Panel approves MEBA plan for memorial garden

By: CHRISTY KNICELEY NICHOLS, Business Editor  12/05/2003

This is a rendering of the planned memorial garden and park on the grounds of the MEBA Calhoun Engineering School on St. Michaels Road.

EASTON - Talbot County planners approved a proposal for a memorial garden and park at the Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association (MEBA) Calhoun Engineering School on St. Michaels Road (Md. Route 33).

Jan Kirsh, of Jan Kirsh Landscapes Ltd., with Jon Braithwaite of architectural firm Atelier 11, presented the plan to Talbot County Planning Commission members at their Dec. 3 meeting.

The MEBA garden and park is set to be open to the public and be wheelchair accessible. Major features of the park include a 600-foot long walled garden in the shape of a ship and a propeller donated to the school by Lipps Propeller.

"The illusion will be that of a 600-foot-long, low-to-the-ground ship cruising out toward St. Michaels Road," Kirsh said. The height of the wall that forms the ship's shape will range from 8 feet tall at the bow to 4 1/2 feet tall at the stern. Kirsh said a representative smoke stack will be at the center of the ship garden.

Commissioner William Boicourt said he thought a park was a good idea to remind people of the school's presence in the county. He said the facility itself, shrouded from the road by a tree-lined drive, often seems mysterious.

Kirsh said MEBA officials are welcoming the opportunity to invite the public in to visit the memorial garden and park.

'The school would like very much to have the community understand who they are and to provide a park-like setting,' she said.

Commissioners Boicourt, Linda Makosky, John Sewell, Robert Zuehlke and Chairman Richard Hutchison approved the plan with a unanimous vote of 5-0.

Rick Simonson, MEBA school instructor and president of the Calhoun MEBA Engineering School alumni association, said school officials hope to have the project completed by July.