

Planning Committee

Agenda Packet

October 17, 2017 |
Room 280
5:00 p.m. |

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission
Planning Committee Meeting Agenda
October 17, 2017 – 5:00 p.m.
CMGC – 2nd Floor, Room 280



<http://nyclovesnyc.blogspot.com/2012/08/front-stoops-in-brooklyn.html>



ROBERTSDAY-POROUS-WALL-APARTMENTS-IMAGE-1.jpg

1. Call to Order and Introductions (5:00-5:10PM)

2. Old Business (5:10-5:20PM)

Approve September 19, 2017 Minutes. Attachment 1 (Action Required)

TODO Tasks

3. Ongoing Business

Mandatory Referrals (Action Required) (5:20-6:35PM)

M.R. #17-32: Proposal by the City of Charlotte to Acquire Property Located at 5516 Central Avenue

The City of Charlotte proposes to purchase a 3.8 acre parcel located at 5516 Central Avenue (Tax Parcel 103-021-02) for the City's Innovation & Technology (I&T) Department. **Attachment 2**

M.R. #17-33: Proposal by the Charlotte Fire Department to Purchase Land Located at Beatties Ford Road and Miranda Road for a Fire Station

The Charlotte Fire Department (CFD) is proposing to purchase a 6.5 acre parcel of land located at the intersection of Beatties Ford and Miranda roads in Charlotte's Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (PID #037-411-23) for a future fire station. **Attachment 3**

South End Vision Plan (5:35-6:30PM)

Garet Johnson, Monica Holmes

Committee discussion and recommendation to receive public comment at the November 21 Planning Committee meeting.

Place Types (6:30-6:45PM)

Garet Johnson, Kathy Cornett

Committee discussion but no action required

5. TODO Tasks (6:45-7:00PM)

Attendance

Planning Committee Members Present: Chairperson Deb Ryan and Vice chairperson John Ham and Commissioners Phillip Gussman, Victoria Nwasike, Keba Samuel, Cozzie Watkins and Nancy Wiggins

Planning Staff Present: Kathy Cornett, Monica Holmes, Garet Johnson, Linda Keich, Julia Lund, Ed McKinney, Grant Meacci and Jonathan Wells

Other Staff Present: Jacqueline McNeil, County Asset Facility Management

Welcome and Introductions

Chairperson Ryan called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m., welcomed those present and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Wiggins requested that the word “ugly” at the bottom of page 6; be replaced with “needs revitalizing.”

A motion was made by Commissioner Watkins and seconded by Commissioner Wiggins to approve the July 18, 2017 minutes as amended by Commissioner Wiggins. The minutes were unanimously approved.

Mandatory Referrals

M.R. #17-28: Proposal by Mecklenburg County to Acquire Eight Flood Prone Structures located along Little Sugar Creek and in the Huntingtowne Farms Neighborhood in South Charlotte

Mecklenburg County proposes to acquire eight flood prone properties located in the Huntingtowne Farms neighborhood (see mandatory referral for addresses and tax parcel numbers). These properties are subject to periodic and severe flooding from nearby Little Sugar Creek.

M.R. #17-30: Proposal by Mecklenburg County to Acquire a Portion of Oak Hills Golf Course, located at Oakdale Road and Interstate 485 in Charlotte’s ETJ

Mecklenburg County proposes to acquire eleven parcels totaling approximately 158 acres, a portion of Oak Hills Golf Course, (see mandatory referral for addresses and tax parcel numbers) for park and recreation purposes.

M.R. #17-31: Proposal by the City of Charlotte to Sell Property on Toomey Avenue

City Real Estate proposes to dispose of a small vacant portion of a 0.23 acre parcel located at 2700 Toomey Avenue (Tax Parcel 145-018-02), corner of Remount Road and Toomey Avenue. The property is leased to and occupied by the Humane Society of Charlotte. The Humane Society does not use the portion of the property proposed for disposition.

Chairperson Ryan asked the Committee if they would like to pull any of the mandatory referrals for discussion. Chairperson Wiggins said that she would like to pull M.R. #17-30 for discussion.

