



HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Marc Elrich
County Executive

Robert K. Sutton
Chairman

Date: January 18, 2023

MEMORANDUM

TO: Ehsan Motazedi, Acting DPS Director & Deputy Director
Department of Permitting Services

FROM: Winnie Cargill
Historic Preservation Section
Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission Historic Area

SUBJECT: Work Permit #1016005 - Hardscaping, Recreation Area/Playground,
Signage, and Site Work Revisions

The Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) has reviewed the attached application for a Historic Area Work Permit (HAWP). This application was **Approved** by the HPC Staff.

The HPC staff has reviewed and stamped the attached construction drawings.

THE BUILDING PERMIT FOR THIS PROJECT SHALL BE ISSUED CONDITIONAL UPON ADHERENCE TO THE ABOVE APPROVED HAWP CONDITIONS AND MAY REQUIRE APPROVAL BY DPS OR ANOTHER LOCAL OFFICE BEFORE WORK CAN BEGIN.

Applicant: Amy Ritsko -Warren
Address: 8940 Jones Mill Road, Chevy Chase

This HAWP approval is subject to the general condition that the applicant will obtain all other applicable Montgomery County or local government agency permits. After the issuance of these permits, the applicant must contact this Historic Preservation Office if any changes to the approved plan are made. Once work is complete the applicant will contact Winnie Cargill at 301.495.2108 or winnie.cargill@montgomeryplanning.org to schedule a follow-up site visit.





APPLICATION FOR HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION 301.563.3400

FOR STAFF ONLY: HAWP# DATE ASSIGNED

APPLICANT:

Name: E-mail: Address: City: Zip: Daytime Phone: Tax Account No.:

AGENT/CONTACT (if applicable):

Name: E-mail: Address: City: Zip: Daytime Phone: Contractor Registration No.:

LOCATION OF BUILDING/PREMISE: MIHP # of Historic Property

Is the Property Located within an Historic District? Yes/District Name No/Individual Site Name

Is there an Historic Preservation/Land Trust/Environmental Easement on the Property? If YES, include a map of the easement, and documentation from the Easement Holder supporting this application.

Are other Planning and/or Hearing Examiner Approvals /Reviews Required as part of this Application? (Conditional Use, Variance, Record Plat, etc.?) If YES, include information on these reviews as supplemental information.

Building Number: Street:

Town/City: Nearest Cross Street:

Lot: Block: Subdivision: Parcel:

TYPE OF WORK PROPOSED: See the checklist on Page 4 to verify that all supporting items for proposed work are submitted with this application. Incomplete Applications will not be accepted for review. Check all that apply:

- Checklist of work types: New Construction, Addition, Demolition, Grading/Excavation, Deck/Porch, Fence, Hardscape/Landscape, Roof, Shed/Garage/Accessory Structure, Solar, Tree removal/planting, Window/Door, Other.

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

Signature of owner or authorized agent Date

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/Excavation/Landscaping	*	*		*	*	*	*
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 conservation and nature education.

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 20th 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, 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 accessible 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

completed in September 2021. In conjunction with walkways installed around the mansion and 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. The original plans for the Nature Play Space were submitted and approved under the same May 2018 Historic Area Work Permit as the stream and trail projects. We completed some site work on the Play Space area in conjunction with the stream and trail projects. The designs of the Nature Play Space features themselves have evolved over the past four years. In this application we submit the changes to the originally approved plans for your consideration.

We also submit for your consideration a change in the entryway signs on Jones Mill Road and Brierly Road. Our organization has evolved from focusing on bird conservation to a much broader mission to connect people and nature in our region. In addition, as the true character of John James Audubon has come to light, our Board, Staff, and Members agreed it was time to change our name to better signal that we welcome all people of all backgrounds and abilities to join in our mission work. After a two-year process that gathered feedback from more than 1,000 stakeholders, we selected and legally changed our name to Nature Forward. Our signs are an integral piece of sharing our new name with the community.

