

**MANDATORY REFERRAL - REPORT NO. 02-09**  
**ACQUISITION OF PROPERTY FOR PARK AND SOUTH MIDDLE / HIGH SCHOOL SITE**

**PROJECT PROPOSAL AND LOCATION:** The proposal is to acquire property for park improvements and a new middle or high school at 9506, 9508, and 9728 Community House Road (plus additional parcels) in Mecklenburg County, totaling 87.25 acres. The site includes Tax Parcels 229-041-11, 18; 220-057-99 on east side of Community House Road, comprising 62.8 acres; Parcels 229-011-20, 22 on west side of Community House Road, comprising 21.15 acres; and Parcels 229-041-13, 14 on west side of Blakeney Heath Road, comprising 3.3 acres.

**PROJECT JUSTIFICATION:** This property would provide park improvements and potential site for either a middle school (1200 students) or high school (2000 students) identified for the southern portion of the County in the CMS Master Plan. The size guideline is 30 acres for middle schools and 60 acres for high schools. It also potentially could provide approximately 2 acres for a branch library designed to share vehicular access and parking. The site is intended to augment and county-owned Ballantyne Park, Hawk Ridge Elementary School, and the YMCA property.

**CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED LAND USE AND PUBLIC POLICY:**

The South District Plan shows the proposed site as residential. While existing schools are shown on the plan as institutional, proposed or future school sites are not mapped. Hawk Ridge Elementary and the existing Ballantyne Park are shown as institutional just to the north.

CMS School Facilities Master Plan identifies a need for one new high school in the south area based on its demographic projections. The plan sets forth a series of criteria for site evaluation. These include: attendance patterns, site as unifying community feature, ability to address crowding at existing schools over time, student diversity, adequacy of roads; potential for public transit utilization, site joint use potential, compatibility to community land use plans, sufficient distance among same-grade schools, availability of sufficient land area. While the subject site meets a number of these criteria, it falls short in key areas: student diversity and potential for public transit utilization.

The City's Centers and Corridors concept and Smart Growth principles stress that major development be focused along transit corridors and within certain other densely developed centers. The City's Transit Station Area Principles, adopted by City Council in November 2001, encourage the concentration of complementary land uses within walking distance of transit stations. The Charlotte Region Transit Station Area Joint Development Principles also encourage "complementary public facilities (such as schools, parks/open space, libraries and social service organizations) at or near transit stations to serve both transit users and surrounding neighborhoods." High School facilities in particular are regarded as suitable candidates for location in transit corridors.

**PROJECT IMPACT:** The proposed parcels are large rural lots, undeveloped except for farmhouses. Recent single-family development is adjacent to the south and extends generally in all directions. Ardrey Kell, the circumferential road, is under construction just southward. A reconfiguration of Community House Road also is in long-term plans for the area. The proposed site is adjacent to Ballantyne Park facilities, and would become a part of a complex of civic facilities.

**RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PUBLIC OR PRIVATE PROJECTS:** The site is one of two under consideration for the middle/high school facilities. The other site (Mandatory Referral 02-08, 105.34 acres directly to the west) was presented to and approved by the Planning Committee on April 1, 2002. The subject site is directly contiguous to the Ballantyne district park property and would be designed to utilize all of the assembled public property for school and recreational facilities as well as a branch library site. Combined with the district park site/YMCA/Hawk Ridge Elementary School/fire station site, the subject site would be part of a larger public facilities complex to serve this portion of southern Mecklenburg County.

**ESTIMATED PROJECT COMPLETION DATE:** Middle School planning in 2002; construction in 2003; High School planning in 2005, with construction to follow.

**JOINT USE TASK FORCE REVIEW COMMENTS:**

There is joint use potential for park and library uses.

The entire complex of publicly owned properties should be site planned at once, rather than having each entity planning its own corner in a vacuum.

