

CITY OF MOUNT HOLLY
2014 CITY COUNCIL RETREAT
FEBRUARY 6 AND 7
LOCATION: Former A&E Administration Building
545 Highland Street, Mount Holly, NC 28120

Thursday, February 6, 2014

- 9:00a.m. Call to Order
Ground Rules, Schedule and Parking Lot Items
- 9:15a.m. Discussion of Downtown Drainage Study
- 10:00a.m. Update regarding water and waste water treatment
- 11:30a.m. Discussion of City Owned Properties/Real Estate Update
- 12:15p.m. Lunch on site – Open Discussion if Needed
- 1:00p.m. Discussion of Visioning Plan Process
- 2:00p.m. Discussion of Sign Ordinance/Community Bulletin Board
- 3:00p.m. E-911 Dispatch Proposal
- 4:00p.m. City Council Round Table
- 5:00p.m. Adjourn
- 6:00p.m. Thursday Night Social-Dinner at Kemp's Place

Friday, February 7, 2014

- 9:00 Reconvene if needed

Topic: Downtown Drainage

Issue: A follow-up to the USI drainage study as presented previously to the Council. Conclude study of drainage facilities impacted by the August 2011 storm event

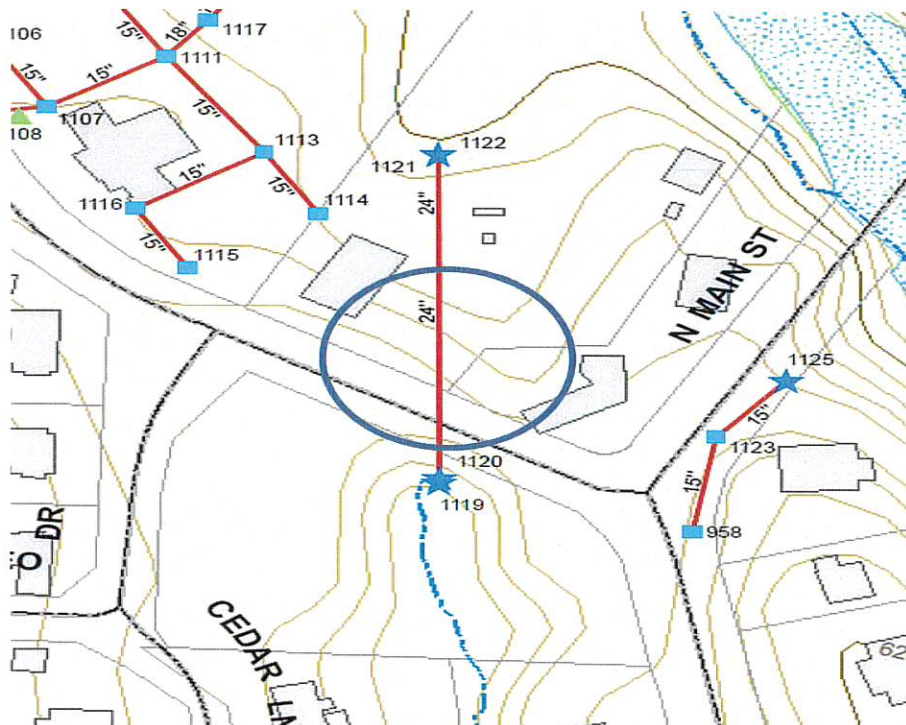
Department: Utilities / City Engineer

Action Statement: Provide project recommendations that will help reduce the flooding potential downtown based on current City and NCDOT regulations governing storm drainage design

Recommendations: 1. **Woodlawn Drainage System** – current drainage system causes water to back-up toward downtown.

Construct a downstream control structure that allows additional flow from the existing NCDOT 42" pipe to outlet downstream.

COST ESTIMATE: \$40,000



Woodlawn Avenue

Ex. NCDOT pipe culvert required to handle a 50-yr storm
Construct an overflow control structure downstream of NCDOT
culvert to match flow

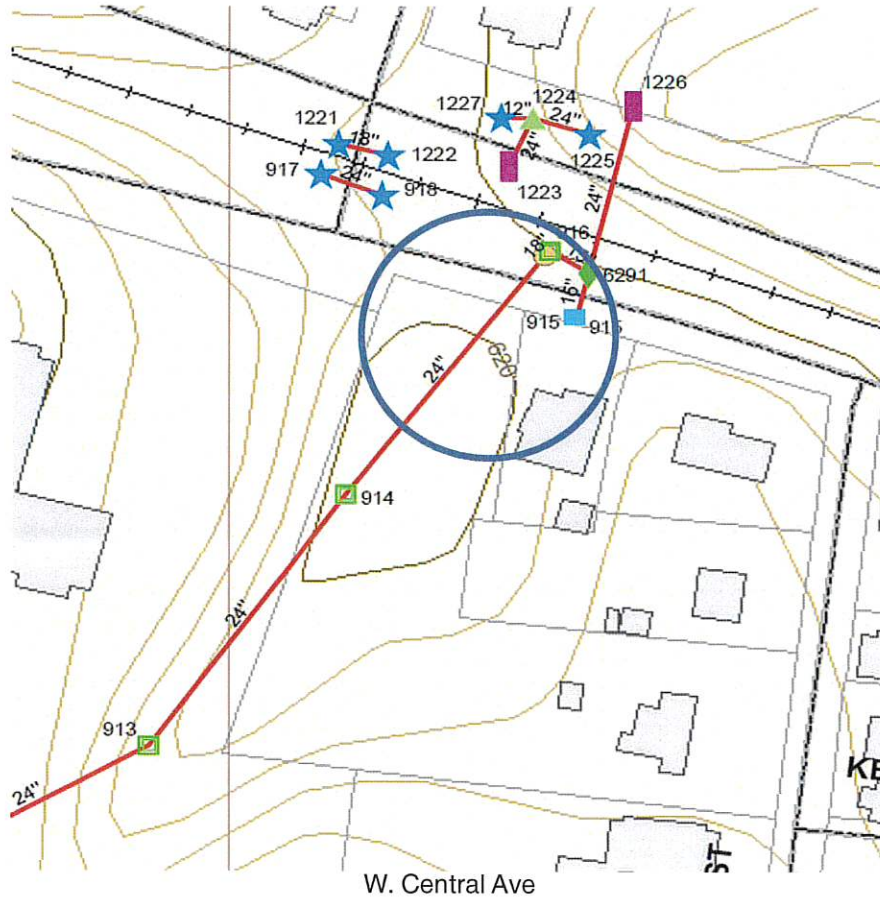
Budget: \$40,000

2.

2. W. Central Avenue Drainage System – current system remains a maintenance problem which may result in clogging and potential overflow to the downtown area

Construct an upstream control structure that manages the quantity of flow through the existing drainage system and help avoid clogging

COST ESTIMATE: \$50,000



Construct a designed control structure for a 25-yr storm event to manage flow and reduce/eliminate potential of clogging and reduce/eliminate potential of overflow to downtown area

BUDGET: \$50,000

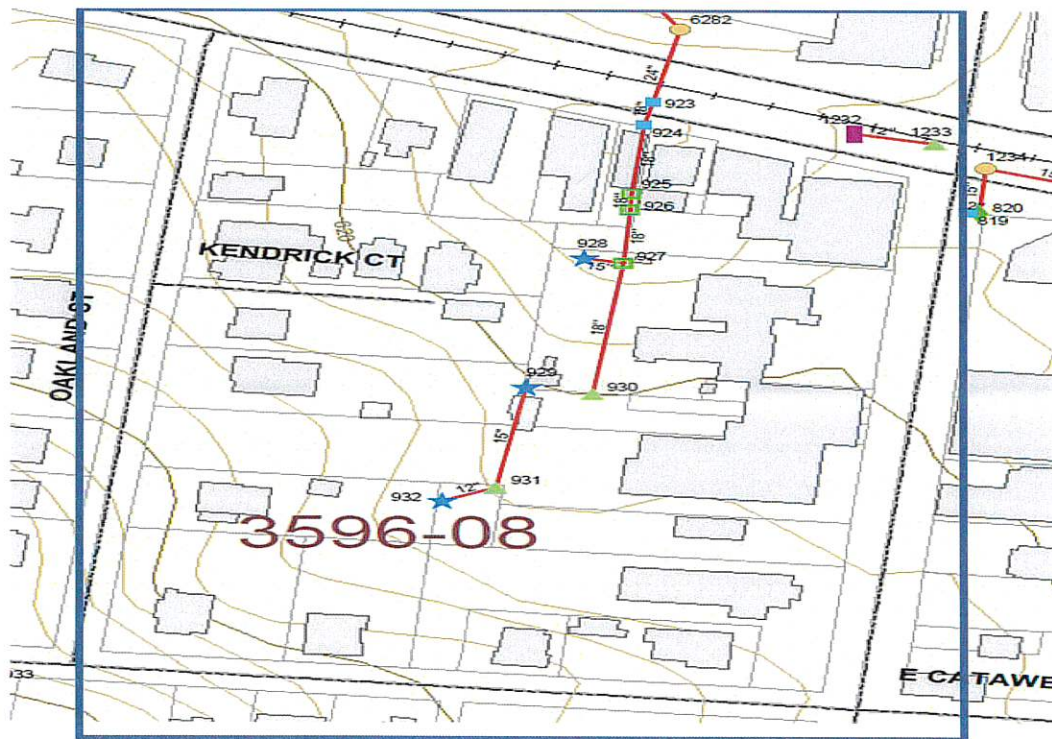
3. Downtown Drainage System: the existing system is adequate for a 25-yr storm event which is consistent with current regulations.

There will be flooding for a 25-yr storm but by eliminating the overflow from W. Central, the flooding would be minimized.

The drainage area contributing to the existing system consists of substantial impervious surfaces including parking lots.

Provide technical guidance and work with private property owners to replace the impervious surfaces with alternative approaches designed to reduce the runoff quantity to the existing drainage system. This will further diminish flooding heights based on a 25-yr storm event

COST ESTIMATE: soft costs i.e. surveying, soil testing; staff time



Downtown Drainage

Current drainage system will have ponding water in W. Central Ave
Based on a 25-yr. storm event and 1-building will take in water

Recommendation: reduce the amount of impervious surface
i.e. pavement to reduce flow and reduce the flooding potential

Course of Action:

Request Council's endorsement of recommendations and proceed with implementation.

