



[Quoted text hidden]

Erica Jackson Matthews <rpjack50@aacounty.org>
To: President Herald Harbor Citizens' Association [REDACTED]

Mon, Sep 29, 2025 at 2:49 PM

Hi Matt,
I was just wondering if you had any comments or questions from the presentation?



***The Best Place
For All***

Thank you,
Erica Jackson Matthews
Anne Arundel County Recreation & Parks
Deputy Director
1 Harry S. Truman Parkway MS 3225
Annapolis, MD 21401
Director's Office: 410.222.7867

No comments from Herald Harbor HOA



[Quoted text hidden]



VCCA Comments

Erica Jackson <rpjack50@aacounty.org>

Stakeholder feedback from Valentine Creek Community Association

5 messages

Franksullivan

aacounty.org>.

Three documents: 1.letter from Valentine Creek Community Association (VCCA) 2. Pertinent Crownsville Conservancy Article 3. Comments of persons directly effected. Please acknowledge receipt.

3 attachments**VCCAV ValentineWoodsletter092625.doc**

353K

**Valentine Creek Woods_The Latest Success Story (1).docx**

568K

**Crownsville Woods Petition_Statements From Local Residents (1).docx**

35K

Glenn Pollard >

Fri, Sep 26, 2025 at 8:03 PM

To: Steuart Pittman <expitt99@aacounty.org>, lisa.rodvien@aacounty.org, exkitc22@aacounty.org, allison.pickard@aacounty.org, petersmith@aacounty.org, Erica Jackson <rpjack50@aacounty.org>, <scotthymes@gmail.com>, Jesse Iliff <jesse@severnriver.org>, Scott Hymes <rpleys00@aacounty.org>

Please see below and attached for official comments from Valentine Creek Community Association's Board in reference to Valentine Creek Park - Water Access Trail.

[Quoted text hidden]

3 attachments

-  **VCCAV Valentine Woods letter 092625.doc**
353K
-  **Valentine Creek Woods_The Latest Success Story (1).docx**
568K
-  **Crownsville Woods Petition_Statements From Local Residents (1).docx**
35K

Erica Jackson Matthews <rpjack50@aacounty.org>

Sat, Sep 27, 2025 at 1:38 PM

To: [REDACTED]

Good Afternoon Frank,

As a point of clarification for me, the comments from the community reference a boat ramp and a 40-space parking lot. The document from Crownsville Conservancy is also from several years back. Is the community looking at the current plan or are these comments from the previous concepts?



***The Best Place
For All***

Thank you,
Erica Jackson Matthews
Anne Arundel County Recreation & Parks
Deputy Director
1 Harry S. Truman Parkway MS 3225
Annapolis, MD 21401
Director's Office: 410.222.7867



[Quoted text hidden]

frank sullivan <franksullivan18@gmail.com>

Sun, Sep 28, 2025 at 10:12 AM

To: "rpjack50@aacounty.org" <rpjack50@aacounty.org>

Cc: [REDACTED]

Hello,

Thank you for asking for clarification about the two attachments. The attachment article supports VCCA's point that the woods is a "pristine" place and support for any park plan should be nature trails using environmentally friendly multi-entry points, with minimal disturbance to this natural resource.

The second attachment is the written comments on a petition circulated by a resident shortly before the revised Concept D2. plan was previewed. The Attachment is viewed as support for VCCA's contention that the maintaining of the pristine resource should be DRP's primary goal, not water access as is currently reflected. Therefore the answer to your question is yes, the comments were based upon pre-D2 information.

I hope this helps and is not too wordy. Respectfully, Frank

[Quoted text hidden]

Melissa Harlinski <pwharl45@aacounty.org>

Mon, Sep 29, 2025 at 2:12 PM

[Redacted content]

Thank you. We received the documents.

Mel

On Fri, Sep 26, 2025 at 7:19 PM 'Franksullivan' via Valentine Creek <valentine-creek@aacounty.org> wrote:

[Quoted text hidden]

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You received this message because you are subscribed to the Google Groups "Valentine Creek" group.
To unsubscribe from this group and stop receiving emails from it, send an email to valentine-creek+unsubscribe@aacounty.org.
To view this discussion visit <https://groups.google.com/a/aacounty.org/d/msgid/valentine-creek/256942981.696753.1758928749279%40mail.yahoo.com>.

--

Melissa Harlinski
Project Manager
Anne Arundel County Department of Public Works
[2662 Riva Road](#), MS-7301
Annapolis, MD 21401
410-222-4126 (office)
443-871-6264 (cell)
pwharl45@aacounty.org



Valentine Creek Community Association

P.O. Box 21

Crownsville, Md. 21032

September 26, 2025

Erica Jackson Matthews
Anne Arundel County Recreation & Parks
Deputy Director
1 Harry S. Truman Parkway MS 3225
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Deputy Director Matthews:

On behalf of the Valentine Creek Community Association (VCCA) Board and our residents we want to thank you for hosting a stakeholder meeting on September 16, 2025. As the community most directly impacted by the proposed Valentine Creek Water Access project, we remain deeply concerned.

In previous letters to your Department (2022 and 2023), we outlined our objections to earlier concepts, and we must once again formally state our strong opposition to Concept D.2 as presented. The VCCA has made every effort to involve all of our residents—members and non-members alike—as well neighbors from surrounding communities in this process. We continue to believe that stakeholders should be engaged meaningfully at the outset of planning, not only after concept plans are drafted. With that in mind, we respectfully but firmly submit the following comments and request confirmation of receipt of this message.

