

**MANDATORY REFERRAL REPORT NO. 05-13**  
**Proposed Reedy Creek Nature Preserve Expansion - Allen Property Acquisition**

**PROJECT PROPOSAL AND LOCATION:**

Mecklenburg County proposes to expand Reedy Creek Nature Preserve by purchasing the "Allen Property" - approximately 11.2 acres located at 9631 Plaza Road Extension (tax parcel 105-111-04). The property is currently undeveloped and encompasses approximately 900 linear feet of Reedy Creek and includes five acres of floodplain. The northern half of the property is surrounded on three sides by nature preserve. The property is zoned R-3 Residential.

**PROJECT JUSTIFICATION:**

Acquisition of this parcel of land is supported by both the Mecklenburg County Nature Preserve Master Plan (1997) and the Mecklenburg County Greenway Master Plan (1999). The optimum size of a nature preserve is at least 1,000 contiguous acres. Reedy Creek Nature Preserve is currently 727 acres. The Reedy Creek corridor is identified as a major greenway corridor, extending from Reedy Creek Park and Nature Preserve to the Cabarrus County line. This parcel encompasses approximately 900 linear feet of creek frontage and will provide direct access to the nature preserve from Plaza Road Extension.

**CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED PUBLIC POLICIES:**

Acquisition of this parcel of land is supported by both the Mecklenburg County Nature Preserve Master Plan (1997) and the Mecklenburg County Greenway Master Plan (1999). Once acquired, this parcel will be preserved as undeveloped open space, with the exception of a future greenway trail.

**CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED LAND USE PLANS:**

The *Northeast District Plan* (1996) recommends "mixed" residential land uses at a density of 8-12 dwelling units per acre. However, park and greenway land uses are considered compatible with residential uses and the proposal can be seen as consistent with the plan.

The parcels and surrounding area are also part of the *DRAFT Rocky River Road Area Plan*, which recommends residential land uses up to 4 dwelling units per acre. Again, park and greenway uses are considered compatible with residential uses. In addition, the stakeholders group working on this plan expressed a desire to see Reedy Creek Park expand into this area and would be likely to be receptive to a change in the land use recommendation from residential to park use.

**PROJECT IMPACT:**

Acquisition of this parcel of land will increase contiguous nature preserve acreage, protect approximately 900 linear feet of creek and five acres of floodplain, and provide critical greenway connectivity for the future Reedy Creek Greenway.

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

This property is contiguous to the 727-acre Reedy Creek Nature Preserve. According to Mecklenburg County nature preserve standards, nature preserves are mostly undeveloped and accommodate low-impact, passive recreational uses such as hiking and nature study. The goal is to increase the size of the nature preserve to a minimum of 1,000 contiguous acres.

The proposed realignment of Plaza Road Extension will bisect this parcel. However, since Reedy Creek is a designated greenway corridor, ownership of the floodplain on both sides of Plaza Road Extension will be necessary to accommodate the future greenway trail.

**ESTIMATED PROJECT COMPLETION DATE:**

Acquisition of the Allen property is expected to be completed by the end of 2005.

