

PARKS, TRAILS, AND OPEN SPACE APPENDIX

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this appendix is to explain the park planning process and to also provide additional information about certain recommendations for parks, trails and open space in the plan area.

M-NCPPC, Montgomery County Department of Parks owns and manages more than 420 parks throughout the county, covering more than 37,000 acres. Only a few of these parks are located in the Great Seneca Plan area. Existing M-NCPPC parks include Orchard Neighborhood Park, Quince Orchard Valley Neighborhood Park and Traville Local Park. Of these parks, only Quince Orchard Valley Neighborhood Park has developed recreational facilities. The other two parks are undeveloped. The plan area also contains a portion of Seneca Creek State Park and is nearby to several park trails or trails managed by park agencies: Muddy Branch Trail, Seneca Creek Greenway Trail, and the Powerline (PEPCO) Trail. The 2010 Great Seneca Plan recommended several new parks that were to be provided by the private sector when certain properties were (re)developed.

ABOUT PARK PLANNING AND ANALYSIS

Park planning is about ensuring the right parks (and park facilities) are in the right places and that they are equitably distributed. During community and area master plans, park planners inventory existing parks in the plan area, and based on standards established in the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan (PROS) determine whether existing parks and park facilities are meeting the needs of current residents. Park planners then evaluate population forecasts based on likely changes in zoning, as recommended in the community or area master plan, to determine what additional parks or park facilities may be needed, and where, to serve future residents. Park planners examine not only public parks, but also privately-owned public spaces (POPS). POPS are open spaces that are managed by the private sector but are open to the public.

Park planning analyses determined that while the Great Seneca Plan area is generally not well-served by existing M-NCPPC parks, residents of this area have access to numerous parks and park facilities that are in the cities of Rockville and Gaithersburg, as well as the Town of Washington Grove. Residents also have access to nearby Seneca Creek State Park.

Results from analysis based on methodologies recommended in the 2018 Energized Public Spaces Functional Master Plan (EPS) (Fig.1), the Great Seneca Plan areas contains a relatively good supply of parks and park facilities per capita and a relatively low need for experience improvement. The primary goal of a park system is to provide a balance of opportunities for physical fitness, social gathering, and nature contemplation.