Our position is clear: As designed, Concept D.2 is unsafe, impractical, environmentally harmful, and misaligned with the County's stated "water access" objective. We request that the County address the concerns listed below with specificity, firm commitments, and concrete revisions—not broad assurances. If these concerns are not substantively addressed, the VCCA Board will stand in firm opposition and be forced to oppose the project and take appropriate action. We are actively exploring our options and consulting with subject-matter experts to understand possible remedies, including, but not limited to, administrative, legislative, and legal avenues.

Executive Summary of VCCA's Position

- **Primary access via Valentine Creek Drive is unacceptable.** The roadway, geometry, and context (no sidewalks; children in the street; soft shoulders; narrow clear width) make additional traffic and overflow parking hazardous.

- **“Water access” is not realistically achieved.** A ~2,200-foot (≈0.42-mile) hike from a 10-space lot to a non-swimming shoreline with shallow water does not realistically serve the public for kayaking or similar use.
- **Environmental harm is foreseeable and unnecessary.** The forest has been described as “pristine” (per Crownsville Conservancy – see attached), with limited invasives; grading, paving, and increased traffic jeopardize habitat, water quality, and character.
- **Better, lower-impact alternatives exist.** Dispersed, small-capacity trailhead access (where feasible) and partnerships/easements merit real analysis before any single, high-impact build.

Critical Safety & Operations Concerns

1) Roadway width, overflow parking, and emergency access.

Valentine Creek Drive measures roughly 20–23 feet of paved width and has no sidewalks. Even routine two-way traffic is tight; roadside parking would immediately constrict lanes, endanger pedestrians, and obstruct emergency vehicles and service trucks (trash, tow, delivery). Independent analysis from our residents with Fire/EMS experience **indicates the street does not provide the functional clear width needed to safely support increased two-way traffic plus overflow parking.** Adding cars that cannot enter the lot due to capacity or lack of a QR reservation does not “disappear” them; they will park on-street.

Requested County actions:

- Provide the **specific roadway classification and minimum functional width standard** the Department is relying upon for Valentine Creek Drive and explain how two-way access with on-street parking will be safely maintained.
- Provide a **binding on-street parking and enforcement plan** (where, how, and by whom), including towing authority, signed restrictions, and how residents will not be forced into confrontational reporting roles.
- **Provide a Fire/EMS review letter** affirming compliant clear widths and turning paths **with realistic overflow conditions**, not idealized drawings. Identify how EMS will reach the shoreline area if vehicles are queued/parked on Valentine Creek Drive.
- **Provide a formal County Roads review letter** including recommendations on lowering the speed limit along the entire length of Valentine Creek Drive; and a separate assessment of the proposed new road, specifically addressing concerns about its potential substandard width, steep grade and the safety risks posed by the sharp drop-off on the left side approaching the parking lot

2) Hazardous intersection at Old Herald Harbor Road (Including Bus Stop).

The intersection of Valentine Creek Drive and Old Herald Harbor Road is already a dangerous location due to poor sightlines, speeding traffic on the hill approach, and limited visibility for vehicles attempting to turn. Residents frequently report “flying blind” when exiting, with cars cresting the hill at unsafe speeds.

Compounding this, there is a school bus stop located at the corner of Valentine Creek Drive and Old Herald Harbor Road, where children routinely wait and cross. Introducing additional park-related traffic—visitors unfamiliar with the road’s quirks—dramatically increases the likelihood of an accident at precisely the location where children are present and most vulnerable.

Requested County actions:

- **Provide the traffic/safety assessment for this intersection**, including sight-distance calculations, historical accident data, and mitigation strategies.
- **Evaluate and commit** to specific measures (e.g., reduced speed limit, traffic calming, signage, or crossing protections) to ensure children waiting at the bus stop are not put at heightened risk.
- **Identify how pedestrian safety** will be addressed holistically along Valentine Creek Drive, given the absence of sidewalks.

3) Security and after-hours risks.

A gated lot with a code does not control pedestrian entry from the neighborhood or curbside parking. Experience elsewhere suggests late-night loitering/parties, vandalism of cameras, and sanitation issues when supervision is not continuous.

Requested County actions:

- **Provide a Ranger/Police operations plan:** patrol frequency, hours, response times, contact methods, after-hours closure procedures, and how violations will be handled without burdening residents.

Impracticality of “Water Access”

- The County confirmed the ~2,200-foot path from lot to pier; return is uphill. **This is not practical** for typical families with kayaks/SUPs or gear.
- The “kayak slide” concept is undefined and raises safety/liability concerns, particularly on steep terrain and in queue situations.
- Shallow water conditions and non-swimming designation limit utility; fishing will occur but does not require paving a new access road and a centralized parking lot.

Requested County actions:

- **Provide projected daily/seasonal user volumes** by modality (kayak/SUP/fishing/sightseeing), turnover assumptions, and how stay length is managed so the 10 spaces do not become all-day occupancies.
- **Provide comparative alternatives analysis:** smaller, dispersed trailhead access points (3–8 spaces each where feasible), partnerships with willing marinas/landholders, and easements that reduce impacts while meeting recreation goals.

Environmental & Wildlife Preservation

- Residents, field staff and the Crownsville Conservancy have described the woods as **one of the most pristine forests** they've seen locally, with minimal invasives.
- **No Paved Parking Lot:** We request that the County commit to avoiding any paved parking lot construction in Valentine Creek Woods. Paved lots would destroy tree canopy, fragment habitat, increase impervious surface runoff into Valentine Creek, and permanently alter the character of this pristine woodland. Smaller, dispersed, and permeable alternatives (such as grasscrete for a few spaces at existing trailheads) should be the only solutions considered.
- Increased traffic and paving invite habitat fragmentation, invasive establishment, altered hydrology/soil acidity, and more turtle mortality (already observed), while disturbing herons, raptors, owls, bats, and other species.
- Grading for the access road and trail segments risks directing stormwater and sediment into sensitive areas (e.g., Arden bog, Severn headwaters) with downstream impacts.

