

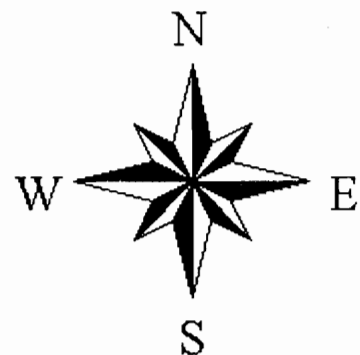
Twin Creeks* Park and Campus

Adopted Master Plan - May 3, 2005

(*Moniese Nomp)



Orange County
Environment and Resource
Conservation Department



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ORANGE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Post Office Box 8181
200 SOUTH CAMERON STREET
HILLSBOROUGH, NORTH CAROLINA 27278



January 31, 2006

Mayor Mark Chilton
Town of Carrboro
301 West Main Street
Carrboro, NC 27510

Dear Mayor Chilton:

As a first step toward the application process for Twin Creeks (Moniese Nomp) District Park, please find enclosed the adopted master plan for this 193-acre site located north of Carrboro near the intersection of Eubanks Road and Old 86. This master plan is transmitted for your informal review, and is the same as the one conveyed to the Town in the summer of 2005.

Based on recent discussions by County and Town staff, it is our understanding that this informal review of the master plan is designed to allow the Board of Aldermen to review the plan at a more macro scale, for initial feedback and comments. Following this review and subsequent discussions, the County plans to prepare and submit a Conditional Use Permit application for Phase I of Twin Creeks Park (phase I is shown by the red dashed line on the attached master plan). We anticipate that the materials, drawings and plans for this application will be completed in time for a submittal in late 2006. Based on recent reports, we also understand that the Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools are submitting a CUP application for the proposed Elementary School #10 on the Educational Campus portion of the site.

As you may recall, the Twin Creeks design process was quite lengthy and involved input from a variety of different parties and stakeholders. An initial 23-member Master Plan Work Group (which included representatives from a wide variety of groups including the Board of Aldermen and Town advisory boards) created a master plan in 2003, which was subsequently reviewed and discussed by citizens and Commissioners. Based on these and other discussions, alternative master plans were developed and presented to the public for comment in the fall of 2004. As a result, a Twin Creeks Master Plan Review Committee met in early 2005. This group reviewed the plans and developed recommendations on several key outstanding items. The Board of Commissioners reviewed these findings, and on May 3, 2005 adopted the master plan for the site that is provided herein.

As you might imagine with a multi-partner project of this scope and scale, there are a plethora of sub-issues and alternative concepts that have been proposed, discussed and considered over the last three years. To help in reviewing these topics, our staff has compiled a listing of "Key Issues and Concepts" that relate to the many different components of the master plan. This is also attached, as context for your review, as a menu of potential matters for further discussion. In addition, of course, the Board of Aldermen may also identify other

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ATTACHMENT C-2

ideas or concepts that you would like to discuss, and we look forward to discussing these matters with you, as needed.

As Twin Creeks (Moniese Nomp) becomes reality over the next decade or so, the co-located schools campus and park – a concept first envisioned years ago in the County's Parks Plan and the Town's Northern Transition Area Plan - will be an important gathering place for community life in southern Orange County, benefiting residents in Carrboro, Chapel Hill Township and beyond. On a number of occasions during our many discussions, comparisons of this site to a smaller, localized version of a "Central Park" were noted, because of its size, its location in a currently rural but urbanizing setting, and the potential variety of amenities. We look forward to working with the Town to make this community schools campus, district park and open space network a place of which current and future generations will be proud.

Please feel free to contact me, or our staff, if you have any questions. We look forward to hearing your thoughts on this master plan.

Best,



Barry Jacobs, Chair
Orange County Board of Commissioners

Attachments

Copies: County Commissioners
John Link, County Manager
Geof Gledhill, County Attorney
David Stancil, E&RC Director
Lori Taft, Recreation and Parks Management Director

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Twin Creeks (Moniese Nomp¹)
Key Issues and Topics
February 23, 2006

1. Potential Piedmont Meadow Restoration Project

A 5-acre meadow is located at the southwestern corner of the site, and is proposed in the Master Plan to be retained as an entranceway feature for the park. County and USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service staff have discussed the potential for a meadow restoration project for this area. The master plan calls for a loop trail around the edge of the meadow. A meadow restoration project would involve regeneration of existing native plant species that are currently competing with fescue grass on the site, which would enhance habitat for species living on the site.

2. Water and Sewer Extension

At present, the first facility to be constructed at the Twin Creeks site is likely to be a new elementary school (ES#10). During the CHATPEC Master Plan Work Group meetings of 2002-03², OWASA shared information about the provision of the service to the site, which had previously been discussed prior to the purchase of the property. Water service currently exists along Old 86, from a transmission line that connects to the Town of Hillsborough system. As the area south of Eubanks Road requires service, OWASA has indicated that the release valve (the junction for water transmission between the systems) would be moved north, so as to allow use of the Old 86 line south of Eubanks Road for service tie-ins as opposed to water transfers only. There is also a plan to extend water service west along Eubanks Road from the Rogers Road area, to create a loop network. Recent conversations with OWASA have confirmed that these concepts are still the plan.

