

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Town Council

FROM: Pam Hemminger, Chair ^{PH (4/12)}
Southern Community Park Conceptual Plan Committee

SUBJECT: Revisions to the Committee's *Report of the Southern Community Park Conceptual Plan Committee*

DATE: March 12, 2002

Voting Yes: Pam Hemminger (Chair), Audrey Booth, Elizabeth Branch, Coleman Day, Jim Earnhardt, Scott Madry, and Douglas Ostanek

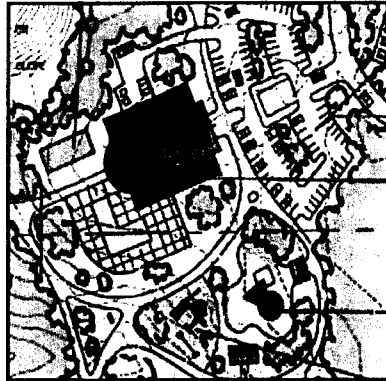
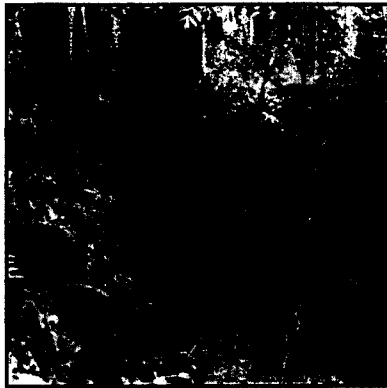
The Committee met on March 12, 2002 to review the comments and recommendations of other Town Boards and Commissions after their review of our proposed Southern Community Park Conceptual Plan.

The Committee was highly appreciative of the depth and scope of the comments we received. We agreed with most of the recommendations made by other boards and voted unanimously (7-0) to recommend that the Council adopt our Report with the following revisions:

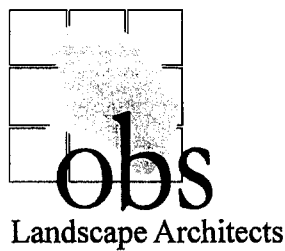
- The paved Fan Branch greenway trail should be extended to the southern tip of the park. The Committee specifically recommends that the trail extension should be near the eastern property line and parallel to Highway 15-501. The Committee recommends that the rest of the trails south of Dogwood Acres Drive remain unpaved.
- The plan should show better pedestrian connections to Scroggs School and the park and ride lot.
- A paved trail for improved pedestrian connection should be added along the north side of Dogwood Acres Drive, from the western property line to the point where the Fan Branch greenway trail crosses Dogwood Acres Drive.
- The site of the future community center should be designated as a temporary picnic area.
- The Town should maintain at least a 50 foot buffer along 15-501. The buffer could be enhanced with plantings where needed.
- The plan should address the importance of bus access and stops. Exact locations of bus stops should be addressed in the Special Use Permit phase of the project.
- The need for benches should be noted.

Southern Community Park

January 14, 2002



**Report of the
Southern Community Park
Conceptual Plan Committee**

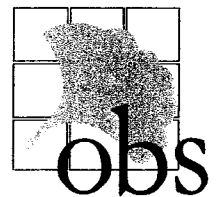


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Southern Community Park

Report of the
Southern Community Park
Conceptual Plan Committee

January 14, 2002



landscape architects

Chapel Hill Town
Council
Members

Kevin Foy	Mayor
Pat Evans	Mayor pro tem
Flicka Bateman	Council Member
Ed Harrison	Council Member
Mark Kleinschmidt	Council Member
Bill Strom	Council Member
Dorothy Verkerk	Council Member
Jim Ward	Council Member
Edith M. Wiggins	Council Member

Southern Community Park
Conceptual Plan Committee
Members

Pam Hemminger (Chair)	Parks & Recreation Department
Runyon Woods (Vice-Chair)	Neighborhood Representative
Audrey Booth	Greenways Commissioner
Elizabeth Branch	Neighborhood Representative
Margaret Brown	Orange County Commissioner
Coleman Day	Neighborhood Representative
Jim Earnhardt	Neighborhood Representative
Jacquelyn Gist	Carboro Aldermen
Beth Huskamp	Parks & Recreation Department
Scott Madry	At Large
Douglas Ostanek	At Large
Steve Scroggs	Chapel Hill / Carboro City Schools
Michael Ullman	At Large

Staff

Cal Horton	Town Manager
Sonna Loewenthal	Assistant Manager
Florentine Miller	Assistant Manager
Kathryn Spatz	Director of Parks & Recreation Dept.
Bill Webster	Recreation Planner

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Project Summary

The Southern Community Park Conceptual Plan Committee has developed a proposed conceptual plan for the 70 - acre property that we believe would meet many of the community's parks and recreation related needs while preserving significant portions of the site as open space.

The Committee met from February until September 2001 and considered a wide range of information including:

- Comments provided by citizens at meetings
- Comments provided through the Committee's web site
- Comments received at two public forums
- Information and comments generated by committee members
- Site analysis
- Information and opinions provided by the consultant
- Staff generated information.

The committee recognizes that the needs of the community are varied and sometimes in conflict with one another. Citizens spoke with passion concerning the need to both preserve open space and develop the property for active recreation. The committee also considered the need to protect established neighborhoods, protect sensitive natural areas, the lack of certain types of active recreational facilities, and the lack of large properties for future park development.

The proposed conceptual plan is intended to blend these many needs into a coherent plan that takes advantage of the property's topography, vegetation, and location. The plan proposes the following general solutions to

some of the major concerns raised in the planning process:

Preservation of Open Space

About 60-70% of this site would be left as open space. Most of the site south of Dogwood Acres Drive would remain undisturbed. Woodland trails would provide access to these natural areas. Large buffers would protect neighbors, the Highway 15-501 entranceway, and the park drainage ways. A new meadow area would be created out of an area that is now a young pine grove.

Active Recreation

Most of the active recreation would be clustered near the northeast corner of the site just south of the Southern Village Park and Ride lot. Specific facilities recommended for inclusion in a first phase of the park include:

- Athletic / soccer fields (2)
- Youth ballfield
- Dog park
- Extension of the Fan Branch Trail
- Large play area
- Water play area (spray park)
- Basketball courts (2)
- Roller hockey court
- Small court area (horseshoes, bocce)
- Performance area
- Disc golf course
- Picnic shelters (one large, several small)
- Recycling center (to be developed by Orange County)
- Bio-retention ponds
- Parking
- Restrooms (3)
- Maintenance shed

The plan also includes possible features for a second phase and several facilities that could be built, if needed, in the future. These include:

- Community center building
- Outdoor leisure pool
- Youth athletic / soccer field
- Expanded parking (all lots can be expanded)

Access

Most of the park’s access would be provided via an extension of the main drive through the existing park and ride lot and Highway 15-501. This would leave only incidental access at Dogwood Acres Drive and Merritt Road.