A motion was made by Commissioner Watkins and seconded by Vice Chairperson Ham to state that the Planning Committee has reviewed M.R. #17-28 and M.R. #17-31 and has no additional comments for the submitting agencies. The motion was unanimously approved.

M.R. #17-30, the proposal by Mecklenburg County to acquire a portion of Oak Hills Golf Course, was discussed. Commissioner Wiggins stated that she is disappointed that they are taking away the golf course and thinks it would be a nice place to have a public golf course. Commissioner Nwasike asked if the property will not be developed until 2023, what will happen in the meantime. Ms. Jacqueline McNeil (County Asset Facility Management) stated there is a 2023 Capital Budget Plan; however, it could be considered in an upcoming Capital Improvement Plan.

A motion was made by Commissioner Wiggins and seconded by Vice Chairperson Ham to state that the Planning Committee reviewed Mandatory Referral No. 17-30 on Tuesday, September 19, 2017 and has the following comment: the Committee is disappointed that the golf course is being taken away and thinks it should continue as a public golf course. The motion was unanimously approved.

South End Vision Plan

Garet Johnson (Planning) stated that staff would like to review the adoption schedule and share what they heard at the public meeting in July as well as what staff heard from this Committee. Next, staff will walk through the plan and discuss next steps in the process. Ms. Johnson explained that staff would like for the Committee to become familiar with the document over the next couple of months. Staff reviewed the draft *Review and Adoption Schedule* and explained that it could change (click [here](#) to view schedule in PowerPoint presentation).

Ms. Johnson further explained that staff and the Committee will discuss the document in detail at the October meeting. In November, the Committee may be ready for public comment and in December, the Committee may be asked to make a recommendation. However, Ms. Johnson emphasized that the schedule could change as the Committee reviews the document. Ms. Johnson added that staff will also work with City Council and City Council Committee.

Commissioner Nwasike asked if the Committee will have a summary of the public comments that City Council receives. Ms. Johnson explained that City Council will receive public comment after the Planning Committee makes a recommendation. She added that the Committee may not be ready to make a recommendation in December. If that is the case, the Committee will be asked to make a recommendation in January.

Chairperson Ryan asked if a plan normally comes to the Planning Committee before it goes to the Transportation and Planning Committee (TAP). Ms. Johnson answered yes; they overlap in the review and adoption process. However, the Planning Committee makes a recommendation prior to the TAP's recommendation.

Commissioner Wiggins suggested that the Planning Committee attend the City Council meeting when they receive public comment on the document.

Ms. Johnson clarified what the Committee will be asked to vote on during the review and adoption process. The two existing plans for this area are roughly ten years old and development in the area is different than previously anticipated. Both plans are in need of some new thinking. This process will update the two plans.

When the Committee makes a recommendation on the *South End Vision Plan*, it will include a recommendation for two plan amendments. The Committee will be asked to vote on the following:

- *South End Vision Plan* – this new document includes the concept and vision for the South End area.
- *South End Transit Station Area Plan* (2005) – Amendment. The *South End Vision Plan* amends this existing plan.
- *New Bern Transit Station Area Plan* (2008) – Amendment. The *South End Vision Plan* amends this existing plan.

Ms. Johnson stated that the plan amendment is a quick update that addresses some of the key issues in the plan that need to be updated such as street cross-sections. In regards to street cross-sections, this allows us to introduce some new thinking when considering pedestrian safety and incorporating bikes. It also allows us to look at the community design piece and identify streets that we would like to have more of a retail focus.

Monica Holmes (Planning) gave an overview of the public meeting that was held July 25. She stated that over 200 people attended this meeting. Her presentation included a brief video with highlights from the meeting.

Ms. Holmes said that the meeting focused on how to get useful information to inform the *South End Vision Plan* and how to give people an experience. Meeting attendees were given a passport and there were tour stops along the way. The tour stops were tied directly to the plan streets, rail trail, parks, mobility, built environment, culture, affordability and art.

There was also a quiz show and an opportunity to get feedback about what people want to see in the area. Some of the comments centered on terms such as: bike friendly, streets and mobility, parking, open space, rail trails, parks, diversity, art and affordability. The organization of the plan is based on input from the public and the Planning Committee. Vice Chairperson Ham stated that the public meeting was great but parking was a nightmare.

