

MANDATORY REFERRAL REPORT NO. 14-43
Proposed Land Acquisition in Mint Hill to Serve as Future Regional Parkland

PROJECT PROPOSAL AND LOCATION:

Mecklenburg County proposes to acquire tax parcel 197-221-03 (±140.27 acres) in the Town of Mint Hill's Extra-territorial jurisdiction. The property is currently vacant and zoned R (*Residential*) according to the Town of Mint Hill Zoning Ordinance. The property is surrounded by a mix of vacant land and single family residences on all sides. Park and Recreation would like to acquire the property as the site of a future regional park.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION:

Park and Recreation would like to acquire this property for a future regional park to serve Mint Hill and the eastern portion of the County. The property is located between Brief and Fairview Roads in the Town. Park and Recreation envisions developing the property with active and passive uses in the future. Those uses could include such amenities as ball fields, tennis courts, basketball courts, playgrounds, walking trails, a recreation center and other specialty facilities.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED PUBLIC POLICIES:

This project is consistent with the *2008 Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Master Plan* goals in which citizens within the County identified a desire for more large size park facilities of a regional nature that can provide an opportunity for an all-day experience. Acquisition of this parcel will provide Park and Recreation with the land to develop such desired park amenities for County residents. The property will require a rezoning to be used as intended by Park and Recreation, as park facilities require conditional approval. The County has had discussions with the Town about this need and will work with Town staff to undertake this process.

The subject property is bisected by a future Major Thoroughfare (Arlington Church Road) in the Charlotte Regional Transportation Planning Organization (CRTPO) *Thoroughfare Plan* and draft *Comprehensive Transportation Plan* (to be the successor of the *Thoroughfare Plan*). It is projected to run between Brief Road to the north and NC218 (Fairview Road) to the south. It is unfunded and does not have an assigned Horizon Year in the CRTPO 2014 *Metropolitan Transportation Plan* meaning that its prospects for development are long-term. Typically when future thoroughfares pass across properties contemplated for development, municipalities require as part of the development review process that the developer reserve right-of-way for the future thoroughfare.

Additionally, the 2011 *Mint Hill Pedestrian Plan* prescribes establishment of a series of pedestrian linkages throughout the town, including an east-west linkage across the subject property. The *Mint Hill Comprehensive Transportation Plan* also includes a connector between the future Arlington Church Road and the current end of Silver Maple Lane on the eastern edge of the site.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED LAND USE PLANS:

The subject property is located within the Town of Mint Hill's planning jurisdiction. According to the 2010 *Mint Hill Land Use Plan*, the prescribed future land use is single family medium density residential. Mint Hill staff report that parks are considered compatible uses in residential areas, particularly in geographies such as this part of town that are underserved by parks.

PROJECT IMPACT:

As part of the 2008 Master Plan process, citizens within the County identified the desire for large park facilities that provide an all-day experience as one of its top five recreation desire. Acquisition of the property will take steps towards providing citizens with more of these type of park facilities and experiences.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PUBLIC OR PRIVATE PROJECTS:

Park and Recreation is aware of the potential for a future extension of the Arlington Church Road thoroughfare through the site and is in the process of evaluating its possible impact (if built) on the future park facility.

ESTIMATED PROJECT COMPLETION DATE:

This project is for land acquisition only and is expected to be completed by late fall/early winter 2014.

JOINT USE TASK FORCE REVIEW COMMENTS:

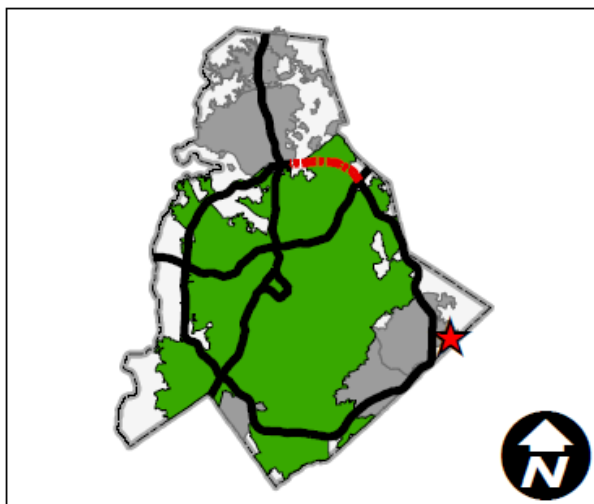
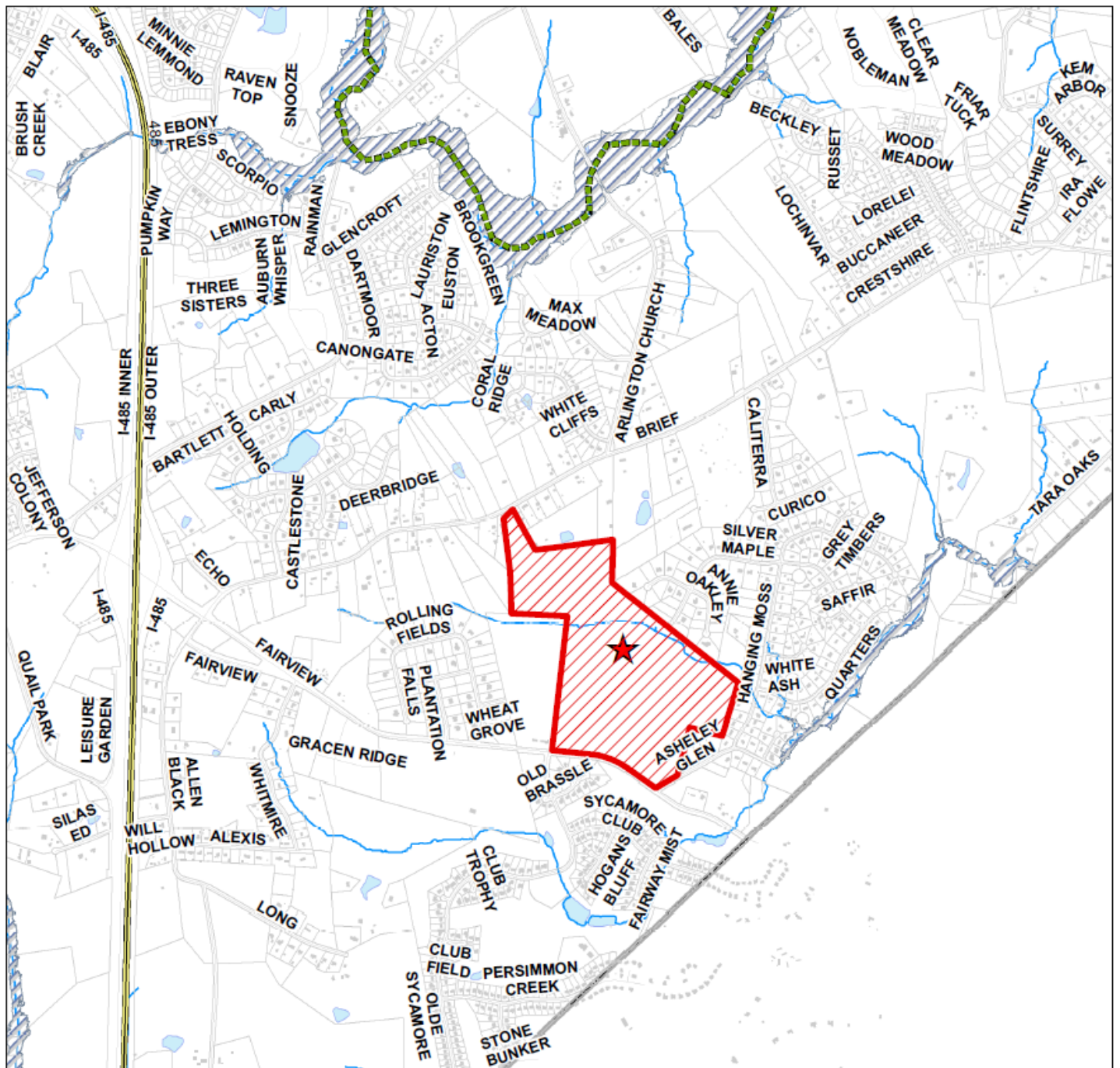
The Joint Use Task Force discussed this matter at their September 3 2014 meeting and no joint use comments were offered.

PLANNING STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Given that this property is located in Mint Hill's planning jurisdiction and that town staff is supportive of the proposed transaction and the prescribed land use, Planning staff recommends approval. Staff further recommends that the County work with town staff and (if necessary) CRTPO to identify right-of-way alignment for the future thoroughfare and site planning for the park be reflective of the potential future development of the roadway as well as other connections consistent with adopted town transportation policies.




CMPC PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

At their September 16, 2014 meeting the Planning Committee recommended approval by a 4-1 vote.



Mandatory Referral 14-43

Initiated by: Park & Recreation
Submitted by: County Real Estate

-  Mandatory Referral
-  FEMA 100 Year Floodplain
-  Proposed Greenway

