



Town of Chapel Hill
AMERICAN LEGION TASK FORCE
Thursday, September 7, 2017, at 02:00 p.m.
Chapel Hill Town Hall, Conference Room 344
405 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Meeting Agenda

Members: Rachel Schaevitz (Chair), Neal Bench (Vice-Chair), Mayor Pam Hemminger, Council Member Donna Bell, Council Member Nancy Oates, Michael Andrews, Dan Cefalo, Pat Heinrich, Ryun Miller, Wesley McMahon, Laurie Paolicelli, Scott Radway, Lew Brown (Alternate)

Staff Liaison: Corey Liles

1. Opening

a. Roll Call

b. Approval of Minutes for the June 14, 2017 Meeting

c. Approval of Agenda

2. Announcements

3. Public Comment

4. Business

a. Review of Work Plan and Development Principles

Background: Consultant staff will review the expected action items for each fall meeting, with particular attention to the Task Force's deliverables which include a prioritized list of uses and criteria for evaluation of public/private partnerships. The Development Principles will also be reviewed as a reminder of what the Task Force adopted in June 2017.

Action Item: Receive information.

b. Overview of Parks & Recreation Staff Discussion

Background: Consultant staff met with Chapel Hill Parks & Recreation staff on August 25, 2017, to receive their input on potential uses of the American Legion property. The high-level takeaways of this meeting will be discussed; input on individual uses will be presented at the next meeting.

Action Item: Receive information.

c. Discussion of Potential Uses

Background: The list of potential uses, included in the June 2017 report based on public feedback to date, will be reviewed. The Task Force will consider whether some uses can be removed from consideration, based on information received to date.

Action Item: Refine and narrow the list of potential uses based on general Task Force consensus.

d. Public Input Strategy

Background: The Task Force scope of work approved by Council includes a fall public session to gather additional community input on Task Force recommendations. The Chair, Vice-Chair, and consultant staff have determined that an online survey may be a more effective way to gather input. The Task Force will discuss these two alternatives, and will also review a list of potential questions for the community.

Action Item: Determine the preferred forum for community input (meeting or survey). If a survey is preferred, review and finalize the list of questions.

e. Draft Use Evaluation Questions

Background: To further the Task Force's consideration of potential uses, consultant staff have adapted the Development Principles into a list of evaluation questions. Along with technical considerations such as cost, these questions will serve as criteria in a Use Evaluation Matrix. Determining priority uses will in turn help shape the criteria for evaluation of partnerships.

Action Item: Review and finalize the list of use evaluation questions.

f. Overview of Recommendations from Town Properties Task Force

Background: Town staff will share recommendations from the June 2017 report of the Town Properties Task Force that have relevance for the work of the American Legion Task Force. Areas of interest include Guiding Principles for Disposal of Properties and prioritized uses for other Town properties.

Action Item: Receive information.

g. Other Task Force Discussion

5. Public Comment

6. Adjournment

Next meeting: September 21, 2017 at 2:00pm

Meeting Materials

- [Draft Minutes of the June 14, 2017 Meeting](#)
- [Task Force Report to Town Council, June 2017](#)
- [Draft Questions to the Community](#)
- [Draft Use Evaluation Questions](#)
- [Town Properties Task Force Guiding Principles](#)
- [Use Comparison Table](#) (Town Properties and American Legion Task Forces)
- [Town Properties by Recommended Use](#)

Opportunity Statement: The Town purchased the 36-acre American Legion Post 6 property in March of 2017. A consultant engaged by the Town is leading a public engagement process to produce conceptual options for future use of the property that reflect the community's interests. The Task Force is a body representative of the community that can offer feedback on the work done by the consultant and assist with finalizing reports for Council consideration. The Task Force can also advise on next steps in the overall planning process. This contribution is needed to help the Town achieve Council Goals and determine the most fitting and appropriate uses of the American Legion Property.

Goal: The American Legion Task Force will participate in the public engagement process and work with the project consultant to develop future land use recommendations for the American Legion property, along with next steps in the planning process, that uphold the Council's Guiding Principles for development of the property.

Resources:

- Project Web Page: <http://www.townofchapelhill.org/americanlegion>
- Board Web Page: <http://www.townofchapelhill.org/town-hall/government/boards-commissions>
(Scroll to American Legion Task Force)

Unless otherwise noted, please contact [Corey Liles](#) in the Office of Planning & Sustainability for more information.



Town of Chapel Hill
AMERICAN LEGION TASK FORCE
Tuesday, June 14, 2017, at 02:00 p.m.
Chapel Hill Public Library, Meeting Room A
100 Library Dr., Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Draft Minutes

Members: Rachel Schaevitz (Chair), Neal Bench (Vice-Chair), Mayor Pam Hemminger, Council Member Donna Bell, Council Member Nancy Oates, Michael Andrews, Dan Cefalo, Joan Guilkey, Pat Heinrich, Ryun Miller, Laurie Paolicelli, Scott Radway, Lew Brown (Alternate), Wesley McMahon (Alternate)

Staff Liaison: Corey Liles

1. Opening

Meeting was called to order at 2:05 p.m. by Rachel Schaevitz, Chair

a. Roll Call

Members Present: Rachel Schaevitz (Chair), Neal Bench (Vice-Chair), Mayor Pam Hemminger, Council Member Nancy Oates, Michael Andrews, Dan Cefalo, Joan Guilkey, Pat Heinrich, Ryun Miller (by phone), Laurie Paolicelli, Scott Radway, Lew Brown (alternate), Wesley McMahon (alternate)

Members Absent: Council Member Donna Bell

Town Staff Present: Corey Liles, Laura Selmer

Consultant Staff Present: Dan Jewell, Elizabeth Wilcox

b. Approval of Minutes for the June 6, 2017 Meeting

➤ Action Taken: Minutes Approved

c. Approval of Agenda

➤ Action Taken: Agenda Approved

2. Announcements

Corey Liles noted the inclusion of pool usage statistics for Town facilities and indoor court layouts for athletics in the meeting materials for task force information.

3. Public Comment

Dr. Hongbin Gu made a presentation on the proposed Chinese Cultural Center. The presentation included conceptual renderings which depict a campus style design with conference space, a tea house, gym facilities, and gardens. The Chinese Cultural Center would be unique for the Triangle region and the state, and would serve as a cultural learning space. Programming would cater to all ages and to multiple interests. Dr. Gu highlighted the Light Up festival held in January at University Place which attracted over 7,000 attendees, demonstrating a demand for cultural programming and potential for tourism.

Members of the task force asked how much space is needed and what funding is available for the project. Dr. Gu responded that the group is seeking a public-private partnership; exact contribution requested from the Town has not been determined. The current space estimate is 50,000 SF and 5-7 acres of land, but plans are conceptual and can be adapted.

4. Business

a. Principles for Development

Background: The principles for development are a key portion of the task force recommendations for the Report to Council. At the June 6, 2017 meeting, task force members approved the wording of several principles and suggested revisions for others. An updated list has been provided for the task force's consideration.

Action Item: Refine and finalize the list of principles for development of the American Legion site.

- Action Taken: The task force reviewed the updated descriptions for draft principles and suggested various edits. The task force approved all principles, completing their list to be included in the report.

Chair Rachel Schaevitz presented an updated list of development principles for the American Legion site, incorporating revisions submitted by task force members since the June 6th meeting. The task force discussed and refined the descriptions that were not previously approved.

Following language revisions, the task force voted unanimously to approve principles regarding: existing water features (after striking language regarding a water feature being visible from Legion Road), partnerships with Ephesus Elementary School, treatment of Legion Road frontage (after combining this principle with one regarding functional vehicular access), a comprehensive parking strategy, and green building standards for construction.

The task force voted with a majority (one opposed) to approve revised language for a principle regarding the mitigation of impacts on neighbors.

The task force voted with a majority (one opposed) to approve a principle regarding clear guidelines for public/private partnerships, after striking language that specified compliance with the AIA 2030 standards as a guideline.

b. Future Considerations and Next Steps

Background: Another key portion of the Report to Council will be recommendations on the ongoing development process for the American Legion site, including topics for future consideration and potential next steps. The task force members will review a draft list of recommendations based on ideas submitted in advance of the meeting.

Action Item: Refine the list of future considerations and next steps, determine the level of support from task force members for each item on the list.

- Action Taken: The task force reviewed the list of suggestions for future considerations and next steps, and suggested various edits. The task force approved recommendations to be included in the report.

Chair Schaevitz presented a list of potential future considerations and next steps, compiled from suggestions submitted by task force members.

The task force voted unanimously to request that Council approve the continuation of the task force. The requested scope of work includes reconvening in the fall, holding an additional six meetings to discuss public/private partnerships for the American Legion site, and completing work by April 2018.

The task force voted unanimously to strike a recommendation for the task force to brainstorm ways to make mortgage payments on the property. Mayor Hemminger noted that the Town has already committed to making the payments and any sale of a portion of the property would be a reimbursement to the Town.

