



The Crescent

THE COALITION FOR THE CAPITAL CRESCENT TRAIL

WINTER 2011

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DESIGN:

Linda Rapp Design

PRINTING:

Ecoprint

Printed using 100% Wind Power on 100% post-consumer recycled paper, process chlorine free.



CCCT Annual Meeting / June 13, 2011

by Ron Tripp, Chair

Your Board and a variety of members met in Elm Street Park in Bethesda on June 13th for the Annual Meeting of the Coalition For The Capital Crescent Trail. The weather was great, and food and beverage plentiful. We were joined by guests from the Parks Department of Montgomery County including Parks Director Mary Bradford, and Parks Police Chief Darien Manley.

The meeting included a briefing by Greg Drury, the chair of our subcommittee on the Light Rail issues. As many are aware from media reports, the Purple line is now delayed until at least 2015, with completion not until at least five years later. The subcommittee will continue to follow this issue.

Peter Gray reported on the River Road Plaza project, a project that CCCT has been working on for years and is now closer to finally seeing construction.

In response to the dangers involved with Trail users crossing four lanes of traffic at Little Falls Parkway, as well as accidents at this crossing, Chief Manley, of the County Park Police, sought to improve the crossing with a design that slows bikes and improves the sight lines between Trail users and motorists. After discussions with the CCCT Board, preliminary designs were reworked prior to construction. The Board doesn't necessarily endorse the changes, but we do agree with the Chief's safety concerns and support his efforts to improve safety at this crossing.

CCCT has held several Bells-n-Whistles give-a-ways this year and will continue them about once a month. Watch the website for details. The give-a-ways are usually held on a weekend morning near the Bethesda Rest Plaza.

Lot 31 & 31A, the County parking lots next to Trail by car dealer at Bethesda Ave and Woodmont, will be developed soon. Minor modifications were made recently to the development plan, and the parking lot could soon be a construction site.

A developer hopes to construct Town houses on site of old cement block plant between the Trail and Little Falls Parkway, West of River Rd. They have an agreement for access across parkland and the Little Falls stream to get to the property from Little Falls Parkway. In exchange they will be giving the County a like amount of property along the Trail. They will also want access to the Trail from the development, and they are willing to help with the River Road Plaza project.

Staffers from Roger Berliner's office have been working with CCCT and the Parks Department on plans for snow removal on the Montgomery portion of the Trail. Parks Director Mary Bradford announced that they are moving forward with this idea. Hopefully we'll have a plan in place before winter.

The existing Board, with the exception of Pat Baptiste, has expressed interest in continuing on the Board. As a Board, we offered no other candidates. Anyone interested in joining the Board is encouraged to attend our Board meetings. The Board also honored Pat for her service and dedication to the Capital Crescent Trail.

The following present Board members were offered as a slate for the Board for the next year: Peter Gray, Jenny Sue Dunner, Tony Marra, Wayne Phyllaier, Charlie Wellander, Jennifer Longsworth, Greg Drury, John Dugger and Ron Tripp. The Board was elected by acclamation. At the July meeting, the Board elected the following officers for the next year: Ron Tripp, Chair, Tony Marra, Vice Chair; Wayne Phyllaier, Treasurer; Jennifer Longsworth, Secretary.



