



National Institutes of Health
Bethesda, Maryland 20892
Office of Research Facilities

September 16, 2011

Ms. Francoise Carrier, Chair
Montgomery County Planning Board
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Chairperson Carrier:

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) supports the staff recommendation for the Mandatory Referral No. MR2010812: West Cedar Lane Shared Use Path from Old Georgetown Road (MD 187) to Wisconsin Avenue (MD355). We support the use of NIH land for this important facility but do not want to invest in a design that does not meet AASHTO and ABA requirements or fails to ensure the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists.

We have looked at several options with the Montgomery County Department of Transportation, but we have not found a way to accomplish these goals without severe impacts to the grounds and driveways of our historic Quarters located along West Cedar Lane.

The staff recommendation to capture six feet from the roadway will allow for the construction of a full-width multiuse path and full-width green buffer between the roadway and the path, a result that could not be achieved using only NIH land. An added benefit for vehicles entering onto West Cedar Lane from the north would be the improved visibility provided by the removal of parked cars along West Cedar Lane. A new multiuse path along West Cedar Lane would add an important segment of connectivity to the local trail system, and will help improve access to the nearby Federal facilities and the Medical Center Metro Station for neighbors, commuters, and visitors.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D.G. Wheeland", is written over a horizontal line.

D.G. Wheeland, Director
Office of Research Facilities