



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

Office of the Planning Director  
Prince George's County Planning Department

14741 Governor Oden Bowie Drive  
Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772  
TTY: (301) 952-4366  
[www.mncppc.org/pgco](http://www.mncppc.org/pgco)  
301-952-3595

September 6, 2016

Ms. Denice Curry  
Prince George's County Department of the Environment  
9200 Basil Court, Suite 300  
Largo, MD 20774

**RE: Western Branch Composting Facility  
Visitor Center (MR-1618A)**

Dear Ms. Curry:

The Prince George's County Planning Department appreciates the opportunity to comment on the proposed new one-story modular building to be located at 6550 S.E. Crain Highway, Upper Marlboro, Maryland. The subject property contains approximately 216.17 acres in the R-O-S (Reserved Open Space) Zone. It is owned by the County and is used by the Maryland Environmental Service (MES), contractor of the Department of the Environment (DoE), as the Western Branch Composting Facility, a primary organics composting facility. The site is currently developed with multiple modular buildings and compost fields. The proposed project will involve an installation of an approximately 1,496-square-foot, 13.5-foot-high modular building adjacent to an existing office building in the northern portion of the site. The building will be used as a visitor center and will replace the 22-year old modular unit that was used as a visitor center until it was demolished several months ago. The project is being reviewed pursuant to the Mandatory Referral review process defined in the Land Use Article §20-301 through 305 of the Maryland Annotated Code.

Staff has reviewed the proposed project and submitted the following recommendations:

- An approved Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) will be needed if the site is required to obtain local stormwater management and sediment and erosion control review prior to the approval of any grading permits for this site. Because the proposed installation will be located on existing asphalt with no impact to woodlands or other regulated environmental features, the project qualifies for an NRI Equivalency Letter (NRI-EL).
- The location of the proposed structure will be on an existing asphalt surface and will not impact any woodlands. Because no previous Tree Conservation Plans were approved for the site and because the project does not require woodland clearing, the project qualifies for a numbered exemption from the Woodland and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Ordinance (WCO). An exemption letter will be required to be submitted for local permits.
- Instructions for the preparation and submission of an NRI-EL and a WCO exemption request can be found in the Prince George's County Environmental Technical Manual (ETM).

- The applicant should consider landscaping with native plant materials, accessible walkways, benches, lighting, trash cans, and other appropriate site amenities. Providing native shade tree, ornamental or evergreen trees, and foundation plantings around the proposed modular building would enhance the aesthetics and reduce the heat island effects.
- Clarification of the proposed parking areas and accessible pedestrian walkways from the parking areas and office building to the proposed modular building should be provided on the site plan.

For your information, all Planning Department staff comments are enclosed with this letter.

Thank you again for allowing us the opportunity to comment on this proposed project. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Gül Güleriyüz, Planner Coordinator, Special Projects Section, Countywide Planning Division, at 301-952-4982 or via email at [gul.guleryuz@ppd.mncppc.org](mailto:gul.guleryuz@ppd.mncppc.org).

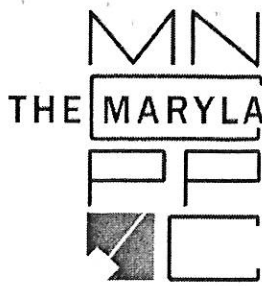
Sincerely,



Debra Borden  
Acting Planning Director

Enclosures

c: Randy Bolt, Maryland Environmental Service  
Tim Brownell, Maryland Environmental Service  
Marilyn Rybak, Recycling Section Manager, Prince George's County Department of the Environment  
Redis C. Floyd, Clerk of the Council, Prince George's County Council  
Derick Berlage, Chief, Countywide Planning Division  
Maria Martin, Planning Supervisor, Special Projects Section, Countywide Planning Division  
Gül Güleriyüz, Planner Coordinator, Special Projects Section, Countywide Planning Division  
Lori Smothers, General Counsel's Office



# THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

Prince George's County Planning Department  
Community Planning Division


14741 Governor Oden Bowie Drive  
Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772  
TTY: (301) 952-4366  
www.mncppc.org/pgco


301-952-3972

August 24, 2016

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Gul Guleryuz, Planner Coordinator, Countywide Planning Division

VIA: Ivy A. Lewis, Chief, Community Planning Division 

FROM: Michael Zamore, Acting Planning Supervisor, Community Planning Division 

SUBJECT: **Mandatory Referral No. 1618A**, Western Branch Composting Facility Visitor's Center

## DETERMINATIONS

General Plan: The proposal is not inconsistent with the Plan Prince George's 2035 General Plan Development Pattern policies for the Rural and Agricultural Areas.

Master Plan: This application is not inconsistent with the land use recommendations of the 2013 *Approved Subregion 6 Master Plan* and *Sectional Map Amendment*, which is the prevailing plan.

## BACKGROUND

Location: The visitor's center will be located on the Western Branch Composting Facility property at 6550 SE Crain Highway in Upper Marlboro.

Size: 216.17 acres

Existing Uses: Partly developed

Proposal: Construct a one-story modular building to be used as a visitor's center.

## GENERAL PLAN, MASTER PLAN AND SMA

General Plan: Plan Prince George's 2035 General Plan shows the property in the Rural and Agricultural Areas policy area.

<b>Master Plan:</b>	<i>2013 Approved Subregion 6 Master Plan and Sectional Map Amendment.</i>
Planning Area/ Community:	PA 82B (Mount Calvert-Nottingham)
Land Use:	The 2013 <i>Approved Subregion 6 Master Plan and Sectional Map Amendment</i> identifies the area's future land use as Institutional.
Environmental:	Refer to the Environmental Planning Section referral for comments on the environmental elements of the 2013 <i>Approved Subregion 6 Master Plan and Sectional Map Amendment</i> and the 2005 <i>Approved Countywide Green Infrastructure Plan</i> .
Historic Resources:	None identified on the site but the Approved Master Plan of Transportation lists Chew Road less than a mile away, as a Scenic and Historic Road.
Parks & Trails:	No parks or trails are identified on this site but the site is in proximity to Patuxent River Park.
<b>SMA/Zoning:</b>	The 2013 <i>Approved Subregion 6 Master Plan and Sectional Map Amendment</i> shows this property in the ROS (Reserved Open Space) Zone.
<b>Aviation Policy:</b>	The subject property is not within the Military Installation Overlay Zone (MIOZ).

#### PLANNING ISSUES

There are no planning issues

c: Ivy A. Lewis, Chief, Community Planning Division  
Betty Carlson-Jameson, Planner Coordinator, Community Planning Division  
Long-range Agenda Notebook

Countywide Planning Division  
Environmental Planning Section  
301-952-3650

August 24, 2016

TO: Gül Güleriyüz, Planner Coordinator, Special Projects Section

VIA: Katina Shoulars, Supervisor, Environmental Planning Section  
Megan Reiser, Planner Coordinator, Environmental Planning Section

FROM: Thomas Burke, Senior Planner, Environmental Planning Section

SUBJECT: MR-1618A Western Branch Composting Facility Visitor's Center

The Environmental Planning Section has reviewed the Application for Mandatory Review dated August 10, 2016 for the Western Branch Composting Facility Visitor's Center. The following comments, based on a review of the submitted application and other available information, are provided for your consideration.

**Background**

This Administrative Mandatory Referral case is for the installation of a one-story modular building at the existing composting facility, located at 6550 SE Crain Highway in Upper Marlboro. No other previous environmental reviews have occurred on this site.

**Proposed Activity**

The Maryland Environmental Service is proposing to install a 1,496 square foot, one-story modular building on the property, to serve as a visitor's center. The building will be placed on an existing asphalt surface, adjacent to the existing office building in the northern portion of the site.