Work Item 1: Nature Play Space

Overview: The Nature Play Space is intended to provide young children (up to 10 years old) of all abilities with an engaging, inclusive play area in a dynamic setting that uses the natural environment to inspire independent exploration of nature, creative play, cognitive development and is both family-friendly and wheelchair-accessible.

The Nature Play Space will inspire healthy imaginative play. Natural elements and adaptive design of play features such as logs and boulders will encourage children to climb, jump, hide, explore, view their surroundings from various perspectives, take risks, reflect, and create. The design of the Nature Play Space puts special emphasis on encouraging children of all abilities to play **together** in nature.

Within the Play Space, children and parents will feel comfortable exploring the natural setting with clear boundaries and information about how to use the play elements with all children, including those with disabilities. Pathways leading to the accessible trail of Woodend will invite families to explore further when they are ready.

The Nature Play Space will be generally open to the public as well as being reserved for Nature Forward programming at other times. It will be used regularly by our on-site preschool program, caregiver-child programs, school field trip programs, and summer camps.

In May 2018, the Historic Preservation Commission approved an Historic Area Work Permit that included the original designs for Nature Forward’s Play Space. The proposed work described below is a summary of the changes we are requesting to the 2018 Historic Area Work Permit, most of which consist of either eliminated features or smaller than originally designed features.

Description of Current Condition: The base plan for the Nature Play Space was installed during the construction of the accessible trail as approved. The base layer of the trails through the Play Space has been installed and is ready for the installation of top surfacing that will make them wheelchair accessible. Most play areas are delineated by log edging and the base layer for areas that require safety fall surfaces are in place. After the base layers were completed, 47 trees and 129 shrubs were planted around the perimeter of the nature play space area. The boulders will remain where they are currently positioned.



Site Plans Approved in 2018 HAWP

2018
Plan



○ = Location of Nature Play Space on Woodend's 40 acres will not change.