Budget Impact:

Include projects in FY '14-'15 Budget

Topic: Update Land Development Guidelines

Issue: The City Land Development Guidelines have not been updated since 2006.

Department: Utilities / City Engineer

Action Statement: Revise the land development guidelines and standards for our infrastructure including right-of-way improvements, drainage, stormwater management, water, and sewer facilities to incorporate internal technical changes made over the years, to clarify standard details, to promote better project design layouts, and to reflect current land development approaches which will reduce vehicle speeds within newly designed residential neighborhoods.

Major Revisions: Reduce preferred design speed of 30 mph to 25 mph as a maximum
Reduce the residential street width from 28-ft. back of curb to back of curb to 24-ft.

Course of Action: Circulate a complete updated Land Development Guidelines manual to all City Departments for input and discussion.
Seek Council's adoption of the revised Land Development Guidelines manual FY '13-'14.

Budget Impact: None

Mount Holly Land Development Guidelines – Local Residential Streets

The purpose of this chart is to illustrate proposed roadway design changes that would promote safe speeds within residential neighborhoods, reduce stormwater quality and quantity issues, and be more consistent with the watershed protected area overlay districts.

Mount Holly 2014

<u>DESIGN CRITERIA</u>	<u>CURRENT</u>	<u>PROPOSED</u>
Design Speed	30 mph	25 mph
Minimum Sight Distance	200-ft	150-ft
Minimum Centerline Radius	200-ft	100-ft
Tangent between Horizontal Curves	----	50-ft
Crown Cross-slope	1/4" per ft	1/4" per ft
Maximum Grade	10%	10%
Minimum Grade w/ valley curb	1%	1%
Minimum Grade w/ swales	-----	2%
K Crest / Sag Vertical Curves	20 / 40	20 / 20
Grade @ Intersection	5% in 100-ft	5% in 100-ft
Minimum Intersection Radius	-----	25-ft
Sidewalks	5-ft	5-ft
Cul-de-sacs Radli Pav't / ROW	35-ft / 50-ft	35-ft / 50-ft
Maximum Length of cul-de-sac	500-ft	800-ft
Offset Intersections	200-ft	125-ft
Sight Triangle Local to Local	35-ft x 35-ft	35-ft x 35-ft
Sight Triangle Local to Other	35-ft. x 70-ft.	35-ft. x 70-ft.
Total Travel Lanes Width / ROW	24-ft / 50-ft	20-ft / 50-ft
Pavement Section	1"-2"-7"	1½"-2"-7"

Topic: Stormwater Systems Ordinance

Issue: Reinforce current laws, ordinances and regulations to define storm drainage as a utility within the City which has over 50% of the roads with ditch conveyance systems.

Department: Utilities / City Engineer

Action Statement: Prepare a comprehensive storm drainage ordinance to protect the public health, safety, and welfare by preventing the introduction of potentially harmful materials into the City storm drainage system; to protect property from potential stormwater damage; to maintain and enhance water quality; to meet the requirements of the City's NPDES permit; and to establish the administrative and enforcement procedures.

Major Provisions:

- Define ownership, operation, and maintenance responsibilities of storm drainage systems within and beyond public rights-of-ways.
- Exempt residential homes from paying the stormwater fee and revise the equivalent residential unit calculation for non-residential uses. Fund storm drainage projects through water and sewer rates and fees.
- Elevate the importance of prohibiting illicit discharge to stormwater systems
- Establish a stormwater prioritization worksheet to evaluate drainage improvement projects
- Expand current laws/regulations requiring any proposed improvements within public rights-of-ways be permitted by the City.
- Formalize storm drainage as a defined utility within the Utility Department
- Establish remedies, penalties and enforcement options for violations of any provision of the Stormwater Systems Ordinance.

Course of Action: Circulate the proposed Stormwater Systems Ordinance to all City Departments for input and discussion.

The proposed ordinance has been reviewed by the City Attorney.

Seek Council's adoption of the Stormwater Systems Ordinance, 2014.

Budget Impact: Budget neutral

<u>Existing Ordinances / Laws</u>	<u>Stormwater Systems Ordinance</u> Strengthens and/or expands existing laws / ordinances
<u>Mount Holly Code of Laws</u> Section 8-6 Garbage, Refuse and Waste (d) Other Limitations. No person shall throw, dispose of or sweep from any household, yard, sidewalk or elsewhere, any garbage, rubbish, dirt, refuse or similar matter into a storm drain, manhole, gutter, center strip, any other stormwater conveyance system (ditches, culverts, etc.) or onto a sidewalk or street, but shall deposit the same as herein specified. (4-11-66,1) <u>Mount Holly Code of Laws</u> Section 8-9 Abatement of Public Nuisance (a) The uncontrolled growth of weeds, grass or vines, to a height of eighteen inches (18') or more within one hundred feet (100') of any resident or business.	<u>Section 26-7 Limitations of Responsibility</u> (d) Open Drainage Channel Maintenance- Every person owning or occupying property abutting an open drainage channel or driveway pipe culvert passes shall keep and maintain that part of the drainage channel and culvert free of trash, debris, excessive vegetation, and other obstacles that would pollute, contaminate, or retard the flow of water through the open drainage channel. In addition, the owner or occupant shall maintain existing privately owned structures adjacent to a drainage channel, so that such structures will not become a hazard to the use, function, or physical integrity of the drainage channel or drainage system. (e) To assist property owners, the City may establish a maintenance program to clean driveway pipe culverts and roadside drainage ditches on a revolving yearly schedule. <u>Section 26-8 Unlawful to obstruct flow of stormwater runoff</u> It shall be unlawful for any person to place, cause to be placed or permit to be placed any obstruction on or within any portion of the city's stormwater drainage system. For the purpose of this section an obstruction shall mean anything which by itself or in conjunction with any other thing or things, impede or tend to impede the flow of stormwater.
<u>Mount Holly Code of Laws</u> Section 8-14 Charges for Abatement by City; Lien (a) The actual cost incurred by the City in removing or otherwise remedying a public nuisance pursuant to Sections 8-12 or 8-13 shall be charged to the owner of the offending property, and the owner shall pay these charges within thirty (30) days after receiving from the City a statement of charges.	<u>Section 26-11 Enforcement and Violations</u> (a) Civil Penalties Violation of this Ordinance may subject the violator to a civil penalty to be recovered in a civil action in the nature of a debt if the violator does not pay the penalty within 30 days after notice of the violation is issued by the Stormwater Administrator. Civil penalties may be assessed up to the full amount of penalty to which the City is subject for violations of its Phase II Stormwater permit.

Mount Holly Zoning Ordinance
Section 3.1B Curb Cuts in Business,
Office and Industrial Districts

Entrances and exits to public streets shall be placed and constructed in accordance with the "Policy on Street and Driveway Access to North Carolina Highways" adopted by NCDOT, as amended. Entrance and exits to state system streets shall require a permit issued by the Public Works Director.

Section 26-9 Driveway and Right-of-way Permit
and Maintenance

(b) Any person constructing, reconstructing or altering a residential or non-residential driveway and all other infrastructure improvements within the City right-of-way including but not limited to drainage pipes, sidewalks, curbs, shall apply for and receive a Driveway and Right-of-Way Permit prior to work commencing. Any street or driveway access onto a NCDOT owned roadway shall be permitted in accordance with NCDOT standards, criteria, and requirements.

Schedule of Fees

Stormwater Fee \$2.50/ ERU

Driveway Cut Permit Fee

Residential \$25.00

Commercial \$50.00

Industrial \$100.00

Section 26-5 Stormwater Fee

Stormwater fees may be determined and modified from time to time by the Mount Holly City Council so that the total revenue generated by said charges and other sources of revenues or other resources allocated by the City Council to the stormwater management utility shall be sufficient to meet the cost of stormwater management services, systems, and facilities, including but not limited to; the payment of the principal and interest on debt obligations, operating expenses, capital layout, nonoperating expenses, provisions for prudent reserves, and other costs as deemed appropriate by the City Council. The following stormwater service charge rates shall apply:

(a) *Detached single family residential* homes are exempt from paying a service charge under the provisions of the ordinance.

(b) All other developed properties having impervious coverage, including, but not limited to; multifamily residential properties with three or more living units, commercial properties, industrial properties, public and institutional properties, church properties, public and private school properties, and developed vacant properties shall be billed for one equivalent residential unit for each 4,000 square feet or fraction thereof of impervious coverage on the subject property.

Section 26-9 Driveway and Right-of-way Permit
Fee

(c) The standard application, design plans, and associated permit fees must be submitted in its entirety and in duplicate to the Office of the City Engineer for review and approval.

Memo

To: Mayor and City Council
From: Danny J. Jackson, City Manager
Date: 2/3/2014
Re: 2014 City Council Retreat

Thursday, February 6, 2014

Subject: Update regarding water and waste water treatment

The City Attorney and staff will update the City Council regarding both water and waste water treatment for the City of Mount Holly. This will include interaction with the Town of Stanley and the City of Charlotte.

The city's interaction with the Town of Stanley lies with both water and wastewater treatment. We will discuss the current contracts and their obvious implications to the City of Mount Holly.

As you all already know, the Town of Stanley on last year decided to contract with the City of Gastonia for wastewater treatment. We will discuss the latest with that proposal and seek direction from the City Council if necessary.

In regard to water treatment, we also need to anticipate what might happen after the expiration of the five (5) year agreement with the Town of Stanley, approved in 2012. This agreement spoke to a rate reduction to the Town of Stanley, relating to a rate reduction for Buckeye Industries only.

In my opinion, after the agreement of 2012 expires or prior to, the Town of Stanley will seek to make plans to either stop doing with business with us completely or seek another rate reduction, mainly long term. Staff will speak to the implications of both.

In regard to the City of Charlotte, staff will update you all on the status of the proposed wastewater plant and Mount Holly's NPDES Permit Modification.