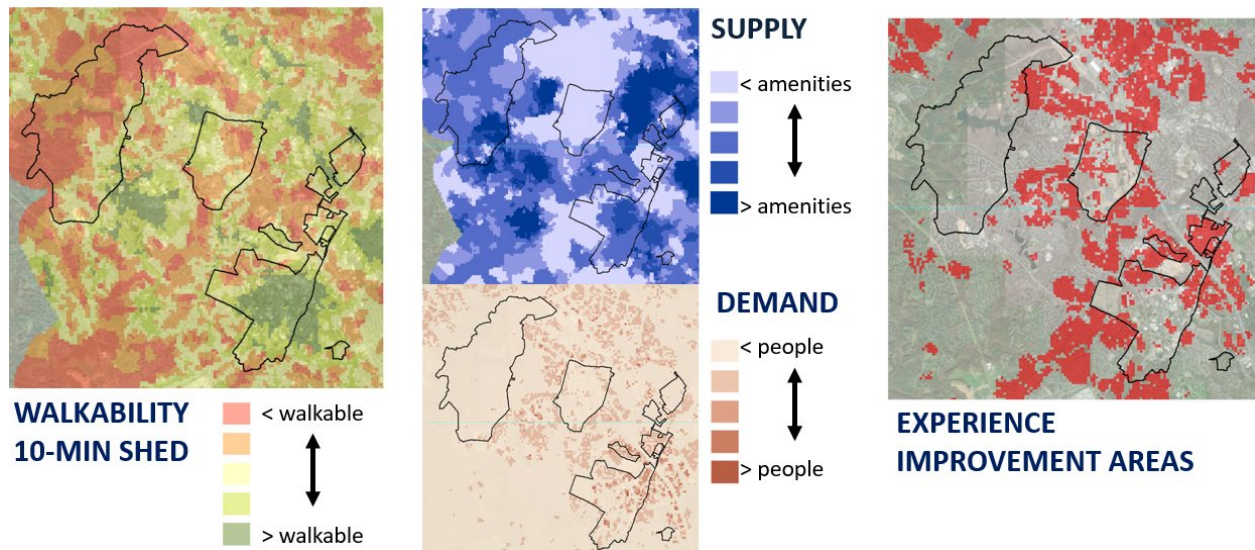


Figure 1. EPS Analysis for the Plan Areas

Based on this analysis, the plan only recommends one new park on the site of the Washington Adventist Hospital campus at the intersection of Broschart and Blackwell roads. Further, discussions within the Department of Parks and with the Planning Department, as well as review of historical documents resulted in the following recommendations for the two existing undeveloped parks in the Plan area: Traville Local Park and Orchard Neighborhood Park.

TRAVILLE LOCAL PARK

This 13-acre undeveloped park is located south of Piney Meetinghouse Road, across from the Universities at Shady Grove and Traville Shopping Center, within the Life Sciences Center area of the plan (Fig. 2). The park is bisected by Willow Tree Drive, forming two parcels. The larger western parcel contains a tributary to Piney Run and associated floodplains and stream buffer. The smaller eastern parcel is relatively flat with a meadow and some specimen trees. The park was conveyed to M-NCPPC in 2002 when the adjacent land was developed with homes. Conditions of approval for the development included grading the site to accommodate future park development, and a concept plan was created to identify some recreational opportunities. The park was never developed. As part of the 2024 planning process, park planners and designers re-examined the park and determined that the western parcel is environmentally constrained and should not be developed. The eastern parcel, however, still has modest development potential. The 2002 concept plan showed a rectangular athletic field (Fig. 3 & 4). Due to tree growth over the past 20 years, this is likely no longer feasible. However, future park development might include a trail loop, a nature play area and a picnic shelter. Other lower-impact facilities could be considered as well.