**JOINT USE TASK FORCE REVIEW COMMENTS:**

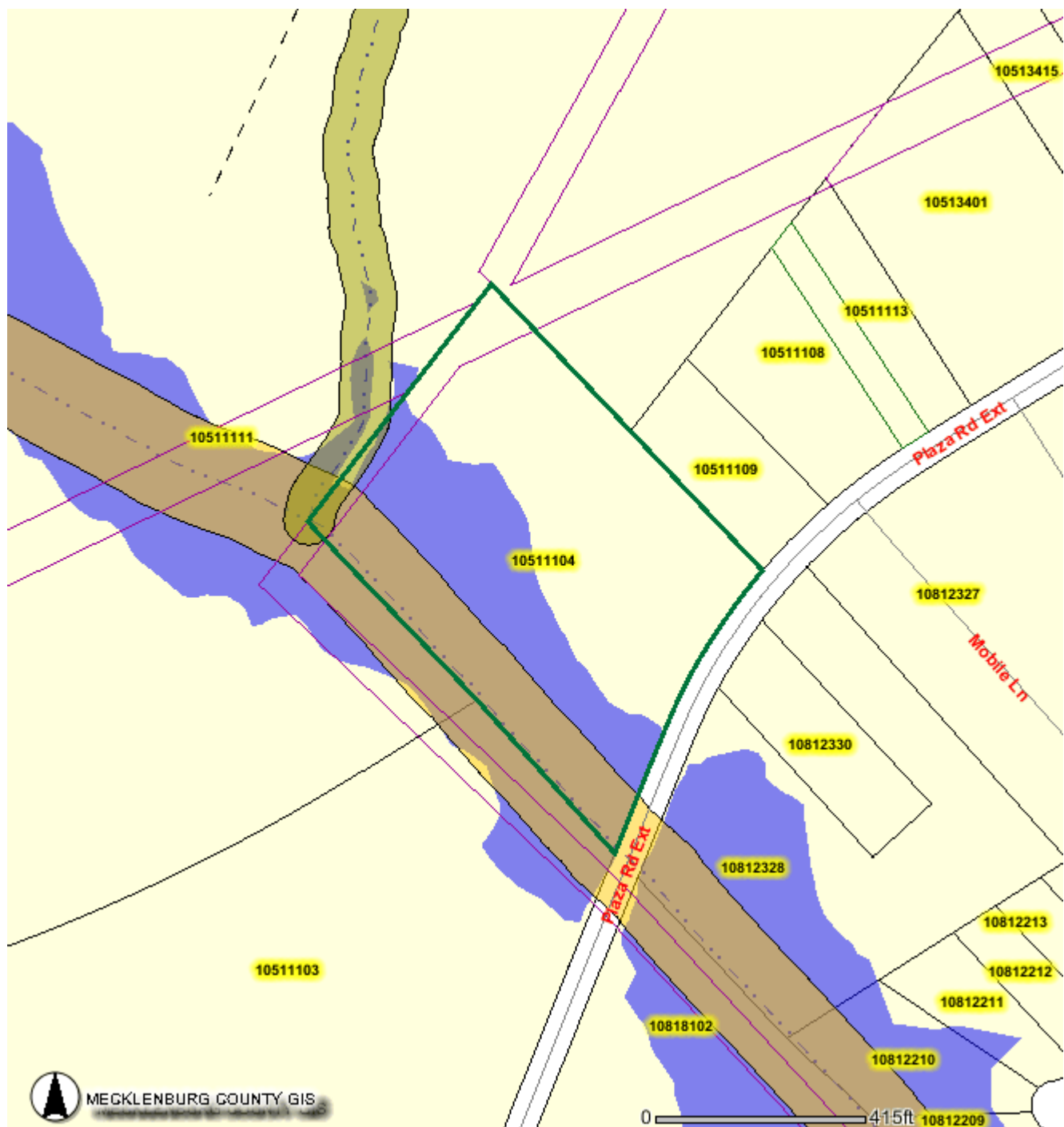
The Joint Use Task Force discussed this matter at their October 5, 2005 meeting and the comment was made that a re-aligned Plaza Road Extension in the Thoroughfare Plan crosses a portion of the site.