**Site Description**

The proposed modular building will be located at the existing composting facility, located at 6550 SE Crain Highway in Upper Marlboro. A review of the available information indicates that no streams or wetlands are found within the project area, but there are streams, wetlands, and Wetlands of Special State Concern on the overall property. The predominant soils found to occur within the project area according to the USDA NRCS Web Soil Survey are Marr-Dodon complex soils series. Based on available information, Marlboro clay is not mapped within the project area, however it is mapped on the overall property. According to the Sensitive Species Project Review Area (SSSPRA) map received from the Maryland Department of Natural Resources Natural Heritage Program, there are no rare, threatened, or endangered species areas mapped within the project area; however, areas of sensitive species are mapped on the overall property. The proposed location of the building is shown along a mapped drainage divide; north of the building location drains to the Western Branch and south of the building drains to the Charles Branch, both of which are within the Patuxent River watershed. According to the adopted Countywide Green Infrastructure Plan, all three network features (Regulated Areas, Evaluation Areas and Network

Gaps) are present on the site, however none are located at the project location. The site has an address along Crain Highway (MD 301); however, it fronts on a local road mapped as both Maude Savoy Brown Road and W.S.S.C. Treatment Plant Road. Portions of the property are located within the Resource Conservation Overlay (RCO) zone of the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area (CBCA); however, the project area is located outside of the limits of the CBCA. The portion of the property located within the CBCA is located within Environmental Strategy Area (ESA) 4 and the project area of the property is located in ESA 3 as designated by Plan Prince George's 2035 Approved General Plan.

## **Environmental Review**

### **Existing Conditions/Natural Resources Inventory**

An approved Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) will be required if the site is required to obtain local stormwater management and sediment and erosion control review prior to the approval of any grading permits for this site. Because the proposed installation will be located on existing asphalt with no impact to woodlands or other regulated environmental features, the project qualifies for an NRI Equivalency Letter (NRI-EL).

Instructions for the preparation and submission of an NRI-EL can be found in the Prince George's County Environmental Technical Manual (ETM).

**Comment:** No additional information with regard to existing conditions is required at this time.

### **Forest Conservation**

The location of the proposed structure will be on an existing asphalt surface and will not impact any woodlands. Because no previous Tree Conservation Plans have been approved for the site and because the project does not require woodland clearing, the project qualifies for a numbered exemption from the Woodland and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Ordinance (WCO). An exemption letter will be required to be submitted for local permits.

Instructions for the preparation and submission of a WCO exemption request can be found in the Prince George's County Environmental Technical Manual (ETM).

**Comment:** No additional information with regard to Forest Conservation is required at this time.

### **Preservation and/or Restoration of Regulated Environmental Features**

If regulated environmental features are present, the development is required to preserve and/or restore to the fullest extent possible.

All impacts to streams, wetlands and associated buffers should be avoided or minimized where possible. The proposed site contains mapped regulated environmental features, however the project area will be on an existing asphalt surface and will not impact any regulated environmental features.

**Comment:** No additional information with regard to impacts is required at this time.

**Chaconas, Sheila**

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**Subject:** FW: MR Request—Western Branch Composting Facility Visitor's Center (MR-1618A)

**RESPONSE FROM HISTORIC PRESERVATION SECTION**

**From:** Stabler, Jennifer  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 16, 2016 8:39 AM  
**To:** Guleryuz, Gul <Gul.Guleryuz@ppd.mncppc.org>; Krause, Robert <Robert.Krause@ppd.mncppc.org>  
**Cc:** Berger, Howard <Howard.Berger@ppd.mncppc.org>  
**Subject:** RE: MR Request—Western Branch Composting Facility Visitor's Center (MR-1618A)

Gül,

This project will not impact any archeological resources.

