MARC Rail Communities Plan

Staff Recommendations

October 5, 2017

Plan Area

MARC Rail Communities Plan
Boyds & Germantown
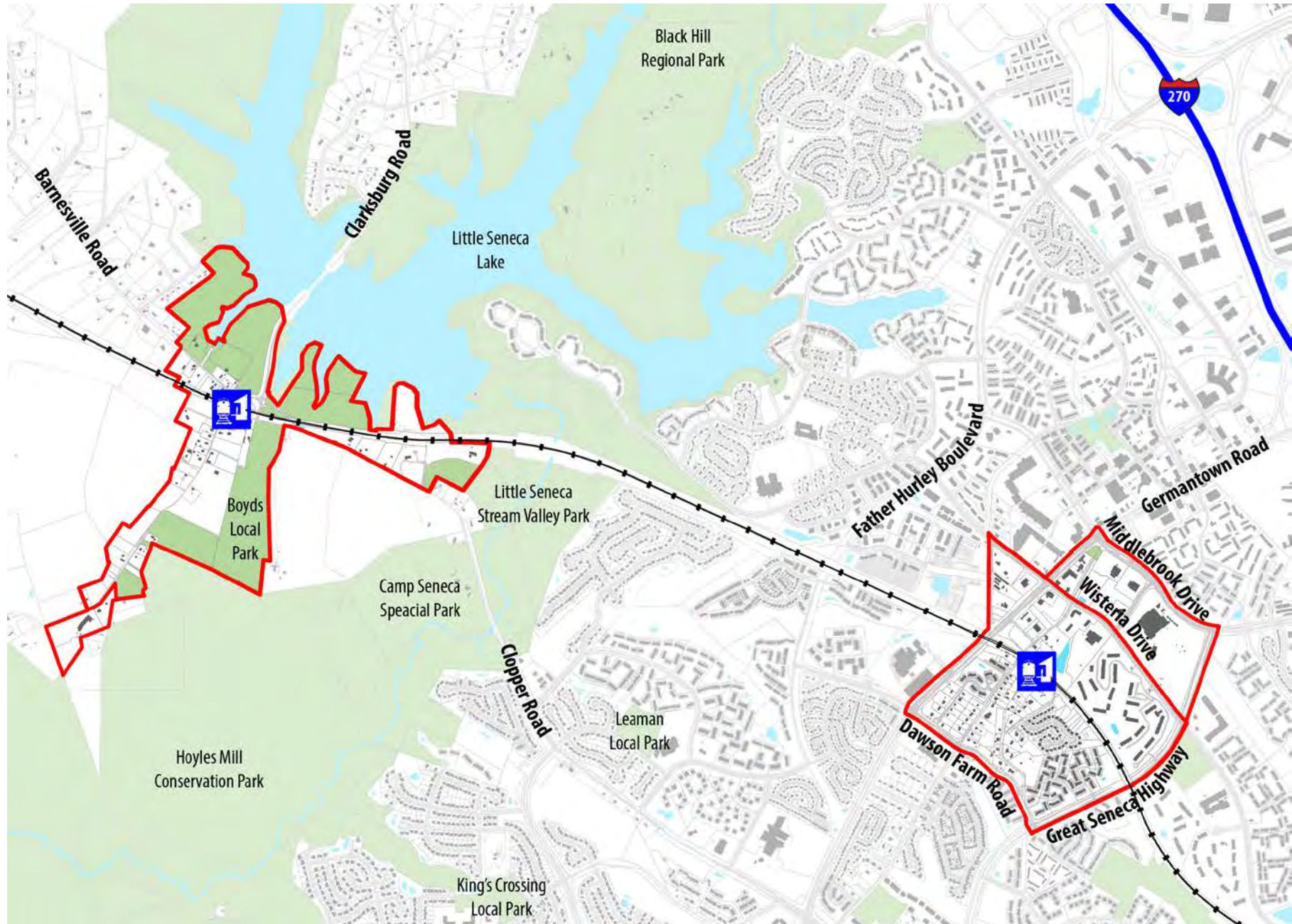
History

- Boyds and Germantown grew out of post-Civil War growth and development generated by the **arrival of the railroad**.

- Boyds retains its original size and **rural village character** within a large historic district.

- Germantown has grown into a **major** suburban residential community and commercial center with several historic sites around its station.

MARC Rail Communities Plan
Boyds & Germantown

History
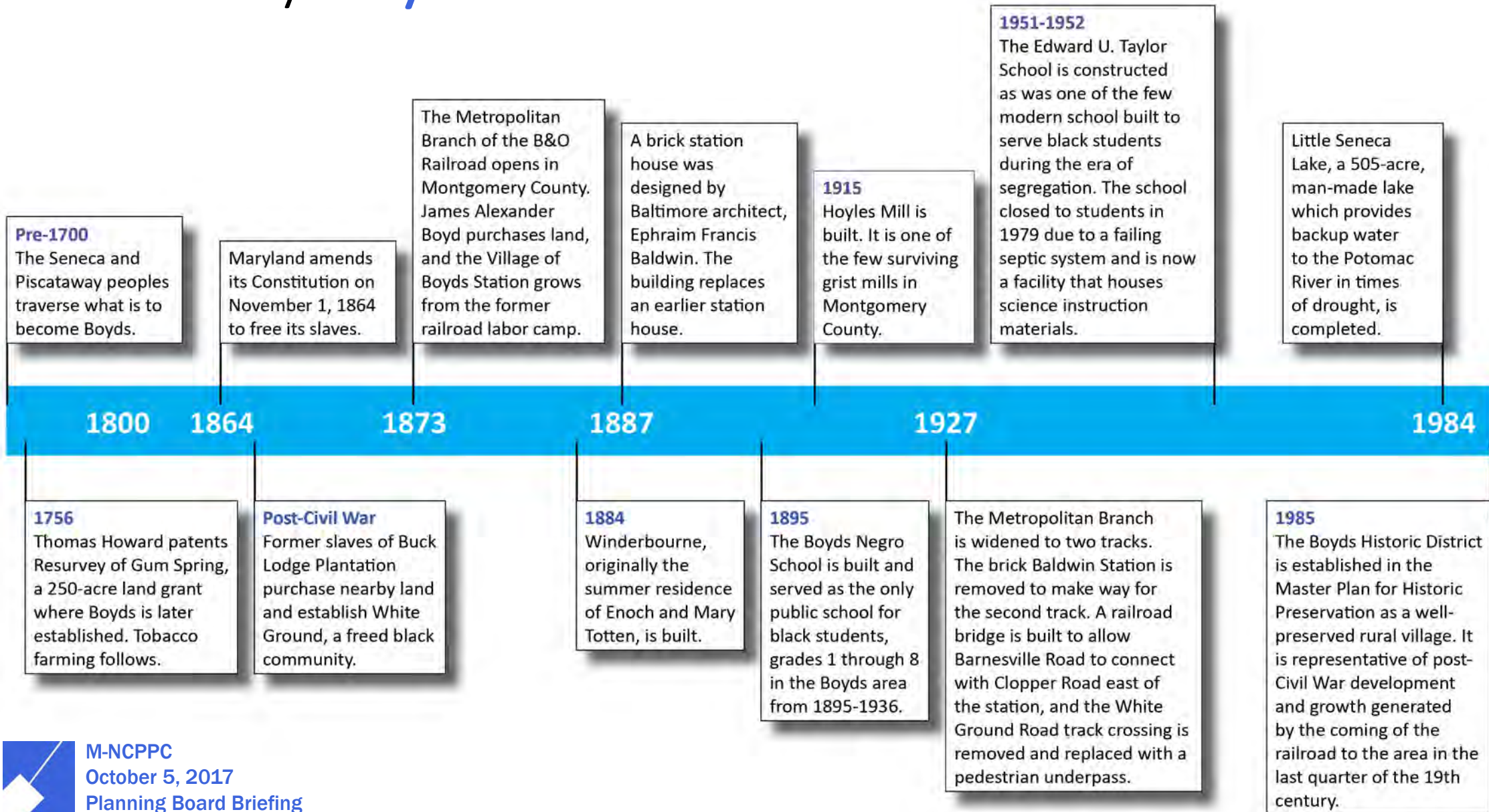

Map of the Metropolitan Branch as it runs through Montgomery County

from History of Western Maryland (1882) by Thomas Scharf

History Boyds

Pre-1700
The Seneca and Piscataway peoples traverse what is to become Boyds.

