

**MANDATORY REFERRAL REPORT NO. 05-08**  
**Proposed Dowd House Site Expansion**

**PROJECT PROPOSAL AND LOCATION:**

Mecklenburg County Real Estate proposes to acquire the entire block surrounding the historic Dowd House (bounded by Monument Street, Wilkinson Boulevard, Remount Road and Greenland Avenue) in West Charlotte. Within this block the County owns parcels 067-061-05 (where the house is located) and 067-061-06 (vacant land). The parcels proposed to be added are 067-061-01, -02, -03, -04 and -07 and total approximately 2.7551 acres. The entire block/site will include just under four acres (including the Dowd House) when assembly is completed.

The Dowd House is a local landmark as designated by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission. Information on the house can be accessed on the Commission's Website at <http://www.cmhpf.org/surveys&rdowdhouse.htm>

The block is currently occupied by City-owned former City Fire Station 10 (recently replaced by a new facility on Wilkinson Boulevard), Urban Restoration, Inc. - a church-related outreach facility with parking area - and U.S. Carwash, Inc (a former branch bank). One of the parcels (City-owned) is vacant. The southern half of the block (toward Wilkinson Boulevard) is zoned O-2 (Office); the northern half is zoned R-5 (Residential).

**PROJECT JUSTIFICATION:**

This proposed transaction will create an appropriate setting for the early 1900's era Dowd House, which was part of Camp Greene (a military camp facility) during World War I. A committee assembled by County Park and Recreation to assess the Dowd site endorsed the concept of a master site plan for the block which would attract visitors and encourage interest in this time period of Charlotte's history and local involvement in the World War I effort.

Efforts will be made to raise funds (private, grants, etc.) to develop elements of the full master plan once the land is acquired.

**CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED PUBLIC POLICIES:**

This initiative is consistent with the Park and Recreation Department's desire to protect and encourage preservation of the historic fabric within the County's park system along with open space and recreational facilities.

Completing this project will enhance the setting for this historic house, which is to be preserved, and provide an urban green space along the Wilkinson Boulevard corridor which is gaining prominence with new development/redevelopment taking place nearby (WalMart, business park, fire station, West Transit Corridor, etc.) When completed, the preserved Dowd House site will serve in some respects as a "gateway" to the uptown area.

**CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED LAND USE PLANS:**

The *Central District Plan* (1993) calls for the south end of the site (Wilkinson Boulevard frontage) to be Industrial, and the north end of the site, including the existing fire station building, to be single-family residential. The property is directly on the West Transit Corridor, with a land use planning effort presently in progress. It is midway between proposed stops on Wilkinson Boulevard at Ashley Road, and at either West Morehead Street or Suttle Avenue. It is only a few blocks from each station. Land uses expected along the transit corridor are mixed use residential, office, and neighborhood commercial. The industrial land use called for by the *Central District Plan* is not compatible with the expected mixed-use transit future of the transit corridor, and will be changed as a result of the transit corridor planning effort.

The area has a limited quantity of open space to serve the existing neighborhood or expected future development. The *Joint Development Principles and Policy Guidelines* (2003) recognize the importance of open space as a component of transit station area communities.

**PROJECT IMPACT:**

Assembling this site will create a visual break in the existing development along Wilkinson Boulevard and highlight the house within a setting of green. The assembled site could become a distinctive landmark along this corridor. No negative impacts on public infrastructure are anticipated.

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

A major community initiative in this area is the development of the West Transit Corridor proposed to be aligned along Wilkinson Boulevard. These properties lie within ½ mile of proposed stations at Wilkinson/West Morehead/Suttle, and at Wilkinson/Ashley Road.

**ESTIMATED PROJECT COMPLETION DATE:**

The 1999 park bonds are available to begin site acquisition that will take place over time as acquisitions are negotiated with the various property owners. Development of the site, based on the master site plan, will require future funding, a portion of which may come from private sources. Existing buildings on the properties to be acquired will be demolished. There is not a specific date for completion of the entire project.

**JOINT USE TASK FORCE REVIEW COMMENTS:**

The Joint Use Task Force discussed this matter at their September 7, 2005 meeting. It was noted that future right-of-way along the Wilkinson frontage should be reserved for potential future widening, and that the Thoroughfare Plan shows re-alignment of Camp Green Street in the current Remount alignment, suggesting that additional right-of-way along Remount should also be reserved for future widening. (A future shift of Camp Greene Street to align with Remount will not directly impact the land area of this proposal, but could further improve the site's visibility.)

**CMPC STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval of this proposal. The proposed Dowd House restoration and adjoining open space will serve the needs of the neighborhood and the transit corridor well.

