## Preliminary Consultation MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

Address: 8075 Newell St., Silver Spring Meeting Date: 6/13/2018

Resource: Silver Spring/Acorn Park Report Date: 6/6/2018

Master Plan Site #35/66

Applicant: Montgomery Co. Parks Public Notice: 5/30/2018

(Ching-Fang Chen, Agent)

Review: Preliminary Consultation Tax Credit: N/A

Case Number: N/A Staff: Michael Kyne

PROPOSAL: Hardscape, landscape, and site alterations

## STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the applicant make any revisions based on the HPC's recommendations and return for a HAWP application. When submitting a formal HAWP application, the applicant should provide full details for all proposed work items, in accordance with the HPC's guidance.

## ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

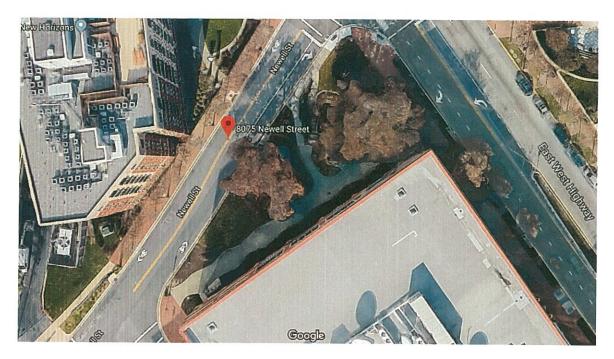
SIGNIFICANCE: Master Plan Site DATE: c. Mid-1800s

Excerpt from Places from the Past:

36/05 Acorn Park and the Silver Spring

This tiny urban park is the site of the original spring that gave name to the town of Silver Spring. According to tradition, Francis Preston Blair discovered in 1840 the spring that once bubbled up through shiny mica sand. Blair was a powerful newspaper publisher and a friend of President Andrew Jackson. Upon discovering the delightful spring, Blair became so enamored by the beauty of the area that he and his wife Eliza established, in 1842, a 300-acre summer estate here that he called Silver Spring. The residence, located on Eastern Avenue, was demolished in 1955. His winter house, Blair House, is now the President's official guest house in Washington, D.C.

Blair built the Acorn gazebo on his Silver Spring estate. It is a good example of rustic garden structures and furniture popular in the mid-1800s. The acorn motif is said to have had sentimental meaning for the Blairs. According to tradition, Francis proposed to Eliza under an oak tree. The gazebo was moved from elsewhere on the estate to its present site in 1955. A public-private partnership forged in 1994 led to the revitalization of Acorn Park and construction of the adjacent building featuring murals depicting scenes from Silver Spring's history by artist Mame Cohalan.



## **PROPOSAL**

The applicant proposes hardscape, landscape, and site alterations at the subject property.

## **APPLICABLE GUIDELINES**

In accordance with Section 1.5 of the Historic Preservation Commission Rules, Guidelines, and Procedures (Regulation No. 27-97) ("Regulations"), in developing its decision when reviewing a Historic Area Work Permit application for an undertaking at a Master Plan site the Commission uses Section 24A-8 of the Montgomery County Code ("Chapter 24A"), the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitation* ("Standards"), and pertinent guidance in applicable master plans. [Note: where guidance in an applicable master plan is inconsistent with the Standards, the master plan guidance shall take precedence (Section 1.5(b) of the Regulations).] The pertinent information in these documents, incorporated in their entirety by reference herein, is outlined below.

## Sec. 24A-8. Same-Criteria for issuance.

- (b) The commission shall instruct the director to issue a permit, or issue a permit subject to such conditions as are found to be necessary to insure conformity with the purposes and requirements of this chapter, if it finds that:
  - (1) The proposal will not substantially alter the exterior features of an historic site or historic resource within an historic district; or
  - (2) The proposal is compatible in character and nature with the historical, archeological, architectural or cultural features of the historic site or the historic district in which an historic

resource is located and would not be detrimental thereto or to the achievement of the purposes of this chapter; or

- (3) The proposal would enhance or aid in the protection, preservation and public or private utilization of the historic site or historic resource located within an historic district in a manner compatible with the historical, archeological, architectural or cultural value of the historic site or historic district in which an historic resource is located; or
- (4) The proposal is necessary in order that unsafe conditions or health hazards be remedied; or
- (5) The proposal is necessary in order that the owner of the subject property not be deprived of reasonable use of the property or suffer undue hardship; [emphasis added] or
- (6) In balancing the interests of the public in preserving the historic site or historic resource located within an historic district, with the interests of the public from the use and benefit of the alternative proposal, the general public welfare is better served by granting the permit.
- (c) It is not the intent of this chapter to limit new construction, alteration or repairs to any 1 period or architectural style.

Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

The Secretary of the Interior defines rehabilitation as "the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features, which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values." Because the property is a Master Plan Site, the Commission's focus in reviewing the proposal should be the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. The Standards are as follows:

- 2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
- 9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
- 10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

## STAFF DISCUSSION

Sufficient details have not been provided for the following proposed work items, and staff cannot make findings or recommendations regarding compatibility and/or appropriateness. The applicant should provide additional information for these proposed work items at the preliminary consultation, so that the HPC can provide feedback and address any potential concerns.

