

MANDATORY REFERRAL REPORT NO. 08-34
Proposed Acquisition of Land for an Elementary School Site on Johnston Oehler Road

PROJECT PROPOSAL AND LOCATION:

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools proposes to purchase approximately 21.66 acres located on the north side of Johnston Oehler Road to construct an elementary school. The subject parcels are located between Jimmy Oehler Drive and Mallard Creek Road. Tax parcel numbers assigned to the site include 029-721-20, 029-721-21 and a portion of 029-721-19. Parcel number 029-721-19 contains approximately 29 acres; of this, the sellers will retain 13.8 acres at the rear of the parcel where the construction of Interstate 485 is proposed. The parcels are all located within the city limits of Charlotte.

The parcels are located within an area zoned R-3 (single family residential), according to the Charlotte Zoning Ordinance. The parcels include one small single-family residence built in 1950 which is currently rental property.

The parcels are located in the Mallard Creek Watershed. A S.W.I.M. buffer and floodway are located on the eastern side of the parcel number 029-721-19, on that portion which will be retained by the seller.

Adjacent to the west is a single family home on 10.5 acres. Adjacent to the north is a vacant parcel which is located within the proposed I-485 right of way. Adjacent to the east are two vacant parcels, followed by some older single family homes and the Robyns Glen subdivision. Across Johnston Oehler Road to the south are recreational fields that are part of the Mallard Creek Recreation Center (within which Mallard Creek High School is situated).

The properties are located near the existing residential subdivision of Robyns Glen. There are other subdivisions in the construction and planning stages within a two mile radius.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION:

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools *Long Range School Facilities Master Plan* (2008) identifies the need to build a new elementary school in this approximate location by the year 2010-2011. The proposed elementary school site currently lies within the Mallard Creek Elementary School attendance boundary and will relieve overcrowding at Mallard Creek and Highland Creek Elementary Schools. Highland Creek (1 ¼ miles north of this site) has a core capacity of 670 students with an expected 2010-11 enrollment of 1,207 (180% of capacity). Mallard Creek (about 2 ½ miles southwest of the site) has a core capacity of 742 with an expected 2010-11 enrollment of 1,231 (166% of capacity). These high numbers are anticipated despite the August 2008 completion of Croft elementary school on Hucks Road (2 ½ miles southwest of the subject site) and the planned August 2009 completion of the elementary school on Salome Church Road (located 2 ½ miles southeast of the site) that will reduce crowding at these two schools.

The overcrowding of these elementary schools is a result of the population growth that has occurred in the northeast portion of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County and is expected to continue as the final sections of the I-485 are completed.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED PUBLIC POLICIES:

There are no relevant public policies that pertain to this project site.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED LAND USE PLANS:

The *Northeast District Plan* (1996), as updated by the *Northeast Area Plan*, in 2000, recommends residential uses at a density of four units per acre for the project site. Schools are considered compatible with residential uses, thus the proposal is consistent with the adopted land use plans.

PROJECT IMPACT:

The property is strategically located to address immediate elementary school enrollment growth in this region of Mecklenburg County. The opening of a new elementary school in this area would relieve overcrowding at Highland Creek Elementary School and Mallard Creek Elementary School.

Johnston Oehler Road is the main thoroughfare through the area. Increased traffic around the school campus is expected for two 30-minute periods in the morning and afternoon. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools works closely with the Charlotte Department of Transportation, the NC Department of Transportation and the site designers to minimize this impact.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PUBLIC OR PRIVATE PROJECTS:

There are no known public or private projects that will be impacted by this project.

ESTIMATED PROJECT COMPLETION

Acquisition of the land is proposed to be funded by 2007 Bonds. The funding for the site is to be approved by the Board of Education and the Board of County Commissioners.

School design and construction will be funded by a future bond referendum. The expected elementary school completion and move-in date is 2010-2011.

