

**MANDATORY REFERRAL REPORT NO. 15-26**  
**Proposed Expansion of Oehler Nature Preserve & North Prong Clark Creek Greenway in Huntersville**

**PROJECT PROPOSAL AND LOCATION:**

The County would like to acquire +/- 44 acres of Tax Parcel 019-431-17 which is located between Ramah Church and Huntersville-Concord Roads in the Town of Huntersville's ETJ for the expansion of Oehler Nature Preserve and North Prong Clark Creek Greenway. The property is zoned Neighborhood Residential - Conditional (NR/CD) under the Town's Zoning Ordinance. The property is vacant and lies to the northwest of the existing Oehler Nature Preserve.

The western boundary of the proposed acquisition as portrayed on the accompanying map is approximate. The intent is to finalize the boundary with survey so that it matches the common boundary with the adjoining Walden subdivision (approved by the Town of Huntersville and not yet under development).

**PROJECT JUSTIFICATION:**

As the County continues to develop, the opportunity to preserve the area's natural habitat and vegetation will become increasingly rare. Acquisition of this property takes steps toward achieving continuous uninterrupted property ownership for the nature preserve. Park and Recreation has found that nature preserves function better with large uninterrupted stretches of property so that plant and animal life can be maintained and protected. Ten acres of the property lie south of a southeast running tributary of North Prong Clark Creek. Closing that gap in property ownership allows Park and Recreation to better manage the plant and animal life at the nature preserve. Additionally, it will allow Park and Recreation to take steps towards restoring the property to its natural habitat. Acquisition of this property allows Park and Recreation to fulfill its goal of expanding the greenway system. North Prong Clark Creek is an adopted creek corridor on the County's Greenway Master Plan.

**CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED PUBLIC POLICIES:**

Acquisition of this property is consistent with the 2008 *Park and Recreation Master Plan*. In that plan, citizens within the County identified greenways as their top recreation desire. The Master Plan also identified a need to the protection and preservation of sensitive natural animal and plant habitats. Acquisition of this property accomplishes that goal.

The proposed action is also consistent with Huntersville's 2030 *Community Plan*, specifically with several policies contained therein:

- Policy E-5: Support reduction in Vehicle Miles Travels (VMT) through investment in sidewalks, **greenways, enhanced connectivity** and mass transit.
- Policy E-7: Support land use and transportation policies that are **environmentally, economically and socially sustainable**.
- Policy T-6: Support the **installation of bikeways and greenway trails connecting residential**, commercial, recreational and institutional use.
- Policy T-8: **Promote and require street connectivity in the Town of Huntersville among residential**, commercial, employment and institutional uses.

The proposed action is also consistent with the *Huntersville Park & Recreation Plan*.

Huntersville has approved the Walden subdivision to the west of the subject property. The approved subdivision plan indicates a stub street for a future connector across the subject property to Ewart Road to the east of the creek.

**CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED LAND USE PLANS:**

The *Huntersville 2030 Community Plan* (adopted 2011) recommends residential development on the subject parcel. Residential land uses are generally considered to be compatible with open space and greenways.

**PROJECT IMPACT:**

Acquisition of this property takes this property out of play for future development and contributes to the water quality of the Clark Creek watershed.

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

The property will be utilized for nature preserve and greenway uses. Park and Recreation is aware of a sewer project along this creek and will have discussions with Charlotte Water about the timing and impact of that project.

**ESTIMATED PROJECT COMPLETION DATE:**

Acquisition of the property is anticipated to be completed by the end of summer 2015.

**JOINT USE TASK FORCE REVIEW COMMENTS**

The Joint Use Task Force discussed this matter at their June 3, 2015 meeting and no joint use comments were offered.

