

**Page Park Update from Council Chairman Bobby Pestronk  
March 11, 2024 Village Council Meeting**

Thanks to those who continue to refrain from using Page Park, who respect the fencing, and who remind others that the Park remains closed.

Nearly everyone is eager to open Page Park. The delays and unsightly fencing have been unfortunate, required, entirely preventable and not the fault of the County Department of Permitting Services. Had the contractor and the Village been better informed, and the Contractor the necessary staff resources for a project like this, many of the on-going delays would have been prevented.

I hope you will direct those who may ask you about the Park to my recorded livestream comments found on the Village website. Since June 2023, I have provided monthly updates and background information to be transparent and as part of a deliberate effort to keep you informed. Base on the questions I am asked, misinformation abounds.

Tonight, I'm going to drill down into the specifics of the County's review process and the status of the reviews.

The County's review process for Page Park has eighteen components each examining a different aspect of Page Park's design and construction. Several, separate County departments are involved. Safety, zoning, and environmental protection are among the considerations.

Typically, a review like ours is completed before any construction begins. That's why one often sees notices of development long before any site changes begin.

Review takes time. It requires an understanding of the project, be technical, require an understanding of complicated rules and regulations as applied to each unique project.

For Page Park, little proceeded initially as it should have. We now pay the penalty in time, expectations, aggravation and, perhaps, additional expense.

Each of the eighteen components in the County's review must be approved, waived, or postponed before a permit is issued. Initial review of any single component once proper documentation is submitted will take between 30 and 45 working days. For Page Park seventeen of those components have already been examined. To begin any part of the review, though, proper documents must be submitted to the County. This has been a continuing problem for our contractor. Our contractor has had trouble believing he must submit material, preparing necessary material, and obtaining necessary expertise. In one case, the wrong documents were submitted. In another, documents submitted conflicted with one another. In some cases, resubmittals were necessary. Where that was the case,

the review clock starts again. Fifteen working days are added since reviewers are reviewing other projects, too, and must get reoriented to ours.

We can all follow progress of reviews. Go to the Montgomery County Department of Permitting website, click on Check Permit Status, enter both Commercial Building under Application Type and 1047420 in the Permit Number Box, and then click Search and then click on the small plus sign to expand the Review box in the lower right portion of the screen. You'll find all eighteen reviews and the status of each. Sometimes a particular review is listed more than once as the review's status changes.

The components for Page Park's review address: Stormwater Requirements, Architecture, Zoning, Electrical, Energy and electrical design, Impervious Area Requirements, Life Safety, Maryland Park & Planning requirements, Mechanical issues, Roadside Tree Law Review, Sediment Control Review, Smoke Control Systems, Structural concerns, Subdivision Development requirements, regulations of the Washington Suburb Sanitation Commission and DPS Final Plan Review. Each of these has its own detailed requirements. Not all apply to the Park but that determination must be made before the reviewer.

As of this weekend, eleven of those reviews have been waived through the review process with no further review required. One has been approved. One has passed the review, three remain denied (likely one of which is simply due to a delay in updating the DPS website). One is conditionally approved and will not delay the opening of the Park. One is pending the approval of those currently denied and will simply require the Village to submit its contract with the contractor once all the other reviews are waived or approved.

One denied components addresses the potential need for ramp access to the portion of the Park under the pergola, a second, handrail design and construction specifications. One of those, ramp access to the portion of the Park under the pergola, if required, will require additional construction. A change order for the cost of the ramp will likely require Council consideration because it was not part of the original design. The additional cost for a licensed engineer to address the conditionally approved item relating to sediment control will be another issue for Council to consider but will not delay opening the Park.

So that's where things stand. We are close to being finished with the County's review. While the exact due date for Park opening is still as yet unknown, it hopefully will arrive as the warmest weather arrives.

Thanks for your continued forbearance and understanding.