- Restoration of the historic Silver Spring.
- Restoration of the historic Acorn Gazebo.

- Alterations to the historic Acorn Gazebo, including installation/replacement of lighting fixtures, ramp construction, and ADA accessibility.
- Installation of interpretive signage at various locations throughout the site.

The applicant has provided details for the following work items, for which staff is conceptually supportive:

## Demo/Removal/Replacement

- Demolition of the existing non-historic walkways.
- Removal and relocation of the existing non-historic light fixtures.
- Removal of a non-historic stone swale.
- Replacement of the existing non-historic stone stairs.

## New Work

- Construction of an ADA accessible wooden overlook terrace at the historic Silver Spring.
- Construction of a wooden platform around the historic Acorn Gazebo, provided the gazebo is not directly impacted.
- Construction of an ADA accessible wooden boardwalk.
- Construction of ADA accessible stone walkways.
- Construction of additional stone stairs to match the existing.
- Construction of low 1'-6" high stone seat walls.
- Construction of concrete and stone veneer retaining walls.
- Installation of a natural play space and play equipment.
- Installation of wooden benches.
- Installation of bike racks.
- Installation of stainless steel pipe railings at the stone stairs.
- Installation of stainless steel pipe railings with wire cable railing infill at the boardwalk and ramps, as necessary.
- Installation of a crosswalk.
- Installation of additional light fixtures throughout the site.
- Bioretention planting.
- Relocation of an existing 5" to 6" dbh oak tree.
- Establishment of a lawn/green space.
- Additional ornamental landscaping.

Staff recommends that the proposed work items and materials be consistent with the park-like character of the historic site. The proposed work items have the potential to enhance the subject property, so long as removal or alteration of the character-defining features of the historic Acorn Gazebo, Silver Spring, and environmental setting are avoided.

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends that the applicant make any revisions based on the HPC's recommendations and return for a HAWP application. When submitting a formal HAWP application, the applicant should provide full details for all proposed work items, in accordance with the HPC's guidance.



## HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION 301/563-3400

## APPLICATION FOR HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT

Contact Fes	Ching-F	ang.Chen@mont	gomeryparks.org	Contact Person: Cr	ling-Fang Chen
				Daytime Phone No.:	301.495.2557
Tax Account No.:	03100243			_	
Name of Property (	Owner M-NCF	PC		_ Daytime Phone No.:	301.495.4610 M-NCPPC
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Agent for Owner:				Daytime Phone No.:	
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House Number:			Street 1		in the other property owner is
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☐ Move	🖸 Install	☐ Wreck/Raze	☐ Solar ☐	Freplace 🗆 Weodb	urning Stove 🔲 Single Family
☐ Revision	🖸 Repair	☐ Revocable	☐ Fence/Wi	all (complete Section 4)	Dark renovation
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pproved:			For Chairpe	rson, Historic Preserveti	on Commission
lisapproved:		Signature:			Data;
Application/Permit No.:			Deta File	<u> </u>	Date Issued:

## HAWP APPLICATION:

## **#1 WRITTEN DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT**

a. Description of existing structure(s) and environmental setting, including their historical features and significance:

The approx. 0.3-acre triangular shaped park is surrounded by high density mix-use development. The historic environmental setting includes all of M-NCPPC-owned property. However, the entire park includes private property as well which creates the park's southern boundary (see map). The southern edge of the park is defined by the privately-owned office building on which there are six murals facing the park. The eastern edge is the sidewalk for East-West Highway. The northern edge is Newell Street.

The park contains walkways, mature specimen trees and significant historic resources, notably the original "Silver Spring" for which the town is named, and the Acorn Gazebo. Between 1842-1845, Francis Preston Blair and his wife Eliza established a 300-acre summer estate called Silver Spring after his discovery of a mica flecked spring. The Acorn gazebo was built 1850 to commemorate their marriage proposal under an oak tree. The gazebo was moved to its current location from across the street in 1955 when the public park was established. The historic spring is set in a recessed grotto with a carved stone hood delineating its location. The grotto dates to before 1861 and was modified in mid 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The park was listed on the Montgomery County Master Plan for Historic Preservation in 1985. Since that time, the landscape and features have been maintained on an ongoing basis. However, erosion due to frequent flooding has caused problems that need to be resolved.

General description of project and its effect on the historic resource(s), the environmental setting, and where applicable, the historic district.

The proposed project is designed to provide improved access and use of the park in this densely populated area. The design includes both hardscape and landscape elements. This project will enhance the visitor experience at this park and will have no adverse effect on the historic resource.

Hardscape: (refer to Site Plan and key on page 3)

- A. Historic Spring/Grotto (existing) retain and restore the historic spring/Grotto
- B. Acorn Gazebo (existing) retain and restore the gazebo
- C. Community Open Space create a consolidated interior lawn as community open space for flexible activities
- D. Acorn Platform build a wooden platform for seating and gathering. The elevated platform is to protect the tree roots and make efficient use of the space.
- E. Overlook Terrace provide an ADA accessible entrance from Newell Street with seating to welcome people to the park. The terrace serves as an overlook for the historic spring area and an overflow space for the Acorn Gazebo, allowing people in wheelchairs better access to the historic features.