Requested County actions:

- **Publish the full natural resources inventory** and any Wildlife/Herpetofauna assessments (including turtle movement corridors), with avoidance/mitigation plans.
- **Provide a stormwater/hydrology memo** documenting how runoff will be retained/treated (during construction and operations), and how downstream resources are protected.
- **Commit to preserving the natural character** of the site by prohibiting the paving of trails, limiting tree and brush clearing to only what is strictly necessary for safety, and incorporating invasive species management and habitat-sensitive design standards throughout the project.

Sanitation & Quality-of-Life

- The likely placement of porta-potties near the lot introduces sanitation, odor, and misuse risks and can induce encampment behaviors without constant oversight.

Requested County actions:

- **Provide the sanitation plan** (placement, service frequency, vandalism controls), why no permanent facilities are contemplated, and how quality-of-life impacts for adjacent homes will be prevented.

Cost–Benefit, Funding, and Phasing

- The project is design-only funded; per your materials, additional funding would not be sought until FY2027 (ask in 2026), with likely base-case construction in 2027.
- Without a credible usage model, construction and lifecycle costs (including technology for gated access, enforcement, sanitation, stormwater maintenance) appear disproportionate to realistic benefits.

Requested County actions:

- **Release a transparent and detailed cost estimate** (capital and annual O&M, including gate tech, enforcement, sanitation, stormwater, and Ranger patrols).
- **Provide a benefit case** tied to measured utilization, along **with trigger points** for scaling back or abandoning the centralized lot if usage does not materialize.

Alternatives & Collaboration

VCCA is not a “no to everything” stakeholder. We have consistently offered constructive paths forward:

- **Dispersed, low-impact access:** Evaluate multiple small trailheads (3–8 spaces each) where feasible in coordination with neighboring communities, land trusts, and State lands—reducing traffic concentration and on-street overflow.
- **Trail-centric management:** Prioritize hiking, biking, birding, and nature study in a **preserve-first** concept that aligns with the site’s natural strengths and minimizes hardscape.
- **Targeted easements:** Where VCCA ownership abuts public roads (e.g., near Valley Drive), we are willing to **explore easements** that responsibly support low-impact, small-capacity trail access — provided safety, enforcement, and environmental standards are met and the centralized lot/access road are eliminated.

What VCCA Requires Before Any Public Meeting Advances

Please provide the following — in writing and posted publicly — so our residents can assess the proposal in good faith before the October 23 public meeting:

1. Roadway/EMS documentation: functional width standard; overflow parking enforcement plan; Fire/EMS sign-off with realistic conditions.
2. Traffic/safety study: Old Herald Harbor Road intersection mitigations, speed-calming commitments, and funding responsibilities.
3. Operations plan: Rangers/police coverage, sanitation placement/maintenance, after-hours controls, and contact protocols.
4. Utilization model: projected daily/seasonal users by activity; turnover assumptions; max daily volumes under the QR reservation system.
5. Full environmental package: natural resource inventory, wildlife/turtle corridor protections, stormwater/hydrology controls, and invasive prevention.
6. Cost transparency: capital/O&M with technology, enforcement, sanitation, and stormwater line items; benefit case tied to measurable outcomes.
7. Alternatives analysis: formal evaluation of dispersed small-capacity access and easements/partnerships as a substitute for a centralized parking lot and new access road.

Notice of Future Potential VCCA Board Actions

If the County proceeds without credibly resolving these issues and without shifting to a **trail-centric, preserve-first plan** (or another demonstrably safer, lower-impact alternative), VCCA will oppose the project at every step.

We appreciate the opportunity to participate and expect a substantive, written response to each request above. Again, please confirm receipt of this letter. We look forward to your timely reply and to materials being posted well in advance of any public meeting so the public can meaningfully engage. If additional time is needed, we request the County postpone the currently scheduled October 23rd public meeting until you can provide the additional requested materials.

Sincerely,

Valentine Creek Community Association (VCCA) Board

Frank Sullivan, Treasurer for Paul Deroo, President

Attachments referenced/underlying (summarized within this letter):

- Previous articles posted to Crownsville Conservancy website regarding Crownsville Woods
- Statements and testimonies from local community residents that capture the lived perspective of neighbors who would be most directly impacted



The Latest Success Story

JULY 26, 2022

ANNE ARUNDEL PARKS PLANS "SCRAPPED" SAY'S COUNTY EXECUTIVE PITTMAN

Thanks to all who showed up yesterday to walk the Valentine Creek County property with County Executive Steuart Pittman and Constituent Services director James Kitchin. I appreciate Janet Holbrook for setting up the tour and Steve Andraka for guiding us and pointing out the boundaries of the property. It's incredible to see how destructive the plans would be to the forested area and hillsides.

The County Executive immediately stated that the concepts that were presented are now scrapped and said the ecological damage of the project does not equal the benefits that would be offered to the public. I'm not sure yet where his opponent stands.

Apparently, Steve Schuh, the former County Executive had a plan to add one new boat ramp on every river, every year. Even though he was voted out, some in Parks and Rec were still trying to achieve that. That's a great idea but NOT in Valentine or Plum Creeks. The County already has approximately a \$90 million budget in the queue to build other projects and they don't have the staff to take on anything else in the foreseeable future.

We did bring up the fact that there are some potential stormwater issues on their land that may need some resources from the county to fix. We also said that the County needs some better signage that prohibits motorized vehicles and hunting and may need to send some rangers to occasionally monitor their part of the woods. MDR NRP already patrols the entire woods.

The Crownsville Conservancy will stay involved in the future to protect the "Big woods" from any irresponsible use. Steve Andraka is the CC's steward and already has been maintaining the bike trails with the help of Lee Wagner, including constructing new access off of Snodgrass Lane.

