

MANDATORY REFERRAL REPORT NO. 13-26
**Proposed New Police Station and Code Enforcement Division Office for Westover Division
of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police and Neighborhood and Business Services**

PROJECT PROPOSAL AND LOCATION:

City of Charlotte Real Estate proposes that a facility be located, designed and constructed to meet the specifications for a new Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department (CMPD) Westover Division headquarters that would replace the current 8,500 square foot leased facility at 1520-D and 1540 West Blvd. in the City West Commons Shopping Center. The proposed new 14,500 square foot facility would be constructed and owned by the City of Charlotte. The proposed site at 2500 West Blvd. (PID's 117-076-06 117-076-07, 117-076-11, 117-076-12, 117-076-13 and 117-076-14) is approximately 5.16 acres on the north side of West Blvd. with access to Elmin Street in the Westover Hills neighborhood of the City of Charlotte.

In addition to housing the police, it is proposed that the new facility also serve as headquarters for the City Neighborhood & Business Services southwest service area code enforcement office that serves this same geographic area. This staff currently works out of the Westside services center building at 4150 Wilkinson Blvd. (that houses the CMPD Freedom Division) which discourages interaction between code enforcement and CMPD staffs that serve the same geography (but will be enabled in the new location).

The property is currently vacant and zoned O-1 (CD) (Office – Conditional) and R-5 (Single family residential) according to the Charlotte Zoning Ordinance. Existing land uses in the area consist of a mix of low density residential, light industrial and retail. The O-1 (CD) zoning is the result of previous plans to develop a funeral parlor and crematorium that was never constructed. The City would seek to re-zone the property to NS (Neighborhood Services) in order to accommodate the proposed land use and minimize setbacks and therefore minimize community impact and site size (and property acquisition costs). The project schedule anticipates submitting a rezoning petition before the end of 2014.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION:

The current Westover Division is located in a total of 8,500 square feet in two separate buildings in the Westover Commons Shopping Center at the back of the center and has little visibility on West Blvd. The CMPD wants to have highly visible and easily accessible division offices, with 12,500 square feet of space for CMPD and 2,000 square feet of space for staff from Neighborhood and Business Services Code Enforcement Division. The current Westover Division location is too small, has minimal visibility and does not offer the level of security required. Code Enforcement staff scheduled to co-occupy the proposed facility with CMPD are currently located at 4150 Wilkinson Blvd.

The search for a replacement facility for the Westover Division was initiated in early 2010. The following criteria were developed by CMPD (and is contained in the 2010 *CMPD Facilities Strategic Plan*) to identify a site suitable for future division facilities. Site must be:

- highly visible
- easily accessible from patrol division area.
- sufficient in size to accommodate a facility containing a minimum of 14,500 square feet of floor area, secured parking for approximately 135 vehicles and public parking for at least 10 vehicles.
- centrally-located within the patrol division boundaries
- located near access to public transportation

Approximately 15 sites were included in the initial search with several sites being considered viable alternatives; however this location was selected for a number of reasons including site size, location near the geographic center of the division territory, access to public transportation, topography and development costs.

Several alternate sites were considered before selecting the subject property, but these sites did not meet the above criteria to the extent the selected site does. Specifically, the other sites exhibited relatively:

- poor accessibility/visibility,
- higher acquisition costs,
- greater distance from core response area,
- significantly higher development costs,
- poor development conditions (e.g. located in floodplains, bad topography, etc.), and
- sites that required assemblage

By having the building designed and constructed specifically to be a police station, the efficiency of the space will be improved over the existing facilities (initially designed as flex space), while avoiding the potential need to spend a significant amount of funding in renovation of the existing leased facilities.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED PUBLIC POLICIES:

Policies governing facility placement are contained in the criteria listed above, which are contained in the 2010 *CMPD Strategic Plan*. Additionally, priority is given to owning (as opposed to leasing) station locations as it is over time more cost-effective.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED LAND USE PLANS:

The Adopted Land Use for this site is Institutional as a result of rezoning 2005-097 which updated the *Central District Plan* (1993).

The *West Boulevard Corridor Plan* (1998) encompassed the area this site is located in. The purpose of the Plan was to provide direction needed to improve the economic stability of the West Boulevard Corridor, and subsequently, enhance the quality of life in the surrounding neighborhoods. The Plan identified the subject property as vacant, and several other sites were identified as potential locations for future development however, this site was not included.

The proposed Institutional land use (for a Police Station) is considered a complementary use to the surrounding residential and industrial land uses in the area, and therefore consistent with the adopted land use plan.

PROJECT IMPACT:

The partnership group that currently owns the property planned to construct a funeral parlor and crematorium, but cancelled their plans and listed the property for sale. One lot would be acquitted from Habitat for Humanity.

The redevelopment of this site has the potential to be a catalyst for reinvestment in the West Boulevard area, and will be designed to complement the existing neighborhood.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PUBLIC OR PRIVATE PROJECTS:

There are no other public or private projects currently planned for this site.

ESTIMATED PROJECT COMPLETION DATE:

The project is schedule for completion by June 2016.

JOINT USE TASK FORCE REVIEW COMMENTS:

The Joint Use Task Force discussed this matter at their December 4, 2013 meeting and had no comments.

