

MANDATORY REFERRAL REPORT NO. 08-09

Proposed Acquisition of additional land for an Elementary School Site on Mt. Holly-Huntersville Road

PROJECT PROPOSAL AND LOCATION:

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools proposes to purchase approximately 5 acres located on the northwest side of Mt. Holly-Huntersville Road to construct an elementary school. This property is located immediately adjacent to the site approved on Mandatory Referral Report No. 07-29.

The subject property is located on the southwest side of the intersection of Mt. Holly-Huntersville Road and Newfound Hollow Drive. The proposed site consists of three adjacent parcels (tax number 031-451-14 containing 2.75 acres, tax number 031-451-13 containing 1 acre and tax number 031-451-11 containing 1.25 acres). The parcels are located within Charlotte's extraterritorial jurisdiction.

The parcels are located within an area which is zoned R-3 (single family residential), according to the Charlotte Zoning Ordinance. All parcels are improved with older small single family residences without historical significance. Two of the parcels are rental property while the other is occupied by an owner-occupant interested in relocating.

Adjacent to the west is the remainder of the school site followed by large vacant tracts of land. Adjacent to the north is a single family residential subdivision containing 15 homes. Adjacent to the northeast is a vacant lot at the corner of Newfound Hollow. Across Mt. Holly-Huntersville Road to the south and east are older single family homes.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION:

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools *Long Range School Facilities Master Plan* (2005 interim report) identifies the need to build a new elementary school in this approximate location by the year 2011-2012. A review of our site design and traffic study for the adjacent site showed a need to obtain additional frontage on Mt. Holly-Huntersville Road for safe site lines, turn lanes and other traffic concerns.

The proposed elementary school site currently lies within the Paw Creek Elementary School attendance boundary and will relieve overcrowding at Mountain Island and Paw Creek elementary schools. Mountain Island Elementary is approximately 1 ¾ miles east of the Mt. Holly-Huntersville Road site and is at 198% utilization without mobile classrooms as of 20th day 2006-07. Paw Creek is approximately 3.5 miles east and is at 127% utilization without mobile classrooms (as of 20th day 2006-07).

The overcrowding of Mountain Island Elementary school is a result of the population growth that has occurred in the western portion of Mecklenburg County with the construction of the I-485 corridor. Growth is expected to continue as the final sections of the I-485 are completed.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED PUBLIC POLICIES:

The City of Charlotte Zoning Ordinance allows for elementary schools within R-3 Residential zoning. Schools are generally considered to be compatible with residential land uses. The integration of schools and neighborhoods is encouraged.

The property is located near the existing residential subdivisions of Northwoods, Brookmere and Catawba River Plantation. There are other subdivisions in the construction and planning stages within a two mile radius including Stratford Pond on Mt. Holly-Huntersville Road, currently under development and approved for 117 new homes.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED LAND USE PLANS:

The *Northwest District Plan* (1990) recommends single family development up to 4 dwelling units per acre for the site. Schools are generally considered to be compatible with residential areas, thus a school would be considered consistent with the *Northwest District Plan*.

PROJECT IMPACT:

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

Mt. Holly-Huntersville Road is the main thoroughfare through the area. 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:

There are no known public or private projects that will be impacted by this project.

ESTIMATED PROJECT COMPLETION

Acquisition of the land is proposed to be funded by 2007 Bonds. The funding for the site is to be approved by the Board of Education and the Board of County Commissioners.

School design and construction will be funded by a future bond referendum. The expected elementary school completion date and move-in date is 2009-2010.

JOINT USE TASK FORCE REVIEW COMMENTS:

The Joint Use Task Force discussed this matter at their February 6, 2008 meeting and no comments were offered.

PLANNING STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Planning Staff recommends approval of this proposed transaction.

CMPC PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

Withdrawn by applicant.

Staff resource: Marci Sigmon



