

MANDATORY REFERRAL REPORT NO. 07-31
Proposed Acquisition of an Elementary School Site on Stumptown Road in Huntersville

PROJECT PROPOSAL AND LOCATION:

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) proposes to purchase approximately 73 acres of a site on the east side of Stumptown Road in the Town of Huntersville's extraterritorial jurisdiction, upon which to construct an elementary school in the near future and a middle school within the next ten years.

The subject property is located on the east side of Stumptown Road, just south of the intersection with Northcross Drive, and consists of tax parcel number 009-091-09.

The parcel is located within an area which is zoned NR, neighborhood residential under the Huntersville Zoning Ordinance. The site – which is vacant - has been previously approved by the town of Huntersville for a 112 lot single family detached residential development known as Harrington. Previous improvements on the site were removed by the developer.

Adjacent to the north are two older single family residences along Northcross Drive and a vacant tract which is proposed for a religious institution. To the east are two wooded tracts with single family residences. To the south is St. Mark's church and school. Across Stumptown Road to the west is a single family detached neighborhood known as Macauley.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION:

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools *Long Range School Facilities Master Plan* (Interim Report-2005) identifies the need to build a new elementary school in this approximate location by the year 2010-2011.

The proposed elementary school site currently lies within the Torrence Creek Elementary School attendance boundary and will relieve overcrowding at that school, which is approximately one mile southwest of this site.

The overcrowding of Torrence Creek Elementary school is a result of the population growth that has occurred in the western portion of the Huntersville area. Growth is expected to continue as additional subdivisions have been approved and continue to be planned for that area. The property is located near the existing residential subdivisions of Macauley, Birkdale, Wynfield, Wynfield Creek, Wynfield Forest, Villages of Rosedale and Stone Hollow. There are other single family subdivisions in the construction and planning stages within a two mile radius including Arbormere, The Oaks at Huntersville and Ranson Oaks (a "55+" neighborhood).

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED PUBLIC POLICIES:

The town of Huntersville Zoning Ordinance allows for elementary schools within NR zoning. Schools are generally considered to be compatible with residential land uses. The integration of schools and neighborhoods is encouraged.

The Town of Huntersville has stated that it strongly prefers that either only one school or a scaled-down elementary/secondary campus be developed at this site.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED LAND USE PLANS:

The Town of Huntersville deems an elementary school on this site to be an appropriate use, particularly since it will serve adjacent neighborhoods. Furthermore, this site conforms to the Town's desire to improve pedestrian access to elementary schools and will produce marginal traffic impacts on area infrastructure due to its student capacity that is smaller than middle or high schools.

CMS also has plans to co-locate a middle school on this site at some point within the next ten years. There is some resistance from the Town of Huntersville for this more intensive use serving a larger area because of infrastructure and transportation issues. Without significant roadway improvements and more road frontage, it will be difficult for the existing infrastructure to support the planned growth in the area. According to the *2030 Long Range Transportation Plan* (adopted by the Metropolitan Planning Organization 2005, amended 2005, 2007), there are plans for many thoroughfare improvements in the area including portions of Stumptown Road within the next 18 years. Unfortunately, there are no plans for improvements on the portion of Stumptown Road upon which this site has frontage.

A portion of the site is bordered by a creek and floodplain, although the *Park & Recreation Greenway Master Plan* (1999) does not include the segment near the site. However, the site would make a reasonable destination point in the event the Torrence Creek Greenway is ever extended from about 1.2 miles to the south, serving the neighborhoods it passes through by providing recreation and pedestrian access to the future school.

PROJECT IMPACT:

The property is strategically located to address immediate elementary school enrollment growth in this region of Huntersville and Mecklenburg County. The opening of a new elementary school in this area would relieve overcrowding at Torrence Creek Elementary School.

Sam Furr Road to the north and Gilead Road to the south are the main east/west thoroughfares through the area. Stumptown Road is a minor thoroughfare approximately half way between these two major roads. Increased traffic around the school campus is expected for two 30-minute periods in the morning and afternoon. Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools works closely with NCDOT and the site designers to minimize this impact.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PUBLIC OR PRIVATE PROJECTS:

According to the Town of Huntersville, there are no known public or private projects that will be adversely impacted by this project.

ESTIMATED PROJECT COMPLETION

Acquisition of the land is proposed, to be funded by 2007 Bonds. School design and construction will be funded by a future bond referendum. The expected elementary school completion date and move-in date is 2010-2011.

