

MANDATORY REFERRAL REPORT NO. 06-04
Proposed Release from Lease of Portion of Renaissance Park owned by City
for Development of a Fire Safety Village

PROJECT PROPOSAL AND LOCATION:

The Charlotte Fire Department is interested in utilizing three parcels in Southwest Charlotte for the development of a Fire and Life Safety Village. This Village would be used to provide the Charlotte area population with all facets pertaining to fire and life safety education. The Safety Village is a volunteer project comprised of several City and County Departments, including Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department, Charlotte Fire Department., MEDIC, Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Department, and the Carolina Medical Center for Injury Prevention.

The three parcels identified as being suitable for this project are currently part of Renaissance Park (owned by the City of Charlotte and leased by Mecklenburg County). The parcels are Tax ID numbers 143-181-05 (5.36 acres), 143-181-03 (1.13 acres) and 143-181-04 (0.56 acres), and all front on South Tryon Street in the 5400 block. The parcels are vacant and zoned R-4 (Single Family Residential District), and collectively consist of 7.05 acres.

Mecklenburg County has indicated a willingness to allow the property to be released from its lease with the City in order to be utilized for the Safety Village.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION:

The purpose of the project is to develop a year-round Safety Village where safety education can be centralized in one fixed location rather than by individual public safety agencies. Safety programs will include fire, bicycle, pedestrian, water, stranger danger and other safety concerns.

Properties currently owned by the City and County were reviewed for availability and suitability, and it was determined that these parcels are the most suitable for the project.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED PUBLIC POLICIES:

No public policies were identified as applicable.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED LAND USE PLANS:

The *Southwest District Plan*, adopted in 1991, recommends single family residential (up to four dwelling units per acre) on the South Tryon Street frontage and Open Space on the rear portion of the subject parcels.

PROJECT IMPACT:

Safety programs are currently transported from place to place on a daily basis, resulting in an inefficient use of time and resources. In addition, some programs have been eliminated from curricula due to staffing, transportation and equipment problems. Having a centralized, volunteer-based center will reduce or eliminate many of these problems.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PUBLIC OR PRIVATE PROJECTS:

Mecklenburg County Park & Recreation department reports that use of these parcels for the Safety Village will have minimal impact on Renaissance Park operations.

ESTIMATED PROJECT COMPLETION DATE:

The project is not yet funded. Charlotte Fire Department believes that the Charlotte community will be in support of the project, and in turn donate goods and services. Buildings within the Safety Village can be sponsored by businesses and individuals. Public and private grants will also be utilized for funding. There will be no cost to transfer the property from its lease with the County to Charlotte Fire Department. Project completion date is unknown.

JOINT USE TASK FORCE REVIEW COMMENTS:

The Joint Use Task Force reviewed this matter at their March 1, 2006 meeting and no comments were offered. It should be noted that a preliminary presentation of the Safety Village concept was made to the Joint Use Task Force in 2005, and received positive responses.

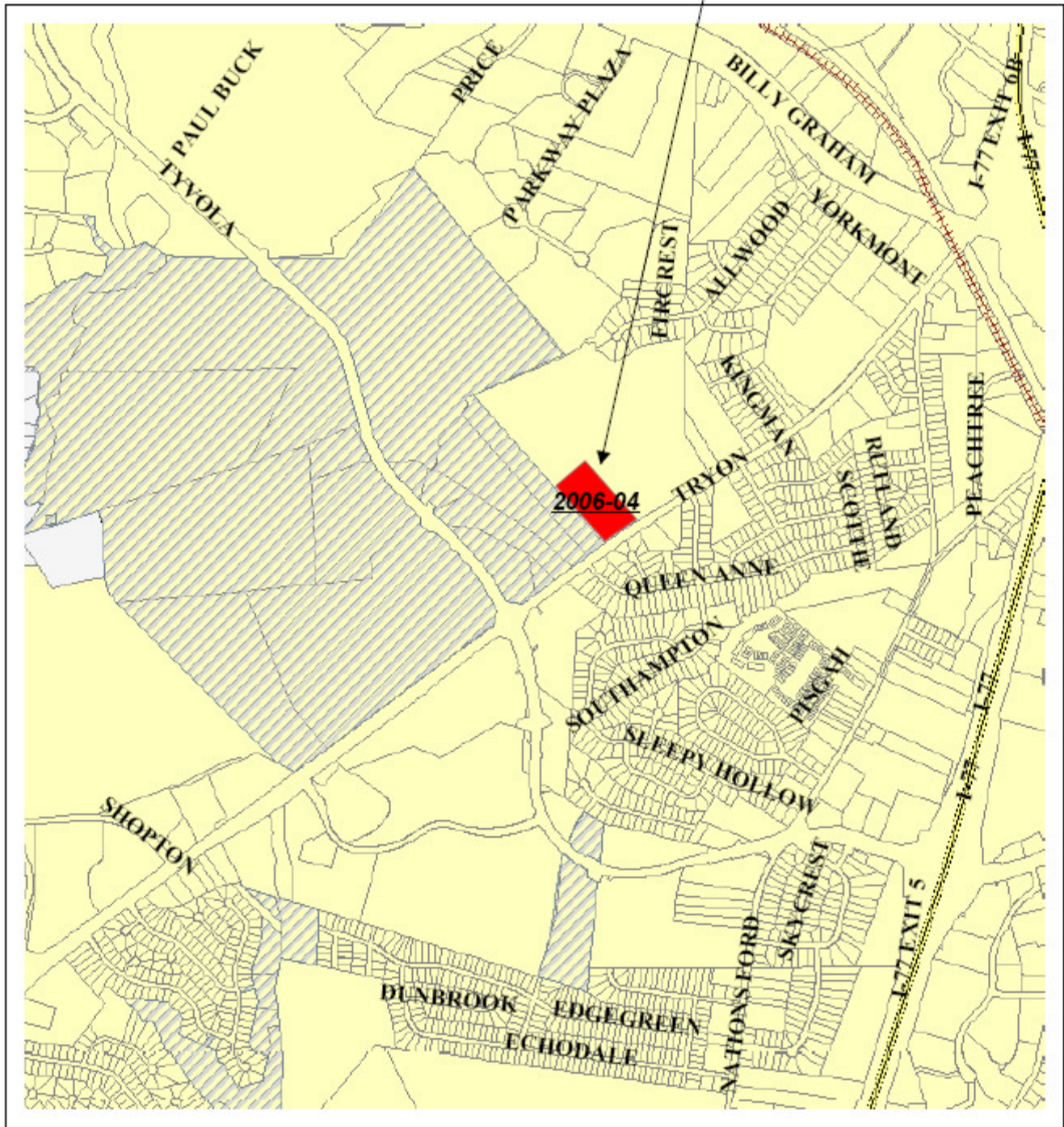
CMPC STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Planning staff recognizes that at this conceptual stage it is premature to portray a specific land development proposal for the Safety Village. The review of this request was done while keeping in mind the examples of safety villages shared with the Joint Use Task Force that were characterized by low levels of development intensity that would not be out of place within or adjoining a park. Within that context, staff recommends approval of this request.

CMPC PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

At their March 21, 2006 meeting the Planning Committee recommended approval by a 5-0 vote.

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Legend



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Park Property