Herald Harbor residents should use that entrance when possible. The access off of Bishop Road has been causing the homeowners to be blocked out of their driveways with cars being parked inconsiderately. Get the most out of your walk and just walk to the access instead of driving there.

Stay vigilant and Informed,

Scott

Scott Hymes, President
Crownsville Conservancy

2016

VALENTINE CREEK WOODS ACQUIRED BY AA COUNTY PARKS

Success! After 14 years of work the deal to save Valentine Woods on the shores on the Severn River was finalized and will become a park. We are active in the planning of the Park with Anne Arundel County

We're proud of the community advocacy and support from the County Executive and Anne Arundel Parks and Recreation who used State Open Space money to save this gem on the Severn. Combined with other preserved properties adjoining, it now is part of 100 acres of pristine forest.

See the video Scott Hymes did which helped spurn a lot of passion for the issue for those who didn't even know it was there.

Source: [Crownsvilleconservancy.org](https://www.crownsvilleconservancy.org)

<https://www.crownsvilleconservancy.org/the-latest-success-story.html>

... "I'm a 17 year old girl who lives in Arden and loves nature. I love those woods and have been walking them for years. It's so serene and beautiful back there. Please don't destroy such a beautiful pocket of nature." ...

... "Maryland doesn't need more green areas to be depleted. The sustainability of this project is not explained anywhere. There is education and safety needed when dealing with water access. There are other parks/water access in Maryland that are completely neglected. Those funds can be used to give new life to another park in dire need of improvement, safety measures, education signs among other initiatives." ...

... "Those woods are critical wildlife areas and very important to the community I stand firmly 100% against any development of the Valentine Creek woods area. Additionally, more traffic through this quiet neighborhood where kids play in the street could prove deadly - and don't heed these words lightly by increasing traffic by developing this area will increase the likelihood of drivers unfamiliar with the area driving recklessly. It is highly likely that a child is injured or killed by driving traffic through our neighborhood and if that happens that blood will be on the hands of those who choose to develop the valentine creek woods area." ...

... "As a Valentine Creek resident, I'm deeply concerned about the traffic and safety risks associated with the proposed development. Valentine Creek Drive is a narrow, dead-end road with no sidewalks and limited sight lines at its intersection - not suited for increased public use. I support a vision for this land that prioritizes preservation, safety, and genuine community involvement from the start." ...

... "Neighbor in Herald Harbor on Valentine Creek, and against reckless development of Valentine Creek Park" ...

... "Living at the intersection of Valentine Creek Drive and Old Harald Harbor Road, I have witnessed one fatal collision and several tire screeching near collisions. Personally, I have almost been hit by vehicles speeding on Old Herald Harbor Road at least once a month since I bought my home in 2008." ...

... "I too am very unhappy with what I see planned for that area. The plan is a foolish waste of money. It will continue as a recurring expense for taxpayers hereafter. The plan will require constant surveillance and security because it will attract unwanted problems. People will misuse the area for day and night parties, drug use, homelessness, etc." ...

... "No! Huge parks are already coming to Crownsville at the Hospital site. Enough is enough. Preserve this land!!" ...

... "Why? There is literally no reason. We have many other access points to nature here in my and other communities. It's too small a space to allow other people here. We pay good money for our "rural" feeling of Crownsville to let this happen. We have plenty of

other spaces even in Crownsville/Annapolis that would give the same feel without polluting and damaging land.” ...

... “This is not a good access point for the public. This is a very delicate ecosystem back here I cannot believe that you would entertain disrupting. People will be trampling all over the shoreline getting in the water and doing things they are not supposed to be doing.” ...

... “I agree wholeheartedly with this petition, and I reject the idea that our community is dependent on cars in order to access natural spaces. I have met many neighbors who walk, jog, or take their dogs for strolls throughout the Crownsville Woods and not only those from Valentine Creek, but the greater community.” ...

... “Thank you for your active voice for land stewardship in our community!” ...

... “I am a living shorelines ambassador who opposed this environmental travesty” ...

... “Overall, any access to the woods by vehicles traveling Valentine Creek Dr (VCD) is an inherently flawed plan, with respect to traffic safety, given: the very dangerous blind intersection onto Old Herald Harbor; the lack of sufficient width on the roadway; and, the blind curves on VCD, a non-curbed street on which children play during the day and seniors walk at twilight.” ...

... “Please involve the homeowners and constituents living along VCD in the planning from the ground up. I fear that sometime in the future we will be fed an otherwise bitter, if not completely indigestible, plan.” ...

... “As one of the original 5 homeowners (c. July 1985) in this wonderful neighborhood, we moved here for the bucolic isolation. I worry that opening access from/to the water (as well as perhaps access to other adjacent neighborhoods) might possibly increase crime, including theft (from front and back yards), property damage and perhaps even burglary/robbery.” ...

... “I’ve been hiking and biking that area since the 1950s and I continue today. I have the impression that the County receives so much property tax revenue, that they are having difficulty finding where to spend it.” ...

... “As a local resident I want to re-assess the proposal.” ...

... “Save the woods. We need them” ...

... “Strongly opposed to this plan which would destroy even more habitat in our community.” ...

... “Save our Wetlands!!!” ...

... “Crownsville doesn’t need more development. It should be up to the people who LIVE HERE.” ...

... “As we age, I certainly view this proposal in its current Concept D, as a credible reason to move away, leaving both Crownsville and AACo for good!” ...

... “We do not pay taxes for you to just take our money and not listen to your constituents. We do not live in a semi-rural area because we want strip malls or “parks.” We do not agree with you RUINING our land!” ...

... “I’m not interested in anything that disturbs the existing trail system and the wildlife /environment wetlands by the water with car traffic.” ...

