## MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

Address: 8940 Jones Mill Road, Chevy Chase Meeting Date: 4/12/2023

**Resource:** Master Plan Site #35/12 **Report Date:** 4/5/2023

Woodend

**Public Notice:** 3/29/2023

**Applicant:** Nature Forward

(Amy Ritsko-Warren, Agent) Tax Credit: N/A

Review: HAWP Staff: John Liebertz

Permit Number: 1025383

**PROPOSAL:** Installation of interpretive panels, alterations to accessory structure, fence installation,

and accessibility alterations to existing gate.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) <u>approve with four (4) conditions</u> the HAWP application with final approval of all details delegated to staff:

- 1. Applicant shall submit all specifications for the orientation and interpretative signs including materials and hardware.
- 2. Applicant shall submit additional documentation that includes notations on the type/dimensions of orientation sign (either the two-panel or three-panel) to be installed at the East Trailhead (Panel #3) and the West Trailhead (Panel #2).
- 3. Applicant shall submit specifications for the base or mounting hardware for Boardwalk (Panel #5) if it requires different hardware than the other signage.
- 4. Applicant shall submit notation on whether the automatic gate and freestanding pushbutton will be installed at both pedestrian entrances on Jones Mill Road and Brierly Road. Both locations are approved under this HAWP.

### ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

SIGNIFICANCE:

Master Plan Historic Site

STYLE:

Georgian Revival

DATE: 1927

Figure 1: The subject property (yellow star) at 8940 Jones Mill Road. . The historic district (shown in red) is bound by Jones Mill Road to the east, single-family housing to the north and south, and Brierly Road to the west.



### **Excerpt from** *Places for the Past:*

In 1927, John Russell Pope, accomplished architect of Eclectic Classicism, designed Woodend for Chester Wells, a naval officer, and Marion Dixon Wells, an Australian heiress. Pope's best-known works include the National Gallery of Art (1941) and the Jefferson Memorial (1943). The spacious H-shaped mansion has Flemish-bond brick walls and quoins, molded water table, stone belt course, and denticulated cornice. The front (east) elevation has a semicircular portico with Ionic columns. A central door on the south elevation, opening into a terrace, has Corinthian pilasters supporting an egg and dart molded cornice, with scrolled broken-pediment. On the north, an oversize Palladian window, lighting a staircase, surmounts a doorway with heavy cornice and oversize Doric columns. A stone balustrade above the two-story brick walls conceals a low hip roof sheathed in copper.

On the interior, a large central hall has a grand, sweeping staircase with heavy newel posts at each landing. The library, or Bird Room, a richly paneled space with natural wood finish, is a reproduction of a room in Abergelde, Marion Wells' childhood home in Australia. While marble hearths and brick firebacks unite fireplaces throughout the house, each has differently detailed mantel pieces. The third level, sheltered beneath the hip roof over the main block, contained a caretaker's apartment. Sited on a hillside, the house is accessed by a long drive through beautifully landscaped grounds. The 40-acre property includes a brick gatehouse garage and numerous mature trees. Marion Wells, an ardent bird watcher, bequeathed the property to the Audubon Naturalist Society. The organization manages Woodend as a nature preserve and education center.

### **PROPOSAL**

The applicant proposes the following alterations: 1) the removal, replacement, and/or installation of orientation panels and interpretive signage; 2) construction of an open-air changing area adjoining the existing comfort station (composting toilet building); and 3) accessible arm and pushbutton mechanism at the pedestrian gates accessing the property from Jones Mill Road and Brierly Road.

### **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 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.

### Montgomery County Code, Chapter 24A-8

The following guidance which pertains to this project are as follows:

- (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.
- (d) In the case of an application for work on an historic resource located within an historic district, the commission shall be lenient in its judgment of plans for structures of little historical or design significance or for plans involving new construction, unless such plans would seriously impair the historic or architectural value of surrounding historic resources or would impair the character of the historic district. (Ord. No. 9-4, § 1; Ord. No. 11-59.)

### Secretary of the 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 applicable *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

The subject property is a 40-acre nature sanctuary with the John Russell Pope-designed Georgian Revival Woodend mansion as the centerpiece of the site. It has become an education preschool center, tree sanctuary, and a source of diverse flora and fauna. The Nature Forward's (formerly the Audubon Naturalist Society) mission focuses on encouraging the local community to learn, appreciate, and protect the surrounding natural environment. The Historic Preservation Commission has approved numerous Historic Area Work Permits (HAWPs) to improve accessibility of the site, complete stream restoration, and create play areas.<sup>1</sup>

### Orientation and Interpretative Panels

Staff finds that the orientation and interpretative panels are consistent with the applicable guidelines and recommends approval with conditions. The design and scale will not adversely affect the historic house, landscape, or setting, and will provide valuable information to visitors. For all the signage, staff recommends that the applicant submit final specifications (material, hardware, etc.) prior to final approval.

### Orientation Panels (#1-3)

Staff finds the three orientation panels to be consistent with the applicable guidelines and recommends approval with conditions. Orientation Panel #1 replaces an existing wheelchair inaccessible kiosk at the North Parking Lot. The new three-panel sign is approximately 6'3" tall and 8'1" wide.

The proposal includes two orientation panels, the previously noted three-panel sign and a two-panel sign. The two-panel sign is the same height, design, and materials as the three-panel sign but is Orientation Panel
Interpretive Sign

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Figure 2: Site plan showing the location of the three orientation panels.

5'9" wide. Staff recommends that the applicant clarifies the type of panel (either the two-panel or three-panel type) to be installed at the East Trailhead (Panel #3) and the West Trailhead (Panel #2).

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For more information, see <a href="http://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/I.G-8940-Jones-Mill-Road-Chevy-Chase.pdf">http://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/I.M-8940-Jones-Mill-Road-Chevy-Chase.pdf</a> (June 2018), <a href="http://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/I.F-8940-Jones-Mill-Road-Chevy-Chase.pdf">http://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/I.M-8940-Jones-Mill-Road-Chevy-Chase.pdf</a> (September 2018), <a href="https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/I.K-8940-Jones-Mill-Road-Chevy-Chase.pdf">https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/I.F-8940-Jones-Mill-Road-Chevy-Chase-1016005.pdf</a> (January 2023).

### <u>Interpretative Panels (#4-9)</u>

Staff finds the six interpretative panels to be consistent with the applicable guidelines and recommends approval with conditions. The application notes that the 24"x36" high pressure-laminate panels would be placed in NPS-styled, low-profile, cantilevered bases.

Staff recommends that the applicant clarifies the type of base to be installed at the Boardwalk (Panel #5). It is unclear if this location would require a rail-mount instead of the cantilevered base.

### Changing Area

Staff finds the proposed changing area to be consistent with the applicable guidelines and recommends approval. The changing area adjoins the south elevation of the existing bathroom, has an 8'x12' footprint, and is 6' tall. The proposal is compatible with the design of the comfort station (composting toilet bathroom), the materials blend with the surrounding landscape, and there would be no adverse effects to the character defining features of the property.

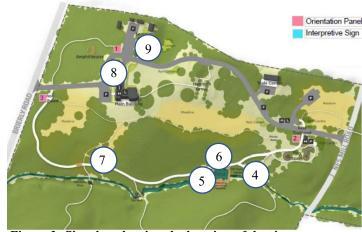


Figure 3: Site plan showing the location of the six interpretative panels.



Figure 4: View of the proposed changing area.

### Automatic Door Opener

Staff finds that the automatic door opener to be consistent with the applicable guidelines and recommends approval with conditions. The applicant proposes to install an automatic arm to the existing pedestrian chain link gate and a free-standing pushbutton to operate the gate. The proposal would not adversely affect the landscape or historic setting and provide additional accessibility to the site. Staff recommends that the applicant clarify if the mechanisms would be installed at the gates on Jones Mill Road and Brierly Road or just Brierly Road as the application is unclear.

After full and fair consideration of the applicant's submission, staff finds the proposal, as modified by the conditions, consistent with the Criteria for Issuance in Chapter 24A-8(b), (1) and (2) having found the proposal is consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation #2, #9, and #10 outlined above.

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) <u>approve with four (4) condition</u> the HAWP application with final approval of all details delegated to staff:

1. Applicant shall submit all specifications for the orientation and interpretative signs including materials and hardware.

- 2. Applicant shall submit additional documentation that includes notations on the type/dimensions of orientation sign (either the two-panel or three-panel) to be installed at the East Trailhead (Panel #3) and the West Trailhead (Panel #2).
- 3. Applicant shall submit specifications for the base or mounting hardware for Boardwalk (Panel #5) if it requires different hardware than the other signage.
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under the Criteria for Issuance in Chapter 24A-8(b), (1) and (2), having found that the proposal will not substantially alter the exterior features of the historic resource and is compatible in character with the district and 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 <a href="mailto:john.liebertz@montgomeryplanning.org">john.liebertz@montgomeryplanning.org</a> to schedule a follow-up site visit.



# **APPLICATION FOR** HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION 301.563.3400

DATE ASSIGNED\_\_\_\_

Date

FOR STAFF ONLY:

HAWP#\_

### **APPLICANT:**

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Address:			City:	Zip:
Daytime Phone: _			ax Account No.:	
AGENT/CONTACT	T (if applicable	<b>e</b> ):		
Name:		E	-mail:	
Address:			Dity:	Zip:
Daytime Phone: _			Contractor Registra	tion No.:
LOCATION OF BU	JILDING/PREM	IISE: MIHP # of Historic	Property	
map of the easen Are other Plannin	nent, and docur g and/or Hearir Variance, Recor ormation.	mentation from the Easeing Examiner Approvals /rd Plat, etc.?) If YES, incl	ment Holder suppo Reviews Required a ude information on	as part of this Application?
Town/City:		Nearest Cross	Street:	
Lot:	Block:	Subdivision:	Parcel:	_
for proposed we be accepted for New Const Addition Demolition Grading/Ex I hereby certify the	ork are submit review. Check ruction kcavation hat I have the a d that the const	Deck/Porch Fence Hardscape/Landsca Roof uthority to make the fore	on. Incomplete A Shed, Solar Tree r ape Windo Other egoing application, plans reviewed and	pplications will not /Garage/Accessory Structure

Signature of owner or authorized agent

# HAWP APPLICATION: MAILING ADDRESSES FOR NOTIFING [Owner, Owner's Agent, Adjacent and Confronting Property Owners] Owner's mailing address Owner's Agent's mailing address Adjacent and confronting Property Owners mailing addresses

Description of Property: Please describe the building and surrounding environment. Include information on significant structures, landscape features, or other significant features of the property:
Description of Work Proposed: Please give an overview of the work to be undertaken:

Work Item 1:	
Description of Current Condition:	Proposed Work:
Work Item 2:	
Description of Current Condition:	Proposed Work:
Work Item 3:	
Description of Current Condition:	Proposed Work:

# HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT CHECKLIST OF APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

	Required Attachments						
Proposed Work	I. Written Description	2. Site Plan	3. Plans/ Elevations	4. Material Specifications	5. Photographs	6. Tree Survey	7. Property Owner Addresses
New Construction	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Additions/ Alterations	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Demolition	*	*	*		*		*
Deck/Porch	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Fence/Wall	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Driveway/ Parking Area	*	*		*	*	*	*
Grading/Exc avation/Land scaing	*	*		*	*	*	*
Tree Removal	*	*		*	*	*	*
Siding/ Roof Changes	*	*	*	*	*		*
Window/ Door Changes	*	*	*	*	*		*
Masonry Repair/ Repoint	*	*	*	*	*		*
Signs	*	*	*	*	*		*

### **Description of Property**

Please describe the building and surrounding environment. Include information on significant structures, landscape features, or other significant features of the property.

### Woodend Sanctuary, Headquarters of Nature Forward

Woodend Sanctuary in Chevy Chase, Maryland is headquarters of Nature Forward, formerly the Audubon Naturalist Society (ANS). Nature Forward's mission is to "inspire residents of the Washington, DC region to appreciate, understand and protect their natural environment through outdoor experiences, education and advocacy." In 1967, Mrs. Marion Wells donated Woodend Sanctuary to Nature Forward and the organization made the move to Chevy Chase where we dramatically expanded our local mission work in nature education, conservation, and restoration.

### **Historic Significance**

Nature Forward's headquarters at Woodend Sanctuary is an historically significant site listed on the National Historic Register, and on Montgomery County's Master Plan for Historic Preservation.

The estate was formerly the home of Captain and Mrs. Chester Wells. It was designed by John Russell Pope, leading American architect of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century whose classically inspired works include the Jefferson Memorial, the West Wing of the National Gallery of Art, and Constitution Hall in Washington, DC. Built in 1927, Woodend mansion is an admired example of Georgian Revival architecture, known for symmetry and geometric proportions.

### **Looking Forward**

In October of 2016, the organization unveiled a 50-year Master Plan to guide the stewardship and renovation of Woodend Sanctuary. The Master Plan set the vision: "Historic Woodend Sanctuary is Washington's oasis of sustainable, healthy natural habitats — welcoming and inspiring all people to enjoy, learn about and protect our shared environment." Our new Master Plan puts the Woodend buildings and grounds front and center, as integral tools to achieving our education and conservation goals.

### **Description of Work Proposed**

Please give an overview of the work to be undertaken.

With approval from the Historic Preservation Commission in May 2018 and updates in January 2023, Nature Forward has undertaken a multi-year "Nature for All" restoration plan to improve the visitor experience and increase opportunities for people of all ages and abilities in Montgomery County and the greater DC metro region to enjoy time in nature.

We have fully completed construction of the wheelchair accessible nature trail and stream restoration projects that were part of the May 2018 approval.