River Road Plaza UPDATE

The Coalition has been telling you, our members, that we are on the verge of submitting our plans for a Plaza/Rest Area at River Road and the Trail to the Montgomery County Planning Board. In fact, we have been telling you this for many, many months. We have been very busy throughout this period of time, obtaining the necessary permits and agreements with various government agencies and working with some private parties next to the proposed Plaza in order to make the plan a reality. We are very proud of the plan, drafted by our landscape architect consultant, Professor Iris Miller of Catholic University, that has been shown to members of the surrounding neighborhood associations and to some adjacent businesses. We have obtained commitments for funding from some private entities, including the Washington Episcopal School, American Plant, and others. The one significant remaining issue that needs to be resolved before going to the Planning Board is funding the monies needed to maintain the new park once it is built. We have been advised that the Parks staff have estimated this maintenance budget to be over \$12,000 per year. The new Parks policy is to obtain guarantees for that funding for up to 20 years. CCCT Board members and park staff are still in discussions about the annual amount and the number of years that must be guaranteed. Planning staff is also in discussions with certain adjacent property owners in the hope that they might fund all or part of the annual maintenance needs in return for use of Park land adjacent to the Trail but not needed for the Plaza plan. The issues are somewhat complicated, but please stay tuned. The Coalition may need to appeal to CCCT members, other Trail user groups, surrounding neighborhood associations, and nearby businesses in order to raise funds that will cover the annual maintenance needs of the new Plaza. We are confident that the plan for the Plaza will still be submitted to the Planning Board and that it will become a wonderful new jewel in the CCCT crown.

THE COALITION FOR THE CAPITAL CRESCENT TRAIL

Board Members 2011-12

Ron Tripp, Chair
 Tony Marra, Vice Chair
 Jennifer Longsworth, Secretary
 Wayne Phyllaier, Treasurer
 Greg Drury
 John Dugger
 Jenny Sue Dunner
 Peter Gray
 Charlie Wellander

The Crescent is published three times a Board year (June-June) by the Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail (CCCT), P.O. Box 30703, Bethesda, MD 20824, phone (202) 234-4874.

CCCT is a non-profit citizens' group promoting a first class development of the 11.2 mile rail-to-Trail conversion from Georgetown, D.C. to Silver Spring, MD for multi-purpose, recreational use.

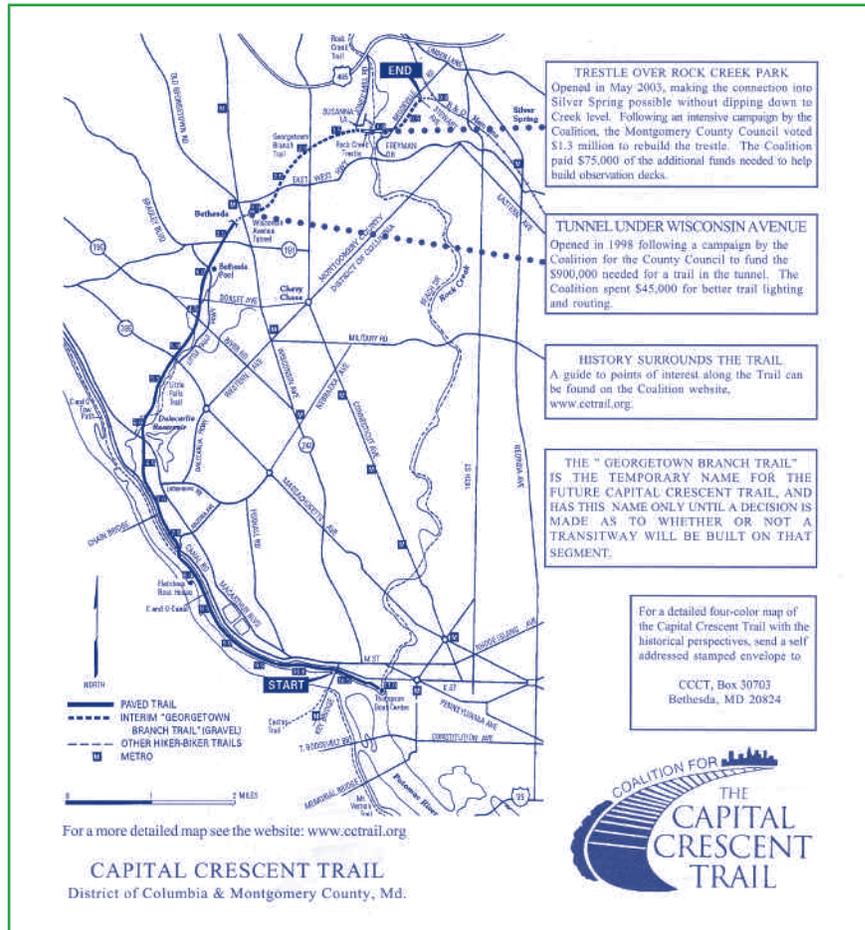
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We request that all submissions for The Crescent be sent to the post office box or e-mail noted below.

