

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Town Council

FROM: Terry Blalock, Chair, Parks and Recreation Commission

SUBJECT: Possible Development of a Park along Little Creek

DATE: January 17, 2007

Blw @ TB

The Commission voted unanimously (9-0) to recommend that if the Council desires to pursue design of a park along Little Creek that the Council consider the following comments and recommendations:

- The property is a large, broad floodplain that is frequently wet and probably has extensive wetlands. We believe that this condition makes most traditional park uses impractical.
- The property appears on the Town's Greenways Master Plan as the southernmost extension of a paved trail system that would extend from Millhouse Road in northwest Chapel Hill to Pinehurst Drive.
- In the 1990s the initial plan included a parking lot on Cleland Drive. The presence of the parking lot was opposed by some neighbors.
- We believe that this project may warrant the formation of a citizen Committee to help formulate a recommendation that would be satisfactory to both neighbors and the community at large. If the Council forms a committee we believe that membership should be comprised of the following: Parks and Recreation Commission (2), Greenways Commission (2), education professional (1), citizens at-large (2) and neighbors of the properties (4).
- The Commission believes that if a citizen committee is formed to develop a park concept plan for the site then the following elements or concepts should be included in the plan:
 - The primary purpose of the park should be as a Nature Interpretation Park with boardwalks and informational signs suitable for classroom field trips
 - Incorporate the Greenways Master Plan recommendations into the park design
 - Construct an observation deck to maximize observation opportunities
 - Construct weatherized restrooms
 - Include a parking area of sufficient size to accommodate a school bus.
- Any concept plan should include funding for a design team including enough funds for detailed engineering studies to determine the feasibility of bridge crossings and of work in wet areas. Such a concept plan is likely to cost in excess of \$50,000.

Present: Terry Blalock, Chair; Betsey Anderson; Neal Bench; Bob Broad; Cory Brooks; Eugene Farrar; Pete Schwartz; Diane VandenBroek; and Andre Wesson.