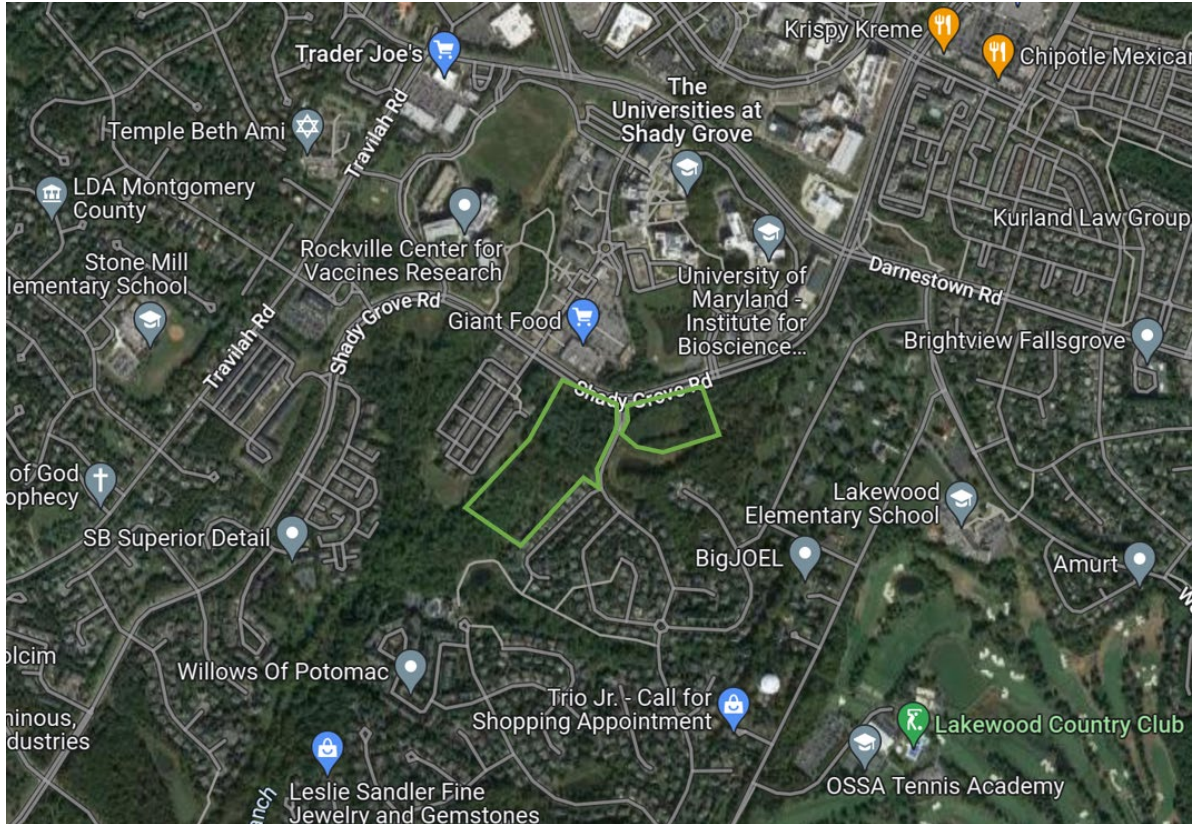


Figure 2. Location of Traville Local Park

TRAVILLE PARK

DRAFT CONCEPT PLAN

--- Limits of grading

Proposed Traville Local Park
Date: July 16, 2002
Lead Staff: Dilip Pandya
Plan Review Summary

The purpose of this Plan Review Item is to approve a rough grading plan for the Traville Local Park.

Background: As part of the Traville subdivision, the developer dedicated approximately 13 acres, a portion of which is to be used as a local park. The site is located adjacent to the intersection of Shady Grove Road and Willow Tree Drive, in the North Potomac Area.

Preliminary Plan Conditions of approval require that the developer to convey the property free of un-natural debris, and "rough grade" and stabilize the site of the future active recreation area according to a plan, which we are to provide. The developer is anxious to complete the grading as soon as possible.

An environmental evaluation of the site indicated that the local park should be located along both sides of Willow Tree Drive. Adjacent steep slopes will not be used for the park and area proposed for active recreation development will not impact environmental buffer areas. There are forested areas on the northern portion of the site.

Project Description: This local park will serve the North Potomac Area. It will be accessed by a driveway along both sides of Willow Tree Drive. The entrance area off of Willow Tree Drive will be clearly defined and include a landscaped sign when the park is developed. The rough grading plan proposes a youth size playing field on the site, and envisions future development which will include a multi-use court, parking, a play area, a picnic area and trails.

Project Coordination: This project has been coordinated with the Park Region Staff, Countywide Planning and the Natural Resources Division.

Figure 3. Draft Concept Plan for Traville Local Park (2002)