- F. Boardwalk provide a wooden boardwalk as part of the ADA accessible route. The boardwalk protects the existing tree roots, transitional steep slope, and bioretention facilities.
- G. Accessible Walk provide a curved stone walkway as part of the ADA accessible route.
- H. Play Area provide boulders, low visual impact play elements that complement the oak tree setting.
- West Terrace provide a multi-use terrace that transitions into the Kennet Street sidewalk and existing building exit.
- J. Bioretention integrate bioretention facilities with the boardwalk to treat stormwater runoff.
- 1. Curb/Edging –divert offsite runoff and create separation between different materials.
- 2. Special Paving draw visual connection from the privately owned green open space and streetscape
- 3. Stone Runnel -convey offsite runoff during large storm events.
- 4. Seat Wall -provide seating opportunity and separation from street activities
- 5. Retaining Wall divert street runoff
- Stairs rehabilitate existing stairs (built 1955 and 1990s) leading to the historic spring area to meet code. They currently do not have uniform riser heights and tread widths. Build new stone stairs from the Newell Street entrance to match existing.
- Ramp provide accessible ramp as part of the boardwalk, including, a nonintrusive ADA ramp and landing for the Acorn Gazebo. Provide handrails and guardrails as needed.
- 8. Crosswalk provide safe street crossing
- Interpretation provide opportunities to interpret the history of the park
- Boulder provide visual connection or seating opportunities
- Bench provide seating opportunities
- 12. Bike Rack (existing) retain existing bike racks
- 13. Light relocate existing light fixtures to the street to enhance the park. Install ground level, recessed, and/or other similar spot lights to highlight the historic features and provide safe passage along the walks.

## Planting: (refer to Landscape Plan and key on page 4)

Existing significant trees, Tree #15 (35" dia. white oak) and Tree #16 (40" dia. white oak) are to be preserved and mitigated for long term health.

 Transplanted Oak – transplant tree #14 (5" white oak) if feasible or plant a matching new oak.

- 2. Shrubs consolidate existing evergreen shrubs at the base of the adjacent office building to create a consistent green backdrop for the community open space.
- 3. Groundcovers establish low-growing, low-maintenance groundcovers to prevent soil erosion. The groundcover planting to provide aesthetic environmental setting for the historic features and buffer the historic features from the busy street activities. The groundcovers are to be planted in plug size to minimize impact to the tree roots.
- 4. Bioretention Planting install bioretention planting to treat stormwater to enhance the environmental setting for the park.
- 5. Lawn establish shade tolerant turf for the community open space.

## **Demolition:** (refer to Demolition Plan and key on page 5)

- 1. Remove the following non-historic walkways:
  - in front of the building (built after 1994) to create green open space.
  - From Newell to the walkway in front of the building
  - From grotto to walkway from Newell Street
- 2. Demolish river rock swale (recently installed interim measure to mitigate stormwater impact)
- 3. Remove obsolete concrete light fixture stands.

## #2 SITE PLAN

See attachment.

## **#3 PLANS AND ELEVATIONS**

See attachment.

## **#4 MATERIALS SPECIFICATIONS**

See attachment.

## #5 PHOTOGRAPHS

See attachment.

## #6 SITE SURVEY

See attachment.

## #7 MAILING ADDRESSES OF ADJACENT AND CONFRONTING PROPERTY OWNERS

## Owner's mailing address:

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission Montgomery County Department of Parks 9500 Brunett Avenue Silver Spring, MD 20901

The Brick Companies 3168 Braverton Street, 4th Floor Edgewater, MD 21037

## Owner's Agent's mailing address:



# M-NCPPC The Park Development Division of the Montgomery County Department of Parks

Blair Mill Rd



M-NCPPC The Park Development Division of the Montgomery County Department of Parks

8075 Newell St, Silver Spring, MD 20910

Accessible Walk West Terrace Bioretention Seat Wall Retaining Wall Stairs Ramp Crosswalk Special Paving Stone Runnel Interpretation Play Area Curb/Edging Boulder ∢ щ с о́ ш щ с о́ щ ц ¬ ¬ - 7 6 4 6 9 7 8 6

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13.

KENNETT STREET

Historic Spring

EAST WEST HWY

Acorn Gazebo

Community Open Space

Acorn Platform

Overlook Terrace

Ш 13

NEWELL STREET

Boardwalk

13. 17. 13.

