



## TOWN OF CARRBORO

NORTH CAROLINA

## TRANSMITTAL

## PLANNING DEPARTMENT

DELIVERED VIA: ☐ HAND ☐ MAIL ☐ FAX ☒ EMAIL

**To:** Steve Stewart, Town Manager  
Mayor and Board of Aldermen

**From:** Patricia J. McGuire, Planning Administrator

**Date:** November 10, 2006

**Subject:** Follow-up to Board comments related to design of Martin Luther King, Jr. Park

A brief chronology of the acquisition and design of the Martin Luther King, Jr. (MLK, Jr.) park property has been prepared (*Attachment C*). Minutes and other materials from meetings of the Board of Aldermen where actions related to the park were taken are attached (*Attachments D and E*). A copy of the adopted master plan for the park is also attached (*Attachment F*).

Comments offered by Board members during the discussion in March are summarized below. Where applicable, staff observations are provided in italic text. Additional information related to street connectivity and the inclusion of street connections to neighboring development in the design for MLK, Jr. Park, is also provided.

1) Request to review alternative design(s) that included parking lots instead of connecting streets. *Following a request from the Hillsborough Road Park Design Committee in January 2001, the Board of Aldermen adopted a resolution specifying that the park should include connecting streets. Sungate Design Group worked with a new park street design subcommittee on alternative designs. The design which maximized useable area on the park was selected and referred to Site Solutions. In resuming its work with the Park Design Committee in 2003, Site Solutions prepared several alternative concept plans for the park, one of which showed parking lots rather than street connections. These concept plans were reviewed by the committee and referred to the Board of Aldermen. A Board subcommittee made a selection and reported to the entirety of the Board of Aldermen in November 2003. The Board of Aldermen adopted a resolution*

*selecting the concept plan with the connecting streets and forwarded this back to Site Solutions for inclusion in the Master Plan. A copy of the alternative parking plan is attached (Attachment G).*

*2) Expenditures on park to date. The Town paid \$ 552, 701 for the purchase of the park. Installment financing was used to cover \$ 274,000 of the purchase price, the annual debt service payment on which will be \$ 24, 773 through FY 2014-2015. The master plan was completed for \$42,000. An estimate of engineering costs associated with street designs is \$4,500 and with environmental assessment is \$12,150. Sewer extension costs totaled \$9,500. Incidental costs of ownership, including removal of the pond, regular mowing, security lighting around the Burnette home place, gate installation and signage, have not been quantified.*

*3) Suggestion to advance park construction by dropping road and reducing the cost. Town Manager responded during discussion in March that scheduling of projects in Capital Improvements Program (CIP) seeks to achieve a balanced tax impact. Under current demands/needs, advancing the project must be considered in conjunction with all the proposed activities within a particularly time period. It is further noted that the updated CIP also under consideration on the evening of November 14, 2006 projects moving the first phase of construction date for the park from FY 08-09 in the current CIP to FY 10-11.*

*4) Clarification of whether it is easier and cheaper to design and build a parking lot than a road: Within the town and at the level of use that is anticipated for the park, design processes, construction standards, drainage requirements and stormwater quantity and quality standards are the same for parking lots and streets. There is not a measurable difference between the ease or cost of designing and building parking lots or a street.*

*5) Location of MLK, Jr. Park. The MLK, Jr. Park is located at 1120 Hillsborough Road, nearly opposite the intersection of Dove Street with Hillsborough Road. The Dove Street intersection lies approximately 1,100 feet south of the next northern connecting street intersection at Parkview Drive and approximately 1,400 feet north/northwest of the nearest connecting street intersection at Blueridge Road. A map showing the park location has been provided (Attachment H).*

#### Overview of Park Acquisition and Planning.

The Board of Aldermen approved purchase of the 9.4-acre Burnette property in November 1999 at a cost of \$552,701 for use as a neighborhood park. A six-member design committee was established in February, 2000, to make recommendations on the selection of a master planner for the park. On June 13, 2000, 15-year installment financing was approved for \$274,000, the portion of the purchase price that was not covered by payments in lieu for open space and recreation facilities that had been paid to the Town for open space and recreation facilities as part of the development approvals for the Cates Farm, Fair Oaks, Andrews Heights and Quarterpath Trace subdivisions.

Funding for park planning was allocated that year as well. Master planning was initiated in July 2000 when Site Solutions was selected to prepare a plan for the park and the Master Plan was approved by the Board of Aldermen on October 5, 2004.