... “If anything, add parking somewhere outside of the trail systems perimeter and make a new trailhead. This is a disservice to the community and nature.” ...

... “Need to preserve watershed and maintain natural environment” ...

... “I am against Anne Arundel County continuing to pursue plans to build a public park on this land in Crownsville Maryland. As noted above, “Despite previous statements from County Executive Pittman acknowledging that earlier park plans were not viable — and that the terrain was worse than originally described — planning and surveying continue without addressing key environmental, safety, and community impact concerns.” ...

... “We do not want this park!” ...

... “County leadership agreed that this project was catastrophic to the Valentine Creek ecosystem. For what. A few kayakers on the water for a few days?” ...

... “Thoughtful access.” ...

... “Totally agree this is truly a reckless idea!” ...

... “Do the planning the right way.”

... “The only work to be done is to preserve the natural integrity of what’s left untouched in Crownsville. Parking lots, bathrooms, or building trails to draw more people in is not preservation or conservation. Stop further development of Crownsville and Herald Harbor. AA Co. needs to improve the old hospital property in a sensible way too, meaning a TON of natural/wooded space, tree plantings, little to no increase in impervious surface, better stormwater BMPs, traffic analysis and improvement, etc.” ...

... “That water is so shallow and would have no benefit for any kayak launch. They can use Smith’s marina” ...

... “Please protect our environment!” ...

... “Very concerned about the recent development in the woods, since I thought development had been scrapped.” ...

... “I am dismayed about this proposed park development, it is the first I've heard of it. In the 2040 Plan map that was open for community comments earlier in 2025, I thought the county had marked this tract of woods for preservation. This is an unwelcome surprise that the county is even considering this.” ...

... “This will mess up not only a beautiful, wooded area but disrupt the nesting areas of our Blue Heron, Osprey and Muskrat who thrive in this area.” ...

... “The County and DRP should listen to the concerns of its residents that would be most-impacted, not those with outside interests.” ...

... “The proposed 40-space parking lot, based on the community size, has a large impact on the environment for a facility that will most likely be underutilized.” ...

... “Ensuring safety and community is a key reason why we moved to this area. We need to ensure that the county includes the community voice and environmental needs before planning or making a decision that will affect numerous communities and family environments. Our voices matter and so do our neighbors and communities. Let's band together.” ...

... “Thank you for creating this informative document. We must all band together to protect our communities and environment against unnecessary development.” ...

... “I am not in favor of this project going through a residential community.” ...

... “This is a critical wildlife and Resource Conservation Area that would be disturbed and possibly destroyed with 40 parking spaces (with potentially 40-200 people at a time) entering and traversing to the water access. This volume would result in a negative impact to the flora and fauna.” ...

... “This land is steep and would require major construction to provide a road, with a turn around at the launch area, to prevent damaging stormwater runoff into the Severn River. A 10' wide trail/road will have a huge impact on the sediment that will be washed down into the Severn River, which already occurs with the current unmanaged narrow trail system. In Mr. Pittman's own words "the environmental impact is not worth the public benefit" from this project.” ...

... “Environmental and safety issues abound. Can't be remediated.” ...

... “The added infrastructure of electricity, garbage services, a port-a-potty, and possible boat ramp will increase cost and impact on a relatively small sensitive environmental area.” ...

... “The increased traffic will be dangerous for the kids walking or riding bikes. The streets are already heavily traveled with many blind turns.” ...

... “I support the community-led petition to preserve the Crownsville Woods and urge County leadership to reconsider development plans that pose significant environmental and safety risks. It is critical that residents' voices are genuinely heard and that past objections are meaningfully addressed. Protecting this ecologically sensitive area and fostering transparent, inclusive planning must be a top priority.” ...

... “County needs to step up and protect the headwaters of the Severn. Take care of the systemic issues which currently exist without creating new issues. Parks and Recreation is destroying our community one parcel at a time. Valentine creek, Crownsville park, millersville park.” ...

... “The former owners tried to develop a few houses on that property but the county zoning board ruled against it because of steep slopes at the beginning of that road. (as well as other problems). Now, that reason is ignored.”



Arden HOA

Erica Jackson <rpjack50@aacounty.org>

Valentine Creek

6 messages

Erica Jackson Matthews <rpjack50@aacounty.org>

Mon, Sep 29, 2025 at 2:45 PM

To: Kimberly Franklin [REDACTED]

Hi Kim,

I was wondering if you had any additional comments related to the latest concept presented for Valentine Creek. I believe your comments were focused on:

- The traffic impacts to Old Herald Harbor, and
- Folks getting turned around trying to find the public access point, but arriving at Arden's private water access points.

Thank you for your participation.



**The Best Place
For All**

Thank you,
Erica Jackson Matthews
Anne Arundel County Recreation & Parks
Deputy Director
1 Harry S. Truman Parkway MS 3225
Annapolis, MD 21401
Director's Office: 410.222.7867



Kimberly Franklin [REDACTED]

Mon, Sep 29, 2025 at 7:53 PM

To: Erica Jackson Matthews <rpjack50@aacounty.org>

Cc: Amanda Smith [REDACTED]

Hi Erica,

Attached are the results of a community survey we put out after the latest stakeholder meeting along with the proposal and latest information uploaded to the DRP website. Thanks for following up.

[Quoted text hidden]



ARDEN COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS (as of 9-29-25).pdf

331K

Erica Jackson Matthews <rpjack50@aacounty.org>

Tue, Sep 30, 2025 at 8:59 AM

To: Kimberly Franklin [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] <aca.developmentzoning@gmail.com>

Good morning Kim,

As always thanks for the feedback. How many people where invited to take the survey and how many people responded?