The now completed trail is a quarter-mile wheelchair-accessible path through the meadow, forest, pond, and stream habitats at Woodend, allowing visitors who use mobility assistance devices including wheelchairs, walkers and canes to experience nature. The accessible trail project was

Historic Area Work Permit Application Nature Forward, March 22, 2023

completed in September 2021. The trail project, in combination with accessible walkways installed around the mansion, was awarded a 2021 Montgomery Preservation Inc. Award for Historic Preservation.

The related stream restoration project was completed in July 2021 and stabilized the eroding banks of the ephemeral stream at Woodend, creating habitat for wildlife while reducing pollution to Rock Creek.

Also completed in 2021 was a full restoration of the mansion's iconic portico.

A final component of the "Nature for All" restoration plan is the construction of a wheelchair accessible Nature Play Space—an innovative, inviting natural play area where local families and schoolchildren of all abilities can explore the natural world together. The original plans for the Nature Play Space were submitted and approved along with the stream and trail projects in the May 2018 Historic Area Work Permit. Updates to the Nature Play Space plans were approved in a January 2023 HAWP application.

Three additional components have been identified as necessary to fully serve unaccompanied visitors and to support those visitors who need additional accessibility features while visiting Woodend Sanctuary.

The first component for your consideration is installation of three orientation panels, four new interpretive signs, and two replacement interpretive signs. These interpretive signs will direct unaccompanied visitors at Woodend to a variety of experiences, summarize a history of the land and the historic buildings, and help visitors explore the wonders of habitats demonstrated onsite.

The second component for your consideration is the addition of a changing area to the southside of the existing composting toilet structure. The need for this changing facility was identified by the MCPS Office of Students with Physical Disabilities, with whom we have been collaborating throughout the development of the Nature Play Space. Our partners at the Office of Students with Physical Disabilities informed us that children of all ages and adults may require a private area for changing diapers and soiled clothing during their visit to Woodend. This new changing area has been integrated into the Play Space design.

Finally, we submit for your consideration the addition of an accessible arm and pushbutton mechanism for the Brierly Road pedestrian gate, to help cyclists and those with assistive mobility devices safely enter Woodend Sanctuary from the Brierly Road sidewalk.

### Work Item 1: Orientation and Interpretive Signs

**Overview:** Nature Forward hosts programs for all ages and stages at Woodend Nature Sanctuary. Visitors who come to Woodend as part of a scheduled program will be met by naturalist or instructor and guided through the property by an expert. Visitors to our scheduled programs leave Woodend Sanctuary with new knowledge and an expanded understanding of the natural world.

Each year, Nature Forward also welcomes hundreds of unaccompanied visitors to Woodend who are not coming for a specific event or program. Regular visitors may know their way around the property and may already have a favorite place to visit or rest. Visitors new to the property, however, lack information on where to go or what there is to do. Those visiting outside of business hours find the mansion and shop closed, making it difficult to access information visitors require to have a fulfilling experience while visiting Woodend Sanctuary.

**Description of Current Condition:** There is an existing kiosk off the north parking lot that includes a map of the property and some very basic information about Nature Forward. This kiosk is not in an accessible location. A map is also posted in the Woodend Nature Shop window. There is no history of the property posted anywhere outside the mansion.

There are no existing signs along the new, wheelchair accessible trail. The existing signs in the Blair Garden and at the tree-safe rain garden include the organization's old name and logo and the information included on the panels is more technical and less inspirational than is interesting to the typical unaccompanied visitor.

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### **#1 ORIENTATION PANEL: EXISTING CONDITIONS**

North Parking Lot Current information kiosk is not located in an accessible location.

### **#2 ORIENTATION PANEL: EXISTING CONDITIONS**



Accessible Trail: East Trailhead

An orientation panel would be located in this accessible location for visitors parking in the to-be-constructed Nature Play Space Parking Area.

### **#3 ORIENTATION PANEL: EXISTING CONDITIONS**



Accessible Trail: West Trailhead

A third orientation panel would be located at this accessible location for visitors who enter the property through the pedestrian gate on Brierly Road.

### **#4 INTERPRETIVE SIGN: EXISTING CONDITIONS**



Accessible Trail: Firepit Area
The sign proposed for this area would interpret the forest.



# **#5 INTERPRETIVE SIGN:** EXISTING CONDITIONS

Accessible Trail: Boardwalk The sign proposed for this area would interpret the stream.

### #6 INTERPRETIVE SIGN: EXISTING CONDITIONS



Accessible Trail: Walkway around Pond The sign proposed for this area would interpret the pond.

### **#7 INTERPRETIVE SIGN: EXISTING CONDITIONS**



Accessible Trail: Meadow View
The proposed sign for this area would interpret the meadow.

### **#8 INTERPRETIVE SIGN: BLAIR GARDEN**



The existing Blair Garden interpretive sign is along a gravel portion of the garden trail that is inaccessible to those using wheels.



Accessible Trail: Blair Garden

This proposed new location for the Blair Garden interpretive sign replaces the existing interpretive sign in a location that is accessible to wheels.

### **#9 INTERPRETIVE SIGN: STORM WATER MANAGEMENT**



These existing Rain Garden signs are overly technical, remotely located, and specific to one type of rain garden.



The proposed new Stormwater Management interpretive sign will be relocated to more central location along this same, accessible path and will interpret all stormwater management practices at Woodend.

**Proposed Work:** See attached sign design package.

### **Proposed Locations of the Orientation and Interpretive Signs**



### Key

- #1 Orientation Panel in North Parking Area
- #2 Orientation Panel at East Trailhead
- #3 Orientation Panel at West Trailhead
- #4 Interpretive Sign at Firepit
- #5 Interpretive Sign on Boardwalk
- #6 Interpretive Sign at Pond
- #7 Interpretive Sign at Meadow
- #8 Interpretive Sign at Blair Garden
- #9 Interpretive Sign for Storm Water Management

**Note:** All orientation panels and interpretive signs will be located in accessible areas.

### Work Item 2: Changing Area

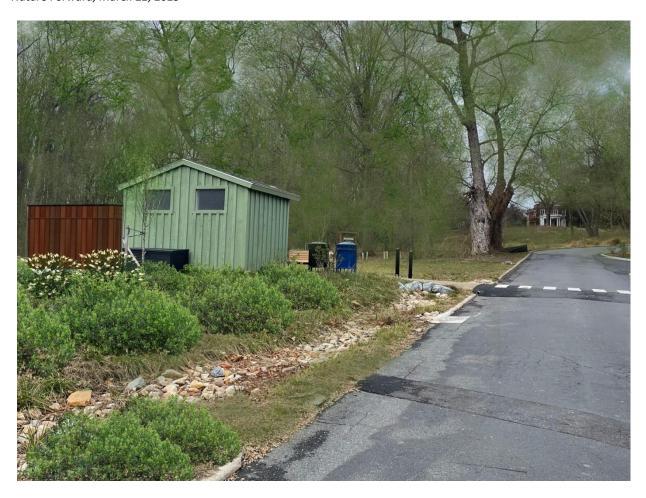
**Description of Current Condition**: There is an existing restroom building with two accessible composting toilet bathrooms. Neither bathroom has room to include a changing table for a large child or adult, a need identified by the MCPS Office of Students with Physical Disabilities.

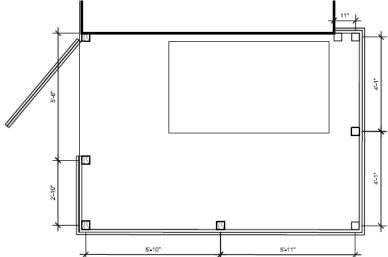


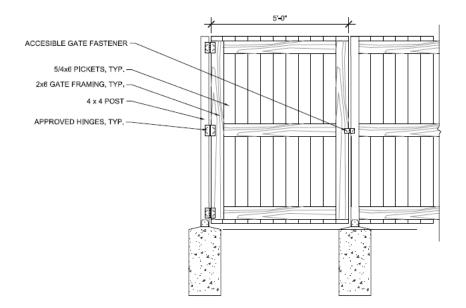
**Existing Composting Toilet Bathroom Structure** 

**Proposed Work:** A wooden changing area would be added to the south side of the existing structure. The door would include a timed locking mechanism. The footprint is 8ft by 12ft and it is 6 ft tall.









### Work Item 3: Accessible Pedestrian Gate Mechanism

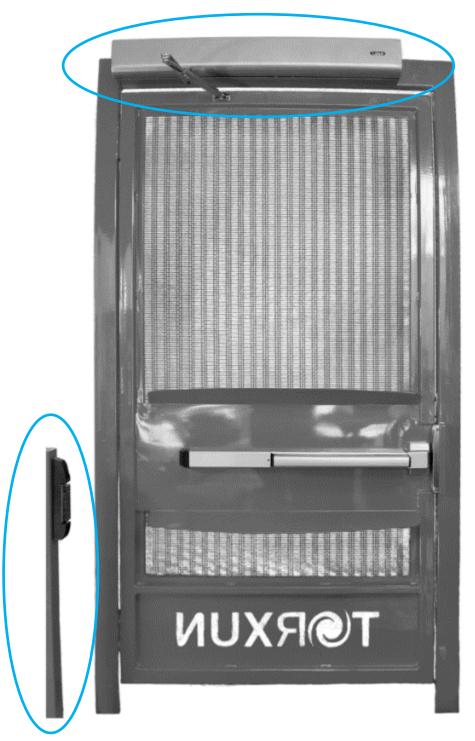
**Existing Conditions:** There are two pedestrian gate entrances to the property – one at Jones Mill Road and one at Brierly Road. The existing gates are not accessible for those using mobility devices and are difficult to manage for those riding bicycles onto the property.





**Existing Brierly Road Pedestrian Entrance** 

**Proposed Work**: An automatic door opener would be added to the Brierly Road gate to allow visitors to open the gate by pressing a button. The automatic gate opens and closes slowly to improve accessibility for those using mobility devices or bringing bicycles onto the property.



This HAWP proposes installing **only** the automatic door mechanism including the top arm (circled) and the standalone pushbutton mechanism (circled). The existing chain link gate would remain the same.

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### **Tree Survey**

No new tree removals are needed to complete the installation of the signs, changing area, or add the automatic door mechanism to the Brierly gate entrance.

### **Working with the Community**

In 2017, Nature Forward formed a Community Liaison Council to help keep our neighbors apprised of plans for Woodend and to solicit their feedback on plans for Woodend. To date, we have held 14 Community Liaison Meetings. We have reported to our neighbors about the Nature for All Projects, including the Accessible Nature Play Space, Accessible Nature Trail, Stream and Habitat Restoration, and interpretive signage. Nature Forward looks forward to better serving residents of all abilities in Montgomery County with the completion of our Nature for All project.