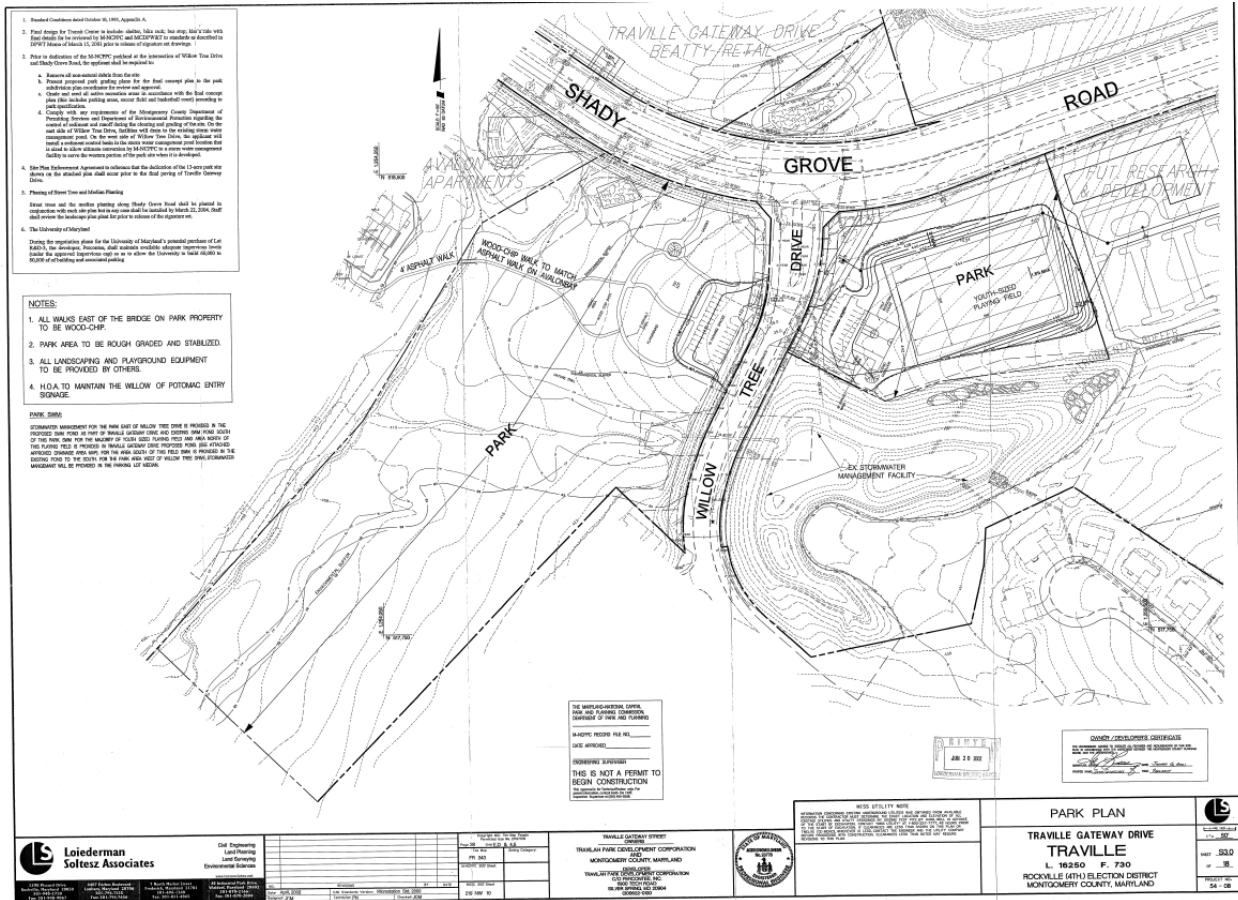


Figure 4. Final Concept Plan for Traville Local Park (2002)

ORCHARD NEIGHBORHOOD PARK

This 12-acre undeveloped park is located in the Quince Orchard area of the plan. It is bounded by residential development primarily on Carrington Hill Drive and Hidden Ponds Way (Fig. 5). The park was conveyed to M-NCPPC in 1982 during development of the homes in the neighborhood that includes Carrington Hill Drive (Fig. 6). The park is classified as a neighborhood park, for which typical development might include a playground, a basketball court or a tennis court, and perhaps a picnic shelter. During the 2024 plan, however, park planners researched the history of this parcel and determined that the backyards of homes along Carrington Hill Drive are covered by a forest conservation easement (Fig. 7), suggesting that the park's forest was intended to be protected as well. Further research revealed that the initial park name included the word "conservation", again suggesting that the park was intended to remain undeveloped to protect the forest (Fig. 8). Based on this research, the park will continue to be managed to retain and protect the existing forest and may be reclassified to a more appropriate park type.