Memo

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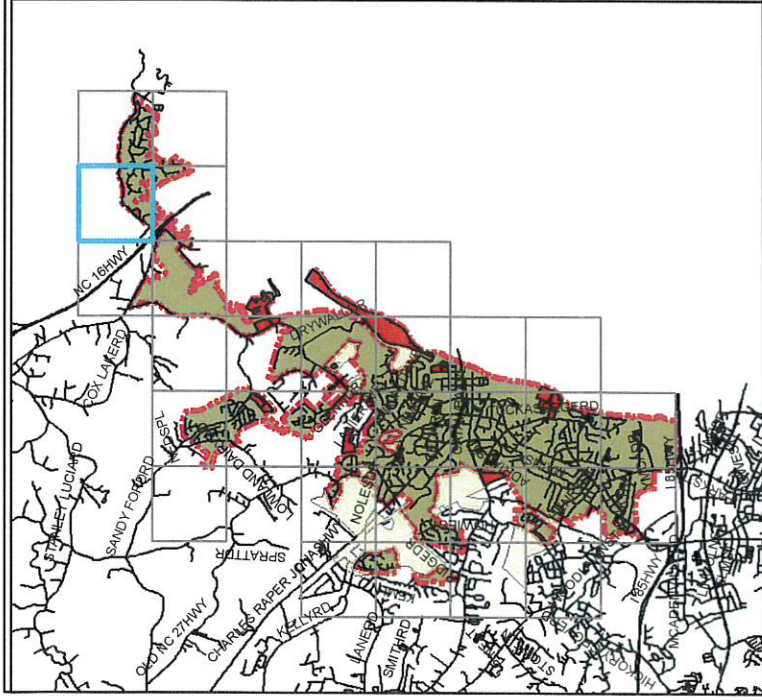
Subject: Discussion of city owned properties – Real Estate update

Please see the enclosed booklet of maps depicting all of the city owned properties in Mount Holly. The maps are comprised of location, size, tax value, utilities, and other notes as needed. This information is for the City Council to use as it sees fit.

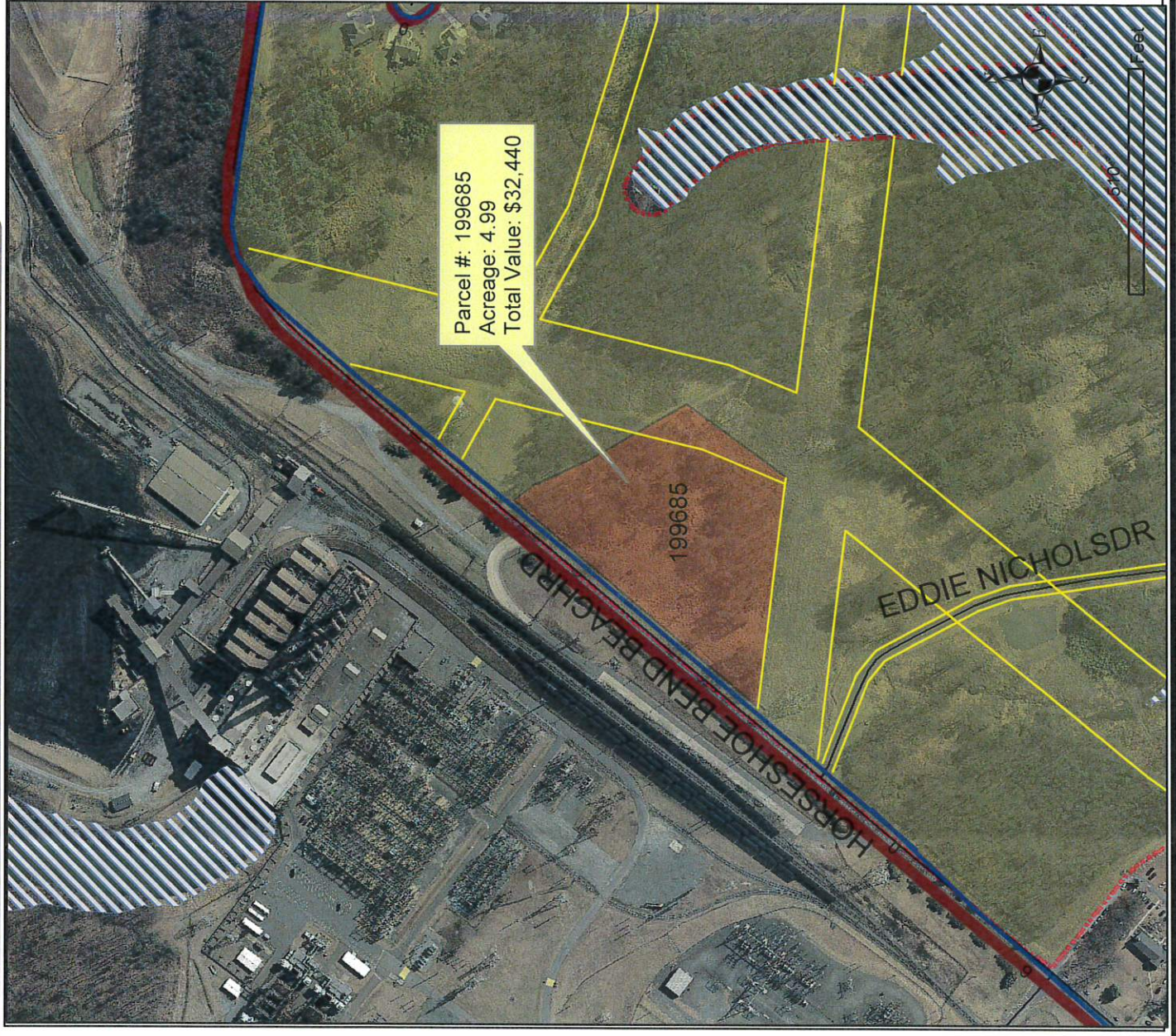
In other real estate news staff will provide updates on properties for sale to the City of Mount Holly and the vacant property in front of the Holiday Inn Express. There will be updates on the North Fire Station and the proposed Public Works Facility.

The City Council is expected to give staff direction as it relates to the properties being discussed. If necessary, staff will provide recommendations accordingly.

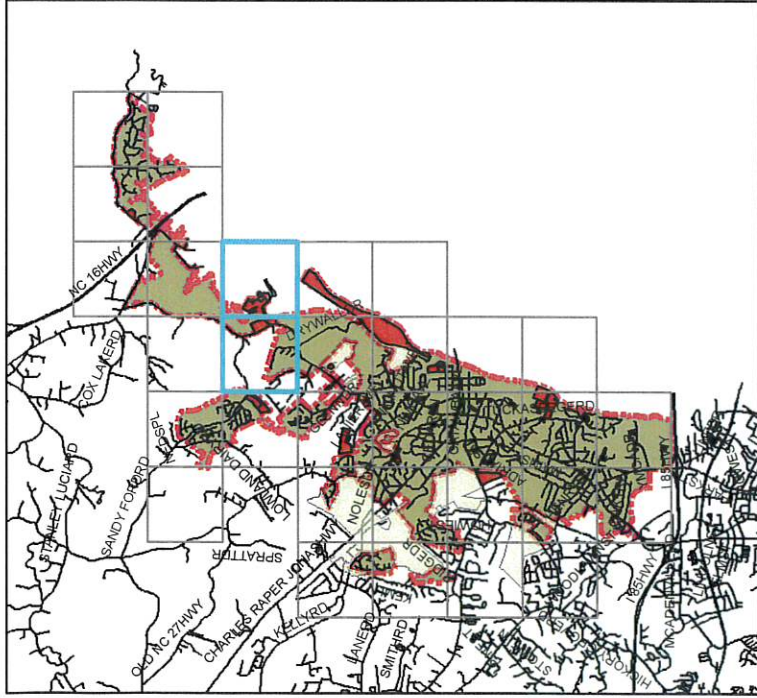
City of Mount Holly Properties 2013



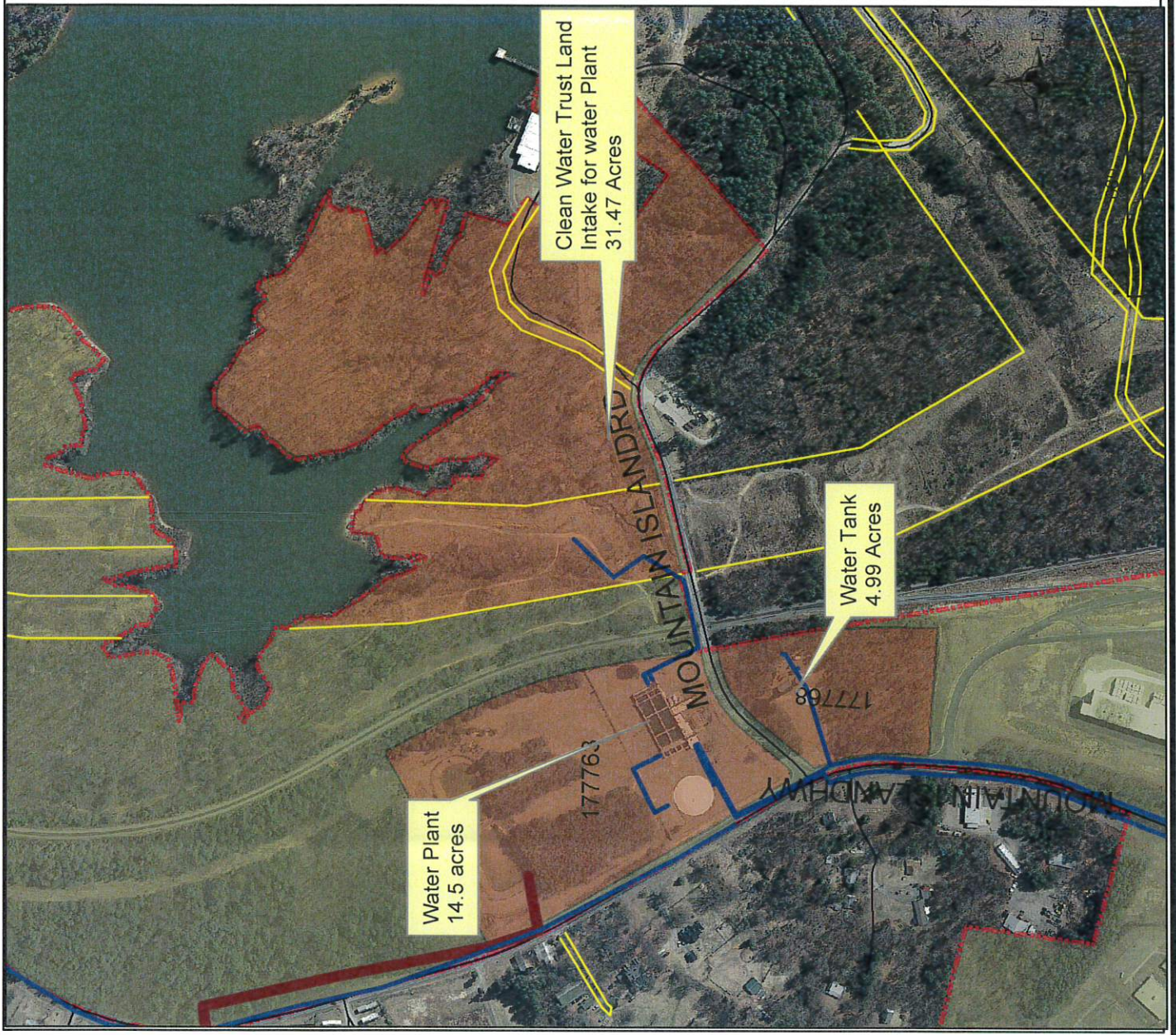
1. Parcel ID- 199685 – former Duke Energy property deeded to the City of Mount Holly, to be used for city or governmental purposes. The Property is Surrounded by Easements and Water and Sewer on the Front side of the property.