***The Best Place
For All***

Thank you,
Erica Jackson Matthews
Anne Arundel County Recreation & Parks
Deputy Director
1 Harry S. Truman Parkway MS 3225
Annapolis, MD 21401
Director's Office: 410.222.7867



[Quoted text hidden]

Kimberly Franklin [REDACTED]
To: Erica Jackson Matthews <rpjack50@aacounty.org>

Tue, Sep 30, 2025 at 6:59 PM

All 900 households were invited to participate in the survey. The results shown are only from 37. I believe there was not enough time between the last shareholder meeting and when the documents were shared to get the information disseminated to the community to review and provide feedback. If we had a bit more time, we could most certainly increase the participation. So, this survey is nowhere near representative of a community position on the project.

[Quoted text hidden]

Erica Jackson Matthews <rpjack50@aacounty.org>
To: Kimberly Franklin [REDACTED]

Tue, Sep 30, 2025 at 7:05 PM

Thank you for the response. There will be additional opportunities for feedback during and after the public meeting. If you get additional feedback during this period, feel free to share it with me.

Have a good evening.



***The Best Place
For All***

Thank you,
Erica Jackson Matthews
Anne Arundel County Recreation & Parks
Deputy Director
1 Harry S. Truman Parkway MS 3225
Annapolis, MD 21401
Director's Office: 410.222.7867



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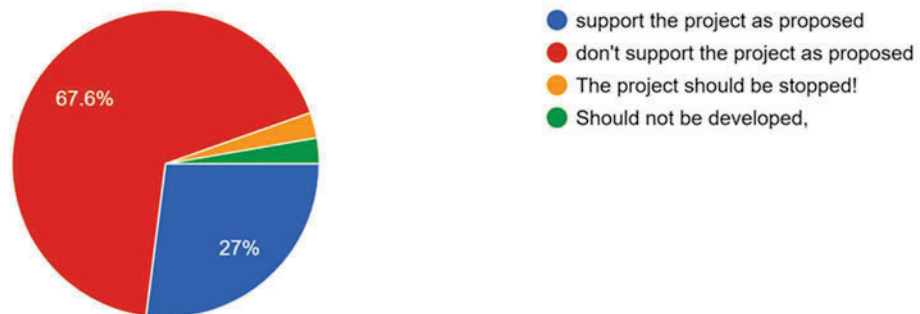
Kimberly Franklin [REDACTED]
To: Erica Jackson Matthews <rpjack50@aacounty.org>

Tue, Sep 30, 2025 at 7:26 PM

Thank you. I will certainly do that.
[Quoted text hidden]

ARDEN ON THE SEVERN COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS AS OF 9-29-25

I have reviewed Concept D as revised and,
37 responses



COMMENTS:

This proposed project is problematic as a water access for kayaks. The walk down to the water is about 1/2 a mile and has an elevation change of 100' from the parking area to the pier. Having to haul a kayak, paddle, PFD, and provisions up and down hill almost a half mile each way makes this too difficult for your average water enthusiast.

Too much damage to the land and the river to support the adapted plan D.

Added water traffic will also be problematic to the community beach and the safety of its community.

I support the project as long as it doesn't grow in size and parking is limited to 10 vehicles.

Taking down more trees threatens existing wildlife that has already been harmed

Opening public access to this waterway will pose immediate challenges for Herald Harbor & Arden on the Severn. Aside from environmental concerns attributed to construction, Arden Beach Association will be forced to enlist additional resources to monitor security of their private beach in section 4. Kayak/Canoe/Paddle Board traffic will naturally be inclined to access the private beach from the water front. Also, being that the park is public there is no way to vet the people who are accessing the park. Has there been any consideration to assess a daily or annual fee to enter the park? This may deter anyone and everyone from accessing the park? All of the residents from the surrounding community have paid peak real estate prices and property taxes in order to live in the respective communities, not to mention, the annual fees to maintain the community amenities. Allowing unfettered public access to the water way redefines the meaning of "water privilege" by allowing anyone to access it. In my experience, people tend to have a deeper appreciation and level of respect for resources that they pay for rather than public spaces that they feel entitled to the use of.

Project should be approved

As I am filling this survey out, I can see the abundant wildlife out of my window, especially the deer, foxes, waterfowl and birds (including bald eagles!), that will be severely impacted by the forest disruption as well as the noise and pollution that this ill-conceived plan will introduce to this portion of Valentine Creek. Sound reverberates in this end of Valentine Creek so traffic and "boaters" will disrupt wildlife as well as the lives of nearby, long term residents. There are also hiking trails existing through these woods that residents use and enjoy. However, these trails are often disrupted by individuals on motorized trailbikes that damage the woods, spew pollution, disrupt wildlife, and create a high noise level in this end of the creek. This will only get worse if and when a parking lot and a road in these woods are constructed. Has this been looked at? Have any environmental studies been performed or are financial considerations dictating this wanton destruction of a wonderful nature area? This would include the impact on the American Bald Eagle population living in the forests and creek area. Mr. Pittman visited the site before the election and wisely concluded that this project is disruptive and a waste of taxpayer dollars - where is Steuart now?

I don't support this due to the likely negative environmental impact, habitat loss, and increased run off.

It will still destroy the beautiful wooded area, increase the use of 4wheelers and motorcycles; litter in the woods will increase and it will destroy the wildlife cycles of our Maryland Terrapin (turtles) and wild turkeys.

Absolutely NOT!

I support the 10 parking spaces option.

I would cause too much traffic in that little water way to the Severn River. There are much bigger coves that the ramp can be placed at!

The less development the better. The fewer trees and excavation the better. The lesser amount of traffic the better.

There is not a natural beach for people at the launch site. It is on tidal mudflats & sometimes there is no water there at all. It is a very small area. It is better to launch more towards Herald Harbor.

The new concept is less harm to the environment and limits the traffic on the river.