Safety

Vehicular access is primarily provided through a traffic light controlled intersection. Recommendations are included that would address safety related issues on Dogwood Acres Drive including:

- Speed of vehicles in the park
- Safety of trail users crossing the road
- Pedestrians accessing the park from the Dogwood Acres neighborhood

We believe that the park as proposed would provide meaningful recreation opportunities for a wide variety of interests for generations.

Introduction

Guiding Principles

The conceptual plan for the Southern Community Park is based on a number of guiding principles identified by the Southern Community Park Conceptual Plan Committee that are applicable to the entire park project. The following is a brief description of these principles.

Accessibility

The park should be designed to accommodate disabled users to the highest degree possible. Each major facility should be accessible as defined by current and pending American Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.

Active, Passive, and Preservation

Design of the park should achieve a balance between active and passive recreation opportunities and should designate a large portion of the site to be preserved.

Preserved natural areas can provide for wildlife corridors and should be linked together rather than isolated.

Buffers

Adequate buffers should be provided to protect adjacent residences, the entranceway along Highway 15-501, natural areas, and waterways.

Consolidation of Facilities

Active recreation facilities in particular should be located near each other. This will improve accessibility, maintenance, and decrease cost and disturbance to the park site.

Dogwood Acres Drive

Emphasis should be placed on slowing cars on Dogwood Acres Drive and providing a safe passage for pedestrians. Closing Dogwood Acres Drive is not believed feasible and moving the road is an expensive proposition with questionable benefits.

Lights

In general, athletic facilities, paved paths and parking areas should be lighted. Lighted fields should be located as far away from homes as possible. A policy should be established to place a limit on the use of lights -- including closing hours for fields.

Maintenance-Oriented Design

Park design should recognize the town's limited maintenance capabilities. Natural areas are favored over formal areas. Equipment should be rugged and relatively maintenance free. All turf areas should be properly installed and irrigated. Consolidation of park activities should also ease maintenance efforts.

Noise

Noisy activities should be located closer to Highway 15-501. Passive or quiet activities should be located away from Highway 15-501.

Parking

Parking should be provided in a convenient manner. Parking will have to be provided in both the southern and northern areas of the park. Parking areas should be kept as small as possible. The park and ride lot should be used by the park's visitors during off-peak times.

Pathways

Trails and paths should serve multiple roles. They should serve park users trying to reach facilities in a hurry as well as users seeking a more relaxed experience. Some trails will also be used by maintenance vehicles.

Security / Vandalism

If possible, all structures should be visible from the road. Any areas that remain open after dark should be well lighted including parking areas and paths.



Dogwood Acres Drive

Community Involvement

The process of preparing a plan for Southern Community Park has been rooted in community involvement and utilizes the interests and expertise of a group of volunteers as a steering committee.

The Southern Community Park Conceptual Plan Committee (SCPCPC) was formed to help guide the plan’s character and content. The Conceptual Plan Committee includes nearby residents, local elected officials, members of the Parks and Recreation Commission, a member of the Greenway Commission, and at-large representatives of the greater Chapel Hill community.

The SCPCPC consists of 13 members meeting monthly to discuss various aspects of the park including program development, layout of facilities, and the relationships between the park and surrounding land uses. As of this report the SCPCPC has met 8 times.

On two occasions the SCPCPC has conducted public forums to allow the community to offer input on the park and it’s development. These two forums were held on September 6th and October 9th at Mary Scroggs Elementary School in Southern Village. The committee also created a web site to receive comments and make information available. The website can be viewed at www.informatics.org/southernpark/info.html

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The two forums were well attended. Each lasted over 2 hours. The first forum was attended by approximately 55 people while the second was slightly higher at around 60.

At the first forum a preliminary plan was presented for comment. Many of the comments revolved around the preservation of the existing woods. Some suggested that the entire park be a natural preserve.

While others spoke in support of the athletic facilities, children's play area, and various other facilities, it was clear that the majority of the speakers favored a plan that would address both preservation and active uses.

At the second forum a majority of the speakers supported athletic fields (primarily soccer fields). In addition, many spoke in favor of other facilities such as a playground, disc golf, roller hockey, water play area, dog park, and basketball courts.

Both proponents of the preservation and active recreation seemed to be pleased with the revised plan. A petition signed by 527 people was received endorsing construction of 3 athletic / soccer fields.



Southern Village

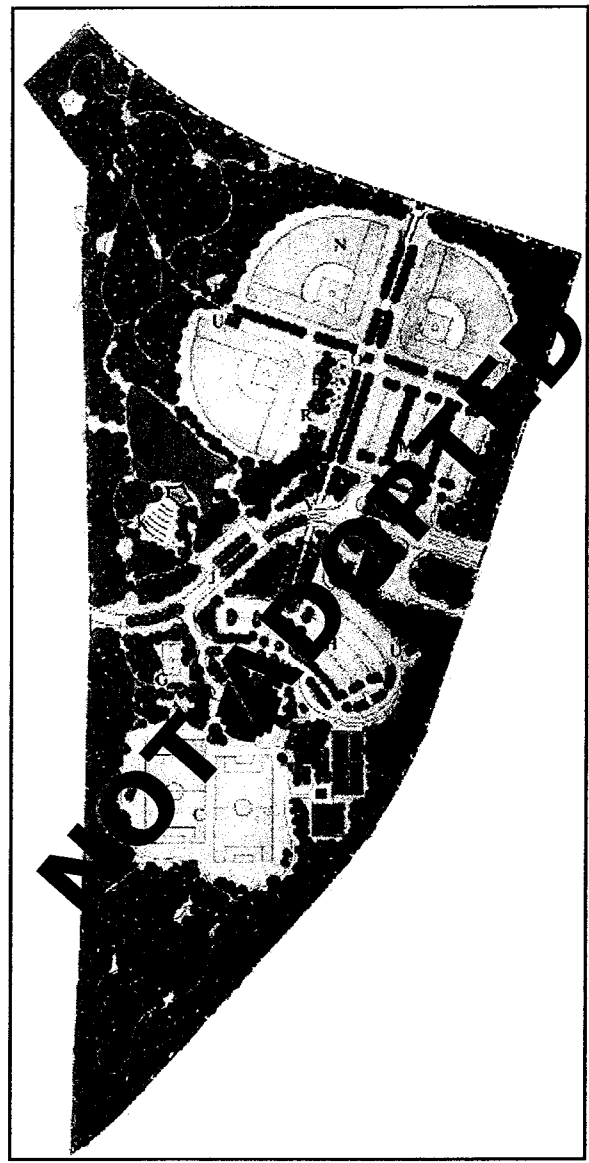
History

The Southern Community Park property was purchased over a decade ago by the Town of Chapel Hill for the purpose of providing a community park in the southern part of the town. At that time the 1989 Community Facilities Report set as a goal the provision of four community parks for the town. A Master Plan and Special Use Permit Application were prepared for the Southern Community Park for consideration by the Council in 1990, but it was not adopted. At that time the town recognized that there was more growth in the northern portion of town. Homestead Park was planned and that plan was implemented.