### Historic Area Work Permit Application Nature Forward, March 22, 2023

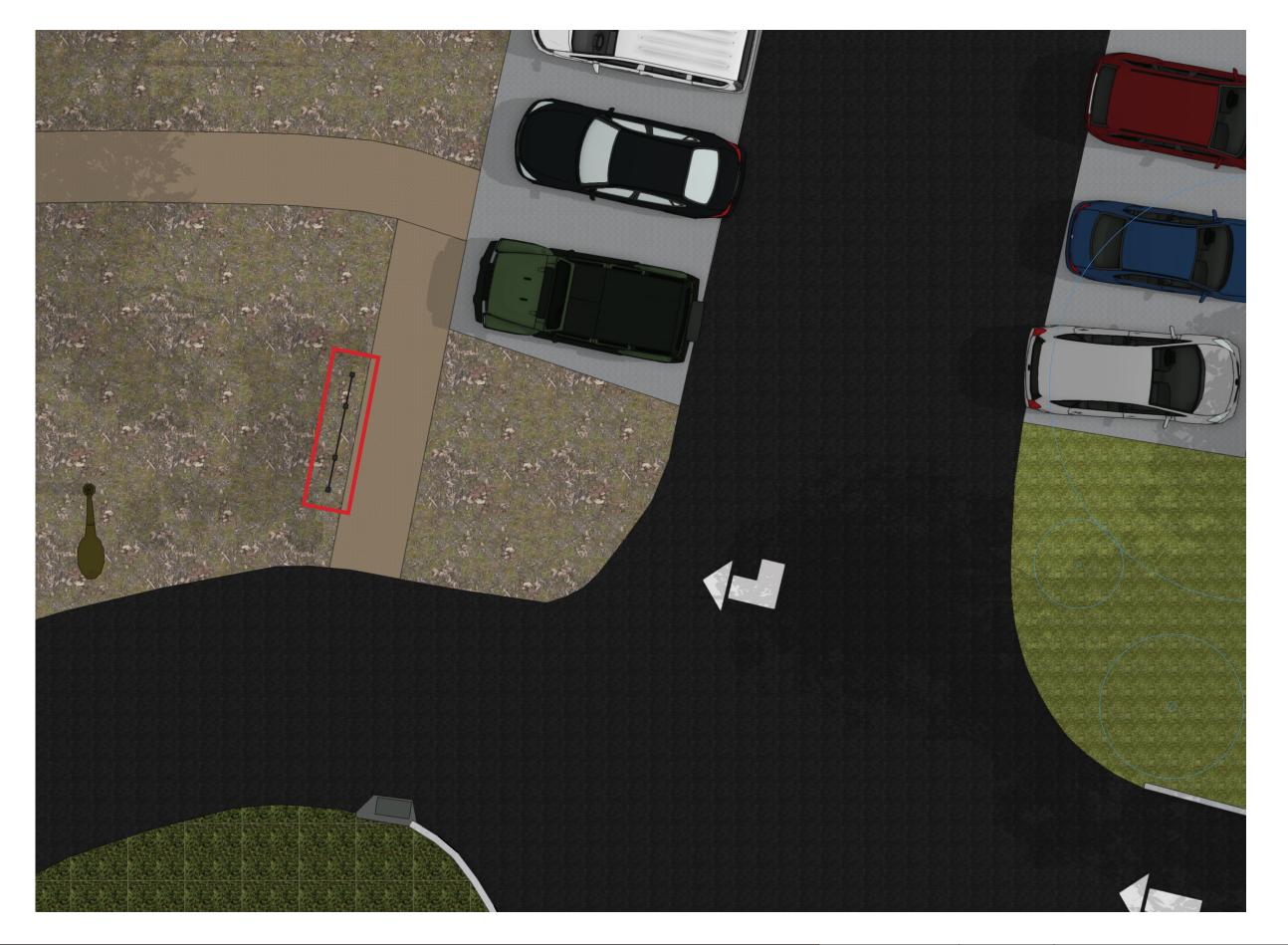
### LIST OF ADJOINING & CONFRONTING PROPERTY OWNERS WOODEND NATURE SANCTUARY

NAME	ADDRESS	LOT/BLOCK
1. Malcom & Alina Brenner	9101 Brierly Rd. Chevy Chase, MD	Lot 1/Block I
2. Bryan & Mary Jacobik	9103 Brierly Rd. Chevy Chase, MD 20815	Lot 2/Block I
3. Joseph Cupo & Kathleen Teixeira	9105 Brierly Rd. Chevy Chase, MD 20815	Lot 3/Block I
4. Stacy Berman & Edward Rosen	9107 Brierly Rd. Chevy Chase, MD 20815	Lot 4/Block 1
5. Mildeen Worrell	9109 Brierly Rd. Chevy Chase, MD 20815	Lot 5/Block I
6. Neil Hyman & Rachel Decter	9111 Brierly Rd. Chevy Chase, MD 20815	Lot 6/Block I
7. Steven Schwartz & Elana Cohen	9113 Brierly Rd. Chevy Chase, MD 20815	Lot 7/Block I
8. William & R A Panton	3213 Woodhollow Dr. Chevy Chase, MD 20815	Lot 9/Block 1
9. Nathan Abraham	3214 Woodhollow Dr. Chevy Chase, MD 20815	Lot 6/Block 4
10. Bruce & Iresha Fletcher	9002 Levelle Dr. Chevy Chase, MD 20815	Lot SA/Block 4
II. Daniel & D M Bailey	9000 Levelle Dr. Chevy Chase, MD 20815	Lot 7A/Block 4
12. Janet Rutsch Revoc Trust	9001 Levelle Dr. Chevy Chase, MD 20815	Lot 15A/Block 6
!3. Neil Stormer & Zain Habboo	9000 Jones Mill Rd. Chevy Chase, MD 20815	Lot 14A/Block 6
14. Ruth Gillilland Grove	9001 Jones Mill Rd. Chevy Chase, MD 20815	
15. Mark Smith & Maxine Harris	9005 Jones Mill Rd. Chevy Chase, MD 20815	Lot 7
16. Maryland National Capital Park & Planning Commission	6611 Kenilworth Ave Riverdale, MD 20737	

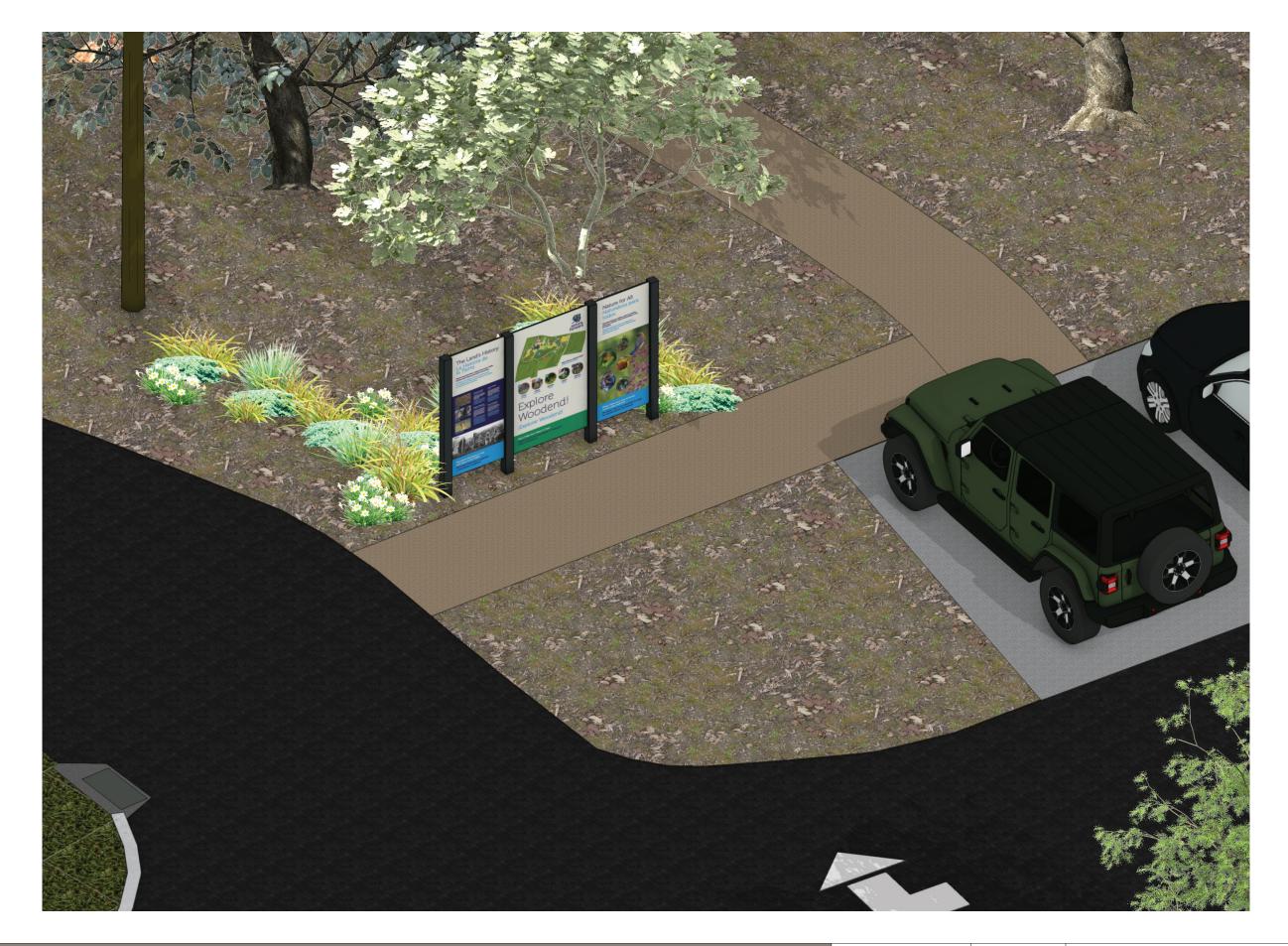
19. Mark Western	3101 Black Chestnut Ln. Chevy Chase, MD 20815	Lot23/Block A
20. Michael August & Bonnie Weaver	3103 Black Chestnut Ln. Chevy Chase, MD 20815	Lot24/Block A
21. Charles & S D Alston	3105 Black Chestnut Ln. Chevy Chase, MD 20815	Lot 25/Block A
22. Sherif & Norma Ettefa	3107 Black Chestnut Ln. Chevy Chase, MD 20815	Lot 26/Block A
23. Andrew & PEShoyer	3108 Black Chestnut Ln. Chevy Chase, MD 20815	Lot 18/Block A
24. Ezra Reese & Azad Nilofer	8811 Jones Mill Rd. Chevy Chase, MD 20815	Lot 15/Block A
25.Joanna Nunan & Thomas Nunan	8809 Jones Mill Rd. Chevy Chase, MD 20815	Lot 14/Block A
26.Gonzalo C Pastor & Judith Gold	8807 Jones Mill Rd. Chevy Chase, MD 20815	Lot 16/Block A
27.John Bristol & Caroline Quijada	3201 Flushing Meadow Ter. Chevy Chase, MD 20815	Lot 23/Block 2
28. Thomas & K M Gilday	3211 Flushing Meadow Ter. Chevy Chase, MD 20815	Lot 18/Block 2
29. Peter Mathers & Bonnie Beavers	3213 Flushing Meadow Ter. Chevy Chase, MD 20815	Lot 17/Block 2
30. Mohamadi Ali & Sara Depew	3212 Flushing Meadow Ter. Chevy Chase, MD 20815	Lot 16/Block 2
31. Jose Demarais Jr & ER L Demarais	8819 Altimont Ln. Che vy Chase, MD 20815	Lot 9/Block 2
32. Howard & K R Rosenberg	8816 Altimont Ln. Chevy Chase, MD 20815	Lot 9/Block I
33. North Chevy Chase Swimming	3 Campbell Ct. Kensington, MD 20895	

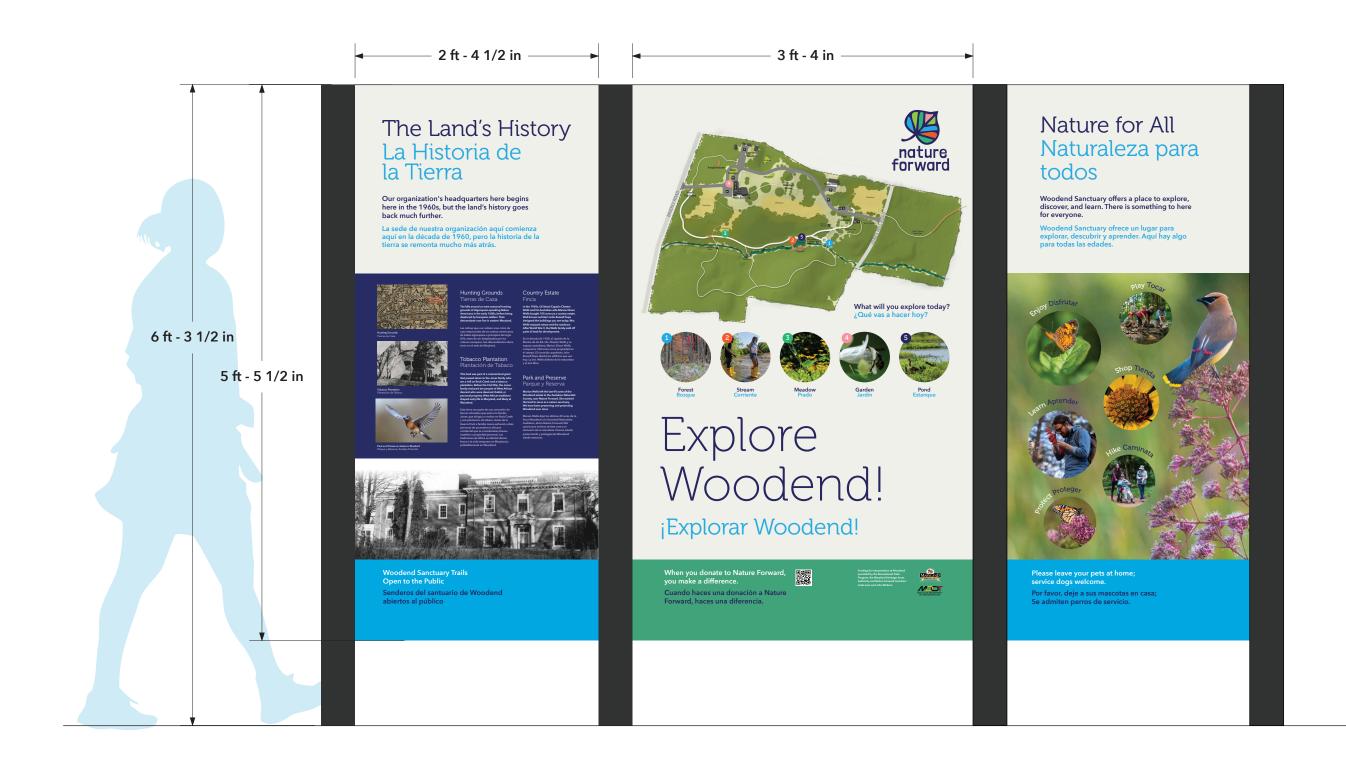
	1	
34. John & Julie Fox	3500 Dundee Dr. Chevy Chase, MD 20815	Lot 6/Block H
35. Douglas & Marianna Lanzo	8824 Brierly Rd. Chevy Chase, MD 20815	Lot 3/Block F
36. Thomas & B G Corbin	8826 Brierly Rd. Chevy Chase, MD 20815	Lot 2/Block F
37. May & LA Breslow	8828 Brierly Rd. Chevy Chase, MD 20815	Lot 1/Block F
38. Captain Luis Avila & Family	3401 Kenilworth Drive Chevy Chase, MD 20815	Lot 7/Block E
39_John & Subadra Molyneaux	8908 Brierly Rd. Chevy Chase, MD 20815	Lot 6/Block E
40. Delfin & M A Go	8912 Brierly Rd. Chevy Chase, MD 20815	Lot 5/Block E
41. UNDER CONSTRUCTION/Current Resident	8918 Brierly Rd. Che_vy_Chase, MD 20815	Lot 4/Block E
42. John McKeon	8922 Brierly Rd. Chevy Chase, MD 20815	Lot 2/Block E
43. Robert Kreimeyer	3400 Inverness Drive Chevy Chase, MD 20815	Lot 17/Block D
44. Helen Kelly	9006 Brierly Rd. Chevy Chase, MD 20815	Lot 18/Block D
45. Andrew & A Goldfarb	90 10 Brierly Rd. Chevy Chase, MD 20815	Lot 19/Block D
46. Stephen & J K N Drake	9012 Brierly Rd. Chevy Chase, MD 20815	Lot P20/Block D
47. Bret & AM Kelly	9108 Brierly Rd. Chevy Chase, MD 20815	Lot P20/Block D
48. Zachary & Kara Karr	9018 Brierly Rd Chevy Chase, MD 20815	
Debbi Bauml Schultz	3210 Flushing Meadow Terrace Chevy Chase, MD 20815	
Grace & Charlie Huebshur	8805 Jones Mill Road Chevy Chase, MD 20815	
Robert Kreimeyer	9002 Brierly Road Chevy Chase, MD 20815	
Kalman Salata	3401 Inverness Drive Chevy Chase, MD 20815	