Maryland amends its Constitution on November 1, 1864 to free its slaves.

The Metropolitan Branch of the B&O Railroad opens in Montgomery County. James Alexander Boyd purchases land, and the Village of Boyds Station grows from the former railroad labor camp.

A brick station house was designed by Baltimore architect, Ephraim Francis Baldwin. The building replaces an earlier station house.

1915
Hoyles Mill is built. It is one of the few surviving grist mills in Montgomery County.

1951-1952
The Edward U. Taylor School is constructed as was one of the few modern school built to serve black students during the era of segregation. The school closed to students in 1979 due to a failing septic system and is now a facility that houses science instruction materials.

Little Seneca Lake, a 505-acre, man-made lake which provides backup water to the Potomac River in times of drought, is completed.

Timeline: 1800 — 1864 — 1873 — 1887 — 1927 — 1984

1756
Thomas Howard patents Resurvey of Gum Spring, a 250-acre land grant where Boyds is later established. Tobacco farming follows.

Post-Civil War
Former slaves of Buck Lodge Plantation purchase nearby land and establish White Ground, a freed black community.

1884
Winderbourne, originally the summer residence of Enoch and Mary Totten, is built.

1895
The Boyds Negro School is built and served as the only public school for black students, grades 1 through 8 in the Boyds area from 1895-1936.

The Metropolitan Branch is widened to two tracks. The brick Baldwin Station is removed to make way for the second track. A railroad bridge is built to allow Barnesville Road to connect with Clopper Road east of the station, and the White Ground Road track crossing is removed and replaced with a pedestrian underpass.

1985
The Boyds Historic District is established in the Master Plan for Historic Preservation as a well-preserved rural village. It is representative of post-Civil War development and growth generated by the coming of the railroad to the area in the last quarter of the 19th century.

History Germantown

1899-1902
The Madeline V. Waters House, the most elaborate house in Germantown, is built along Wisteria Drive. The house is destroyed by arson in 1986. A linear park along Wisteria Drive at Germantown Road commemorates the house and its setting.

1998
New Germantown Road (MD 118) is built one block northwest of old Germantown Road, which is renamed Liberty Mill and Walter Johnson Roads. The old Germantown Road connection is replaced by a pedestrian bridge over the railroad tracks.

The Maryland General Assembly grants the Metropolitan Railway Company the rights to charter a railroad line through the County, connecting DC with the western portion of the country. The franchise expires in 1865. The B&O Railroad completes the task, changing the route to run through Silver Spring.

1878
A small station house is built at New Germantown.

Pre-1700
The Seneca and Piscataway hunt and travel through the area of today's Germantown.

1883
The Gothic Revival influenced, Pumphrey-Mateny House is built near the intersection of today's Walter Johnson and Bowman Mill Roads.

A larger station house, designed by Baltimore architect, Ephraim Francis Baldwin, replaces the smaller station house.

circa 1901
Upton Bowman builds a house on the south side of the railroad tracks.

1963-1972
The Liberty Mill closes in 1963. In 1972, the mill building burns down.

| 1830 | 1853 | 1873 | 1883 | 1888 | 1891 | 1914 | 1974 |

German-speaking settlers establish a community near the intersection of today's Liberty Mill and Clopper Roads. Free blacks settle near the original Germantown in a community called Brownstown, at the junction of Black Rock and Germantown Roads and in another area east side of Riffleford Road.

After the Metropolitan Branch of the B&O Railroad opens in 1873, the commercial nucleus of Germantown shifts a mile north to the railroad stop near today's Mateny Hill and Liberty Mill Roads. This area became known as New Germantown or Germantown Station.

New residences, the Germantown Bank and other stores spring up when the Bowman brothers construct the Bowman Brothers Mill near the station. The mill becomes one of the state's largest steam-powered flour mills and makes New Germantown a regional commercial center.

1914-1918
The original Bowman Brothers Mill burns down, but is rebuilt in 1916 with six silos. In 1918, mill's name is changed to Liberty Mill.

1960s
Germantown expands after approval of the Wedges and Corridors Plan.

1974
Seneca Valley High School opens as the first high school in Germantown on the site of a dairy farm owned by Walter Johnson.

Boyds and Germantown Today

Design Workshop

- 4-day workshop in March 2016
- 15 presentations by agency representatives.
- Visioning exercise.
- Developed initial ideas.
- Synthesized ideas.

Concept Boyds

- Protect integrity of the historic and natural environmental setting.

- Promote uses and designs that are compatible with the historic district and sites.

- Increase MARC ridership.
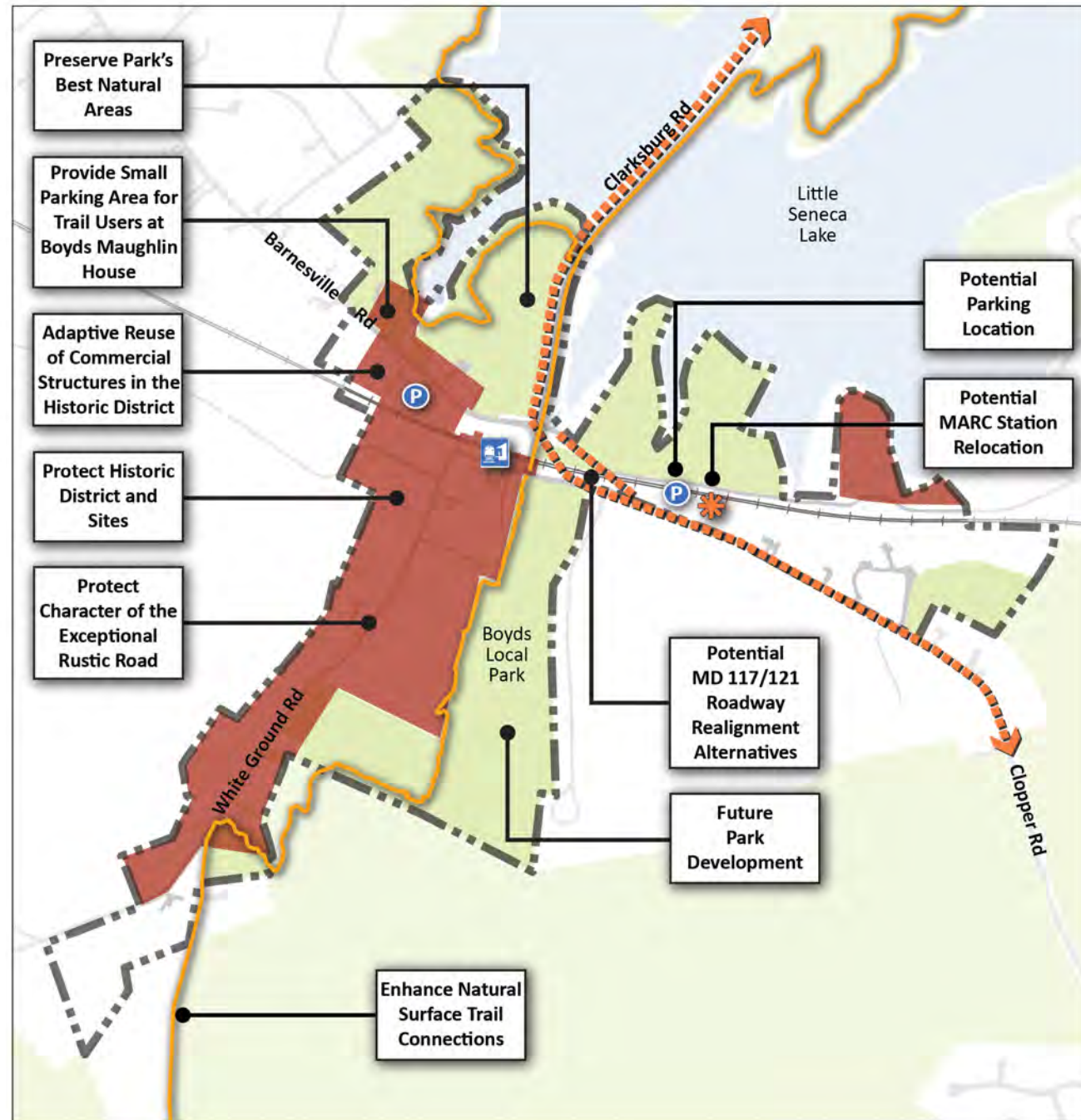
Concept
Germantown

