EXPEDITED
MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT

Address: 10701 Colesville Rd., Silver Spring

Resource: Master Plan Site #33/22
Robert B. Morse Water Filtration Complex

Applicant: Montgomery County Dept. of Parks
(Julie Mueller, Agent)

Review: HAWP

Meeting Date: 4/14/2021

Report Date: 4/7/2021

Public Notice: 3/31/2021

Tax Credit: No

Case Number: 902232 REVISION

Staff: Michael Kyne

PROPOSAL: Sidewalk construction and other hardscape alterations

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

✓ Approve
☐ Approve with conditions

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

SIGNIFICANCE: Master Plan Site #33/22, Robert B. Morse Water Filtration Complex

STYLE: Georgia Revival

DATE: c. 1929-36

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Fig. 1: Subject property, as marked by the blue star.
PROPOSAL:

The Commission approved the applicants’ proposal for the following work items at the February 12, 2020 HPC meeting:

- Installation of new sections of concrete sidewalk along the west side of Colesville Road
- Modification of the end treatment of an existing W-style guardrail.

The applicants propose the following revisions to the previously approved HAWP:

- Installation of a sidewalk encircling the sides and rear of the historic treatment plant building.
  - The previous approval called for pedestrians to walk through the paved parking lot without a sidewalk; however, this approach has been deemed unsatisfactory and unsafe.

APPLICABLE GUIDELINES:

Policy On Use of Expedited Staff Reports for Simple HAWP Cases

IV. The Expedited Staff Report format may be used on the following type of cases:

2. Modifications to a property, which do not significantly alter its visual character.

11. Construction or replacement of walkways, parking areas, patios, driveways or other paved areas that are not readily visible from a public right-of-way and/or are compatible in material, location, and design with the visual character of the historic site or district.

Montgomery County Code; Chapter 24A-8

(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 ensure 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; 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.” 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 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 proportion, and massing to protect the 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 RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Commission approve the HAWP application under the Criteria for Issuance in Chapter 24A-8(b), (1), (2) & (c) having found that the proposal will not substantially alter the exterior features of the historic resource and is compatible in character with the purposes of Chapter 24A:

and with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation #2, #9, and #10;

and with the general condition that the applicant shall present an electronic set of drawings, if applicable, to Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) staff for review and stamping prior to submission for the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (DPS) building permits;

and with the general condition that final project design details, not specifically delineated by the Commission, shall be approved by HPC staff or brought back to the Commission as a revised HAWP application at staff’s discretion;

and with the general condition that the applicant shall notify the Historic Preservation Staff if they propose to make any alterations to the approved plans. Once the work is completed the applicant will contact the staff person assigned to this application at 301-563-3400 or michael.kyne@montgomeryplanning.org to schedule a follow-up site visit.
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
301/563-3400
APPLICATION FOR
HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT

Contact Email: [redacted]  Contact Person: Julie Mueller
Daytime Phone No.: 301-505-4390

Tax Account No.: 
Name of Property Owner: MNCPC  Daytime Phone No.: 
Address: 9400 Boarrett Lane Silver Spring, MD 20901
City:  
Zip Code: 
Contractor: John P. Parks  Phone No.: 
Contractor Registration No.: 
Agent for Owner:  Daytime Phone No.: 

LOCATION OF BUILDING PRESENT
House Number: 10401  Street: Colesville Rd.
Town/City: Silver Spring  Nearest Cross Street: Hillwood Dr.
Lot: 
Block: 
Subdivision: 001
Liber:  
Folio: 
Parcel: 

PART ONE: TYPE OF PERMITS-ACTION AND USE
1A. CHECK ALL APPLICABLE:  
☐ Construct  ☐ Extend  ☐ Alter/Recompute  ☐ A/C  ☐ Slab  ☐ Room Addition  ☐ Porch  ☐ Deck  ☐ Shed
☐ Move  ☐ Install  ☐ Wreck/Raze  ☐ Solar  ☐ Fireplace  ☐ Woodburning Stove  ☐ Single Family
☐ Revision  ☐ Repair  ☐ Revocable  ☐ Fence/Wall (complete Section 4)  ☐ Other: Sidewalk

1B. Construction cost estimate: $75,000

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

PART TWO: COMPLETE FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION AND EXTENSIONS/ADDITIONS
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
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.

 Signature of owner or authorized agent  Date

Approved:  For Chairperson, Historic Preservation Commission
Disapproved:  Signature:  Date:
Application/Permit No.:  Data Filed:  Data Issued:

SEE REVERSE SIDE FOR INSTRUCTIONS
1. WRITTEN DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT:

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

Originally built for the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission, the Robert E. Morse Water Treatment Plant is located at 10700 and 10701 Columbia Pike, straddling both sides of the road in Silver Spring (M: 33/22). The proposed project is located on the west side (10701), today known as Burnt Mills West Special Park. This portion of the park consists of the former treatment plant building, a dam, and small ancillary structures. Originally constructed on the site of former mills, the treatment plant was decommissioned in the early 1960s. At that time, equipment was removed and hardscape elements, such as curbs, sidewalks, and parking areas were extensively altered (see attached 1962 plan). The site on both sides of Colesville Road was purchased in 1996 and 2000 by M-NCPPC for parkland. The west building served as office space for some time until it was vacated more than 10 years ago.

The site is individually listed on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation. In 2008, it was documented by the Historic American Engineering Record (https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/md1796/).

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

The project proposes to install concrete sidewalks along Colesville Road to provide hikers on the Northwest Branch trail system with a paved connection between the trails on either side of the road. Currently the trail on the west side ends at a sidewalk that does not extend northward all the way to the south paved driveway to Burnt Mills West Special Park. It ends in a grassy area that includes a steep slope which extends to the curb. This makes walking along the edge extremely difficult. Furthermore, there is no sidewalk going north from the park’s north driveway to the paved bus stop and pedestrian crosswalk leading across Colesville Road to the east side where hikers can reconnect to the trail system in Burnt Mills East Special Park.

A sidewalk is not planned in front of the building facing Colesville Road as there is not enough space between it and the street to install one without compromising the historic setting more than already happened when Colesville Road was widened many years ago. Instead, Parks is proposing to install a sidewalk encircling the side and rear of the building. HAWP #902232 originally approved for this project called for pedestrians to walk through the paved parking lot without a sidewalk. However, upon further consideration, this has been deemed unsatisfactory and unsafe, thus the revised proposal.

The project entails the following per the attached plans:

- Installing new concrete sidewalks
- Installing concrete retaining wall at northern section outside of the historic boundary.
- Modifying the existing guardrail at the southern end to allow the sidewalk to connect safely to the existing sidewalk that crosses the bridge.
- Painting crosswalk striping across existing driveways to alert drivers to possibility of pedestrians at this location.

The work will not adversely affect the historic integrity of the site and will help pedestrians more safely access the natural and cultural resources in this park.
2. **SITE PLAN:** see original HAWP attached

3. **PLANS AND ELEVATIONS:** see new attached

4. **MATERIAL SPECIFICATIONS:** see original HAWP attached

5. **PHOTOGRAPHS:** see original HAWP attached

6. **TREE SURVEY:** N/A

7. **ADDRESS OF ADJACENT AND CONFRONTING PROPERTY OWNERS:** The historic environmental setting of this site is surrounded by MNCPPC-owned property. There are no other adjacent property owners.
For detail of concrete curb to be used around inner and outer peripheries see drawing No. 1.

New Columbia Pike — U.S.— Md. Route 29 — S.B. Lane