**PLANNING STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

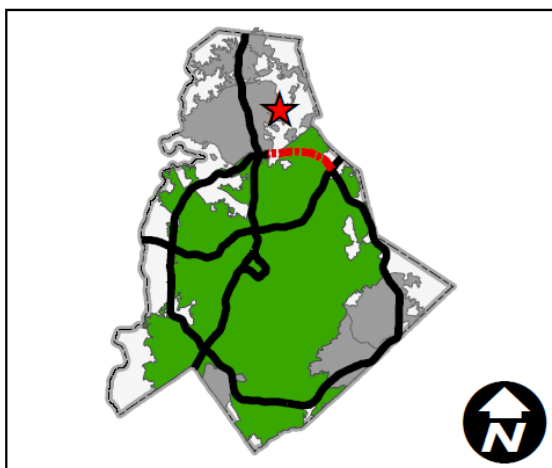
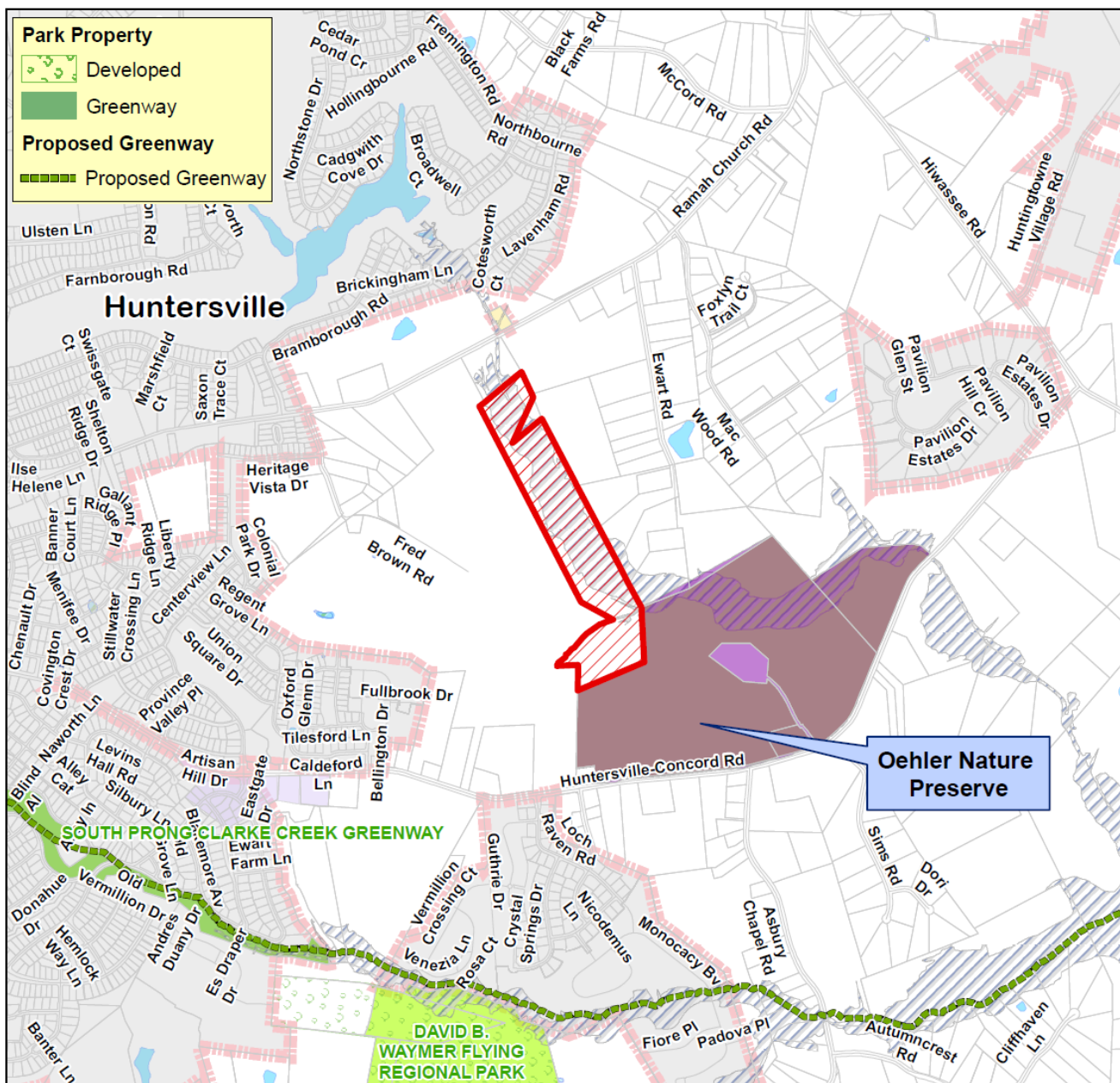
The subject property is in the Town of Huntersville's planning jurisdiction. Town staff reports that the town is supportive of the proposed transaction for the intended use, subject to the following two conditions:

- The western boundaries of the proposed acquisition should align with the approved Walden subdivision plan
- Acquisition should take into account the town's goal of the eventual development of a connector street between the Walden subdivision, across the property and creek to Ewart Road to the east.

Planning staff recommends approval subject to the two conditions articulated by the Town of Huntersville.

**CMPC PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:**

At their June 16, 2015 meeting the Planning Committee recommended approval – subject to the staff-stated conditions – by a 5-0 vote.



## Mandatory Referral 15-26

Initiated by: Park & Recreation

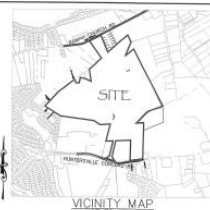
Submitted by: BSSA-Asset & Facility Management

- Mandatory Referral
- Local Historic Landmark
- FEMA 100 Year Floodplain
- County Property
- Ponds



Produced by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Department

WALDEN SUBDIVISION  
MASTER SKETCH PLAN  
HUNTERVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA  
MECKLENBURG COUNTY



Project Number: 17.53.132

Date: 12-19-2004

Drawn By: J.M.

Checked By: MFP

Revisions:

1	11/18/04	ORIGINAL PLUMBING
2	1/31/05	PER TOWN OF HALESTOWN
3	5/31/06	PER METALWORKING CORP.
4	10/15/07	PER DEVELOPER
5	11/05/07	PER TOWN OF HALESTOWN
6	2/26/12	PER TOWN OF HALESTOWN
7	12/17/14	PER TOWN OF HALESTOWN
8	12/17/14	PER TOWN OF HALESTOWN

Sheet Title:

Cover Sheet

Sheet No:

C-0.0

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