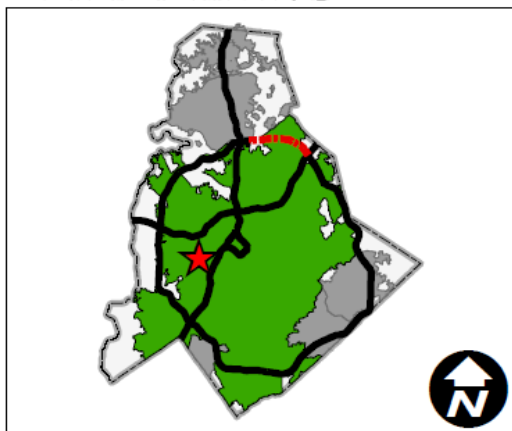
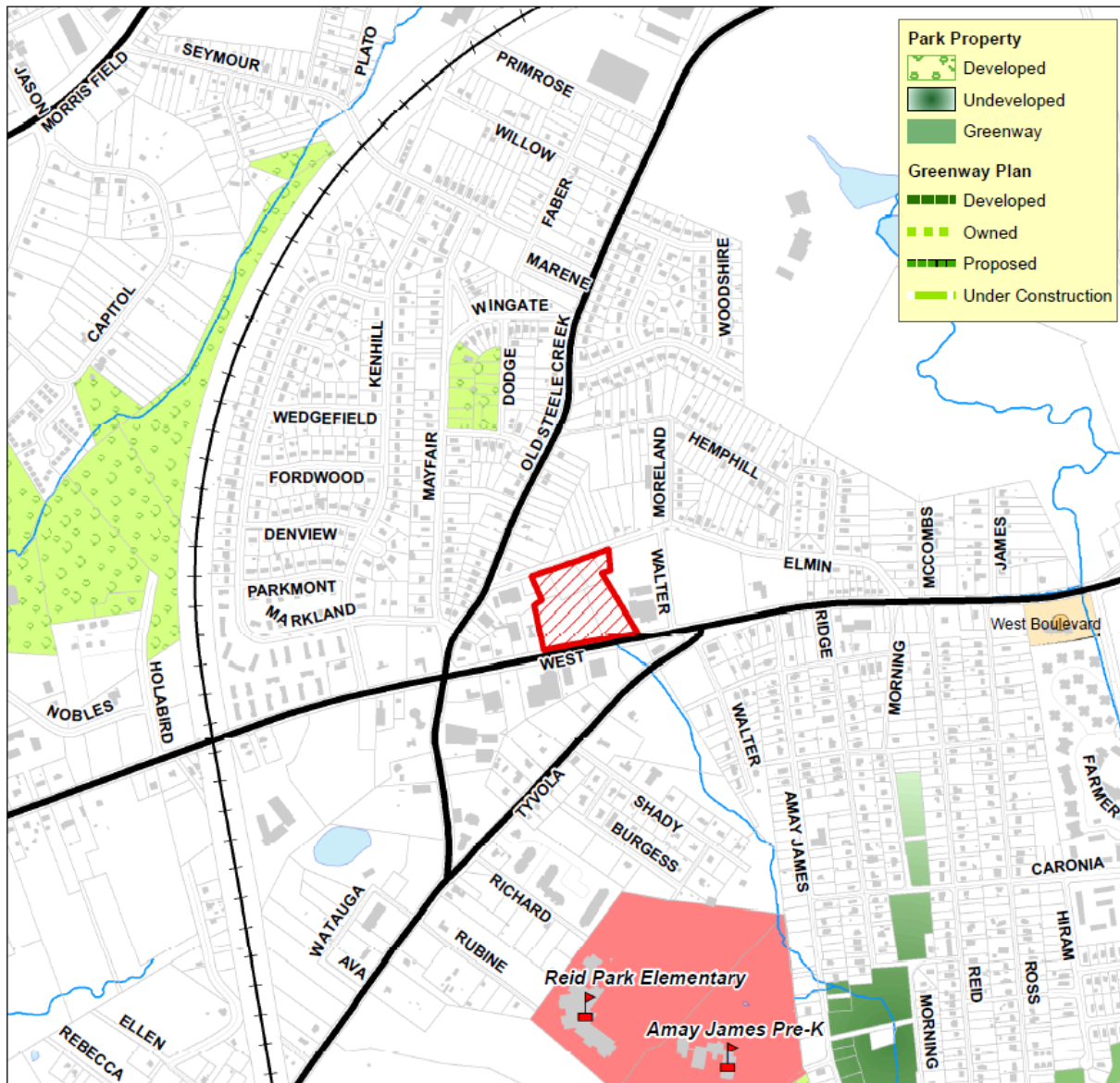
PLANNING STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Planning staff recommends approval of the proposed land acquisition.

CMPC PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

City Real Estate staff requested a deferral to the January 21, 2014 Planning Commission meeting. At their December 17, 2013 meeting the Planning Committee approved deferring the matter by a 6-0 vote.

At their January 21, 2014 meeting, the Planning Committee recommended approval by a 5-0 vote.



Mandatory Referral 13-26

Initiated by: CMPD

Submitted by: City Real Estate

- Mandatory Referral
- County Property
- Libraries

Produced by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Department

