

## **MANDATORY REFERRAL REPORT NO. 00-02**

### **CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG PLANNING COMMISSION**

#### ***North Tryon Street Branch Library/Job Link Center/David 3 Police Station***

**February 2000**

#### **PROJECT LOCATION**

The site is located at 4104 and 4116 N. Tryon Street, just west of the intersection of N. Tryon and Sugar Creek Road. The site includes all of Tax Parcels #091-081-10 and #091-081-22. These two parcels are the former sites of a McDonald's restaurant and a Quincey's restaurant. The total area of the site is approximately 3.96 acres. Little Sugar Creek defines the boundary at the rear of the property. An historic cemetery borders the site on the northeast side.

#### **PROJECT PROPOSAL**

The Public Library of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County proposes to build a branch library at the site. Co-located with the library would be a Job Link Center and the new David 3 District Police Station.

#### **PROJECT JUSTIFICATION**

Mecklenburg County has approved funding for a new branch library to replace the leased space in the North Park Mall. The Library agreed to co-locate a Job Link Center in the new space to provide a needed community service. The Joint Use Task Force reviewed the project and found an additional potential joint use by the Police Department. The Police are in the process of redistricting. Currently, David 3 is located close to uptown Charlotte and is served out of the Police Headquarters building. The new district (see attached David 3 map) runs northeast from the uptown area to the intersection of I-85 and North Tryon Street near UNCC. The subject site is centered in the district. Subsequent discussions between the Police and the Library resulted in a desire to co-locate.

#### **RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PROJECTS**

The property is located within the Central District planning area and is contained within the draft North Tryon Street Plan area. The site is zoned B-2 (General Business District). Commercial and industrial uses are the primary land uses in the surrounding area, commercial, retail and industrial being the primary uses along the corridor. The proposed use is consistent with the recommendations for B-2 as called for in the Central District Plan. The more recent draft North Tryon Street Plan indicates a need for "public facilities (library, recreation center, etc.) to support the area's residential neighborhoods." In its present location and its previous location in the North Park Mall, this library branch has traditionally served the neighborhoods located off North Tryon Street and Sugar Creek Road.

## **MANDATORY REFERRAL REPORT NO. 00-02**

### **CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG PLANNING COMMISSION**

#### ***North Tryon Street Branch Library/Job Link Center/David 3 Police Station***

**February 2000**

#### **PROJECT LOCATION**

The site is located at 4104 and 4116 N. Tryon Street, just west of the intersection of N. Tryon and Sugar Creek Road. The site includes all of Tax Parcels #091-081-10 and #091-081-22. These two parcels are the former sites of a McDonald's restaurant and a Quincey's restaurant. The total area of the site is approximately 3.96 acres. Little Sugar Creek defines the boundary at the rear of the property. An historic cemetery borders the site on the northeast side.

#### **PROJECT PROPOSAL**

The Public Library of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County proposes to build a branch library at the site. Co-located with the library would be a Job Link Center and the new David 3 District Police Station.

#### **PROJECT JUSTIFICATION**

Mecklenburg County has approved funding for a new branch library to replace the leased space in the North Park Mall. The Library agreed to co-locate a Job Link Center in the new space to provide a needed community service. The Joint Use Task Force reviewed the project and found an additional potential joint use by the Police Department. The Police are in the process of redistricting. Currently, David 3 is located close to uptown Charlotte and is served out of the Police Headquarters building. The new district (see attached David 3 map) runs northeast from the uptown area to the intersection of I-85 and North Tryon Street near UNCC. The subject site is centered in the district. Subsequent discussions between the Police and the Library resulted in a desire to co-locate.

#### **RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PROJECTS**

The property is located within the Central District planning area and is contained within the draft North Tryon Street Plan area. The site is zoned B-2 (General Business District). Commercial and industrial uses are the primary land uses in the surrounding area, commercial, retail and industrial being the primary uses along the corridor. The proposed use is consistent with the recommendations for B-2 as called for in the Central District Plan. The more recent draft North Tryon Street Plan indicates a need for "public facilities (library, recreation center, etc.) to support the area's residential neighborhoods." In its present location and its previous location in the North Park Mall, this library branch has

traditionally served the neighborhoods located off North Tryon Street and Sugar Creek Road.

