

MANDATORY REFERRAL-REPORT NO. 05-17
Proposed Addition to Future High School Site in Mallard Creek Park

PROJECT PROPOSAL AND LOCATION:

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools proposes to purchase 3.123 acres of property near Mallard Creek Park adjacent to the site of the future high school to be built in the park. The property – parcel # 029-331-14 – is zoned R-3 Residential and contains a single family dwelling, and is largely surrounded by vacant land. The purpose of the proposed acquisition is to provide an additional area for baseball and softball fields for the new high school. Alternately, the site acquisition can serve as an initial phase for the eventual development of an elementary school at this approximate location.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION:

The site development for the Mallard Creek High School will require the displacement of several athletic facilities currently located within Mallard Creek Park. Additionally, the high school site contains wetlands and a creek, reducing the amount of developable property. The current school campus design will require extensive grading and retaining walls in order to construct its athletic fields. The acquisition of this parcel will allow the development of additional athletic facilities to partially offset those eliminated as part of the high school development, and to reduce the impacts on the wetlands and creek, and for the need for extensive grading and retaining walls.

In the longer term, the *Long-Range School Facilities Master Plan (Interim report – 2005)* identifies the need to locate a new elementary school in this approximate location by 2013. The site is located within the current Mallard Creek Elementary school boundaries and Mallard Creek Elementary is currently 127% utilized without mobile classrooms. Given the existing and anticipated growth in elementary school age population in this segment of Mecklenburg County, it is anticipated that this school will be required to relieve the future “Highland Creek Elementary school” tentatively scheduled to open in 2006 approximately 1.3 miles north of this site.

The co-location of multiple schools on single or contiguous campuses provides operating and facilities economies that may not otherwise be able to be realized. For instance, it may be possible for two adjoining schools to share bus loading facilities, athletic facilities, etc.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED PUBLIC POLICIES:

Enhancement of the adjoining 52 acre high school site with the addition of this parcel brings it closer to the 60-acre high school acreage guideline used by CMS. Acquisition of land for an eventual elementary school is consistent with the *Long-Range School Facilities Master Plan (Interim report – 2005)*. Development of parks are allowed by right, and schools under prescribed conditions in R-3 zoning districts in the City of Charlotte Zoning Ordinance.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED LAND USE PLANS:

The *Northeast District Plan (1996)* designates this parcel for single family (4 units per acre or less) development. (Parcels to the east and north are designated for open space). Schools and open space are generally land uses considered to be appropriate for residential areas.

PROJECT IMPACT:

The site is strategically located to address future (longer term) elementary school enrollment growth in this region of the district, while meanwhile helping to reducing construction costs at the high school.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PUBLIC OR PRIVATE PROJECTS:

Several transportation projects are planned for the general area, including the northern leg of I-485 and an improvement to the Johnston-Oehler/Mallard Creek intersection. The Mallard Creek High School is a funded project with an anticipated August, 2007 opening date.

ESTIMATED PROJECT COMPLETION DATE:

Site acquisition is anticipated to be completed by the end of 2005.

JOINT USE TASK FORCE REVIEW COMMENTS:

The Joint Use Task Force reviewed this matter at their October 5, 2005 meeting and the comment was offered that if this property is to be eventually used for an elementary school site, that improved vehicular access would need to be provided.

CMPC STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

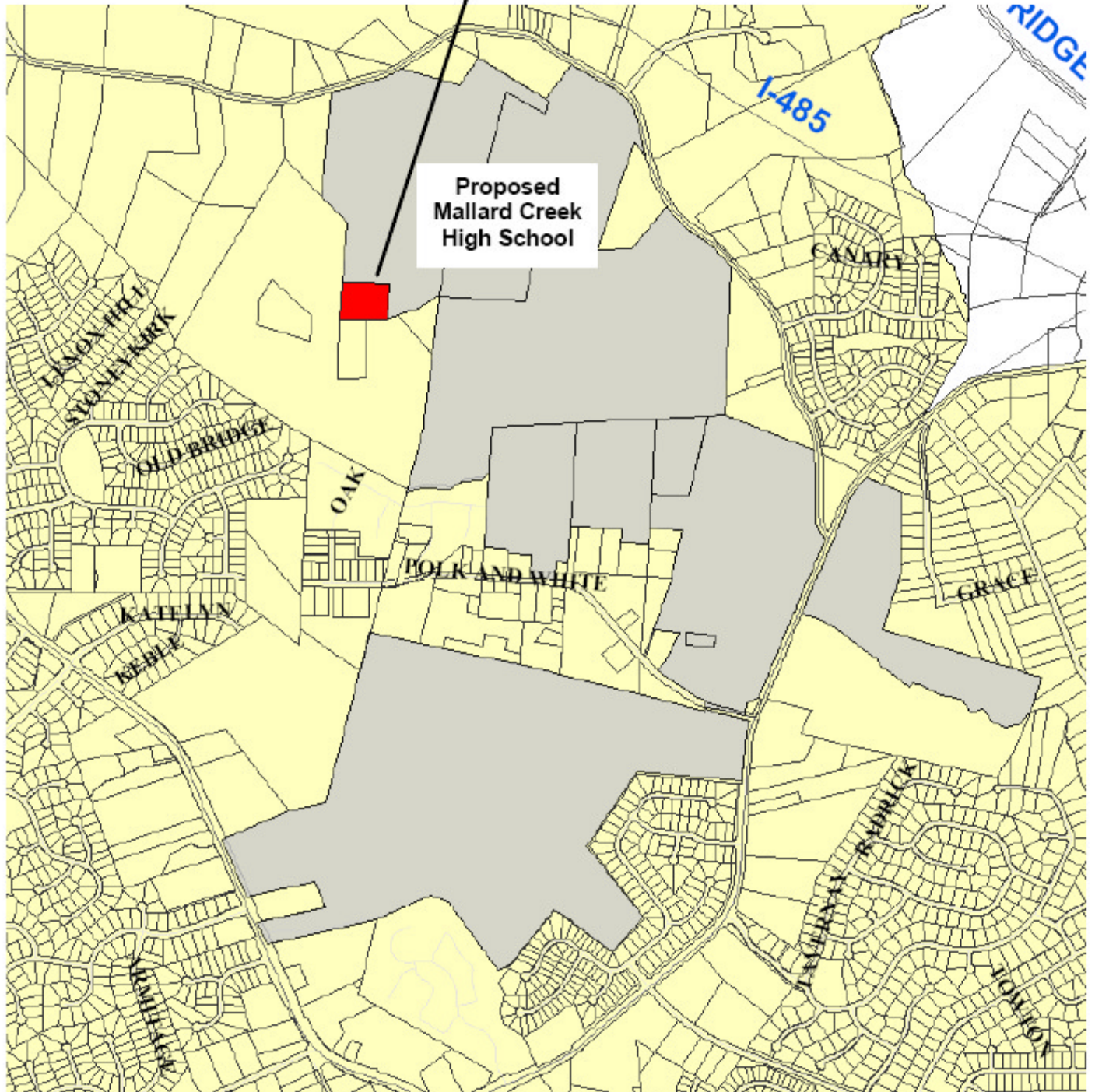
Staff recommends approval of acquisition of this parcel for the enlargement of the “Mallard Creek High School” site. (If CMS decides to proceed with acquisition of additional property for a future elementary school site, review of development of an elementary school site at this location will be conducted in connection with a Mandatory Referral to be submitted at that time).

CMPC PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

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



MR 2005-17



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Legend



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Meck County Property



County 03