The task force voted unanimously to recommend that Council begin earmarking funds in the FY19 budget for investigation and engineering related to the pond.

The task force discussed a recommendation that any land sale should yield the highest return possible for a use that fits in with the community gathering space. Some members felt this recommendation didn't go beyond stating the obvious, however there was general agreement to emphasize compatibility with community spaces. A majority of the task force voted to approve this recommendation.

The task force voted unanimously to strike a recommendation that Town staff assemble cost estimates for infrastructure improvements, since the infrastructure needs for the site are still unknown.

The task force discussed a recommendation for the Town to pursue a memorandum of understanding with the Chapel Hill/Orange County Visitor's Bureau for the advertising of tournament events. There was concern that since the facilities had not been determined, it was unknown whether any could host tournaments. However there was general agreement that the American Legion site should serve a tourism function. The task force revised the language and

voted unanimously to approve a recommendation regarding partnership with agencies such as the Visitors Bureau to generate revenue through tourism opportunities.

Michael Andrews commented that extending the task force would allow time to hold multiple sessions for public input. Mr. Andrews would like to see efforts made to engage isolated populations within the community that may not typically participate in public decision-making.

Pat Heinrich asked whether it was the intent of the extended task force to participate in a public/private partnership Request for Proposal process, noting that this could be an extensive process. Mayor Hemminger responded that the task force could conduct preliminary screenings of proposals to ensure consistency with development principles and Town values. This work would be of value to Council.

c. Potential Land Uses

Background: Various potential land uses for the American Legion site have been identified through the charrette and through user group submissions. The task force will review a compiled list of uses for inclusion in the Report to Council.

Action Item: Refine the list of potential land uses, determine the level of support from task force members for each item on the list.

➤ Action Taken: Task force members expressed concern about having a vote on potential land uses at this time. The item was tabled for future consideration.

The task force determined that the list of potential land uses, based on previous public input, would be included in the Report to Council with no prioritization from the task force.

d. Other Task Force Discussion

No other items discussed.

5. Public Comment

Council Member Ed Harrison expressed concern that the development principles did not address stormwater management.

Fred Lampe, community member, expressed concern for the removal of language relating to the AIA2030 green building standards. Mr. Lampe noted that the American Legion property presents the Town with an opportunity to set a new standard for building design and energy conservation, making an impactful statement on the Town's commitment to climate change mitigation.

Diane Willis, community member, concurred and added that referencing the AIA standards would send a clear message of the Town's support for the Paris Accords. Lynne Kane, community member, noted that consideration of construction cost is important.

Michael Andrews responded with an openness to consider more stringent building standards, should the term of the task force be extended. The extension would allow for time to the task force to better understand the AIA requirements. Pat Heinrich offered that AIA or other specific requirements could be considered as the key criteria for partnerships are developed. Mayor Hemminger noted that staff are currently reviewing a petition to Council for all development in town to meet AIA2030 challenge targets.

6. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 4:12 p.m.

Report to Council: June 26, 2017 at Council Business Meeting

Meeting Materials

- [Draft Minutes of the June 6, 2017 Meeting](#)
- [Draft List of Development Principles](#) (updated 6-09-2017)
- [Draft List of Potential Land Uses](#)

Opportunity Statement: The Town purchased the 36-acre American Legion Post 6 property in March of 2017. A consultant engaged by the Town will be leading a public engagement process to produce conceptual options for future use of the property that reflect the community's interests. The Task Force is a body representative of the community that can offer feedback on the design work done by the consultant and assist with finalizing the report for Council consideration. The Task Force can also advise on next steps in the overall planning process. This contribution is needed to help the Town achieve Council Goals and determine the most fitting and appropriate uses of the American Legion Property.

Goal: The American Legion Task Force will participate in the public engagement process and work with the project consultant to develop future land use recommendations for the American Legion property, along with next steps in the planning process, that uphold the Council's Guiding Principles for development of the property.

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AMERICAN LEGION TASK FORCE

REPORT TO TOWN COUNCIL // JUNE 2017



INTRODUCTION	4
ABOUT THE PROPERTY	6
GUIDING PRINCIPLES ADOPTED BY COUNCIL	8
COUNCIL RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING PURCHASE	9
<i>American Legion Task Force Work</i>	
DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES	12
FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS AND NEXT STEPS	14
DRAFT LIST OF POTENTIAL LAND USES	15
<i>American Legion Design Charrette</i>	
PUBLIC OUTREACH	18
CHARRETTE PROCESS	19
CHARRETTE SUMMARY MAP	20
CHARRETTE TEAM DESIGN CONCEPTS	22
POST-IT NOTE TAKEAWAYS	36
COMMON THEMES AND CONCEPTS	38
<i>Appendix Sets</i>	
A – American Legion Task Force Members	
B – American Legion Task Force Charter	
C – Task Force Meeting Minutes	
D – Charrette Design Team	
E – Materials Available April 8 at Each Charrette Table	
F – Post-It and Table Notes Generated at Charrette	

CONTENTS

This report was produced for the Town of Chapel Hill
by Coulter Jewell Thames, PA.



The Chapel Hill Town Council in December 2016 agreed to purchase the American Legion property for \$7.9 million. The Town Council anticipated that the site – through public amenity, private partnerships, and a mix of uses – could serve local quality of life and integrate with the Town’s larger vision for future development in northeast Chapel Hill. Council initiated a public engagement process, led by Coulter Jewell Thames, PA, to learn about the community’s interests in the site and to begin developing a vision for how the site can best serve the community and the future of Chapel Hill.

The engagement process kicked off with a public design charrette on April 8, 2017. This document includes a description of the charrette process and of the goals and recommendations that were generated at the charrette. The report was presented to the American Legion Task Force, which was established by Council to consider future uses of the American Legion property.

The Task Force held four meetings during April, May and June of 2017. Comprised of 12 members, with two alternates, the Task Force included the Mayor, two Council members and community and business representatives. It also included representatives from the Planning Commission; the Parks, Greenways and Recreation Commission; the Cultural Arts Commission; the Chapel Hill/ Orange County Visitors Bureau; and Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools.

The goal of the Task Force, as adopted by the Town Council, is as follows:

The American Legion Task Force will participate in the public engagement process and work with the project consultant to develop future land use recommendations for the American Legion property, along with next steps in the planning process, that uphold the Council’s Guiding Principles for development of the property.

Task Force members heard comment from the public at the beginning and end of each meeting. Members representing the Parks, Greenways and Recreation Commission and the Chapel Hill/ Orange County Visitors Bureau made presentations to the Task Force, sharing those organizations’ insights into how Town needs could be met on the site. Kidzu Children’s Museum and the Chinese Cultural Center also made presentations regarding their interest in the property. A number of other organizations submitted materials indicating an interest in the property; all of those materials are available on the project website.

During the time allotted to it, the Task Force drafted and adopted *Development Principles* and *Future Considerations and Next Steps*, and it put forward a draft *List of Potential Land Uses*, which are based on uses identified during the charrette. The report that follows includes the Task Force’s work, along with the consultant’s work on and takeaways from the charrette.