Chairperson Ryan stated that the term “people-first” is a little jargon-y. She thinks it should be “pedestrians-first.” Commissioner Watkins agreed and asked how healthy principles are incorporated into the plan. Ms. Holmes stated that the *Livable City Policy Statement* is included in the document and guides the plan. Commissioner Wiggins suggested mentioning in the plan that the hospital is located on the periphery of the neighborhood and encourages healthy activities.

Ms. Holmes explained that Chapter 1 includes the history and guiding principles and Chapter 2 includes the plan's seven overall goals:

1. Grow By Design
2. Expand Our Mix
3. Celebrate Public Space
4. Manage Our Common Resources
5. Pursue Affordability
6. Move. Connect. Work.
7. Never Stop Experimenting

The third chapter covers focus the five focus areas in the plan: South Boulevard, South Tryon Street, The Gold District, Camden and Distribution/New Bern. The focus areas take the goals and apply them to specific locations. For instance, one of the focus areas is South Boulevard. What does the future of this street look like, how do you incorporate new pedestrian facilities, what does the crossing look like, what does the bicycle infrastructure look like, how does it turn into the main street we want it to be and how do you put that into a 20 year vision. Some of this will be addressed in the recommendations.

Chairperson Ryan asked if the implementation strategies focus on preserving lower density, older buildings and affordable spaces in the lower South End area. Ms. Holmes said that is one of the recommendations in Chapter 4. There are a few suggestions on the table such as height and use limits. Commissioner Wiggins said that she prefers not to use height restrictions in this area but prefers variations in the scale and size of buildings.

The PowerPoint presentation highlights the implementation strategies and includes specific strategies under each of the Key Initiatives – Top 10 List. There are ten design guideline headings. They each include an explanation and example guideline. They go a little deeper like setting the stage for some of the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) priorities work that the Committee has already done.

Grant Meacci explained that the standards that the Committee worked on for TOD influenced some of the standards in the document.

Commissioner Watkins asked how does this plan relate to the surrounding areas. Mr. Meacci said that once completed, the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) will “raise the bar” for the entire city but not all places will be treated the same.

Vice Chairperson Ham asked if anyone is communicating how the community can to get to South End without using a car. Ms. Holmes said that this plan is a work plan for Center City Partners. They are highly invested in Historic South End. Discussions will take place on strategies to get people to use park and ride and different transportation modes.

Commissioner Gussman said that one of the key elements that he sees in South End is the opportunity to ride the light rail. He thinks that South End is one of the areas that could be car free. Commissioner Wiggins said that she often asks people on light rail why they use it and how they use it. Some prefer light rail over the bus.

Commissioner Nwasike asked if some parking areas will be designated for South End residents similar to systems in other cities where residents have permit stickers on their cars. Ms. Holmes answered that there are different levels of parking management and different ways parking could be addressed. The work plan will determine exactly how that can be done.

Chairperson Ryan stated that it is not ironic that we are trying to promote pedestrian environments and yet so much time and effort is spent discussing parking. She has concerns about public parking decks because it seems to be a core long term investment. Commissioner Wiggins added that Charlotte is attractive to millennials and they do not want cars.

Commissioner Watkins said that Baby Boomers are aging and still prefer cars and convenient parking. There is a need to evaluate both sides, not just one or the other. She agrees there needs to be a push for a pedestrian environment. However, we need flexibility regarding transportation needs.

Commissioner Samuel said that Charlotte as a city does not make total car-free lifestyles possible. She thinks that South End is becoming an island for those who live there and is an exclusive place. She added that if she has to get to her children she does not want to get on the light rail. However, she welcomes it as an experience for her children. She said it will be her children's transportation but not hers.

Chairperson Ryan reminded the Committee that this is a long range plan and ten years from now much about lifestyle preferences may have changed. She does not think that the plan is just for the people who live there.

Commissioner Nwasike said that she is okay with a little different but a completely pedestrian lifestyle is not a reality for most people. Chairperson Ryan said that it is okay that Ballantyne is a car oriented area but South End being walkable is okay too. Parking and driving is not and should not be easy in South End.

