



HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING
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TECHNICAL STAFF REPORT

Planning Board Meeting of January 22, 2026

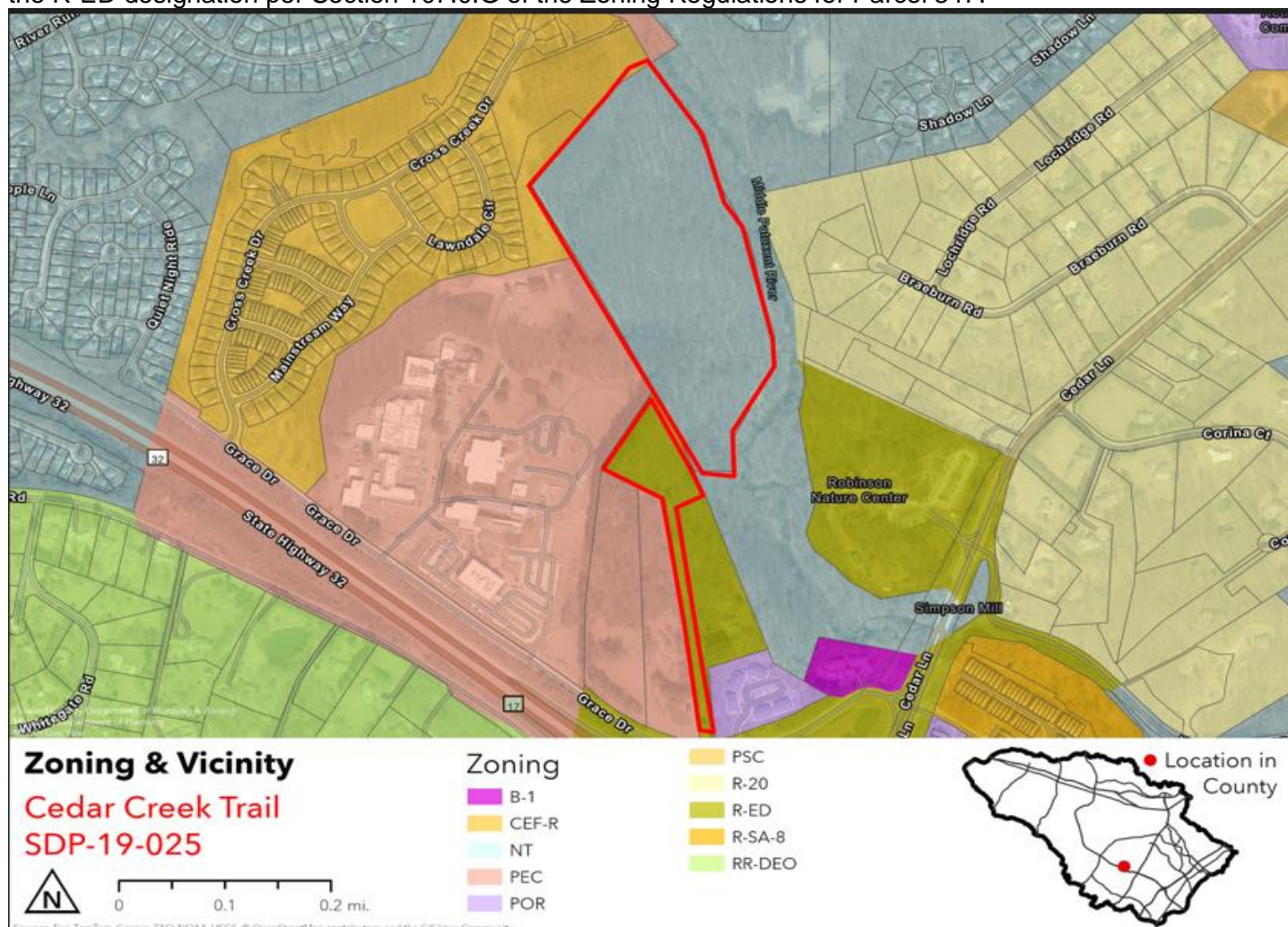
Case No./Petitioner: SDP-19-025, Simpson Oaks CRP3, LLC

Project Name: Cedar Creek Bridge and Trail

DPZ Planner: Brenda Lubber, BLubber@howardcountymd.gov

Request: Approval of a Site Development Plan for three (3) 20-foot long single span bridges associated with the Cedar Creek community enhancement trail system.

Location: The properties are located at the northwest intersection of Grace Drive and Cedar Lane; identified as Tax Map 35, Parcel 412, Parcel 'A', zoned New Town (NT), and Parcel 347, zoned Residential-Environmental Development (R-ED). This plan is being processed under the NT-Open Space designation in accordance with FDP-181-A Part 7 and per Section 125.0.G of the Zoning Regulations for Parcel A, and under the R-ED designation per Section 107.0.G of the Zoning Regulations for Parcel 347.



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Vicinal Properties:

North: Single-family detached lots (NT-Single-Family Low-Density)

East: The Robinson Nature Center and single-family detached lots (R-20 and NT-Single-Family Low-Density).

South: Cedar Lane, commercial office (B-1) and Housing Commission Housing Development project to be developed with apartments (POR).

West: Grace Corporate Headquarters (PEC), single-family detached lots (R-ED), and the Cedar Creek subdivision (CEF-R).

Legal Notice: The property was properly posted by DPZ in accordance with the legal requirements.