INTRODUCTION



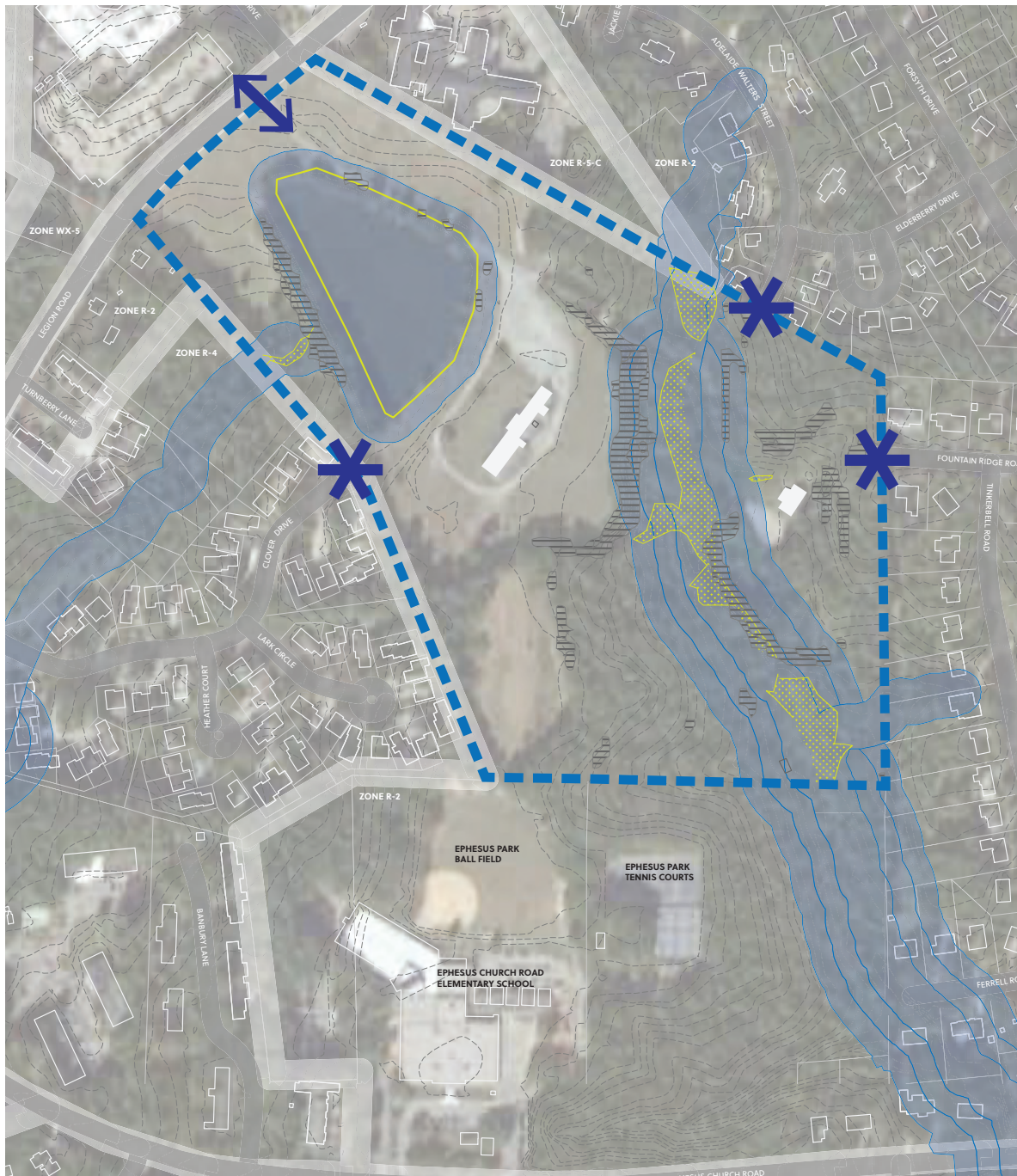
The American Legion property, situated between 15-501 and Ephesus Church Road, is a 36.2-acre parcel that has been home to American Legion Post 6 since 1961. The Post building is 8,400 square feet; other site features include a large pond close to Legion Road, a small dance studio, and a stream running north to south. The stream cuts through the eastern side of the property and is surrounded by woods. Foot paths in the woods connect to surrounding neighborhoods on the site's eastern and southwestern edges and to Ephesus Park and Ephesus Church Elementary School to the south. A retirement community is northeast of the site, and to the northwest is office space. The site is just south of the Ephesus Fordham zoning district, which includes some of Chapel Hill's older, suburban-style shopping centers. The property's current zoning is Residential-2.

Development of the American Legion property is constrained by the Resource Conservation District, which totals 8.6 acres and includes the stream and stream buffer, and by areas with steep slopes greater than 15%, which total 1.3 acres. That leaves 28.2 developable acres, including the 3.1-acre pond, which could be partially or completely removed.

In 2005, American Legion Post 6 entered into an agreement with the Town of Chapel Hill to offer the town a right of first refusal on the property, should the Legion decide to sell it. Council considered an option to purchase the property in June 2015 for \$10 million and declined because of cost. In anticipation of development proposals for the property, Council held a work session in March 2016 to gauge community interest in the site. Council adopted in June 2016 a set of guiding principles for any future site development.

Those guiding principles, and the December 2016 Council resolution authorizing the purchase of the American Legion property, are included on the following pages.

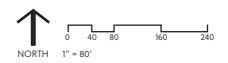
ABOUT THE PROPERTY



AMERICAN LEGION PROPERTY SITE ANALYSIS MAP

LEGEND

- AMERICAN LEGION PROPERTY
- PARCEL LINES
- EXISTING STREETS
- SITE POND AND WETLANDS
- ZONING BOUNDARIES
- CONTOUR LINES
- 50' / 100' / 150' RCD BUFFERS
- FULL RCD BUFFER
- STEEP SLOPES (> 15%)
- * SITE ENTRIES AT NEIGHBORHOOD STUB STREETS
- ↗ CURRENT SITE ENTRY FROM LEGION ROAD



The following will guide future development of the American Legion property:

Describe how proposed plan and timing of development would integrate with Town's vision for future development in northeast Chapel Hill.

Conduct analysis of traffic impacts on Legion Road.

Describe how proposed multi-family project would contribute to mix of housing options in town.

Provide mix of uses in proposed development, including office space.

Detail how project would help maintain quality of life, including how the project would provide green space, trails, and/or indoor recreation space.

Explore potential partnerships with other public or private entities to provide needed community amenities.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE PROPERTY

ADOPTED BY TOWN COUNCIL JUNE 2016

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TOWN MANAGER TO EXECUTE AN OFFER TO PURCHASE AND CONTRACT AND LEASE FOR THE AMERICAN LEGION PROPERTY (2016-12-05/R-8)

WHEREAS, the Town Council and citizens of Chapel Hill have for some time indicated an interest in the possible acquisition by the Town of the 35 acre American Legion Property on Legion Road; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council has discussed the possibility of acquiring this parcel of land a number of times in public session and in closed session; and

WHEREAS, the 35 acre American Legion Property has the potential to be used for a number of possible purposes which would be beneficial to the Town and its citizens; and

WHEREAS, the Town closed the 2016 Fiscal Year with \$3.6 million over its targeted fund balance; and

WHEREAS, in November the residents of Chapel Hill approved a \$40.3 million bond referendum; and

WHEREAS, the American Legion renewed a previous opportunity to the Town to make an offer to purchase the property; and

WHEREAS, the Council authorized the Town Manager to enter into negotiations for the possible acquisition of the Legion Property; and

WHEREAS, as a result of those negotiations the Town has been given the opportunity to contract to purchase the property for \$7.9 million, subject to formal acceptance by the general membership of Chapel Hill Post 6, American Legion, Inc.; and

WHEREAS, the Council finds that the acquisition of the Legion property for this price is supported by a formal appraisal, informal estimates of value, and recent prices for land purchases in the Chapel Hill area; and

WHEREAS, the Council finds that the acquisition of the Legion property will provide the opportunity for the Town to consider opportunities for potential different uses for parts of the property which will provide benefit to the Town and its residents; and

WHEREAS, pending the development of a plan for the future uses of the property the Council finds that the lease of the buildings and surrounding open space back to the American Legion for 3 years for \$1.00 per years is reasonable.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the Town of Chapel Hill that the Council authorizes the Town Manager to execute an offer to purchase and contract to purchase the 35 acre American Legion property and lease of the buildings substantially in the form and under the terms presented to the Council on December 5, 2016 and to complete all necessary steps to finalize the transactions described therein and as presented to the Council.

This the 5th day of December, 2016.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING PURCHASE
APPROVED BY TOWN COUNCIL DECEMBER 2016

AMERICAN LEGION TASK FORCE WORK
APRIL, MAY AND JUNE 2017



COMMUNITY BUILDING PRINCIPLES

1. A Community Gathering Space for Everyone

The American Legion site supports a variety of activities, appealing to many different interests and to people of all ages. The site is accommodating and inviting for visitors of all abilities. The site serves a variety of income levels with free and low-cost activities included. Anybody in Chapel Hill feels welcome and engaged here.

2. A Network of Walkable Paths

Trails, sidewalks, and greenways throughout the site provide access to all facilities, promote physical activity, allow for enjoyment of nature, connect to the surrounding neighborhoods and to the elementary school, and integrate with Chapel Hill's greenway system.

3. Support for Healthy Lifestyles

All uses of the American Legion site support healthy lifestyles through athletic and physical activity and/or interaction with nature. This applies not only to portions of the site devoted to recreation, but also to any commercial or institutional uses. The healthy lifestyle focus can be used as a branding element that generates tourism and economic development for the town.

4. Existing Water Features

Additional investigation related to the existing pond, including scenario cost, wetland status, and water source, is needed before further decisions about the pond are made. Contingent on those findings, the pond may be removed or reduced in size in order to enhance safety and provide more flexibility for site planning.

RELATIONSHIPS TO ADJOINING PROPERTIES

5. Mitigation of Impacts on Neighbors

Amenities on the site enhance the value of surrounding neighborhoods and preserve their character. Appropriate buffers allow privacy of adjacent lots and reduce noise and light spillover. The design limits motor vehicle entry and exit points from neighborhood streets to maintenance and emergency access.

6. Partnership with Ephesus Elementary School

The Town and the School District work together to identify complementary programs that could be carried out in partnership along with opportunities to share facilities. The network of paths allows students and families access to and through the site, supporting neighborhood walk-to-school programs.

DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

ADOPTED BY THE TASK FORCE JUNE 14, 2017

DESIGN AND USE PRINCIPLES

7. Legion Road Frontage and Access

Legion Road remains the main public motor vehicle entry point for the entire property. If feasible, the site entry is aligned with Europa Drive. The community space is clearly and highly visible from the entrance, with significant frontage reserved for prominent gateway features.