Other relevant information

For many years town officials have recognized the need for interconnectivity of streets. Planning documents referenced this need as early as 1970 and in 1979 a plan for street connectivity around the downtown and in newly developing areas to the south and west of town was adopted. In 1986, the plan was expanded to include areas to the north of town. The Tripp Farm Road Connector was added to the town's street connectivity plans at that time. Town regulations, policy, and planning documents have affirmed and implemented neighborhood interconnectivity concepts. A brief description of each of these, as well as a discussion of how interconnectivity requirements have shaped developments in the town, is presented below.

*Land use ordinance provisions requiring connectivity.* Due to the benefits provided for safety, efficient delivery of public services, and community building, connectivity provisions have been part of Carrboro's regulations for many years. Sections 15-214 and 217 specify the Town's requirements for connectivity, and were adopted to connect with, support and enhance the connections that would be established by connector roads. Until 2002, these sections made up the bulk of the Town's tools to implement the policies for interconnecting streets. These sections call for 1) collector streets to interconnect with arterials, 2) subcollectors, local, and minor streets to connect with all surrounding streets, and 3) development of cul-de-sacs is prohibited unless topography makes interconnecting streets impracticable. There were several mechanisms, however, that provided opportunities for certain developments to avoid neighborhood interconnectivity. In 2002, the Town significantly strengthened the connectivity requirement, removing provisions that allowed developers of unsubdivided developments or those with private roads to avoid interconnecting streets. At the present time, nearly every development involves careful and serious consideration of the need for streets to be built so that they will either connect to existing streets or provide a means for future street connections.

From the perspective of the Land use Ordinance, the need to develop connected neighborhoods is clear. The multi-purpose function, i.e. providing space for vehicles, bikes and pedestrians, at a minimum, of these roads is a long-standing feature of development in Carrboro in support of a multi-modal transportation system.

*How interconnectivity requirements have shaped developments in Town.* A table showing projects whose design has been influenced by connectivity provisions is provided below. Of particular note are those projects where the interconnectivity requirements have represented fairly substantial obstacles to successful development due to complexity, cost or both. Both the Winmore village mixed-used development and Rose Walk at University Lake subdivision have been required to construct bridges to satisfy the Town's interconnectivity requirement. Also of note is the Carrboro Greens development which, in its first iteration was submitted as a special use permit application

without a street connection. After the permit application was denied by the Board of Adjustment for failure to stub out an extension of Pathway Drive, the applicant appealed the decision to Orange County Superior Court. The Town's decision was upheld.

Year	Project	Year	Project
1980	Bolin Forest	1995	Sunset Creek
1980	Tennis Club Estates	1998	Carrboro Greens
1983	Spring Valley	1999	Hanna Ridge
1984	Cobblestone	2001	Smith Middle School Athletic Fields
1984	Fair Oaks	2001	Jones Ferry Road Park and Ride Lot
1984	Sudbury	2001	Rose Walk at University Lake
1984	Waverly Forest	2002	Horne Hollow
1984	Highland Hills		Tramore West
1988	Quarterpath Trace	2003	Winmore VMU
1990	Camden	2005	Carrboro High School
1991	Wexford		Claremont
1992	Cates Farm	2006	Jones Property
1993	Williams Woods at Cates Farm		
1994	Lake Hogan Farms		

*Summary of issues related to street connections in the MLK, Jr. park...* The need for multiple points of access to Hillsborough Road has been documented for many years. The North Carolina Department of Transportation has allowed the existing cross-section of North Greensboro Street and the proposed expansion to include only two travel lanes and bike lanes, despite this serving as the principal north-south through town, in part because of the town's adopted and implemented policy for street connections. The connector roads policy has been reaffirmed numerous times, most recently in December 2000 when Carrboro Vision2020 was adopted. Policy 4.12 of that document states "The town should continue to implement its connector roads policy." The road has always been planned to connect the western terminus of Tripp Farm Road with Hillsborough Road. The NSA Plan Connector Roads map shows the road intersecting opposite (thus creating a 4-way intersection) the eastern terminus of Dove Street.

*Change to park plan so that interconnecting streets are not included.* That street connections on the MLK, Jr. park to either existing stub-outs or to properties that connect to existing street stub-outs is needed and in keeping with adopted plans and policies is clear. Under these circumstances, any development application for the property will be held to the standards of the ordinance and adopted plans and policies regarding street interconnectivity. The Land Use Ordinance specifies that a zoning permit issued by the Zoning Administrator is needed for outdoor recreational facilities owned and operated by the Town, such as that planned for MLK, Jr. park. Zoning permits are issued based on

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compliance of a development application with the provisions of the Land Use Ordinance. Inclusion of street connections will be needed in order for a site plan to meet the ordinance and for the Zoning Administrator to issue a permit approving such a development.