CONTACT THE CCCT:
contact@cctrail.org
 P.O. Box 30703
 Bethesda, MD 20824
 202-234-4874

VISIT OUR WEBSITE:
www.cctrail.org
 for Trail updates and events!



Whole Foods Community Giving Day Benefits the River Road Plaza



Whole Foods Bethesda held a local 5% Community Giving Day on 6/1/2011 benefiting The Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail and the River Road Trail Plaza Project.

Whole Foods has donated \$5,387.65 from that event. This is our biggest single donation to date for the River Road Plaza. Thank you Whole Foods, and thanks to all the CCT supporters who made a point of shopping at Whole Foods Bethesda to support us on their Community Giving Day.

The CCCT has been blessed by the support of many donors over the years. This strong support has allowed us to build our cash reserves so that we can plan toward making an approx. \$80,000 commitment to partially pay for the River Road Plaza Project. This critical commitment would not be possible without that strong donor support.

We would like to recognize and publicly thank a few of our recent largest donors:

\$500 donors: The Sanders Foundation, and Peggy Young

Donors of \$200 or more: Ted Alden and Fiona James, Blake Biles and Laura Sessums, Barry and Keiko Bretschneider, John Ellicott, Walter Jung, Paul Lang and Joan Barron, Eric and Pamela Melby, Sara and Arne Paulson, Charles Pekow, John Rowe and Nancy Chesser, Mike and Caroline Ryschkewitsch, Sandy and Lewis Schneider, Westmoreland Hills Garden Club.

We receive hundreds of smaller donations each year, and these make up the majority of our annual income – we are as appreciative of our smaller donors even though we cannot name them all here.



We hope to receive final permission to proceed with the River Road Plaza project soon. CCCT has already committed to funding the core of this project, but we still need donations toward additional features such as a water fountain, more seating, and more landscaping. CCCT will be reaching out to the community with information about these sponsorship opportunities as we move into the final stages of the project.

Light Rail Committee <http://www.purplelinemd.com/>

To obtain up-to-date information about the Purple Line, please use the website noted above, which is administered by the Maryland Transit Authority and endorsed by Governor Martin O'Malley. As you will see, the website contains a wealth of information, including details about upcoming community meetings and summary briefings on meetings that have already occurred.

The CCCT's position on the Purple Line is neutral. The main mission of our Light Rail Committee is to ensure and maintain the user friendliness and safety of the Trail for CCCT's faithful users. To be sure, controversial issues do arise in our meetings from time to time including the costs associated with recommended changes to the Trail for which CCCT may be liable, proposed designs that impede Trail safety, and the access to or usefulness of the Trail. We encourage you to attend neighborhood meetings, which are often informative and revealing. Any meeting that involves future Trail development (whether in conjunction with a rail stop or a pass thru) raises many viewpoints. In light of the mission stated above, any proposed Trail development that anticipates structural changes, increases in traffic flow and/or business development warrants our

attention. The Purple Line/Light Rail Project will effect numerous neighborhoods, existing business centers, traffic, parking, environmental initiatives, and economic development. In the name of progress, we pray that this is not only an urban step forward in Smart Growth, but also a launching pad for a more successful Capital Crescent Trail.

If you have more ideas or would like to consider being invited to a Light Rail Committee meeting held by us, or being on the CCCT Light Rail Committee – please contact Greg.Drury@gmail.com or **202-674-8102**.