Bench Bike Rack

Acorn Urban Park Renovation - Site Plan

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**Bioretention Planting** 

Lawn

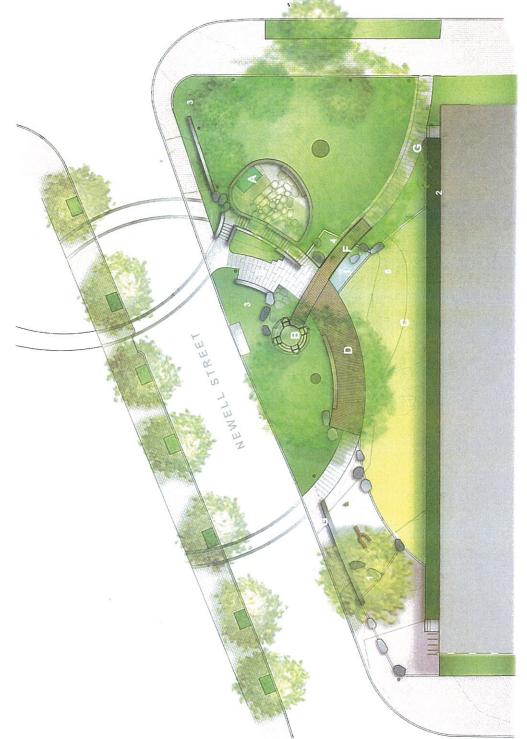
Groundcovers

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Shrubs

Transplanted Oak

EAST WEST HWY



Community Open Space

Historic Spring Acorn Gazebo Overlook Terrace

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Acorn Platform

Accessible Walk

Boardwalk

West Terrace Bioretention

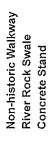
Play Area

Acorn Urban Park Renovation - Landscape Plan

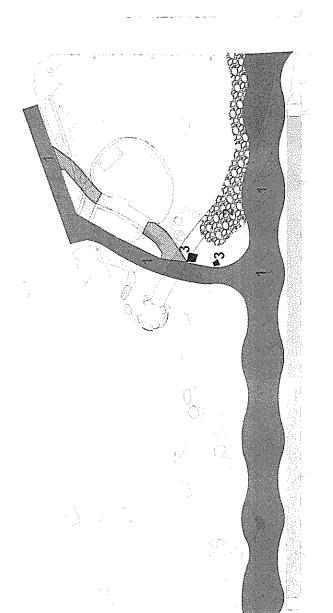
8075 Newell St, Silver Spring, MD 20910







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KENNETT Street

M. M-NCPPC The Park Development Division of the Montgomery County Department of Parks Acorn Urban Park Renovation - Demolition Plan

Historic Spring

DOT Right of Way

6

Acorn Gazebo

NEWELL STREET

EAST WEST HIGHWAY

M-NCPPC (0.12 AC)

Private (The Brick Companies

5,4

P6

Acorn Urban Park Renovation - Site Plan (Property Ownership)

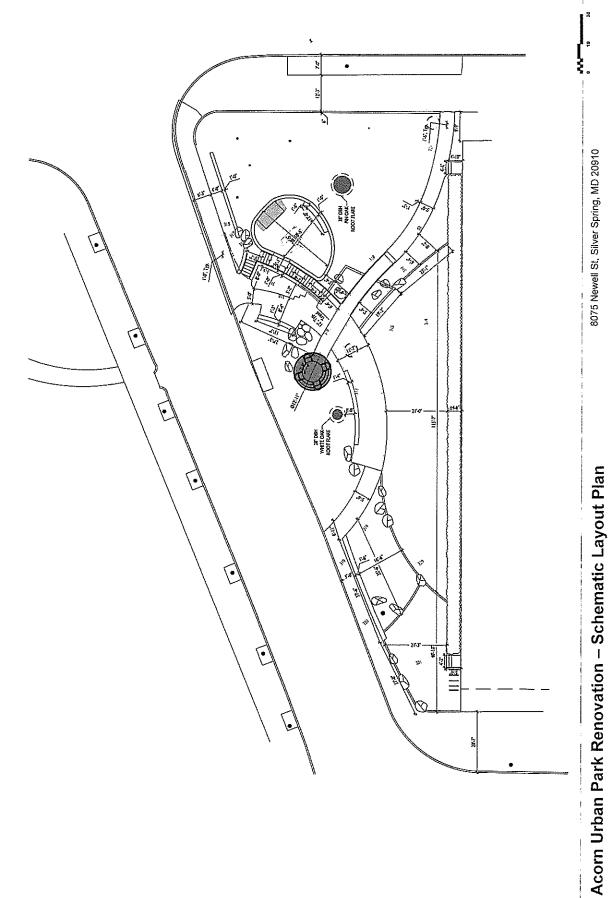
KENNETT STREET

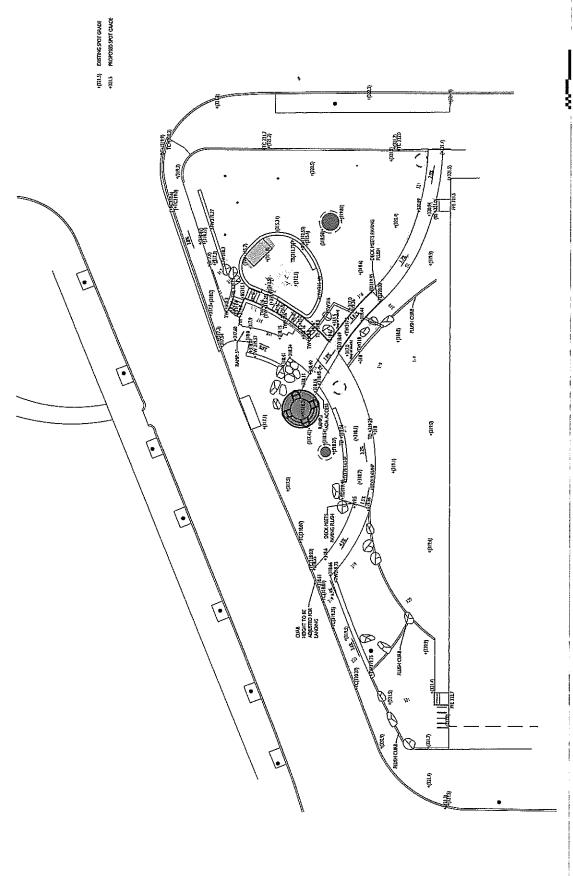
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8075 Newell St, Silver Spring, MD 20910

