

MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT

Address:	7901 Meadowbrook Ln, Chevy Chase	Meeting Date:	6/12/2019
Resource:	Master Plan Site #36/90 Rock Creek Recreation Center	Report Date:	6/5/2019
Applicant:	M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks	Public Notice:	5/29/2019
Review:	HAWP	Tax Credit:	n/a
Case Number:	36/90-19A	Staff:	Dan Bruechert
Proposal:	Solar Charging Station		

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the HPC approve the HAWP application.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

SIGNIFICANCE: Individually Listed Master Plan Site #36/70 (Rock Creek Rec. Center)
STYLE:
DATE: c.1940

The Meadowbrook Rec. Center is located to the south of the historic Rock Creek Stables. The park consists of a CCC recreation building, a playground, basketball courts, and playing fields.



Figure 1: The historic rec center is located in the southwest corner of the park.

PROPOSAL

The applicant proposes install a solar charging station for portable devices.

APPLICABLE GUIDELINES

Proposed alterations to individual Master Plan Sites are reviewed under Montgomery County Code Chapter 24A (Chapter 24A) and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Rehabilitation is defined 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.

Montgomery County Code, Chapter 24A Historic Resources Preservation

(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
- (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.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, space and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
8. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportions, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
9. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will 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

The applicant proposes to construct a ground-mounted solar charging station to the north of the recreation center building. The charging station will be approximately 15' (fifteen feet) tall and will be shaped like a flower (see attached application). Staff finds the location, design, size, and

materials to be appropriate with the surrounding park and recommends approval.

The new solar charging station (also referred to as a “solar tree” in the application) will be placed to the rear of the historic recreation center building, next to the playground and basketball courts. Staff finds that this location will not have a significant impact on the historic character of the recreation center building.

Staff additionally finds that the design of the charging station is appropriate in a park setting, adjacent to the playground. The design effectively contrasts against the stone recreation center, but is compatible with the adjacent, brightly colored, playground equipment. Staff concurs with the submitted narrative that the design adds to the playful nature and purpose of the park.

The proposed charging station will be approximately 15’ (fifteen feet) tall. This is lower than the roof of the historic recreation center and is the same approximate height as the basketball hoops in the adjacent courts. Staff finds the height is compatible with the surrounding site.

Finally, Staff finds that the metal base and pole are appropriate materials for the charging station. The metal features are consistent with many of the other recreational features in the park (i.e. playground equipment, basketball hoops, etc.).

Staff finds that the proposal will not impact the historic character of the historic recreation center building (24A-8(b)(1)) and that the park is better served by the HPC approving this HAWP (24A-8(b)(6)).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Commission **approve** the HAWP application; as being consistent with Chapter 24A-8 and the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation; and with the general condition applicable to all Historic Area Work Permits that **the applicant will present 3 permit sets of drawings to HPC staff for review and stamping prior to submission for permits (if applicable)**. After issuance of the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (DPS) permit, the applicant will arrange for a field inspection by calling the DPS Field Services Office at 240-777-6370 prior to commencement of work and not more than two weeks following completion of work.



876558

DPS - #8

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
301/563-3400

**APPLICATION FOR
HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT**

Contact Person: Julie Mueller
Daytime Phone No.: 301-650-4390

Tax Account No.: _____
Name of Property Owner: Dept. of Parks Daytime Phone No.: 301-650-4390
Address: 9500 Brunette Ave, Silver Spring 20901
Street Number City State Zip Code
Contractor: Parks Phone No.: 301-650-4390
Contractor Registration No.: _____
Agent for Owner: As Above Daytime Phone No.: _____

LOCATION OF BUILDING/PROJECT

House Number: 7901 Street: Meadowbrook Ln.
Town/City: Cherry Chase Nearest Cross Street: East-West Hwy
Lot: _____ Block: _____ Subdivision: _____
Libor: _____ Folio: _____ Parcel: _____

PART ONE: TYPE OF PERMIT ACTION AND USE

1A. CHECK ALL APPLICABLE:

- ☐ Construct ☐ Extend ☐ Alter/Renovate
☐ Move ☒ Install ☐ Wreck/Remove
☐ Revision ☐ Repair ☐ Revocable

CHECK ALL APPLICABLE:

- ☐ A/C ☐ Stair ☐ Room Addition ☐ Porch ☐ Deck ☐ Shed
☒ Solar ☐ Fireplace ☐ Woodburning Stove ☐ Single Family
☐ Fence/Wall (complete Section 4) ☐ Other: _____

1B. Construction cost estimate: \$ TBD charging station

1C. If this is a revision of a previously approved active permit, see Permit # _____

PART TWO: COMPLETE FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION AND EXTEND/ADDITION

2A. Type of sewage disposal: 01 ☐ WSSC 02 ☐ Septic 03 ☐ Other: _____
2B. Type of water supply: 01 ☐ WSSC 02 ☐ Well 03 ☐ Other: _____

PART THREE: COMPLETE ONLY FOR FENCE/RETAINING WALL

2A. Height _____ feet _____ inches

3B. Indicate whether the fence or retaining wall is to be constructed on one of the following locations:

- ☐ On party line/property line ☐ Entirely on land of owner ☐ On public right of way/ easement

I hereby certify that I have the authority to make the foregoing application, that the application is correct, and that the construction will comply with plans approved by all agencies listed and I hereby acknowledge and accept this to be a condition for the issuance of this permit.

