east side. If that portion of the site is developed, noise mitigation would be necessary.

E. Other Considerations

Near the center of the park, the Columbia Gas pipeline crosses the site from Fox Mill Road on the south side of the site to Club Pond Lane on the northern boundary. The use of the easement is severely restricted and notification of Columbia Gas is required before any construction can occur.

The section of the property previously known as parcel 10 (the easternmost portion) is occupied by a control building and receiving tower for Bell Atlantic's telecommunication operations. Approval has been granted from the Planning Commission to replace the tower with a monopole adjacent to the east side of the existing building. When that relocation occurs, the existing tower, guy wires, etc. will be removed. Access to the building is from Fox Mill Road and must not be blocked.

III. DESCRIPTION OF PLAN ELEMENTS

A. Trail System

Asphalt Trails - The countywide trail plan requires a bicycling trail (8' wide asphalt) along the Columbia Gas easement. This trail will run approximately 800 linear feet along the west side of the easement and will link the Polo Fields neighborhood with the facilities in the park as well as providing a connection to the north from Fox Mill Road. An 8' wide asphalt trail approximately 1200 linear feet long will also be constructed to connect to the existing trail off the southwestern corner of the park and continue along Fox Mill Road to the park entrance road.

Additionally, all of the facilities within the park will be accessible from the paved trail system. Six hundred linear feet of 8' wide asphalt trail will connect the volleyball courts, the basketball courts, and the two athletic fields on the eastern portion of the site with the parking lot. An additional 100' long section of paved trail will lead from the trail along Fox Mill Road into the picnic/playground area. Approximately 360' of 8' wide asphalt trail will connect from the roadside trail to the western 60' diamond field.

Natural Surface or Stonedust Trails - Approximately 1600 linear feet of trail within the park will link the facilities with each other and to the adjacent communities. An interpretive loop trail will circumscribe the large wetland in the western portion of the site. These trails will be stonedust or natural surface and should be 6' wide. They are primarily intended for pedestrian use.

B. Entrance Road and Parking

An asphalt entrance road will provide vehicular access from Fox Mill Road. The entrance will be located opposite Mill Heights Drive at the existing median break. The road will cross the pipeline easement perpendicularly into the asphalt parking lot for 124 cars along the west side of the easement. The parking lot with concrete wheel stops will be divided into four bays of 31 or 32 cars each. Five accessible spaces will also be provided. The lot will be landscaped to provide visual relief for the view from across Fox Mill Road. There will also be a variety of plantings to buffer between the parking lot and the adjacent wetlands. The parking area may be lighted.

C. Athletic Fields

One 60' diamond field, one 90' diamond field, and a 200' x 350' rectangular field will be constructed as located on the Master Plan. The two ballfields will have backstops, bleachers, and sideline fences. If necessary, they will also have outfield fences. The 90' diamond field may be lighted. All three fields will be irrigated. Fields are not to be located closer than 100' feet to the nearest adjacent property and vegetative screening will be provided along the common property lines with the Polo Fields neighborhood.

D. Picnic Area and Playground

A picnic area with five tables and three grills will be sited among the large oak trees and near the ornamental blue spruce trees. An asphalt trail will connect to one of the tables and grills which should be made accessible for persons with disabilities. The playground, with separate areas for both toddler age and school age children, will also be accessible. It, too, should be sited among the trees, with no tree removal to accommodate it.

E. Courts and Picnic Shelter

Two tennis courts, tennis practice courts, two basketball courts, and a court complex with up to three outdoor racquetball courts and four handball courts may be constructed as shown on the Master Plan. The tennis courts and basketball courts will have standard color-coating, fencing (for the tennis) and will be linked to the paved trail system. Trees will be planted between the basketball courts and the Parkway, the rectangular field, and the telecommunications control building. The court complex, located near the pipeline easement and adjacent to the asphalt trail, will require consultation with the Columbia Gas Company. The tennis courts and court complex may be lighted.