8. Comprehensive Parking Strategy

Parking near the main facilities accommodates early demand and can be expanded for future demand. Enough parking is provided to prevent spillover onto neighborhood streets. Opportunities are pursued for shared parking with the Europa Center, Ephesus Elementary School, and others, with a goal of minimizing new surface parking. Public transit, along with bicycle and pedestrian connections, provide alternatives to accessing the site by car.

9. Green Building Standards for All Construction

All facilities on the American Legion site (indoor and outdoor) pursue ambitious standards for using water and energy efficiently, minimizing waste, and avoiding the use of harmful materials. The site design minimizes environmental impact and preserves the tree canopy.

SHARING THE SITE – PARTNERSHIP EVALUATION

10. Clear Guidelines for Public/Private Partnerships

Before any private organizations are chosen as partners, Town Council should define key criteria for evaluating partnerships, related to design, construction, and programming. All partnerships, must benefit the overall Chapel Hill community. Recommended criteria for public/private partnerships include:

- Partner programs should have free or low-cost options.
- Any private development along Legion Rd should be compatible in design with the public entrance to the property.

ACTIONS FOR TASK FORCE

- Request to Council that the Task Force reconvene in the fall to continue work on the evaluation of potential partnerships. The scope would include:
 - Develop a list of key criteria to fulfill the Development Principles for Public/Private Partnerships, with support from Town staff.
 - Recommend to Council an evaluation process for potential partners.
 - Participate in the evaluation process by reviewing proposals.
- The Task Force anticipates six additional meetings (including at least one public session) and will complete its work by April 2018.

ACTIONS FOR TOWN COUNCIL AND TOWN STAFF

- The Task Force recommends that Council begin earmarking money in the Town Budget, beginning FY19 (budget year beginning July 1, 2018), for additional investigation and engineering related to the pond.
- The Task Force recommends that if any land is sold, it should yield the highest return possible for a use that fits in with the community gathering space.
- The Task Force recommends that the Town partner with agencies such as the Chapel Hill/ Orange County Visitors Bureau to generate revenue through tourism opportunities that make use of future facilities on the site.

All recommendations received a vote in favor from at least 70% of Task Force members.

FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

FROM CHARRETTE POST-IT NOTES

- Passive recreation such as trails, parkland and natural areas
- Lawn for open play (frisbee, kites, throwing footballs, etc.)
- Farmer's market
- Athletic fields and courts
- Skate park
- Other programmed outdoor recreation
- Playground
- Splash pad
- Children's natural play
- Outdoor performance venue (amphitheater)
- Affordable housing
- Workforce housing
- Other housing
- Educational uses – service-learning, afterschool, vocational
- Community center
- Cafes/ eateries
- Space for food trucks
- Outdoor gathering and picnic spaces
- Children's museum
- Cemetery expansion
- Indoor recreation space
- Cultural/ arts facility – classroom and makerspace
- Dog park
- Event venue – rental opportunity
- Child and senior daycare (combined)
- Commercial and retail uses
- Pool (indoor/ outdoor)

FROM CHARRETTE CONCEPT SKETCHES

- Community garden
- Pickleball courts
- Gymnasium (as part of community center)
- Boy Scout amphitheater (preserved)
- Dance studio (preserved or replaced)
- Nursing home/ assisted living
- Parks & Recreation administrative offices

DRAFT LIST OF POTENTIAL LAND USES COMPILED FROM CHARRETTE MATERIALS

AMERICAN LEGION DESIGN CHARRETTE
APRIL 8, 2017



Town staff conducted a broad outreach to the Chapel Hill community, including posts and notices about the charrette through:

- Town of Chapel Hill website
 - News and Events page
 - Town Calendar
 - American Legion project web page
- News Release sent to the following groups (opt-in groups for Town communications)
 - eNews (weekly digest)
 - News Releases (general info)
 - Town-Sponsored Events
 - Economic Development
 - Parks & Recreation
 - Report to the Community
 - Ephesus Fordham Walkability
- Advisory Boards and Commissions (invitation sent by staff liaisons)
- Postcards sent to all property owners within 1,000 feet of the American Legion property
- Announced and/or discussed at Council meetings leading up to charrette
- Other news outlets covered the event, including:
 - The News & Observer (The Chapel Hill News)
 - Chapel Hill-Carrboro Chamber of Commerce
 - WCHL / Chapelboro
 - Our Town Chapel Hill

PUBLIC OUTREACH

The charrette was held on Saturday, April 8, 2017 at the American Legion property. More than 120 people attended at least part of the event, which ran from 9am to 4pm. While some people attended the entire day, others dropped by to provide their input.

The charrette was kicked off by Dan Jewell of Coulter Jewell Thames, who presented a summary of the property's opportunities and constraints. Participants were then encouraged to submit their major concerns about the property on Post-It notes, which were posted on the wall and reviewed with the entire audience.

Participants then worked in small groups with a designer – see Appendix A for the Design Team. Each table had base maps that highlighted property features including streams, stream buffers, steep slopes and neighborhood connections; site photos; trace paper; and pens and colored markers. As the designing began, participants worked in groups to suggest ideas, hopes and concerns that were translated to design concepts. Before a lunch break, participants visited each table to see and hear each group's major ideas, themes and concept designs. As town residents continued to drop in after lunch, some designers worked with members of their group to refine concepts, while others worked with newcomers to capture their ideas.

Scribes were also appointed to write down group ideas and members. At the end of the day, seven concepts with a range of ideas were presented by each group. The seven concepts are further discussed on the following pages. In addition to the opportunity to interact with designers to have their ideas translated into a drawing, participants were provided with Post-It notes and pens and encouraged to post their ideas to the wall. More than 200 ideas were captured, which generally fell into three categories: Guidelines and Principles for Design of the Property, Desired Uses, and Connectivity. See page 36 for the major themes gleaned from the Post-Its, and Appendix F for the full transcriptions.

THE CHARRETTE PROCESS

This plan represents consensus of the seven concepts created at the charrette. Two plans did depart from this consensus: One showed no development along Legion Road and showed the entire site as a park, and a second showed a vehicular connection from the west connecting to the site entrance at Legion Road.

CHARRETTE SUMMARY MAP

LEGEND

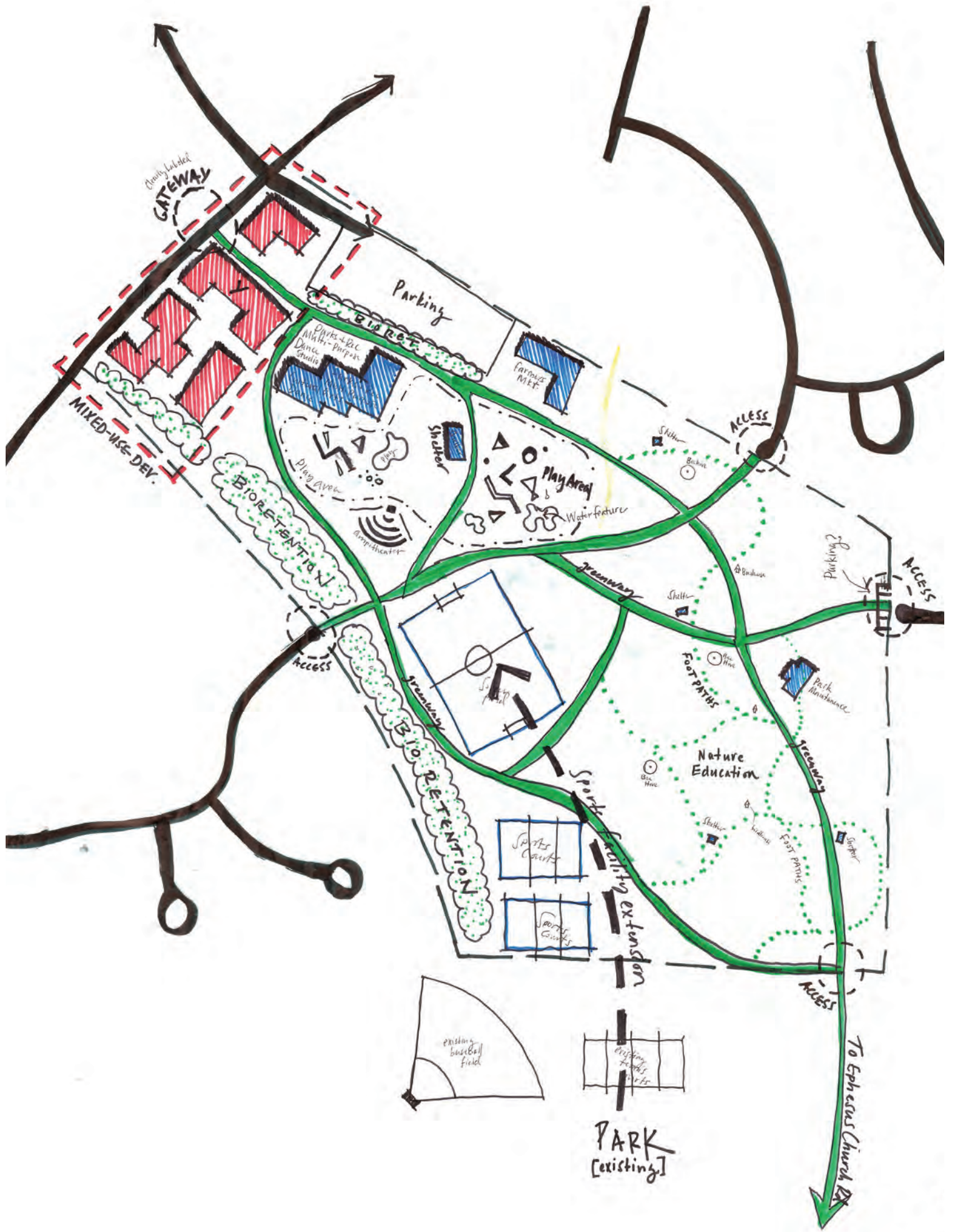


KEY COMPONENTS AND TAKEAWAYS:

- Greenways and footpaths should provide the primary and secondary circulation throughout the site. The current gravel road should turn into a gateway greenway into the site, and a primary path from Legion Road to Ephesus Church Road should run through the site.
- Extend Europa Drive onto the site for vehicular access to a parking lot that is located as close as possible to Legion Road.
- To pay for the development and purchase of the site, a mixed-use development should be located as a dense district fronting Legion road. Possible tenants include the YMCA and residents of the nearby nursing home. Ideally this would be composed of buildings with shops and offices below and living quarters above.
- The site should be clearly divided into private [red] and public [blue/green] uses.
- Fill in the pond and replace it with a multifunction public facility, with space for uses including the parks and recreation department, a dance facility and a rentable event venue. This facility, as well as a farmers' market and a clear play area, would be located close to the parking lot for accessibility. The parks and recreation department would move from its current location close to the police and fire departments to this site, where it could be openly used by all residents.
- Include bioretention ponds south of the parking lot as well as in a 30-foot buffer along the southwest border of the site.
- South of the site, extend the existing park's sports facilities north into the site, to provide a continuation of sports courts and fields.
- The existing footpaths should be expanded and given clear signage and should be used as a nature education opportunity for the nearby elementary school and for the public. Beehives and bird feeders could be sprinkled throughout the park.
- Possible parking spots at neighborhood access points could be included.

TEAM KERI: CONCEPT NO. 1

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS



KEY COMPONENTS AND TAKEAWAYS:

- The site should allow for collaboration with the school and provide for future school expansion.
- Teacher and other workforce housing should be part of the otherwise commercial uses at Legion Road.
- Relocate the access drive across from Europa Drive.
- Reuse part of the pond as an amphitheater.
- Reconfigure the existing drive and parking.
- The new site design should include the reestablishment of existing pedestrian paths and the Boy Scout amphitheater.
- Separate the water pond for fishing or other recreational use.
- Accommodate the integration of community programs like the Chapel Hill Farmer's Market and Kidzu.
- Consider reusing portions of the existing building.

TEAM JARED: CONCEPT NO. 2

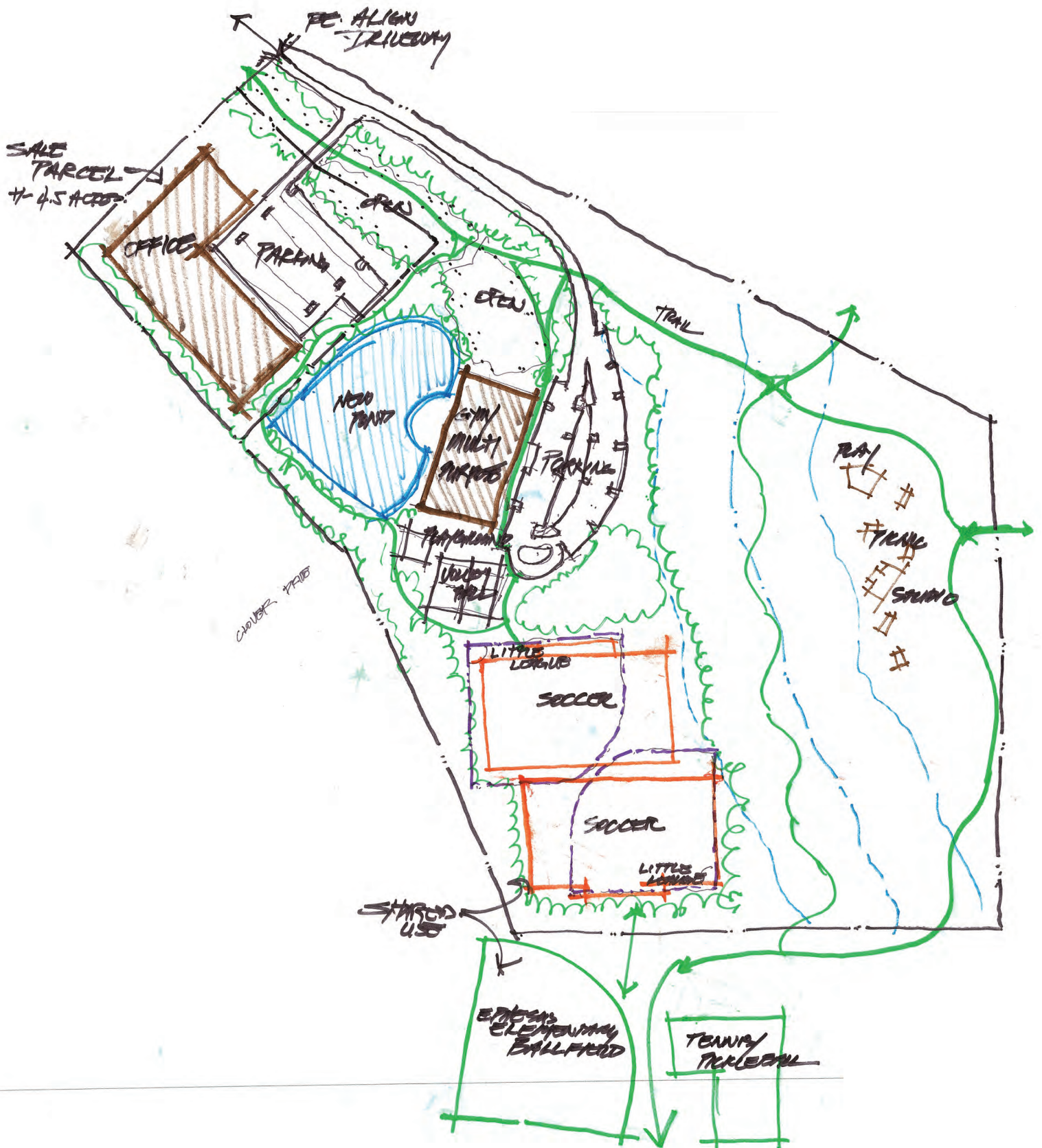
MIXED USES AND PARTNER OPPORTUNITIES

KEY COMPONENTS AND TAKEAWAYS:

- Keep as much green space as possible, including some open-play, multi-use fields.
- The fields would ideally be at the south end of the park, where they can be shared with the school.
- The pond is an amenity, although it can be reconstructed and made smaller.
- Create a multi-purpose community building that can accommodate a gymnasium, meeting space, dance floor, indoor table tennis, indoor pickleball and other community events.
- Develop a robust walking trail system.
- Develop a greenway that connects through the site from Ephesus Church Road to Legion Road, with a crosswalk at Europa Drive.
- Shift the driveway so that it aligns with Europa Drive.
- It is acceptable to sell four to five acres along the Legion Road frontage for development of some type.
- The development parcel should be at the northwest corner of the property and oriented such that it does not comprise more than 50% of the Legion Road frontage. The goal is to maintain views of the park.
- Provide adequate parking for the proposed uses, but share parking with the potential development parcel in the front of the property, and explore shared parking opportunities with the Europa Center.

TEAM DAN: CONCEPT NO. 3

SHARED SCHOOL LIFE



KEY COMPONENTS AND TAKEAWAYS:

- Place a 24-court pickleball complex roughly in the southern third of the property.
- Build an expanded community center building with two gymnasiums, in order to accommodate indoor play and tournaments.
- Provide additional parking.
- Place a stand-alone restroom building near the pickleball courts.
- The loss of one open play field in the southern end of the property could accommodate the pickleball courts.