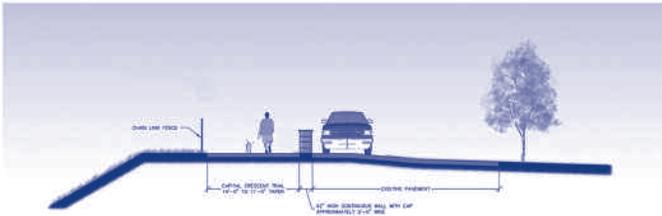
Thank You!

for all the Bells & Whistles expressions of support from patrons on the Trail during our occasional Saturday Morning safety day.

It's a great chance for our Board members to meet Trail users in person and hear their praises and concerns.

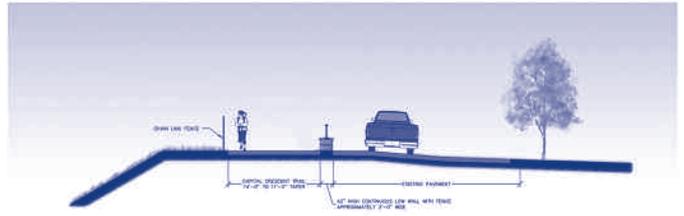
SOUTHWEST RIVER ROAD CAR BARRIER PLANS

Cross Sections



42" CONTINUOUS WALL WITH CAP

SCALE: 1" = 5'



42" CONTINUOUS LOW WALL WITH FENCE

SCALE: 1" = 5'

Peter and Ron,

I am working on a project to build a barrier between the road and the CCT south of River Road. The location is where the River Road bridge ends and the Trail is at grade with the access road. We have had serious problems with vehicles and trucks crossing onto the Trail at that point. I have spoken to you in the past about this project. We have decided that a solid barrier is needed to maintain the safety of the Trail users. I have attached the plans and cross section of this project. It should also help deal with the encroachment issues in the area. We want to make the wall solid but attractive. To that end, the wall will be built out of concrete filled masonry units. On the surface, we will place a veneer of cultured stone. The image Board shows a number of styles available with different color schemes that can be chosen. I was thinking that a mix of tan to match the bridge with brown and gray.

Some of the features include having our maintenance and safety vehicles enter under the bridge near River Road. They will then use the side Trail to access the path. We are only placing a 8' side entrance within the wall for any possible pedestrian access. The Trail will be widen as much as possible near the bridge and taper back down to 10' near the end. From the wall, we will extend a chain link fence along our property line to better define the park.

The cross sections shows two options. The top solid wall is staff's preference but placing a small fence on top is possible. Since the wall will only be 42" from the surface of the Trail, you would not have that closed in feeling. The plans do not show any landscaping at this time. That plan is still to be developed. We plan to add curb and gutter at the section under the bridge and plant grass to prevent illegal parking that is presently occurring.

We request your input on the plans before we move into final design. If you would like full size plans, please provide an address and I can send them to you. Let me know if you have any questions or would like to meet. We hope to have this under construction this summer or fall.