Concurrently, a severe recession also impacted the feasibility of the park. The 1990 plan required an expensive realignment of Dogwood Acres Drive and accommodated a Park and Ride lot as well as a fire station. Both of these facilities have since been constructed on other properties.

Population growth in the area has created more need for the park. The widening of Highway 15-501 has eliminated the need to realign Dogwood Acres Drive and improved opportunities for access to the park.

In 1997 a 1.5 mile natural surface hiking trail was established on the property. The trail is well used by those in adjacent neighborhoods.



1990 Master Plan for Southern Community Park

Inventory & Analysis

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Project Location / Boundary

The park site is south of Southern Village and the Scroggs School, west of Highway 15-501 and east of the Dogwood Acres Subdivision. The site is triangular in shape and extends south to Merritt Drive.

The park site boundary encompasses approximately 70 acres that is divided by Dogwood Acres Drive. Approximately 20 acres of the site is located south of Dogwood Acres Drive. The majority of the site, 50 acres, lies to the north of Dogwood Acres Drive.

Surrounding Land Uses

The park site is bordered to the east by Highway 15-501. Currently there is a road widening project underway that will improve Highway 15-501 to a median divided highway section. Breaks in the median relative to the park site will occur at the signalized intersection with Main Street of Southern Village to the north of the site, at Dogwood



Asterisk (*) denotes location of park

Acres Drive, and at Dixie Trail south of the park site.

To the west of the park site lies Dogwood Acres Subdivision. This residential area is characterized by large lots. Ten of these lots actually share a property line with the park site.

At its southern tip, the park site borders residential and undeveloped property generally to the west and Highway 15-501 to the east. Merritt Drive connects with Highway 15-501 at the southern tip of the park site.

North of the park site are two major land uses. Adjacent to the northeast corner of the site is the Town's park and ride facility. This facility accommodates approximately 400 vehicles.

The other land use is the Mary Scroggs Elementary School. Immediately adjacent to the park site is an athletic field that was constructed by the Chapel Hill / Carboro



Highway 15-501

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School System on land that was originally part of the park site. This field is fully lighted and irrigated. The field is operated under a joint agreement between the town and the school system. The Town schedules the field after 5:00 PM and on weekends, during school days and during summer months. The schools use the field for school and after-school programs.

The surrounding land uses should influence park development in several ways. Specifically:

- Dogwood Acres Subdivision should be protected from noise and lights.
- Pedestrians crossing and walking along Dogwood Acres Drive should be protected.
- More options should be explored for pedestrian and bicycle access to the park.
- A positive relationship should be developed between the Park and Ride Lot and the park.

These goals and concerns are addressed further in this report.

Natural Characteristics

The natural characteristics of the park site influence the development of the property as a park.

Vegetation

There are portions of the park that are covered by mature hardwood forest, while other portions of the site are covered by relatively young pine growth. It is the intent of the plan to retain as much of the hardwood forest as possible.



Existing Soccer field

Conveniently, those areas covered by the hardwoods are also those areas, which exhibit the most dramatic changes in elevation. These areas also contain the most significant drainage patterns and include the low areas of the site. No rare or endangered plants are known to be present on the park property

Wildlife

No rare or endangered animals are known to be present on the park property. Animals that are present are typical of the Piedmont area of North Carolina.

Slopes

Most of the park site exhibits slopes of less than 10%. Slopes in excess of 10% are found in the ravine in the southern portion of the site and in the northwest corner. The entire property falls from Highway 15-501 to the west and north. Fan Branch Creek

carries the drainage from the site to the north.

Soils

Soils found within the park site belong to the Wedowee-Louisburg Association. Most significant in terms of the soils is the depth to bedrock, their capability to support development, and erosion hazard.

There are two soil types found on the site. They are Appling Sandy Loam and Louisburg Sandy Loam. The Appling Sandy Loam soils are found along the eastern boundary and occur on the higher points of the site. These soils are more suited to development in that their depth to bedrock is greater, and their susceptibility to erosion is less than the Louisburg soils.

Wetlands

Investigations were done to identify jurisdictional wetlands on the property. Two small

isolated pockets of wetlands were found along with one larger area. The larger area exists just adjacent to the western property line in the center of the major drainage swale north of Dogwood Acres Drive. Wetlands CC, CB, and CD are part of a wetland area that covers .27 acres. One of the smaller pockets that lies in the northwestern corner of the property encompasses a vernal pool between the existing greenway trail and Fan Branch Creek. This pocket, Wetland CE, covers .01 acres.

The second small isolated wetland is located south of Dogwood Acres Drive is a headwater wetland of an unnamed tributary that feeds Fan Branch Creek. Wetland CA covers .01 acres.

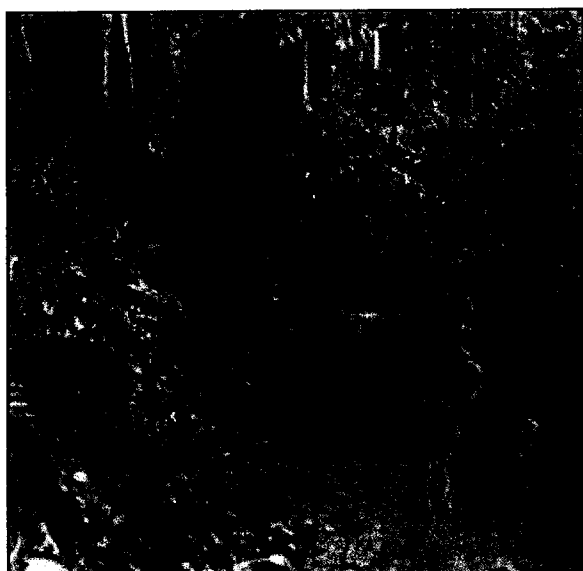
The presence of these wetlands should not impact park development. *Please reference the wetlands survey map.*