Commissioner Samuel said that repurposing and planning to repurpose parking facilities is a great idea. You might build a parking deck that can be easily transitioned to something else in the future. The overall consensus was that planning for multiple generations is difficult but very important.

Ms. Holmes reviewed the design guidelines section of the document. She shared some example guidelines as well as some resources for each one. She highlighted the importance of prioritizing how ground floor activities are treated, breaking down the volume of larger buildings and requiring urban streetscape details.

Place Types

Kathy Cornett gave an update on Place Types. Click [here](#) to view the PowerPoint presentation. She shared that staff has heard from the Committee that public engagement needs to be more strategic, consistent and transparent. Building trust can be done in many different ways. The website needs to be easier to find and it needs to be more engaging and interactive. Also, meeting participants need to know how their input will be used.

Ms. Cornett further explained that there are communication strategies for public engagement. Staff will use examples and images of Place Types to help people understand them and how the pieces fit together. Emphasis will be placed on using words and terms that people easily understand when we are talking about concepts and ideas.

Staff is working with a consultant to develop an engagement strategy for a very detailed Public Involvement Plan (PIP). There is a draft outline. Chairperson Ryan said that she encourages an attitude of fun regarding public engagement and that it should not be a chore. She said that it does not matter what is done with the website if there is not a robust way to push people there. Ms. Cornett said that is a part of the PIP.

Commissioner Nwasike said that when it comes to affordable housing and similar topics, it is important to make decisions and manage expectations upfront.

Commissioner Gussman asked if all three modules are happening at once . Ms. Johnson said that it may be January to March, about 6 weeks apart. Each module will be previewed and summarized with the Committee.

Chairperson Ryan was unsure of the relevancy of some of the module topics. She thinks that “public realm” is the most important issue as it actually defines Place Types. Commissioner Gussman suggested that “public realm” be very narrowly defined if we agree that is the most important piece.

Chairperson Ryan commented that Instead of “what can U-DO,” it’s more like “what can you see.” She said that she would like to be ahead of the game of what is going out to the public. She thinks the Committee was left out of the previous round of engagement. She does not want the Committee to see the document for the first time in August.

Meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm.

MANDATORY REFERRAL REPORT NO. 17-32
Proposed City Acquisition of 5516 Central Avenue in Charlotte

PROJECT PROPOSAL AND LOCATION:

The City of Charlotte proposes to purchase a 3.89-acre parcel located at 5516 Central Avenue (parcel identification number 103-021-02). The property includes an approximately 36,865 square foot building. The City's Innovation & Technology (I&T) Department proposes to occupy the property and consolidate 120 staff in the facility after a full renovation of the existing building.

The property, zoned O-1 (Office), according to the Charlotte Zoning Ordinance, is located on Central Avenue across from the former Eastland Mall site. The building has been vacant for two years and has been listed for sale since July 2016. Fire Station 42 is adjacent to the property on Central Avenue. Other adjoining uses include a CSL Plasma Donation Center, AAA Insurance, retail space, and a church.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION:

I&T has advocated for consolidation for many years because staff are currently located on five floors in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center and in three different facilities throughout the city. The separation of work groups has negatively impacted the operational efficiency within the department as well as the level of service delivered to the rest of the City. Consolidation will improve employee morale, overall Departmental performance, and result in a single operational culture in I&T.

The property is a good option to facilitate the consolidation because the building is large enough to accommodate current I&T staff as well as growth projections and will have access to the proposed CityLYNX Gold Line streetcar. The presence of a City facility will also promote community safety through increased activity and demonstrate the City's commitment to economic development in East Charlotte.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED PUBLIC POLICIES:

In June 2017, City Council adopted the *City-Owned Real Estate and Facilities Policy* (the Policy), which aims to ensure that the acquisition, use, management and disposition of City-owned property and facilities are responsible, responsive, transparent, and consistent with City Council policies. This transaction is consistent with the Policy because renovating the existing building is more cost-effective than building a new facility or a long-term lease with the City as the lessee. The building's interior will also utilize a new and innovative space planning design consistent with workspace utilization principles contained in the Policy.

