

**MANDATORY REFERRAL REPORT NO. 08-29**  
**Proposed McDowell Nature Preserve Expansion**

**PROJECT PROPOSAL AND LOCATION:**

Mecklenburg County proposes to purchase two parcels located between Shopton Road West and Soldier Road in the southwestern corner of the County in the Charlotte extraterritorial jurisdiction, in order to expand the 1,100-acre McDowell Nature Preserve.

Tax parcel 199-041-25 is a 7.03-acre landlocked parcel which is undeveloped and primarily forested. A Duke Energy utility right-of-way encumbers +/- 0.98-acre at the southwest boundary. This parcel is bordered by McDowell Nature Preserve to the east and south, and scattered residences to the north and west. The property is zoned R-3 (Single Family Residential) by the City of Charlotte.

The County also proposes to purchase the eastern portion (+/- 10.5 acres) of tax parcel 199-041-23, located immediately adjacent to and west of the above property. This nearly 17-acre tract includes a single family residence, stables, garage, and storage buildings (not to be acquired by the County). The eastern portion (to be acquired) is forested and contains a small pond. The property is zoned R-3 (Residential) by the City of Charlotte.

Both properties adjoin the northern edge of the McDowell Nature Preserve.

**PROJECT JUSTIFICATION:**

The subject parcel is immediately adjacent to the 150-acre grassland/prairie restoration site at McDowell Nature Preserve. This area is being actively managed for the preservation of numerous rare plant and wildlife species, including: Schweinitz's sunflower, Georgia aster, Carolina birdfoot-trefoil, grasshopper sparrow, loggerhead shrike and vesper sparrow. Acquisition of this property will provide an opportunity to buffer this critical habitat from encroachment and future development.

**CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED PUBLIC POLICIES:**

Expansion of existing park/nature preserve facilities is supported by the 2008 *Park and Recreation Master Plan*.

**CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED LAND USE PLANS:**

The *Southwest District Plan* (1991) calls for the parcels to be single-family residential at a density of less than 3 dwelling units per acre. The surrounding area is dominated by single-family houses on large acre lots with a number of vacant heavily wooded parcels. The proposed land acquisition for an expansion of a nature preserve is consistent with the overall policies of the *Southwest District Plan* (1991) for the area surrounding the McDowell Nature Preserve.

**PROJECT IMPACT:**

This project will enhance the preservation and continued management of critical grassland habitat and its associated rare species. No negative impacts are anticipated.

**RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PUBLIC OR PRIVATE PROJECTS:**

This project has no relationship with, nor will it impact, other public or private projects in the vicinity. The sole purpose of this acquisition is the preservation of open space and wildlife habitat.

**ESTIMATED PROJECT COMPLETION DATE:**

Mecklenburg County anticipates acquiring the property in September 2008.