Visual Quality

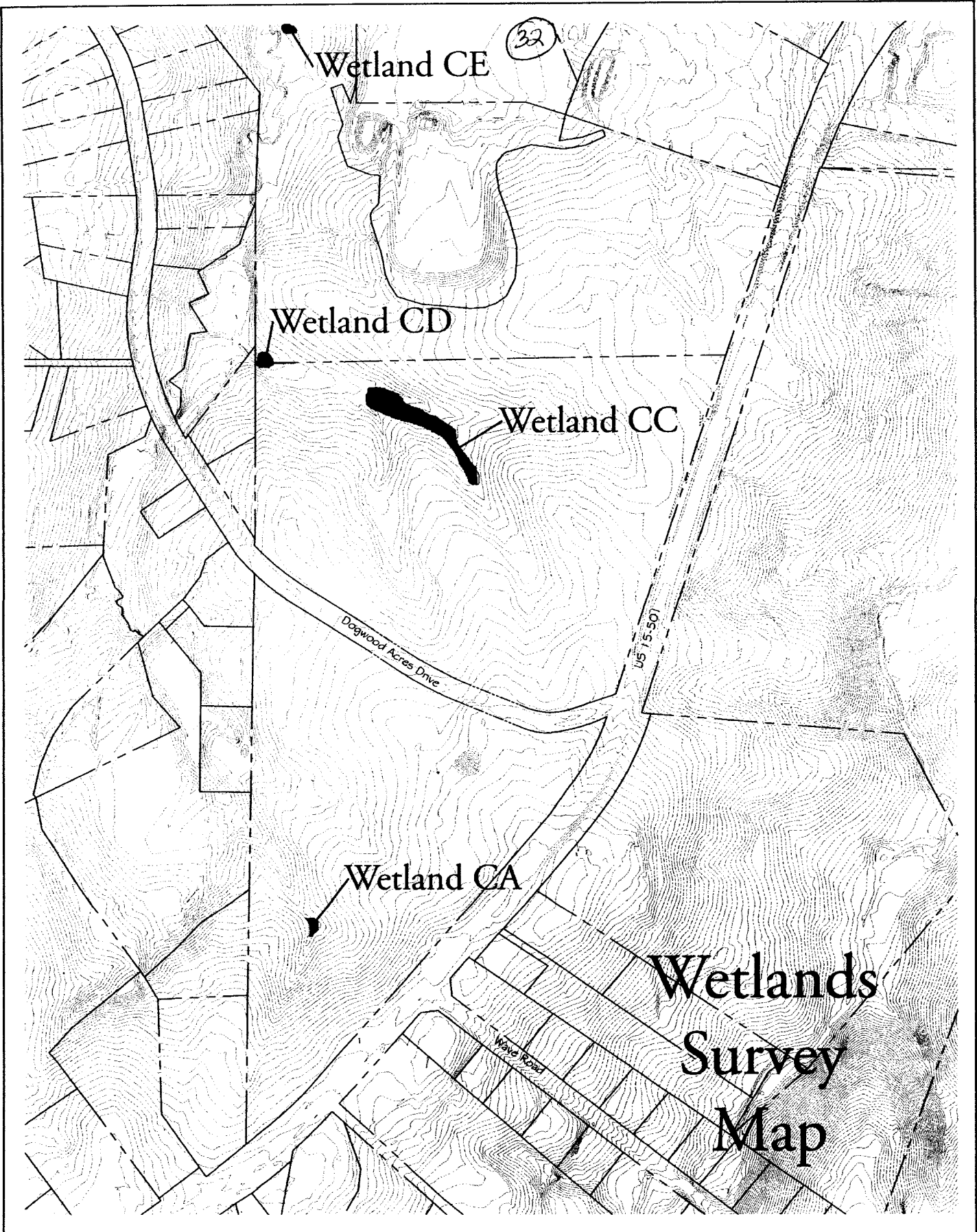
The visual interest or quality of the park site is linked directly to the physical attributes described above. Areas that are covered by hardwood forest, exhibit changes in elevation, and include streams and tributaries are the most visually interesting. Any development in these areas should address visual quality.

Perennial Streams

Fan Branch Creek is a perennial stream that crosses the northwest corner of the park property. Also within the park property there are 2 seasonal tributaries that flow into Fan Branch Creek.



Fan Branch Creek



Southern Community Park

Town of Chapel Hill
Concept Diagram

June 28, 2001
Scale: 1"=100'



Planning Process

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Challenges

Three major challenges to be addressed by the park plan include transportation issues, pedestrian safety, and cost effectiveness.

Transportation

Transportation issues revolve primarily around access to and from the park site. Increasing traffic on Dogwood Acres Drive is viewed negatively. Access to Highway 15-501 is limited. The proximity of the Park and Ride lot to the park is viewed positively. It is also recognized that the recycling center will generate a lot of traffic. The master plan should reflect a relationship between the park and ride lot north of the park site, the recycling center, and Highway 15-501.

The park and ride lot could serve as overflow parking for the park on weekends and after hours during the week and that the park parking area could serve as overflow parking for the park and ride lot during the week.

A drive at Highway 15-501 could serve as a right-in right-out only connection. Park users traveling south on Highway 15-501 would turn in to this drive and users leaving the park and traveling south would exit here.

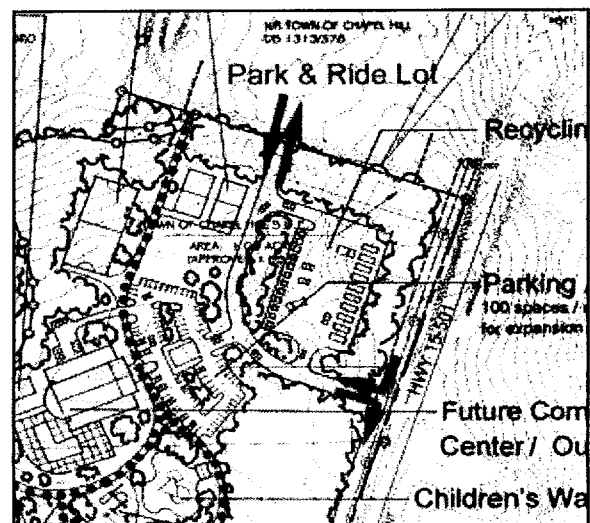
Park users coming to the park from the south or leaving and traveling north could use the main street intersection for Southern Village and access the park through the park and ride lot. Improvements would need to be made to the park and ride lot to emphasize this movement and improve pedestrian safety.

Pedestrian Safety

Pedestrian safety is a concern in the park and ride lot, between the park and the park and ride lot, and along Dogwood Acres Drive. Crossing this road to access the southern half of the park will require traffic calming measures and a lower speed limit to insure safe passage. Two pedestrian crossings are envisioned. The plan should define specifically and place the emphasis on the pedestrians.

Cost Effectiveness

Recognizing physical limitations in terms of topography, drainage patterns and soil characteristics and their impact on potential construction costs is important to park development. Minimizing the length of access roads and entrances will also help control construction costs. The plan should recognize and reflect the physical constraints of the site as they impact construction costs.



Park Access Diagram

Program Identification

The program for the park was defined by citizen input, comments received at public forums, SCPCPC input, and staff suggestions.

Council Mandates

Certain program elements for the Southern Community Park have been mandated by the Chapel Hill Town Council. These mandated program elements include the following:

- Dog Park / minimum size 1 acre
- Recycling Center
- Soccer Fields / 2 minimum

Program Development

Developing the park program has been a primary focus of the committee. The committee looked at the Town’s needs as defined by the draft master plan.

At one meeting the committee members were led through an exercise in which each member had an opportunity to rank various program elements as to their importance.

Immediately prior to addressing program issues an exercise aimed at overall park design was conducted. The first step of the exercise was for each member to select their top six design considerations from a list of 13 considerations formulated at a previous meeting. The results of that

exercise are as follows:

<u>Program Element</u>	<u>Votes</u>
Passive recreation / Preservation	8
Pathways	7
Noise and lighting	6
Buffers and security	5
Parking	3
Dogwood Acres Drive	3
Maintenance	2
Grouping amenities	2
Shared use	2
Accessibility	1

Next the members of the committee were asked to identify any of the potential uses or program items that seemed unnecessary or that they questioned. Out of the following list only the community center was questioned and discussion revolved around the number of athletic / soccer fields needed.