The adopted City FY2018-2022 Community Investment Plan includes \$5,400,000 for I&T consolidation and specifically calls for the purchase of the property.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED LAND USE PLANS:

The *Eastland Area Plan* (2003) identifies this area as a future Town Center and recommends a mix of single family, multi-family, office, and retail uses. If residential uses are included, a density of up to 10 units per acre is considered appropriate based on adopted policy.

PROJECT IMPACT:

The increase in city staff will increase traffic on Central Avenue, but will also promote community safety through increased activity.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PUBLIC OR PRIVATE PROJECTS:

The property is across Central Avenue from the former Eastland Mall site and the City's purchase of the property will demonstrate a commitment to revitalizing the area and economic development. The property is also along the route for the proposed CityLYNX Gold Line Streetcar project. However, no projects related to transit or transportation are proposed in addition to the renovations of the existing building.

ESTIMATED PROJECT COMPLETION DATE:

Closing will occur in February or March 2018. Design and construction will begin immediately with delivery of the facility in late 2019 to early 2020.

JOINT USE TASK FORCE REVIEW COMMENTS:

The Joint Use Task Force reviewed this matter at their October 4, 2017 meeting and discussed the following items:

- Only two-thirds of the 36,000 +/- sq. ft. is needed for I&T function; 12,000 sq. ft. will be available for other public use(s). However, 138 - 150 IT employees programmed for the building will likely leave little parking for the remaining 12,000 sq. ft.
- Charlotte-Mecklenburg Library has a future library facility programmed for this general vicinity. Library staff has concern with site access and lack of parking for remaining 12,000 sq. ft., which make it less desirable for their use.
- If the site upfit includes bicycle accommodations (bike parking, showers, etc.), these amenities could incentivize bike commuting and decrease reliance upon existing parking.
- The Fire Station located next door could provide opportunities for public amenities (e.g. fitness room, meeting space) for I&T employees to be housed at the proposed facility.
- East Strategy Team and Eastland Redevelopment Team should be consulted regarding potential joint venturing and/or off-site improvements that could leverage investment (e.g. public art).

The following agencies were represented at the October 4, 2017 Joint Use Task Force meeting: Park & Recreation, City Real Estate, Planning, Charlotte Water, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Library, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police, and the Town of Davidson.

PLANNING STAFF REVIEW:

Planning staff has reviewed the proposed purchase of the property and below are the key findings:

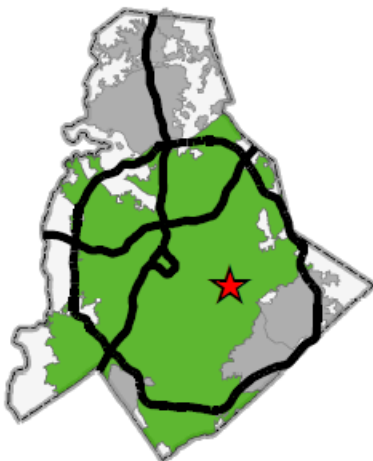
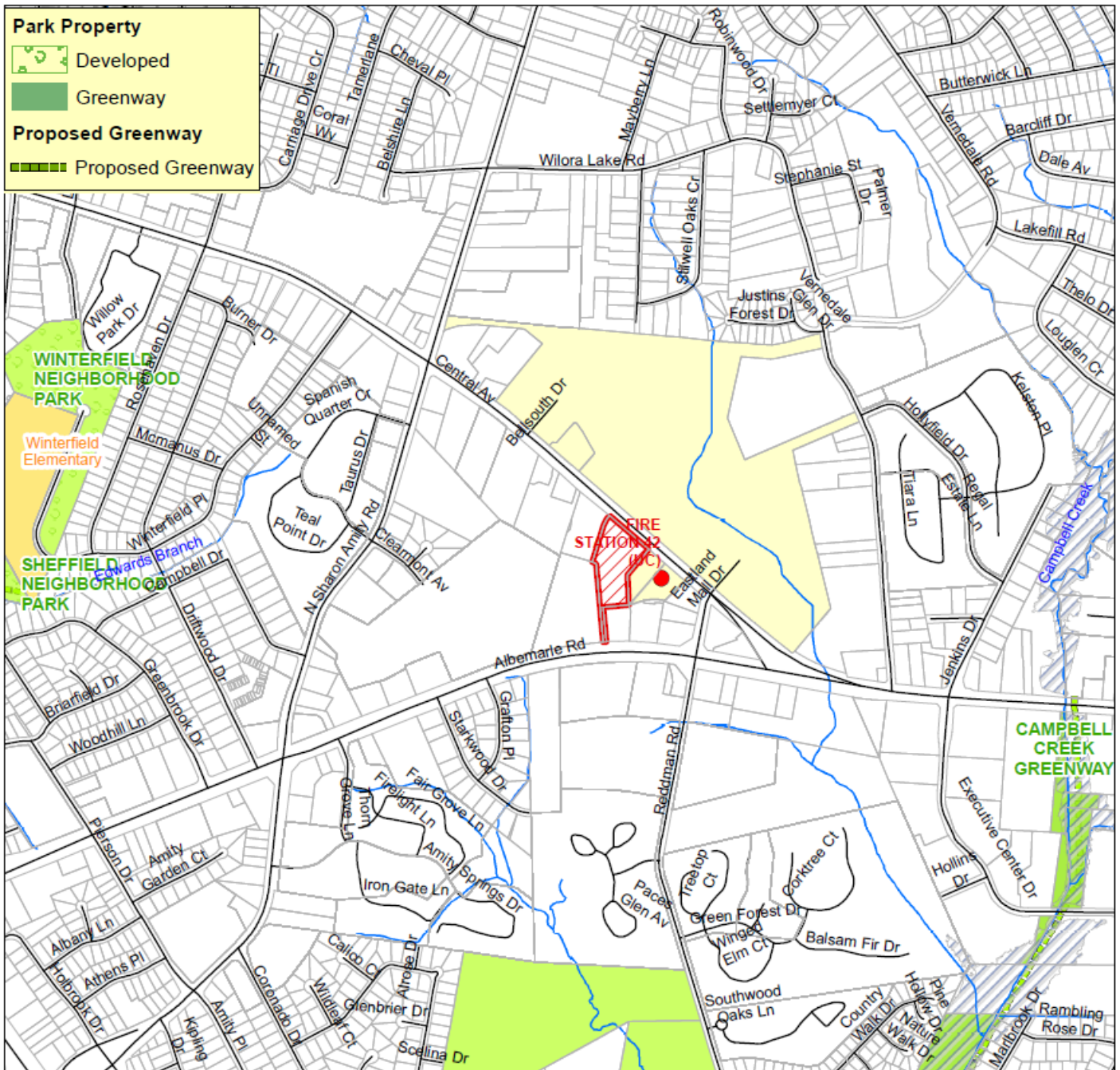
Conclusions:

- The proposed use as an office is consistent with the vision in the *Eastland Area Plan* which recommends this site to be part of a future Town Center area with a range of uses.
- Acquiring this property provides the opportunity to activate and appropriately utilize an existing vacant non-residential structure within the Eastland area, a priority area for reinvestment.

Adopted Goals and Policies:

- The *Eastland Area Plan* (2003) identifies this area as a future Town Center and recommends a mix of single family, multi-family, office, and retail uses. If residential uses are included, a density of up to 10 units per acre is considered appropriate based on adopted policy.
- The site is located along the adopted alignment in the *CATS 2030 Transit System Plan* as a future phase of the Gold Line Streetcar project.
- Council's *Economic Development FY 2018-2019 Focus Area Plan* identifies the objective, "Promote the holistic development of targeted business districts and neighborhoods" by "stimulat[ing] private investment in targeted areas and within areas identified in the Community Investment Plan and Business Corridor Revitalization Plan." Examples include *Eastland/Central Avenue Area*.