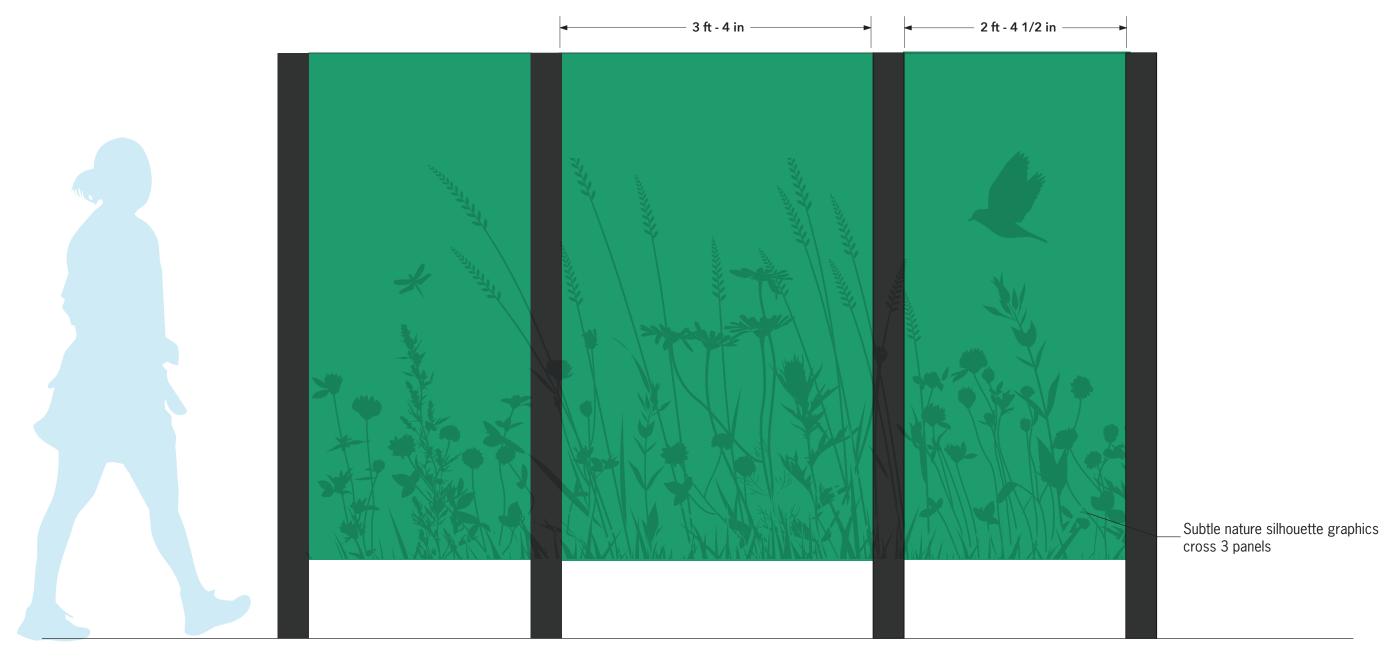








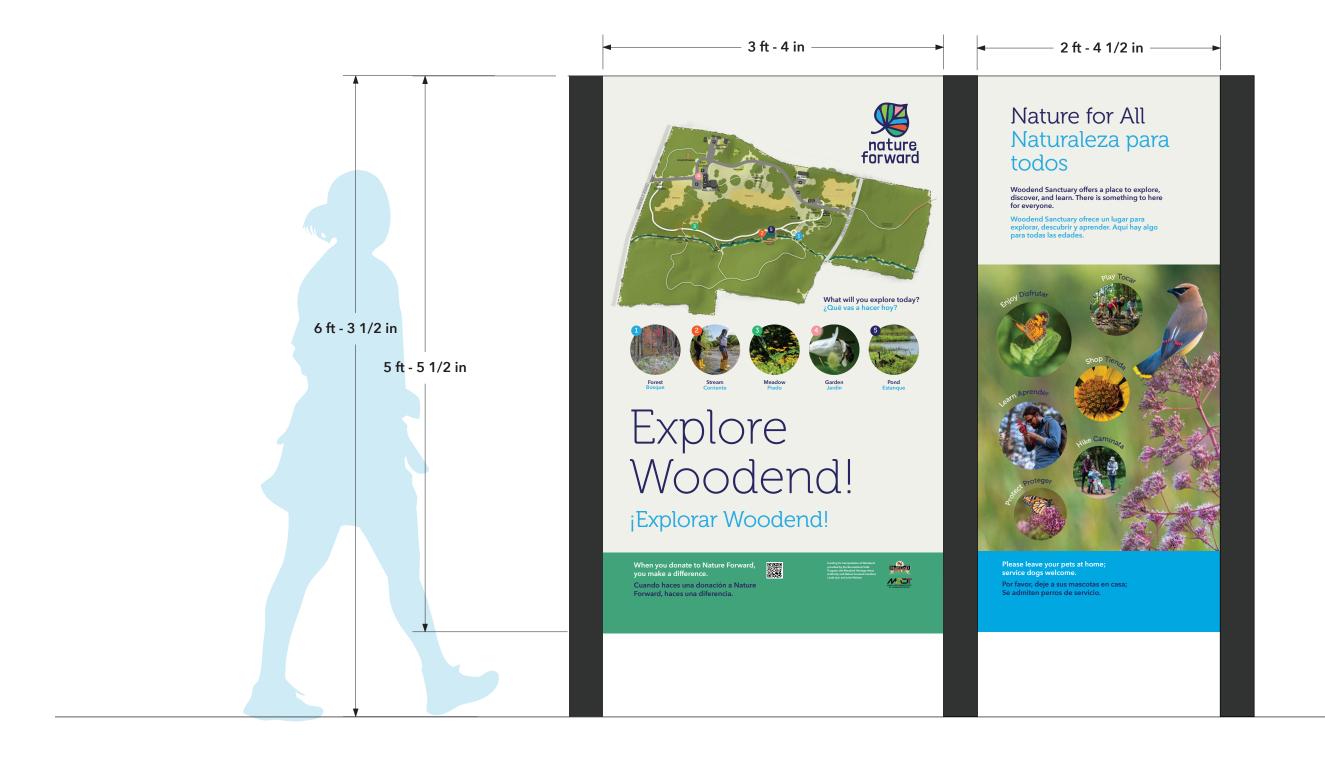
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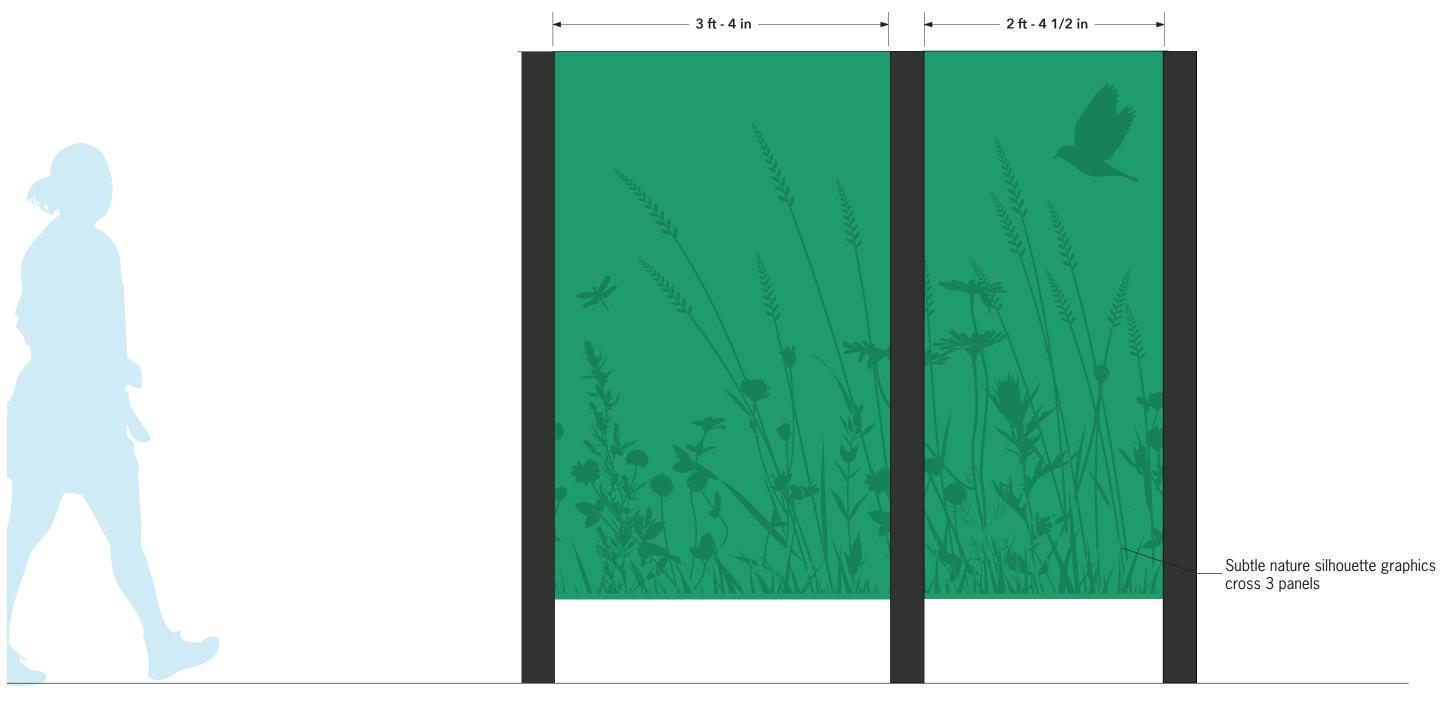


NATURE FORWARD | Welcome Signage

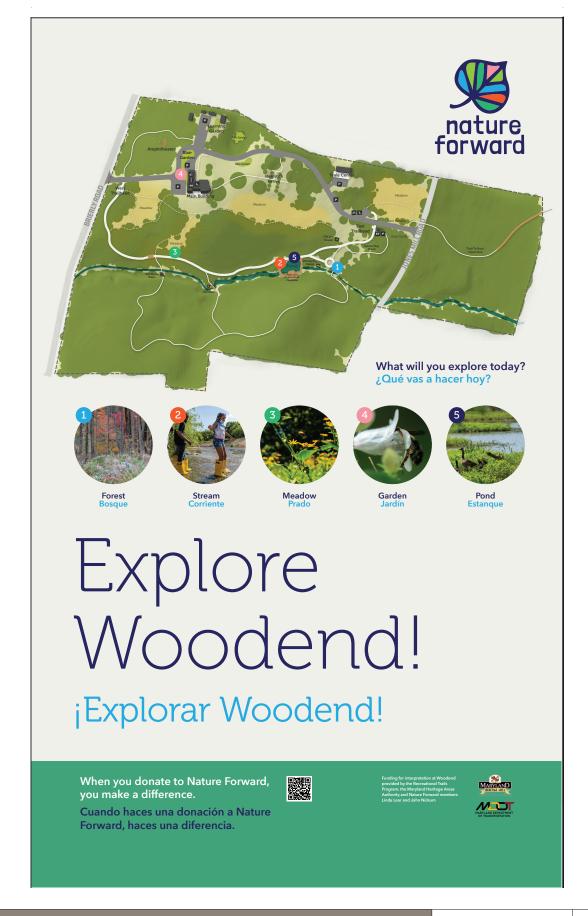
BACK OF PANELS

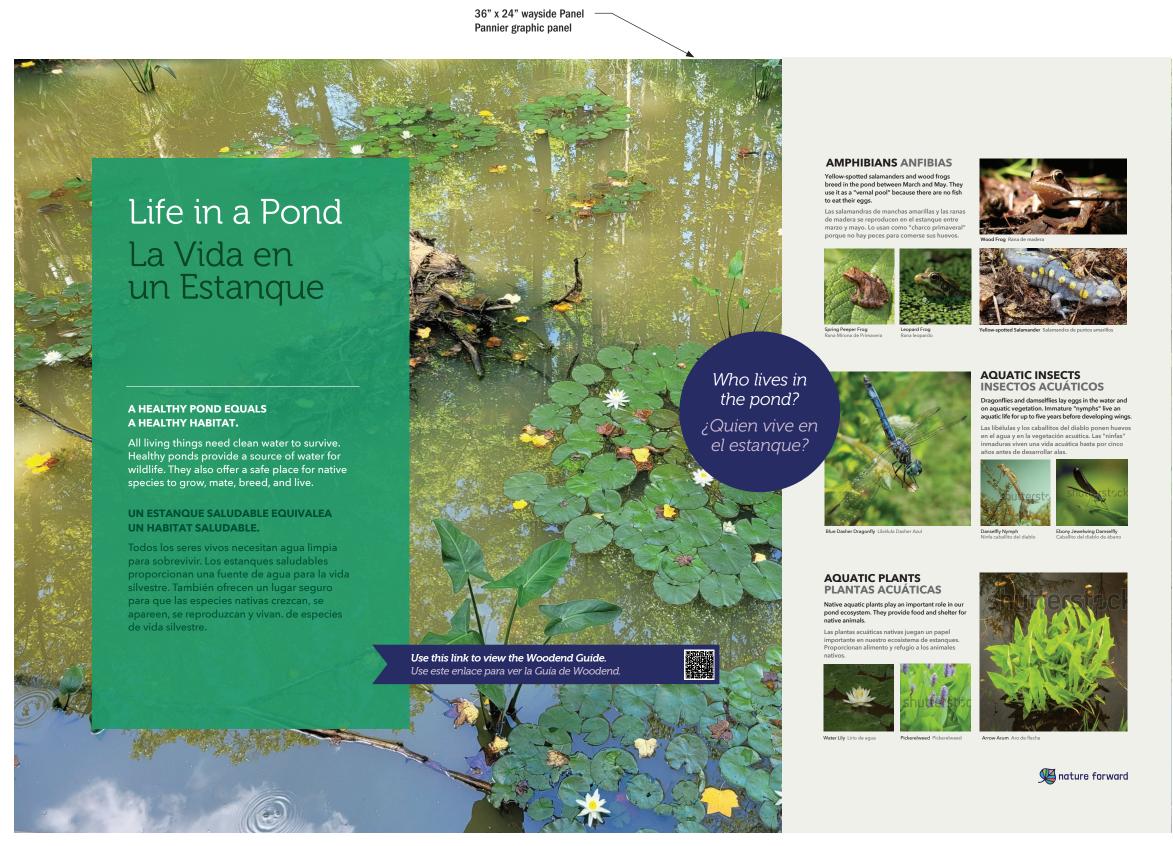
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BACK OF PANELS