- Dog Park
- Recycling center
- 2 athletic / soccer fields
- Extension of Greenway to Dogwood Acres Drive
- Community center
- 3 winterized restroom facilities
- Detention basin
- Satellite Parking
- Playground
- Continued connection of Dogwood Acres drive to Highway 15-501

The final step in the exercise was for members to rank their top five and second five potential park elements from a list of 23 elements. A top five indication was given a value of 2 and a second five indication was given a value of 1.

The results were as follows:

Disc golf	17
Performance Area	15
Large picnic shelter	14
Open areas	13
Baseball / softball	11
Outdoor Pool	10
Basketball	09
Volleyball	08
Wildlife corridors	08
Playground area	08
Art along trails	07
Satellite picnic areas	06
Roller hockey courts	05
Botanical gardens	04
Gazebo	04
Community garden	03
Tennis courts	02
Tai Chi area	02
Quarry gardens	01

Items on the list which received no votes included putting area, market, overlooks, and bocce ball. The mandated elements were not included in this list.

Staff recommendations for the park program reflect recent trends in recreation and shortcomings identified by the draft Chapel Hill Parks and Recreation Master Plan . These recommendations indicated a need for the following:

- Athletic / soccer fields
- Youth baseball field
- Roller hockey
- Winterized restroom facility
- Large picnic facility
- Maintenance building

They also asked the committee to consider the future need for a community center and an outdoor pool for the southern part of town.

Committee recommendations also reinforced the need for athletic / soccer fields, a future community center, and a desire to address the concerns for preservation and a balanced park project consisting of both passive and active recreation facilities.

Community Input

Community input received through two public forums, attendance at meetings, correspondence, and e-mail communication influenced the plan and resulted in the modification of the plan.

These modifications included:

- Further open space preservation
- Reduction of the size of the meadow area
- Definition of a hierarchy of trails
- Inclusion of children’s water-play area
- Relocation of the performance area
- Reduction in the size of the parking areas
- Protection of the vernal pond
- Need for athletic fields
- Decision to field locate the disc golf course
- Large play area including boulders for climbing

Program Development

Development Opportunities

The SCPCPC identified areas where development is most appropriate. These are the areas which exhibit some or all of the following attributes:

- Young pine forest
- Minimal changes in elevation
- No major drainage patterns
- Applying soil types or Louisburg soil types where slopes are less than 15%

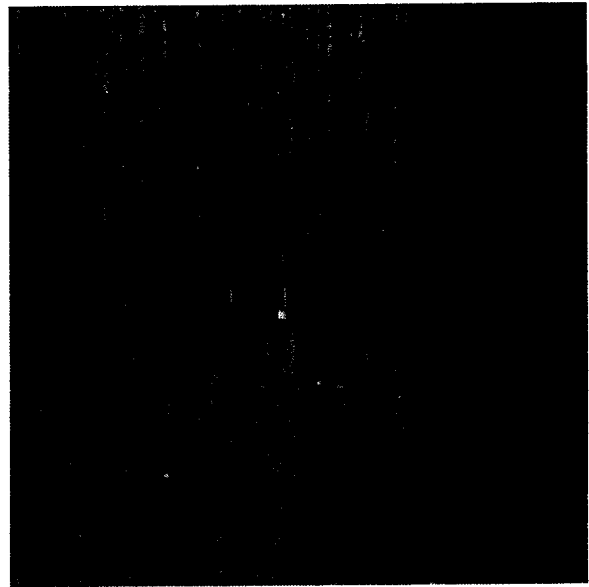
By combining the information gathered in the analysis process a development diagram for the park site has been prepared.

Development zones occur on the higher elevations of the site and along Highway 15-501. *Please reference development opportunities diagram.*

Preservation Opportunities

The analysis process also identified areas that should be preserved. These areas include:

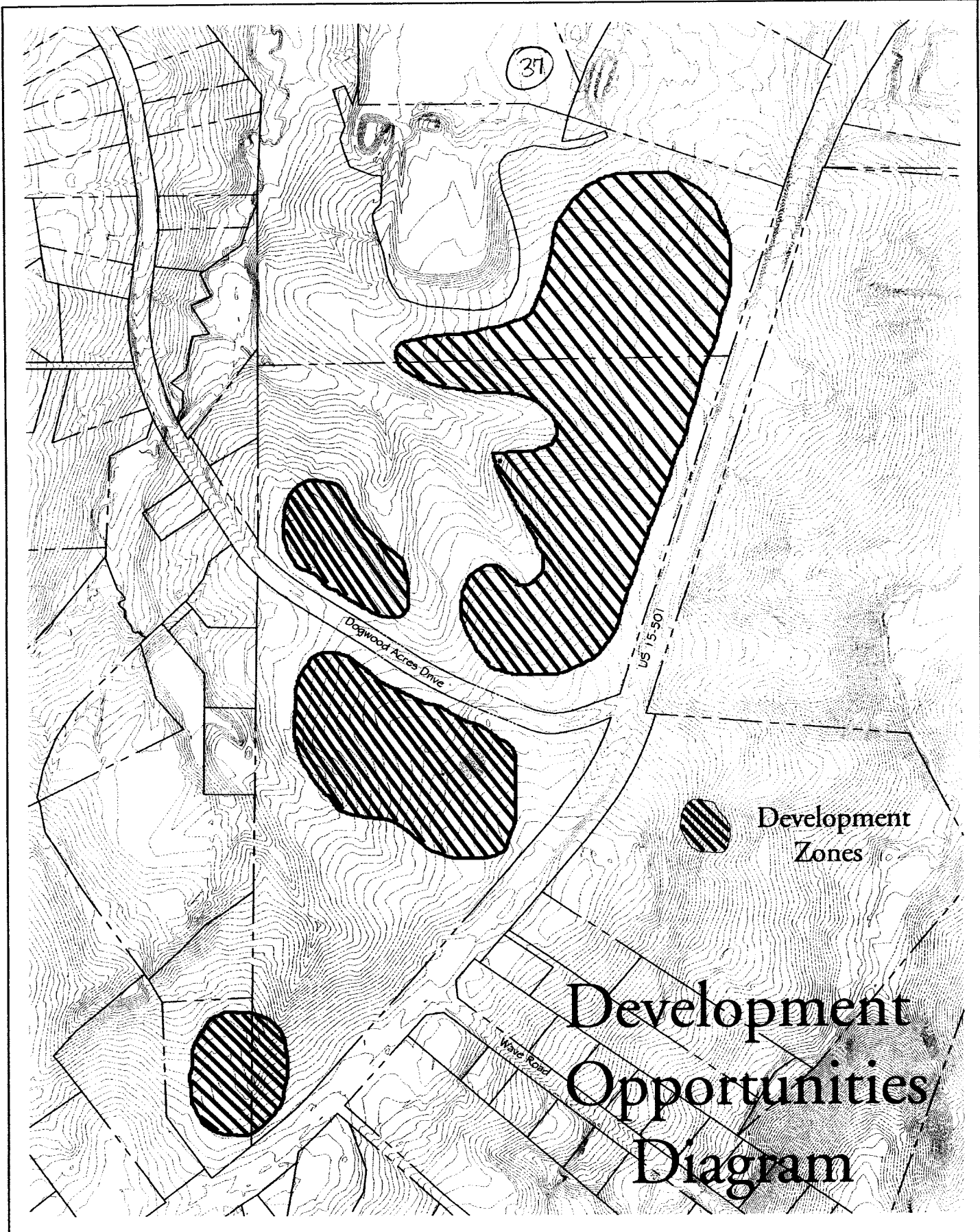
- Buffers along Highway 15-501
- Buffers adjacent to the northern property line between the park site and the park and ride lot
- Buffer along the western property line
- Areas along Fan Branch and other drainage ways
- The majority of the site south of Dogwood Acres Drive.
- Areas where topography is steep and tree cover is predominantly hardwoods.



