

**MANDATORY REFERRAL REPORT NO. 98-20**  
**CHARLOTTE MECKLENBURG PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**PROPOSED NEW SCHOOL SITE**  
**SOUTH/SOUTHWEST MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL SITE - NATIONS FORD ROAD**

**PROJECT LOCATION**

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education proposes to purchase 272 acres of land (Tax Parcel Numbers 167-121-02, 167-121-04, 167-121-05, 167-12-06, 167-121-07 and 167-133-42 / See Attached Map) located at 6912 Nations Ford Road. The proposed school site is zoned R-4 (single-family). The site has access to both water and sewer services and road access is provided by 1004 feet of frontage along Nations Ford Road which is a minor thoroughfare. The site configuration is very amenable to a school campus layout. A large portion (50%) of the site is unusable for building locations due to steep slopes (in excess of 15%), floodplains/wetlands, and a future roadway right-of-way crossing the site.

**PROJECT PROPOSAL**

This proposed project calls for the purchase of 272 acres of land by the Board of Education to serve as a site for a new middle school and high school. This site, which consists of six (6) separate parcels, can ultimately accommodate a future elementary school (as funding becomes available) as well as the proposed middle and high schools. The new middle school will house approximately 1000 (6-8 grades) students and the high school will accommodate about 1600 (9-12 grades) students living in the general vicinity of the schools. The schools are anticipated to be completed and opened for the 2000-2001 school year.

**PROJECT JUSTIFICATION**

The site is located to address future enrollment growth in this region of the district in grades 6-8 and 9-12 and to relieve present and/or anticipated overcrowding in nearby middle and high schools. Quail Hollow and South Charlotte Middle Schools and Myers Park and South Mecklenburg High Schools are the most likely schools to be directly benefitted.

**PROJECT IMPACT**

The proposed schools at this location will provide relief from overcrowding at the above referenced schools and room for additional enrollment growth at these schools. Creation of an educational village at this location, similar to Governor's Village, could also be a catalyst for new development on the Westside.

The proposed site supports the principles (Proximity, Diversity, Utilization, Stability) prescribed to be used in the siting of future schools which were developed by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Future School Planning Task Force (Committee of 33). The location is in general proximity to crowded school attendance areas, to areas of anticipated growth, and to areas of concentrated black and non-black populations. (See attached for a more detail description of the

site selection process.)

A new school at this location would be in concert with the Southwest District Plan and support of a residential future which is recommended for this area.

### **RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PROJECTS**

Construction of the proposed "Shopton/Archdale Connector" through the site needs to be coordinated with the transportation authorities. While completion of the connector will improve access to the site, it is not critical to the site development. Big Sugar Creek forms the western boundary of the site and is part of Mecklenburg County's greenway system. The County presently owns greenway property along the western bank of Big Sugar Creek. This site would provide the opportunity to expand the greenway along the eastern bank and connect the school site by greenway to Renaissance and Ramblewood Parks. The additional land at the site could also be used to develop a neighborhood park or the existing facilities at the schools could be enhanced (i.e. lights, additional equipment, ballfields, etc) to meet the need for a neighborhood type park in this area.

### **PROJECT COST**

Estimated cost, developed in conjunction with the CMS Capital Needs Assessment process, is approximately \$57 million including land, construction, furnishings and equipment, design, and project management.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