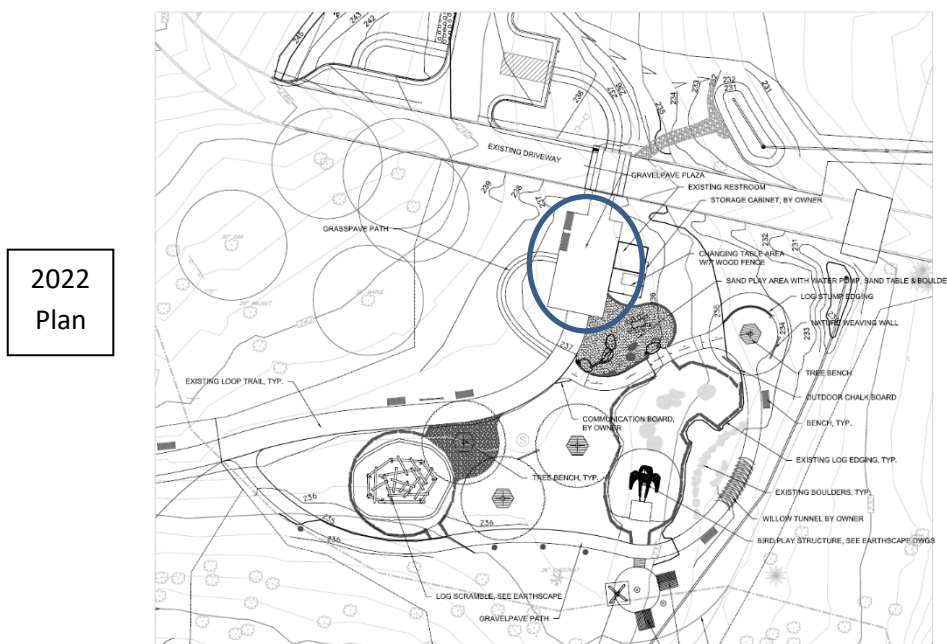
2018
Plan



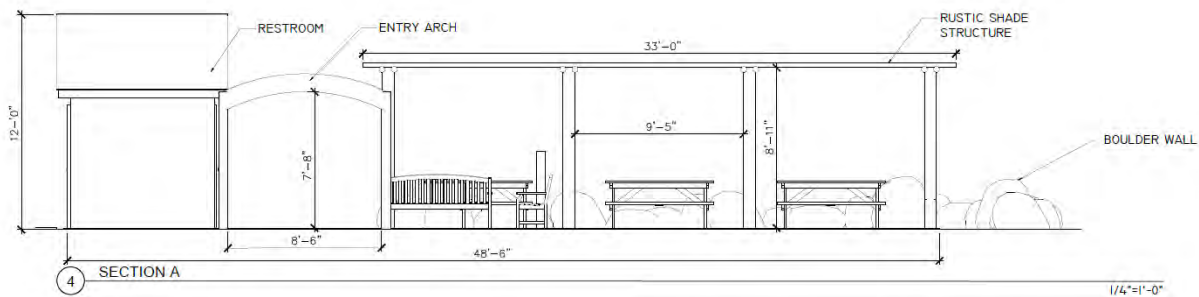
○ = Location and size of associated parking will not change

2022 Proposed Site Plan

- 1) **The Entrance Plaza is smaller and the entry arch and rustic shade structure have been removed.** As you can see in the site plan submitted with the May 2018 HAWP, originally an “L” shaped welcome plaza was designed as an area where school groups would gather as they are getting organized for their program. When we built the accessible trail we realized that the size specified was larger than what we needed. In the new site design, the entrance plaza is a simple rectangular area of bonded gravel. The entry arch and shade structure that were originally planned for the entry plaza have been removed.



2018 Entryway Design



REMOVED:
Entry arch and rustic shade structure

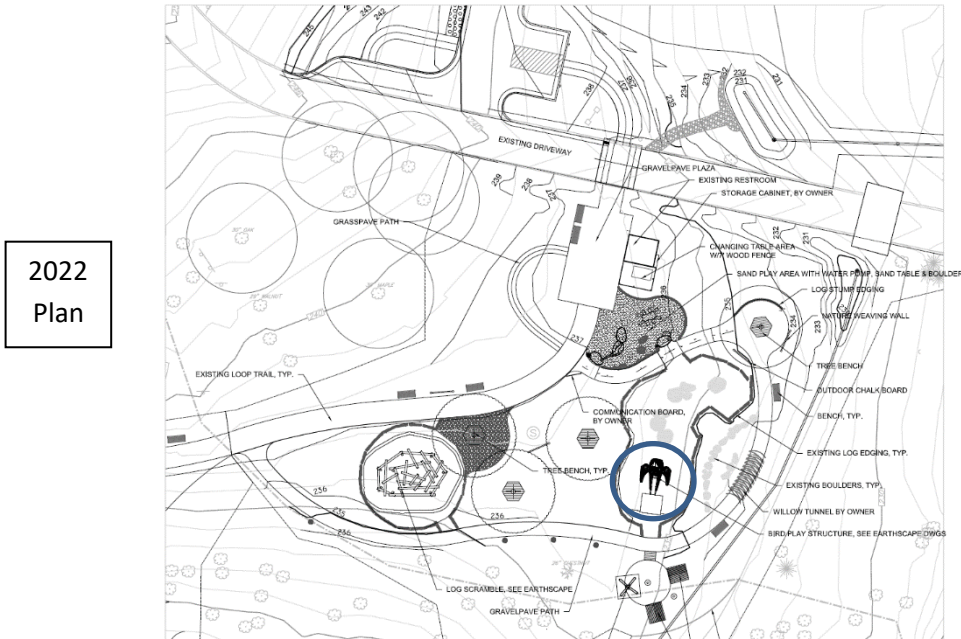
REVIEWED
By Winnie Cargill at 7:34 am, Jan 18, 2023

APPROVED
Montgomery County
Historic Preservation Commission
Robert H. [Signature]