Existing pine forest on site



Park and Ride Lot



Southern Community Park
 Town of Chapel Hill
 Concept Diagram

June 28, 2001
 Scale: 1"=100'



Master Plan



Description

The master plan for Southern Community Park embraces the fundamental idea that park development should be done with minimal impact on the natural environment. The percentage of the park site being developed is approximately 30%, leaving 70% undisturbed or reserved for passive recreation opportunities. In order to accomplish that goal, the placement of program elements and the relationships between them are critical.

The organization of the active program elements along the north-east edge of the property helps preserve the most valuable portions of the site. Other advantages to this arrangement include the following:

- The eastern edge is the least valuable in terms of existing vegetation and visual interest.
- The north-east portion of the site is more conducive to development. Because of slight changes in elevation, depth to bedrock and proximity to Highway 15-501 and the park and ride lot construction costs can be kept down.
- The adjacent Dogwood Acres Subdivision will be protected to the greatest extent possible from light and noise.

This plan provides an approach to development that ensures that active and passive recreation facilities and opportunities can truly reach a reasonable balance.

Active recreation facilities are located predominantly north of Dogwood Acres Drive, while the area south of Dogwood Acres Drive is mostly passive and natural.

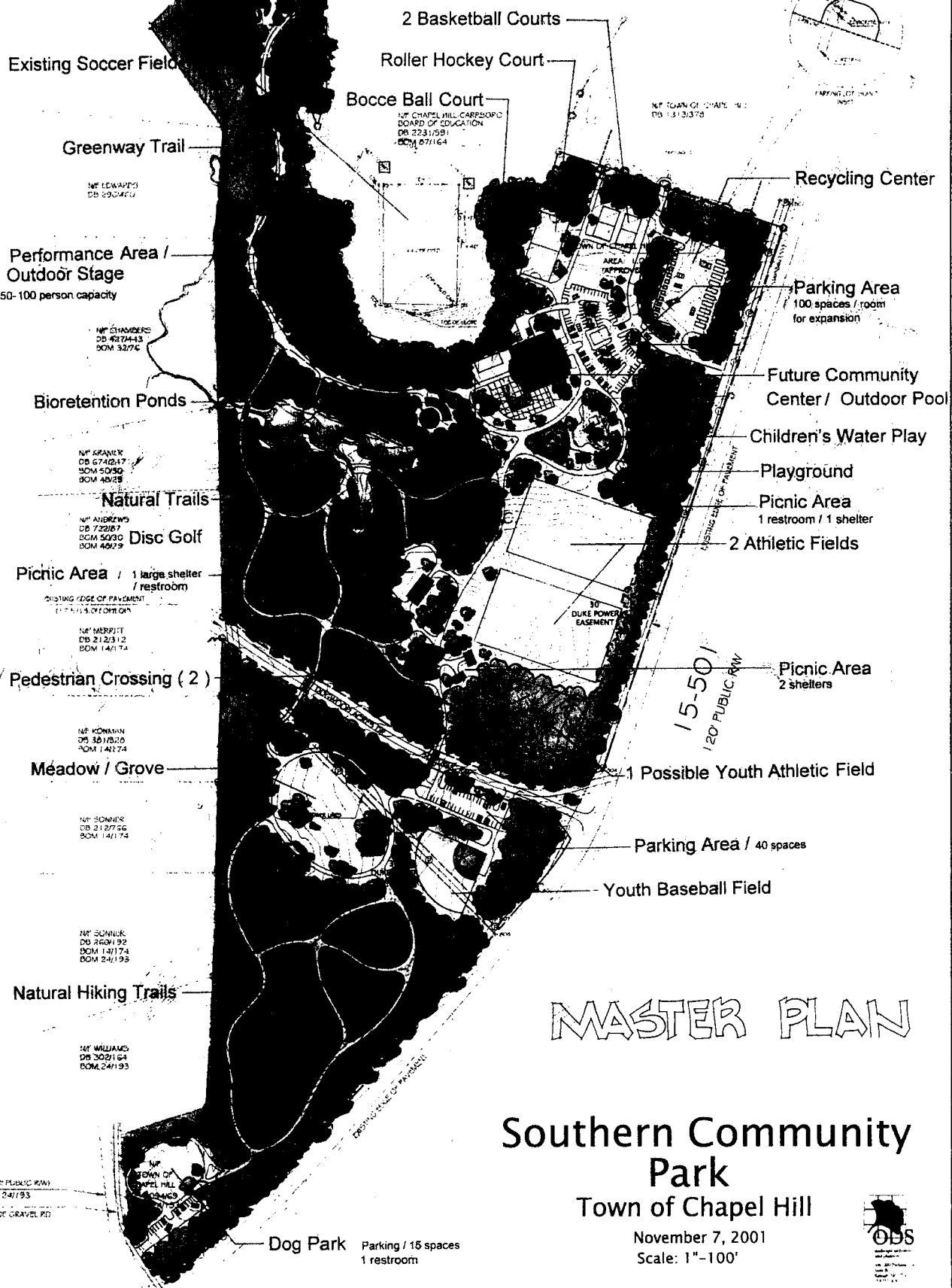
Master Plan Highlights

- Preservation of 70% of the property in a natural, undisturbed condition
- Balance of active and passive recreation opportunities
- Variety of recreational opportunities
- Enhanced use of Park & Ride lot
- Safe vehicular access
- Pedestrian oriented features
- Construction cost control
- Continuation of existing green way
- Emphasis on minimizing maintenance
- Reservation of areas for future facilities
- Consolidation of park activities
- Activities not currently available in other parks:
 - ♦ water-play
 - ♦ roller hockey
 - ♦ disc golf

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NP MERRITT PERFO
DB 1302113
DOM 14/1/74