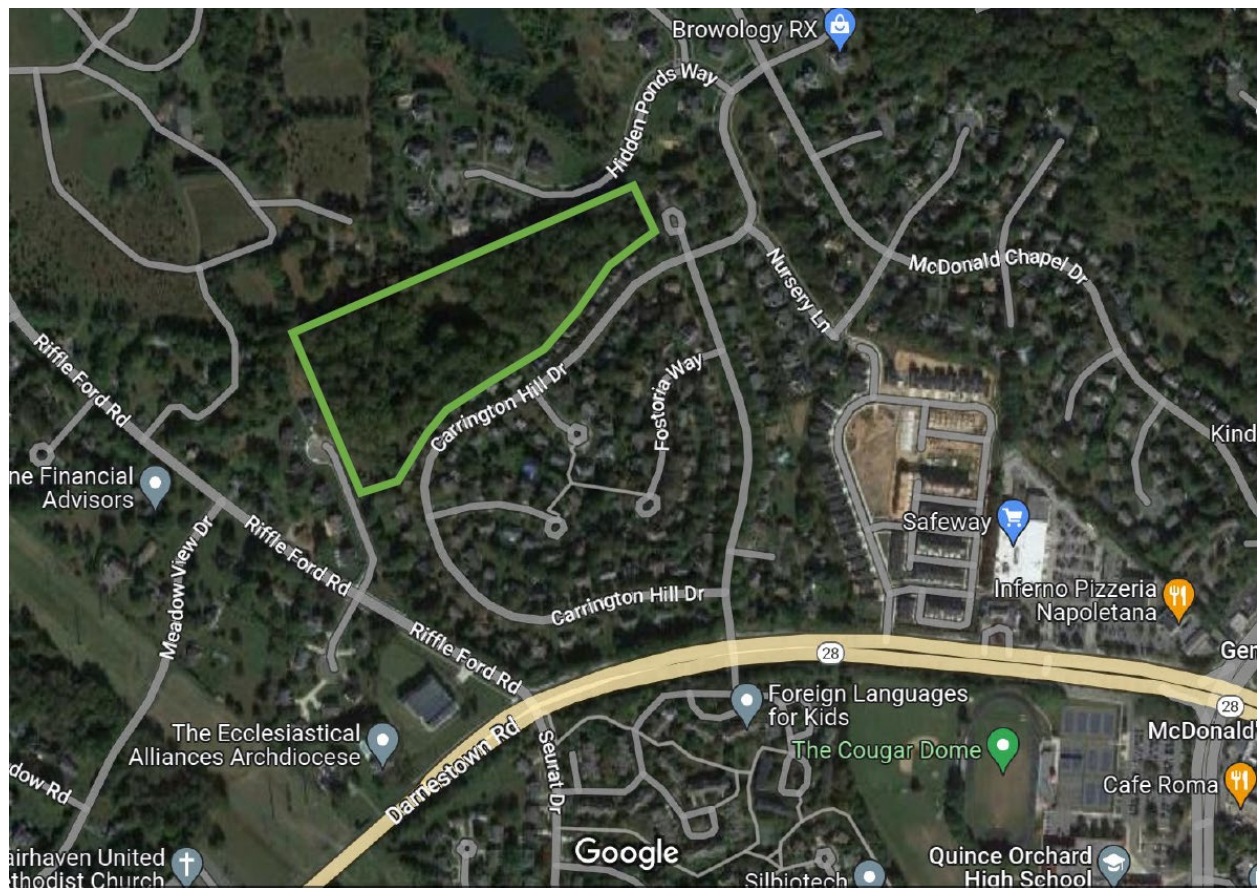


Figure 5. Location of Orchard Neighborhood Park