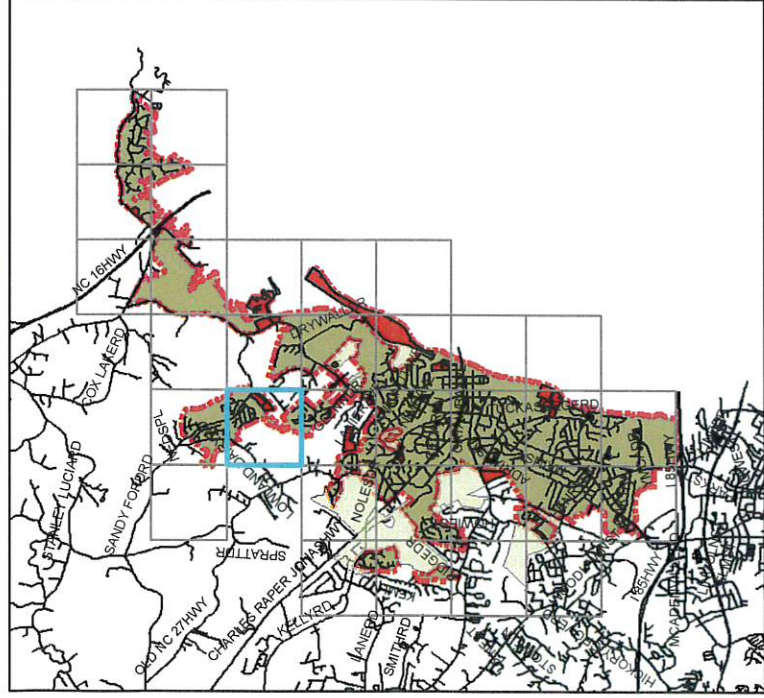
City of Mount Holy Properties 2013



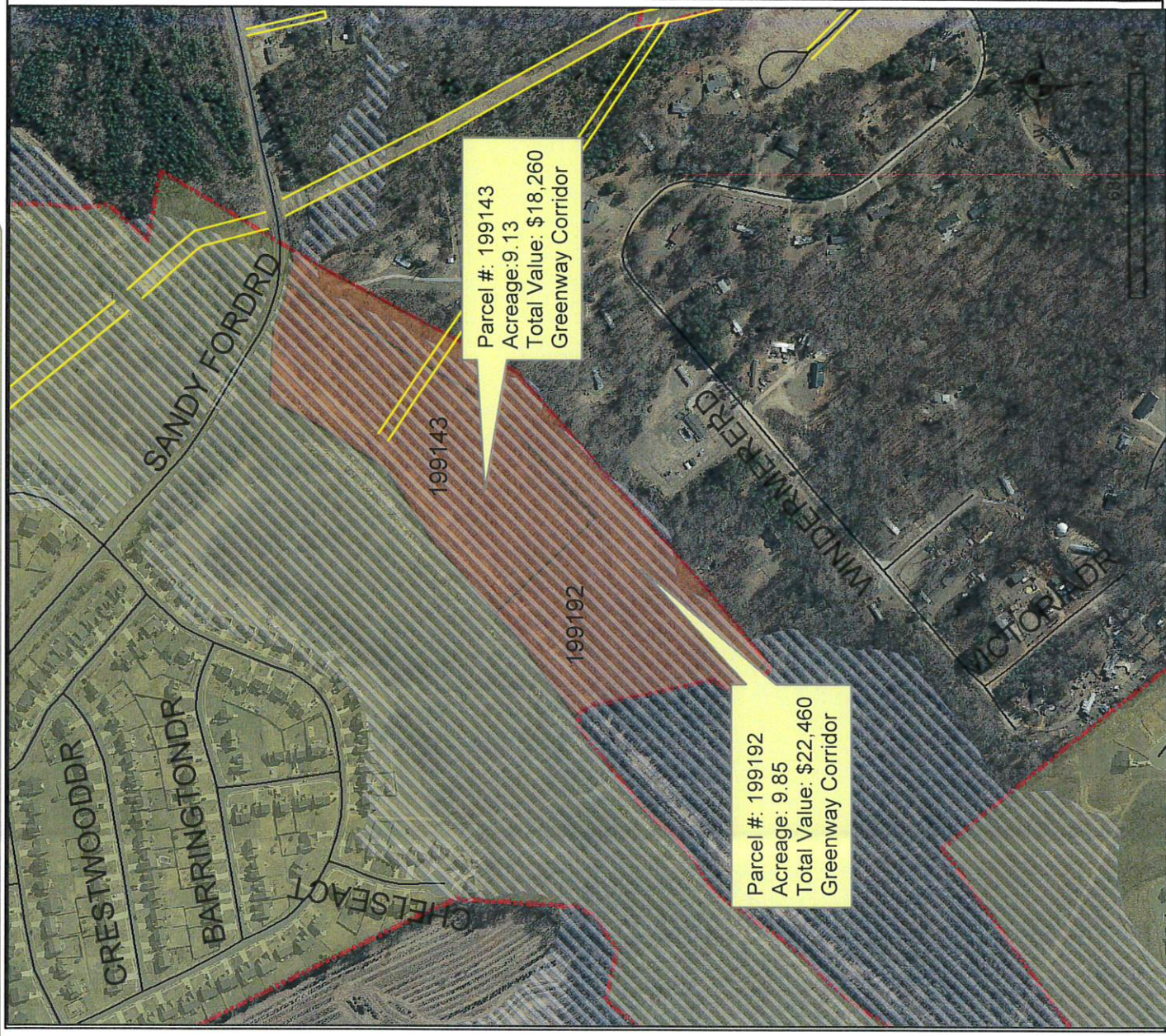
Two of these properties are in use by the City as the Water Treatment Plant and above ground water storage tank. The larger parcel is Clean Water Trust property used for conservation and surrounds water intake.