**JOINT USE TASK FORCE REVIEW COMMENTS:**

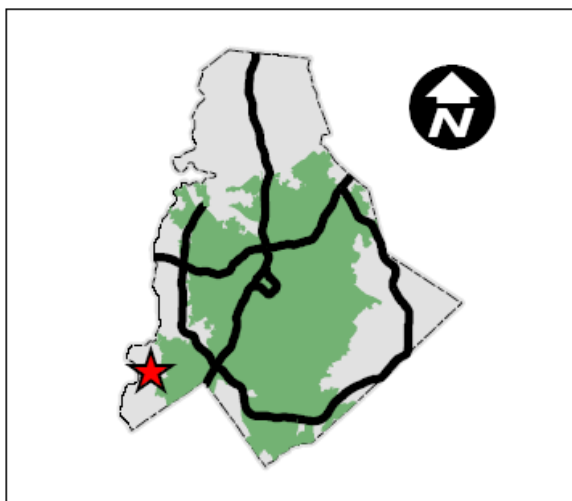
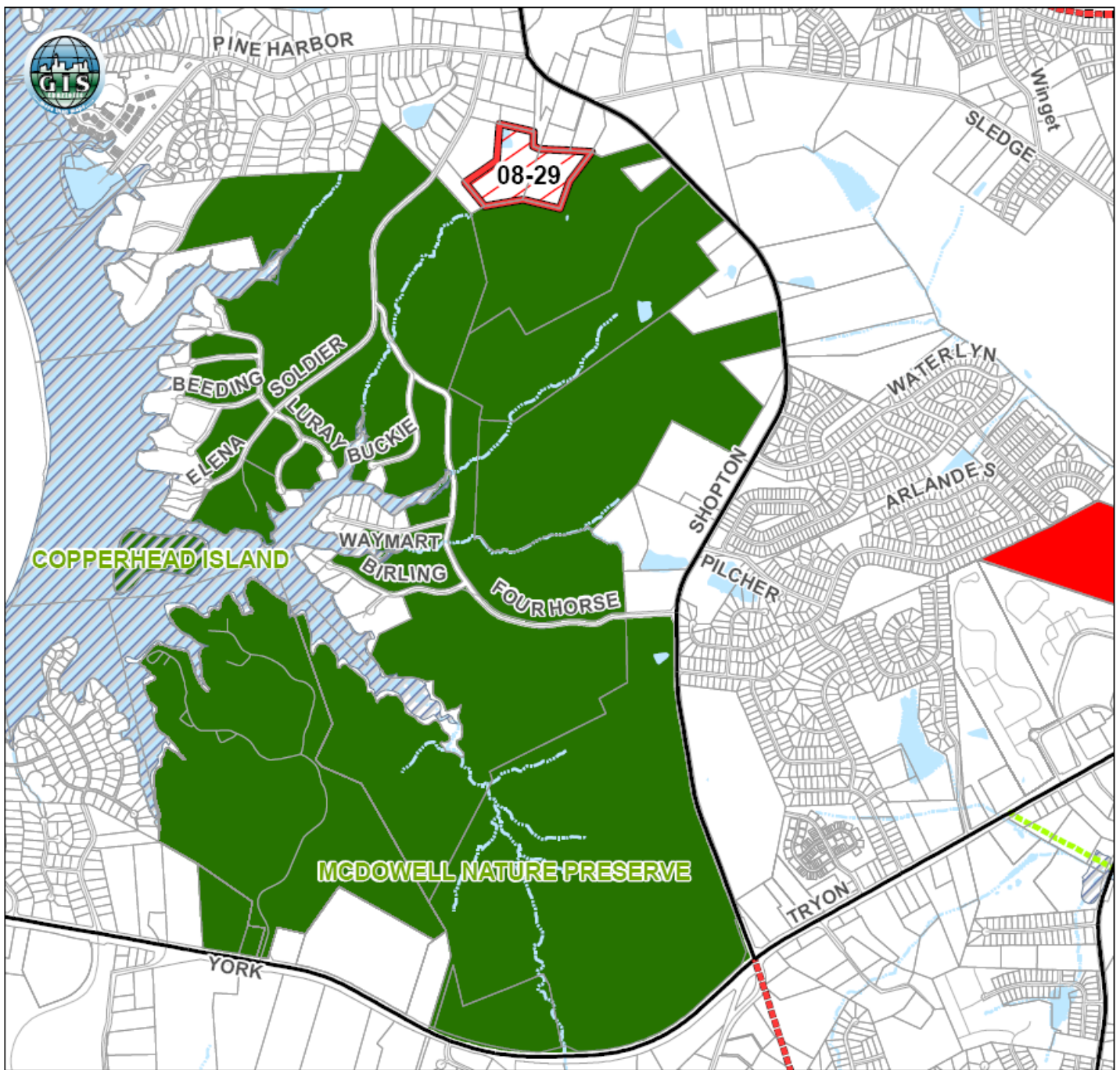
The Joint Use Task Force discussed the matter at their July 2, 2008 meeting and no joint use comments were made.