36"







**gecko**group

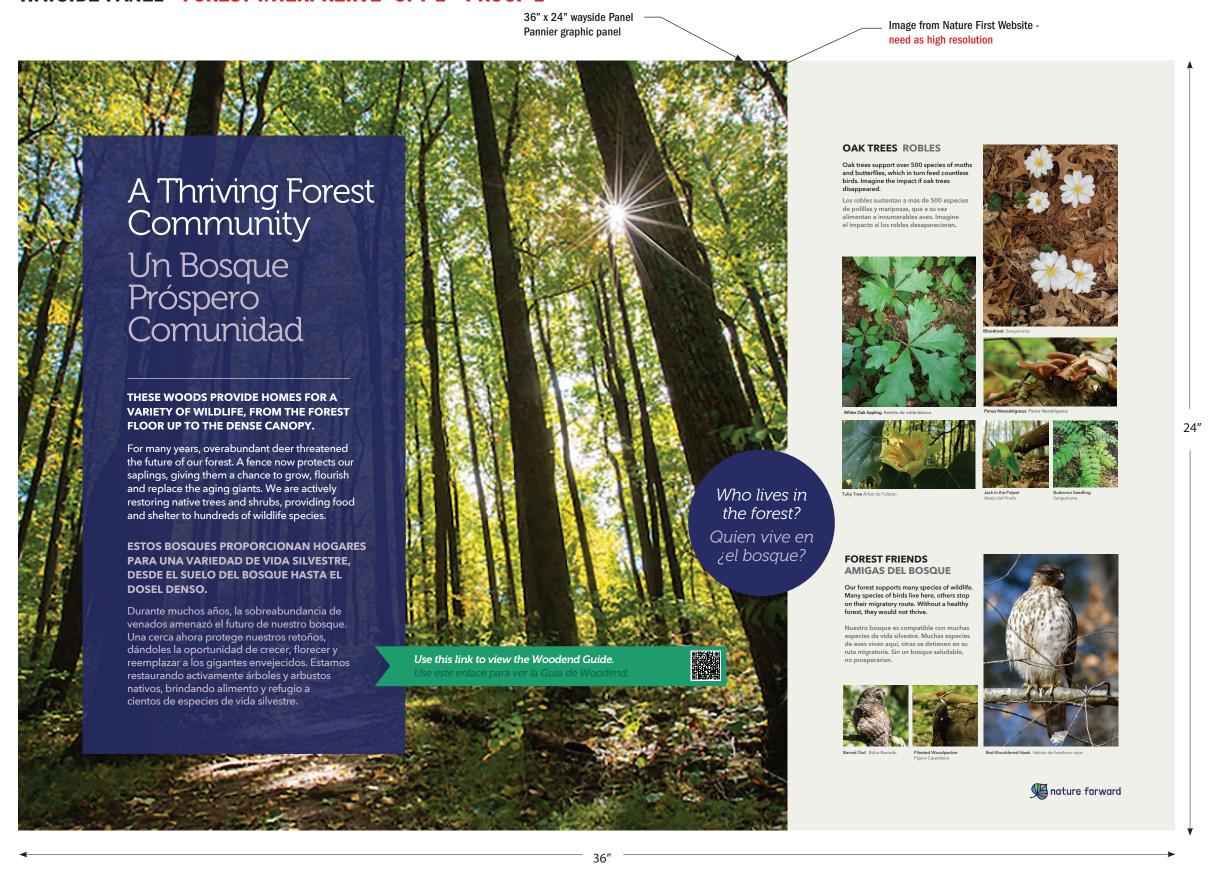
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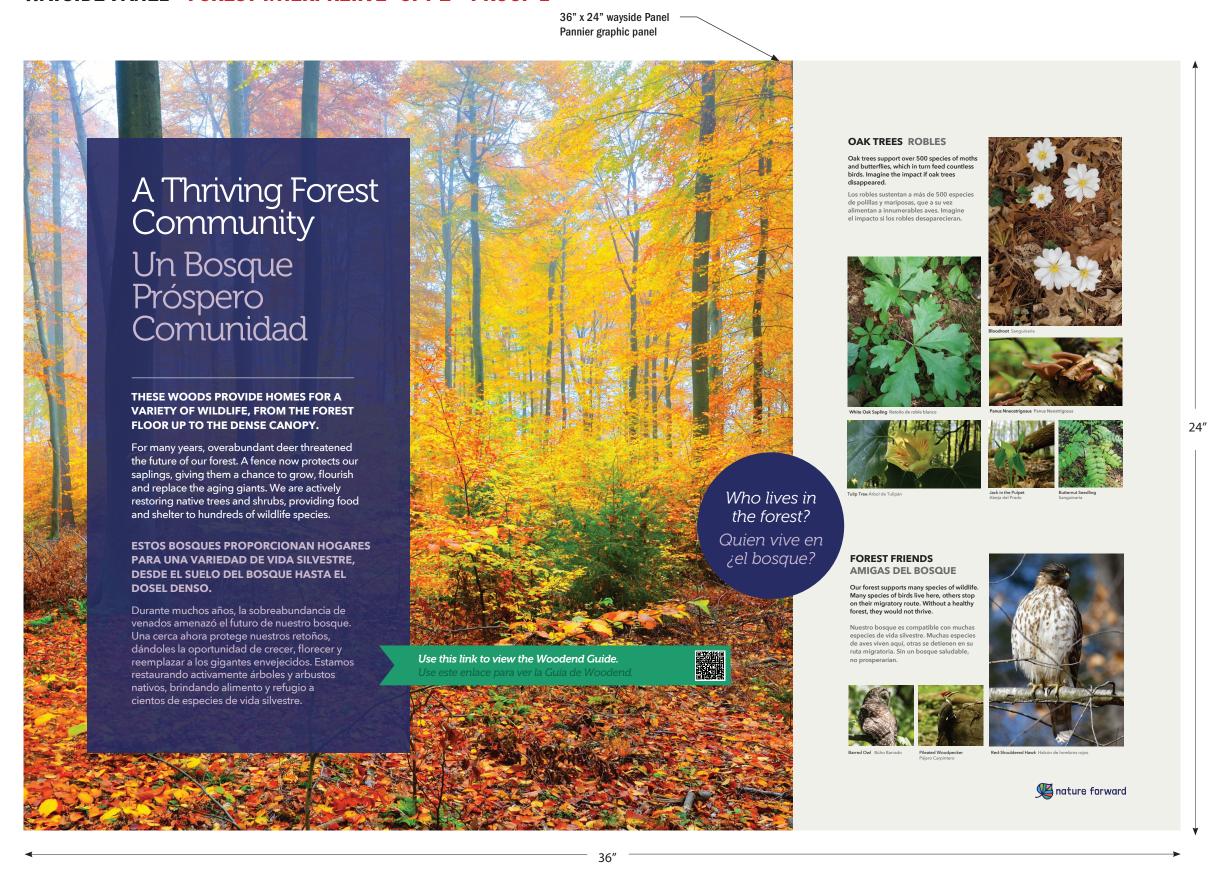
Wayside Panel - Proof 1

36" x 24" wayside Panel Pannier graphic panel



**gecko**group





36" x 24" wayside Panel Pannier graphic panel

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¿Por qué Gestionar la Escorrentía del Agua de Lluvia?

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Las superficies impermeables evitan que las aguas pluviales lleguen al suelo, lo que provoca problemas de escorrentía. Usamos nuevos materiales en el sitio que permiten que el agua se filtre. El pavimento permeable e nuestros estacionamientos tiene grava gruesa debajo de pavimento. El agua fluye hacia esa grava a través de los espacios entre los adoquines. En nuestros senderos, los neros se unen a la gravilla y permiten que el agua se



**NOT FINAL DESIGN** 

24"

**gecko**group

DATE 01-25-23

Wayside Panel - for discussion

# **WAYSIDE PANEL - BLAIR NATIVE PLANT GARDEN INTERPRETIVE**



**NOT FINAL DESIGN** 

36"

# MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

Address: 8940 Jones Mill Road, Chevy Chase Meeting Date: 4/12/2023

**Resource:** Master Plan Site #35/12 **Report Date:** 4/5/2023

Woodend

**Public Notice:** 3/29/2023

**Applicant:** Nature Forward

(Amy Ritsko-Warren, Agent) Tax Credit: N/A

Review: HAWP Staff: John Liebertz

Permit Number: 1025383

**PROPOSAL:** Installation of interpretive panels, alterations to accessory structure, fence installation,

and accessibility alterations to existing gate.

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) <u>approve with four (4) conditions</u> the HAWP application with final approval of all details delegated to staff:

- 1. Applicant shall submit all specifications for the orientation and interpretative signs including materials and hardware.
- 2. Applicant shall submit additional documentation that includes notations on the type/dimensions of orientation sign (either the two-panel or three-panel) to be installed at the East Trailhead (Panel #3) and the West Trailhead (Panel #2).
- 3. Applicant shall submit specifications for the base or mounting hardware for Boardwalk (Panel #5) if it requires different hardware than the other signage.
- 4. Applicant shall submit notation on whether the automatic gate and freestanding pushbutton will be installed at both pedestrian entrances on Jones Mill Road and Brierly Road. Both locations are approved under this HAWP.

### ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

SIGNIFICANCE:

Master Plan Historic Site

STYLE:

Georgian Revival

DATE: 1927

Figure 1: The subject property (yellow star) at 8940 Jones Mill Road. . The historic district (shown in red) is bound by Jones Mill Road to the east, single-family housing to the north and south, and Brierly Road to the west.



### **Excerpt from** *Places for the Past:*

In 1927, John Russell Pope, accomplished architect of Eclectic Classicism, designed Woodend for Chester Wells, a naval officer, and Marion Dixon Wells, an Australian heiress. Pope's best-known works include the National Gallery of Art (1941) and the Jefferson Memorial (1943). The spacious H-shaped mansion has Flemish-bond brick walls and quoins, molded water table, stone belt course, and denticulated cornice. The front (east) elevation has a semicircular portico with Ionic columns. A central door on the south elevation, opening into a terrace, has Corinthian pilasters supporting an egg and dart molded cornice, with scrolled broken-pediment. On the north, an oversize Palladian window, lighting a staircase, surmounts a doorway with heavy cornice and oversize Doric columns. A stone balustrade above the two-story brick walls conceals a low hip roof sheathed in copper.

On the interior, a large central hall has a grand, sweeping staircase with heavy newel posts at each landing. The library, or Bird Room, a richly paneled space with natural wood finish, is a reproduction of a room in Abergelde, Marion Wells' childhood home in Australia. While marble hearths and brick firebacks unite fireplaces throughout the house, each has differently detailed mantel pieces. The third level, sheltered beneath the hip roof over the main block, contained a caretaker's apartment. Sited on a hillside, the house is accessed by a long drive through beautifully landscaped grounds. The 40-acre property includes a brick gatehouse garage and numerous mature trees. Marion Wells, an ardent bird watcher, bequeathed the property to the Audubon Naturalist Society. The organization manages Woodend as a nature preserve and education center.

## **PROPOSAL**

The applicant proposes the following alterations: 1) the removal, replacement, and/or installation of orientation panels and interpretive signage; 2) construction of an open-air changing area adjoining the existing comfort station (composting toilet building); and 3) accessible arm and pushbutton mechanism at the pedestrian gates accessing the property from Jones Mill Road and Brierly Road.

## **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 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.

#### Montgomery County Code, Chapter 24A-8

The following guidance which pertains to this project are as follows:

- (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.
- (d) In the case of an application for work on an historic resource located within an historic district, the commission shall be lenient in its judgment of plans for structures of little historical or design significance or for plans involving new construction, unless such plans would seriously impair the historic or architectural value of surrounding historic resources or would impair the character of the historic district. (Ord. No. 9-4, § 1; Ord. No. 11-59.)

#### Secretary of the 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 applicable *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

The subject property is a 40-acre nature sanctuary with the John Russell Pope-designed Georgian Revival Woodend mansion as the centerpiece of the site. It has become an education preschool center, tree sanctuary, and a source of diverse flora and fauna. The Nature Forward's (formerly the Audubon Naturalist Society) mission focuses on encouraging the local community to learn, appreciate, and protect the surrounding natural environment. The Historic Preservation Commission has approved numerous Historic Area Work Permits (HAWPs) to improve accessibility of the site, complete stream restoration, and create play areas.<sup>1</sup>

## Orientation and Interpretative Panels

Staff finds that the orientation and interpretative panels are consistent with the applicable guidelines and recommends approval with conditions. The design and scale will not adversely affect the historic house, landscape, or setting, and will provide valuable information to visitors. For all the signage, staff recommends that the applicant submit final specifications (material, hardware, etc.) prior to final approval.

