

MANDATORY REFERRAL REPORT NO. 08-14
Proposed Acquisition of a Building to House a Pre-K School on David Taylor Drive

PROJECT PROPOSAL AND LOCATION:

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) proposes to purchase an existing building constructed (and formerly used) as a pre-school, located on the west side of David Taylor Drive in northeast Charlotte in which to locate a CMS Pre-Kindergarten school in the University City area. The subject property is located at 9501 David Taylor drive in the University Research Park within Charlotte's City limits (tax parcel number is 047-351-06).

The 5.57-acre parcel is zoned RE-2 (Research) under the Charlotte Zoning Ordinance, and is improved with a two story pre-school building containing 29,196 square feet of classroom and office space. An improved greenway (part of the County's greenway system) follows the southern boundary, and the majority of the site is within the FEMA-designated floodplain.

Adjacent to the site to the south and west is a vacant tract of land owned by UNCC. Adjacent to the north is a newer pre-school building, and across the street to the east is the TIAA-CREF complex along Andrew Carnegie Blvd.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION:

CMS operates Pre-Kindergarten centers throughout the district with the goal of improving kindergarten readiness for qualifying students in areas where there is a measurable gap in school readiness between socio-economic strata. The CMS *Long Range School Facilities Master Plan* (2008 interim report) identifies the need to provide a Pre-K school to serve students living in the University City area.

Additional enrollment growth in the CMS Pre-K program is anticipated due to recent regulatory and funding changes that eliminate the federal subsidy formerly provided to private Pre-K program operators. With a substantially greater financial burden on private Pre-K service providers, it is anticipated that some of these programs will close, shifting some Pre-K students to public school enrollment.

Pre-K students living in the University City area are currently bused to three Pre-K schools closer to the center city. CMS has identified the need to move the Pre-K program from one of these locations in order to allow for building renovation and program expansion at that school. Following renovation, a smaller specialty school program will replace the pre-K program at the former location. Part of the planning for this facility is a determination of which students (from up to the three locations) would be located at this proposed facility, which will be able to accommodate up to 400 Pre-K students.

The proposed building has the capacity to meet the anticipated growth in Pre-K population. Some of the existing interior and exterior features in the building will be able to be re-used as they were originally designed and constructed for Pre-K age children. Minor modifications will be needed to the site in order to accommodate school buses.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED PUBLIC POLICIES:

The City of Charlotte Zoning Ordinance allows for elementary schools within RE-2 Research zoning.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED LAND USE PLANS:

The Northeast District Plan (1996) recommends research uses for this site. Schools are considered to be compatible with a research park, thus a Pre-Kindergarten school would be considered consistent with the Northeast District Plan.

PROJECT IMPACT:

The property is strategically located to address immediate Pre-K school enrollment growth in this region of Mecklenburg County.

W. T. Harris Boulevard to the south and Mallard Creek Church Road to the north are the main thoroughfares 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 traffic planners and the site designers to minimize this impact. The business park roads were built for future expansion of the park and there are traffic signals already in place at all exits from the business park.

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. Renovations will be completed by the projected move-in date in August 2008.

JOINT USE TASK FORCE REVIEW COMMENTS:

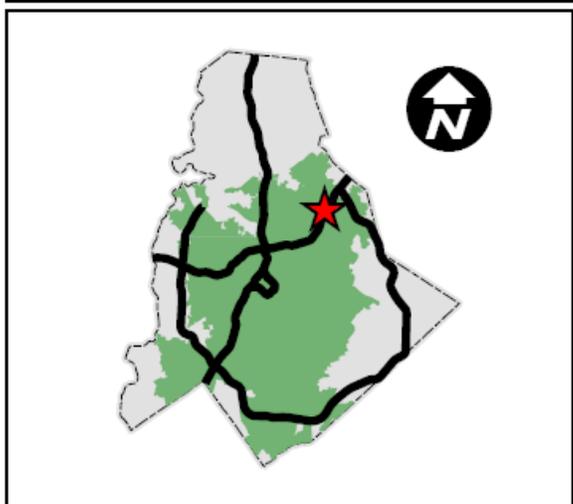
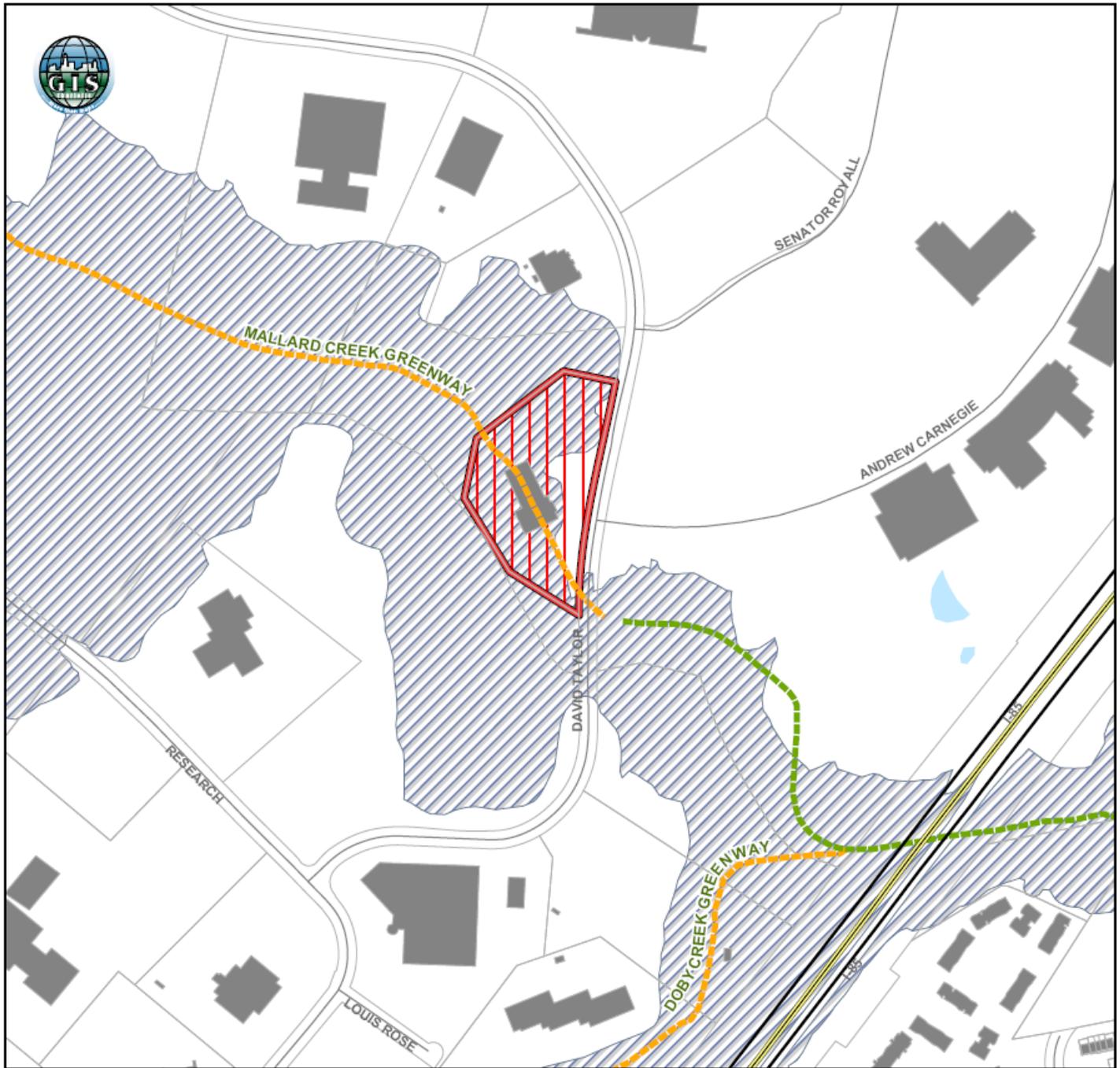
This matter was discussed at the April 2, 2008 Joint Use Task Force meeting and there were no comments offered at that time.

PLANNING STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff supports the proposed transaction to purchase the existing building (formerly used as a pre-school) on the west side of David Taylor Drive for use as a CMS Pre-Kindergarten school serving the University City area.

CMPC PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

Defer indefinitely, per applicant.



Mandatory Referral 08-14

CMS Real Estate Department

 Mandatory Referral 08-14	 Developed Greenway
 Existing Park	 Greenway Design/Construction
 Proposed Park	 Greenway Overland Connector
 Nature Preserve	 Proposed Greenway
 Greenway Dedication	
 FEMA 100 Year Floodplain	

Produced by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Department