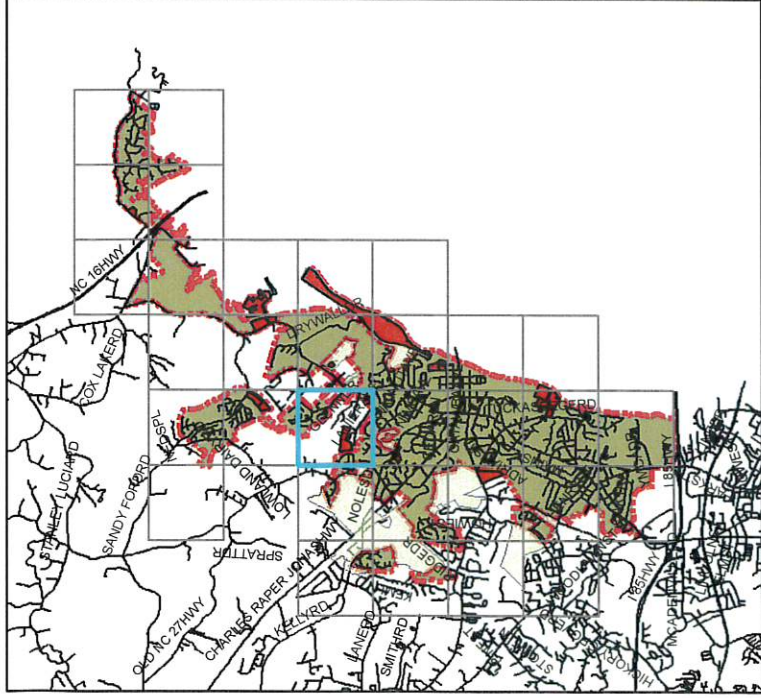
City of Mount Holy Properties 2013



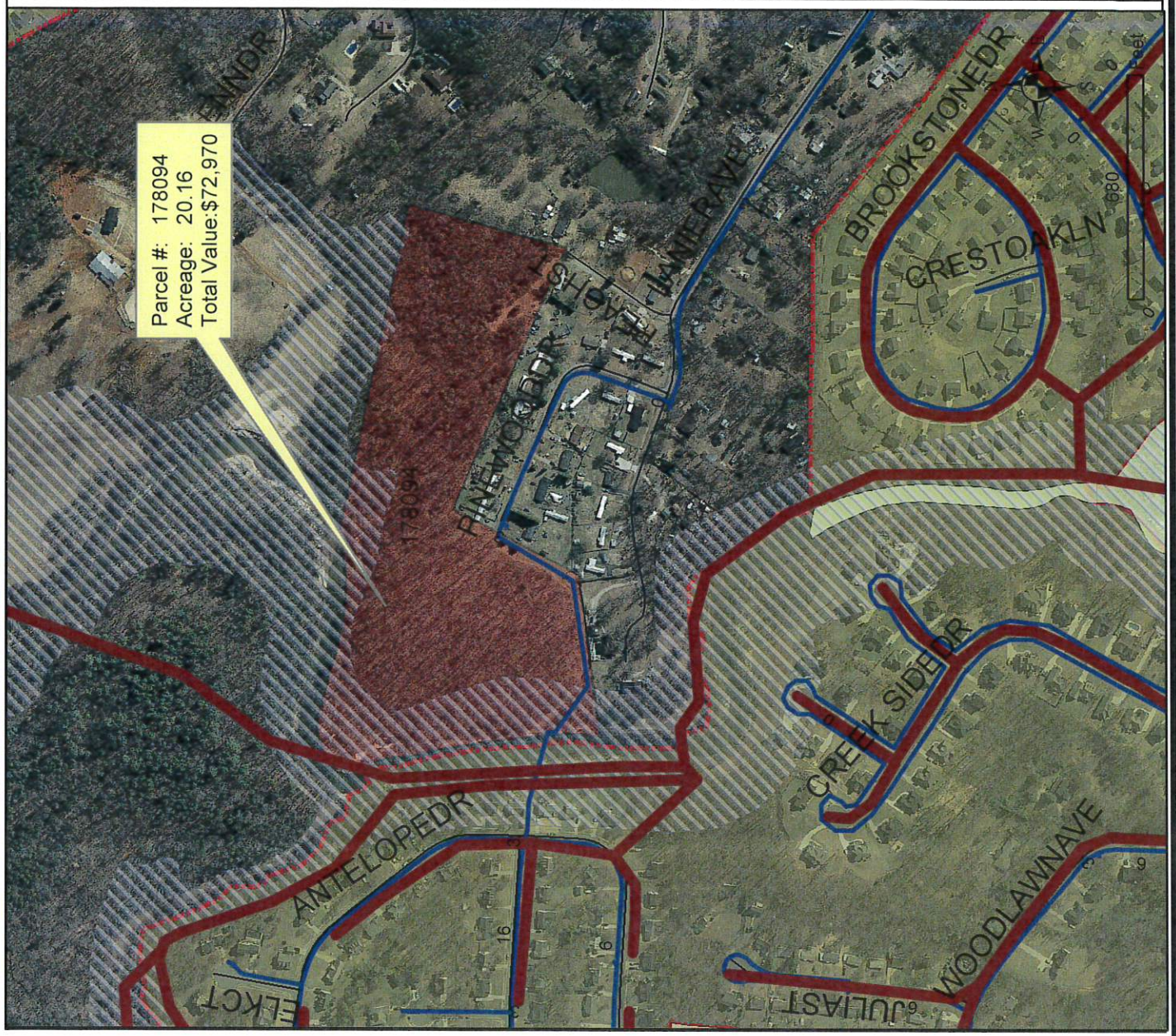
Parcel ID-199192 & 199143 – deeded to the city from Dutchman's Meadow Developer, to be used as part of the future greenway.



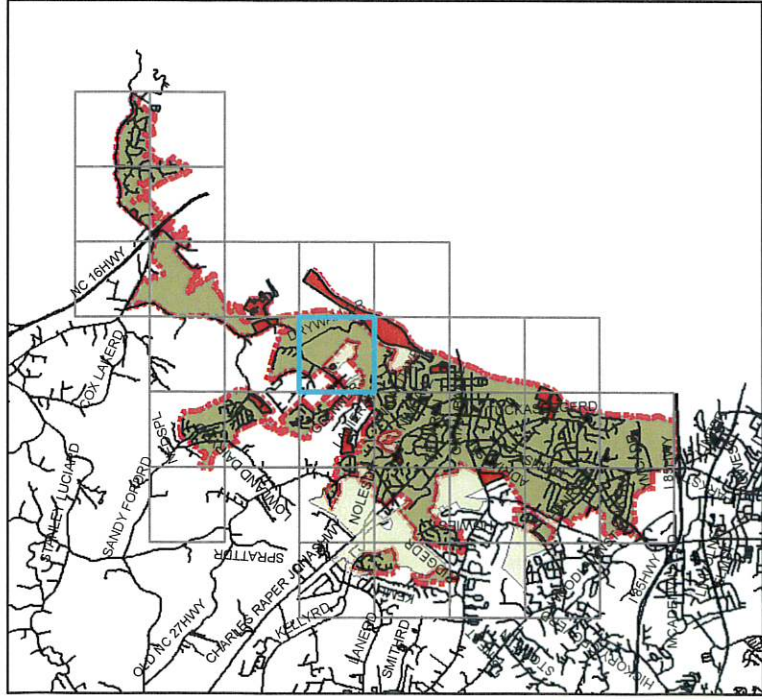
City of Mount Holy Properties 2013



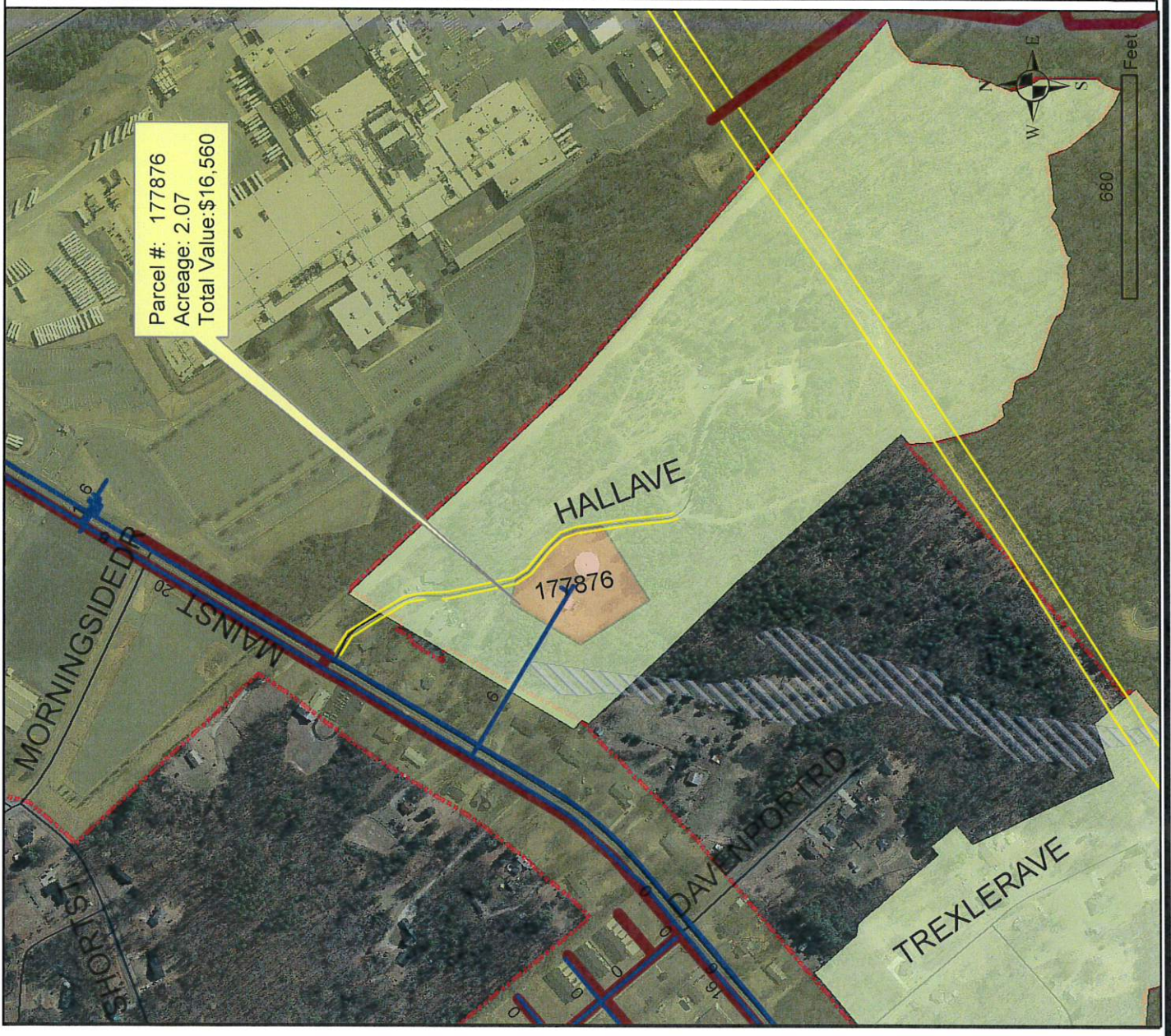
Parcel ID-178094 – former landfill site, located outside of the city limits. The parcel is bordered on one side by the 100 year flood plain. The parcel also has water and sewer availability.



