

**MANDATORY REFERRAL-REPORT NO. 05-02**  
**Property Exchange Along Rail Corridor for Alpha Mill Residential Project**

**PROJECT PROPOSAL AND LOCATION:**

Crosland Development Corporation is interested in redeveloping the historic Alpha Mill property for residential multi-family apartment units. The property (parcel 08103308) is located along the Northeast Transit Corridor near East 12<sup>th</sup> Street just northeast of Uptown Charlotte. Crosland needs the excess rail right-of-way from the City primarily for parking for the redeveloped property.

**PROJECT JUSTIFICATION:**

CATS staff has been involved in discussions relative to this issue for over a year and is content with the request.

The City's rail corridor currently encumbers 100 feet of the Alpha Mill property along the rail frontage. The City has determined that it only needs 35 feet of the 100 feet of railroad right-of-way width to run the future Northeast Corridor light rail operation. Crosland needs the remaining 65 feet of rail corridor for the redevelopment of the Alpha Mill property. While the City has rights of use to the rail property, the land beneath the rails is actually assigned to the owner of the Alpha Mill.

Exchanging land rights with Crosland will help to promote economic development in an economically depressed area of the City by enabling this project to proceed. The proposed development will also save an historic building and encourage further growth in this portion of Charlotte. Finally, the proposed transaction will serve to clarify land ownership at this location.

It is proposed that Crosland and the City exchange non-warranty deeds, wherein the City will relinquish its rights to 65 feet of the right-of-way in exchange for Crosland releasing its remaining interests underneath the remaining 35 feet of the City's rail right-of-way. As part of the transaction, Crosland will also give the City \$13,822 as further compensation for the exchange.

**CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED PUBLIC POLICIES:**

The proposed transaction is consistent with City economic development goals. According *Guidelines for Services Contracting and Asset Management, July 1994* by the Privatization Competition Advisory Committee, "City Council will balance the benefits of the sale of any of its assets with other Council policies and goals".

**CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED LAND USE PLANS:**

The Alpha Mill property lies within the *Optimist Park Neighborhood Plan (2002)* boundary. The existing land use of the property is industrial and the Plan identifies the property for a future land use study area contingent upon development of the Northeast Transit Corridor. This property is just within a ¼ mile radius of a proposed light rail transit station at North Tryon and 16<sup>th</sup> Streets. The *Transit Station Area Principles (2001)* emphasize the need to concentrate a mix of complementary, well-integrated land uses within walking distance of transit stations; to promote good walking, bicycling and transit connections; and to design the development to complement transit. In addition, the Principles recommend a minimum density of 20 dwelling units per acre and a minimum Floor Area Ratio of .75 within ¼ mile of a transit station. The Principles also recommend considering station areas "special traffic generators" such as cultural, educational, entertainment, and recreational uses.

Rezoning Petition 04-017 was approved by City Council on March 15, 2004 that recommends preserving three to four existing buildings on the property, development of up to five new buildings, up to 400,000 square feet of residential uses, and 50,000 of the 400,000 square feet may be developed for non-residential land uses. The approved Floor Area Ratio for the property is 1.2 that exceeds the minimum FAR of .75 within ¼ mile of a transit station.

**PROJECT IMPACT:**

The location of the land being deeded to Crosland will be adjacent to the City's Northeast Transit Corridor that will be elevated by pier structures to cross over the existing CSX railroad tracks. The land proposed to be released will not be needed for future rail uses.

**RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PUBLIC OR PRIVATE PROJECTS:**

The exchange of property will spur further economic development along the Northeast Transit Corridor running through Uptown Charlotte.

**ESTIMATED PROJECT COMPLETION DATE:**

Crosland expects to begin construction by around June 2005. They are currently receiving their Brownfield approval from the NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources and a Certificate of Appropriateness from the National Park Services for historic tax credits for the Alpha Mill structure.

**JOINT USE TASK FORCE REVIEW COMMENTS:**

The Joint Use Task Force discussed this proposal at their January 5, 2005 meeting and did not offer any comments.