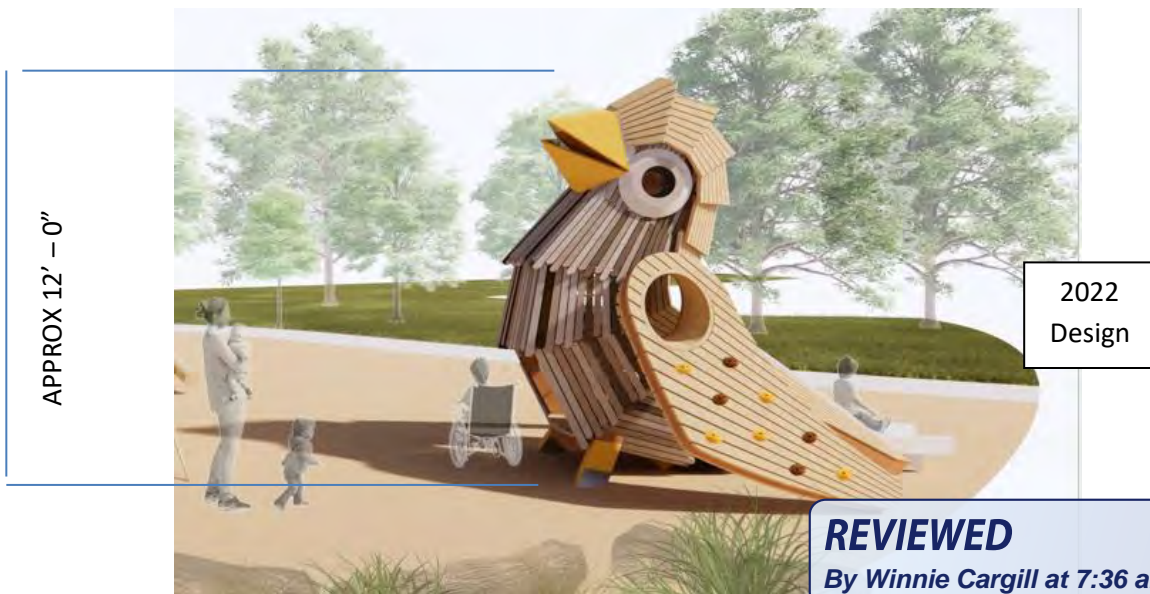
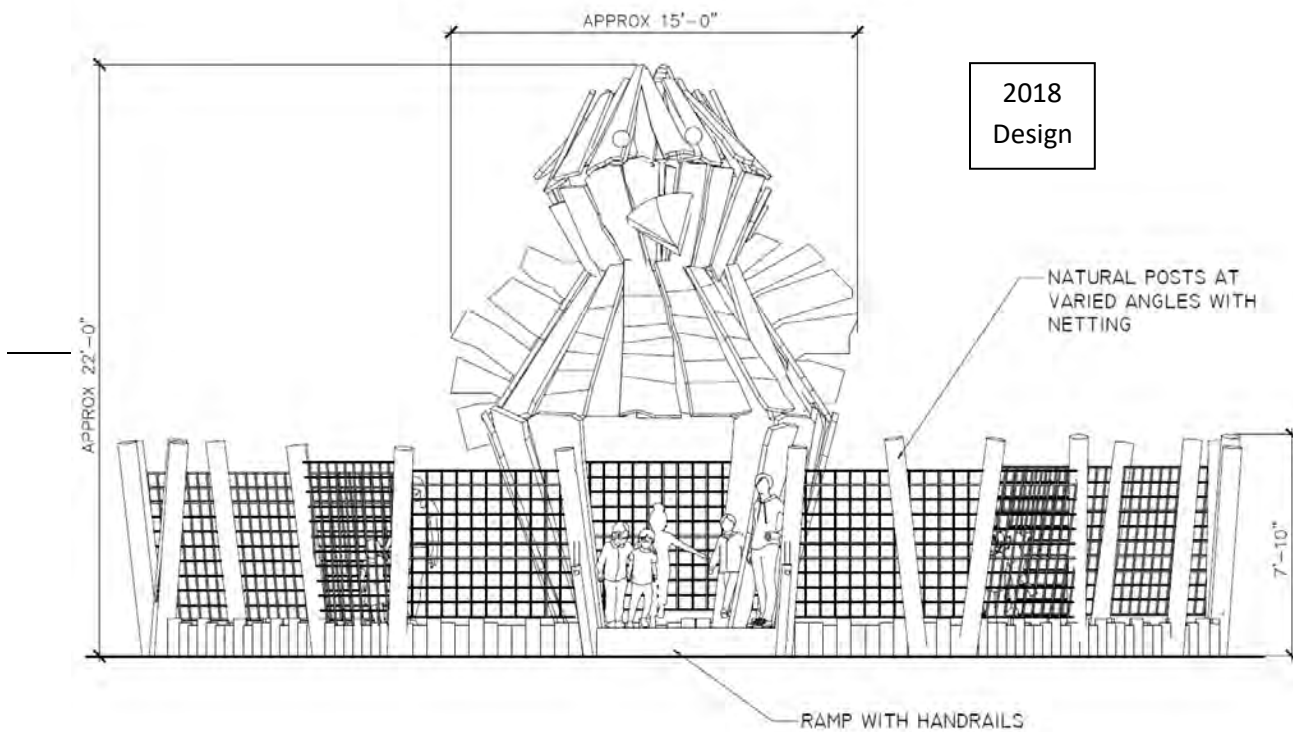
- 2) Design and location of the “Roost/Woodthrush Climbing Structure” has changed. The specifications for the featured climbing structure in the play space have been shortened by ten feet, to create a smaller feature without surrounding decking or netting. The location has shifted slightly to accommodate an existing sewer cover.