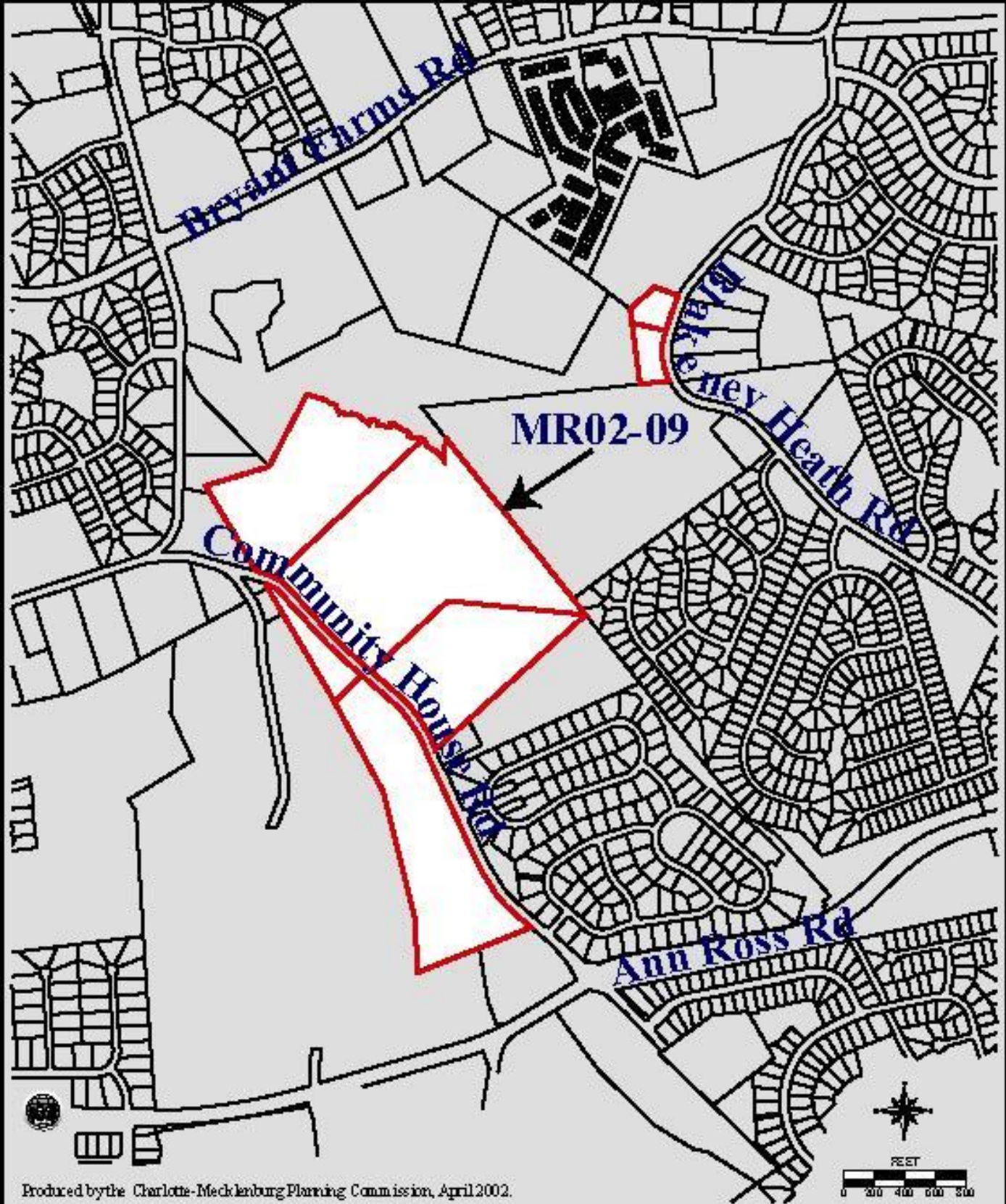
**CMPC STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** CMPC staff recommends that this site should be purchased for park and/or middle school use only. The site is undeveloped rural land located on the City fringe in an area of intense development pressure. It is located at a prominent vehicular crossroads, adjacent to other civic uses including an extensive park network, and is just beyond the emerging Ballantyne regional commercial center. However it is not served by transit, and general transit service is unlikely.

Acquisition and use of the subject site for park, library, and middle school purposes is consistent and compatible with proposed land use plans.

