

MANDATORY REFERRAL REPORT NO. 06-16
Proposed Acquisition of a Middle School Site on Hucks Road

PROJECT PROPOSAL AND LOCATION:

Acquisition of land is being proposed by Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) to serve as a site for a new middle school in Northern Mecklenburg County, within Charlotte's extraterritorial jurisdiction. The property (parcel number 027-153-18) is currently vacant and located on the south side of Hucks Road about midway between NC115 and Browne Road. Hucks Road connects Browne Road and Arthur Davis Roads. The property is 25.5 acres and is zoned R-3 single family residential.

The subject parcel adjoins land purchased several years ago by Mecklenburg County for a future community park, and property purchased earlier in 2006 by CMS for a future elementary school.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION:

The proposed middle school property is located near existing densities of CMS students, as well as future growth areas, thus providing for long-term populating of the middle school. The proposed school site lies within the 2005/06 Alexander Middle School attendance boundary. Alexander Middle School, which is approximately 2.8 miles north of the proposed site, is currently at 189% utilization without mobile classrooms. Ranson Middle School – also in the vicinity of the site - is approximately 3.7 miles southwest of the proposed site, and is currently at 128% utilization without mobile classrooms.

Preference for the proposed site is based on the property's location adjoining the new elementary school site. Co-location of the elementary and middle school sites in this fashion provides operating and facilities economies that may not otherwise be realized. For instance, it may be possible for the two schools to share bus loading facilities, athletic fields/facilities, parking, etc.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED PUBLIC POLICIES:

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools *Long Range School Facilities Master Plan (Interim Report-2005)* identifies the need to build a new middle school in this approximate location by 2013-2014. (The report also identifies the need to build a new elementary school in this approximate location by 2008.)

The proposed acquisition is also consistent with Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools goal of acquiring new school sites based on current and projected student enrollments.

The property's size combined with the adjoining Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation land can serve to meet both Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools and State of North Carolina guidelines of 32 developable acres required for a middle school site.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED LAND USE PLANS:

The Northeast District Plan (1996) recommends single family land uses at a density of four dwelling units per acre for this and surrounding parcels. Middle schools are considered compatible with single family land uses.

PROJECT IMPACT:

The property is strategically located to address future (longer term) middle school enrollment growth in this region of Mecklenburg County. The opening of a new middle school in this area would relieve overcrowding at nearby Alexander and Ranson Middle Schools.

Increased traffic around the school campus is expected for two 30-minute periods in the morning and evening. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools will work closely with the City Department of Transportation, the NC Department of Transportation and the site designers to minimize this impact. The site could potentially create a safe walk zone for the neighborhood students as well as some of the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PUBLIC OR PRIVATE PROJECTS:

In addition to the adjoining future planned elementary school and county park, several transportation projects are planned for this general area including Charlotte Area Transit System North Corridor Transit line (and proposed Eastfield Station) along Arthur Davis Road. Strong transit-oriented development is projected (including sizable residential developments) adjacent to the station.

The parcel may be affected by the future Hucks Road realignment. This realignment is contained as a major thoroughfare in the MUMPO Thoroughfare Plan and has a 2030 "horizon year" in the 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan, meaning that in all likelihood it will not be constructed with public funds before that year. Nevertheless, it is important to ensure that right-of-way for this future project be protected, and that site planning for the proposed middle school (as well as for the adjoining elementary school and park) serve to recognize the future location of this thoroughfare.

ESTIMATED PROJECT COMPLETION DATE:

The anticipated need for the middle school is for the fall of 2013. (The adjoining elementary school will be needed by the fall of 2008.)

JOINT USE TASK FORCE REVIEW COMMENTS:

The Joint Use Task Force reviewed this matter at their July 5, 2006 meeting and offered no comments.