NP CHAPEL HILL DAY CARE CENTER
DOM 7/1/02



Existing Soccer Field

2 Basketball Courts

Roller Hockey Court

Bocce Ball Court

NP CHAPEL HILL CARESOPD
BOARD OF EDUCATION
DB 2231/591
DOM 8/7/164

NP TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL
DB 1313/378

Greenway Trail

NP EDWARDS
DB 2907/67

Recycling Center

Performance Area /
Outdoor Stage
50-100 person capacity

NP CHAMBERS
DB 4827/413
DOM 32/74

Parking Area
100 spaces / room
for expansion

Bioretention Ponds

Future Community
Center / Outdoor Pool

NP GRANIK
DB 6742/47
DOM 50/30
DOM 48/28

Children's Water Play

Natural Trails

NP ANDREWS
DB 722/87
DOM 50/30
DOM 48/28

Disc Golf

Playground

Picnic Area / 1 large shelter
/ restroom

EXISTING EDGE OF PAVEMENT
11' 11" S. OF CENTER

NP MERRITT
DB 2123/12
DOM 14/1/74

Picnic Area
1 restroom / 1 shelter

2 Athletic Fields

Pedestrian Crossing (2)

NP KOWAN
DB 381/25/8
DOM 14/1/74

Meadow / Grove

Picnic Area
2 shelters

15-50'
120' PUBLIC RW

1 Possible Youth Athletic Field

NP SONNER
DB 2127/56
DOM 14/1/74

Parking Area / 40 spaces

Youth Baseball Field

NP SONNER
DB 2604/92
DOM 14/1/74
DOM 24/1/93

Natural Hiking Trails

NP WILLIAMS
DB 3027/164
DOM 24/1/93

MASTER PLAN

Southern Community Park

Town of Chapel Hill

November 7, 2001

Scale: 1"=100'

MERRITT DR. (60' PUBLIC RW)
SEE PG 24/1/93

APPROX. 10' WIDE GRAVEL PD

Dog Park Parking / 15 spaces
1 restroom



Program Elements

The following describes each of the program elements or park features. These elements are considered part of the recommended Phase 1 of construction. The three elements mandated by the town Council are described first.

Athletic Fields

The plan includes 2 adult size athletic / soccer fields, a space reserved for a youth or practice soccer field and a youth baseball field.

The two adult sized athletic / soccer fields are located together and oriented the same way. This would potentially allow for the reorientation of the fields to reduce wear and maintenance requirements. Both fields would be lit and irrigated. They are located along Highway 15-501 to take advantage of the high ground and slight topographic change as well as reducing the effect of the lighting and noise on the adjacent neighborhood.

An area, directly south of the two adult soccer fields, has also been reserved for a possible future youth or practice soccer field. This field could be developed in a future phase if needed.

A youth baseball field is located on the south side of Dogwood Acres Drive and close to the corner with Highway 15-501. The need for this element was determined by staff and the draft Chapel Hill Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The field is 200 feet deep and will not have a permanent home run fence or be lighted. This location was chosen to utilize a relatively flat area, which is covered by young pine growth.

Dog Park

The dog park component of the park is located at the extreme southern corner of the property. As shown, the dog park is a fenced area containing about 2 acres. This area is accessed from Merritt Road. A gravel parking area for 15 cars would be constructed. Expansion of this lot is also feasible if the use warrants expansion. Merritt Road improvements are likely to be necessary. Water service is available.

Recycling Center

The recycling center is located in the north-east corner of the site on the eastern side of the access drive which connects the park and ride lot to Highway 15-501. This location separates this facility from the park proper while remaining very convenient for citizens.

Trails

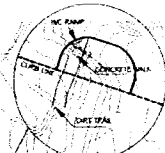
The trails throughout the park follow a definite hierarchy.

Paved Trails: The primary paved trail would be the extension of the Fan Branch Greenway trail to Dogwood Acres Drive. This trail and associated walks would also serve as the major ADA access route and maintenance access to major park facilities. Paved trails are also necessary to link the parking areas to facilities south of Dogwood Acres Drive, including the baseball field and meadow.

Natural Trails: Natural surface trails would be located throughout the remainder of the park, especially along the western property line and in the area south of Dogwood Acres Drive. *Please reference the trails diagram on the next page.*

NF MERRITT HEIRS
DB 83092.3
BOM 45/120

NF CHAPEL HILL DAY CARE CENTER
BOM 75/102



Existing Soccer Field

2 Basketball Courts

Roller Hockey Court

Bocce ball Court

Park & Ride Lot

Recycling Center

Greenway Trail

Performance Area /
Outdoor Stage
50-100 person capacity

Parking Area
100 spaces / room
for expansion

NF EDWARDS
DB 296460

FOOT

FOOT

FOOT

Future Community
Center / Outdoor Pool

Children's Water Play

Playground

Picnic Area A

2 Athletic Fields

Picnic Area B

Bioretention Ponds

NF KRAMER
DB 674047
BOM 50/30
BOM 40/28

Natural Trails

Disc Golf

NF ANDREWS
DB 72287
BOM 50/30
BOM 40/28

Picnic Area / 1 large shelter

AREA: 47.93 AC

Pedestrian Crossing (2)

EXISTING EDGE OF PAVEMENT
(17,511.0' TOPCON)

NF MERRITT
DB 2129312
BOM 14/174

Meadow / Grove

NF ROMAN
DB 3807326
BOM 14/174

1 Possible Youth Athletic Field

Parking Area / 40 spaces

Youth Baseball Field

Natural Hiking Trails

NF SONNER
DB 212766
BOM 14/174

AREA: 19.79 AC

NF WILLIAMS
DB 3029164
BOM 24/193

MERRITT DR. (60' PUBLIC ROW)
SEC PG 24/193

APPROX. 12' WIDE GRAVEL RD.

Dog Park Parking / 15 spaces

Trails Legend

- Greenway Trail
- Other Paved Trails
- Natural Surface Trails

Southern Community Park

Town of Chapel Hill

November 7, 2001
Scale: 1"=100'



Children's Play

The children's play area is composed of two separate and distinct but adjacent facilities. These two facilities are a large playground and a water play area. The large playground would be designed to challenge children of all ages.

Children's play areas would be located near planned parking areas for convenience and safety.

The play area should contain a variety of imaginative and challenging play opportunities. One idea mentioned at the second public forum by several citizens was a rock climbing area for older children and adults.

The water play area (spray park) would feature various water apparatus and sprays that could be individually controlled. The design of this facility would involve a separate design and citizen input process.

Meadow

A meadow, of approximately 3 acres, would be created just south of Dogwood Acres Drive by removing dense young pines. This area could be used for picnicking, kite flying, walking and other passive recreation. In conjunction with the development of this meadow, the existing overhead power line would be relocated underground. Other open space exists in the form of woods preserved throughout the park site.

Park and Ride Lot

Improvements to the Park and Ride lot would be focused on pedestrian safety.



Greenway

Improvements could include additional sidewalks, crosswalks, and / or a modest redefinition of the circulation patterns by limiting aisle connections.

Performance Space

The performance space accommodates 50-100 spectators. The proposed location is in an area where the natural slope is conducive to an angled seating area and could also shield the stage from the noise associated with the athletic fields and Highway 15-501. The Town should develop a policy regarding lighting and sound for this area.