- Protect the historic and established residential areas.
- Safety for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Greater street connectivity.
- Take advantage of natural features.

Planning Principles

- *PRESERVE* the historic character of the Boyds and Germantown communities.

- *CONNECT* Boyds and Germantown, both internally and beyond, to ensure a viable range of transportation choices, including expanded MARC ridership, improved pedestrian and bicycle mobility, and efficient vehicular travel.

- *SUSTAIN* the area's natural resources while acknowledging and respecting the area's environmental and infrastructure constraints.

- *RENEW* the Boyds and Germantown station areas with new uses that support MARC commuter rail service, preserve and enhance community character, and serve community residents.

Preserve

Vision:

Preserve, celebrate and interpret the shared history and unique historic resources of the Boyds and Germantown rail communities to foster a distinct community identity and strong sense of place. Position both station areas for the future by sensitively adapting and enhancing historic structures for continued use while ensuring that future development and transportation improvements maintain the integrity of the historic settings.

Preserve

- **Retain, restore and rehabilitate** historic resources that contribute to the historic fabric of both communities.

- Encourage the **compatible reuse** of structures that lend historic character to both communities, to maintain the rail communities' historic integrity while revitalizing and enhancing MARC station areas.

- Ensure that **future development and supporting elements are compatible** with existing historic districts and resources.

- **Celebrate, interpret and highlight historic resources** through programming, interpretive elements, and improvements to wayfinding.

MARC Rail Communities Plan
Boyds & Germantown

Preserve Boyds

Preserve Germantown

Connect

Vision:

Preserve and celebrate the MARC stations, their functions, and their role as defining elements of each rail community's identity. Support the continued viability of rail service at both stations. Reduce dependency on the automobile for daily trips by improving the walking and bicycling environments and expanding public transportation options. Manage the roadway network to improve efficiency. Ensure context-sensitive transportation improvements that preserve the character, historic resources, and community-serving facilities in both communities.

Connect

- Support the **future viability of MARC** rail service through measures to expand ridership and service, while improving connections to the stations.

- Create a **context-sensitive, interconnected street network** that is safe, attractive, comfortable and convenient for all users regardless of age, mobility or transportation choice.

- Support the county's **complete streets and Vision Zero** policies.

- Expansion of rail facilities must **protect** and be compatible with existing historic districts and resources.

MARC Rail Communities Plan
Boyds & Germantown

Connect Boyds

Bus Turnaround and Drop Off

Boyds Country Store

Existing Pedestrian Underpass

Proposed Handicap Lift

Historic Hoyles Mill

Barnesville Rd

Clarksburg Rd

Proposed Additional MARC Parking

Stormwater Management Area

Existing MARC Parking

MARC Rail Communities Plan
Boyds & Germantown

Connect Germantown

New
Waters Road
Connection

Potential
Parking
Garages

Realign
Bowman Mill
Drive

Pumphrey
Mateny House

Potential
New Surface
Parking Lots

Extend
Crystal Rock
Drive

Dedicated Bus
Loop and Bus
Shelters

Extend
Bowman Mill
Road

Germantown Rd

Bowman Mill Dr

Walter Johnson Rd

Wisteria Dr

Crystal Rock Dr

Connect Boyds

- Existing roads are solid lines.
- Realigned roads are dashed.

MARC Rail Communities Plan
Boyds & Germantown

Connect Boyds

Potential future railroad bridge and underpass

Connect
Germantown

- Existing roads are solid lines.

- Proposed and realigned roads are dashed.
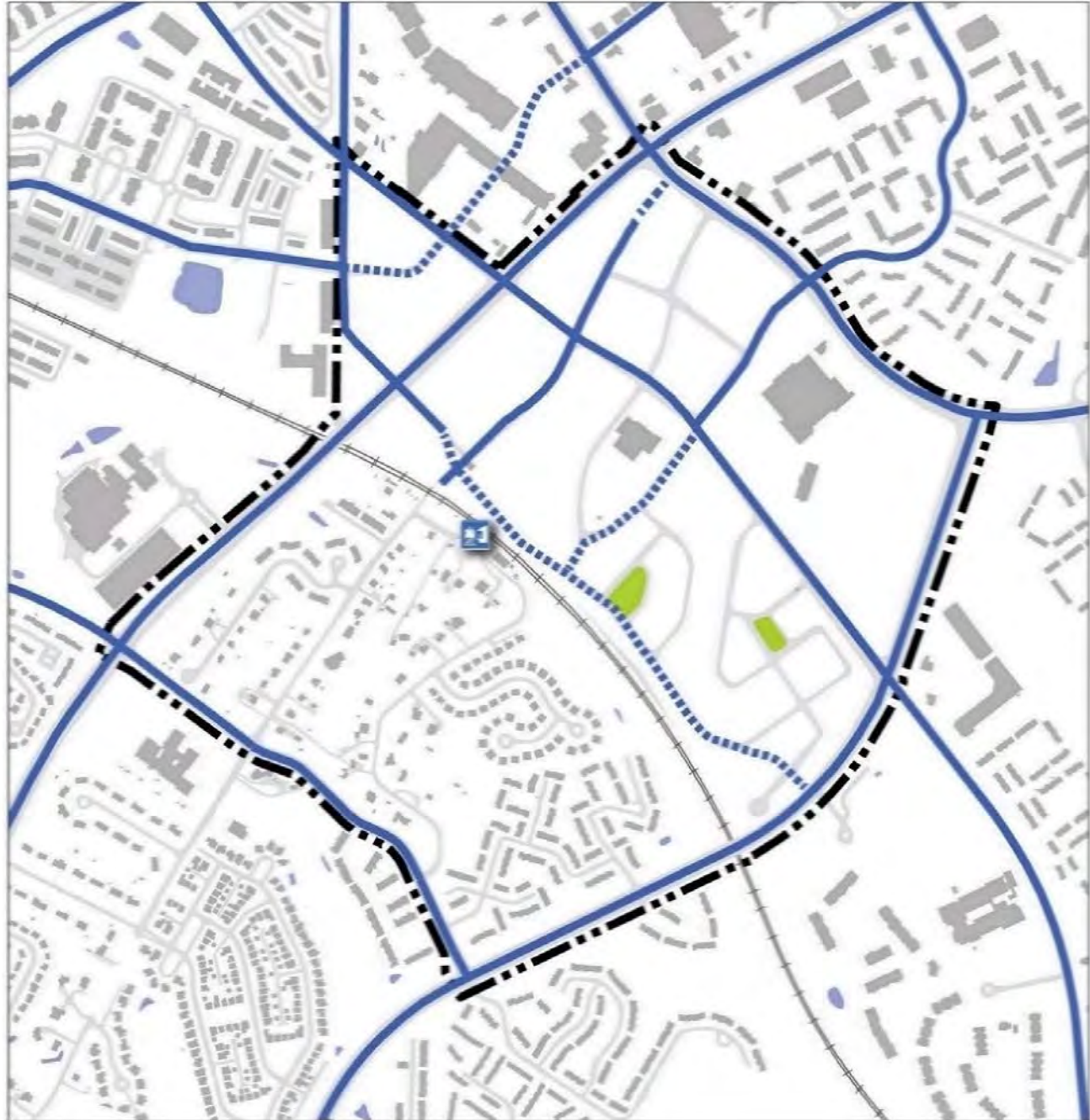
Connect
Germantown