O = Roost/Woodthrush location



2022 Plan



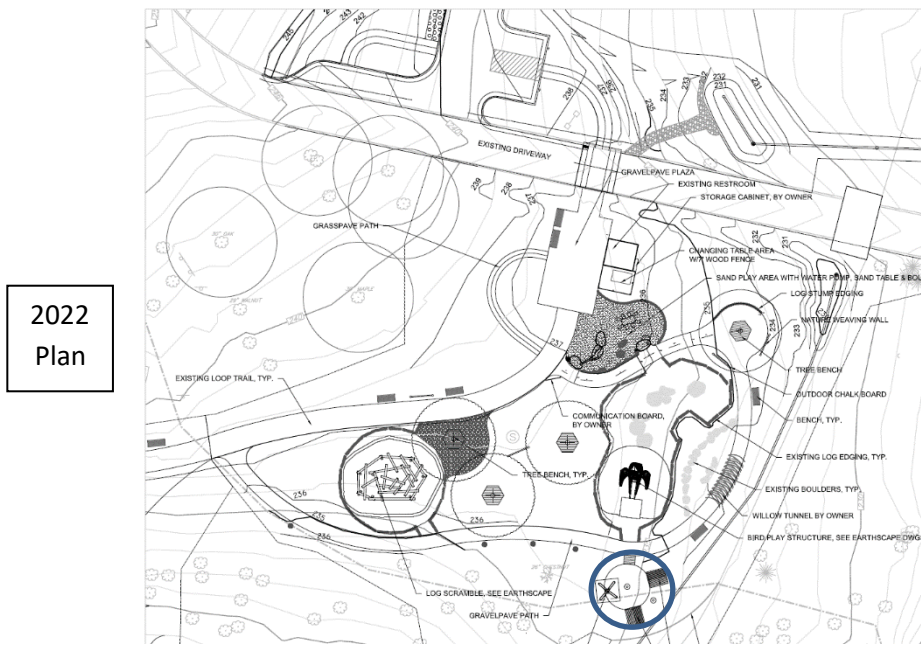
APPROVED
Montgomery County
Historic Preservation Commission



3) **Some features have been eliminated and others have moved.** The overall footprint of the play space has not changed. However, to make more room for free play and resting areas, the swing, nest and Parkour climbing structures have been eliminated from the design. The updated design moves the accessible playhouses to the area where the nest was located (now eliminated) in the 2018 HAWP.



