

MANDATORY REFERRAL | REPORT NO. 2018-11

City Engineering & Property Management Proposed Acquisition of Property in Biddleville for Tree Canopy Preservation

PROJECT PROPOSAL AND LOCATION:

The City of Charlotte's Engineering and Property Management Department (E&PM) proposes to acquire one vacant parcel of approximately .119 acres (078-192-12), zoned R-5 per the Charlotte Zoning Ordinance, in the Biddleville area of Charlotte for tree canopy preservation. The property is located off Rozzelles Ferry Road, as shown on the location map below, and is near Johnson C. Smith University.

This property was identified and considered under the City's scoring model for tree canopy preservation and was determined to be a good candidate for preservation due to its geographic location and potential partnership opportunities for replanting. This model uses criteria including acreage, current vegetative cover, potential for connectivity to greenways, partnering opportunities, and the level of development in the general geographic area.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION:

The acquisition of this property will enable the City to work toward reaching Charlotte City Council's goal of attaining fifty percent tree canopy coverage city-wide by 2050 through the preservation of forested properties in developing areas.

This acquisition allows the City, as required by the Charlotte Tree Ordinance, to fulfill its role as administrator of a Tree Ordinance Mitigation Fund and to meet the greater intent of the tree ordinance to preserve and protect tree canopy and promote the benefits trees provide to the Charlotte community (Charlotte, North Carolina, City Code, §21).

This property provides a replanting opportunity and expansion of the program into more urban, developed areas. Tree canopy loss typically occurs more frequently in denser urban areas. Additionally, numerous program fees have been collected in close proximity to this property.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED PUBLIC POLICIES:

The acquisition of this property is consistent with the tree canopy and general environmental goals associated with the City of Charlotte's Tree Canopy Preservation Program, City Council's "50% in 2050" Tree Canopy Goal strategy (both adopted 2011) and City Council's Environmental Focus Area Plan (adopted 2018).

In order to complete the acquisition, the City will utilize tree ordinance mitigation funds collected by Land Development through developer payment in lieu of on-site tree preservation to acquire these properties for conservation purposes, as established in the City's tree ordinance.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED LAND USE PLANS:

The proposed acquisition of the subject parcel for tree canopy preservation is inconsistent with the adopted future land use of Single Family <= 5 DUA as per the *West End Land Use and Pedscape Plan* (2005), which recommends Single Family <= 5 DUA; however, it is consistent with the plan's recommendation for this portion of the larger area to provide urban public spaces that should be designed to encourage public use and contribute to the overall fabric of the built environment.

PROJECT IMPACT:

Acquisition will enable the City to work toward reaching the goal of attaining fifty percent tree canopy coverage city-wide by 2050 through the preservation of forested properties in developing areas.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PUBLIC OR PRIVATE PROJECTS:

The Five Points Plaza project is planned nearby and will create intersection improvements and community amenities, enhanced by proximity to a tree canopy site.

ESTIMATED PROJECT COMPLETION DATE:

Staff is negotiating the purchase price with the property owners and plans to move forward with obtaining City Council approval to enter into a contract following Joint Use Task Force and Planning Committee review. Acquisition of the parcel is anticipated within six months of Council approval.

JOINT USE TASK FORCE REVIEW COMMENTS:

The Joint Use Task Force discussed this matter at their June 6, 2018, meeting, and no joint use comments were offered.

Agencies Represented:

Charlotte Department of Transportation; Charlotte Economic Development; Charlotte Engineering & Property Management (Engineering, Real Estate & StormWater Services); Charlotte Water; Charlotte Mecklenburg Libraries; Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning, Design & Development; Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department; Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools; County Finance; County Park & Recreation; County Manager's Office; County Health Department; County Asset & Facility Management; and Central Piedmont Community College.

PLANNING STAFF REVIEW:

Planning staff has reviewed the proposed transaction and below are the key findings:

Conclusions:

- The proposed use is inconsistent with the single family land use as per the *West End Land Use and Pedscape Plan* (2005); however due to the configuration of the parcel making it difficult for single family development, provides an opportunity for creating a public open space within the neighborhood.
- The property provides a replanting opportunity and expansion of the program into more urban, developed areas.

Adopted Goals and Policies:

- *The West End Land Use and Pedscape Plan* states as a goal the provision of urban public spaces that should be designed to encourage public use and contribute to the overall fabric of the built environment.
- The acquisition of this property will enable the City to work toward reaching Charlotte City Council's goal of attaining fifty percent tree canopy coverage city-wide by 2050 through the preservation of forested properties in developing areas.
- The acquisition of this property is consistent with the tree canopy and general environmental goals associated with the City of Charlotte's Tree Canopy Preservation Program, City Council's "50% in 2050" Tree Canopy Goal strategy (both adopted 2011) and City Council's Environmental Focus Area Plan (adopted 2018).

CMPC PLANNING COMMITTEE REVIEW:

At their June 19, 2018, meeting, the Planning Committee reviewed the proposed acquisition...

