



March 14, 2014

Mr. Randy Clay, AICP
Planner
Howard County Department of Planning & Zoning
3430 Court House Drive
Ellicott City, MD 21043

Dear Mr. Clay:

Thank you for the minutes of the Howard County Design Advisory Panel's February 26, 2014 review of the Inner Arbor Trust's designs for Merriweather Park in the Merriweather-Symphony Woods Neighborhood #14-02 (SDP).

In addition to voting unanimously to endorse the Trust's Park plan, the Design Advisory Panel suggested, "That the applicant review the scale of the width of, particularly, the central walkway that comes opposite the Mall bringing folks into Merriweather, to see that it's appropriately sized to accommodate numerous folks that come that way."

We have widened to 10 feet (from 8 feet) the central walkway, from the Song Cycles entrance along Little Patuxent Parkway to the branching point, after which both paths are 8 feet (for 16 feet of total circulation width). The Design Advisory Panel's suggestion has prompted me to illustrate the Trust's analysis of the Park's pedestrian circulation capacity.

The biggest peak demand on the Park's pedestrian circulation system will be when a Merriweather Post Pavilion capacity crowd "dumps" at the end of a sold-out event of 19,000 people. (In the past, about five larger festivals have attracted more guests; though, "hardwiring" the pedestrian infrastructure into the landscape to accommodate these five events would significantly degrade the Park experience the remaining 360 days a year.)

The Trust's Industrial Engineering & Research consultant, Integrated Insight, Inc. of Orlando, calculates the Theoretical Hourly Capacity (THC) to be in excess of 800 people per hour, per foot of pedestrian circulation width, when crowds exit in a unidirectional manner at the end of a high density event such as a concert. With the adjustment cited above, the Park path plan has a combined 30 feet of path circulation width to and from Little Patuxent Parkway. Additionally, Free To Be Dr., the Trust's private access road immediately to the west of Land Horns path, is designed to be 22 feet wide and will be used for unidirectional event pedestrian exiting, as it is used today.

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Hence, with a total of 52 feet of circulation width, the SDP portion of the Merriweather Park plan has a projected peak unidirectional pedestrian exiting of more than 40,000 people per hour on paved surfaces, or more than 13,000 people in a 20 minute period, which is a reasonable exiting duration for a sold-out event in which many people leave early and many people linger.

To put this into context, the Trust's Park plan, which connects with Little Patuxent Parkway to the north, handles about 70% of all of Merriweather Post Pavilion peak exiting; yet, the vast majority of concert parking is to the south and west. In other words, the Trust's Park circulation capacity is very ample, with the understood exception of festivals, which by both definition and by planning, are special "outlier" cases.

Please let me know if you have any questions on the above analysis.

Sincerely,



Michael S. McCall
President and CEO