Proposed Tree

Engineered wood fiber with SWM Wood decking on helical plers Cleaned and restored Spring Decorative lighting in Acorn Stone veneer retaining wall Decorative paving band Existing brick sidewalk Natural stepping stone Decorative guardrail Flush concrete curb **MATERIALS KEY** Brick sidwalk-New Natural boulder DESCRIPTION Concrete wall Play equipment Stone seat wall Light pole, typ. Wood bench Stone runnel Stone Paving Play surface Granite curb Existing Tree Stone stairs Stone wall Bike racks Handrail 6 (6)

DETAIL

Acorn Urban Park Renovation - Schematic Materials Plan

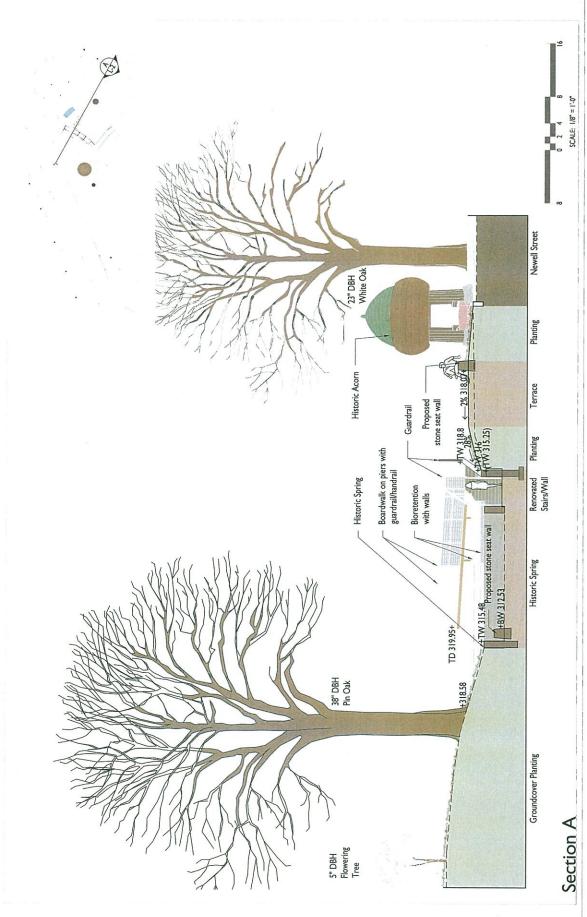
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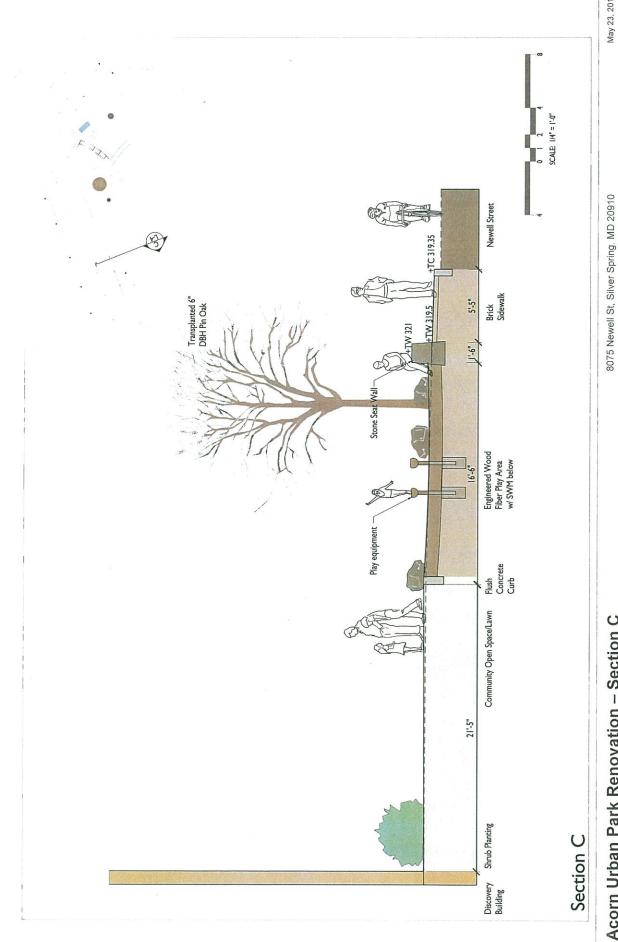
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Acorn Urban Park Renovation - Section A