JOINT USE TASK FORCE REVIEW COMMENTS:

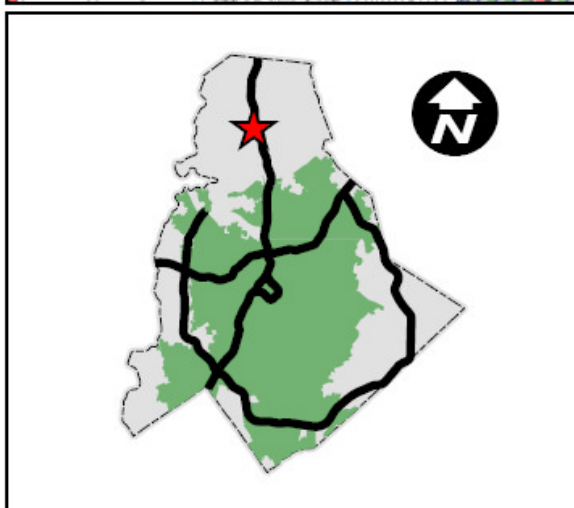
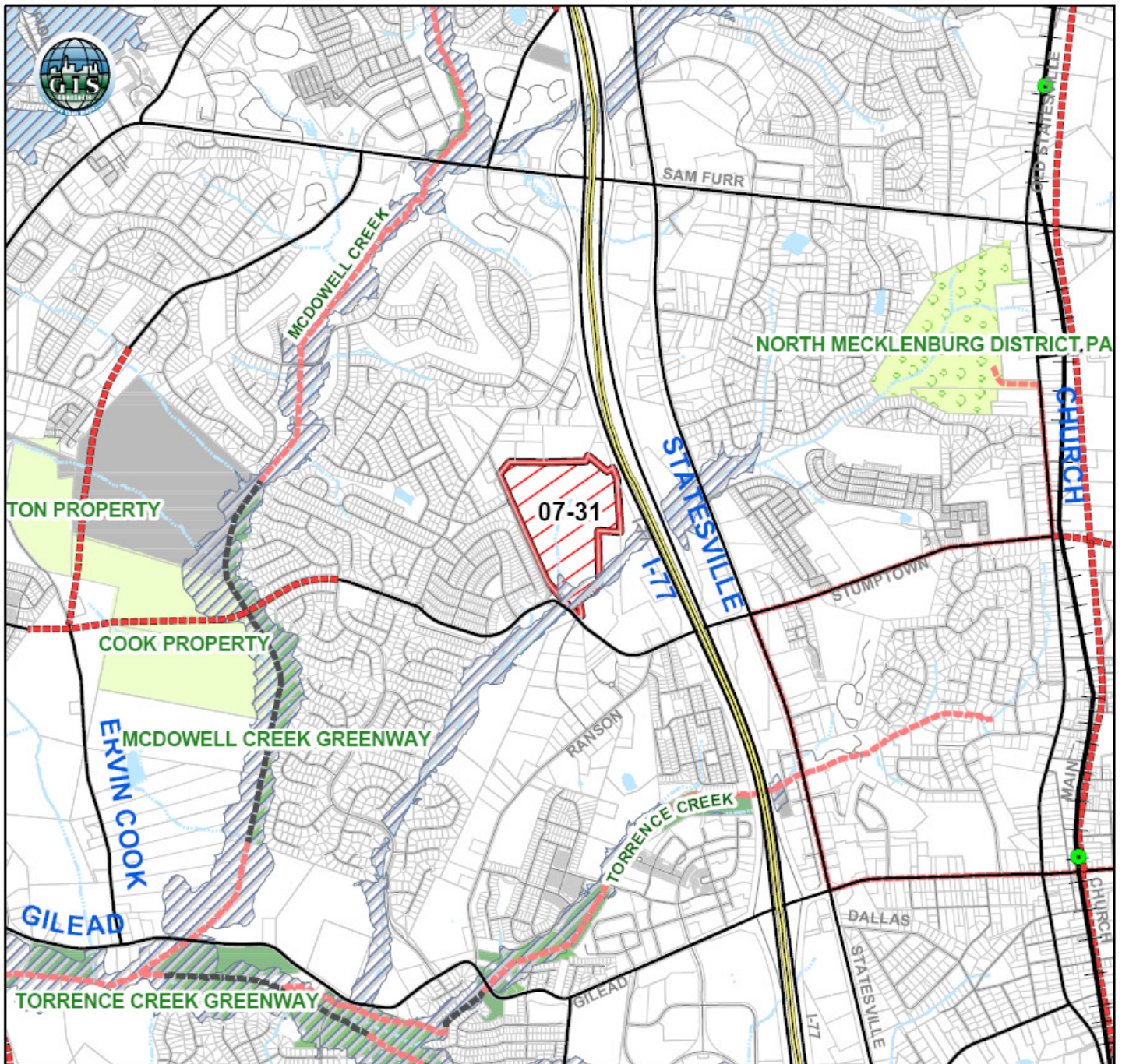
This matter was discussed at the December 5, 2007 meeting of the Joint Use Task Force, where the Huntersville representative expressed misgivings with the adequacy of the infrastructure at this location to serve two schools on the site.

PLANNING STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Planning Staff recommends deferral of this Mandatory Referral pending resolution of outstanding site capacity issues between the Town of Huntersville and CMS.

CMPC PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

The Planning Committee recommended deferral (staff recommendation) by a 7-0 vote at their December 18, 2007 meeting.



Mandatory Referral 07-31

CMS Real Estate Department

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|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| South Corridor Transit Station | Mandatory Referral |
| Existing Thoroughfare | Existing Park |
| Proposed Thoroughfare | Proposed Park |
| Developed Greenway | Greenway |
| Owned Greenway | Preserve |
| Proposed Greenway | City Property |
| Greenway Construction | FEMA 100 Year Floodplain |

Produced by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Department