Jennifer Stabler  
Archeology Planner Coordinator  
M-NCPPC Historic Preservation Section  
14741 Governor Oden Bowie Drive  
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772  
(Office) 301-952-5595  
(Fax) 301-952-3799

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**From:** Guleryuz, Gul  
**Sent:** Monday, August 15, 2016 2:12 PM  
**To:** Krause, Robert  
**Cc:** Stabler, Jennifer; Berger, Howard  
**Subject:** RE: MR Request—Western Branch Composting Facility Visitor's Center (MR-1618A)

Thank you so much.

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**From:** Krause, Robert  
**Sent:** Monday, August 15, 2016 12:51 PM  
**To:** Guleryuz, Gul  
**Cc:** Stabler, Jennifer; Berger, Howard  
**Subject:** RE: MR Request—Western Branch Composting Facility Visitor's Center (MR-1618A)

No I've taken a look at the maps and the project information and have no further comment. I can summarize in a message back to you once Jennifer and I meet.

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**From:** Guleryuz, Gul  
**Sent:** Monday, August 15, 2016 10:59 AM  
**To:** Krause, Robert  
**Cc:** Stabler, Jennifer; Berger, Howard  
**Subject:** RE: MR Request—Western Branch Composting Facility Visitor's Center (MR-1618A)

Hi Robert,

Thank you very much. These sites will be included in the application.

### **Noise**

The application includes a proposal to install a visitor's center for the composting operation. No residential uses are proposed. Noise mitigation analysis and mitigation is not required at this time.

**Comment:** No additional information regarding noise is required.

### **Stormwater Management**

A stormwater management concept letter and plan were not included with the application. The approval of stormwater management is under the authority for review and approval of the Department of Permitting, Inspection and Enforcement's Site/Road Plan Review Division.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Western Branch Composting Facility Visitor's Center. If you have questions regarding these comments, please contact the Environmental Planning Section at 301-952-3650.



I assume that HP will provide additional comments when Jennifer returns from vacation. Will you have anything to add too?

Gül

**From:** Krause, Robert

**Sent:** Thursday, August 11, 2016 4:19 PM

**To:** Guleryuz, Gul

**Cc:** Stabler, Jennifer; Berger, Howard

**Subject:** RE: MR Request—Western Branch Composting Facility Visitor's Center (MR-1618A)

Hi Gül,

In reviewing the proposed project, it should be noted by the applicant that the proposed site is less than one mile from two County-designated Historic Sites:

- Chew's Bridge (Historic Site #82A-035)
- Billingsley (Historic Site #82B)

And less than one mile from two County-designated Historic Resources:

- Archeological Site #126, Western Branch (Historic Resource #82B-026)
- Archeological Site #128, Billingsley (Historic Resource #82B-027)

Acknowledgement of these Historic Sites and Historic Resources should be noted within the application materials. I will defer to Jennifer Stabler for comment on potential below-ground impact associated with this project.

Thanks,  
Robert



Robert Krause, Ph.D  
Planner Coordinator-Historic Preservation Section  
M-NCPPC  
14741 Governor Oden Bowie Drive  
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772  
Office: 301-952-5395  
[Robert.Krause@ppd.mncppc.org](mailto:Robert.Krause@ppd.mncppc.org)

**Chaconas, Sheila**

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**Subject:** FW: REMINDER: Due on Wednesday—Western Branch Composting Facility Visitor's Center (MR-1618A)

**RESPONSE FROM PUBLIC FACILITIES**

**From:** Mangalvedhe, Jay

**Sent:** Monday, August 22, 2016 2:04 PM

**To:** Guleryuz, Gul <Gul.Guleryuz@ppd.mncppc.org>

**Subject:** RE: REMINDER: Due on Wednesday—Western Branch Composting Facility Visitor's Center (MR-1618A)

No comments from PF.