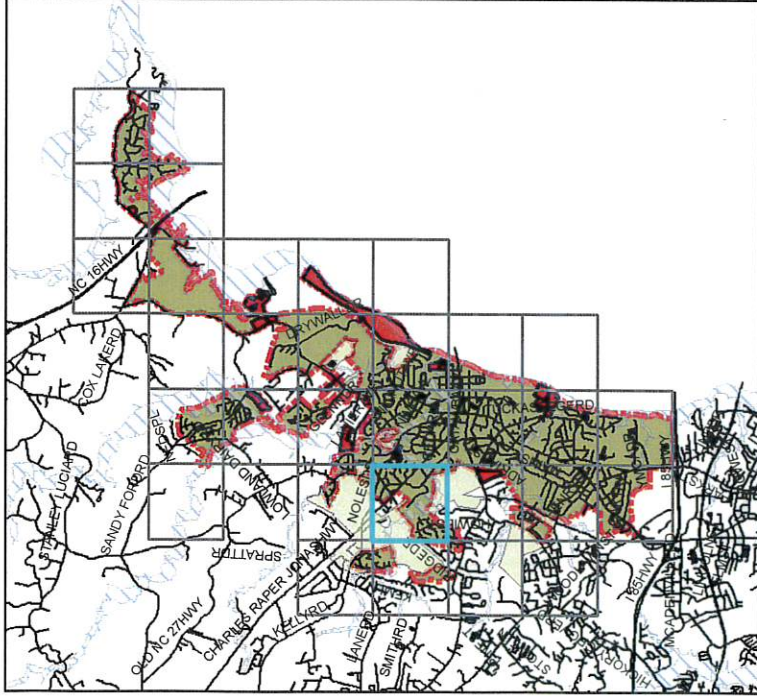
City of Mount Holly Properties 2013



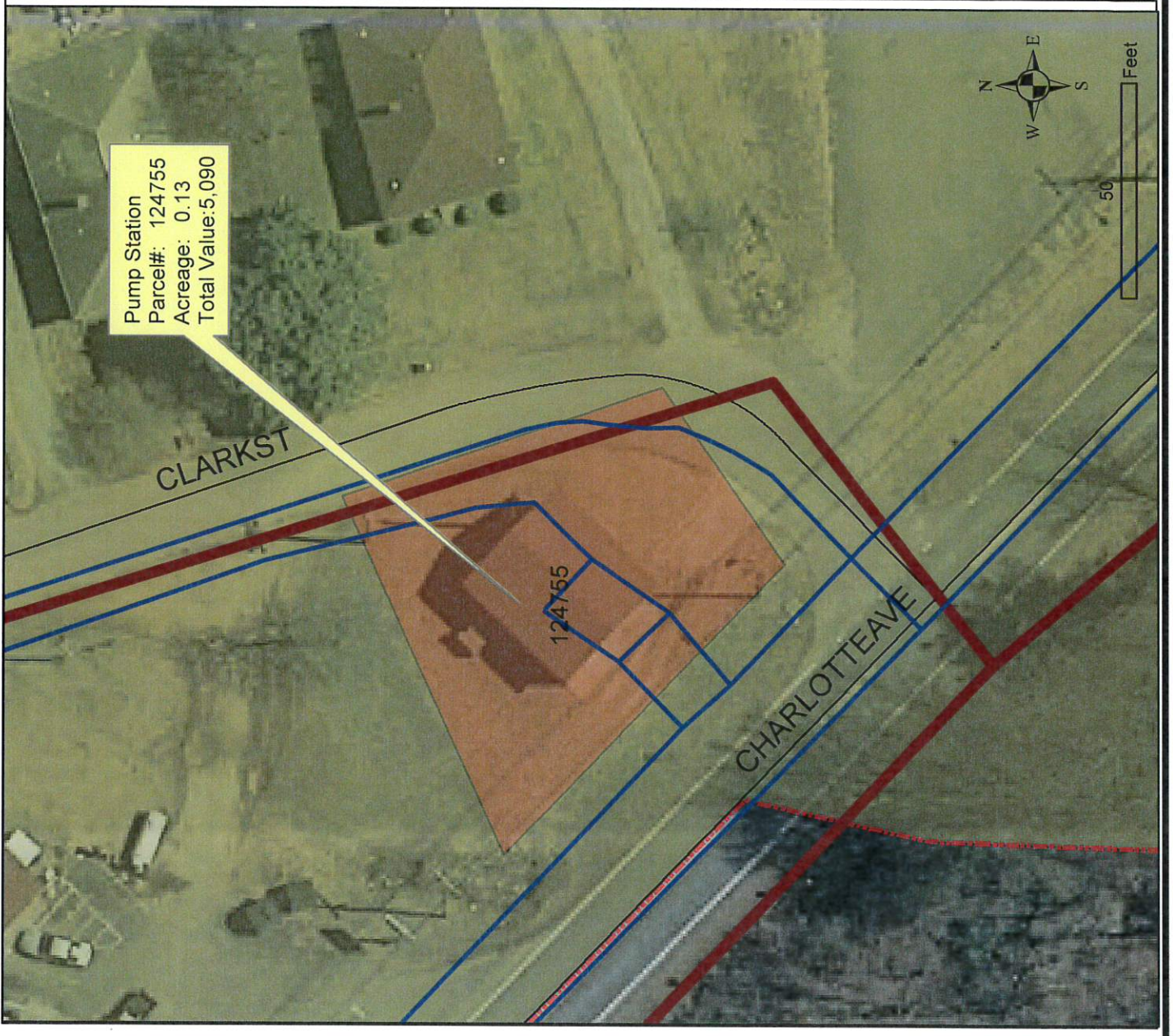
Parcel ID-177876 – contains a two million gallon water storage tank, still in use. Located near Freightliner/Daimler Plant.



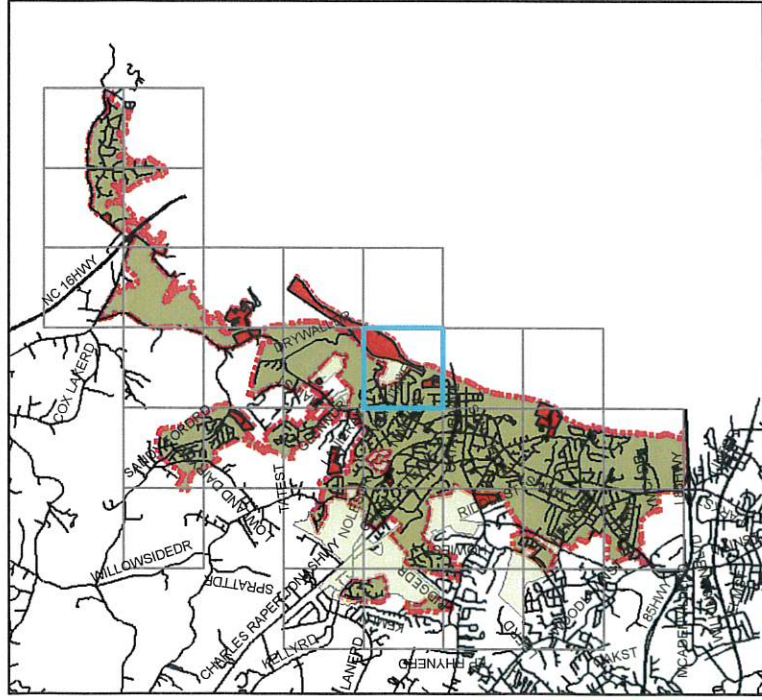
City of Mount Holly Properties 2013



City's pump station, located near Will's Convenience Store on NC 27.



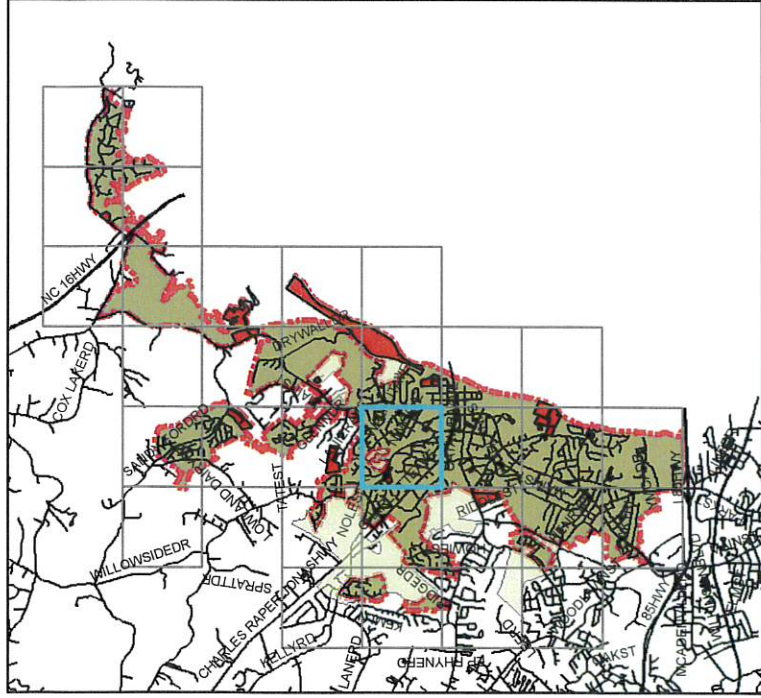
City of Mount Holly Properties 2013



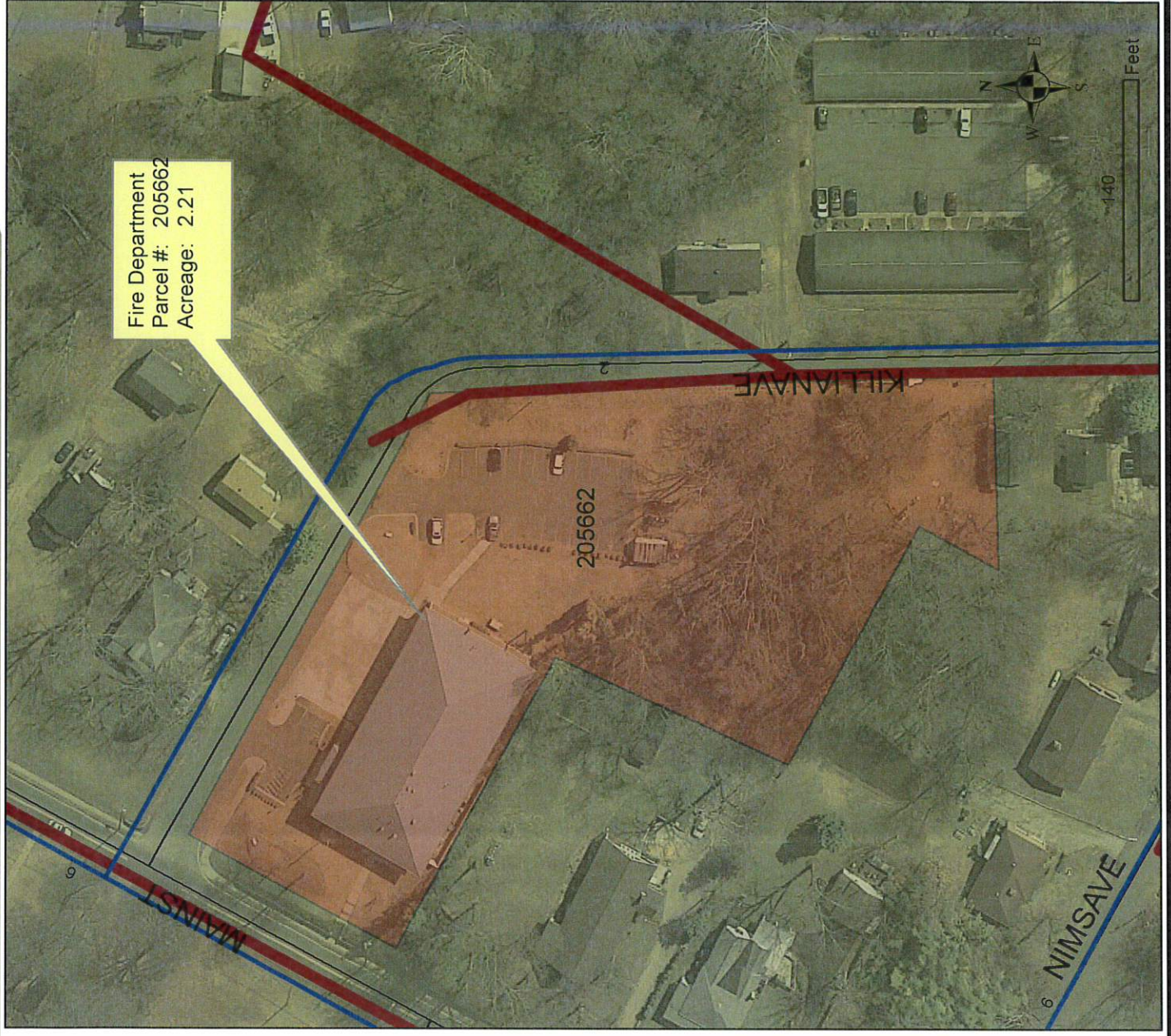
Parcel ID-123513 – city's automotive garage,
 Located near the current Streets & Solid Waste Department.
 River Street Park is a city park and future route of the
 Catawba River Greenway and Carolina Thread Trail.