= Feature has been eliminated
 = Feature (accessible playhouses) has changed location



REVIEWED
 By Winnie Cargill at 7:35 am, Jan 18, 2023

APPROVED
 Montgomery County
 Historic Preservation Commission

2022
 Plan



Playhouses (moved)



ELIMINATED: Nest Swing



ELIMINATED: Nest

NRO854
Parkour 004

KOMPAN!

Elevated Activities: 0	Accessible Elevated Activities	Accessible Ground Level Activities	Accessible Ground Level Play Types
Present	0	4	2
Required	0	2	2

ELIMINATED: Parkour

REVIEWED
 By Winnie Cargill at 7:32 am, Jan 18, 2023

APPROVED
 Montgomery County
 Historic Preservation Commission

- 4) **Shade sails have been added to the water and sand play area, and the location has shifted slightly.** To make the sand play area more comfortable in the hotter months, shade sails have been added. The shade sails themselves are temporary and will be removed seasonally (likely November – April). The posts supporting the sails will be set in concrete. The shade sails will be a neutral beige color.

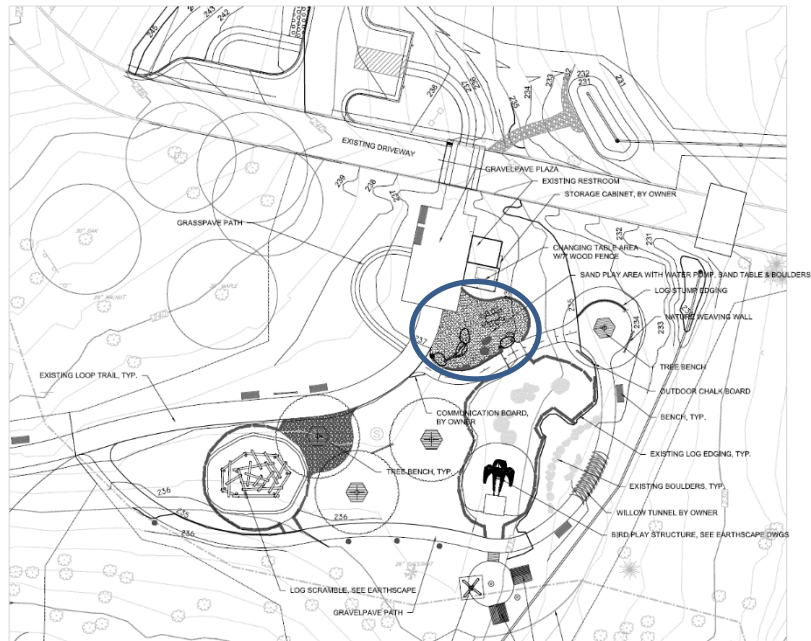


2018
Plan

Audubon
Naturalist
Society
Connects people with
nature in the DC Region.

0 = Sand Play Location

REVIEWED
 By Winnie Cargill at 7:31 am, Jan 18, 2023



2022
Plan

APPROVED
 Montgomery County
 Historic Preservation Commission
Robert A. [Signature]



Seasonal shade sails have been added to provide shade for sand play in the warmer months (May – October).

REVIEWED

By Winnie Cargill at 7:31 am, Jan 18, 2023



Work Item 2: Changing Name on Entry Signs

Description of Current Condition: There are two entry signs to the Woodend Nature Sanctuary that include the name of the organization which were approved with a December 2015 Historic Area Work Permit. One is at the Jones Mill Road entrance, south of the drive, and one is at the Brierly Road entrance, north of the drive.