However, use as a High School is inconsistent with the broader community-wide goal of focusing higher intensity uses in the City's principal development corridors. As compared to transit corridor site opportunities, the subject site would encourage development on the fringe of the City at the expense of the urban core. Expenditure of public funds for a development of this magnitude should be leveraged more effectively to serve the wider community goals. It is noted that a High School site in a more urbanized corridor setting likely could be developed at a higher density, requiring a smaller site area than the usual CMS suburban guideline.

**CMPC PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:** The Planning Committee recommended approval by a 5-1 vote.

# Mandatory Referral: MR02-09



**MANDATORY REFERRAL:**

**SOUTH MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL SITES #2 of 2**

**EAST SIDE OF COMMUNITY HOUSE ROAD**

**MR02-09**

**CAPITAL PROJECT PROPOSAL FORM**

**Instructions:**

This form is provided to capital project initiating agencies and departments for reporting proposed projects to the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission in accordance with the requirements of North Carolina House Bill 855.

Proposed capital projects are to be submitted to the Planning Commission using this form at least 30 days prior to presentation to the governmental unit having approval authority.

Constructive review of a project proposal requires a full description of the project and its objectives. Please provide all of the requested information as well as pertinent graphic information. You will be advised when the project is scheduled for Planning Commission consideration so that your department representatives may be present to respond to questions.

**I. Initiating Department:** Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools & County Real Estate Services

**Date:** March 1, 2002

**Submitted By:** Harold Jenkins, CMS and Mark P. Hahn, RES

**Department Representatives:** Kevin Bringewatt, CMS and Nancy Brunnemer, RES

**II. Project Name:** South High School Site or Middle School Site #2 of 2 – East Side of Community House Road

**III. Location and Description of Project:** The subject property includes Tax Parcel 229-041-11, 229-041-18 and 229-057-99 approximately 64 acres, located east of Community House Road and partially contiguous to the Ballantyne district park site (undeveloped). This project may also utilize +/- 20 acre on the west side of Community House Road (Tax Parcels 229-011-20 and 229-011-22). Tax parcels 229-041-13 and 229-041-14 (approximately 4 acres) would be needed to round out the park/school site. A middle school would accommodate 1200 students; A senior high school would serve 2000 students. The standard size for middle schools is 30 acres, for senior high schools 60 acres.

**IV. Project Justification/Need:** This property would either a middle school and park improvements or a senior high school – both of which are identified as needed for the south portion of the County in the CMS Master Plan. This site potentially would also provide approximately 2 acres for a branch library site to be designed to share vehicular access and parking spaces.

**V. Project Status (check all that apply):**

<b>Nothing done but this report</b>	<b>X</b>	<i>Land not yet acquired</i>	
Preliminary plans completed		Land acquisition underway	
Detailed plans completed		Land acquired	
No land acquisition involved		Project under contract	

**VI. Proposed Development Schedule:**

<b>Task</b>	<b>Begin</b>	<b>Completed</b>
Planning	2002 for middle school site; 2005 for high school site	
Land		
Construction	Early 2003 for middle school site	

(Identify any known external factors that are critical to the timing of this project. For example, the opening of a major shopping center or construction of a new school.) N/A

**VII. Relation of this proposal to other public projects: (Is this project part of a series of interrelated capital projects? Is the project affected by or does it affect other public projects in this area?)**  
This site is one of two under consideration for the middle/high school facilities. The subject site is directly contiguous to the Ballantyne district park property and would be designed to utilize all of the assembled public property for school and recreation facilities as well as a branch library site. Combined with the district park site/YMCA/Hawk Ridge Elementary School/fire station site, the subject site would be part of a larger public facilities complex to serve this portion of southern Mecklenburg County.

**VIII. Project Cost Estimate:** (Indicate the estimated total project cost and describe how this estimation has been made.) A market appraisal will establish the value for negotiations.

**VIII. Assistance Funds:** (If state or federal assistance funds are proposed, indicate the specific assistance program and the status of any application for project funding assistance.) N/A

Map to be attached.