Removing trees from their natural habitat just so humans can have more enjoyment is a privileged view of the world and destroying our planet for our children. We have to take care of what we have, not destroy it just for more fun.

Our roads simply cannot handle anymore traffic. These are residential back roads that are now completely congested and overcrowded with traffic from 97, veterans and generals highway. Let's not forget the mega church, the veterans cemetery, community rec fields, the fair grounds, REN Fest, etc. And now we want to add additional speeding traffic all while trailoring boats? Our waterways are polluted! Our community can't cut a tree or add five bricks without multiple permits but AA county can add an asphalt and cut trees, no questions asked? Can we bring in the Severn River Association and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation to help us fight this? What about the wildlife that is already struggling due to lack of space, run off and pollution? The proposed development is not wanted nor needed!

I am in favor of creating more public access to the Severn river. It's been long overdue and could possibly reduce outsider intrusion to abi beaches.

I am concerned about the environmental impact and disturbance to the local area, as well as the added traffic on community streets that do not have sidewalks.

I'm all for more public access to the Severn river.

Not fiscally responsible

This has to be a joke. How many hundreds of thousands of dollars (or millions?) are you going to spend to make a dead end road to a parking lot? The goal of this effort is to provide access to the bay by the Severn River. What access? The lot is 1/2 mile from the water. You expect people to carry a canoe or a kayak 1/2 mile to a pier? Seriously? This is what we elected you to be voting on? This sounds like government waste.

I'm strongly OPPOSED to developing Valentine Creek Park, due to environmental upset to land and water ecosystems. Tree loss, noise, trash, and stormwater runoff would directly degrade the peaceful quality of the Critical Area, causing animals to flee their habitat and changing the landscape of this natural resource. The park is already available to the general public for hiking and solitude, due to its richness of wildlife and plant species. The quiet wooded trails are full of wonderful native and migratory birds. The waters are a frequent shallow breeding ground for great and little blue herons. Horned and sago pondweed, redhead grass, and Eurasian milfoil found in the cove waters at the proposed fishing pier site would very likely be destroyed. These grasses contribute to the health of the area waters, and are vital to crabs, fish, and other species. Whether on land or water, I ask Anne Arundel County leadership to block any environmental disruption of the Valentine Creek area. Thank you for your time.

This area is already open for public use. if developed, who is going to POLICE the area? Such as four wheelers ,drug usage,trash ? Who will keep public off of our beaches, especially Beach 4? We

walk in that area every day and the wildlife will be greatly disturbed-especially the Maryland terrapins

would like more than 10 parking spots but like the reduced footprint from the original.

I strongly oppose the proposed kayak launch site project, even under revised Concept D. While the County reduced the environmental footprint from the original proposal, significant concerns remain that make this project inappropriate. The project requires clearing trees/vegetation and grading within the Critical Area Buffer, which exists specifically to protect the Bay and its tributaries. Any disturbance in this sensitive zone contradicts established environmental protection principles and sets a troubling precedent. The proposed parking area will create impervious surfaces generating contaminated runoff containing oil, chemicals, and debris that will flow toward the Severn River, degrading water quality. Construction and ongoing use will disturb potentially contaminated sediments and create erosion pathways along the access route. The proposed launch location is in shallow water surrounded by mudflats. These conditions will strand kayakers at low tide and make launching difficult even at high tide. The extensive phragmites populations indicate poor water circulation and habitat degradation. The 2,200-foot distance from parking to water access, combined with steep terrain, creates significant accessibility barriers and will likely result in users creating unauthorized shortcuts, causing additional environmental damage. Given the site's inherent limitations, the County risks investing substantial public funds in a facility that will see minimal use. The combination of difficult access, poor water conditions, and environmental constraints suggests this project will fail to serve its intended purpose effectively. The County should consider improving existing facilities or partnering with established marinas rather than creating this problematic new site. While the County has POS fund obligations for public use, "public use" should not require environmentally damaging development. Passive recreation and conservation fulfill public benefit requirements while protecting ecological values. This project appears inconsistent with Anne Arundel County's environmental protection commitments, particularly given the County Executive's previous assessment of the environmental collateral damage.

No due to environmental impact and habitat loss and impact to community It is simply unneeded. There is not enough information to agree to this project. What is a kayak slide? What type of pier? Will the pathway be paved, gravel or mulched?

While this may seem like a scaled down version of the original, it's not feasible, I feel, for the area targeted. Where is the entrance? Does anyone realize how shallow the area is? What kind of boats would be allowed? How does anyone expect to be able to swim in this area, as it is way too shallow and should NOT be dredged?! What is the upside for the public?

Keep us a private community

I would prefer that the property remains unchanged; however, proposal D is a good compromise for providing public access and maintaining the state of the property.

The environmental impact is top priority. In the design and modifications, limiting the negative impact while providing public access is important.

As a waterfront homeowner on Valentine Creek (825 Hollywood Blvd, Crownsville, MD 21032), I am deeply opposed to the development project. While the County argues that Concept D represents a scaled-back version of earlier proposals, the project would still cause significant and irreversible harm to the ecological balance and tranquility of Valentine Creek. Even with fewer parking spaces and reduced tree removal, shifting the parking lot and water access point closer to the creek will concentrate foot traffic, noise, and pollution in more sensitive areas of the habitat. This will disrupt wildlife corridors, fragment vegetation, and diminish the natural buffer zones that currently protect water quality. The proposed pier, along with the increased human activity it will attract, threatens to erode the serenity and natural character that define Valentine Creek, undermining the very environmental and community values that the use of Program Open Space (POS) funding was meant to protect. In this way, the project—despite its adjustments—still imposes undue harm on the area's environmental makeup and the quiet refuge the creek provides. Matthew and Raelyn Moran 825 Hollywood Blvd Crownsville, MD 21032 (410) 320-3822

Revised proposal still negatively impacts the critical watershed area. Any clearing of trees and increased vehicle & foot will impact rainwater drainage into the estuary. Increase vehicles and people will also cause noise pollution to nesting waterfowl negatively impacting the ecosystem. What is the significance of 10 spots? Seems like a way to start expanding over the next few years? Environmental impacts are still very present in this plan

To: Jesse Iliff [REDACTED]

Severn River Assoc.