Sewer service would need to be extended from an outfall along Jones Creek to the south. To service the school, discussions to date would extend the sewer line along the Jones Creek corridor from its terminus at the time of construction (with an offset from the stream itself) north to the schools campus, where ES#10 would be served. Phase I of the park would not likely require sewer service, although subsequent future phases would.

3. Further Archaeological Evaluations of Two Sites

The cultural resources survey of the site, conducted in 2002, turned up two locations of archaeological significance. One, a rhyolite quarry from the Archaic Period (8000-1000 BC) is located on the hilly, wooded westernmost portion of the property between Old 86 and the farmstead. Rhyolite was used for different types of stone tools, and most of the findings associated with these quarries are primarily Archaic period projectile points and other related tools. In addition to the quarry, a nearby smaller site was identified, in the northeastern part of the property, which was possibly a bartering station for materials and tools from the quarry. The rhyolite

¹ Tutelo-Saponi for "twin creeks." Pronounced mo-nee-ay-say nom-p)

² The roster of this work group, which met from October 2002 – May 2003, is attached.

quarry could be a significant finding (although since this report, other similar quarries have been found in the region) and will warrant further study as potentially the first rhyolite quarry to be documented in Orange County. However, no disturbance of this area is called for in the master plan and no facilities are planned for the quarry area, with the exception of portions of the trail network around the edge of the hill. The schools campus will likely need to design around the small “bartering station” which is located within the educational campus.

4. Funding, PreGrading and Phasing of the Park

The 2001 voter-approved Orange County Parks and Open Space bond allocated \$1.2 million for the first phase of Twin Creeks Park. Since the park as planned would create several playing fields, including four full-size soccer fields, an additional \$650,000 has been appropriated from the Soccer Superfund component of the 2001 bond, for a total of \$1.85 million for Phase 1. The proposed first phase of the park would include a (to-be-designated) County portion of the entranceway, and include the lower two playing fields, a picnic shelter and parking. This phase was selected to maximize the facilities that could be built with available funds for Phase 1, deferring some of the infrastructure costs related to future phases in order to construct and bring online two soccer fields as soon as practical. If funding permits, the potential to pre-grade the remaining playing fields as part of Phase 1 would be considered. (This would expedite the work needed to make the additional fields ready for subsequent construction).

5. “Parkway” Entry Road

To date, County staff has met with Town colleagues and representatives of the proposed development to the south of Twin Creeks (currently known as “Ballentine” subdivision). An old existing farm road straddles the property line between the two properties, and this general area is the location of the planned entrance road (the County’s internal working title for this road has been “Twin Creeks Parkway”). The discussions to date have reflected an interest from Town staff and NCDOT to have a shared roadway entrance from Old 86 for the park and the subdivision. Both parties are conceptually in agreement with this idea.

Two primary issues have arisen to date: a) the exact alignment of this road’s intersection with Old 86, and b) the timing of construction and possible cost-share arrangements. It is our understanding from the developer that, in order to address site distance and safety issues, the road intersection is proposed to shift to the south onto the proposed Ballentine property. Discussions and estimates of the projected timing of the two projects indicate that Ballentine (if approved) will likely be constructed prior to Twin Creeks Park (Phase I). Since most of the road is needed for the proposed development, and it would likely come first, the developers have expressed a willingness to enter into a cost-share arrangement on the roadway, which the County will consider.

The nature of how this entry road/parkway ties into the Lake Hogan Farm Road Extension (connector road) is another topic that may need to be addressed, although this would not likely occur until a subsequent phase of the park or schools campus.

6. Duke Forest

The Duke Forest Resource Manager was a member of the 2002-03 CHATPEC master plan work group. The work group did discuss the possible synergies between the park, schools and the forest, noting the potential for environmental education. Although no action from the Board of Trustees has been requested yet, the location of the connector road along the boundary of the Twin Creeks and Duke Forest properties was discussed, and it was expected that Duke would be generally comfortable with the proposed location, to avoid splitting the schools campus in two parts, if the road kept close to the forest boundary. County staff recently met with Duke Forest staff again, and the Duke Forest committee is now considering the road alignment.

7. Connector Road (Lake Hogan Farm Road Extension)

One topic that has been discussed a number of times over the past four years, from the beginning stages of the 2002-03 work group to present, is the eventual location of the connector road (the extension of Lake Hogan Farm Road northward to Eubanks Road). This road is shown as a dashed line in the Town's Northern Transition Area Plan, although an exact location has never been determined. The CHATPEC Work Group was informed that the main concept was to connect Point A (Homestead Road) with Point B (Eubanks Road). The County's initial preliminary concept plan for the site reflected a location that was generally a northward extension within the Twin Creeks site. However, based on discussions with the work group, and with County and Town staffs as the master plan was generated, the road was routed to the eastern edge of the property by the 2002-03 work group. This was at the request of the school board representatives, who noted that the straight-line northern extension of the road would split the schools and hinder pedestrian access and connectivity of the campus. The schools representatives on the master plan work group felt strongly that the educational campus should be kept intact as a unit, to provide for ease of access between future schools facilities.

