

MANDATORY REFERRAL-REPORT NO. MR02-10
BELMONT BRANCH/LITTLE SUGAR CREEK - ACQUISITION

PROJECT PROPOSAL AND LOCATION: it is proposed to acquire 24 vacant flood plain tracts on the Belmont Branch of Little Sugar Creek within the Optimist Park and Belmont neighborhoods off North Davidson Street for inclusion in Mecklenburg County Storm Water Services residential buy-out/water quality/stream restoration program. (List of tax parcels attached.)

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION: These parcels will be added to six flood plain parcels recently acquired by Mecklenburg County Storm Water Services to be used for a large scale wetlands and stream restoration project to be funded by the North Carolina Clean Water Management Trust Fund. The addition of these parcels will provide direct connectivity to the acquired parcels and to the Little Sugar Creek Greenway.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED LAND USE AND PUBLIC POLICY: This purchase is consistent with the Mecklenburg County Greenway Master Plan (1999) to acquire flood plain properties for open space, water quality enhancement and passive recreation use. A state storm water grant for the restoration project is pending the acquisition, although purchase will not be conditioned upon obtaining the grant.

This proposal is also consistent with recommendations in the *Optimist Park Neighborhood Plan* adopted by City Council on March 25, 2002. This plan recommends preservation of land located within the floodplain along Little Sugar Creek for open space land uses.

PROJECT IMPACT: Acquisition will provide environmental restoration along the greenway between Cordelia Park and 12th Street. Belmont Branch flows into Little Sugar Creek, the most degraded creek in the County. This restoration project is one of several proposed to help cleanse the creek as it flows for more than twelve miles through Mecklenburg and into South Carolina.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PUBLIC OR PRIVATE PROJECTS: This proposal is consistent with the Greenway Master Plan and County Storm Water Services water quality enhancement and protection policies.

ESTIMATED PROJECT COMPLETION DATE: Purchase is funded. No building is contemplated. Restoration is anticipated to be complete approximately one year after receipt of the grant.

JOINT USE TASK FORCE REVIEW COMMENTS: The Joint Use Task Force met on April 3, 2002 and had no comments on the proposed project.

CMPC STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The proposed project utilizes vacant property that in some cases is overgrown and/or collecting debris. The parcels are currently zoned R-5, R-22MF, B-2 and I-2. The parcels primarily border single-family development and property already acquired for the Little Sugar Creek Greenway. The project lies between the Optimist Park and Belmont communities. City Council recently adopted the *Optimist Park Neighborhood Plan*, which recommended continued development of the greenway along Little Sugar Creek and neighborhood beautification projects to clean up vacant and overgrown lots. A plan for the Belmont Community is underway and already residents have recognized the need for additional recreational facilities, green space and the problem of vacant lots being used for illegal dumping. Based on the project's consistency with the Mecklenburg County Greenway Master Plan, the Optimist Park Neighborhood Plan and initial comments from the Belmont community, staff recommends approval of the project.

CMPC PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Planning Committee recommended approval by a 6-0 vote.

BELMONT BRANCH AT LITTLE SUGAR CREEK

Tax Parcel List:

Parcel	Acreage
08108301	0.264
08108308	0.131
08108307	0.131
08108205	0.208
08108204	0.624
08108207	0.502
08108208	0.459
08108209	0.225
08108202	0.15
08108203	0.208
08108201	0.126
08108214	0.126
08108213	0.205
08108212	0.126
08108211	0.172
08108210	0.172
08109506	0.169
08108309	0.131
08108303	0.131
08109111	0.172
08109501	0.172
08109603	0.172
08109602	0.172
08109601	0.172
Total Area	5.12

Mandatory Referral: MR02-10