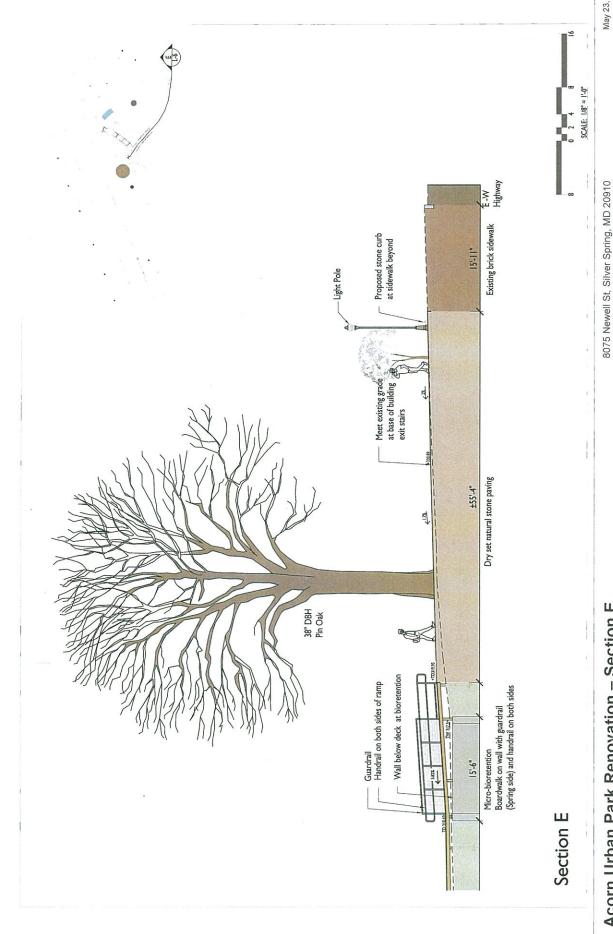




## Acorn Urban Park Renovation - Section C

May 23, 2018

# D 8075 Newell St, Silver Spring, MD 20910



## Acorn Urban Park Renovation - Section E

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0 2 4 SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"

Historic Spring

9.-5"

+TD 31935

8" Wide Concrete Wall

Handrail for ramp

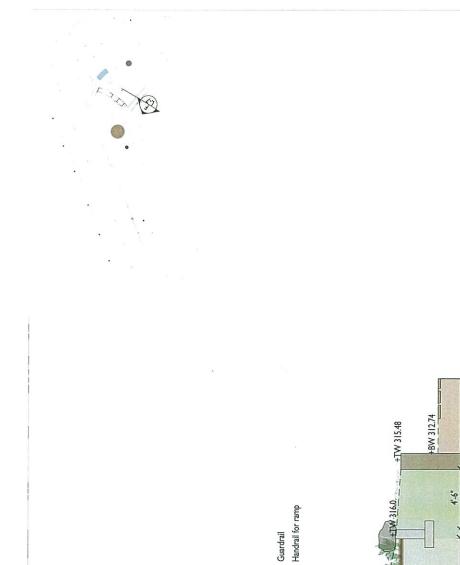
Boardwalk on helical piers /wall

Micro bio-retention

Community Open Space/ Lawn

Acorn Urban Park Renovation - Section F (23,

Section F







- Discovery Building w/Murals

Transplanted 6" DBH Oak

— Light Pole

Relocatd Bike racks

- Existing hydrant

TW 321.75+

- Stone Seat Wall Lighting in wall

+31855 +31855

Play Area

- Light Pole

Boulders

Kendall Street

Brick Sidewalk

Flexible Paved Area w/ Seating Boulders at edge 27-72

**Brick Sidewalk** 

Walk/ Landing

Planting



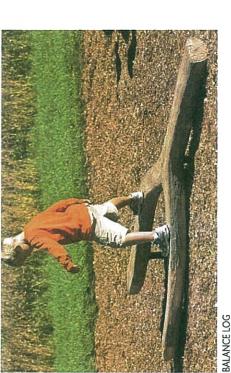
Section G

1/2"=1'-0"



() PLAY COMPONENTS IMAGES

ACORN SPINNER



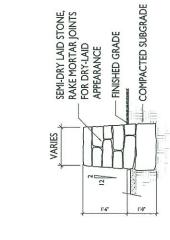
SEATING BOULDERS

NTS

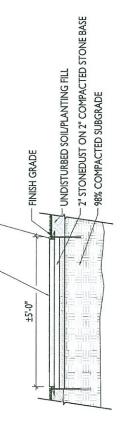
18" X 60" X 2" THICK STONE PAVING WITH HAND TIGHT, SAND SWEPT JOINTS

- FLEXIBLE BRICK EDGE

VARIES NOTES: STONE TO MATCH EXISITING STONE AT HISTORIC SPRING



SECTION SECTION



STONE SEAT WALL

1/2"=1'-0"

