

MANDATORY REFERRAL REPORT NO. 11-10

Proposed County Acquisition of Land on Shearer Road in Davidson's ETJ as Future Parkland

PROJECT PROPOSAL AND LOCATION:

This project is the proposed acquisition of +/- 228 acres included in Tax Parcels 003-331-03 through 48, 003-331-50 through 66, and 003-041-03 and 003-041-07 on Shearer Road in the north/northeasterly portion of the County within the Town of Davidson's extraterritorial jurisdiction. (A small portion of this property extends across the County boundary into Iredell County and Mooresville's extraterritorial jurisdiction.) The property is currently vacant (except for a private home on Tax Parcel 003-331-49 which is not a part of this project as it will be subdivided off and not acquired), and adds to three existing public land holdings (the Town of Davidson's Fisher Farm - 200 acres; Tax Parcel 003-111-04 and the County's Allison Park - 37 acres, Tax Parcels 003-051-13 and 003-051-06; and Shearer Road property - 70 acres, 003-331-02). Once acquired, the subject property will create +/- 535 acres of contiguous parkland for active and passive park activities.

The facility is envisioned to ultimately support a combination of active and passive recreational activities. Once acquired, the Park & Recreation Department intends upon developing a master development plan for the site.

The subject property was previously proposed for subdivision and development into a residential community; but the development went into foreclosure, thereby making it available to the County at this time.

The property is zoned RPA (rural planning area) under Davidson's *Planning Ordinance*, and Residential Agricultural under the Iredell County *Zoning Ordinance*.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION:

This project is consistent with the *2008 Mecklenburg County Parks Master Plan* objectives. Expanding existing park sites to create larger contiguous acreage provides opportunities for locating multiple outdoor recreation facilities in combination with protection of tree cover, wildlife corridors and streams. The Town of Davidson is supportive of adding this tract to expand and connect the existing land holdings off Shearer Road.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED PUBLIC POLICIES:

This project is tied to the 2008 parks plan and to objectives focused on expanding existing open space/park sites where feasible.

The West Branch Rocky River greenway (scheduled to run along the western boundary of the site) is identified in the *2008 Mecklenburg County Greenway Master Plan*. The Iredell portion of the Carolina Thread Trail indicates that the portion of Grey Road running alongside the site is a "suggested route".

Grey Road (which passes the site to the north) is classified in the MPO *Thoroughfare Plan* as a Major Thoroughfare which should provide suitable access to the site for future park users.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED LAND USE PLANS:

The *Davidson Planning Ordinance* (2001) shows the property with a RUR – Rural designation. The preservation of future parkland in the rural area is specifically mentioned as a goal in the *Davidson Planning Ordinance*. The Town's *Comprehensive Plan* (2010) calls for the preservation of open space in the rural area of Davidson's planning jurisdiction which includes this property.

The segment in Iredell County is designated for "neighborhood residential" development in the Town of Mooresville's Land Development Plan (that is adopted by reference by Iredell County). Zoning jurisdiction for the segment rests with Iredell County, whose Zoning Ordinance shows this parcel as RA – Residential Agricultural, within which public parks are an allowed use.

PROJECT IMPACT:

This project takes this tract out of play for future residential development and expands/connects two large land holdings on the eastern side of Davidson.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PUBLIC OR PRIVATE PROJECTS:

This property is to be utilized as open space/park land. It does not affect any other known public projects in this area. The northerly boundary of the project lies within Iredell County (PID #4664-44-7309), and the County is working with Iredell County to gain approval to acquire the portion of the property within Iredell County as required by G.S.153A-15.

ESTIMATED PROJECT COMPLETION DATE:

This project for is land acquisition only and is expected to be completed by the end of August 2010. The timeframe for development of future park facilities will be determined at a later date. The County Park and Recreation Department is currently developing a preliminary site plan for the park.

JOINT USE TASK FORCE REVIEW COMMENTS:

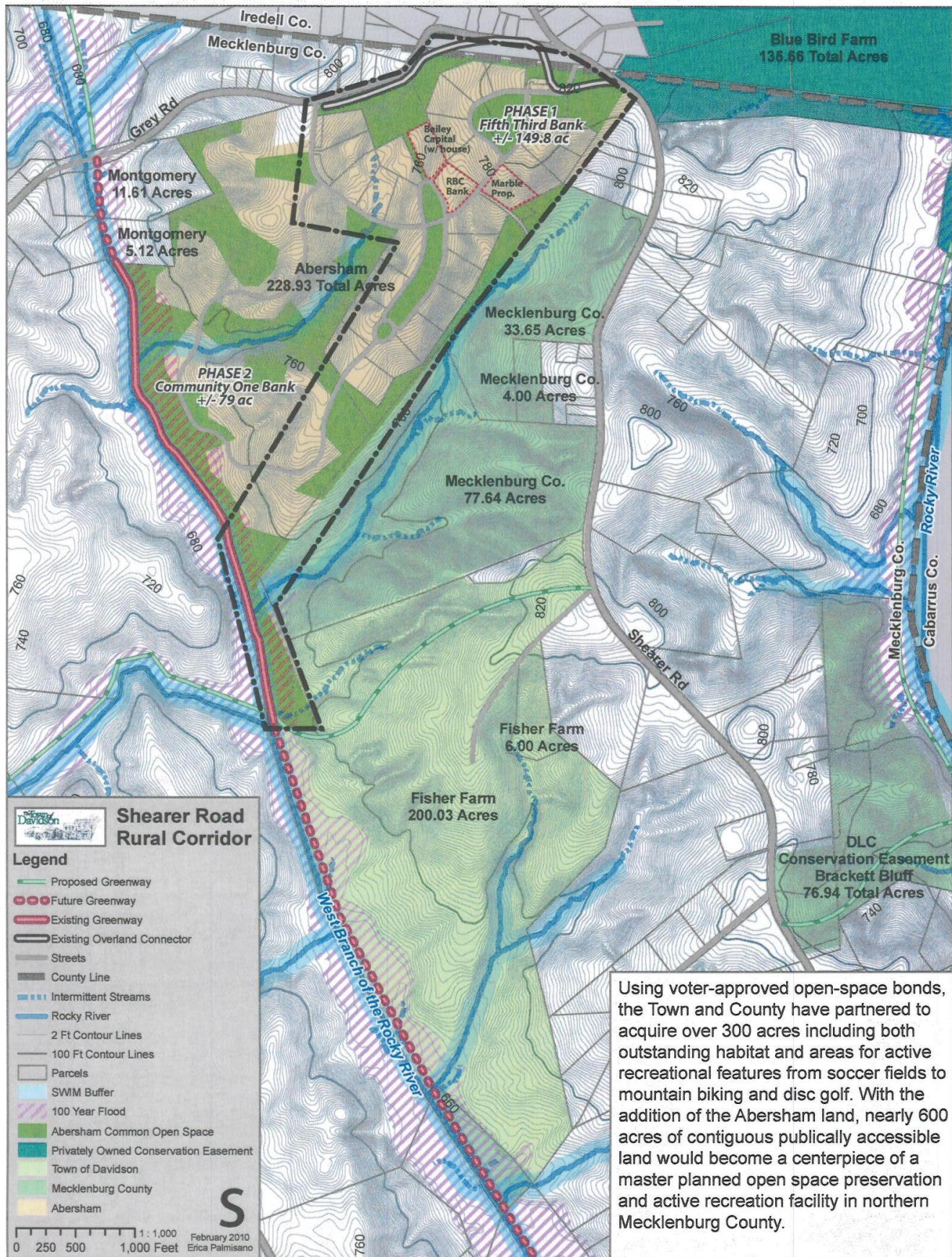
This proposed transaction has not been reviewed by the Joint Use Task Force.