Julie Mueller
Signature of owner or authorized agent

5/1/19
Date

Approved: _____ For Chairperson, Historic Preservation Commission

Disapproved: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Application/Permit No.: _____ Date Filed: _____ Date Issued: _____



DPS - #8

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
301/563-3400**APPLICATION FOR
HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT**Contact Person: Julie Mueller
Daytime Phone No.: 301-650-4390Tax Account No.: _____
Name of Property Owner: Dept. of Parks Daytime Phone No.: 301-650-4390
Address: 9500 Brunett Ave, Silver Spring 20901
Street Number City Street Zip Code
Contractor: Parks Phone No.: 301-650-4390
Contractor Registration No.: _____
Agent for Owner: As Above Daytime Phone No.: _____**LOCATION OF BUILDING/PREREQ**House Number: 7901 Street: Meadowbrook Ln.
Town/City: Cherry Chase Nearest Cross Street: East-West Hwy
Lot: _____ Block: _____ Subdivision: _____
Liber: _____ Folio: _____ Parcel: _____**PART ONE: TYPE OF PERMIT ACTION AND USE****1A. CHECK ALL APPLICABLE:**

- ☐ Construct ☐ Extend ☐ Alter/Revolute
☐ Move ☒ Install ☐ Wreck/Raze
☐ Revision ☐ Repair ☐ Revocable

CHECK ALL APPLICABLE:

- ☐ AC ☐ Slab ☐ Room Addition ☐ Porch ☐ Deck ☐ Shed
☒ Solar ☐ Fireplace ☐ Woodburning Stove ☐ Single Family
☐ Fence/Wall (complete Section 4) ☐ Other: _____

1B. Construction cost estimate: \$ TBD charging station

1C. If this is a revision of a previously approved active permit, see Permit # _____

PART TWO: COMPLETE FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION AND EXTEND/ADDITIONS2A. Type of sewage disposal: 01 ☐ WSSC 02 ☐ Septic 03 ☐ Other: _____
2B. Type of water supply: 01 ☐ WSSC 02 ☐ Well 03 ☐ Other: _____**PART THREE: COMPLETE ONLY FOR FENCE/RETAINING WALL**

3A. Height _____ feet _____ inches

3B. Indicate whether the fence or retaining wall is to be constructed on one of the following locations:

- ☐ On party line/property line ☐ Entirely on land of owner ☐ On public right of way/easement

I hereby certify that I have the authority to make the foregoing application, that the application is correct, and that the construction will comply with plans approved by all agencies listed and I hereby acknowledge and accept this to be a condition for the issuance of this permit.

Julie Mueller
Signature of owner or authorized agent5/31/19
Date

Approved: _____ For Chairperson, Historic Preservation Commission

Disapproved: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Application/Permit No.: _____ Date Filed: _____ Date Issued: _____

1. WRITTEN DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT:

a. *Description of existing structural and environmental setting, including historic features and significance.*

Site

Rock Creek Recreation Center (MPHP 36-70), also known as Meadowbrook Recreation Center is in Meadowbrook Park, a 16.6-acre site just south of East-West Highway and north of the District of Columbia line in Rock Creek Park. The site contains the historic stone recreation building, a playground, tennis and basketball courts, and playing fields.

History and Significance

The early history of the site is first noted in a May 3, 1929 *Maryland News* article which announces that a rec center is being proposed close to the District of Columbia line. It touts that the new facility will be accessible to local citizens via the new Bethesda-Silver Spring Highway, known today as East-West Highway and which was in the planning and early construction phase then.

In 1933, M-NCPPC appropriated funds for detailed construction plans for a recreation area in Rock Creek Park, Unit 1. The exact construction date of the original open-air field shelter at Meadowbrook has not been determined, but with reasonable certainty, it is perhaps the earliest rec building constructed by the MNCPPC. A *Washington Post* article, published on September 7, 1934, noted that “a large field house of rustic design” was to be located between the District Line and the East-West highway near Chevy Chase and completed on September 15th.