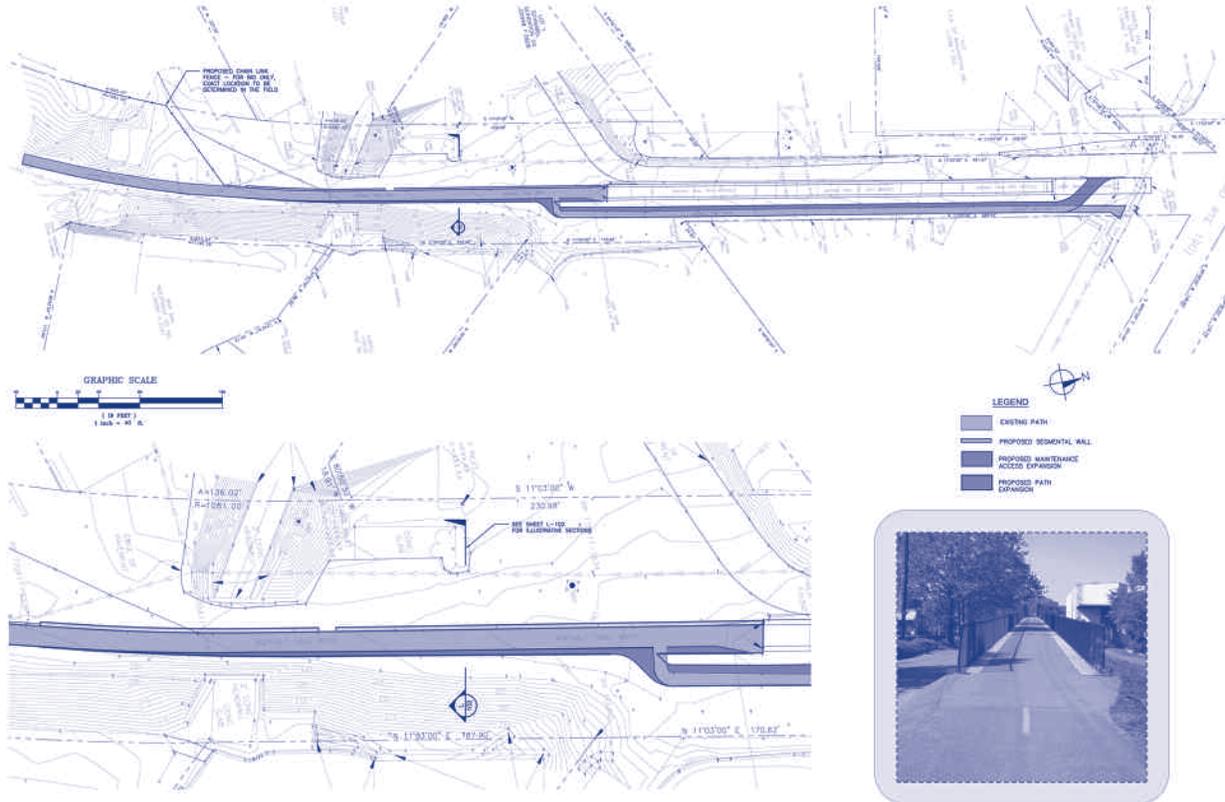
Thanks,

Marian

Marian S. Elsasser
Landscape Architect
Park Development Division
Montgomery County Department of Parks
M-NCPPC

SOUTHWEST RIVER ROAD CAR BARRIER PLANS

Design Concept - Wall Alignment



Dear Ms. Bradford,

The Coalition for The Capital Crescent Trail (CCCT) has noted with appreciation three recent developments which have helped to improve safety, or significantly improved Trail access.

The first of these, the stairway at Mile 5.3, where a rough Trail from Sumner Village intersects the Capital Crescent Trail (CCT), was completed about three years ago and has provided important access for the residents of Sumner Village, most of which were physically unable to navigate the steep bank up to the CCT.

The second is the replacement of the wooden stairway leading to the CCT from the bottom of Brookeway Drive by a paved Trail that provides a gentle grade, which now permits parents with small children in strollers to make an easy climb up to the Trail (one local resident with Parkinson's disease has found that it is now possible to get his recumbent bicycle to the Trail via the new route).

The third is the improved crossing of Little Falls Parkway with a design which provides much greater safety for both pedestrians and bicyclists, which Chief Manley had advocated on behalf of.

These improvements were made with excellent designs with landscaping appropriate to their surroundings and preserving the natural beauty of the park.

On behalf of the Coalition and the many Trail users who now benefit from these improvements, please convey our appreciation to the responsible members of your staff.

Sincerely,

Ron

Ron Tripp

Chair, Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail

Two visions for Chevy Chase Lake

Chevy Chase Lake is where the Interim CCT crosses Connecticut Avenue. It now has a collection of small businesses including Starbucks, two gas stations, a supermarket, a lumberyard, and the 13 story Chevy Chase Land Company office building that has City Bikes at the ground level. HOC residential buildings along Chevy Chase Lake Drive are also part of the sector.