## Orientation Panels (#1-3)

Staff finds the three orientation panels to be consistent with the applicable guidelines and recommends approval with conditions. Orientation Panel #1 replaces an existing wheelchair inaccessible kiosk at the North Parking Lot. The new three-panel sign is approximately 6'3" tall and 8'1" wide.

The proposal includes two orientation panels, the previously noted three-panel sign and a two-panel sign. The two-panel sign is the same height, design, and materials as the three-panel sign but is Orientation Panel
Interpretive Sign

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Figure 2: Site plan showing the location of the three orientation panels.

5'9" wide. Staff recommends that the applicant clarifies the type of panel (either the two-panel or three-panel type) to be installed at the East Trailhead (Panel #3) and the West Trailhead (Panel #2).

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For more information, see <a href="http://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/I.G-8940-Jones-Mill-Road-Chevy-Chase.pdf">http://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/I.M-8940-Jones-Mill-Road-Chevy-Chase.pdf</a> (June 2018), <a href="http://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/I.F-8940-Jones-Mill-Road-Chevy-Chase.pdf">http://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/I.M-8940-Jones-Mill-Road-Chevy-Chase.pdf</a> (September 2018), <a href="https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/I.K-8940-Jones-Mill-Road-Chevy-Chase.pdf">https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/I.F-8940-Jones-Mill-Road-Chevy-Chase-1016005.pdf</a> (January 2023).

### <u>Interpretative Panels (#4-9)</u>

Staff finds the six interpretative panels to be consistent with the applicable guidelines and recommends approval with conditions. The application notes that the 24"x36" high pressure-laminate panels would be placed in NPS-styled, low-profile, cantilevered bases.

Staff recommends that the applicant clarifies the type of base to be installed at the Boardwalk (Panel #5). It is unclear if this location would require a rail-mount instead of the cantilevered base.

## Changing Area

Staff finds the proposed changing area to be consistent with the applicable guidelines and recommends approval. The changing area adjoins the south elevation of the existing bathroom, has an 8'x12' footprint, and is 6' tall. The proposal is compatible with the design of the comfort station (composting toilet bathroom), the materials blend with the surrounding landscape, and there would be no adverse effects to the character defining features of the property.

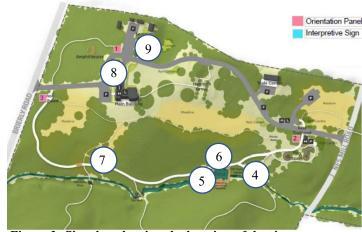


Figure 3: Site plan showing the location of the six interpretative panels.



Figure 4: View of the proposed changing area.

#### Automatic Door Opener

Staff finds that the automatic door opener to be consistent with the applicable guidelines and recommends approval with conditions. The applicant proposes to install an automatic arm to the existing pedestrian chain link gate and a free-standing pushbutton to operate the gate. The proposal would not adversely affect the landscape or historic setting and provide additional accessibility to the site. Staff recommends that the applicant clarify if the mechanisms would be installed at the gates on Jones Mill Road and Brierly Road or just Brierly Road as the application is unclear.

After full and fair consideration of the applicant's submission, staff finds the proposal, as modified by the conditions, consistent with the Criteria for Issuance in Chapter 24A-8(b), (1) and (2) having found the proposal is consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation #2, #9, and #10 outlined above.

#### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) <u>approve with four (4) condition</u> the HAWP application with final approval of all details delegated to staff:

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under the Criteria for Issuance in Chapter 24A-8(b), (1) and (2), having found that the proposal will not substantially alter the exterior features of the historic resource and is compatible in character with the district and the purposes of Chapter 24A;

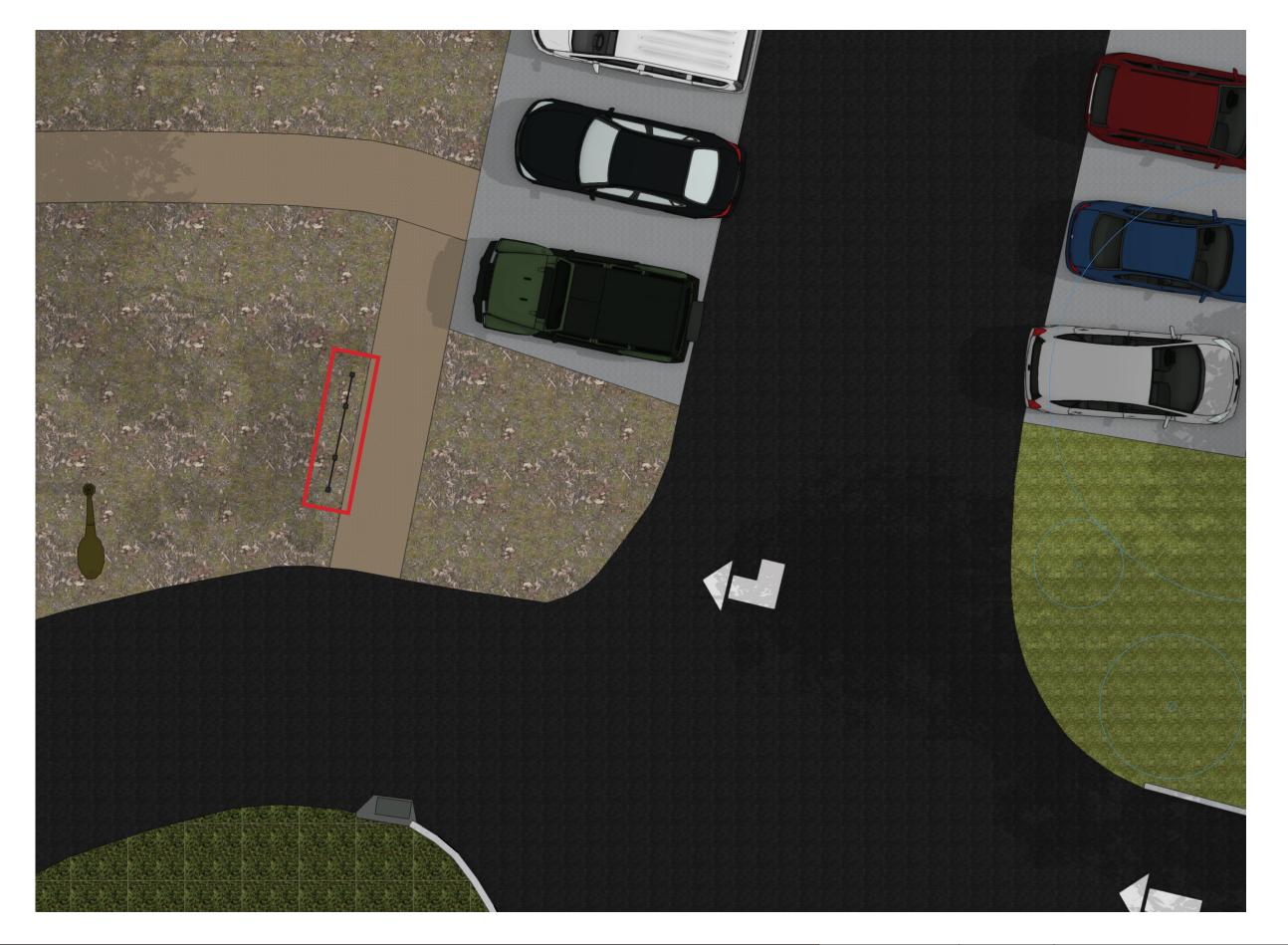
and with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation #2, #9, and #10;

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;

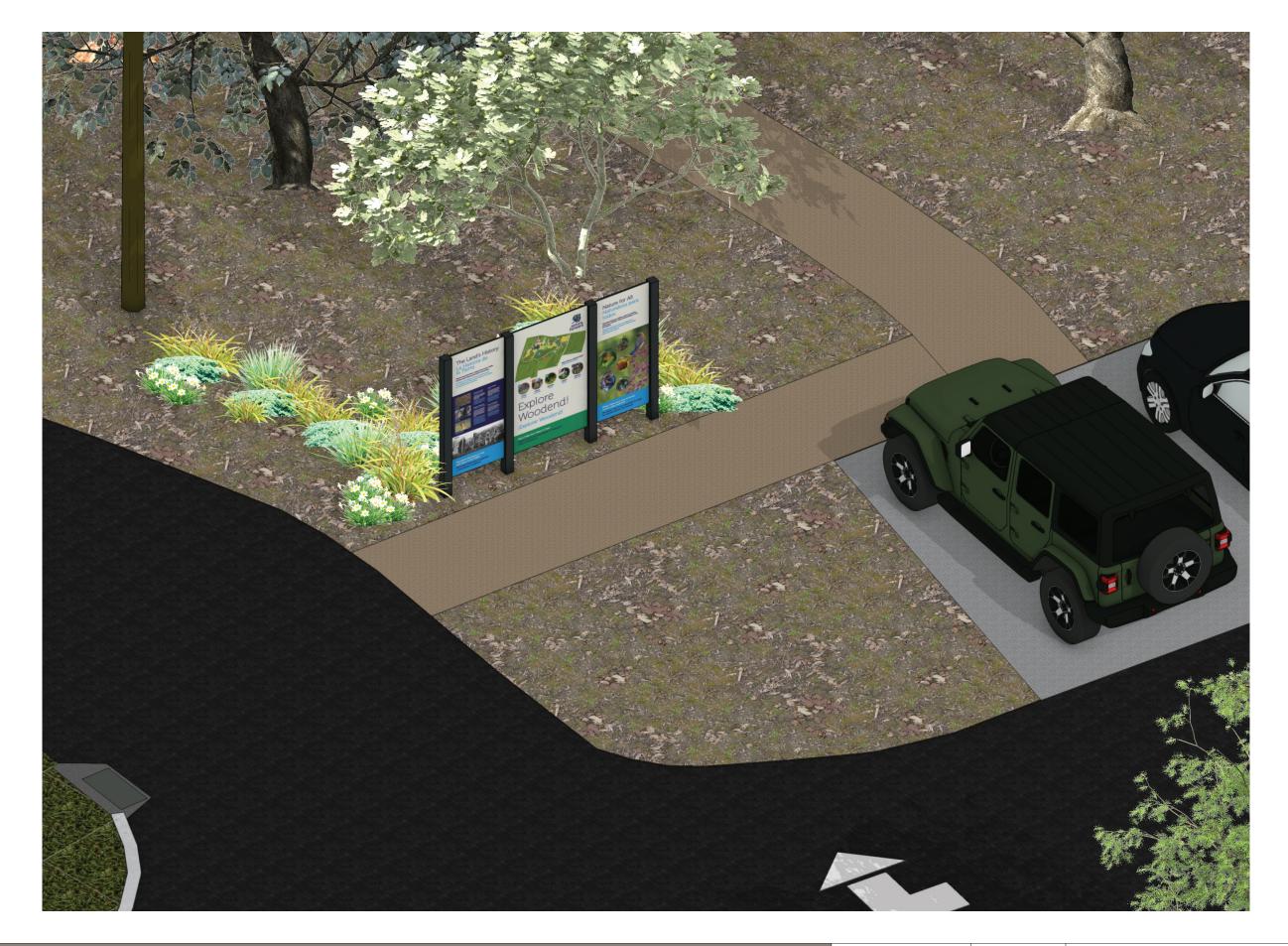
and with the general condition that final project design details, not specifically delineated by the Commission, shall be approved by HPC staff or brought back to the Commission as a revised HAWP application at staff's discretion;

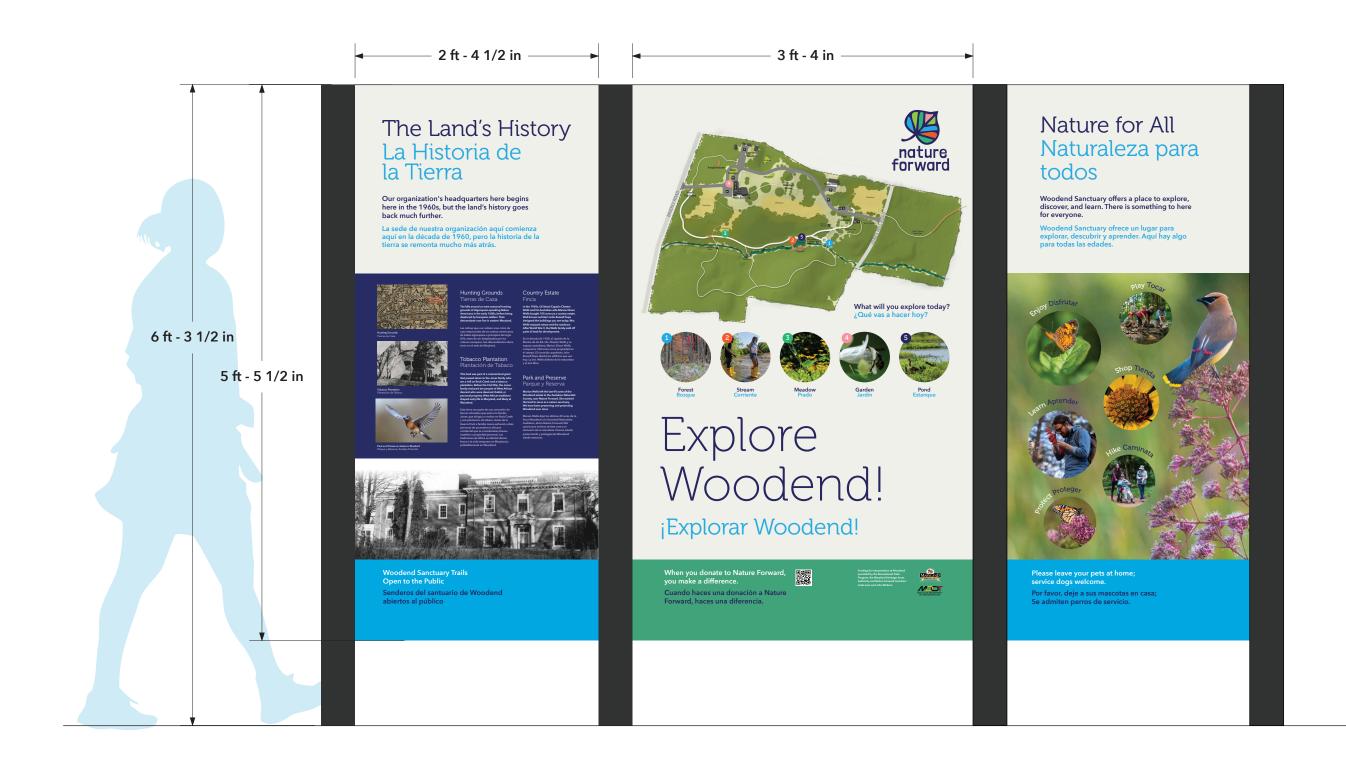
and with the general condition that the applicant shall notify the Historic Preservation Staff if they propose to make any alterations to the approved plans. Once the work is completed the applicant will contact the staff person assigned to this application at 301-563-3400 or <a href="mailto:john.liebertz@montgomeryplanning.org">john.liebertz@montgomeryplanning.org</a> to schedule a follow-up site visit.