**Chaconas, Sheila**

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**Subject:** FW: REMINDER: Due on Wednesday—Western Branch Composting Facility Visitor's Center (MR-1618A)

**RESPONSE FROM TRANSPORTATION SECTION**

**From:** Janousek, Daniel

**Sent:** Tuesday, August 23, 2016 11:03 AM

**To:** Guleryuz, Gul <Gul.Guleryuz@ppd.mncppc.org>; Rowe, Brandon(Scott) <Brandon.Rowe@ppd.mncppc.org>; Krause, Robert <Robert.Krause@ppd.mncppc.org>; Shoulars, Katina <Katina.Shoulars@ppd.mncppc.org>; Mangalvedhe, Jay <Jay.Mangalvedhe@ppd.mncppc.org>

**Cc:** Fields, Ernest <Ernest.Fields@ppd.mncppc.org>; Martin, Maria <Maria.Martin@ppd.mncppc.org>

**Subject:** RE: REMINDER: Due on Wednesday—Western Branch Composting Facility Visitor's Center (MR-1618A)

Gul,

The Transportation Section will not be providing comments on this application. There are no impacts to master-planned transportation facilities that require analysis, and there are no recommendations from staff at this time.

V/R (Very Respectfully)

Dan

August 17, 2016

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Gül Güleriyüz, Planner Coordinator  
Special Projects Section, Countywide Planning

**VIA:** Susan Lareuse, Master Planner, Urban Design Section

**FROM:** Jill Kosack, Planner Coordinator, Urban Design Section

**SUBJECT:** Mandatory Referral MR-1618A  
Western Branch Composting Facility Visitor's Center

The Urban Design Section has reviewed materials provided in support of MR-1618A, Western Branch Composting Facility Visitor's Center, proposed to be located at 6550 S.E. Crain Highway, Upper Marlboro, Maryland. The subject property contains approximately 216.17 acres in the R-O-S (Reserved Open Space) Zone and is located on the south side of W.S.S.C Treatment Plan Road, approximately 2,400 feet southeast of its intersection with US 301. The large site is generally bordered by a vacant property in the R-O-S and O-S (Open Space) Zone; to the northeast is a W.S.S.C. treatment plant and in the western end of the property is a property developed with a Maryland State Highway Administration garage. The project is being reviewed pursuant to the Land Use Article §20-301 through 305 of the Maryland Annotated Code that requires the Planning Board to review public construction projects for all federal, state, county and municipal governments, and publicly and privately-owned utilities through the Mandatory Referral review process.

The subject property is owned by the County and is used by the Maryland Environmental Service (MES), contractor of the Department of the Environment (DoE), as the Western Branch Composting Facility, a primary yard waste recycling facility. The site is currently developed with multiple modular buildings and compost fields. The current proposal is to add an approximate 1,496-square-foot, 13.5-foot-high modular building for a visitor's center, adjacent to an existing office building in the northern portion of the site.

The Urban Design Section offers the following recommendations regarding the proposed project:

1. The proposed modular building will be placed in a paved area of the site, adjacent to the existing office. It will be screened from adjacent uses and the public road by existing vegetation around the edge of the large property.
2. A basic site plan was provided indicating the approximate building location, utility connections and major improvements, including a wooden access ramp. The Urban Design Section would suggest the applicant consider ensuring visitor comfort by providing landscaping with native plant materials, accessible walkways, benches and other appropriate site amenities.

3. It is unclear if sufficient parking will be provided for the visitor's center; however, there appears to be a large amount of paved area on the property that could serve as parking as needed. Clarification should be provided on the site plan.
4. The applicant provided images of the already purchased modular building. The Urban Design Section has no comments on the design given the utilitarian nature of the use.

## **Conclusion**

The Urban Design Section offers the following suggestions:

1. Provide native shade trees, ornamental or evergreen trees, and foundation plantings around the proposed modular building to enhance the aesthetics and reduce the heat island effects.
2. Clarify the proposed parking areas and provide accessible pedestrian walkways from the parking areas and office building to the proposed modular building.
3. Consider providing site amenities around the modular building, such as benches, lighting and trash cans, depending on the proposed site programming.