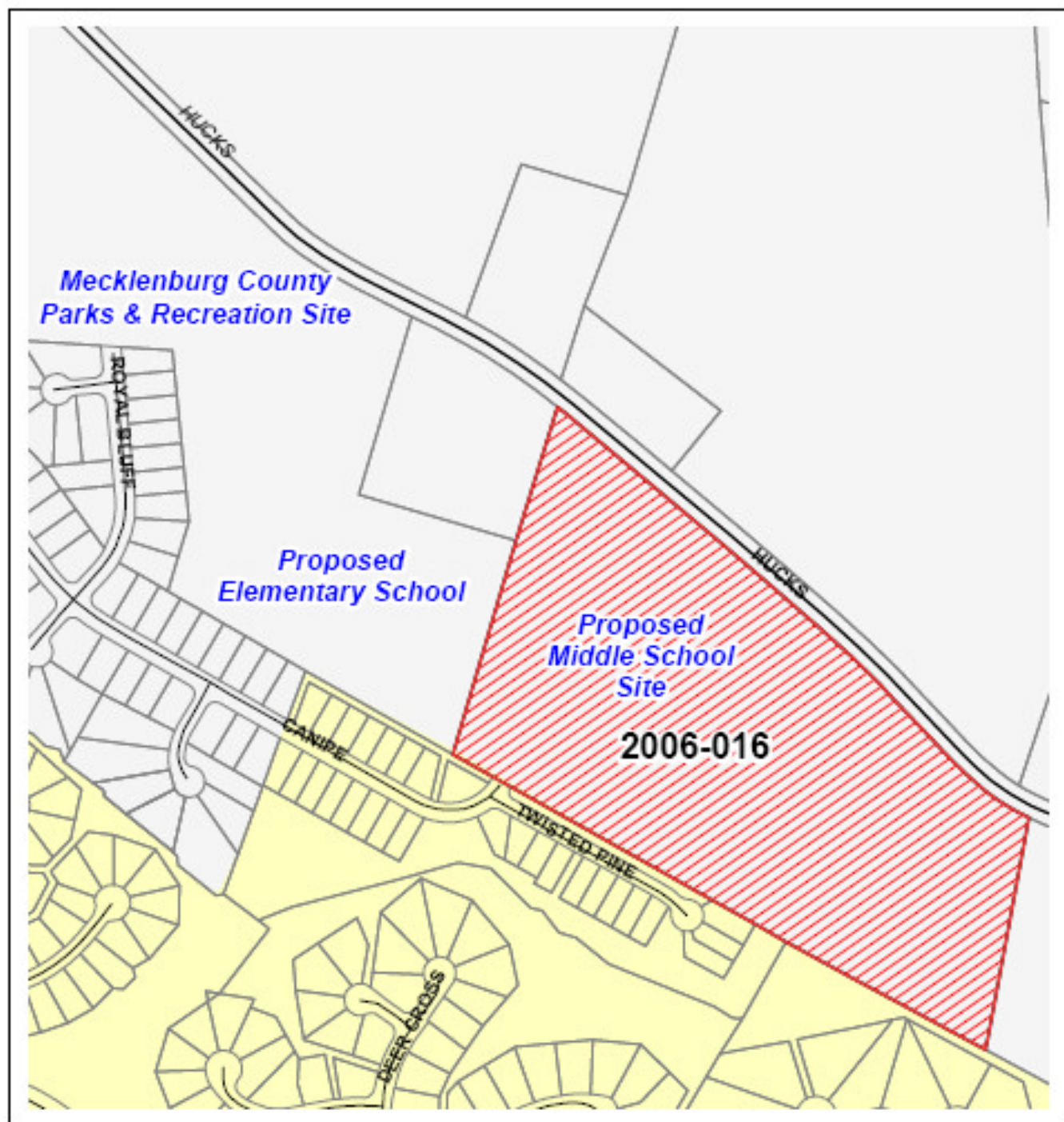
CMPC STAFF RECOMMENDATION:



Planning staff supports the acquisition of this property to serve as a future middle school site.

CMPC PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

At their July 18, 2006 meeting, the Planning Committee recommended approval by a 7-0 vote.

Mandatory Referral 2006-16



-  Mandatory Referral 2006-16 **Department: CMS**
-  Municipal Boundary