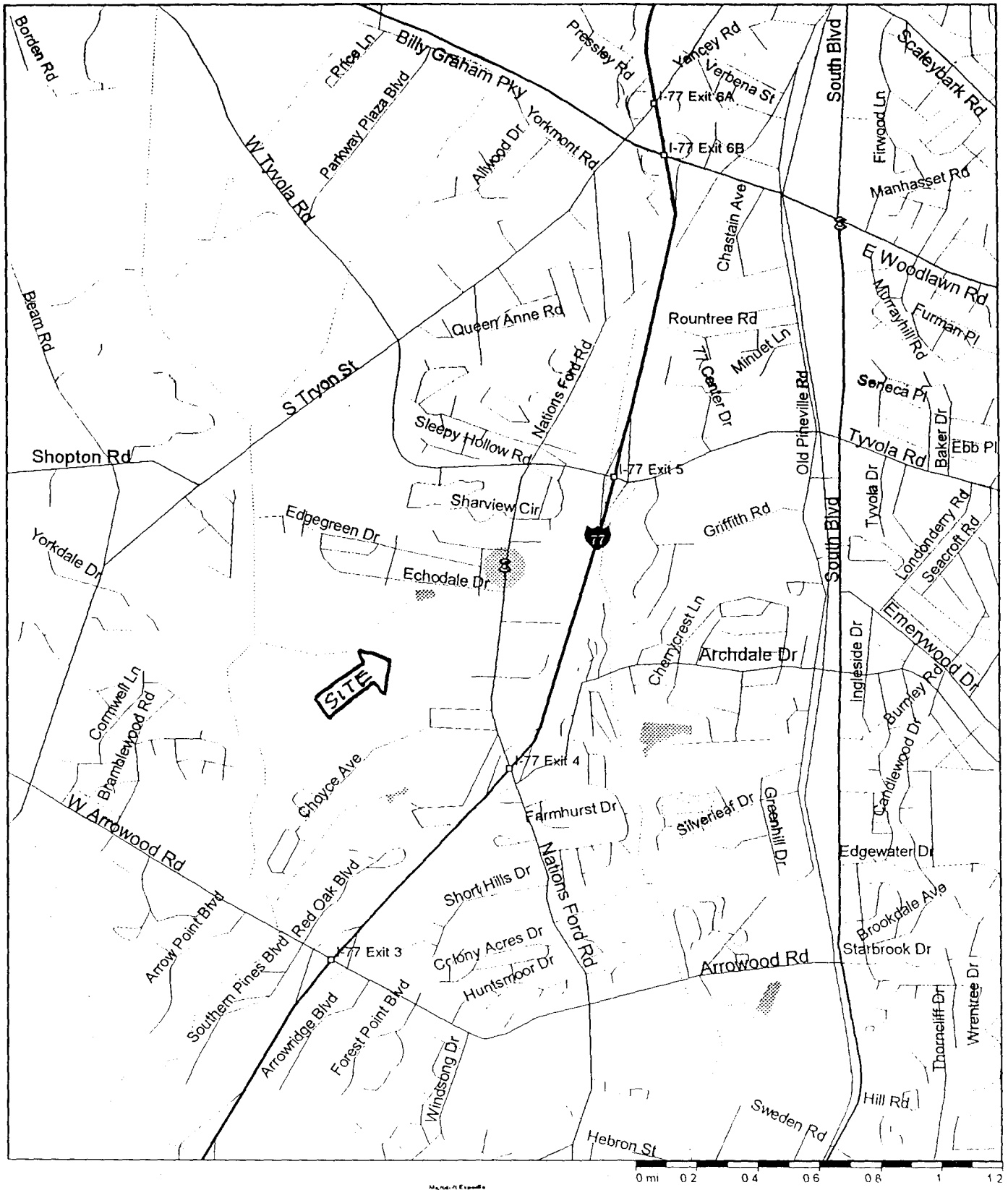
Staff recommends the land be purchased to build a new South/Southwest Middle School and High School. At the May 13 meeting of the Joint Use Task Force, CMS gave a presentation on the proposed site for review and comment. The Joint Use Task Force was also supportive of the proposed site for the new schools.