**PLANNING STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval of the proposed land acquisition.








**CMPC PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:**

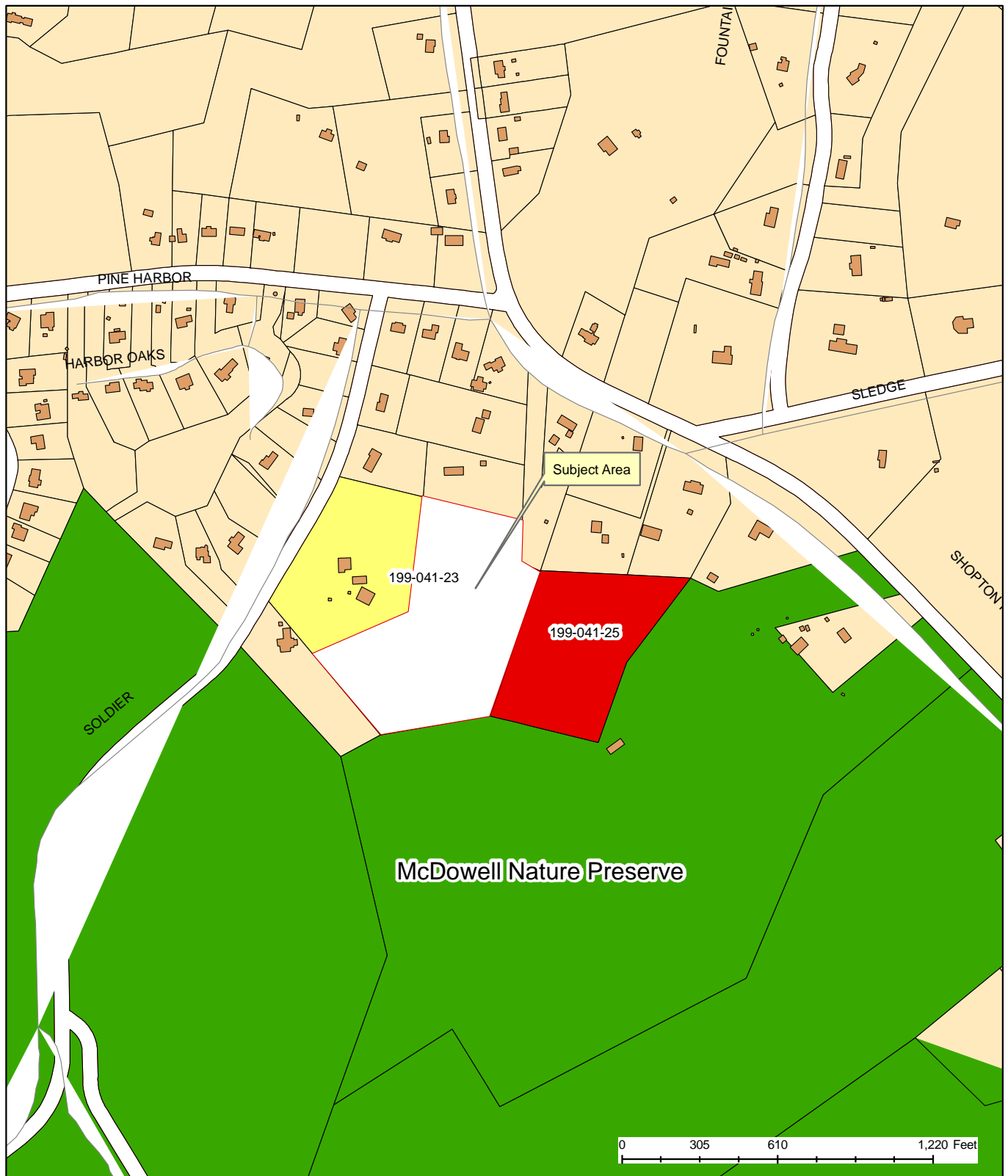
At their July 15, 2008 meeting the Planning Committee recommended approval by a 5-0 vote.



## Mandatory Referral 08-29

*County Real Estate Services*

- |   |   |
|---|---|
|  Mandatory Referral    |  Proposed Park     |
|  Existing Thoroughfare |  Greenway Property |
|  Proposed Thoroughfare |  Nature Preserve   |
|  Existing Park         |   |



### McDowell Nature Preserve Expansion

Tax Parcel 199-041-25 (+/- 7.03 acres)  
and  
Part of Tax Parcel 199-041-23 (+/- 10.5 acres)

Real Estate Services Department