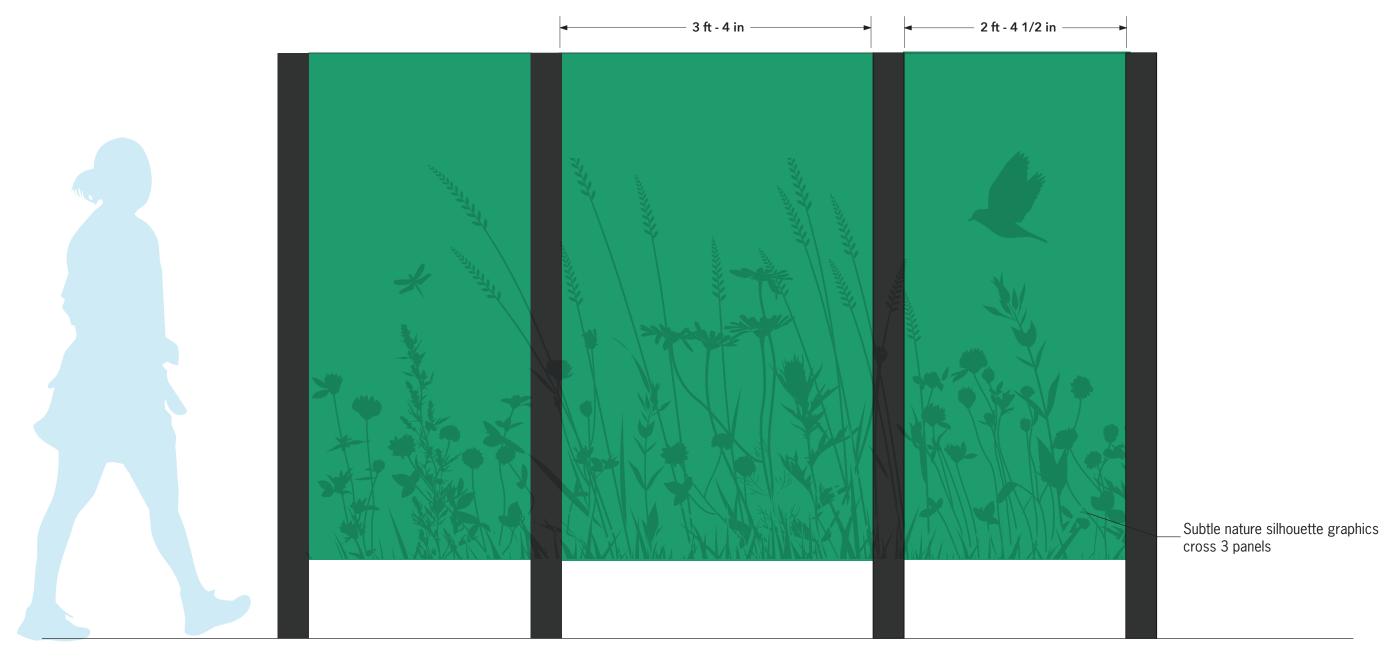








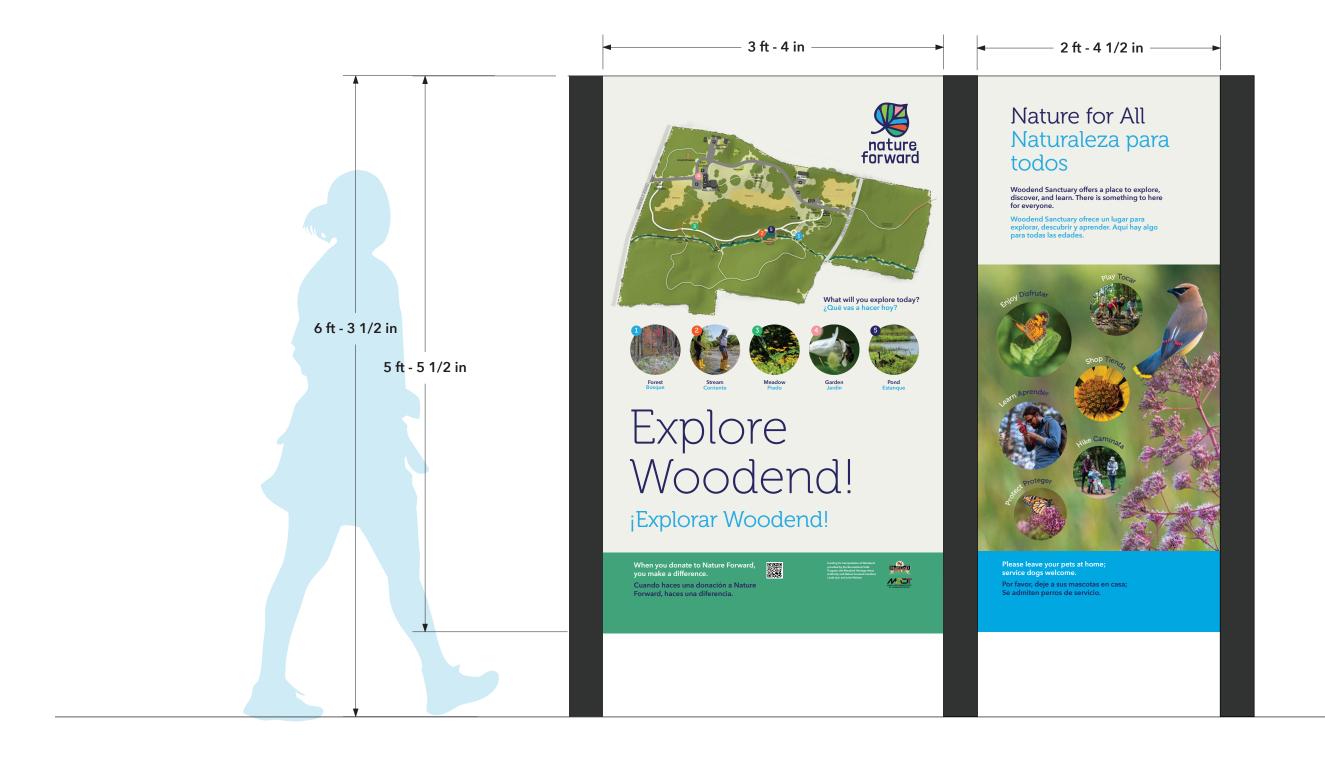
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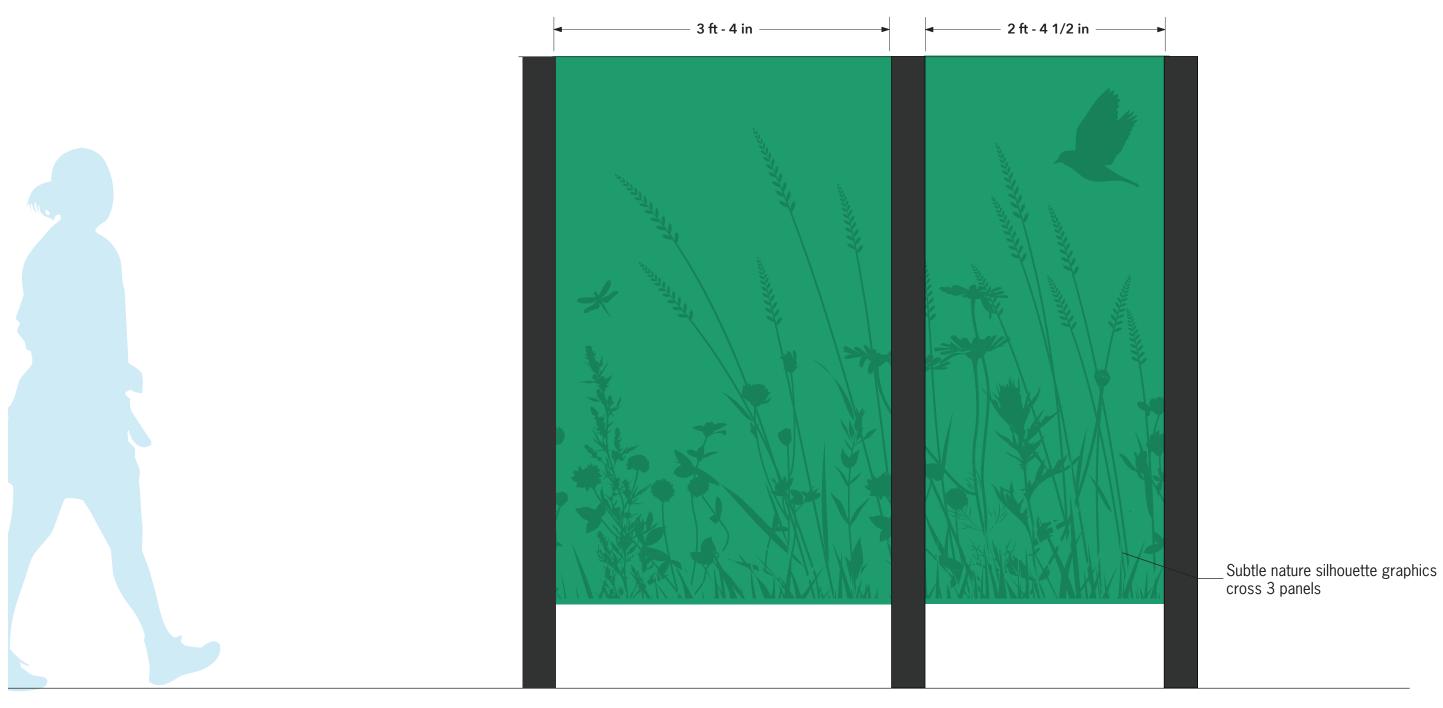


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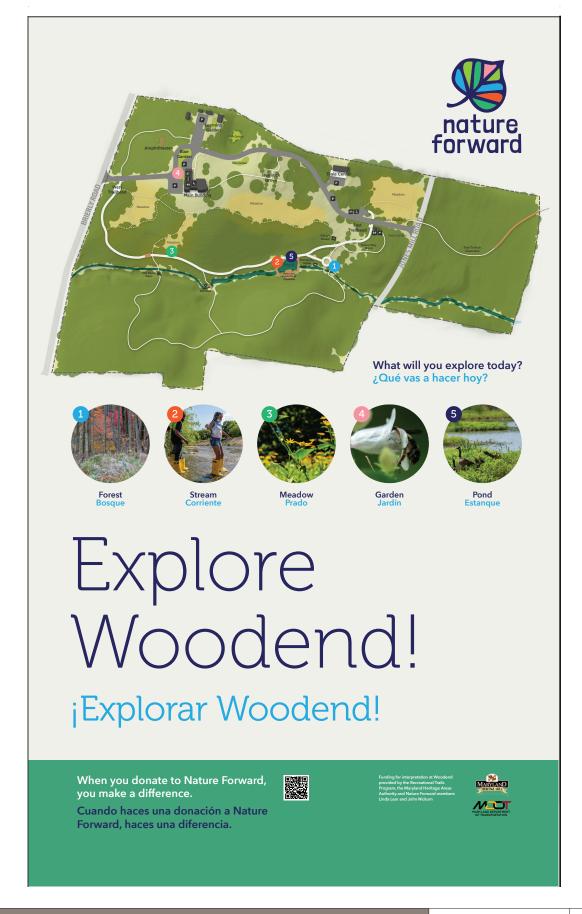
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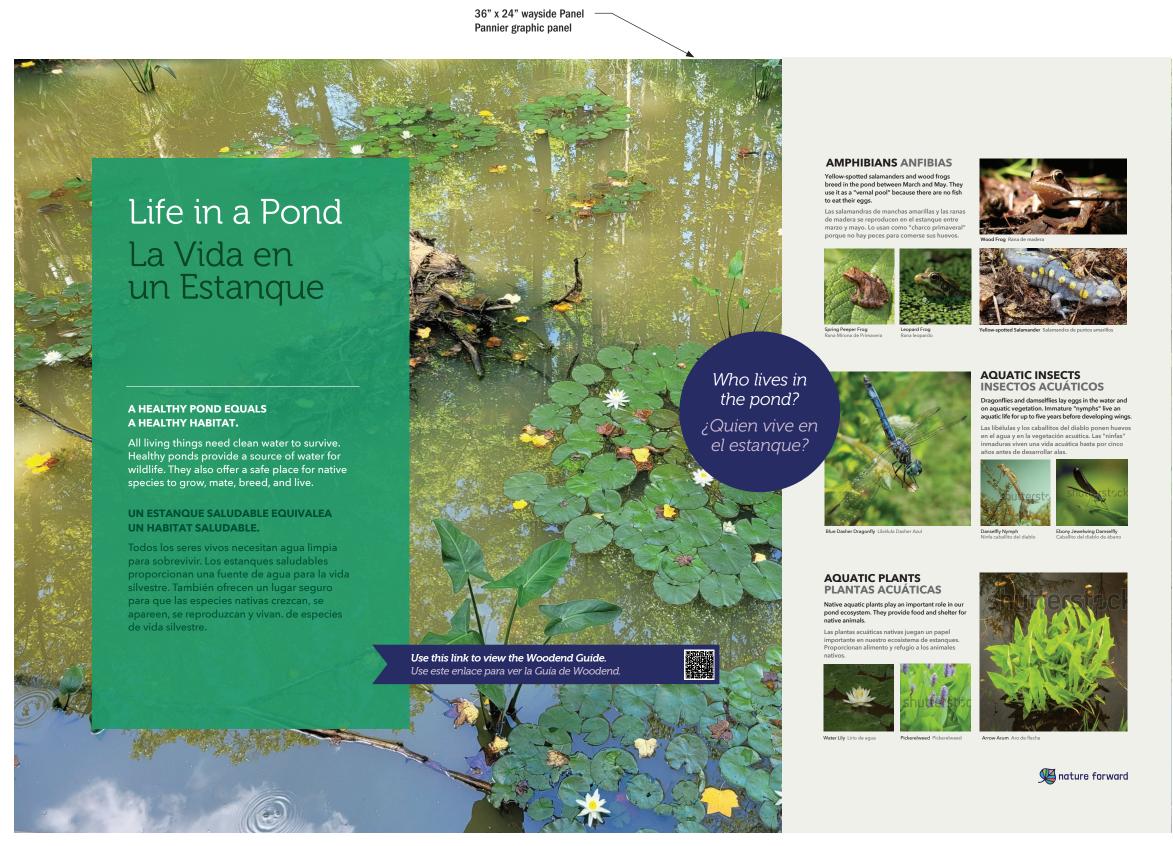
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BACK OF PANELS