8075 Newell St, Silver Spring, MD 20910

23

8075 Newell St, Silver Spring, MD 20910





BLACK LOCUST
DECKING AND FASCIA
TREX ELEVATIONS
STRUCTURAL JOISTS, POSTS
HELICAL PIERS

NTS

BLACK LOCUST
BENCH SLATS
BLACK OR BRONZE
POWDERCOAT
SUPPORT AND POSTS,
SURFACE MOUNT TO DECK



6 GUARDRAIL IIMAGES

NTS

STAINLESS STEEL RAIL AND POSTS W/ WIRE CABLE INFILL

NTS

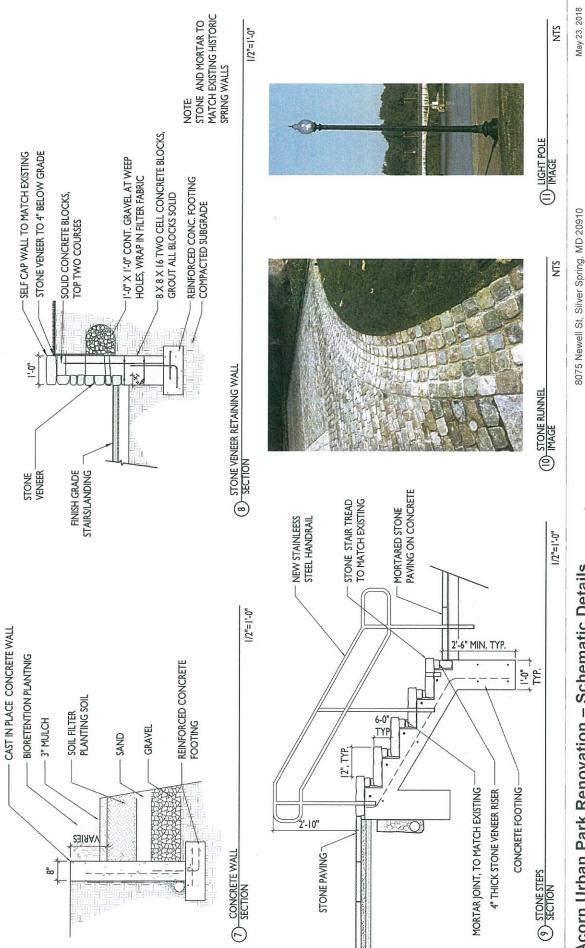
Acorn Urban Park Renovation - Schematic Details

S WOOD BENCH

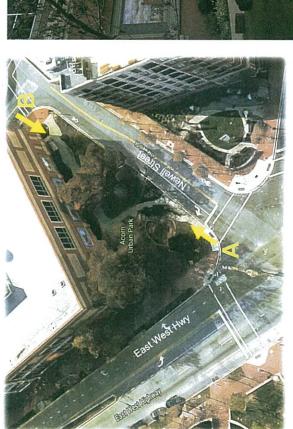
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## Context







# Acorn Urban Park Renovation - Photographs

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## Historic Spring and Acorn Gazebo







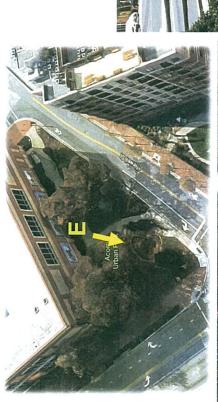
## Acorn Urban Park Renovation - Photographs

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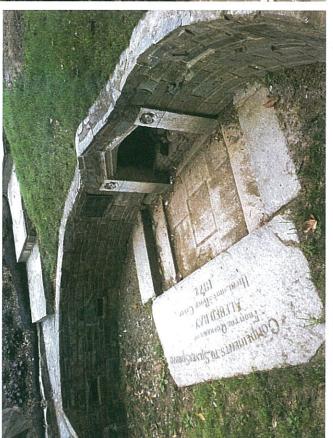


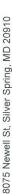
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## Historic Spring