JOINT USE TASK FORCE REVIEW COMMENTS:

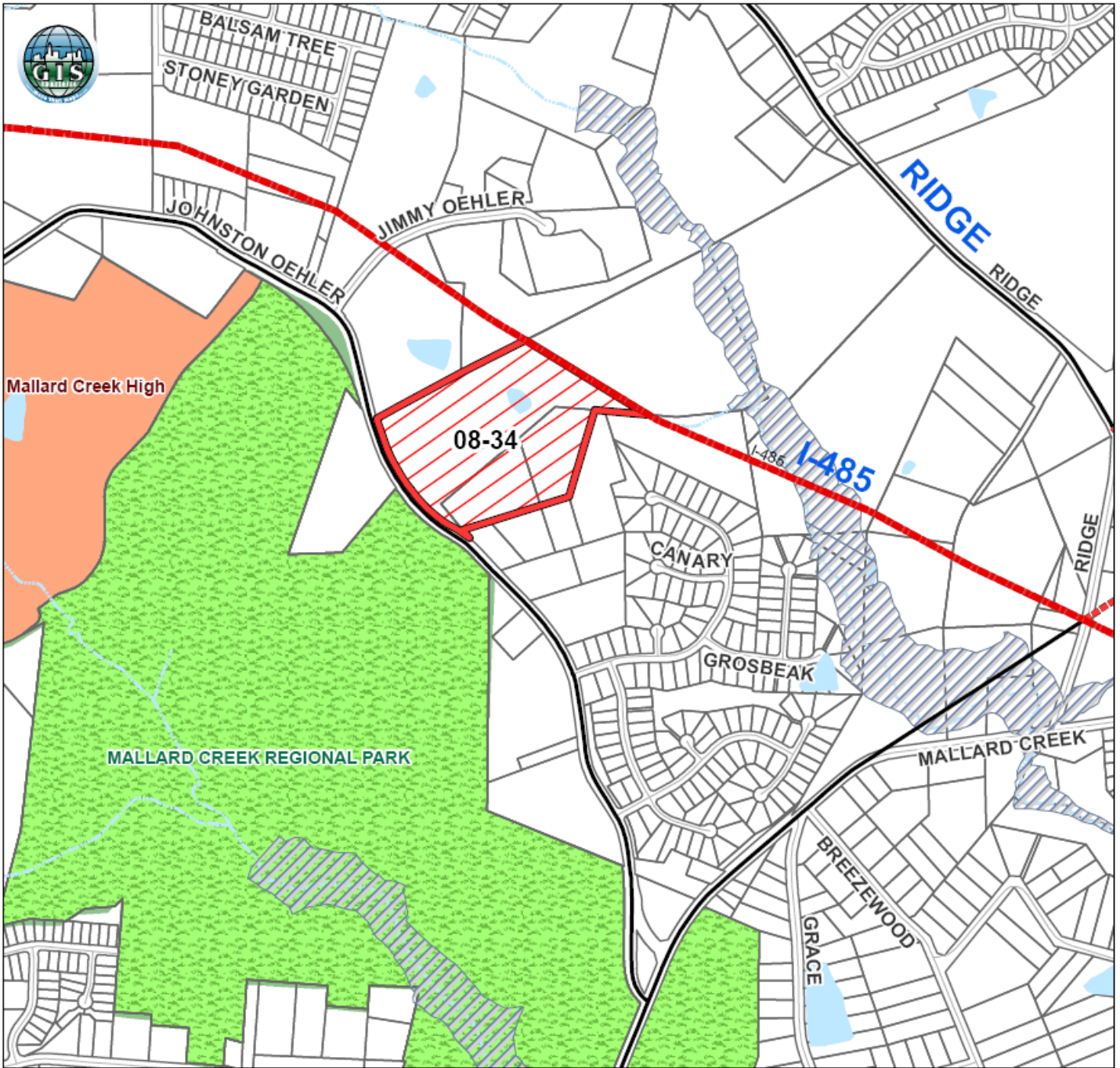
The Joint Use Task Force discussed this matter at their September 3, 2008 meeting and noted that, given the natural water features around the site, the proposed school might serve as a water quality education facility. This would require special design considerations.

PLANNING STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the proposed acquisition of approximately 21.66 acres on the north side of Johnston Oehler Road to construct a future elementary school.



CMPC PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

At their September 16, 2008 meeting the Planning Committee recommended approval by a 6-0 vote.



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CMS

-  Mandatory Referral
-  Park Property