Middlebrook Road:

- "Road Diet"-reduce the number of lanes from 6 to 4.

- Set speed limit to 30 mph (25 mph during school hours).

- Establish two-way separated bike lanes on both sides of the road.

- Can implement in a phased approach.
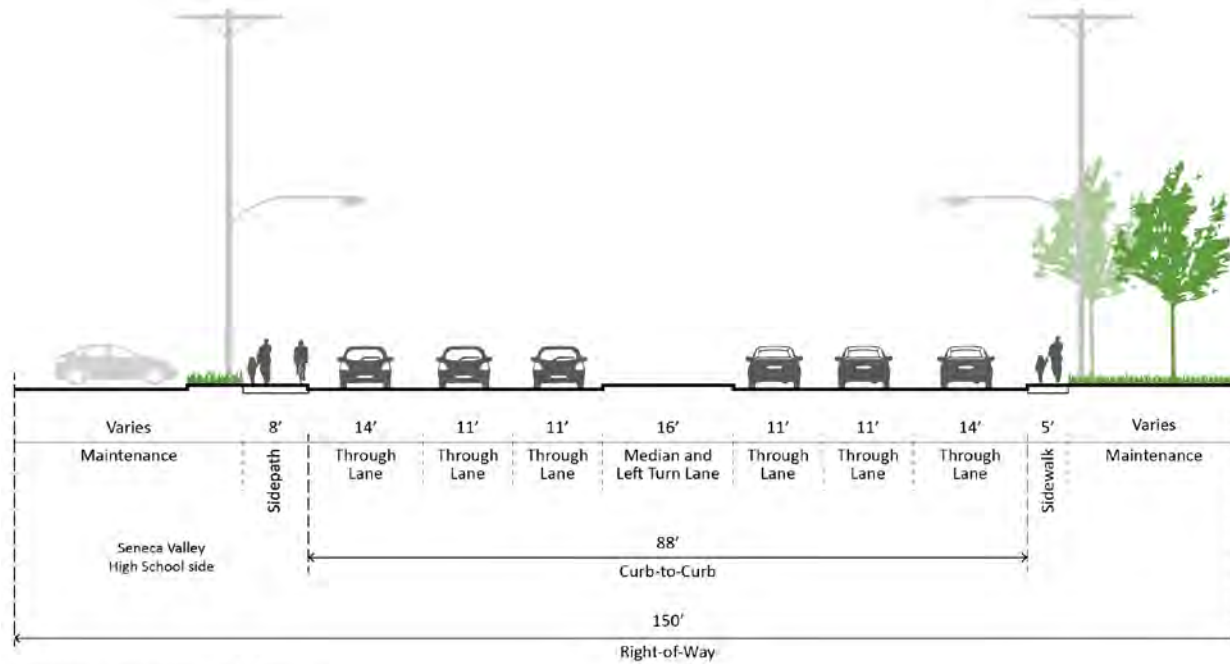
Existing Middlebrook Road
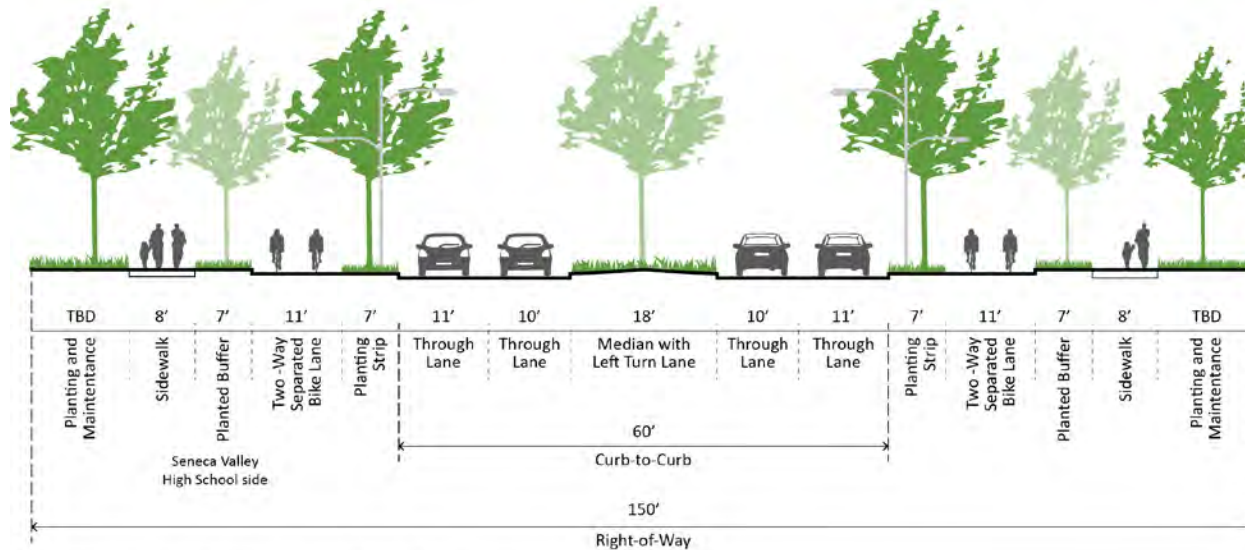
Proposed Middlebrook Road Long-Term

Connect Germantown

Great Seneca Highway:

- Maintain as a 4-lane divided road.

- Provide curb and gutter.