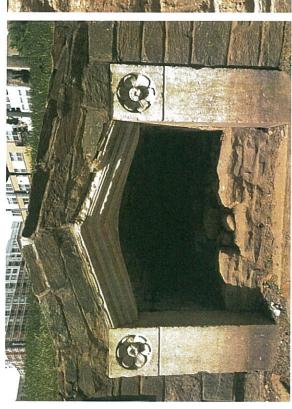


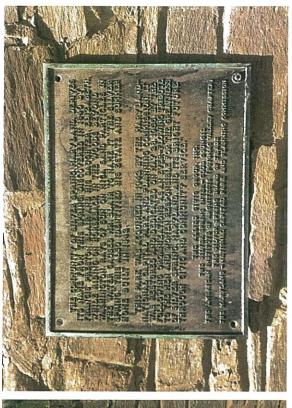


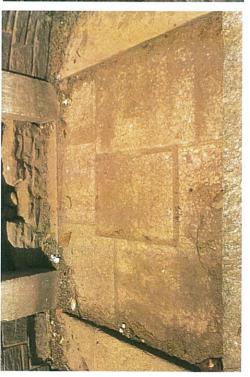




## Historic Spring and Grotto









Acorn Urban Park Renovation - Photographs

## Historic Spring - Wall Enclosure







8075 Newell St, Silver Spring, MD 20910

## Historic Spring- Stairway







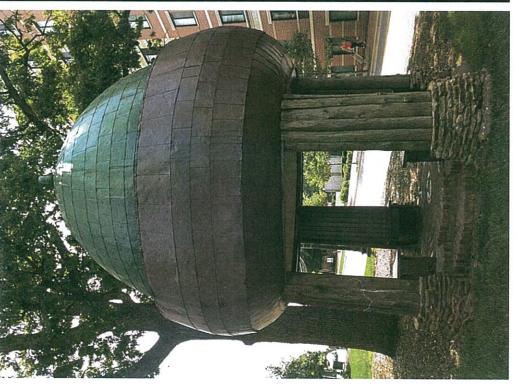


Acorn Urban Park Renovation - Photographs

## Acorn Gazebo









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## Acorn Gazebo









Acorn Urban Park Renovation - Photographs

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## Views from Newell Street











## View from Argent Apartments

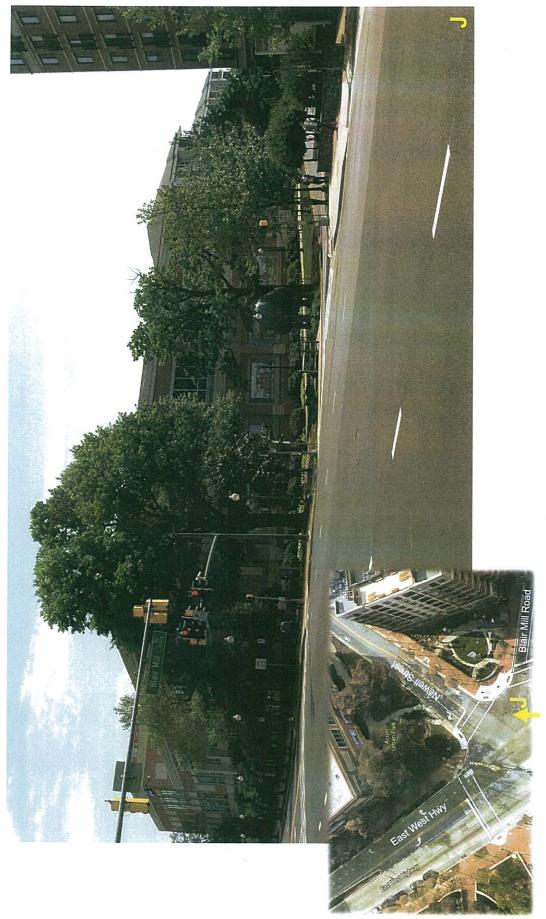






# Acorn Urban Park Renovation - Photographs

8075 Newell St, Silver Spring, MD 20910



View from East West Highway at Blair Mill Road

## Acorn Urban Park Renovation - Photographs

8075 Newell St, Silver Spring, MD 20910

## View from East West Highway









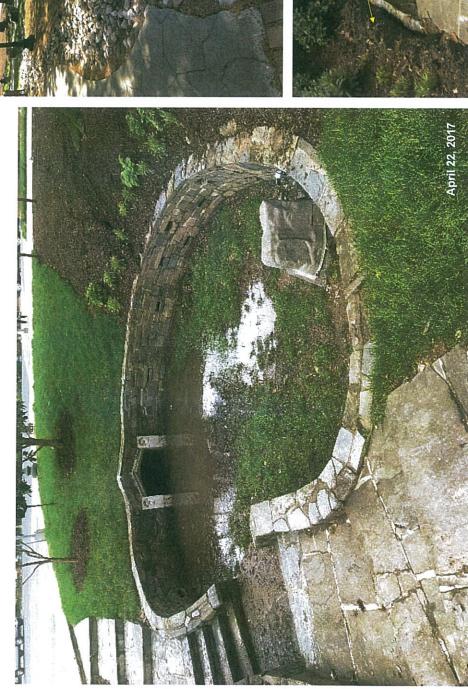






## Acorn Urban Park Renovation - Photographs

## Drainage Problems and Interim Solutions









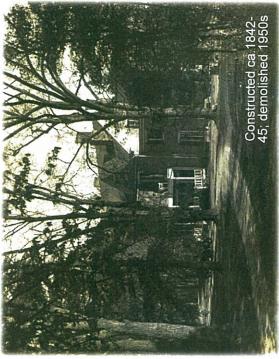


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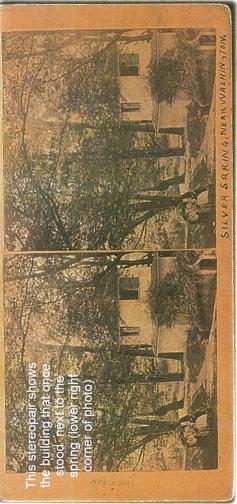


## Historic Photographs



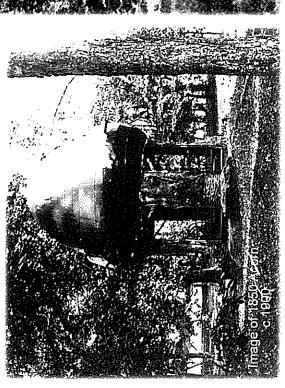






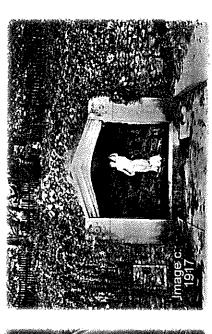
## Acorn Urban Park Renovation - Photographs

## Historic Photographs











M-NCPPC The Park Development Division of the Montgomery County Department of Parks

May 23, 2018

## Acorn Urban Park Renovation – Tree Survey

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