Bio-retention Ponds

In the center of the property north of Dogwood Acres Drive is the major drainage swale, which carries storm water to Fan Branch Creek. In this area the master plan suggests a series of three retention ponds

that will control storm water before it leaves the site and retain it in such a manner that the ponds become an asset to the park both visually and as an opportunity for environmental education. The actual number and sizes of the ponds will be determined by detailed design.

Hard Surface Courts

The roller hockey court and basketball courts are located between the proposed community center site and the park and ride lot to insure easy access and security. It is anticipated that the basketball courts would not be lit. The roller hockey court would have lights, but they would be controlled on an as needed basis by lease, rent or agreement.

Disc Golf

The incorporation of a disc golf course within the park design is possible in a number of potential configurations. This course does not require the removal of any significant trees, grading or other disturbance. The players can use the same trail system as hikers. It is suggested that the disc golf course whether it is 9 or 18 holes be field located after final location of facilities such as trails, retention ponds, etc.

Traffic Calming

In order to plan for the safest pedestrian crossings possible across Dogwood Acres Drive, the Town should use a variety of techniques to slow vehicles on that portion of Dogwood Acres Drive which passes through the park. Options for implementing traffic calming measures would be greater if

the road is under town control than rather NCDOT control. The committee recommends that the town petition the state to assume control of the portion of the road that is within town ownership. The plan demonstrates two locations where pedestrian crossings are desirable.

The type and number of traffic calming measures could be considered at a later stage in the planning process.

In addition to traffic calming measures it is also recommended that the speed limit on Dogwood Acres Drive be lowered from 35 m.p.h. to 25 m.p.h. and that parking along the road be prohibited.

Parking

A parking area for 100 cars is shown at the front of the proposed community center with an access drive that connects to the park and ride lot and Highway 15-501. This parking area could be expanded to hold about 200 cars if the need arises. However, this is not likely to be necessary until the proposed community center is built. The park and ride lot is viewed as additional parking for the park during the weekends and after hours during the weekday. The dog park has its own 15 space gravel parking area. A third 40 space parking area is shown on the south side of Dogwood Acres Drive adjacent to the baseball field.

Bus Stop

It is also possible that a bus stop might be incorporated into the park parking area in order to strengthen the tie between the existing park and ride lot and the park.

Small Court Facilities

A location for small court games such as bocce ball and horseshoes should be provided.

Picnic Facilities

Picnic facilities would include a large picnic shelter capable of accommodating about 100 people. Several other smaller shelters would also be provided close to the active recreation facilities. In addition, a number of picnic tables and grills would be located outside the shelters.

Restrooms

A winterized restroom would be provided as part of the larger picnic shelter. Two additional winterized restrooms would be located at the playground and dog park.

Maintenance Building

A maintenance building should be provided in close proximity to the athletic fields. This building would house equipment for field maintenance and general upkeep of the park.

Future Program Elements

The following program elements have been illustrated on the Master Plan, but are not considered part of Phase 1 development.

Parking expansion is the only future element that is not shown on the Master Plan.

Community Center

While the community center is not a facility which will be constructed in the near future, it's placement is critical to the overall master plan. The future community center is located central to the rest of the active recreation facilities and is proximate to the park and ride lot. This portion of the site is a relatively high point and is easily accessed from Highway 15-501.

Outdoor Pool

The outdoor pool is closely associated with the community center. It would be constructed to accommodate leisure swimming and summer youth programs.

Youth Athletic / Soccer Field

If future programming requires the addition of fields, a youth athletic field would be located north of Dogwood Acres Drive and south of the two athletic/soccer fields.

Parking Expansion

Planned parking areas in the north-east corner of the site could be expanded to double the size or approximately 200 cars if needs dictate. The expansion of other existing lots are also possible.

Construction Costs

45

The cost of constructing the Southern Community Park as illustrated by the Master Plan in this report is contingent on a number of variables that can only be approximated or estimated at this time. The most significant of these is the general economy and construction climate at the time of bidding and construction.

For purposes of this estimate we have referenced costs incurred on similar projects over the past two years.

Not included in this estimate are the cost of the future community center and the recycling center. The recycling center funding will be separate from park funding.

The estimate reflects phase one construction only.

The costs presented here are preliminary in nature and identify allowances for the various construction activities and park elements. True construction cost estimates can only be determined definitively with further design and the preparation of construction documents.

The cost estimate is organized by first identifying costs for general construction activities that will be incurred across the entire park or that serve the park site as a whole. Then the estimate identifies special costs specific to a particular element.

Funding currently dedicated for the development of Southern Community Park includes \$ 895,000 from an Orange County bond passed in 1997 and \$ 2,000,000 in bond money approved by Orange County voters in November of 2001 as part of an Orange County Parks and Recreation Bond.

It is felt that a significant portion of the phase one construction can be accomplished for the combined sum of these two numbers.

Following is a preliminary estimate of probable construction costs:

General Construction Activities

Clearing	\$ 60,000
Earthwork	\$ 400,000
Rock removal	\$ 40,000
Erosion control	\$ 50,000
Utility services	\$ 200,000
15-501 acceleration / Deceleration lanes	\$ 150,000
Connecting road	\$ 100,000
Subtotal:	\$ 1,000,000

Athletic / soccer fields (Total quantity 2)

Lighting	\$ 200,000
Irrigation	\$ 50,000
Sprigging	\$ 40,000
Drainage	\$ 50,000
Subtotal:	\$ 340,000

Dog Park

Parking	\$ 15,000
Fencing	\$ 20,000
Water service	\$ 10,000
Walks	\$ 15,000
Subtotal:	\$ 60,000

Youth Baseball Field

Irrigation	\$ 12,000
Backstop	\$ 8,000
Sprigging	\$ 15,000
Subtotal:	\$ 35,000

Park and Ride Lot Improvements

Subtotal:	\$ 75,000
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General Lighting	\$ 100,000
Children's Water Play	\$ 80,000
Performance Space	\$ 50,000
Meadow	\$ 40,000
40 Space Parking Lot	\$ 36,000
Bio Retention Ponds	\$ 100,000
Playground	\$ 150,000
Large Picnic Shelter	\$ 50,000
Shelter / Restroom	\$ 75,000
2 Seasonal Restrooms	\$ 75,000
2 Shelters	\$ 60,000
Traffic Calming Islands	\$ 30,000
Paved Trails / Walks	\$ 350,000
Disc golf	\$ 3,000
Natural Trails	\$ 30,000
100 Space Parking Lot	\$ 90,000
Roller Hockey Court	\$ 100,000
Basketball Courts	\$ 35,000
Small court area	\$ 10,000
Maintenance Building	<u>\$ 30,000</u>
Subtotal	\$ 1,494,000
Total	\$ 3,004,000
Contingency 10%	\$ 300,400
A/E Fees	\$ 200,000
Permits and Fees	<u>\$ 75,000</u>
Grand Total	\$ 3,579,400