- Establish the street as a tree-lined boulevard with expanded pedestrian and bike facilities.
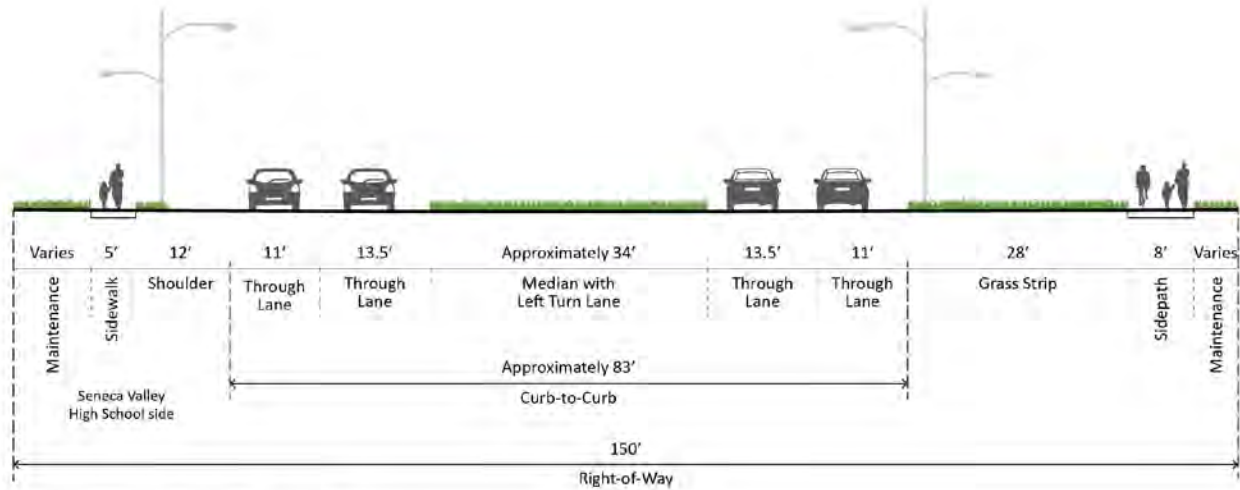
Existing Great Seneca Highway
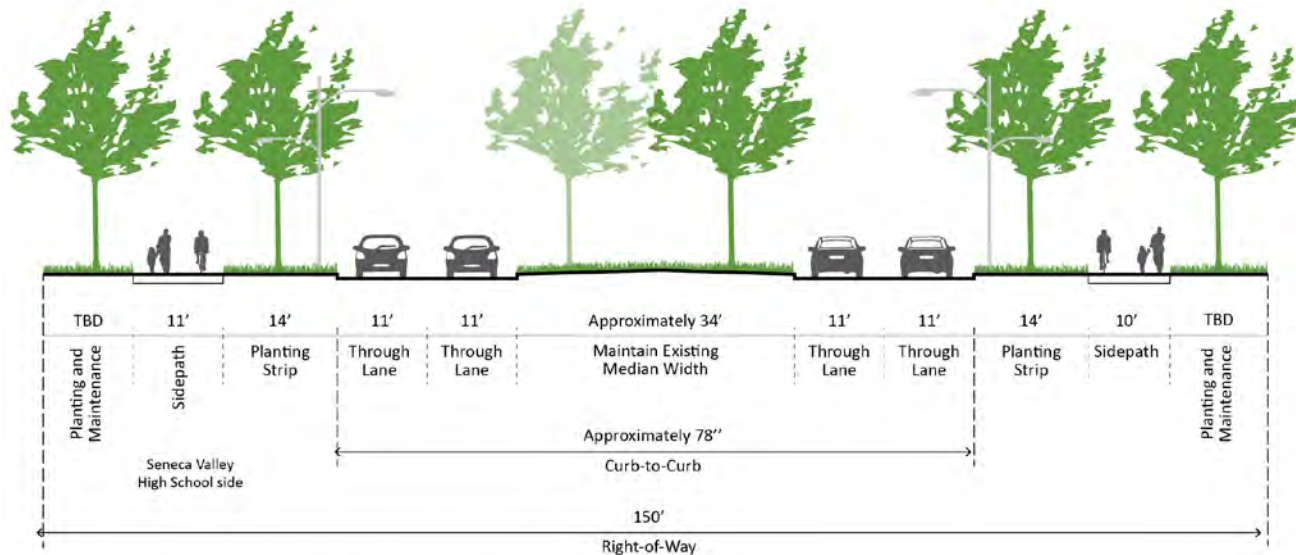
Proposed Great Seneca Highway

Connect Germantown

Wisteria Drive by Seneca Valley High School:

- Establish as a 4-lane, tree-lined boulevard with pedestrian and bike facilities.

- Use curb lanes for off-peak parking.

- Incorporate median breaks with pedestrian refuges between Seneca Valley High School and Rolling Hills Apartments.

Existing Wisteria Drive

Proposed Wisteria Drive between Crystal Rock Drive and Great Seneca Highway
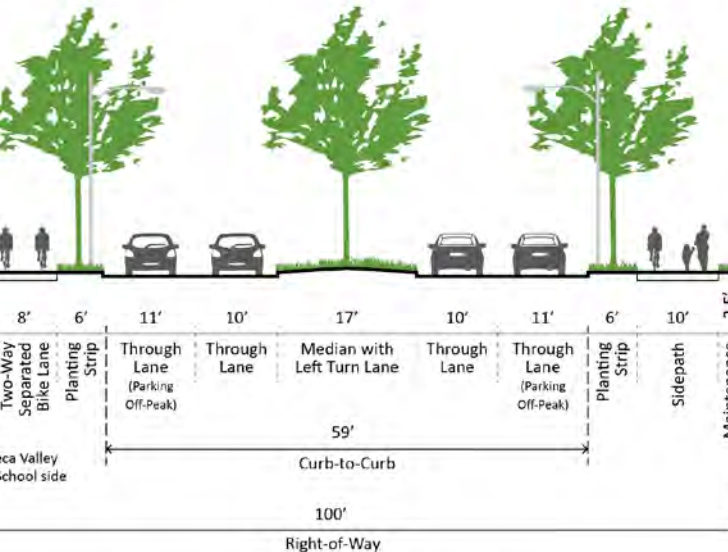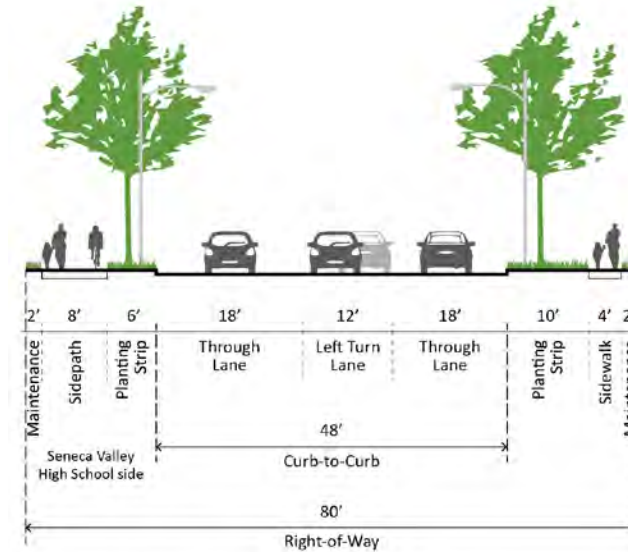
Connect
Germantown

**Wisteria Drive between
Waters Road and Crystal Rock Drive:**

- Establish as a divided 4-lane, tree-lined boulevard with pedestrian and bike facilities.

- Provide on-street parking.