The Purple Line will change the character of the CCT at Connecticut Avenue. As described elsewhere in this newsletter, the Purple Line is entering the Preliminary Design stage. Concept plans call for the CCT to be rebuilt alongside the light rail tracks and completed into downtown Silver Spring. At Chevy Chase Lake, the CCT will cross Connecticut Avenue on a Trail bridge alongside the Purple Line light-rail bridge. The CCT will be elevated through much of the Chevy Chase Lake sector, on the bridge over Connecticut Avenue and at the transit station platform, and on the Trail ramps that approach from both sides. Maps and graphics of the Purple Line and rebuilt CCT are available at the MTA Purple Line website, www.purplelinemd.com.

Chevy Chase Lake Redevelopment

Two competing visions:

In April 2011 the Chevy Chase Land Company (CCLC) presented its vision for redeveloping its property at Chevy Chase Lake. The CCLC vision is for a large, high-density transit oriented development project of up to 4,000,000 sq. ft. of mixed commercial/residential uses, with about 3/4 of the development being residential (up to 3000 residential units). Building heights transition from 6 stories high at the edges to up to 19 stories high near the center. The plan features a new local street grid with public spaces, an elevated public plaza at the Purple Line station, and neighborhood oriented ground-level retail.

In June 2011 M-NCPPC planning staff presented a narrated video of a very different vision for Chevy Chase Lake. The planning staff vision calls for rezoning the property to allow only a much smaller, lower density project with slightly over 1,000,000 sq. ft. of mixed use commercial/residential development (250,000 sq. ft. now and another 800,000 sq. ft. to be allowed when Purple Line construction begins). Building heights would be limited to 65 feet, only about six

stories. This planning staff preliminary recommendation would allow a project only roughly one quarter the size as that envisioned by the Chevy Chase Land Company.

Does the density at Chevy Chase Lake matter to Trail users?

The Purple Line is planned to come regardless of whether Chevy Chase Lake is redeveloped. While the Purple Line will greatly change the character of the Trail in this area, the additional impact of Chevy Chase Lake redevelopment upon the CCT will not be nearly as great. The tree loss, the Trail ramps and bridge and the connection of the Trail to the elevated Purple Line station will be the same for both low density or high density redevelopment. A high density Chevy Chase Lake redevelopment project will generate more pedestrian activity in the area, but the Trail will be elevated on the Trail ramp and bridge structures through the project area and this Trail elevation will separate it from most local pedestrian activity. Pedestrian access to the Trail will be limited to several discrete points by the elevated Trail structure. Because the CCT will be alongside the Purple Line tracks, the only place where pedestrians can cross the Trail will be on the elevated pedestrian plaza at the Purple Line station platform. Pedestrian crossing paths will be focused to only one or two points at the station for safety from transit vehicles.

Thus far the CCCT doesn't see a strong reason to enter the discussion on allowable density at Chevy Chase Lake. Most of the changes that will come to the CCT are from the Purple Line. Redevelopment of Chevy Chase Lake at either low or high density will have relatively little additional direct impact on the CCT. The members of the CCCT Board, like many Trail users and community members, have strong and diverse views about growth policy, density and transit-oriented development.

The M-NCPPC has extended the planning period for developing the Chevy Chase Lake rezoning recommendations by nine months. The Planning Board is now expected to take up the Sector Plan for approval in Sept. 2012. CCT supporters can find information on the two competing visions, the planning schedule and upcoming meeting dates at the M-NCPPC website, <http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/community/chevychaselake/>.

Reporting Trail Conditions



The Coalition regularly receives messages alerting us to conditions on the Trail. Frequent users help by keeping us posted on the conditions they encounter.

If you're on the Trail following a storm, snowfall, or other active weather, make use of our resources and let others know what you encounter. Send reports on Trail conditions or incidents on any part of the Trail (the CCT or the Interim CCT) by emailing us at: report@cctrail.org. Full names and email addresses are not posted.