Should the Board of Aldermen wish to remove street interconnections from the MLK, Jr. park design, the following actions would be needed, 1) amendments to the Land Use Ordinance to amend or delete street interconnectivity provisions, and 2) initiate action with Chapel Hill and Orange County to amend the connector roads provision of the NSA Plan as the plan has been adopted as part of the Joint Planning Area Land Use Plan.

*Chronology of Board of Aldermen Discussion and  
Action Regarding the Martin Luther King, Jr. Park*

<i>DATE</i>	<i>ACTION</i>
11-16-99	The Board held a public hearing on a recommendation to sell a 2-acre tract on Pathway Drive and purchase a 9.4 acre parcel on Hillsborough Road for a park. Staff analysis reviewed the potential of the property for use as a park and noted that a connector road crosses the property. The Board voted 6-1 (Caldwell) to continue the public hearing and to direct town staff to initiate a phase 1 environmental assessment and prepare financing options for the Board's consideration.
11-30-99	The Board voted 7-0 to authorize the purchase of the Burnette property on Hillsborough Road for a park for \$550,000 using a combination of payment-in-lieu funds and other debt financing.
2-22-00	The Board voted 7-0 to adopt a resolution approving a public input process for the park and creating a Hillsborough Road Neighborhood Park Design Committee. Aldermen Dorosin and Gist were appointed to the design committee, which also had two members of the Recreation and Parks Commission, one member of the Ad Hoc Committee on Park Financing, and one citizen at large.
5-23-00	The Board voted 7-0 to adopt a resolution setting a public hearing on the use of lease-purchase financing for the purchase of the park property.
6-13-00	The Board held a public hearing (no one spoke) and voted 6-0 (McDuffee absent) to approve the financing terms for the park property.
6-27-00	The Board voted 4-0 (Dorosin, Gist, Spalt absent) to adopt a budget amendment to reimburse the General Fund for cash borrowed to purchase the park in December 1999.
6-27-00	The Board voted 4-0 (Dorosin, Gist, Spalt absent) to authorize the Hillsborough Road Neighborhood Park Design Committee to negotiate with design firms and the Town Manager to enter into a contract for architectural services for the development of a master plan and subsequent development services for the park. Site Solutions was later selected.
10-3-00	Alderman Dorosin announced that on October 15, 2000, a park design forum would be held at the Hillsborough Road Park site to receive input on the design of the park.
10-24-00	Committee chair, Evie Odum, on behalf of the Hillsborough Road Neighborhood Park Design Committee, asked that the Board respond as to

- whether the road would be built and, if so, that the Board finalize the design of the road. The committee voted to suspend the park planning process and request additional information from the Board of Aldermen before directing Site Solutions to proceed further with the development of design scenarios.
- 10-24-00 Alderman Gist reported that she had contacted Orange County Solid Waste regarding deconstruction or recycling of the buildings on the park site.
- 1-23-01 The Board by a vote of 6-1 (Gist) adopted a resolution specifying that facilities to accommodate cars, pedestrians, and bicycles that satisfy the Town's connector road policy be included in the design of the park. The resolution also established the Hillsborough Road Park Road Design Committee to recommend options for the design and construction of the facilities. Two citizens spoke on the item: Susan Stone expressed concern about the connector road and Richard Ellington commented on a preferred location for the connector road on the property.
- 2-13-01 The Board appointed Susan Stone and Emerald Estock to the Hillsborough Road Park Road Design Committee.
- 3-20-01 As part of a discussion on affordable housing, the Board stated that if any portion of the Hillsborough Road Park site is severed from the whole by the connector road, that portion should be considered for affordable housing.
- 3-27-01 As part of a consolidated request with the Town of Chapel Hill for southern Orange County, the Board voted 7-0 to adopt a resolution requesting that the 2001 Orange County Parks and Recreation Bond include \$250,000 for land acquisition and \$750,000 for development of Hillsborough Road Park.
- 4-24-01 The Board adopted a resolution requesting that the Town proceed with pond work at the Hillsborough Road.
- 6-5-01 The Board unanimously approved a budget amendment of \$11,994 for pond work at the Hillsborough Road Park.
- 10-23-01 Brad Lessler of Sustainable Living, Inc. asked about the disposition of the house on the park property. Mayor Nelson stated that the Board has not made a decision on the house but would notify Mr. Lessler when a decision is made.
- 6-3-03 At the public hearing on the Pacifica AIS development, Marty Mandell suggested that through a land swap Pacifica be built on the Hillsborough Road Park property in order to preserve the Pacifica property on Hanna Street as a park. Alderman Broun stated that she would like to know the legality of this since in-lieu fees were used in the purchase of the park property.
- 8-19-03 The Board by a vote of 5-1 (Gist voting no, Dorosin absent) adopted a resolution setting a public hearing for September 2, 2003 on the advisability

of issuing bonds for sidewalks and greenways and for the Hillsborough Road Park.

