

MANDATORY REFERRAL REPORT NO. 03-25

Proposal to acquire property on Robinson Church Road to serve as a future High School site

PROJECT PROPOSAL AND LOCATION:

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools proposes to purchase 60 acres of land located on Robinson Church Road in eastern Mecklenburg County to develop a high school using 1999 Land Bonds for property acquisition. The subject property (parcel 108-181-01) is zoned R-3 and is currently vacant. The proposal is to work with the owner of the land and to determine precisely what 60-acre portion of the 268-acre parcel would be most appropriate for the high school site, and to purchase only those 60 acres, rather than the entire site.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION:

The property is located in the Target Search Area for a high school in the draft *Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Long-Range School Facilities Master Plan 2003/04—2012/13*, currently being considered by the Board of Education.

The proposed Robinson Church Road high school site is approximately 3.4 miles north of Independence High School and lies within the 2003/04 Independence home school boundary. Independence is currently 145% utilized without mobile classrooms. Vance High School also serves this area and is approximately 5.5 miles northwest of the proposed property. Vance is currently 167% utilized without mobiles. The construction of a new high school in the eastern portion of the district would have the potential to relieve overcrowding at Independence and/or Vance high schools. The proposed property is near existing densities of CMS high school students as well as near areas of anticipated growth, thus providing for the long-term populating of a school at this site.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED PUBLIC POLICIES:

The proposed school site is zoned R-3, which allows high schools. Its size meets both CMS and state guidelines of developable acres for a 2,000-student high school.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED LAND USE PLANS:

The *East District Plan* (1990) identifies this location as a potential site for an elementary or high school.

PROJECT IMPACT:

Increased traffic around the school site is expected for two 30-minute periods in the morning and afternoon. CMS has pledged to work closely with permitting agencies and the site designers to minimize this impact.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PUBLIC OR PRIVATE PROJECTS:

The proposed Eastern Circumferential Road is planned to be routed through the subject property. The *2025 Long Range Transportation Plan* indicates funding for construction by 2020. The Eastern Circumferential is to be a four-lane, median divided major thoroughfare with the potential to grow to six lanes. CMS has pledged to work with staff of the Mecklenburg Union Metropolitan Planning Organization (MUMPO) as planning of the Eastern Circumferential progresses.

The site also adjoins a future greenway, according to the Mecklenburg County greenway plan.

ESTIMATED PROJECT COMPLETION DATE:

This project is a proposed land banking site and since funding for construction is not currently available, a projected build out date is not available at this time. The estimated cost, developed in conjunction with the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Capital Needs Assessment process, is approximately \$45 million (in 2003 dollars). This cost includes construction, furnishings and equipment, design and project management.

JOINT USE TASK FORCE REVIEW COMMENTS:

The Joint Use Task force discussed this matter at its meeting on October 1, 2003 and has indicated no joint use opportunities.

CMPC STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends purchase of a portion of this site to be used as a future high school.

CMPC PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

At their October 16, 2003 meeting, the Planning Commission recommended approval of this transaction by a 6-0 vote.

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