- Incorporate median breaks with pedestrian refuges.
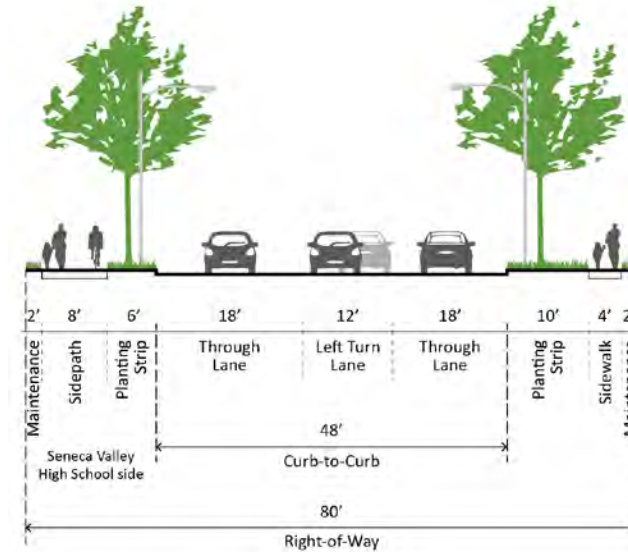
Existing Wisteria Drive
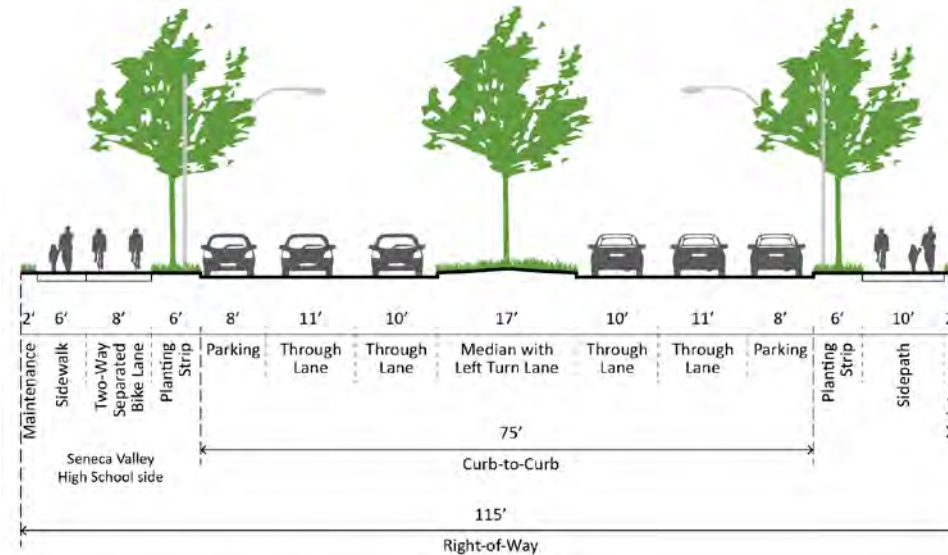
Proposed Wisteria Drive between Germantown Road and Crystal Rock Drive

Connect
Germantown

Germantown Road:

- Maintain as a 6-lane road.

- Provide a sidepath on the northwest side of the road and a sidewalk on the southeast side.

- Provide a traffic signal and pedestrian crosswalk at the intersection of Germantown Road and Bowman Mill Drive/Waters Road.
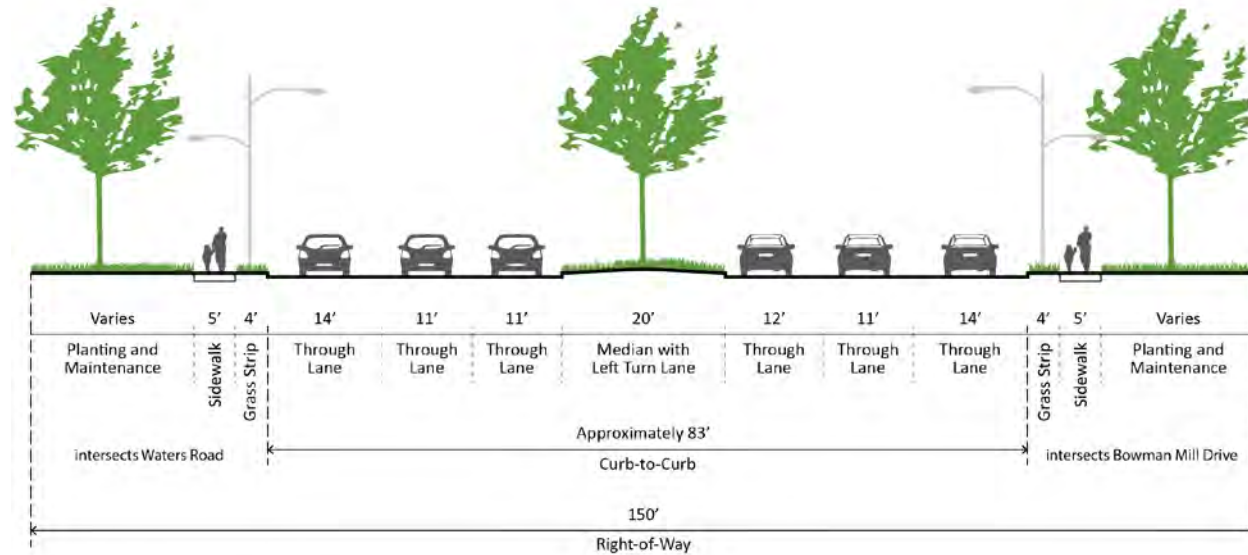
Existing Germantown Road
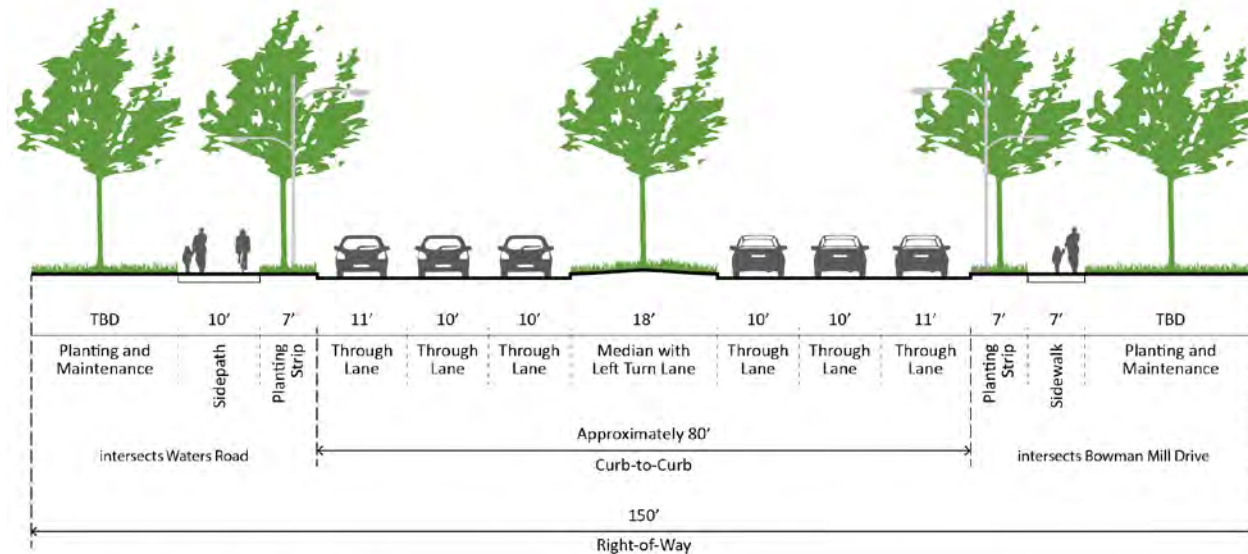
Proposed Germantown Road

Connect
Germantown

Bowman Mill Drive:

- Extend Bowman Mill Drive from Germantown Road to Great Seneca Highway.