At the same time, it was noted that any road location would need to conform to the topography of the area. The importance of minimizing stream crossings was also identified as an important consideration. The existence of two land-locked properties along the eastern edge of the site was additionally noted.

Based on these factors, the proposed road corridor was redesigned. The current location aims to accomplish four goals:

- a. Connect Eubanks Road and the Lake Hogan Farm Road as it emerges from the property to the south,
- b. Keep the educational campus intact by placing the road east of the campus,

- c. Provide access to two land-locked properties located southeast and east of the site, and
- d. Minimize stream crossings and keep the parkway connector road intersection away from Jones Creek.

As noted above, Duke was consulted about allowing the road to straddle the boundary of the forest and for safety and road design, curve into the back corner of the forest as it turns to the east. The adjoining property owners of the land-locked property have also been consulted on different occasions to share the design and the rationale. The road is designed using the topography of the site to meet these goals.

8. The Redline Trail, Town Greenways and Loop Trail Network

During discussions after the Master Plan Work Group of 2002-03, a number of questions were posed concerning the walkability to the educational campus from the residential areas to the south, as well as possible future residential areas to the south and east. An alternative design was developed by County staff attempted to look again at this question.

Among the results of this redesign was the creation of a proposed trail that would be wider and more accessible, using a segment of the projected Jones Creek Greenway to connect to the schools campus. This trail would be more visible and could have night lighting and call-boxes if desired to provide a more direct and safety-oriented connection to the schools. Since this trail was highlighted on the revised master plan in red, it became known as the “Redline Trail” and is reflected on the final version of the master plan adopted by the County Commissioners.

It should be noted that all of the design efforts to date have used the Town’s greenway concepts, as determined from existing plans, to provide for sections of the future greenways on the site. Conveniently, these greenway segments also serve to connect the different segments of the site. In addition, a loop trail network is envisioned and shown conceptually (the exact trail locations would not be identified until more detailed drawings are completed) to provide for a variety of pedestrian experiences and connect to the schools for a possible cross-country trail or other shared use.

9. Relationship of Park to Campus and Town Public Works

It is the County’s understanding that the Town has purchased land across from Twin Creeks for a future public works site. Discussion may be desirable regarding how the two sites could work compatibly with each other.

10. Uses of Open Space Areas

One of the features of the Twin Creeks park master plan is that over 50% of the land area is to be left in open space, while still providing for a variety of active recreation opportunities. One of the guiding principles of the site design was to balance active recreation and low-impact recreation, and provide for flexible open space areas for

unstructured public use (the Olmsteadian vision referred to in the master plan, a la New York's Central Park).

The layout and topography of the site were such that the interests of active recreation and of open space and low-impact recreation could both be met. Loop trails cross some of these areas, while others are proposed to be left in a natural state (wooded and open) for a flexible variety of open space uses, including bird-watching, nature study and other unstructured activities.

11. Consistency with County and Town Plans

This property was acquired through Orange County's Lands Legacy Program to meet a long identified need for the Chapel Hill Township District Park. As the property was identified, it was learned that the Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools (CHCCS) were negotiating purchase of an adjacent parcel, and the efforts were joined with the idea of co-locating the facilities.

While some confusion may have resulted in gaps in communication between the County and Town, efforts to assess the compatibility of the location with existing plans were made. As this property was evaluated for acquisition in the spring of 2001, a review was conducted of County and Town plans for consistency. The site is within the Orange County-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Joint Planning Area. The Joint Planning Area Land Use Plan classifies this area as "Transition Area II." The Parks Element of the Orange County Comprehensive Plan (adopted 1988) identified a future Chapel Hill Township District Park (75-199 acres) to be generally located near the intersection of Eubanks Road and Old 86 (very close to the site). The Town's Northern Transition Area Plan also showed a park and school site co-located on this property (prior to the subsequent property acquisitions of the County and CHCCS). Also, in early 2001, correspondence was received from the Town asking for the County's assistance in acquiring and constructing a park north of Carrboro. These factors were all noted as part of the acquisition decision process.

There may also be other issues that the County and Town wish to address which are not listed here.

Orange County ERCD

Chapel Hill Township Park & Educational Campus

Master Plan Work Group

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3/1/2006

Please Send any corrections to Carol Melton, cmelton@co.orange.nc.us, 245-2590

Chapel Hill Township Park & Educational Campus

Master Plan Work Group

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Chapel Hill Township Park & Educational Campus**Master Plan Work Group**

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3/1/2006

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Chapel Hill Township Park & Educational Campus

Master Plan Work Group

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Roy Williford / Trish McGuire	Town of Carboro Planning		

Staff representatives from Towns of Chapel Hill and Carboro invited to participate ex-officio

3/1/2006

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