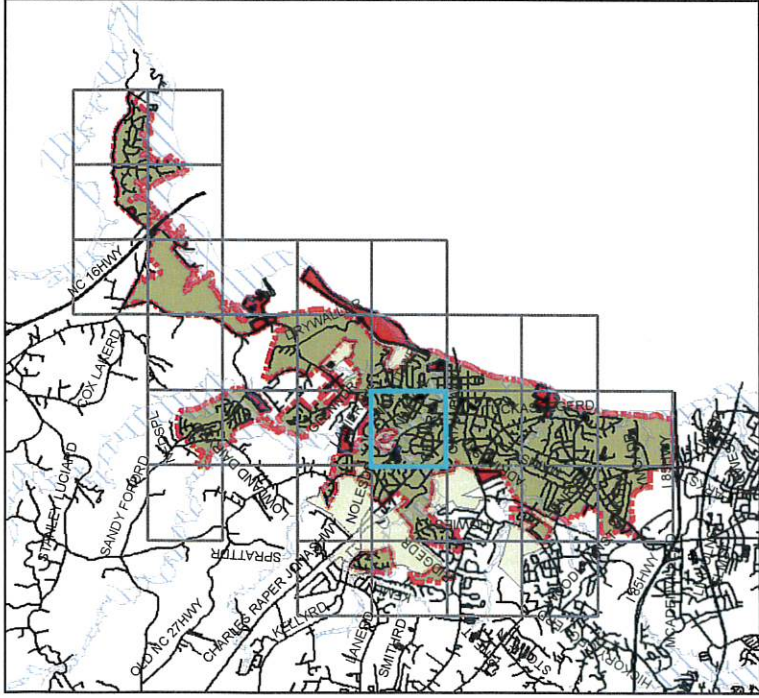
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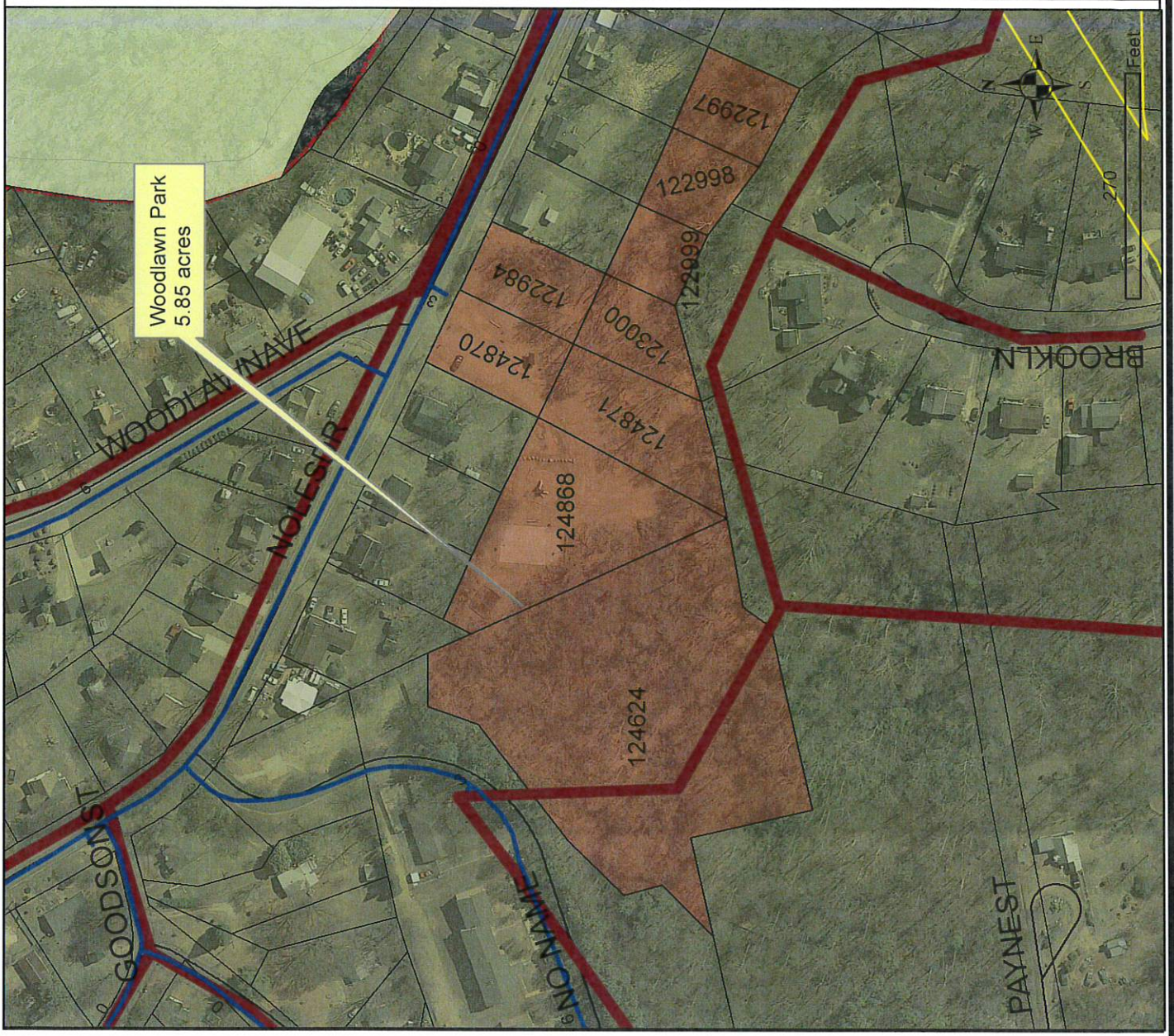
Parcel ID-205662 – Headquarters for the
City's Fire Department, located on Killian Avenue.
Water and Sewer available.