The extant rec building was designed by Howard Cutler and his daughter Katherine; a Silver Spring architectural firm, in cooperation with the National Park Service (NPS) and the M-NCPPC in early 1940. Shortly thereafter, it was built by the Civilian Conservation Corp (CCC).

The CCC had a direct impact on the construction of the rec center building. Its agency’s influence on the architectural design is unquestionable. CCC employee, Albert Good, produced the standard model for blending of rustic architecture with the picturesque park landscape, a process he called “assimilation.” Among Good’s floorplans that were widely distributed throughout NPS sites and which is very close to the Meadowbrook plan is one with two stone fireplaces, surrounding windows, enclosed ends, and crushed stone flooring.

By 1959 this park became known as “Candy Cane City” after the installation of red and white striped play equipment, including the Jack and Jill Climbing Tower and two spring-mounted hobby horses. These new pieces supplemented traditional equipment such as swings and see-saws. Meadowbrook was one of the first parks to have brightly colored, modern units.

By 1966, the new “Astro City” playground at Meadowbrook was on display for the Congress for Recreation and Parks. According to *Evening Star*, this equipment was “to keep children up with the space age. It takes them through journeys of the astronauts with walks, sliding boards, and climbs – if it

doesn't scare them off." Produced in Grinnell, Iowa, the M-NCPPC paid \$10,000 for a spaceship sliding board, a Sputnik pole with rings, a Telstar Whirl, Moon Creatures, and Sand Craters. Despite this new, update space-age equipment, maps such as the Federal Rock Creek Park, published by NPS in 1972, continued to identify the children's area next to the Recreation Center as "Candy Cane City."

Today, the playground is filled with colorful modern equipment. The fence posts are painted red and white harkening back to the original park theme.

b. General description of project and its effect on the historic resources and environmental setting.

The Department of Parks proposes to install an ADA-compliant solar charging station to allow park users to charge their phones and laptops while at the park. The station, which includes a small concrete pad, would be located near the turn in the sidewalk between the rec center and the playground. This spot is close to most of the major outdoor functions in the park. The design is a prototype that is being proposed for use throughout the Parks system. The large, whimsical floral design would be easily recognized by Park users throughout the system.

Effect: The installation of the solar charging station will have no adverse effect on the historic character defining features of the designated recreation center. It will not alter or diminish the integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling or association. Furthermore, the proposed improvement is easily reversible. Its design adds to the playful nature and purpose of the park.

