

MANDATORY REFERRAL-REPORT NO. 02-28
Stewart/Irwin Creek Greenway Acquisition at West Morehead Street/Freedom Drive

PROJECT PROPOSAL AND LOCATION:

Mecklenburg County proposes to purchase Tax Parcel Nos. 067-013-04, 067-014-05, 067-014-06 and 067-011-05; approximately 13 acres located off the southerly side of West Morehead Street and along both sides of Freedom Drive near the confluence of Stewart and Irwin Creeks. The purpose of this purchase is to utilize the property for greenway/open space and water quality enhancement.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION:

The subject properties are located in Central Park District I and are partially vacant and are entirely within the 100-year flood plain of Stewart and Irwin Creeks. The use of these parcels as open space would create a green gateway, complementing Bryant Park as well as the rejuvenation of the West Morehead Street and Freedom Drive corridors. In addition, a nearby parcel, (Tax Parcel No. 067-013-06) was recently acquired for open space and its building is slated for demolition within a few months. As naturally-maintained open space, this area will also serve to improve the water quality of the two creeks, which join at this point near I-77 and flow southward.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED LAND USE PLANS AND PUBLIC POLICY:

This proposal is consistent with the *Mecklenburg County Greenway Master Plan* (1999) and supports the *2010 Center City Plan* with regard to linkages between the City's core and outlying neighborhoods. The *West Morehead Corridor Vision and Concept Plan*, adopted by City Council earlier this year, recommends that the subject parcels be used for open space land uses.

PROJECT IMPACT:

The subject property is located within the 100-year flood plain of Stewart/Irwin Creeks and previously has been subject to flooding. The property is slated to be cleared and used as open space. As open space, this area will provide a green component to a busy area just outside the Center City core. A great effort is currently underway to rejuvenate both the West Morehead Street and Freedom Drive corridors.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PUBLIC OR PRIVATE PROJECTS:

This project is a continuation of the County's plans to acquire land for its greenway/open space system.

ESTIMATED PROJECT COMPLETION DATE:

1999 Land Bonds will be used for acquisition. No funding is available for development at this time and the land will be banked for future use as open space.

JOINT USE TASK FORCE REVIEW COMMENTS:

The Joint Use Task Force met on September 4 and noted that the first floor elevation of the buildings scheduled for acquisition is 7 1/2 feet below flood elevation making their re-use for public purpose impractical.

CMPC STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of this Mandatory Referral.

CMPC PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: The Planning Committee recommended approval by a vote of 6-0 at their September 17, 2002 meeting.

Mandatory Referral: MR02-28

