

MANDATORY REFERRAL REPORT NO. 01-01
CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG PLANNING COMMISSION
PURCHASE LAND FOR STEELE CREEK BRANCH LIBRARY
JANUARY, 2001

PROJECT LOCATION

The proposed site is located on Steele Creek Road just north of the intersection of Steele Creek and York Road.

PROJECT PROPOSAL

The Public Library of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County (PLCMC) desires to purchase a 3.1 acre site to build a 15,000 square foot branch library. This project will replace the existing 4,000 square foot leased facility (Steele Creek Branch Library) located in a shopping center along York Road. The lease for this space terminates on 12/01/03.

The proposed project will also be located on property adjacent to the new Southwest Middle School. This will result in a complex to serve the educational and cultural needs of the community. Also, the County's Parks and Recreation Department has expressed an interest in utilizing the fields associated with the school for public park use.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

In 1999, a Mecklenburg County General Obligation Bond for Public Library was passed by residents of Charlotte-Mecklenburg. One of the projects included in the bond was the replacement of the existing Steele Creek Branch Library with a permanent facility. This project is needed to serve the cultural needs of a growing part of Mecklenburg County.

PROJECT IMPACT

The purchase of this property will enable the PLCMC to purchase land to build a permanent library facility to replace space that is currently being leased. The proposed space would more than triple the existing space. There should be no adverse impacts derived from this project. The project should enhance this growing portion of Mecklenburg County by providing increased access to a new 15,000 square foot cultural facility.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PROJECTS

The proposed project is located along a major thoroughfare adjacent to a proposed school. The project will result in a new complex to serve the educational and cultural needs of a growing portion of Mecklenburg County. The Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) and PLCMC have agreed to coordinate construction schedules and share driveways. Although no plans have been drawn to date, the concept is to have two driveways to serve the school one would be used for buses and the other for private cars. It is anticipated that the library will share the private car driveway. During the design, the two agencies will also explore shared parking and stormwater retention. As mentioned earlier, the

County Parks and Recreation Department has also expressed an interest in utilizing the fields associated with the school for public park use.

The proposed project will be located on a 3.1 acre site with 500+ feet of frontage on Steele Creek Road. The site contains a 2,000+ square foot residential unit that is currently occupied. Adjacent land uses include vacant property to the east, vacant and commercial development to the south, the proposed Southwest Middle School to the west and vacant and single family north of the proposed site.

This site is located in the Southwest District Plan and is zoned R-3 single family. The district plan calls for low density residential development for the proposed library site. The proposed institutional use is compatible in a residential area and is therefore consistent with adopted land use policies for the area. The current R-3 zoning, however, doesn't accommodate governmental facilities greater than 12,500 square feet. Therefore the site should be rezoned to a zoning district (institutional) to accommodate the proposed use.

The site is located along a portion of Steele Creek Road which is proposed to be realigned to connect to York Road. The proposed realignment is part of the York Road widening project and may impact available acreage needed for the library. The realignment is a funded project in the 2020 Transportation Plan. Construction for this project begins this June, 2001 with a completion date of Fall 2003.

PROJECT COST

The proposed budget is approximately \$2.7 million for construction, design and upfit.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff supports the purchase of this site to build a new branch library. Staff further recommends the following:

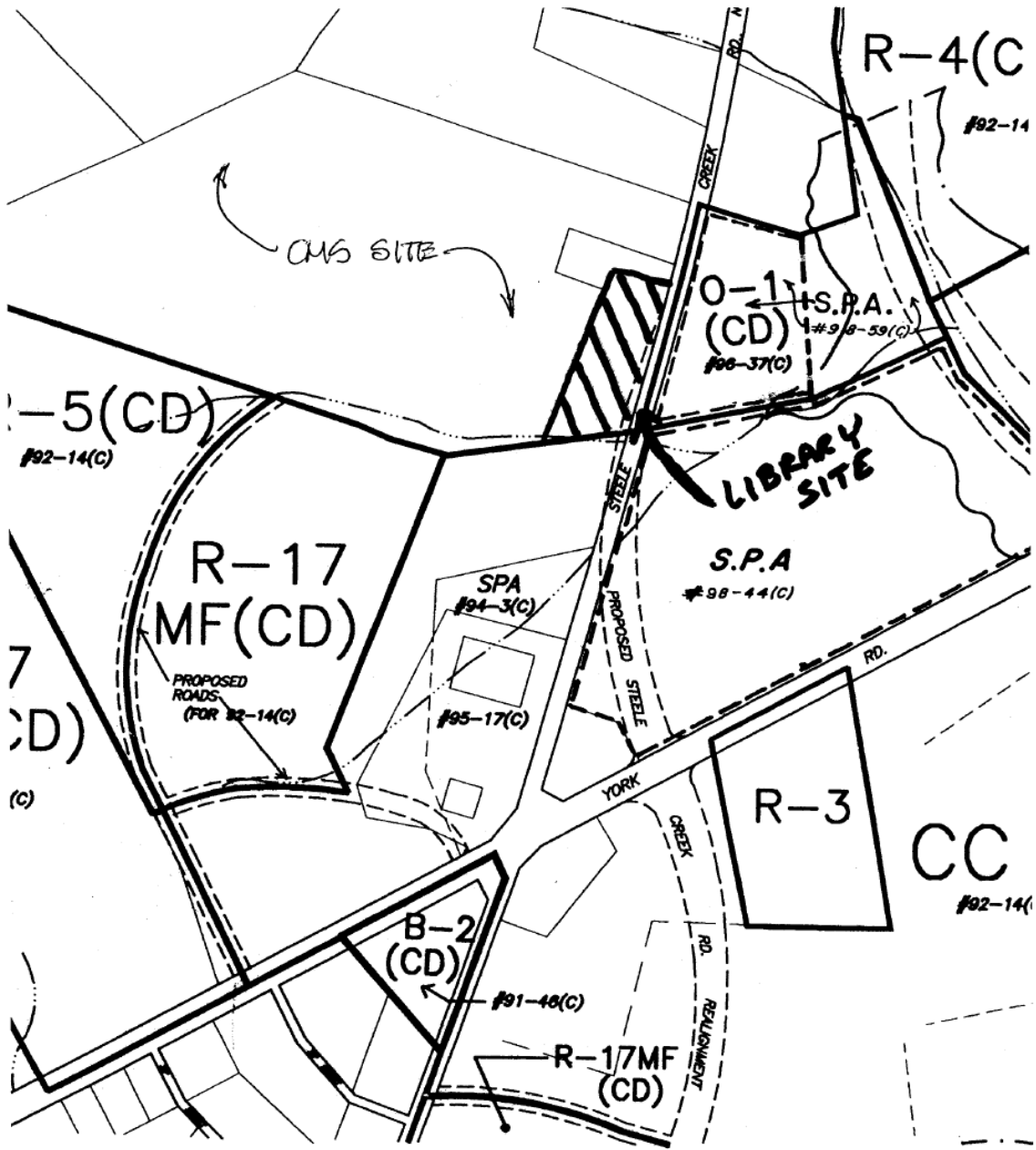
- the property should be rezoned to a zoning district (Institutional) to accommodate the proposed use;

- CMS and the PLCMC should coordinate construction schedules, as currently proposed, including location of driveways, parking and stormwater retention and;

- the PLCMC should coordinate with the Charlotte Department of Transportation (CDOT) and North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) on the realignment project proposed for Steele Creek Road.

PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The Committee voted unanimously 6-0 to approve staff's recommendation to purchase the proposed site for a branch library.



SHEET NO. 171

MR01-01

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