I. General Information:

Site History:

- **F-87-105, Village of Hickory Ridge, Section 3, Area 14, Lots 1 – 44**, recorded May 4, 1987.
- **FDP-181-A Part 7, Village of Hickory Ridge, Section 3, Area 14**, recorded March 3, 1999.
- **F-99-122, Village of Hickory Ridge, Section 3, Area 14, Open Space Lot 45 and Parcel A**, recorded March 5, 1999 (Plat No. 13640). A resubdivision of Open Space Lot 44.
- **ZB-1104-M, Simpson Oaks (now known as Cedar Creek)**, approved April 6, 2015. To rezone the adjacent parcel from PEC to CEF-R. The rezoning was approved subject to a community enhancement trail system on the subject parcels.
- **S-15-007, Simpson Oaks (now known as Cedar Creek), Lots 1-184, Open Space Lots 185-191, and Village of Hickory Ridge, Section 3, Area 14, Parcel 'A' and Open Space Lot 45**, signed on December 17, 2016.
- **P-17-002, Simpson Oaks, Phase 1, Lots 1-129, Open Space Lots 130-140, Non-Buildable Bulk Parcels A-F, and Village of Hickory Ridge, Section 3, Area 14, Parcel 'A' and Open Space Lot 45**, signed October 5, 2017.
- **BA-820-D, Simpson Oaks CRP3, LLC**, the developer appealed the County's request to connect the trail to the Robinson Nature Center. On August 21, 2025, the Hearing Examiner determined the trail connection the Robinson Nature Center was not required.

Existing Site Conditions: Parcel A is wooded and contains wetlands, streams, their buffers, 100-year floodplain and steep slopes. Parcel 347 is wooded and contains a dry drainage swale with moderate and steep slopes.

Regulatory Compliance: The project must comply with Section 107.0.G. of the Zoning Regulations, Section 125.0.G of the Zoning Regulations, the criteria listed in FDP-181-A Part 7, the amended Fifth Edition of the Howard County Subdivision and Land Development Regulations, the Howard County Design Manual, the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance, and the Howard County Landscape Manual.

II. Description of the Site Development Plan Proposal and Analysis:

Proposed Site Improvements: As part of the approval of ZB-1104M, the applicant is required to construct a trail system as part of the community enhancement improvements. The plan proposes a 5-foot natural surface trail that meanders through Parcel 'A' and Parcel 347 which connect to Cedar Lane. On Parcel A, the proposed trail system contains two (2) 20-foot-long single span bridges that cross an unnamed intermittent stream and steps in

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areas where grades exceed 10%. Parcel 347 contains a 20-foot single span bridge that crosses a dry drainage swale and steps in areas where grades exceed 10%. After construction, Howard County will maintain the bridges and trail system that connects the Cedar Creek subdivision with Cedar Lane.

Community Enhancement Floating District (CEF): On April 6, 2015, the Howard County Zoning Board approved a petition to rezone the adjoining property (Cedar Creek) from the Planning Employment Center (PEC) to Community Enhancement Floating – Residential (CEF-R) Zoning District. To achieve the CEF zoning the proposed development must contain one or more off-site design features or enhancements that benefit the community and are open and free to the public. A trail system was approved by the Zoning Board as an offsite community enhancement because it provides a pedestrian link between the adjoining community to Cedar Lane. Since the parcels subject to this petition are zoned R-ED and NT-Open Space, any new structures must comply with the Zoning Regulations and FDP.

FDP Criteria (applied to Parcel A only):

Permitted Uses: Per the FDP, these parcels are to be used for all open space land uses, including pedestrian and bicycle pathways.

Setback Requirements: Per the FDP, structures shall not be within 30 feet of a right-of-way of any public street, road or highway, or within 25 feet of any property line. Bridge #1 and Bridge #2 comply with the setbacks. The trail is considered a use, and the FDP does not restrict the location of uses.

Building Height: The FDP does not impose a height limit if the structures are constructed in accordance with a site development plan approved by the Howard County Planning Board.

Lot Coverage: Per the FDP, no more than 10% of the open space land use shall be covered by buildings or major structures. The structures do not exceed the 10% requirement.

Roads: No new roads are proposed. The bridge and trail system will be accessed from the Cedar Creek subdivision or Cedar Lane.

Parking: Per the FDP, no parking requirements are imposed for open space land uses.

R-ED Criteria (applied to Parcel 347 only):

- The proposed layout of lots and open space effectively protects environmental and historic resources.

The trail has been designed to minimize disturbance to steep slopes. Bridge #3 will be constructed to cross a dry drainage swale. Steps will be constructed in areas where grades exceed 10%. Lots are not proposed with this plan.

- Buildings, parking areas, roads, storm water management facilities and other site features are located to take advantage of existing topography and to limit the extent of clearing and grading.

The configuration of the trail was determined by an on-site evaluation with County staff to determine the areas requiring minimal environmental impacts.

- Setbacks, landscaped buffers, or other methods are proposed to buffer the development from existing neighborhoods or roads, especially from designated scenic roads or historic districts.

There are no scenic roads or historic districts within the vicinity of the site. The trail meanders through a wooded area and has been carefully located to minimize disturbance to the trees and steep slopes. The trail will be hand dug and with the use of small equipment to minimize disturbance to the area. The pathway is significantly buffered by existing vegetation.

Landscaping: Existing wooded vegetation is being credited for perimeter landscaping requirements.

Stormwater Management: The bridge and trail system will be treated by an infiltration trench and disconnection of non-rooftop runoff.

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Environmental Considerations: Parcel A contains wetlands, streams, their buffers, 100-year floodplain and steep slopes. Necessary disturbances to the steep slopes and stream buffers were approved by DPZ per Section 16.116(c) of the Subdivision and Land Development Regulations. Parcel 347 contains a dry drainage swale with moderate slopes and steep slopes.

DocuSigned by:

Lynda Eisenberg
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1/6/2026

Lynda Eisenberg, AICP, Director

Date

Please note that this file is available for public review by appointment at the Department of Planning and Zoning's public service counter, Monday through Thursday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.