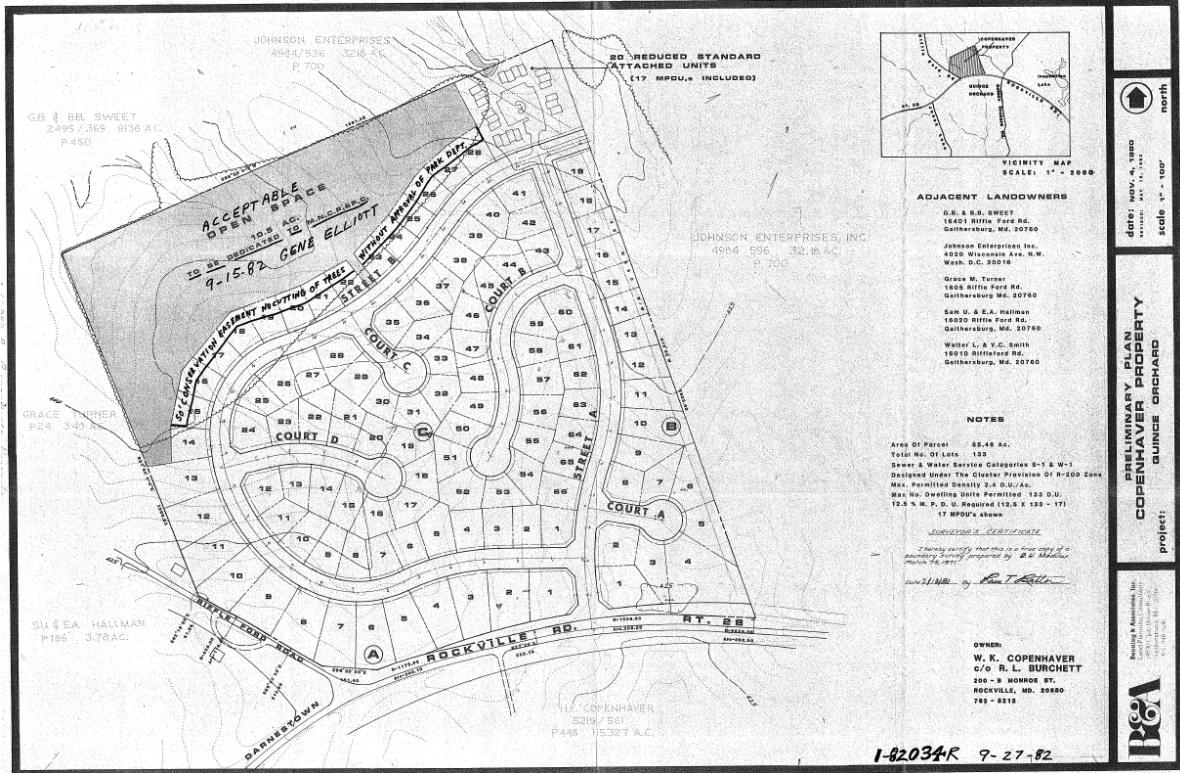


Figure 6. Architectural drawing depicting land conveyed to M-NCPPC (1982)