- 8-19-03 Interim Manager Mike Brough told the Board that the Hillsborough Road Park Design Committee's work was stymied until the Board of Aldermen decided where the road would be located within the park and the design of that road. The Board voted 6-0 (Dorosi absent) to reactivate the Hillsborough Road Park Design Committee to resolve the road issue and to plan the design of the park, and to obtain additional community input.
- 9-16-03 The Board by a vote of 6-0 (Nelson absent) adopted a resolution to continue with the current consultant, Site Solutions, for the Hillsborough Road Park Master Plan. The Board requested that the staff schedule an agenda item for the Board to discuss the configuration of the road. This agenda item should include alternatives for the road alignment and background materials.
- 11-18-03 The Board received a presentation from the Hillsborough Road Neighborhood Park Subcommittee Report on a recommended road access option through the park. The Board by a vote of 6-1 (Gist) adopted a resolution to accept the subcommittee report, approve the road alignment option to serve as a guide for the Park Design Committee, and direct staff to reinstate the design committee so that they can work along with Site Solutions to design the Hillsborough Road Neighborhood Park.
- 1-3-04 The Board appointed Mayor Mike Nelson to the seat on the Hillsborough Road Park Design Committee that was vacated by Mark Dorosi.
- 4-20-04 Mayor Nelson announced that on Saturday, April 24, 2004 there would be a public input session for the Hillsborough Road Park.
- 6-15-04 The Board reviewed the Hillsborough Road Neighborhood Park Design Committee's Park Design recommendation and voted 7-0 to adopt a resolution to approve the park design, to direct staff to work with Site Solutions in completing the park master plan, and to name the park Martin Luther King, Jr. Park. The adopted design included the connector road.
- 10-5-04 The Board by a vote of 7-0 reviewed and approved the Martin Luther King Jr. Park Master Plan. The adopted master plan included the connector road.
- 3-14-06 As part of a discussion of the adopted Capital Improvements Program, the Board discussed the Martin Luther King, Jr. Park. There was discussion of the need for the connector road in the park, access to the park, alternative designs that did not include the connector road, and how much as been spent on the approved design and how much expense might be incurred in a redesign process. There was a request to schedule an agenda item in the future.

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**REPORT: HILLSBOROUGH ROAD PARK CONNECTOR ROAD**

The Hillsborough Road Neighborhood Park Design Committee requested clarification on whether the connector road will be constructed through the park property and adjacent property and, if so, clarification of the design and location of the road. A staff review on this matter was presented. A resolution that specifies that the connector road is to be included among the features that will be placed on the Hillsborough Road park property was recommended for the Board's approval.

Trish McGuire, the town's Planning Administrator, made the staff presentation.

Susan Stone stated that a connector road would be a major feature of this park. Ms. Stone stated her concern that the neighborhood felt that when this property was developed, that it would be a residential development--not a park. Ms. Stone asked that the Board consider having a public hearing on whether to put the road through the park.

Richard Ellington stated that the proposed alignment does not make sense. Mr. Ellington proposed that the road be aligned along the northwest side of the property.

The following resolution was introduced by Alderman Allen Spalt and duly seconded by Alderman Alex Zaffron.

**A RESOLUTION SPECIFYING THAT A CONNECTOR ROAD IS TO BE INCORPORATED  
INTO THE DESIGN OF THE HILLSBOROUGH ROAD PARK  
Resolution No. 93/2000-2001**

WHEREAS, the Carrboro Board of Aldermen has adopted a Connector Roads Policy, and,

WHEREAS, the Hillsborough Road park property purchased by the Town in 1999, has been designated since 1986 as the location of the Tripp Farm Road connector.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Carrboro Board of Aldermen that the Aldermen approves the inclusion of facilities to accommodate cars, pedestrians, and bicycles that satisfy the town's connectivity policy among the features to be planned for the Hillsborough Road park.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Carrboro Board of Aldermen that the Aldermen hereby establish a subcommittee of the following Board members (Allen Spalt, Mike Nelson, and Alex Zaffron) and two at-large citizens to meet with Sungate Design Group and recommend options for design and alignment of the proposed facilities for consideration by the Board of Aldermen.

The foregoing resolution having been submitted to a vote, received the following vote and was duly adopted this 23rd day of January, 2001:

Ayes: Joal Hall Broun, Mark Dorosin, Diana McDuffee, Michael Nelson, Allen Spalt, Alex Zaffron

Noes: Jacquelyn Gist

Absent or Excused: None