Advantage Charter School is located in the former K-mart building directly across from the the subject site. CMS is preparing to develop property at N. Tryon and Craighead (less than ½ mile from the site) for a new elementary school. CMS is also evaluating property at N. Tryon and Eastway for a middle school site.

The Sugar Creek floodplain at the rear of this site will be part of the greenway/open space acquisition efforts of the Mecklenburg County Department of Park and Recreation for development of the Little Sugar Creek Greenway. This effort is now also supported by SWIM – storm water management practices and flood plain preservation initiatives currently being put in place by other departments/agencies. New SWIM regulations may affect the amount of the site that can be developed, but a site feasibility study done for the Library indicates that there would still be room to develop the new building on the property.

### **PROJECT IMPACT**

The project site is currently occupied by two vacant buildings. Additional public facilities are needed in the area. As quoted above, the draft North Tryon Street Plan calls for additional "public facilities (library, recreation center, etc.) to support the area's residential neighborhoods." The corridor is perceived to be a crime area and the Police Station would add to a sense of security in the corridor. The library, Job Link Center and the police station would be tremendous assets to the corridor and would enhance the revitalization strategies that are planned for and beginning to take place along N. Tryon.

The location of these public facilities in the corridor would fulfill the North Tryon's Street Plan's vision of redeveloped land uses, enhanced physical appearance, business development, increased sense of public safety, and a new image for the corridor.

However, the location of the library and JobLink center at this particular site would run completely contrary to need for neighborhood-oriented services and the Plan's transportation vision of "providing pedestrian access to neighborhood services." The proposed location for the library and JobLink center is *not* appropriate for easy access by area school students and neighborhood residents. The proposed site would be within walking distance of the existing charter school, a planned elementary school, and the Hidden Valley Neighborhood, but on the opposite side of a major thoroughfare that is soon to be widened to 6 lanes. Pedestrians coming from the Charter School across the street would have to walk 3/10ths of a mile to get to the nearest crosswalk and then back the same distance to get to the library. Pedestrians coming from the Hidden Valley would have to cross two thoroughfares to get the site (Sugar Creek and N. Tryon). For these reasons, staff recommends that the library/JobLink locate in an area on the opposite side of N. Tryon, such as the semi-vacant former K-mart site now used by the charter school, in order to be more accessible to residential and educational uses in the area corridor.



In order to further promote pedestrian accessibility to the library and provide a facility that would positively impact the N. Tryon Streetscape, the building should be designed to face the street, with parking behind the building, and with attractive design elements. (The library buildings in Uptown and in Plaza-Midwood are good examples.)

### **PROJECT COST**

Land acquisition costs will be negotiated and/or based on a market appraisal. Current tax value for the +/- 5.686 acres is \$495,710.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

The proposed uses are highly appropriate for this section of the N. Tryon corridor, however, *staff cannot recommend these uses on this particular site*. The Library's development team should look at other more neighborhood- and school-accessible sites in the corridor.

If the Library were to locate at this property, staff could only recommend it with strong reservations and the following conditions:

1. Extraordinary (and expensive) attention would need to be paid to pedestrian and bicycle connections to the site. Special accommodations in the road widening project will need to be discussed with CDOT and project engineers. Site design should also provide for accessibility to the proposed greenway that will eventually be constructed at the rear of the property. The greenway could provide an important pedestrian and bicycle linkage to the library for children and families from Hidden Valley and other area neighborhoods. (However, this section of the greenway is not currently funded for construction.)
2. The design of the site would also need to relate to and incorporate the historic cemetery that sits adjacent to the subject property and which could provide exciting opportunities for educational and greenspace/openspace connections to the library.
3. The site drains into the Little Sugar Creek, which has had flooding problems in this section. Efforts to reduce runoff through the reduction of impervious surface area, use of pervious paving materials and intensified landscaping are strongly recommended.