CMPC PLANNING COMMITTEE REVIEW:



Mandatory Referral 17-32

Initiated by: Innovation & Technology

Submitted by: Engineering & Property Management

- Mandatory Referral
- County Property
- City Property
- Schools
- FEMA 100 Year Floodplain



Produced by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Department

Initiated by: Kevin Gordon, Fire
Submitted by: Timothy J. O'Brien, E & PM
Planning staff resource: Julia Lund, Planning

ATTACHMENT 3

MANDATORY REFERRAL-REPORT NO. 17-33 **Proposed Land Purchase for Fire Station at Beatties Ford Road and Miranda Road** **in Charlotte's Extraterritorial Jurisdiction**

PROJECT PROPOSAL AND LOCATION:

The Charlotte Fire Department (CFD) is proposing the purchase of land for a future fire station in the vicinity of Beatties Ford Road and Miranda Road which is in Charlotte's ETJ and west of Northlake Mall. City staff have identified a 6.5-acre corner parcel (PID #037-411-23) that is a rectangular, level site and mostly cleared of trees. The parcel is zoned R-3 (single family residential) according to the Charlotte Zoning Ordinance and has a modest vacant house that contributes little toward the value of the property.

The area is characterized by a mixture of very low-density residential development and vacant pasture-land.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION:

Increasing growth in northwest Charlotte has created a need to secure a fire station site to serve this area both in the immediate and foreseeable future. Acquiring this parcel now will allow the City to mitigate rising land values and secure a site on a primary road (Beatties Ford Road) before land costs increase.

CFD uses various criteria to select sites for a fire station. Essentially, a new fire station must be built when a new "point of dispatch" is required in order to meet response time standards. The site selection is based most importantly on proximity to service area but also, ease of access into and out of the fire station (which means no medians to impede the ability to enter and exit). Other things are also considered such as topography and street connectivity. Other parcels were considered; however, those parcels either required the purchase of too much land and/or required the purchase and removal of occupied residences and/or extensive vegetation.

The City has already assumed first responder responsibility in some portions of Charlotte's ETJ. In June 2011, Newell/Mallard Creek Volunteer fire district closed while Providence District closed in 2015, and CFD assumed responsibility to those areas in FY2012 and FY2016 respectively. This particular site is located within the Long Creek VFD service area.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED PUBLIC POLICIES:

NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) Standards states that the first fire fighting force be on scene in 6 minutes and the second unit within 10 minutes, 20 seconds, at least 90 percent of the time. As the northwest area of Charlotte continues to grow, the firefighting units will have an increasingly more difficult time accomplishing these goals unless a new fire station can be built before development intensity increases in the area.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED LAND USE PLANS:

The Westside Strategy Plan (2000) recommends this area for single family residential at 4 DUA; however, institutional uses are not identified for specific locations within area plans and are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. *The Northwest District Plan (1990)* also includes as a goal the provision of efficient and acceptable levels of public services and facilities to attract and accommodate development.

PROJECT IMPACT:

Fire stations are generally well received in communities. Fire fighters are trained in CPR and are valuable resources to the community.

The site will have sizeable setbacks from neighboring properties to help mitigate impacts.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PUBLIC OR PRIVATE PROJECTS:

There are no known other projects in the vicinity of the site.

ESTIMATED PROJECT COMPLETION DATE:

Construction of this fire station is at least three years out.

JOINT USE TASK FORCE REVIEW COMMENTS:

The Joint Use Task Force discussed this matter at their October 4, 2017 meeting and no comments were offered.

The following agencies were represented at the October 4, 2017 Joint Use Task Force meeting: Park & Recreation, City Real Estate, Planning, Charlotte Water, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Library, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police and the Town of Davidson.

PLANNING STAFF REVIEW:

Planning staff has reviewed the proposed purchase of the property and below are the key findings:

Conclusions:

- Siting a fire station in this location will improve response times in this area in anticipation of future growth.
- The relatively large size of the lot will allow for sizable setbacks that can help mitigate impacts to surrounding neighbors.

Adopted Goals and Policies:

- Council's *Community Safety FY 2018-2019 Focus Area Plan* identifies the objective, "Minimize loss of life, property damage and injury" by "Improv[ing] response times for emergency calls."
- *The Northwest District Plan (1990)* includes as a goal the provision of efficient and acceptable levels of public services and facilities to attract and accommodate development.

CMPC PLANNING COMMITTEE REVIEW:

