

Questions and Answers from Design Public Hearing for Scotts Run Trail
Public Hearing Date: November 14, 2016

Written Comments and Responses

1. **Comment:** This trail fills a large missing link in neighborhood connections to school and metro. At a time when Fairfax County is building out its bike network to be more connected to regional trails, neighborhoods, and transit stations, it makes little sense that this is being designed as a pedestrian only trail, rather than a multi-use trail. Designing this trail to be safely used by bicyclists will allow a much safer connection to the Metro compared to the on-road routes bicyclists must use today. Please consider designing this trail to accommodate all users, including bicyclists.

Response: This project was originally intended to accommodate both pedestrians and cyclists, but is also required to meet the guidelines for an access route under the Americans with Disabilities Act. After several engineering studies, it was determined that the topography in combination with other site constraints made it highly impractical to simultaneously meet those guidelines and provide a trail design that was suitable for bicycles. As an alternative, the County is looking into improvements along Magarity Road that would make cycling safer in that corridor.

2. **Comment:** Great project and really pleased to see that you are moving forward. This green park area is such a wonderful resource for all who live in the neighborhood and it is wonderful that you will be making it more accessible for pedestrians and bikers for recreation and getting to and from the Metro. One request which will benefit many: Please make sure you connect with Matt Robinson of the Highland District Project and Chris Wells of the 'Top of Old Meadow' Project to see if plans for the pedestrian paths and bike trails in those projects can be connected at the appropriate time to your project i.e. Included in your vision and present plans. For the communities of Upper Old Meadow--Dolley Madison Apartments and the Regency and Encore condos--connectivity to the park and access to the Metro through the park would be of tremendous benefit and much appreciated.

Response: Developments in the Tysons area are reviewed by staff in various County agencies including the Department of Zoning, the Department of Public Works, the Department of Transportation and the Park Authority for consistency with current plans for redevelopment to ensure that any opportunities to make road and trail connections will be recognized and acted upon.

3. **Comment:**

Dear Ms. Cronauer,

I was glad to meet with you and your colleagues at the Scott's Run Trail Design Public Hearing on Tuesday, November 15, 2016. I am sure I am not the only one who appreciated the informative face-to-face time that allowed us to ask questions and learn more about this and other projects.

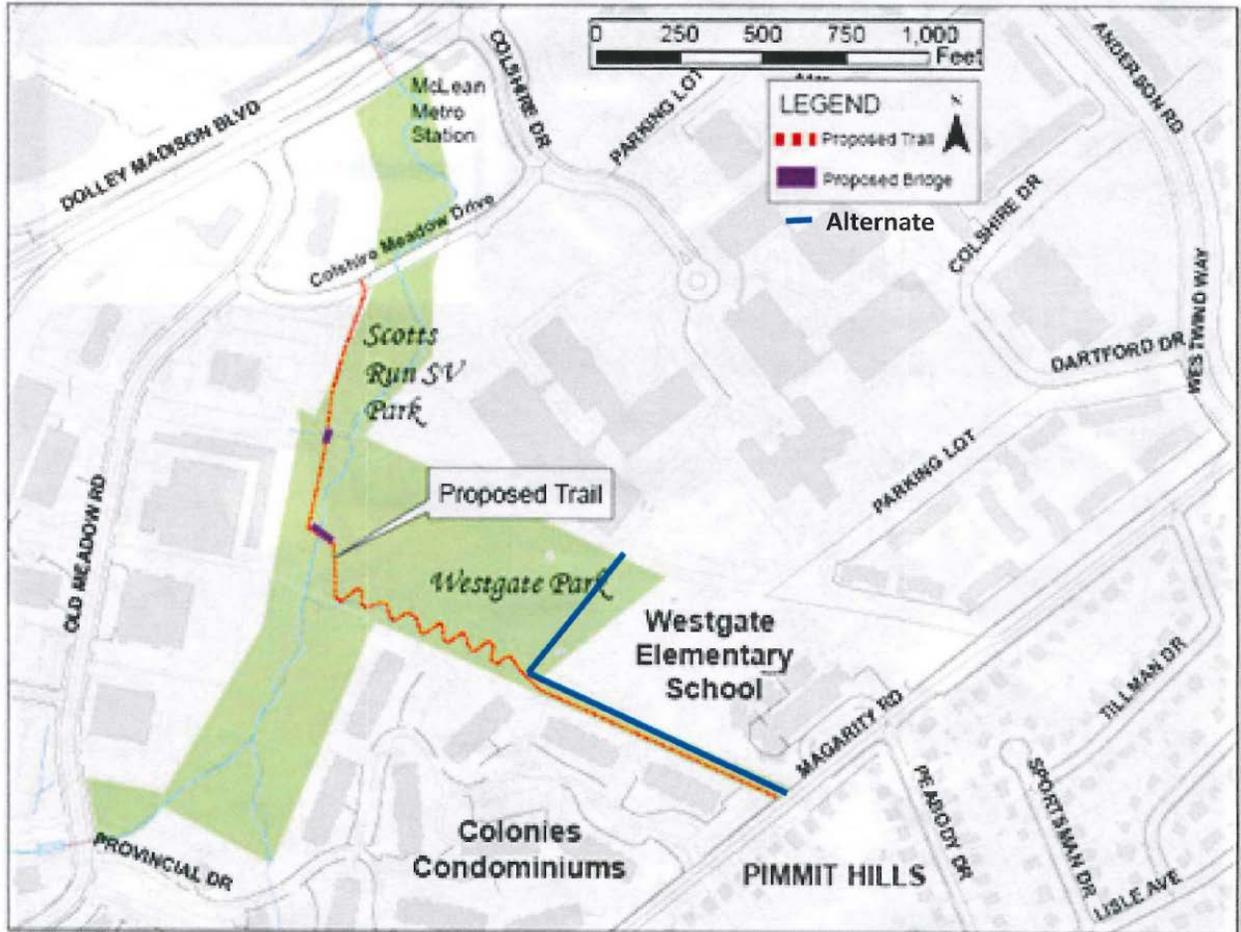
As you may recall, I inquired if your office could consider an alternate design, depicted in the enclosed. If you could, please indulge my non-expert observations. This design may come with six benefits:

1. Roughly follows the efficient, natural flow of current foot traffic that has created a partial desire path through a tree line to existing sidewalks
2. Better serves cyclists on even terrain, removing the need for switchbacks to meet ADA criteria
3. Shortens the path from 2,676 linear feet to roughly 1,300 linear feet, cutting the design length by more than half
4. Requires no significant tree removal, further preserving the park and existing trails
5. Requires no bridges
6. All of which leads to significant cost savings to fund other projects

Most designs of course have tradeoffs, and this one is no exception:

1. Likely requires cooperation with The MITRE Corporation, as this path would end on their property to access existing sidewalks
2. May impact proposed designs of Westgate Park, however this may better serve the community in the end, since a prominent foot path would bring more usage to the park.

With such potential benefits, I respectfully ask your office to consider such an alternative design to best serve the community. I am quite interested in the proposal and outreach that would be required to The MITRE Corporation. As a current MITRE employee who lives in this area, I would like to offer my assistance in these discussions.



Response: This suggested route would indeed result in many of the benefits described above. Since there is no existing trail at the property line, the actual total distance to a real sidewalk is about 2,000 LF, which is still less than the 2,676 for the proposed route. Assuming that the trail would be built on the strip of land between the Mitre Corporation parking lot and their property line that is shared with Northrop Grumman, there may also be some issues with maintaining a 5% maximum slope. The biggest issues, however, are that it would require a permanent trail easement from the Mitre Corporation and could be impacted by the future plans for Westgate Park and a future planned cross-street, Lincoln St. In spite of the issues, the concept is sound and we will keep this option in mind as future plans for the park and road network develop.

4. **Comment:** I heard from Matt Robinson that Highlands District was two months away from final plans on first buildings and included in the plans are trails in the southern part of Scotts Run Park. Matt stated the goal would be to connect up with existing trails. As seen in the meeting though, the existing trails are not yet built. This seems like one of those situations where larger community could get together and find a solution.

Another example of where we could all get together and help facilitate better paths popped up when Liz pointed out that the reason trail could not go all the way to Old Meadow Road was a choke point between The Highlands District and The Colonies. From all my conversations over past several

years, I am finding out that both of our communities are willing to do what it takes to facilitate this, but we were never aware of the need.

To address issues like these with the end goal of stretching the trail all the way to Old Meadow Road, could I suggest that representatives from the various communities and government organizations (FCPA, FDOT, Colonies, Regency, Encore, and Highlands) get together sometime in next couple of months to begin to discuss how best to revitalize the southern portions of Scotts Run between Highlands and The Colonies.

I know holidays are crazy, but if there is interest, The Colonies would be happy to host such a meeting. I imagine a brief talk and then walk through the woods sometime in next couple of months. Anyone interested or have additional thoughts?

Response: This comment, which was provided by email, was followed up by four other responses voicing support and agreement. Although the actual design and construction of an extension of the trail to Old Meadow Road is beyond the scope of the current project, it is part of the Countywide Trail Plan which is in the transportation section of the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan. That fact, along with the obvious interest by the surrounding community will make that project a high priority as properties between Scotts Run and Old Meadow Road are redeveloped. County staff will be happy to attend meetings with residents to explore possibilities.

5. **Comment:** I attended the hearing on the trail held last Wednesday at Westgate Elem. School. Thank you all for the effort and care you are expending on the development of this trail. My suggestion is that you involve the Colonies management and Board of Directors since the trail will impact the side of the Colonies property. I know Pindar von Arman has been involved in the hearings, etc. for the trail. Perhaps he could facilitate your contacting the Colonies management and board. You may already have plans to do this.

Again, thank you very much for your efforts in this important step to connect the Pimmit neighborhood with the Metro and to facilitate the enjoyment of our public parks.

Response: The project team has been in contact with the Colonies Condominiums since February of 2015 and has presented the project to the Board of Directors in July of 2015 and May of 2016. We have done everything possible to address the issues along the common border of the properties including replacement of the fence, minimizing impacts to trees on the edge of the property, and retaining the existing access point.