

MANDATORY REFERRAL REPORT NO. 12-02
Proposed City Purchase of 18.6 acres in Lakewood Community
(Partner with Catawba Lands Conservancy)

PROJECT PROPOSAL AND LOCATION:

Charlotte Storm Water Services proposes to acquire, in partnership with the Catawba Lands Conservancy, Parcel No. 065-09-144, located next to a Stewart Creek tributary in the Lakewood Neighborhood near Rozzelle's Ferry. The proposed site is approximately 18.6 acres zoned for-1 (Industrial) and R-5 (Residential). The current land use is vacant with some utility right-of-way and is owned by Duke Energy.

The purpose of the acquisition is to: 1) construct a stream restoration project and a stormwater Best Management Project (BMP) and 2) construct a portion of the Stewart Creek Greenway, which will be part of the Carolina Thread Trail when complete. The property has been recently subdivided from a larger parcel by Duke Power in order to partner with the Catawba Lands Conservancy (CLC) and Mecklenburg County Park & Recreation (the subdivided land contains an electrical sub-station). Catawba Lands Conservancy is the organization leading the Carolina Thread Trail construction efforts in fifteen counties in North and South Carolina within the Metrolina area.

The Charlotte Department of Transportation has acknowledged a desire for a future extension of Lakeview Street along the proposed greenway frontage. The extension of this street will open up additional land for development looking onto the greenway, which is proposed to meander through large, mature trees opposite the proposed housing.

Once Mecklenburg County Park & Recreation has available funding for Stewart Creek Greenway, the greenway portion of the property will be transferred to Mecklenburg County with the City retaining the portion upon which the BMP will be developed. The remaining portion of the original parcel will be retained by Duke Power due to the large substation located on the property. Parcel ownership is proposed as follows: Conservation easement – 9 acres; BMP maintenance easement – 2.5 acres; Lakeview Extension R/W – 1 acre, and Mecklenburg County– 6 acres.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION:

City Storm Water has collected mitigation payments in the Irwin Creek watershed (of which Stewart Creek is a tributary stream) and is responsible for building water quality improvements within this watershed. The stream restoration project will be constructed in order to generate stream mitigation credits for public projects and aid in the effort toward watershed recovery.

Eventually when Park & Recreation becomes a partner, it will join the existing partners in this venture (Catawba Lands Conservancy, the Lakewood neighborhood, Charlotte Storm Water Services, Charlotte DOT and Charlotte Neighborhood and Business Services). The contributions by the long list of partners make this a project that provides more benefits for the community than any single project can provide, or that any one partner can provide individually.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED PUBLIC POLICIES:

The stormwater improvements and greenway are consistent with the *Greenway Master Plan*, a component of the *Mecklenburg County Park & recreation 10-year Master Plan* (2008). The stormwater improvements are consistent with Storm Water Services policy by providing cost-efficient improvements to water quality and quantity within the City. Irwin Creek is one of the City's impaired streams and constructing water quality improvements helps the City work toward the goal of watershed recovery.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED LAND USE PLANS:

The proposed improvements are consistent with the *Lakewood Neighborhood Plan* (2006) which recommends greenway improvements and linkages within this portion of the study area. The plan also supports improving neighborhood connectivity for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists.

PROJECT IMPACT:

The stream restoration project and water quality BMP will be designed to help improve water quality within Stewart Creek and Irwin Creek. The proposed greenway trail will be an integral part of the Carolina Thread trail and will provide recreation opportunities to the Lakewood Community.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PUBLIC OR PRIVATE PROJECTS:

Other stormwater improvements and greenway additions in the area both upstream and downstream will add to the synergistic approach of this project. There are houses being bought both upstream (through a City Storm Water project) and downstream (through a County floodway mitigation project) of this project because of flooding issues, and additional water quality BMPs and sections of the greenway may be built in these areas.

ESTIMATED PROJECT COMPLETION DATE:

It is estimated that this stormwater project will be built in Fiscal Year 2015. A feasibility analysis for the stream restoration and BMP has been completed. The greenway will be completed as County Park & Recreation funding allows.

JOINT USE TASK FORCE REVIEW COMMENTS:

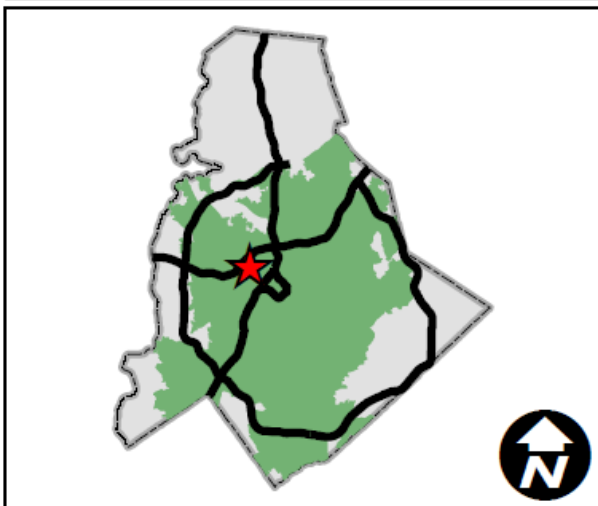
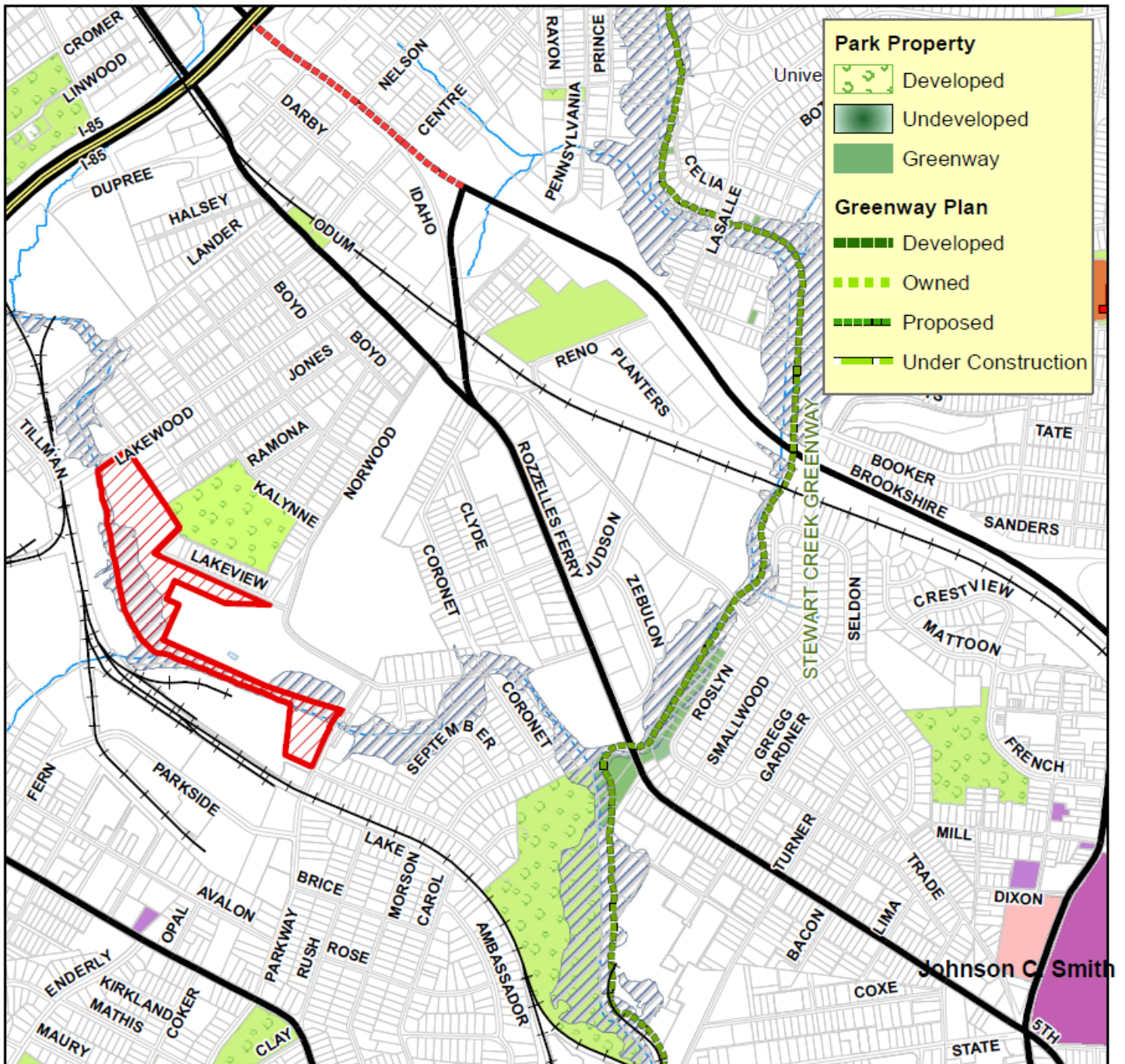
The Joint Use Task Force discussed this matter at their February 1, 2012 meeting and no joint use comments were offered (although the group acknowledged that this was a good joint use project).

PLANNING STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff supports the proposed transaction to acquire land to construct a stormwater and greenway project and recommends approval.

CMPC PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

At its February 21, 2012 meeting the Planning Committee recommended approval by a 6-0 vote.



Mandatory Referral 12-02

Initiated & Initiated by: E&PM

- Mandatory Referral
- FEMA 100 Year Floodplain
- Existing
- Proposed



Produced by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Department