PLANNING STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

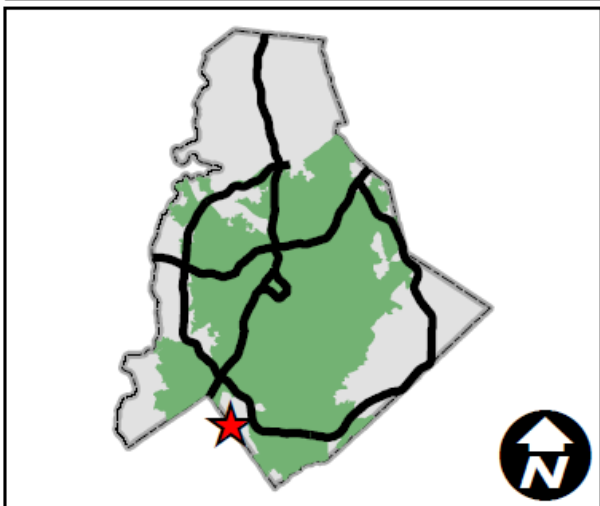
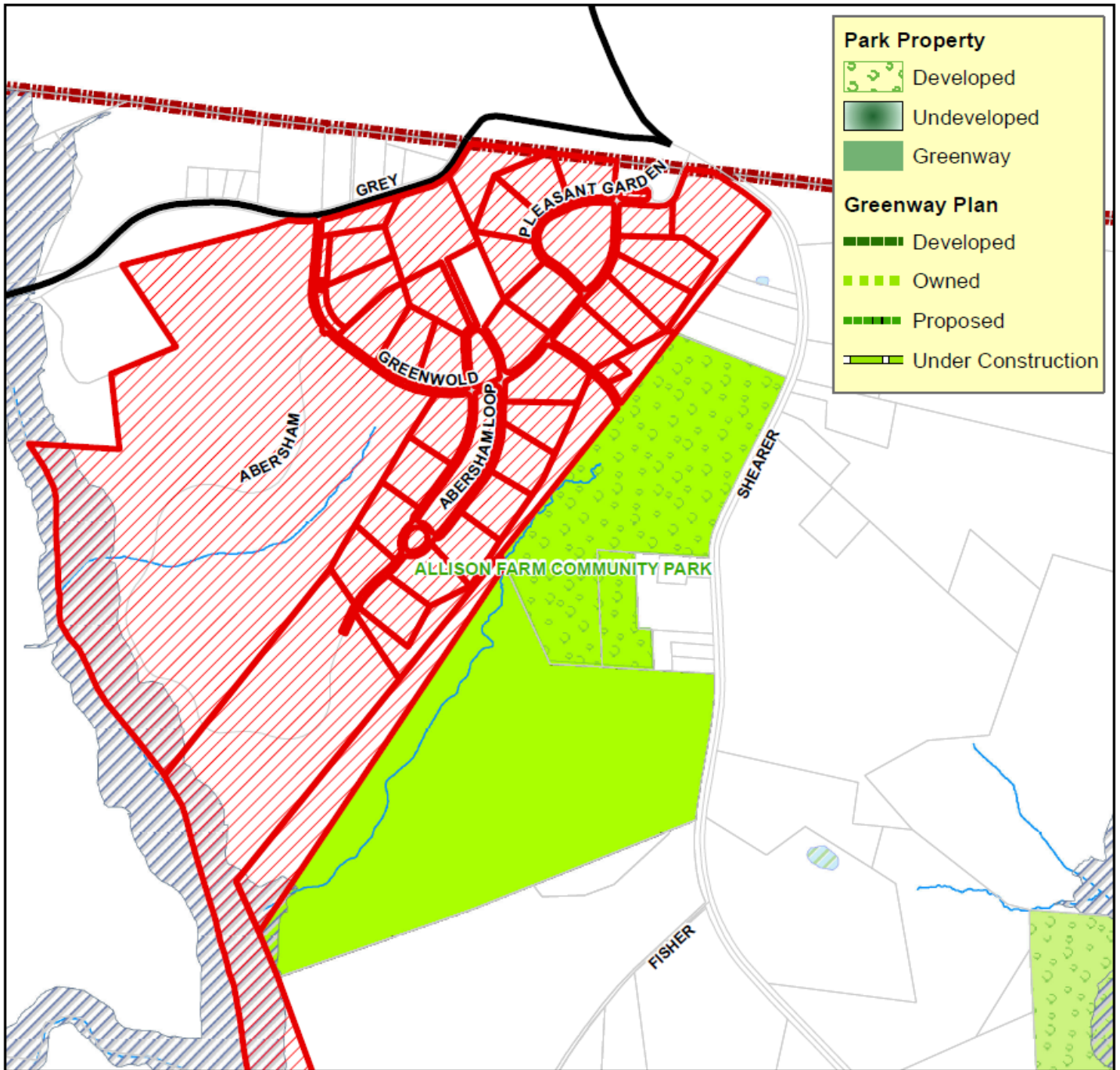
Town of Davidson staff have expressed support for this proposed transaction. Planning staff recommends approval.

CMPC PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

At their July 19, 2011 meeting the Planning Committee recommended approval by a 5-1 vote.



Using voter-approved open-space bonds, the Town and County have partnered to acquire over 300 acres including both outstanding habitat and areas for active recreational features from soccer fields to mountain biking and disc golf. With the addition of the Abersham land, nearly 600 acres of contiguous publically accessible land would become a centerpiece of a master planned open space preservation and active recreation facility in northern Mecklenburg County.



Mandatory Referral 11-10

Submitted by: **County Real Estate**

Initiated by: **Mecklenburg County Park & Recreation**

- Mandatory Referral
- County Property