TEAM DAN: CONCEPT NO. 4

PICKLEBALL SCHEME

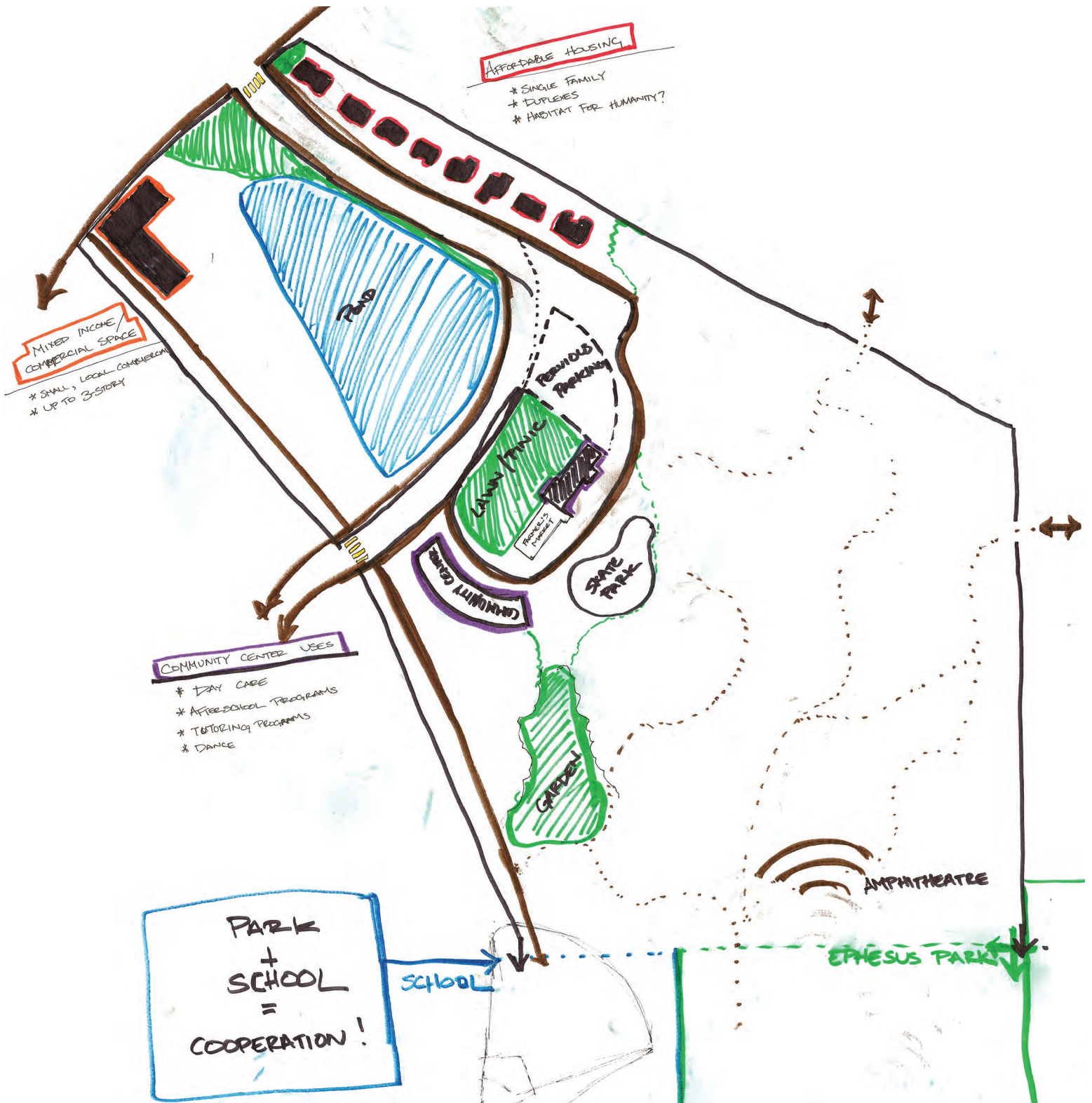


KEY COMPONENTS AND TAKEAWAYS:

- The majority of the space should remain green.
- Keep the pond if it is feasible to do so.
- Collaborate with the school and with the parks and recreation department to create partnerships and shared spaces.
- The site focus should be community-oriented.
- If commercial or retail is needed, the stores should be affordable and mirror the needs of the community.
- Formalize the trails and have them maintained by parks and recreation.
- Be sure to emphasize slower traffic. If cars must pass through, make sure the site design discourages speed.
- Build a community center that offers adult classes as well as afterschool programs.
- Partner with home-building organizations like Habitat for Humanity to build affordable housing.
- Provide a permanent Chapel Hill Farmer's Market facility in the bones of the existing building.

TEAM ASHLEY: CONCEPT NO. 5

GREEN OASIS AND CONNECTIVITY

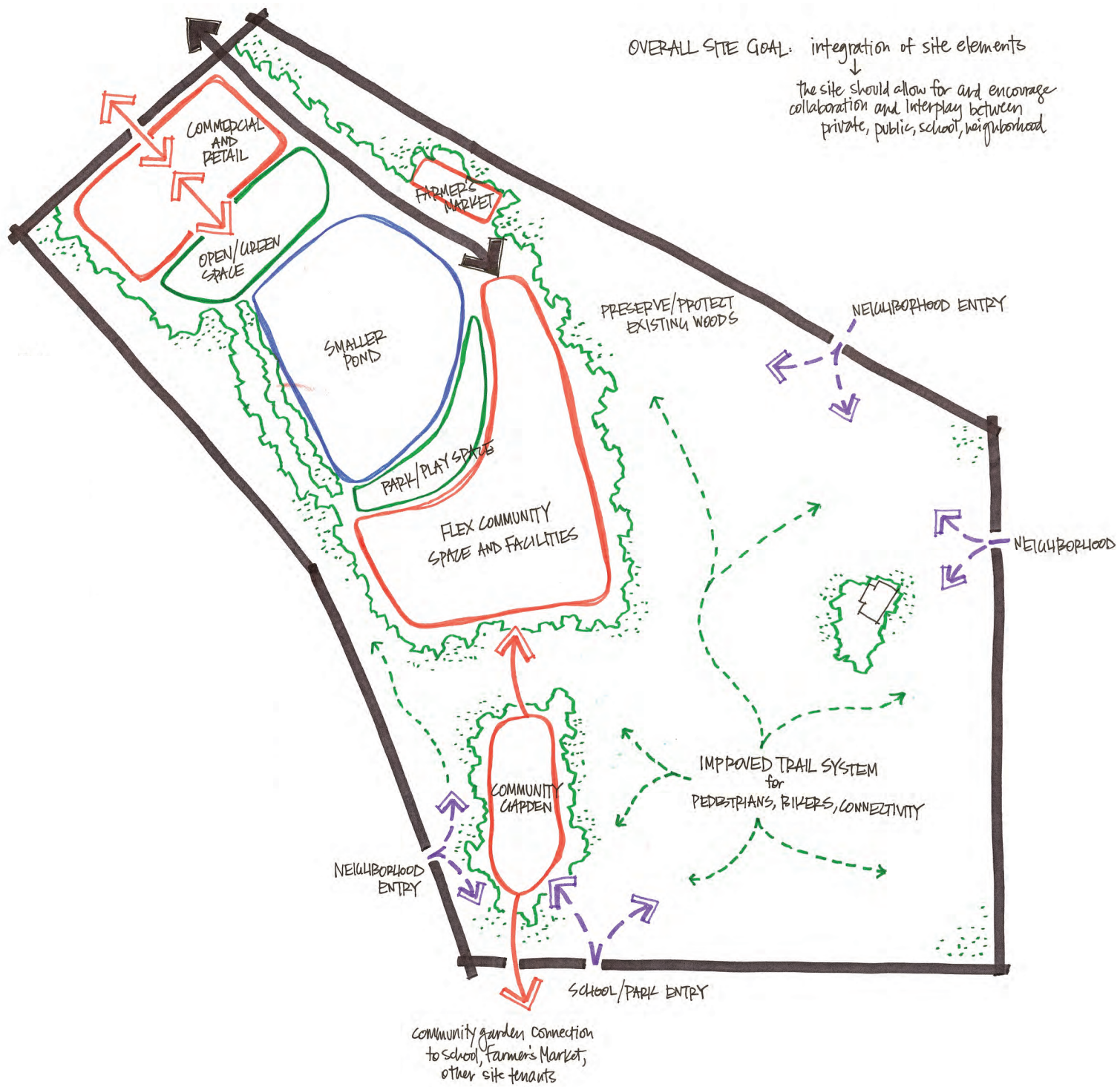


KEY COMPONENTS AND TAKEAWAYS:

- The site should allow for and encourage collaboration and interplay between private and public, for-profit and non-profit, school and neighborhood.
- It is acceptable to build commercial and retail space on Legion Road to allow for the development and maintenance of the public amenities on the rest of the site.
- The commercial and retail should relate in form and in use to the buildings across Legion Road, and to the pond and the rest of the site. A restaurant or cafe would be a nice use against the pond.
- Keep the pond as a site amenity, but make it smaller.
- Provide space for the Chapel Hill Farmer's Market, either on the site's northeast edge or in the space between commercial uses and the pond.
- Preserve the existing trees.
- Improve the trail system to serve pedestrians, hikers and bikers, and to improve connectivity between the surrounding school, park and neighborhoods.
- Build a community garden on the clearing where the baseball field used to be, and use it to make connections to the school, the Farmer's Market and the community.
- Build a community center facility that includes flex space to serve multiple community constituencies. Uses should include recreation, meeting space, afterschool programs, arts and performances, low-cost venue rentals, and a combined daycare for young children and seniors.
- Build structured or underground parking, so that the site has as little asphalt as possible.