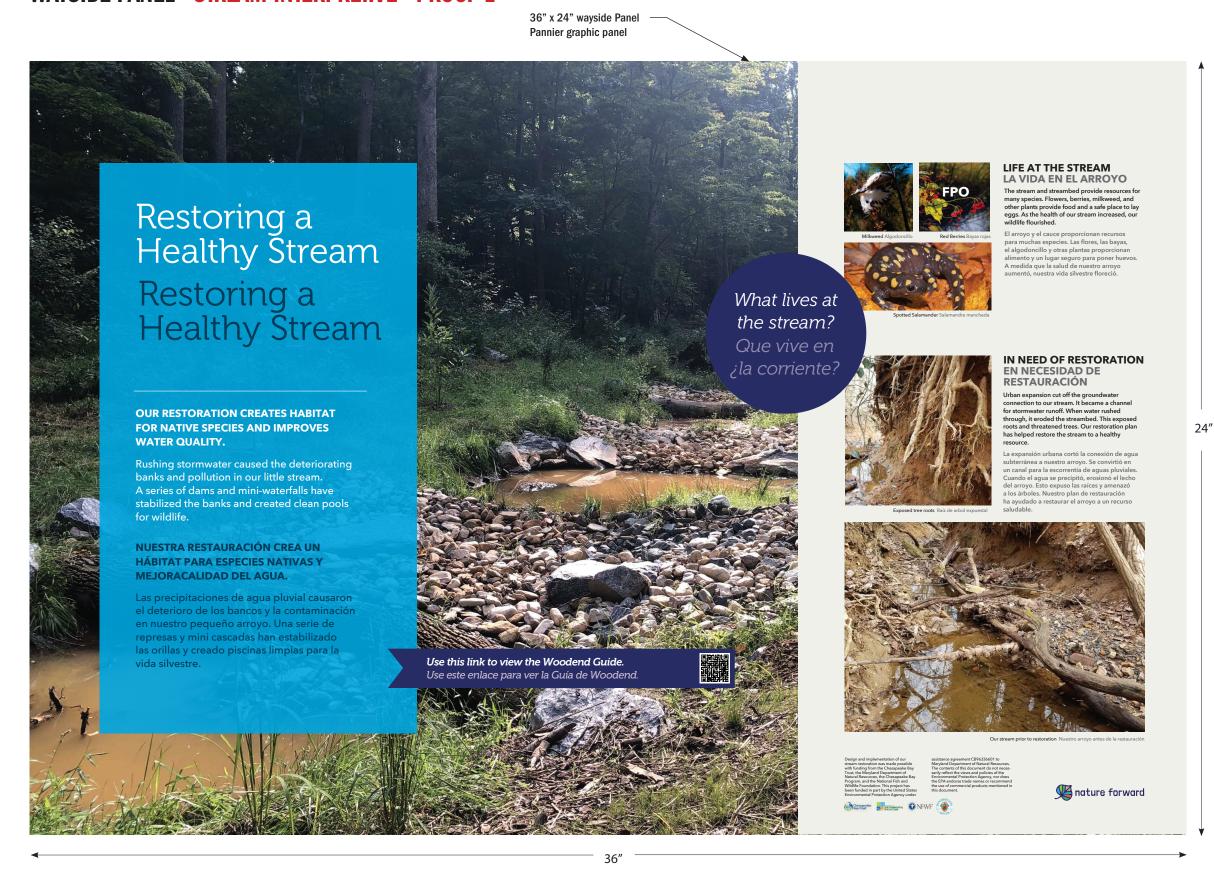




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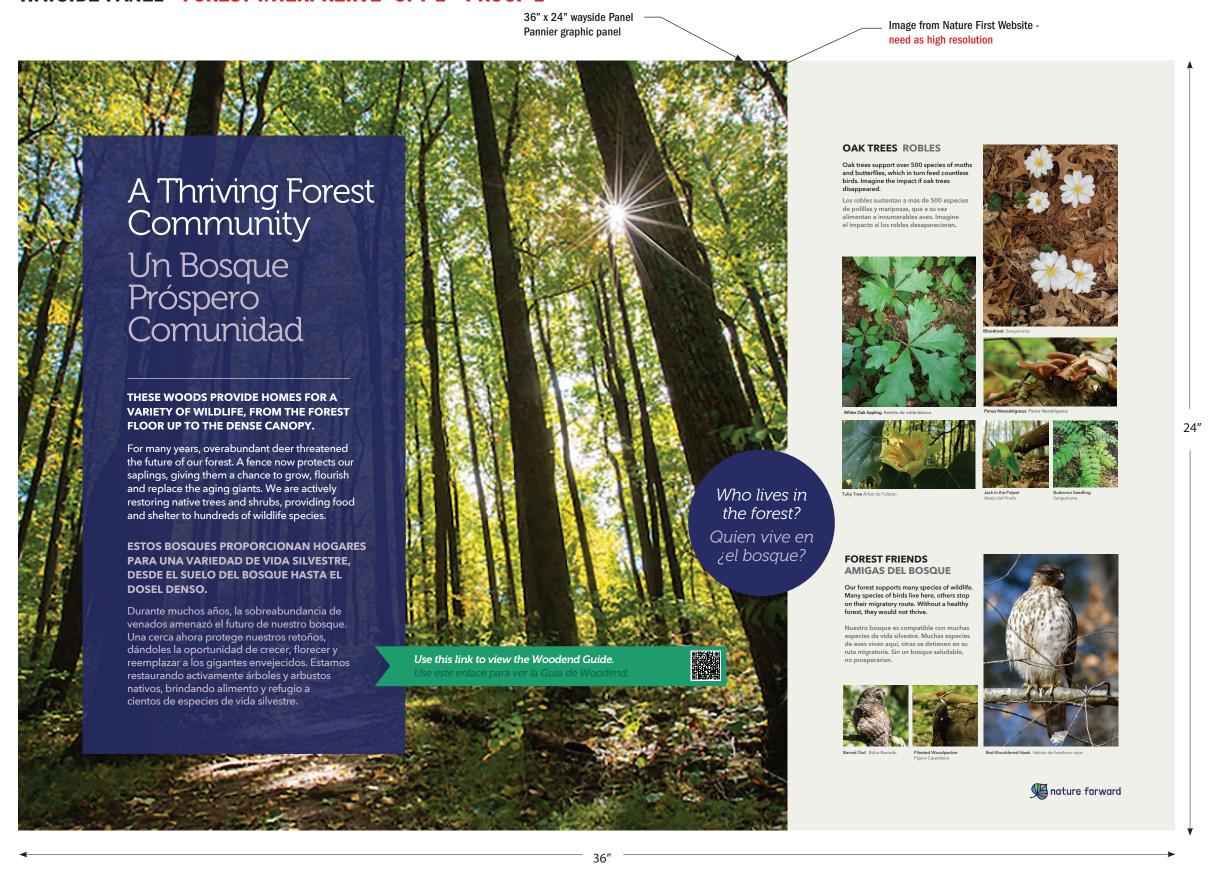
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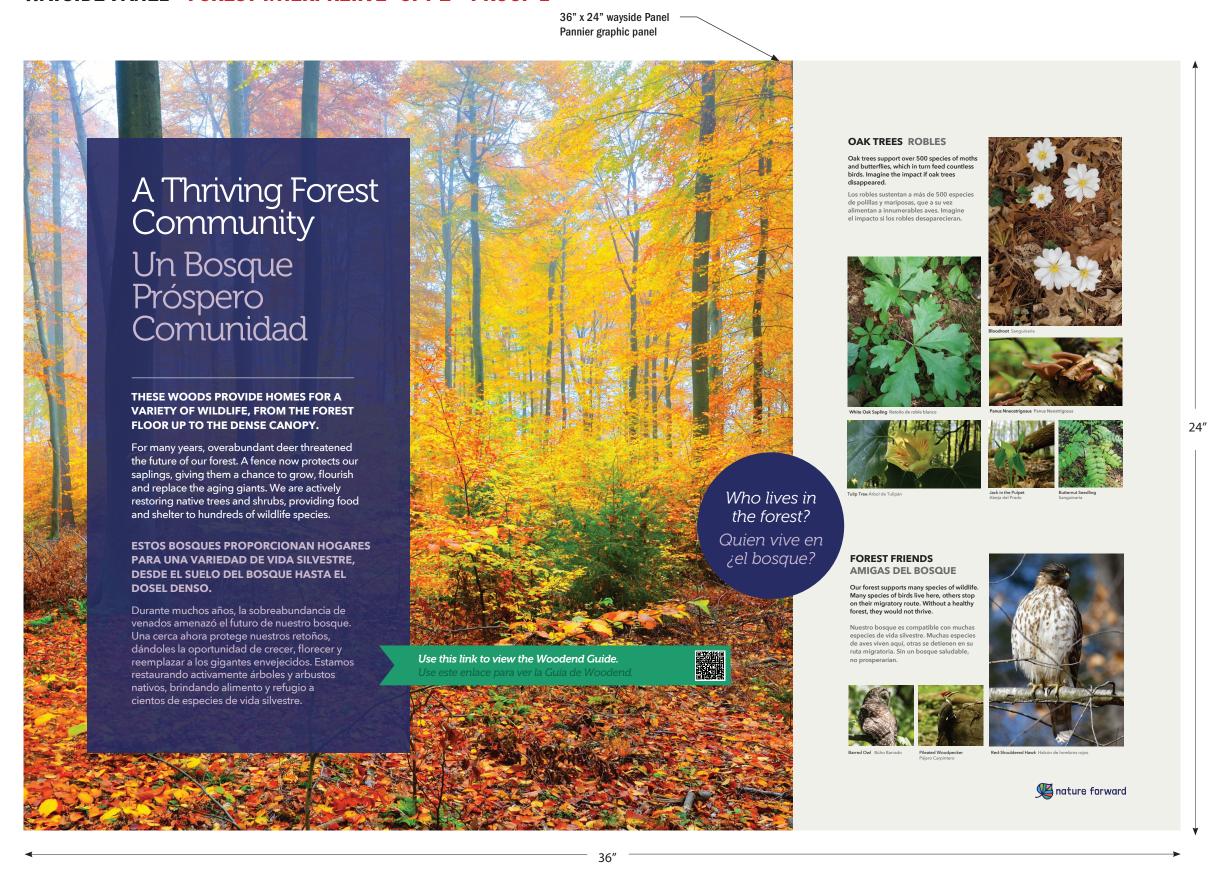
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#### PERMEABLE PAVEMENT **PAVIMENTO PERMEABLE**

ground, causing runoff issues. We use new materials on site that allow water to seep in. Permeable paving in our parking lots has coarse gravel beneath the hardscape. The water flows into that gravel via the spaces between the pavers. On our trails, polymers bind to pea gravel while letting water drain through tiny holes.

Las superficies impermeables evitan que las aguas pluviales lleguen al suelo, lo que provoca problemas de escorrentía. Usamos nuevos materiales en el sitio que permiten que el agua se filtre. El pavimento permeable e nuestros estacionamientos tiene grava gruesa debajo de pavimento. El agua fluye hacia esa grava a través de los espacios entre los adoquines. En nuestros senderos, los neros se unen a la gravilla y permiten que el agua se



**NOT FINAL DESIGN** 

24"

**gecko**group

DATE 01-25-23

Wayside Panel - for discussion

# **WAYSIDE PANEL - BLAIR NATIVE PLANT GARDEN INTERPRETIVE**



**NOT FINAL DESIGN**