Jones Mill Road Sign



Brierly Road Sign

Proposed Work: The brick sign pillars will not change and the new signs will be the same size and format. The material will remain wood with a painted white background and black engraved lettering. The names will change as follows:



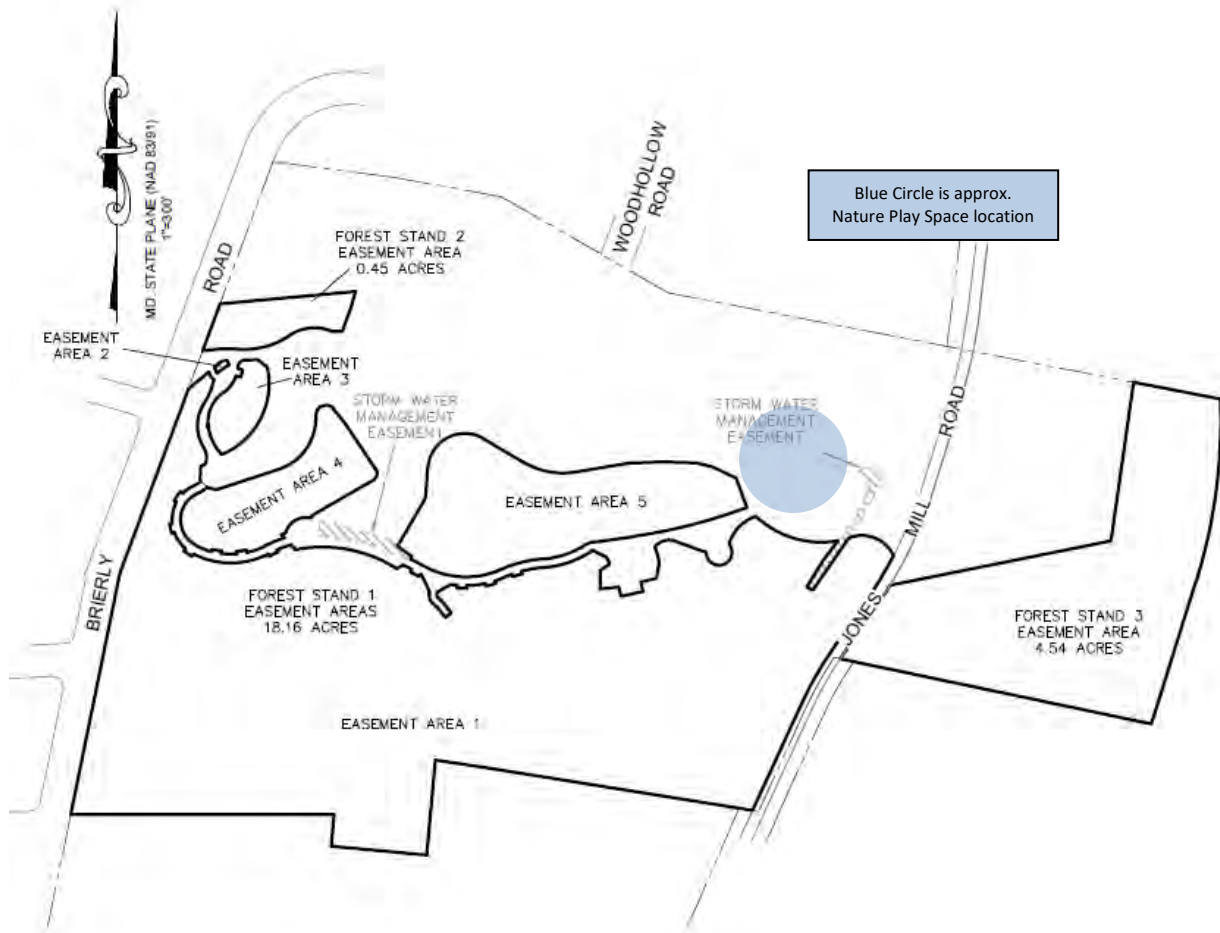
Jones Mill Road Sign



Brierly Road Sign

Tree Survey

No new tree removals are planned to complete the installation of the Nature Play Space and new signs. 41 additional trees and 70 additional shrubs will be planted after the play features are installed. As part of the Nature for All HAWP that was approved in 2018, Nature Forward placed 23.11 acres of Woodend’s forest into permanent forest conservation easement with Montgomery County. The easement areas do not overlap with the Nature Play Space.



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 the Woodend plans. To date, we have held 13 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 wayfinding signage. Nature Forward looks forward to better serving residents of Montgomery County of all abilities with the completion of our Nature for All project.