TEAM LINDSEY: CONCEPT NO. 6

SITE-BASED COLLABORATIONS AND BROAD PUBLIC BENEFIT

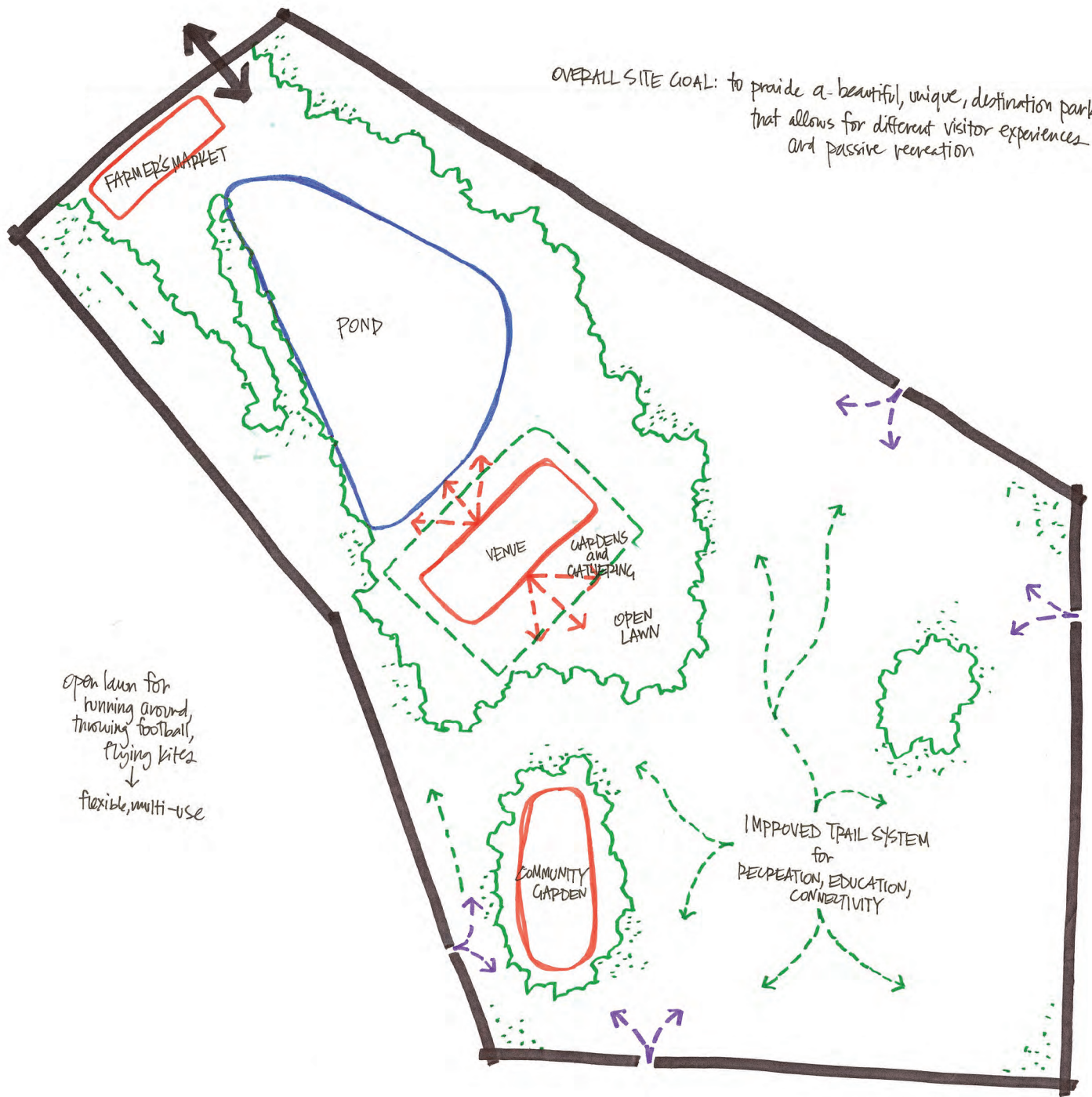


KEY COMPONENTS AND TAKEAWAYS:

- The site should be a beautiful, unique, public destination park that allows for different visitor experiences and passive recreation.
- Keep the pond as a site amenity.
- Build partnerships with local schools, universities and non-profits to make the site into a learning laboratory about nature and the environment.
- Use the existing woods and new gardens as visitor amenities and as educational opportunities.
- Keep and improve the trail system for recreation and connectivity.
- Build a community garden with connections to the school and to the educational mission of the site.
- Build a unique event venue that fits the site and creates revenue through rentals.
- Build spaces for gathering.
- Maintain an open lawn for running around, picnicking, throwing a football, flying kites and other uses.
- Allow for the Chapel Hill Farmer's Market to build a location on Legion Road and to connect to the rest of the site.

TEAM LINDSEY: CONCEPT NO. 7

BEAUTIFUL PUBLIC PARK



Charrette visitors were asked to list their top goals for the site on Post-It notes and to stick them to the wall. The notes fit roughly into three categories: *Guidelines and Principles*, *Connectivity*, and *Desired Uses*. Following are the themes or suggestions that rose to the top in each category.

GUIDELINES & PRINCIPLES

This category includes suggestions intended to guide broad aspects of the site development and design. Refer to Appendix F for the table that lists full comments.

25 notes expressed interest in principles that would govern the design of the site. Of those, 14 were concerned about following sound environmental practices, and 11 offered design suggestions for features like potential viewsheds and landmarks.

17 notes expressed a preference that the site remain passive and peaceful.

13 notes shared suggestions and concerns about covering the costs of site design and development.

11 notes urged public, civic use of the property.

6 notes shared thoughts about site maintenance and potential partnerships.

3 notes expressed a concern about traffic.

2 notes expressed a hope that the site would serve a diverse cross-section of the community.

CONNECTIVITY

This category includes suggestions about site accessibility. Refer to Appendix F for the table that lists full comments.

13 notes offered suggestions for neighborhood connections.

7 notes pushed for walkability, bikeability and multi-modal site access.

2 notes offered opinions about car access.

POST-IT NOTE TAKEAWAYS

DESIRED USES

This category breaks down the most common ideas for potential site uses. Refer to Appendix F for the table that lists full comments.

42 notes: passive recreation such as trails, parkland, natural areas and lawn

19 notes: Chapel Hill Farmer's Market location

18 notes: programmed outdoor recreation such as skate park and sports fields

15 notes: children's play such as splash pads, playgrounds and natural play

9 notes: outdoor performance venue

9 notes: housing, particularly affordable and workforce housing

7 notes: educational uses such as service-learning, afterschool and vocational

6 notes: community center

5 notes: food options such as permanent cafes or space for food trucks

4 notes: outdoor gathering and picnic spaces

4 notes: Kidzu location

4 notes: cemetery expansion

3 notes: indoor recreation space

3 notes: arts facility

2 notes each: dog park, venue rental, commercial uses and combined child and senior daycare

The charrette table discussions and Post-It suggestions generated a wealth of creative and exciting ideas for the development of the American Legion property. The full concept descriptions on the previous pages, and the Post-It and table notes listed in full in Appendix F, capture the breadth of views expressed and conversations held.

Following are the most common themes and concepts that emerged from across all forms of feedback.

PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT

Consider small-scale development along Legion Road, to benefit the whole town and to generate revenue for the maintenance of the rest of the property.

PARK

Protect the environment and the natural character of the site, while also providing space for active recreational amenities.

ACCESS

Limit car access to the site, and improve bicycle and pedestrian connectivity.

PARTNERSHIPS

Focus on partnerships with local institutions such as the Chapel Hill Farmer's Market, Kidzu, Ephesus Elementary School and the YMCA.

COMMON THEMES & CONCEPTS



American Legion Public Input Fall 2017

Project Background: The Chapel Hill Town Council in December 2016 agreed to purchase the American Legion property for \$7.9 million. The Town Council anticipated that the site — through public amenity, private partnerships, and a mix of uses — could serve local quality of life and integrate with the Town's larger vision for future development in northeast Chapel Hill. Council initiated a public engagement process, led by the American Legion Task Force and Coulter Jewell Thames, PA, a landscape architecture firm, to learn about the community's interests in the site and to begin developing a vision for how the site can best serve the community and the future of Chapel Hill.

The engagement process kicked off with a public design charrette on April 8, 2017. At this charrette a list of potential uses for the site was identified. After the charrette, the Task Force met numerous times and developed Development Principles for the property.

At this time, the Town of Chapel Hill seeks your input to help the Task Force further prioritize the list of uses possible at the site as it moves forward with the property purchase. It is important to note that this not the last chance for public input. As the Council moves forward with decisions regarding the site there will be further opportunity for comment.

>>Insert Location Map

>>Insert Site Analysis Map

Question 1: Tell us about yourself:

If you provide an email you will be added to a list of people interested in receiving further information about the property.

