

MANDATORY REFERRAL-REPORT NO. 16-17
Proposed Expansion of McDowell Nature Preserve

PROJECT PROPOSAL AND LOCATION:

Mecklenburg County proposes to purchase Tax Parcel 199-481-06 (approximately 6.977 acres) to expand McDowell Nature Preserve. The property is located on Shopton Road West, between Sledge and Four Horse Roads in Charlotte's extraterritorial jurisdiction. The property is vacant (with the exception of a few outbuildings), is zoned R-3 (single family) under the City of Charlotte Zoning Ordinance, and adjoins the current Nature Preserve boundary to the west. To the east (across Shopton Road West) is located a residential subdivision.

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 allows the County to preserve open space, increase wildlife habitat protection and water quality protection. It also provides additional buffer for the existing nature preserve along Shopton Road West.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED PUBLIC POLICIES:

This acquisition is consistent with several Mecklenburg County adopted policies and plans such as the *Park and Recreation Master Plan* which seeks to expand open space and habitat protection. The acquisition is also consistent with the County's goal of protecting the watershed as the property drains into Lake Wylie

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED LAND USE PLANS:

The parcel has an adopted land use of Residential up to 4 DUA (dwelling units per acre), as per the *Steele Creek Area Plan* (adopted 2012). However, park or nature preserves are considered compatible uses for residential areas, especially since the site is adjacent to an existing nature preserve. The proposed use is consistent with the overall vision for the Wedge Neighborhood it's located in, as per the *Steele Creek Area Plan*.

PROJECT IMPACT:

This property is to be utilized as nature preserve land. It does not affect any other known public projects in this area.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PUBLIC OR PRIVATE PROJECTS:

There are no other public or private projects being impacted by this park project.

ESTIMATED PROJECT COMPLETION DATE:

This project is for land acquisition only and is expected to be completed by the summer 2016.

JOINT USE TASK FORCE REVIEW COMMENTS:

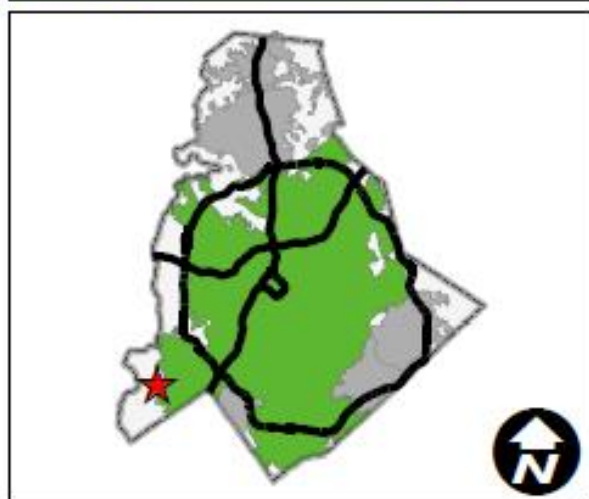
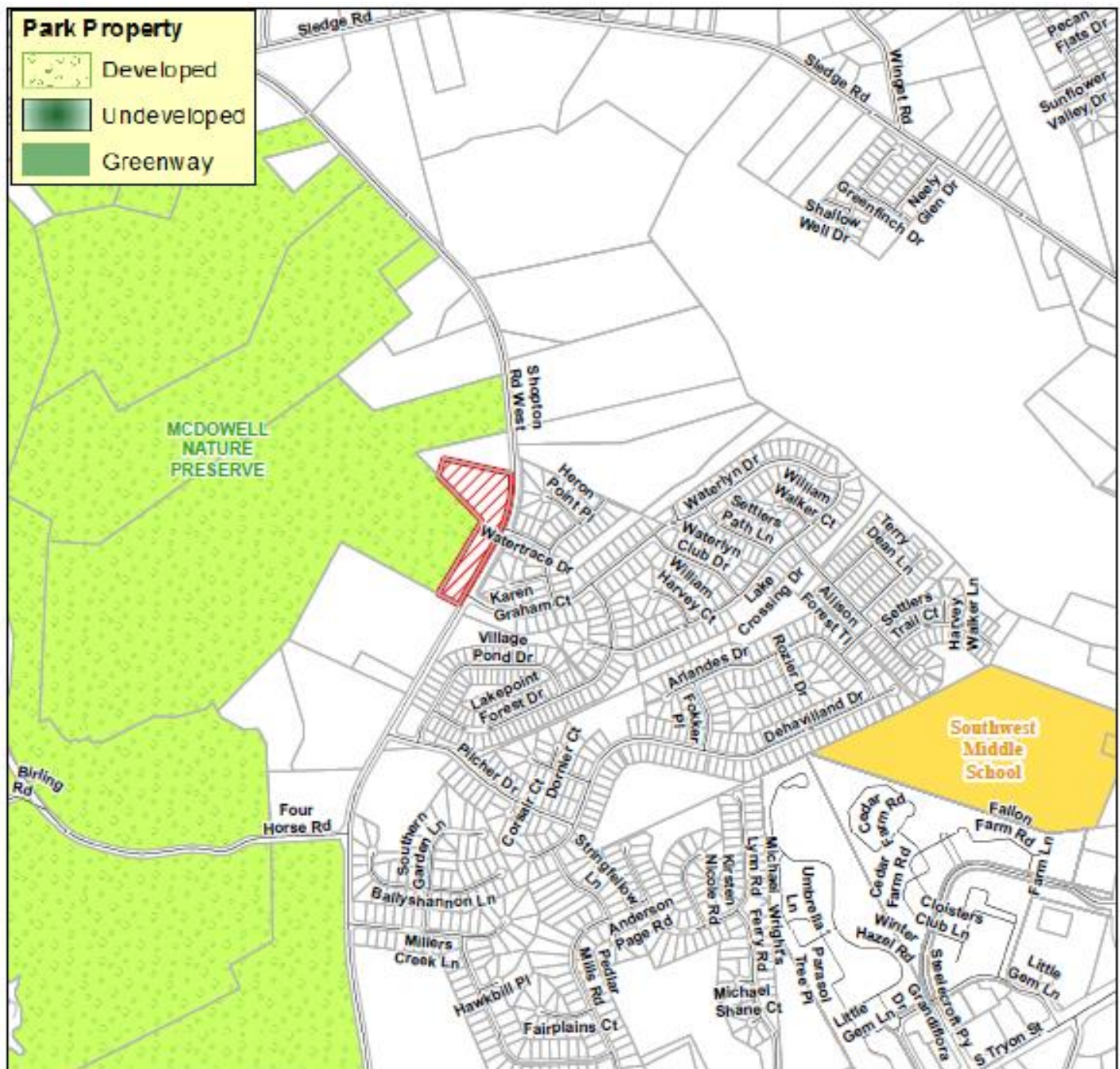
The Joint Use Task Force discussed this matter at their April 6, 2016 meeting and no comments were offered.

PLANNING STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Planning staff recommends approval of the proposed land purchase.

CMPC PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

At their April 19, 2016 meeting the Planning Committee recommended approval by a 6-0 vote.



Mandatory Referral 16-17

Initiated by: County Park and Recreation

Submitted by: Asset & Facility Management

- Mandatory Referral
- County Property
- Schools