Jesse,

Do you have any additional comments on the latest concept that was presented on Valentine Creek? I believe the majority of your comments were about the possibility of additional access points.



**The Best Place
For All**

Thank you,
Erica Jackson Matthews
Anne Arundel County Recreation & Parks
Deputy Director
1 Harry S. Truman Parkway MS 3225
Annapolis, MD 21401
Director's Office: 410.222.7867



On Fri, Aug 15, 2025 at 1:55 PM Jesse Iliff <jesse@severnriver.org> wrote:

[Quoted text hidden]

Jesse Iliff [REDACTED]

Fri, Oct 3, 2025 at 10:11 AM

To: Erica Jackson Matthews <rpjack50@aacounty.org>

Hi Erica,

I apologize for the delay here. I believe the County has made significant adjustments to its various plans to meet community concerns. As with most (if not all) park projects that I have had any involvement with over the past 10 years, the adjacent community, or at least significant numbers of people therein, will always object. So it is with Valentine Creek. I empathize with the Valentine Creek homeowners who bought their properties with the amenity of an underused public property at the end of their street that they were able to use as a secluded natural area. When the County makes it a more broadly-used area, they will lose something.

I also empathize with the logistical difficulty of this area being a useful access point for the river. It is just too long of a hike to drag a kayak, and I don't think many people will use it for that. I think improving the trails and building a pier makes sense, but I doubt that lots of people will drive there and carry a kayak a half mile to launch. But people might like to be able to dock their kayak there and have a nice natural area for a hike or a picnic.

In short, I believe the County's limited parking area will minimize environmental disturbance to a reasonable compromise, and am grateful for your and the Department's efforts in that vein. If the trails are improved and some signs help people know where they are, I think the area will be a nice County natural area that will be enjoyed by a broader number of county residents, and if they can get down to the river for fishing and meditation, that will be a good thing.

--JLI

[Quoted text hidden]



October 17, 2025

To: Anne Arundel County Recreation and Parks

The most recent comments sent to elected officials by the Valentine Creek Community Association (VCCA), in two separate emails, do not reflect the Crownsville Conservancy's position on the latest concept plan (D2) presented by the County for Valentine Creek Park.

The author of those comments mistakenly referred to a post made in July 2022 and incorrectly stated that the Crownsville Conservancy believed the property should not be developed due to its potential impact on the area. That 2022 post pertained to Concepts A, B, and C — not Concept D2, which is the most recent plan.

The Crownsville Conservancy played an instrumental role in helping this park come to fruition, working on it from 2003 until 2016, when the agreement was finalized. At that time, there was unanimous support from the VCCA. We worked to preserve the VCCA's water access and trail access by convincing a builder to sell the property to the County for use as a park.

It was understood that, because the property was purchased with state open space funds, it would need to include some form of public access. The VCCA continues to request involvement in the planning process and has many questions that remain to be addressed before the plan is finalized. While the VCCA supports the County's purchase and is not opposed to appropriate public access to Valentine Creek Woods, there is not unanimous agreement within the VCCA regarding the current plan.

We all share the goal of developing the property in the most environmentally responsible way possible, and the concerns raised by the affected communities are valid and worth discussion.

Despite what may have been written or misunderstood by others, the Crownsville Conservancy's position is that the latest plan represents a minimal use of the property — an approach we support. We encourage the County to minimize hard surfaces and tree removal, and to employ the most effective stormwater management practices.

The VCCA has also made several valid requests, including the need for a traffic study, traffic-calming measures, and limited parking at the end of the street to prevent overflow parking by visitors entering the park without registration for designated spaces.

Below are some possible solutions that may help address these issues:

1. **Street Parking Permits:**

Parking at the end of the street should be allowed by permit only. The VCCA could manage the permits for residents and their guests. A simple paper permit displayed on the windshield could suffice for residents hosting gatherings who need additional on-street parking.

2. **Dedicated Kayak Rack:**

Install a kayak rack near the park's waterfront access, reserved exclusively for VCCA residents. The VCCA could manage applications for use and assign spots with locks, as is common in many waterfront communities.

3. **Speed Control Measures:**

The speed limit should be lowered, and, depending on the VCCA's preference, speed bumps should be considered. Current criteria for adding speed bumps make approval difficult, especially since the park is not yet built and traffic studies cannot be conducted preemptively. These criteria should be waived in this case, and if feasible, the County should fund the installation.

4. **Permeable Surfaces:**

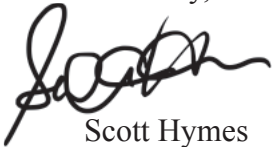
Use permeable pavers instead of asphalt for the roadway, or at minimum, for the parking area to reduce stormwater runoff and improve sustainability.

In our view, this park will not attract hundreds of cars per day. It is a relatively isolated area that will primarily serve nearby residents without existing water access. The County's plan includes limited parking, which will naturally deter heavy use. Residents of Herald Harbor will likely access the park through the Crownsville Conservancy property in Herald Harbor.

I regret that I am unable to attend the next community meeting as I will be out of the country. However, other members of our board will be present to represent the Conservancy.

Thank you for your hard work on this project and for continuing to facilitate communication between the communities and the County.

Sincerely,



Scott Hymes

President, Crownsville Conservancy