Name:

Address (optional)

Email address (optional)

Question 2: How many adults live in your home (1, 2, 3, 4+)

Question 3: How many children live in your home (0, 1, 2, 3, 4+)

Question 4: At the April charrette, a range of uses were identified including:

- Passive recreation such as trails, parkland and natural area
- Lawn for open play (frisbee, kites, throwing footballs, etc.)
- Outdoor gathering and picnic spaces
- Farmer's market
- Event venue-rental opportunity
- Athletic fields and courts including pickle ball
- Skate park
- Other programmed outdoor recreation
- Playground
- Splash pad
- Children's natural play
- Outdoor performance venue/amphitheater
- Affordable housing
- Workforce housing
- Senior housing
- Other housing
- Educational uses-service-learning, afterschool, vocational
- Community center
- Cafes/ eateries
- Space for food trucks
- Children's museum
- Cemetery expansion
- Indoor recreation space
- Cultural/ arts facility — classroom and makerspace
- Dog park
- Child and senior daycare (combined)
- Commercial and retail uses
- Pool (indoor/ outdoor)
- Community garden
- Boy Scout amphitheater (preserved)
- Dance studio (preserved or replaced)
- Nursing home/ assisted living
- Parks & Recreation administrative offices

Please list your top three choices for use of the site below. Choices can be from the above list or others not on the list. (Open ended question)

Question 5: This list of questions below has been developed based on Task Force's Development Principles and will be used by the Task Force to prioritize uses for the Council's consideration. To assist this prioritization, please rank the questions with the most important factor to consider each use's priority on top to least important on the list. Your ranking will help determine which questions should be given the most weight as the Task Force develops its prioritized list uses for the Council's consideration.

How well does the use meet existing town needs based on Town of Chapel Hill Parks and Recreation data?

Is the use compatible with neighboring uses taking into account impacts from noise, light, traffic, etc.?

Does the use support a variety of uses on the site?

Will the use be open to Chapel Hill Residents of all abilities and income levels?

Can the use be provided a cost that is affordable to all Chapel Hill residents?

Will the use support a healthy lifestyle by providing physical and athletic opportunities?

Does the use encourage interactions with nature?

How sustainable or green is the use?

Question 6: Do you have other thoughts or comments regarding the American Legion that you would like to share with the Task Force and Town Council? (open ended)

American Legion Task Force
Draft Use Evaluation Questions

	0 not at all	1	2	3	4	5 completely
2. Is the use compatible with neighboring uses taking into account impacts from noise, light, traffic, etc.?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Does the use support a variety of uses on the site?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Will the use be open to Chapel Hill Residents of all abilities and income levels?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. Can the use be provided a cost that is affordable to all Chapel Hill residents?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. Will the use support a healthy lifestyle by providing physical and athletic opportunities?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. Does the use encourage interactions with nature?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. How sustainable or green is the use?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Technical/Quantitative Considerations:

1. How well the use meets programming needs of the Chapel Hill Parks & Recreation Department
2. Level of public interest in the use (as gauged by online survey or public meeting)
3. Cost – order of magnitude
4. Acreage requirement
5. Other site suitability factors

Guiding Principles for Evaluating Town-Owned Properties

(Town Properties Task Force, April 2017)

Should the Town Dispose of Property?

- Consider disposal if the property has no significant public value, results in high costs to the Town, or private ownership would bring new value to the community.
- Disposal/repurposing decisions should take into account current and anticipated future Town facilities and infrastructure needs.
- Do not dispose of Town properties solely for cash, except when proceeds will be invested to support strategic initiatives or when no “public use” is appropriate. Disposition should always further the Town’s strategic goals.
- A public benefit can be gained by land-banking publically-owned properties until such time as they may be needed, even if no use is anticipated for such properties at the present time.
- Property disposition shall be guided by Town Council-adopted community plans, and shall focus first on uses not likely to occur through dynamics of the private real estate market alone.
- Make properties available at below market rates, as low as \$1, for uses that support public interests such as affordable housing. In such cases, the acquirer must demonstrate that it needs this in-kind subsidy.
- Utilize independent financial analysis to make informed decisions.
- Consider the full economic value—sale proceeds plus projected property and sales tax revenues—in making disposition decisions.
- Actively seek out and consider input from stakeholder groups. Maximize opportunities to collaborate with other public organizations to share resources and facilities.
- The Town should not accept donations of real property unless there is a significant public benefit.

If Disposal Makes Sense, How Should the Town Proceed?

- Disposition will be in accordance with North Carolina General Statutes, meaning that *most* property sales will go through a public request for proposals or upset bid process. Certain uses, such as affordable housing, may allow for private negotiated sale.
- Insofar as possible, the Town should use long-term leases (50+ years) rather than outright sales in order to preserve control over uses and allow the possibility of reversion to the Town in the future.
- Consider land swaps/trades.
- The Town shall establish a disposition process that screens potential purchasers to ensure that they are qualified (track record) to carry out the development proposed. Even then, Town should reserve a right of reversion/re-purchase if buyer does not deliver the proposed use within certain period of time from acquisition.
- The Town should have the flexibility to acquire adjacent property in order to maximize the financial or programmatic value of Town-owned sites prior to disposition.

Summary of Recommended Uses **for Specific Town-Owned Properties**

Address Town Needs

- A-1 **6900 Millhouse Rd.** (east side of road between Chapel Hill Transit Center and Town Operations Center)
- A-3 **Fire Station #4**, 101 Weaver Dairy Rd. Ext. at intersection with Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
- C-7 **Fire Station #3**, 1615 E. Franklin St. at intersection with Elliott Road

Affordable Housing

- A-4 **2200 Homestead Rd.**
- C-8 **Parks and Recreation Department Office**, 200 Plant Rd.
- D-13 **Open space in the Northside area (small tract)**, south of Village Drive and west and south of Jay Street

Create Community Space

- F-22 **Old Post Office**, 179 E. Franklin St.

Create Downtown Destination

- E-16 **Parking Lot**, 415 W. Franklin St.
- F-20 **Parking Lot #2**, 100 E. Rosemary St. at intersection with Columbia Street

Expand Downtown Parking

- F-21 **Wallace Parking Deck**, 150 E. Rosemary St.

Further Economic Development

- A-1 **6850 Millhouse Rd.** (west side of road)

Green Space / Greenways

- B-5 **Open space known as the Dry Creek properties**, Southwest corner of Erwin Road and I-40
- B-6 **Open space known as the Dry Creek properties**, Southeast corner of Erwin Road and I-40
- D-13 **Open space in the Northside area (large tract)**, south of Village Drive, west and south of Jay Street, and east of the Norfolk Southern Railroad
- G-10 **Open Space – Mount Carmel Church Rd.**, near the intersection of Bennett Road and Mt. Carmel Church Road

Land Bank for Future Use

- A-2 **Eubanks Road Park and Ride Lot**, 200 Eubanks Rd.
- C-9 **Police Center**, 828 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
- G-11 **Southern Community Park Parcels**, 100 Sumac Rd. area
- G-12 **Open Space**, 1610 US 15-501 South

Wait for Future Parking Plan

- E-14 **Parking Lot**, 604 W. Rosemary St.
- E-15 **Parking Lot**, 108 Graham St.
- E-18 **Parking Lot**, 127 W. Rosemary St.

Common Uses and Community Wants/Needs

Identified by Town Properties Task Force and American Legion Task Force

	TPTF Priority Uses	ALTF Potential Uses
Passive recreation such as trails, parkland and natural areas / Open space for preservation of stream corridors, wildlife corridors, and trails	X	X
Lawn for open play (frisbee, kites, throwing footballs, etc.)	[Recreation including indoor facilities, and outdoor facilities, such as playing fields]	X
Athletic fields and courts		X
Community center		X
Indoor recreation space		X
Outdoor gathering and picnic spaces		X
Skate park		X
Other programmed outdoor recreation		X
Playground		X
Splash pad		X
Children's natural play		X
Pool (indoor/ outdoor)		X
Community garden		X
Pickleball courts		X
Gymnasium (as part of community center)		X
Dog park		X
Performance Venue	X	X (Amphitheater)
Children's museum	X	X
Classroom and makerspace	X	X
Gallery Space	X	
Affordable housing / Workforce housing / Mixed Income	X	X
Cafes/ eateries	X	X
Commercial and retail uses	X	X
Town government offices	X	X (P&R Admin)
Land banking (hold for future community needs not yet anticipated)	X	X?
Affordable entrepreneurial office space	X	X?
Affordable office/retail space for nonprofits	X	X?
Farmer's market		X
Event venue — rental opportunity		X
Educational uses — service-learning, afterschool, vocational		X
Space for food trucks		X
Cemetery expansion		X

Child and senior daycare (combined)		X
Boy Scout amphitheater (preserved)		X
Dance studio (preserved or replaced)		X
Nursing home/ assisted living		X
Market uses in high-value locations, such as corner retail	X	
Schools	X	
Infrastructure such as stormwater (serving multiple site)	X	
Parking (serving multiple site)	X	