### **PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**

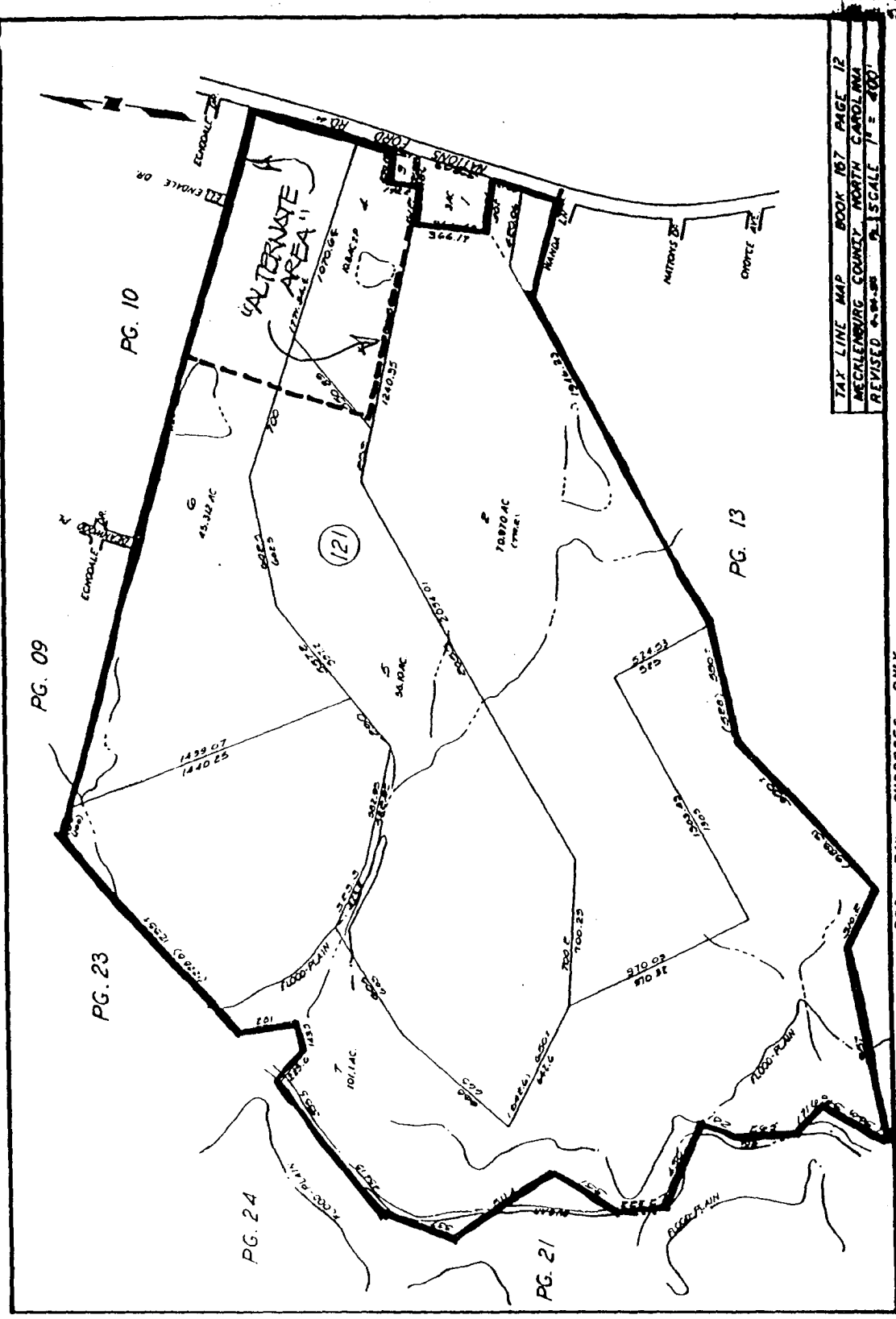
At the May 19, 1998 meeting, Planning Committee unanimously approved the purchase of 272 acres of land by the Board of Education for a new south/southwest middle school and high school on Nations Ford Road.

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# South/Southwest High School/Middle School



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TAX LINE MAP BOOK 107 PAGE 12  
MECKLENBURG COUNTY NORTH CAROLINA  
REVISED 6-20-88 SCALE 1" = 400'

FOR TAX PURPOSES ONLY

"SOUTHWEST MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL SITE"

## **SCHOOL SITE IDENTIFICATION PROCESS - 1997 REFERENDUM**

The new school site identification process (outlined below) for the 1997 referendum funded projects differs substantially from the process previously used.

**January 1997:** Board of Education adopted facilities plan prescribing 10 new schools by 2003... needed to respond to crowding and anticipated growth in enrollment through 2003. General geographic areas were identified based upon expected unmet needs from completion of 1993 and 1995 bond funded new schools and by enrollment growth trends and demographics. Ten schools by level were:

- elementary (4)
- middle (3) and
- high schools (3)

**August 1997:** The “Committee of 33” report presented to Board of Education identified a series of principles prescribed to be used in siting of future schools, and endorsed the concept of long range school facilities planning.

**October 1997:** The “Committee of 21” report presented to Board of Education, City Council and County Commission, presenting outline for developing long range facilities master plan.

### **November 1997**

- CMPC agreed to partner with CMS in opening site i.d. process to city/county agencies and to broker collaboration among these departments.
- CMPC brought several city/county agencies to review CMS preliminary site criteria and to determine what publicly- and privately-owned parcels came close to meeting the criteria.
- Group focused on areas identified by the principles contained in the Committee of 33 report, by principles of sound community planning suggesting schools be built away from “edges”, and by desire to avoid building schools of like levels in close proximity to one another.
- Process resulted in identification of over 100 sites.

**December 1997** CMS staff began to assess “developability” of the sites: topography, zoning, utility availability, etc. CMPC was instrumental in helping to provide perspective on community and land use master plans pertinent to each site.

**October 1996 - present** CMPC and County Manager’s office jointly created and staffs the Joint Use Task Force, upon which CMS staff serves. This provides a monthly forum for the school district and each city/county agency (as well as towns) to learn about one other agencies’ capital plans to discuss mutual concerns and potential for joint usage.

**April, 1998** CMPC coordinated the effort toward clarifying the approval process and defining the calendar to which the school district intends to comply in order to obtain necessary county approvals for several new school sites.

**beginning May, 1998** submission of preferred sites for Mandatory Referral review to CMPC