**CMPC STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

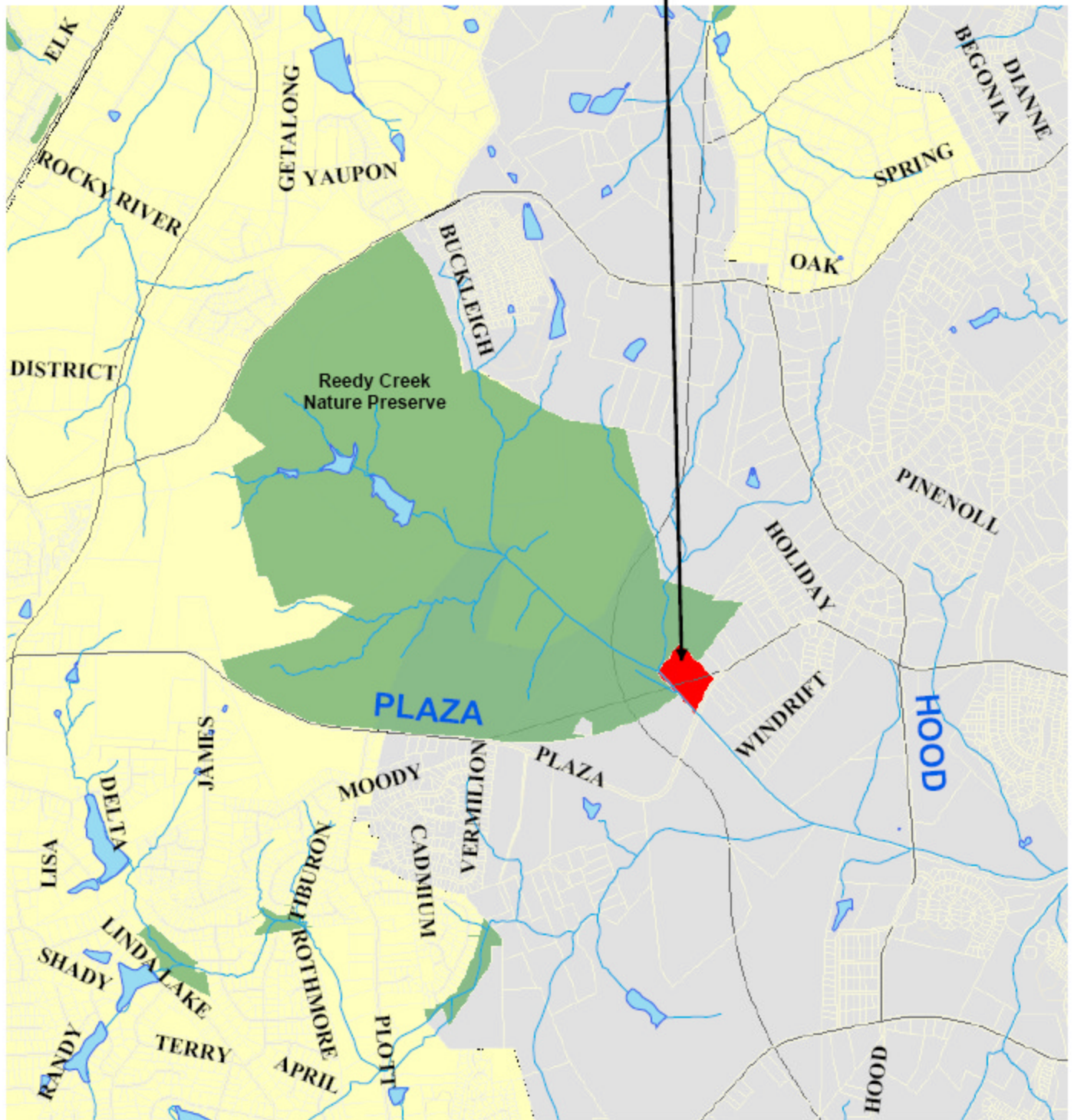
Staff supports the acquisition of this property and will follow-up with the *Draft Rocky River Road Area Plan* stakeholders group to discuss a change in the draft land use recommendation for the parcel. It is further recommended that if the site is acquired, at the appropriate time the county should agree to work with other agencies to convey right of way for the future Plaza Road Extension.

**CMPC PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:**

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



# MR 2005-13



## Legend

- 05\_13
- Park Property
- Lakes
- Creeks