You can also follow Trail reports both on the web and on Twitter. Before heading out on the Trail after weather has been active, it's a good idea to check the website, www.cctrail.org. Click on "Trail Reports" on the left side of the main page. This is where you'll find the latest reports from users. Or, follow on Twitter, [@CCTreports](https://twitter.com/CCTreports).

If you would like to help send tweets on Trail conditions, please contact us at at: report@cctrail.org. Remember, these reports are only as good as the information that we receive.

GET INVOLVED!



Consider contributing 5-10 hours a month by being a CCCT Board member – environmental committee, light rail committee and other needs. Contact Ron Tripp, R.Tripp@comcast.net or 301-237-5079.

Are you thinking of becoming a CCT commuter?

Hundreds of cyclists use the CCT every day to get to work. It is a great way to lose some weight and lighten your gasoline bill. The Washington Area Bicyclist Association has a commuter assistance program to help new cycling commuters get started. See "Getting There By Bike" at their website, www.waba.org.

Now you may donate/renew with your credit card via the CCCT web site!
Visit www.cctrail.org to use our secured method.

Yes! I want to help complete the Capital Crescent Trail and make it safer and more pleasant to use!

Name(s) _____ (H) _____ (W) _____

Address _____ Apt. _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ E-mail _____

NEW MEMBER RENEWING MEMBER

INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS:

- \$10 Basic Individual
- \$30 Contributor
- \$60 Path Finder
- \$100 Patron
- \$200 Trail Blazer
- \$500 Benefactor

A DETAILED FOUR-COLOR MAP OF THE CAPITAL CRESCENT TRAIL WITH HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES IS AVAILABLE AS A FOLDING POCKET MAP.

Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to:

Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail
P.O. Box 30703
Bethesda, MD 20824

THIS MAP IS FREE TO ALL NEW MEMBERS.

Make your tax-deductible contribution checks payable to: The Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail.
Mail to the address above. Or, visit our web site to donate/renew with a credit card.

Thanks for your efforts on behalf of the Trail! Here's an additional contribution of \$ _____ .

Membership is good for one year from the 15th day of the month that you join.

We are an all-volunteer organization.

I am interested in volunteering, contact me for: Advocacy Events Trail Maintenance

We do not share our membership list with any organization except our affiliate organization, the Washington Area Bicyclist Association. CCCT is exempt from federal taxation under section 501(c)(3) of the IRS Code and is qualified to receive tax-deductible contributions.

VISIT OUR WEB SITE, www.cctrail.org, FOR ACTION ALERTS and TRAIL UPDATES.



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Summer Work on the CCT

The Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail covers all the changes on the CCT that have been done, and what work there is still to be done, this summer.

The first to be completed was the reconstruction of the Trail crossing of Little Falls Parkway. The Trail has been realigned to replace the straight crossing with a crossing that has curves at the approaches at either side. The intent is to make Trail users slow and turn toward approaching motor vehicle traffic before entering the crossing, to increase safety.

Darian Manley, the Park Police Chief, and Doug Burton, Parks Dept., came to the April CCCT Board meeting to share sketches of a first plan. CCCT Board members present suggested several very significant changes to reduce the proposed Trail curvature and to reduce interference between Trail and swimming pool pedestrian traffic. The Parks Dept. accepted the changes, resulting in a design that CCCT considers to be much improved over the first plan.

There was considerable negative reaction on some of the local cycling listserves when construction began. But now that Trail users have had some time to see how the new crossing works, the response has become favorable for the most part. It has now been re-stripped to better define the Trails roadway. Some Trail users have observed that motor vehicle traffic appears to be slowing more and yielding to Trail users in the crosswalk more consistently than before.

The other project is less controversial.

The second project to be completed was the construction of a new Trail access ramp at Brookeway Drive, at CCT milepost 5.5. The new ramp replaces a steep staircase and is ADA compliant. This ramp greatly improves access to the Trail from the Sumner neighborhood.



Trail crossing at Little Falls Parkway



Trail access ramp at Brookeway Drive