### **PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**





**COUNTYWIDE INSET MAP**

**LEGEND**

- ☒ County Boundaries
- ☒ Tax Parcels
- ☒ Parcel Dimensions
- ☐ Sales by Deed
- ☒ Railroad ROW
- ☒ Utility ROWs
- ☒ Bodies of Water
- ☒ Streams
- ☐ Floodplain
- ☐ Watershed
- ☐ Building Outlines
- ☐ Prop. I-485 Corridor

Advantage Charter School is located in the former K-mart building directly across from the the subject site. CMS is preparing to develop property at N. Tryon and Craighead (less than ½ mile from the site) for a new elementary school. CMS is also evaluating property at N. Tryon and Eastway for a middle school site.

The Sugar Creek floodplain at the rear of this site will be part of the greenway/open space acquisition efforts of the Mecklenburg County Department of Park and Recreation for development of the Little Sugar Creek Greenway. This effort is now also supported by SWIM storm water management practices and flood plain preservation initiatives currently being put in place by other departments/agencies. New SWIM regulations may affect the amount of the site that can be developed, but a site feasibility study done for the Library indicates that there would still be room to develop the new building on the property.

### **PROJECT IMPACT**

The project site is currently occupied by two vacant buildings. Additional public facilities are needed in the area. As quoted above, the draft North Tryon Street Plan calls for additional "public facilities (library, recreation center, etc.) to support the area's residential neighborhoods." The corridor is perceived to be a crime area and the Police Station would add to a sense of security in the corridor. The library, Job Link Center and the police station would be tremendous assets to the corridor and would enhance the revitalization strategies that are planned for and beginning to take place along N. Tryon.

The location of these public facilities in the corridor would fulfill the North Tryon's Street Plan's vision of redeveloped land uses, enhanced physical appearance, business development, increased sense of public safety, and a new image for the corridor.

However, the location of the library and JobLink center at this particular site would run completely contrary to need for neighborhood-oriented services and the Plan's transportation vision of "providing pedestrian access to neighborhood services." The proposed location for the library and JobLink center is ***not*** appropriate for easy access by area school students and neighborhood residents. The proposed site would be within walking distance of the existing charter school, a planned elementary school, and the Hidden Valley Neighborhood, but on the opposite side of a major thoroughfare that is soon to be widened to 6 lanes. Pedestrians coming from the Charter School across the street would have to walk 3/10ths of a mile to get to the nearest crosswalk and then back the same distance to get to the library. Pedestrians coming from the Hidden Valley would have to cross two thoroughfares to get the site (Sugar Creek and N. Tryon). For these reasons, staff recommends that the library/JobLink locate in an area on the opposite side of N. Tryon, such as the semi-vacant former K-mart site now used by the charter school, in order to be more accessible to residential and educational uses in the area corridor.

In order to further promote pedestrian accessibility to the library and provide a facility that would positively impact the N. Tryon Streetscape, the building should be designed to face the street, with parking behind the building, and with attractive design elements. (The library buildings in Uptown and in Plaza-Midwood are good examples.)

## **PROJECT COST**

Land acquisition costs will be negotiated and/or based on a market appraisal. Current tax value for the +/- 5.686 acres is \$495,710.

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

The proposed uses are highly appropriate for this section of the N. Tryon corridor, however, *staff cannot recommend these uses on this particular site*. The Library's development team should look at other more neighborhood- and school-accessible sites in the corridor.

If the Library were to locate at this property, staff could only recommend it with strong reservations and the following conditions:

1. Extraordinary (and expensive) attention would need to be paid to pedestrian and bicycle connections to the site. Special accommodations in the road widening project will need to be discussed with CDOT and project engineers. Site design should also provide for accessibility to the proposed greenway that will eventually be constructed at the rear of the property. The greenway could provide an important pedestrian and bicycle linkage to the library for children and families from Hidden Valley and other area neighborhoods. (However, this section of the greenway is not currently funded for construction.)
2. The design of the site would also need to relate to and incorporate the historic cemetery that sits adjacent to the subject property and which could provide exciting opportunities for educational and greenspace/openspace connections to the library.
3. The site drains into the Little Sugar Creek, which has had flooding problems in this section. Efforts to reduce runoff through the reduction of impervious surface area, use of pervious paving materials and intensified landscaping are strongly recommended.

## **PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**

Approved by a vote of 4-2.