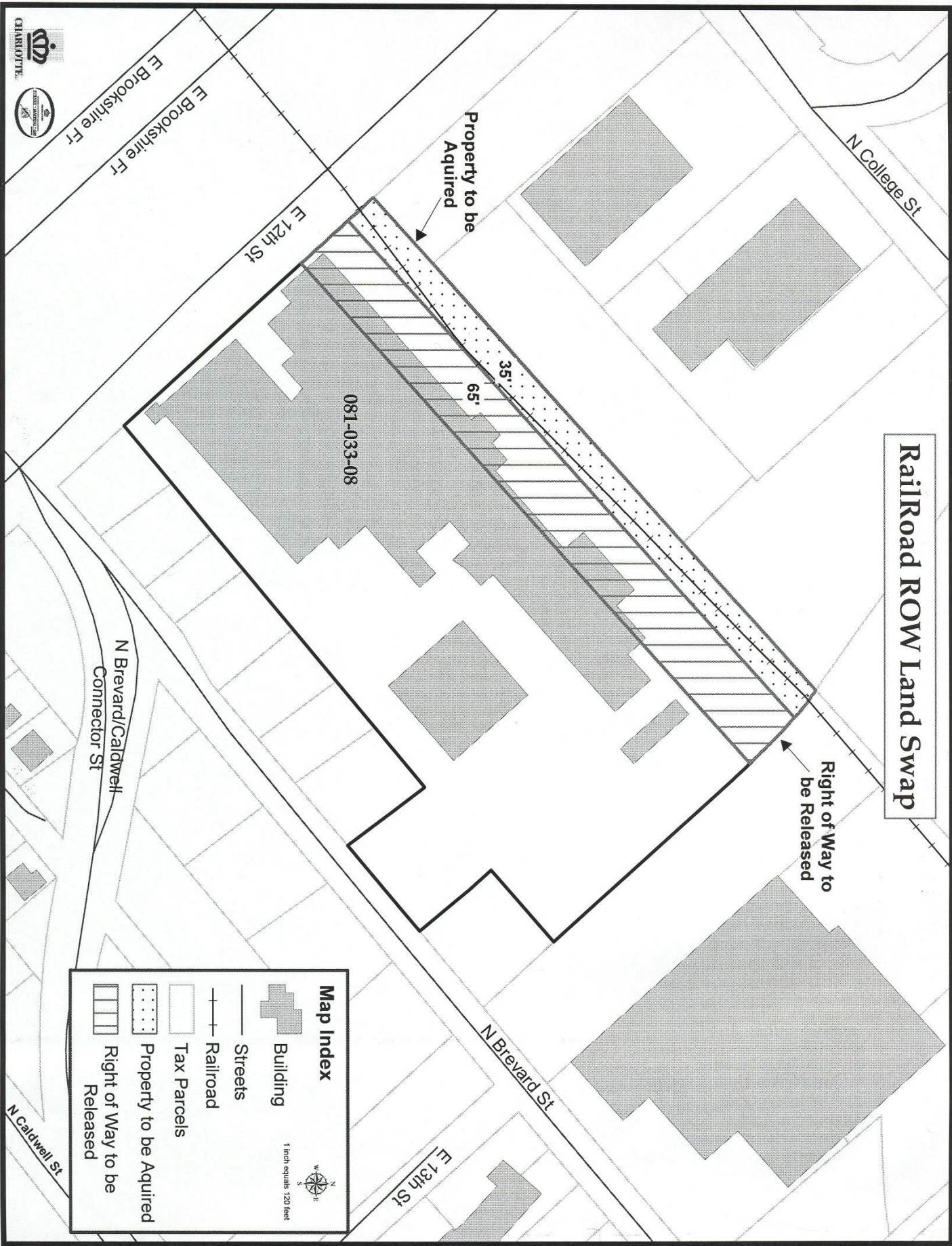
**CMPC STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval of this petition.

**CMPC PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:**

At their January 18, 2005 meeting, the Planning Committee recommended approval by a vote of 6-0.

# RailRoad ROW Land Swap



Building

Streets

Railroad

Tax Parcels

Property to be Aquired

Right of Way to be Released

**Map Index**

1 inch equals 120 feet

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