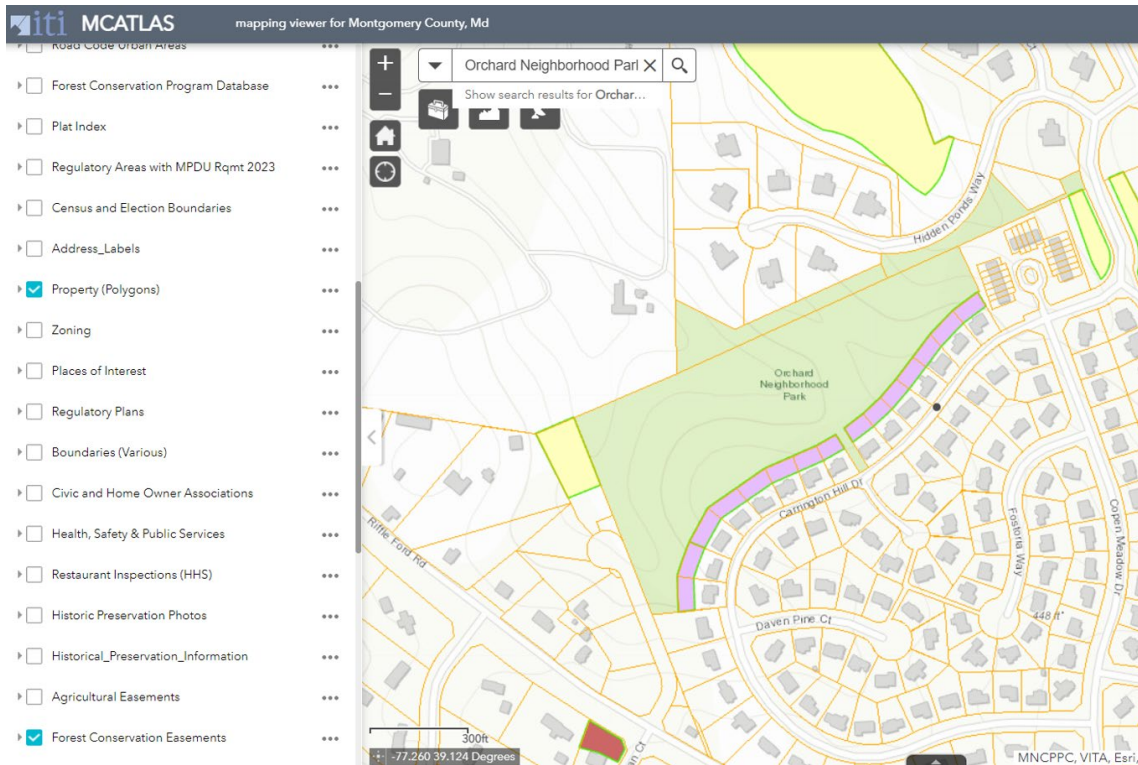
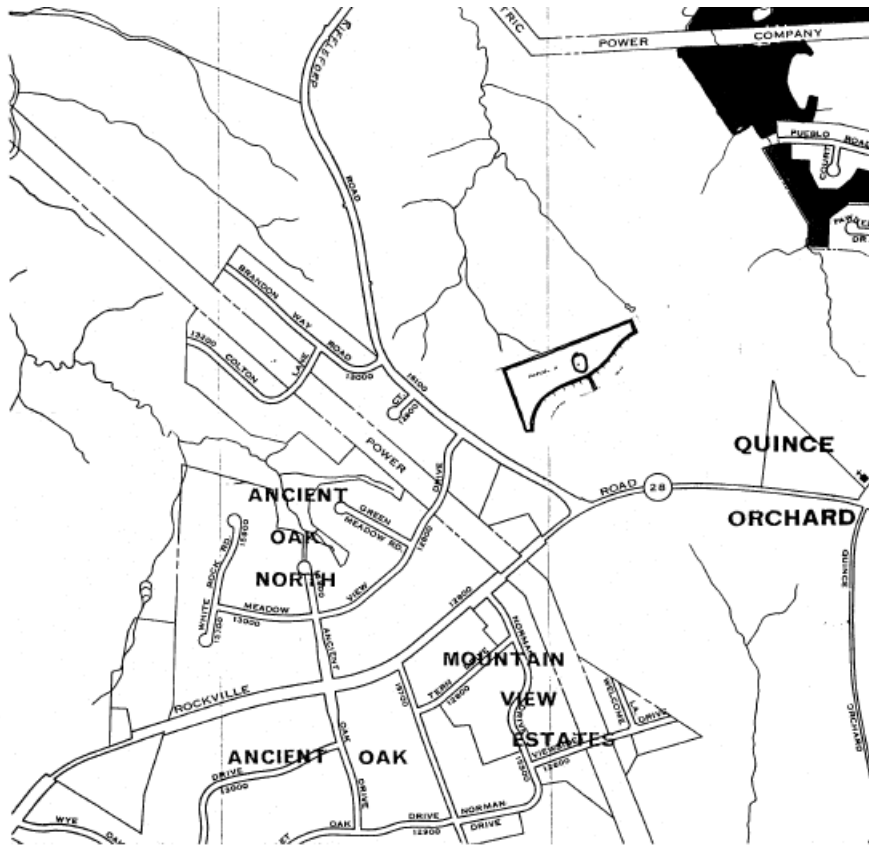


Figure 7. Portions (pink) of backyards identified for Forest Conservation, restricting land improvements to protect forest.



PARK ORCHARD NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION ACRES 10.2 DATE 1/9/85
 DEDICATED 0 SWM POND

THE COMMISSION HAS RECEIVED THE DEED TO THE PROPERTY AS INDICATED IN
 RED . THERE ~~IS~~ NOT A DWELLING ON THE PROPERTY CONVEYED. IF YOU HAVE
 ANY QUESTIONS OR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION PERTAINING TO THIS NOTIFICATION,
 PLEASE CONTACT: GENE ELLIOTT (495-4629) OR CLARE RUNKLES (495-4627).



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Figure 8. 1985 internal Montgomery Parks graphic identifying the land as a neighborhood conservation park.