2. SITE PLAN: see photos.

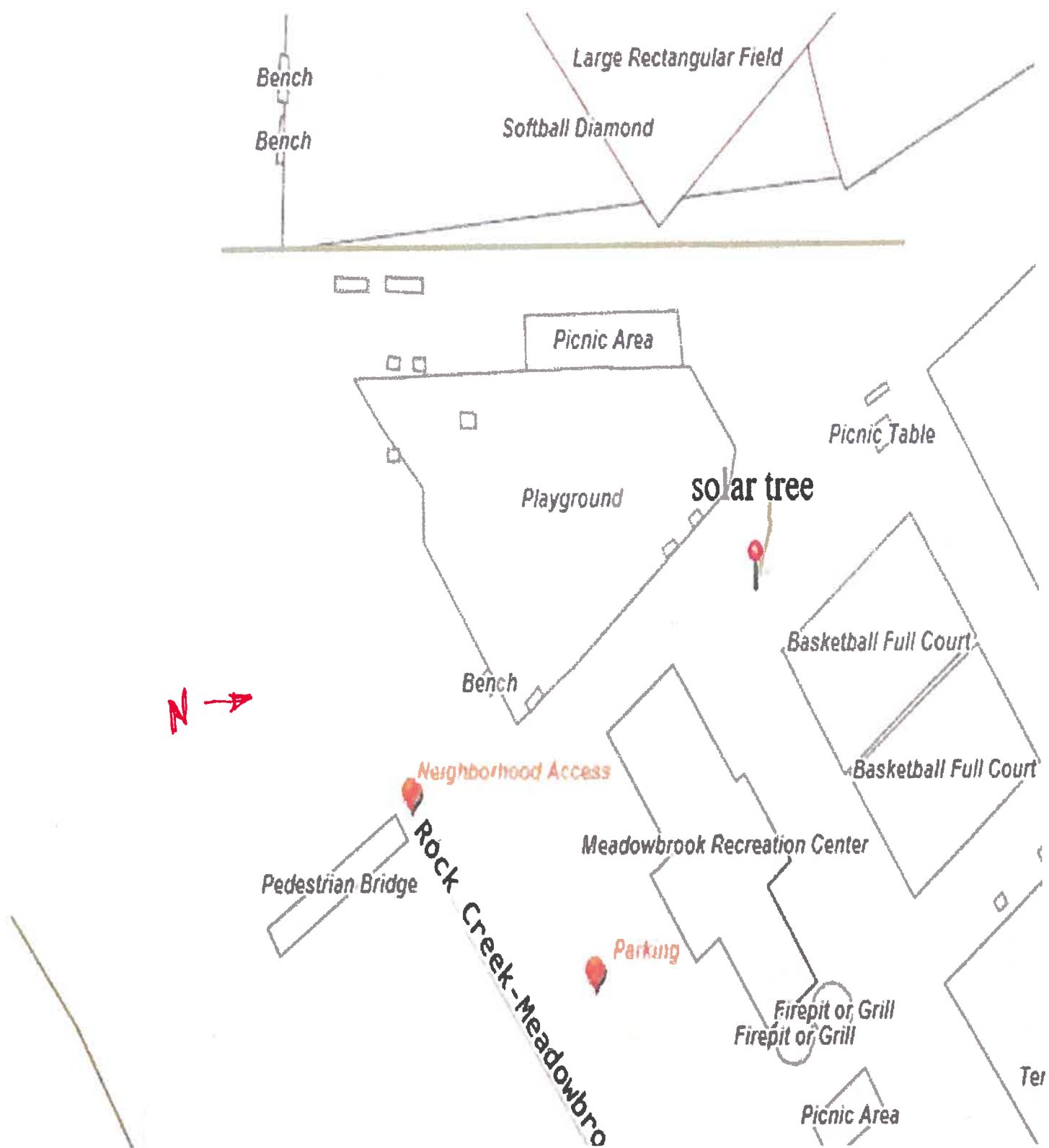
3. PLANS AND ELEVATIONS: see attached

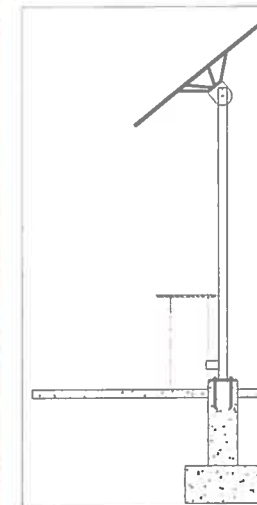
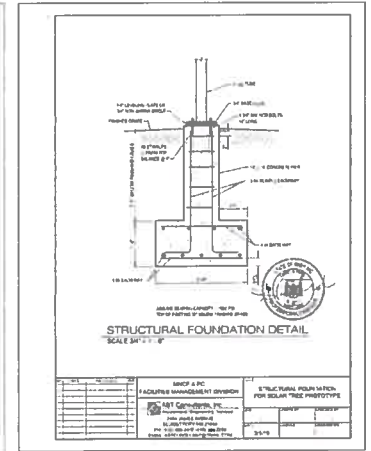
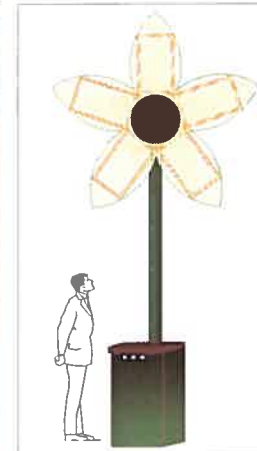
4. MATERIAL SPECIFICATIONS: see attached

5. PHOTOGRAPHS: see attached

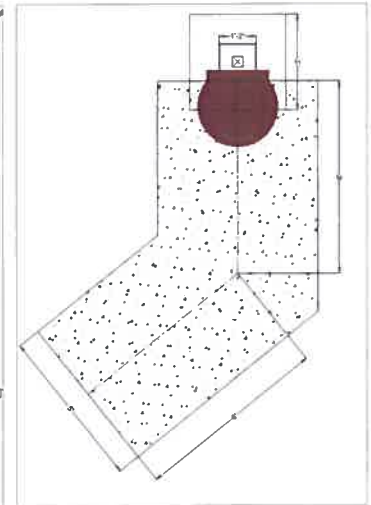
6. TREE SURVEY: N/A

7. ADDRESS OF ADJACENT AND CONFRONTING PROPERTY OWNERS: N/A (inside Rock Creek Park)





SECTION VIEW



PLAN VIEW

DESIGN		REVIEW AND APPROVAL	
Landings ADAMT	Date	Checked By	REVIEWED IMMEDIATELY DESIGN
ADAMT	Date	Checked By	
Engineer	Date	Checked By	
Drawn By	Date	Checked By	

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
 Montgomery County Department of Parks
 Facilities Management Division
 8301 Turkey Thicket Dr., 2nd Floor
 Gaithersburg, Maryland 20879

PLANS COORD. FOR CONSTRUCTION DRAWINGS		
REVISIONS		
Rev.	No.	Description

PROJECT

Candycane City
 Solar Flower

SHEET 1 OF 1





Looking south

approx.
propagation