- Realign the road to the south side of the Pumphrey-Mateny House.

- Provide a dedicated bus loop near the MARC station.

- Construct a sidepath on one side of the street and a sidewalk on the other side.
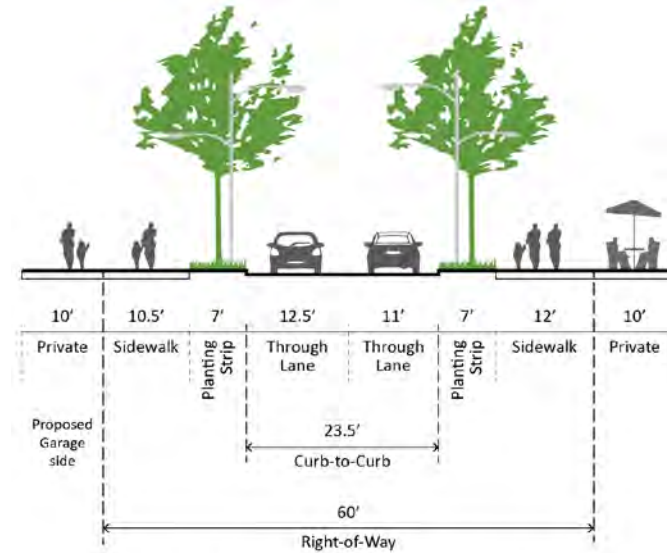
Proposed Bowman Mill Road between Germantown and Walter Johnson Roads
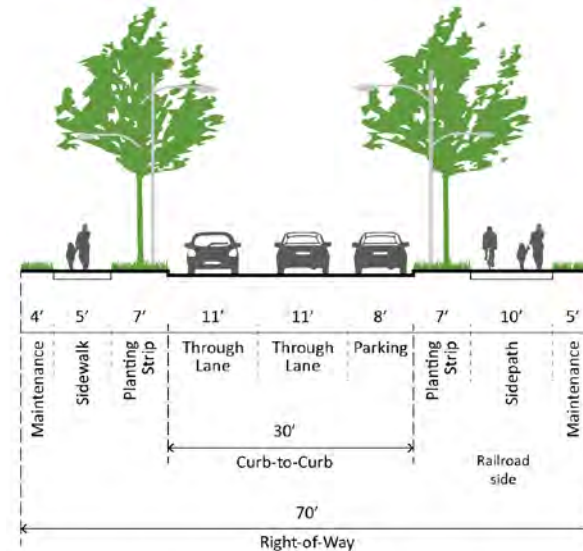
Proposed Bowman Mill Extended

Sustain

Vision:

Foster environmental stewardship by protecting the area's sensitive natural assets, enhancing the tree canopy and water resources, and adapting the built environment to sustainably manage stormwater runoff. Acknowledge and celebrate the area's distinctive environmental setting, while thoughtfully managing infrastructure and utilities to support community character and public health.

Sustain

- Preserve and enhance the area's **natural assets and tree canopy**, including designated Best Natural Areas.

- Protect and restore the area's **water resources**.

- Acknowledge the area's **unique geology**, its influence on the area's natural character and the constraints it imposes on development and infrastructure.

- Manage infrastructure and utilities to ensure **responsible growth**, preserve **community character**, and safeguard **public health**.

MARC Rail Communities Plan
Boyds & Germantown

Sustain

Tree canopy in parking lots

Shaded streetscapes

Stormwater management on sidewalks

Renew

Vision:

Build on the historic fabric of Boyds and Germantown by encouraging adaptive reuse of structures and infill projects that reflect the scale and character of each historic district and the surrounding neighborhoods. Create gathering places and well-designed streetscapes that enrich distinct community identities and the public realm. Support MARC ridership by sensitively expanding commuter parking areas.

Renew

- Promote **compatible infill development** around each MARC station while protecting existing residential uses, historically-significant structures and natural areas.

- Promote a **compact, walkable and context-sensitive community form** and public realm that supports both stations while protecting and reinforcing each community's scale, historic character and sense of place.

- Establish a network of **high-quality parks, public spaces, trails and community gathering places** in both communities to provide space for recreation and social interaction while enhancing the beauty and environmental quality of both communities.

Renew Boyds

MARC Rail Communities Plan
Boyds & Germantown

Renew Boyds

Aerial view near the intersection of Barnesville and Clarksburg Roads

Renew Boyds

View of station area from Barnesville Road

Renew
Germantown

Renew
Germantown

- Create walkable blocks.
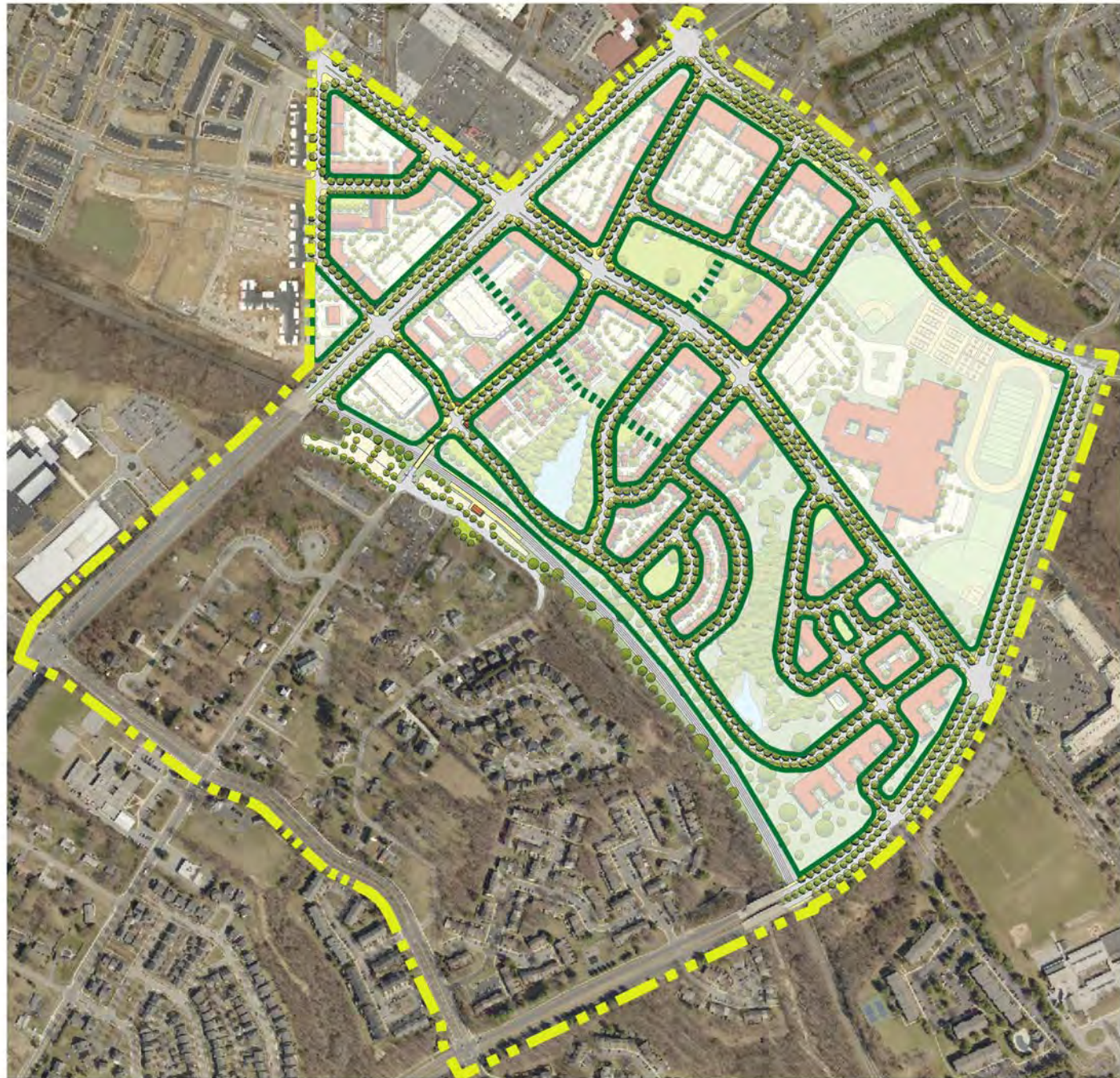
Renew
Germantown