**CMPC PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:**

At its September 20, 2005 meeting the Planning Committee recommended approval by a vote of 4-2.

Mecklenburg County, North Carolina

# POLARIS

Property Ownership Land Records Information System

Date Printed: Thu Aug 25 16:42:33 EDT 2005

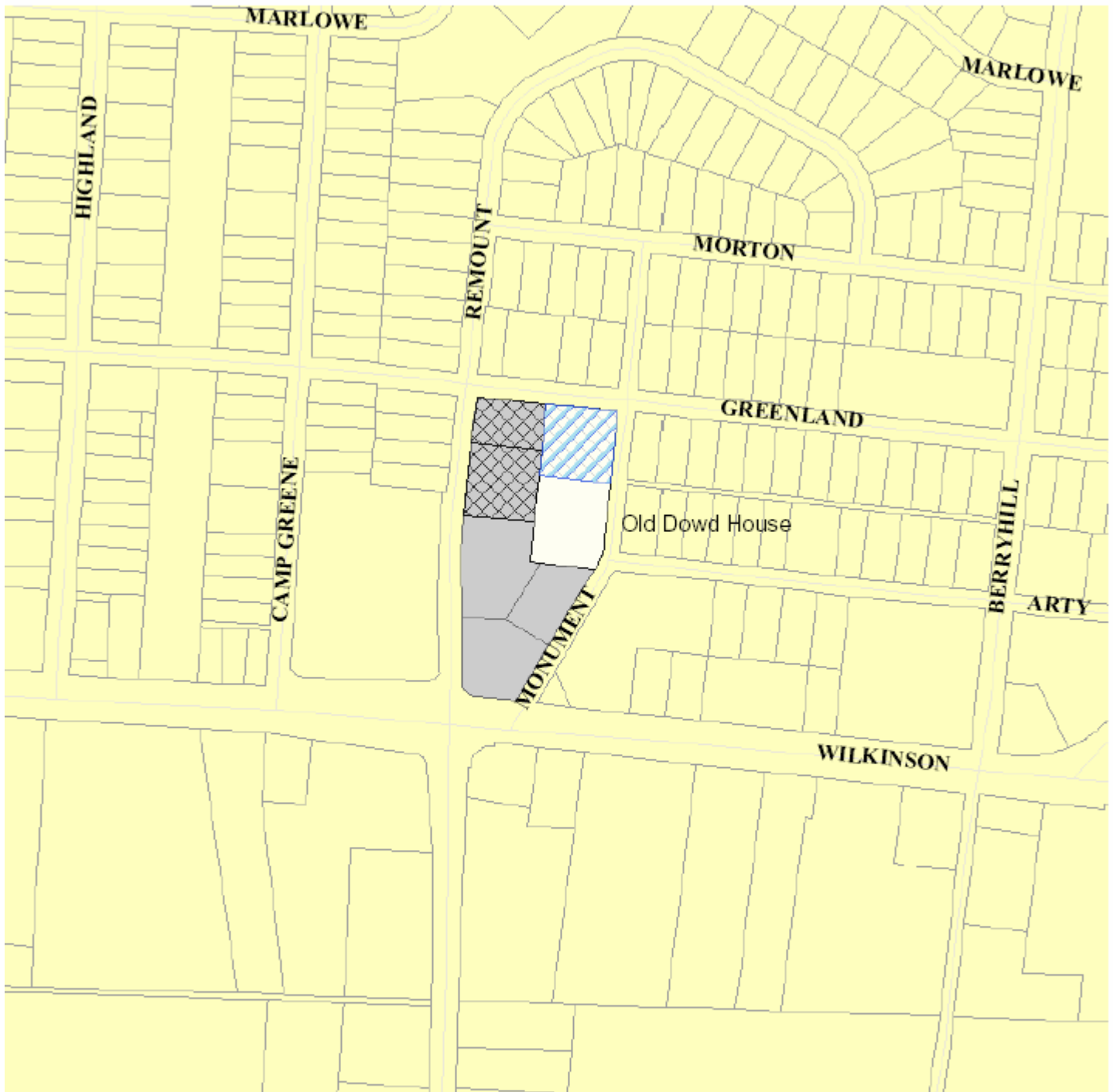
## Dowd House Site



This map is prepared for the inventory of real property within Mecklenburg County and is compiled from recorded deeds, plats, tax maps, surveys, planimetric maps, and other public records and data. Users of this map are hereby notified that the aforementioned public primary information sources should be consulted for verification. Mecklenburg County and its mapping contractors assume no legal responsibility for the information contained herein.



# MR 2005-08



## Legend

- 05\_08
- Meck County Property
- Park Property
- City Property

0 125 250 500 750 Feet