- Create walkable blocks.
- Line streets with buildings and trees.

Renew
Germantown

- Create walkable blocks.
- Line streets with buildings and trees.
- Conceal parking.

Renew
Germantown

- Create walkable blocks.
- Line streets with buildings and trees.
- Conceal parking.
- Create publicly accessible open space.

Renew
Germantown

- Create walkable blocks.

- Line streets with buildings and trees.

- Conceal parking.

- Create publicly accessible open space.

- Integrate natural features and Seneca Valley High School.

Renew
Germantown

- Building heights step up from the historic district to Middlebrook Road.

- Building heights step up as recommended in the 2009 Germantown Employment Sector Plan.

75' height limit

60' height limit

40' height limit

Seneca Valley High School 70' in height

Historic District

75' height limit

Renew
Germantown

- Broaden housing choices.

- Provide housing options for a variety of family sizes, income levels and to allow for aging in place.
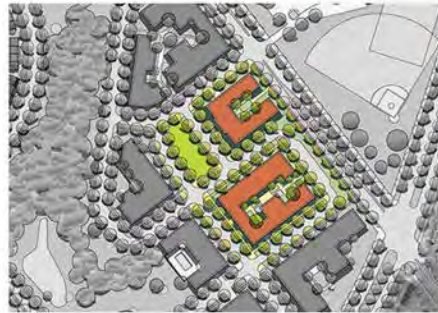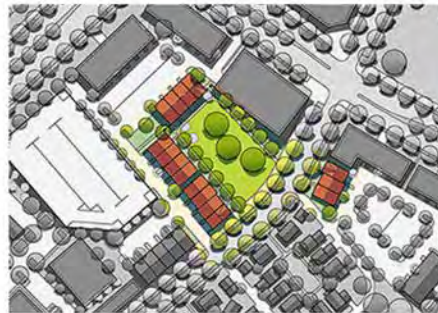
Renew Germantown

Aerial view from the intersection of Middlebrook Road and Crystal Rock Drive

Renew Germantown

Street view looking north on Walter Johnson Road

Overlay Zones

Boyds

Apply the <u>Rural Village Center Overlay Zone</u> to the residential and commercial areas to retain the historic setback patterns and allow septic capacity from adjacent properties.

Germantown

Confirm the <u>Germantown Transit Mixed Use Overlay Zone</u> where it currently exists to retain the priority of Building Lot Terminations (BLTs) in the optional method of development.

Next Steps

October 19 **Planning Board Briefing**

November **Present Working Draft to Planning Board**

December/January **Planning Board Public Hearing**
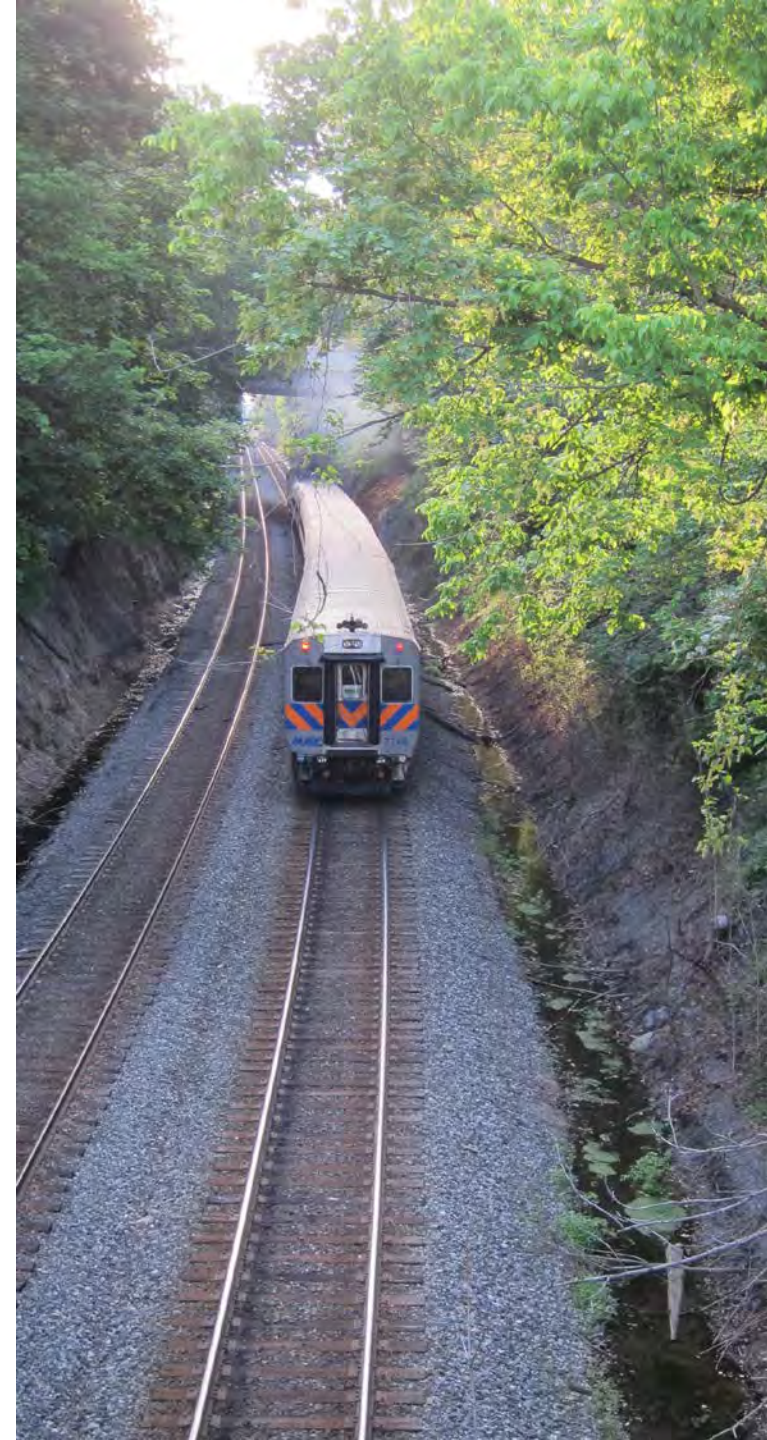
January/February **Planning Board Worksessions**

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M-NCPPC
October 5, 2017
Planning Board Briefing