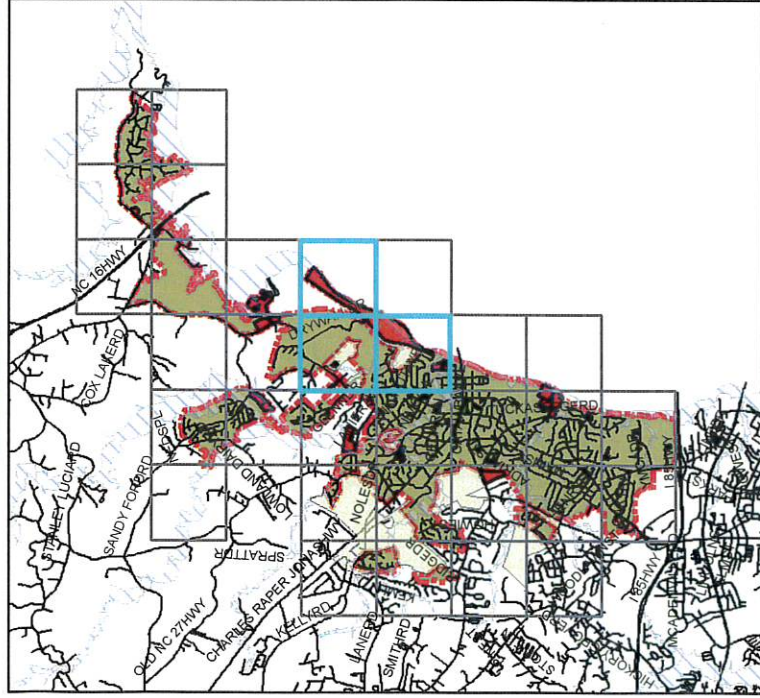
City of Mount Holly Properties 2013



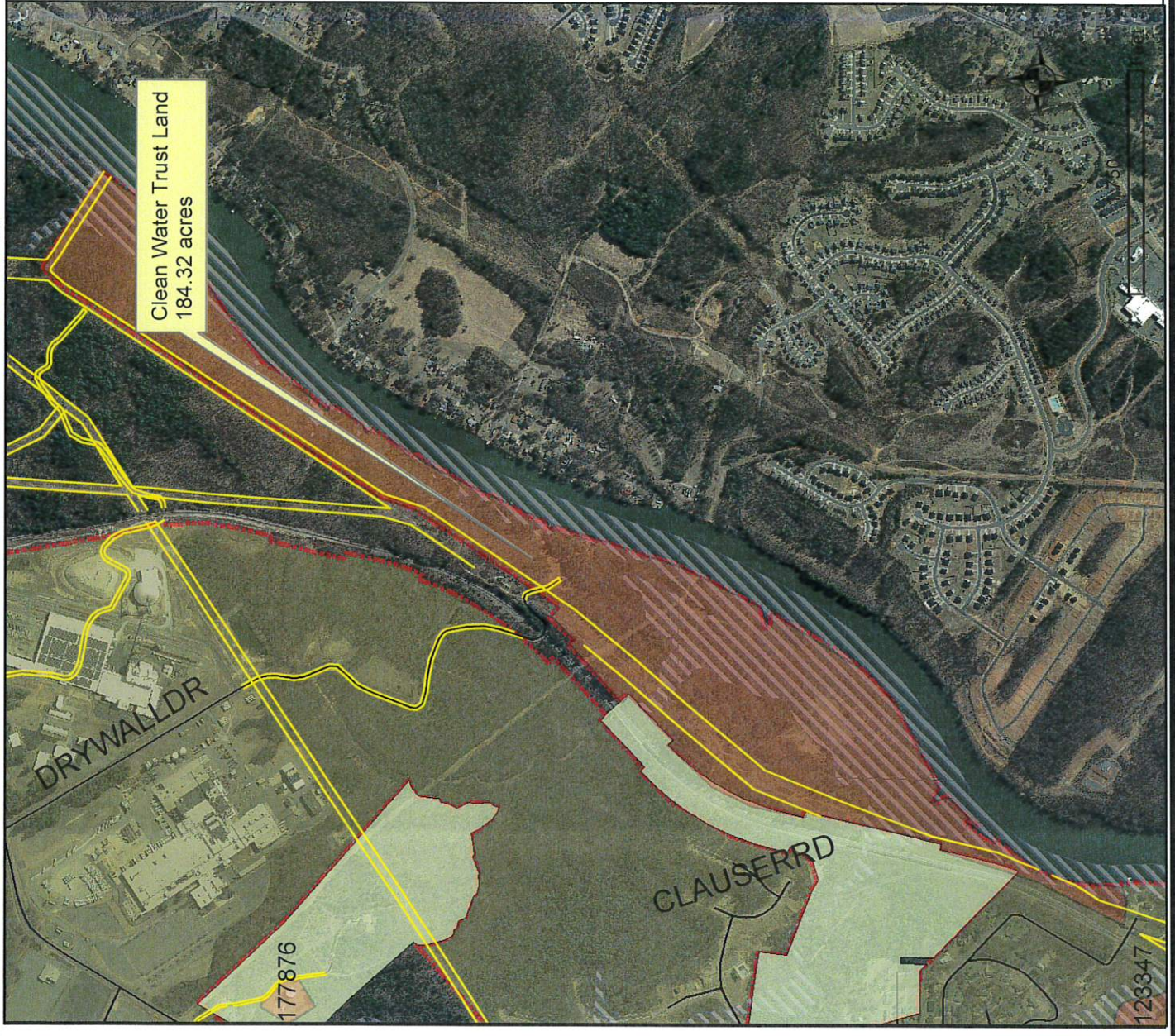
Woodlawn Park is a 5.85 acre City Park near the intersection of Woodlawn Ave. and Noles Dr.



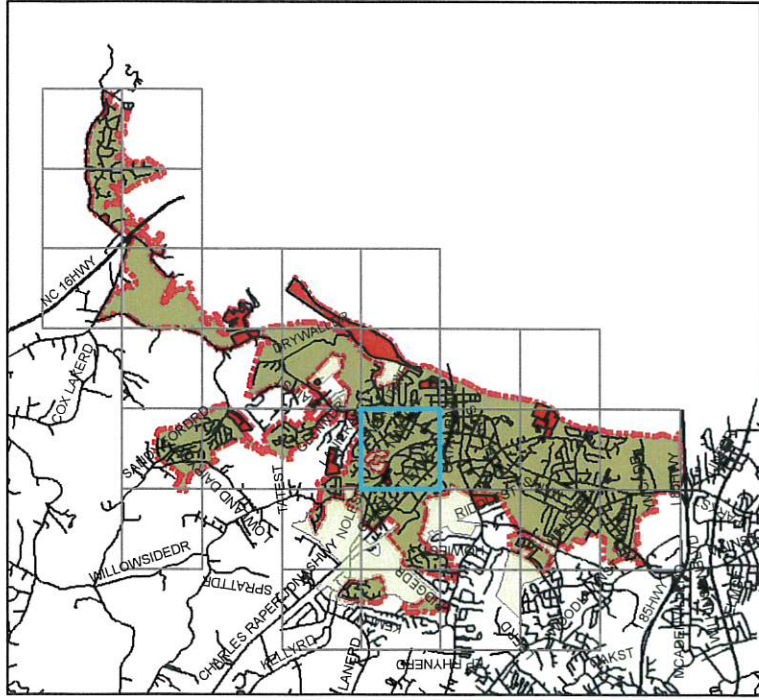
City of Mount Holly Properties 2013



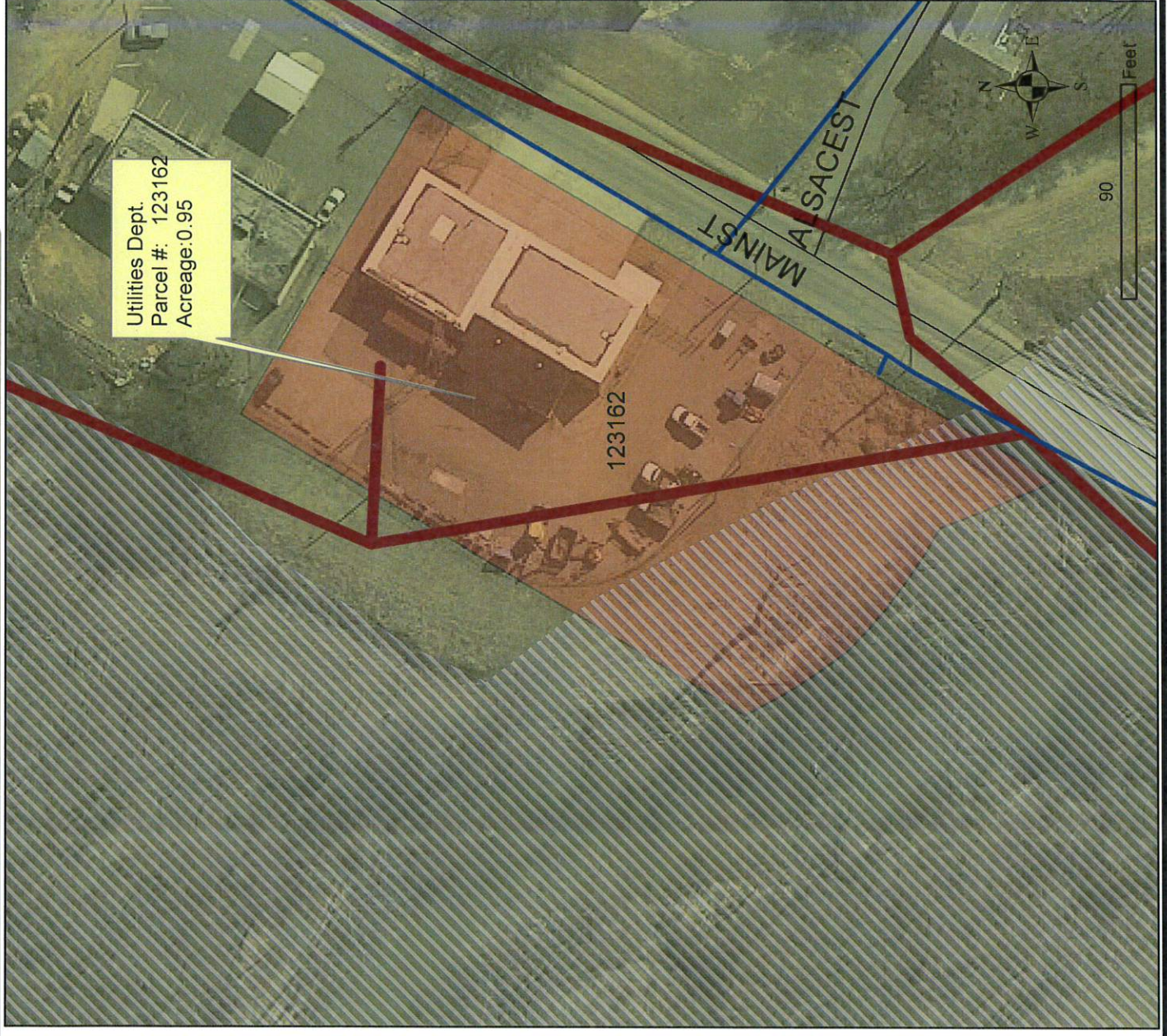
Clean Water Trust Land is comprised of 184.32 acres of natural habitat that serves as a buffer to the Catawba River and is the part of the future route of the Catawba River Greenway and the Carolina Thread Trail.



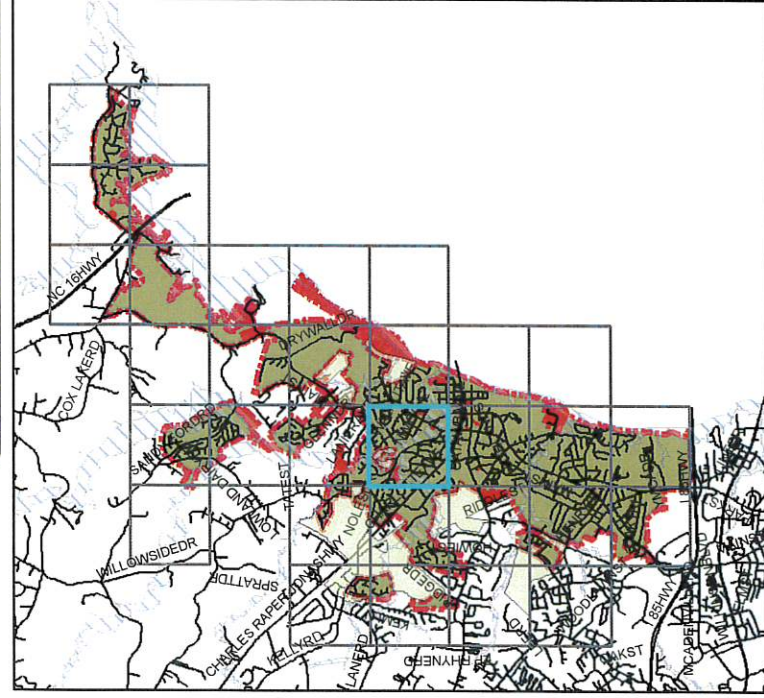
City of Mount Holly Properties 2013



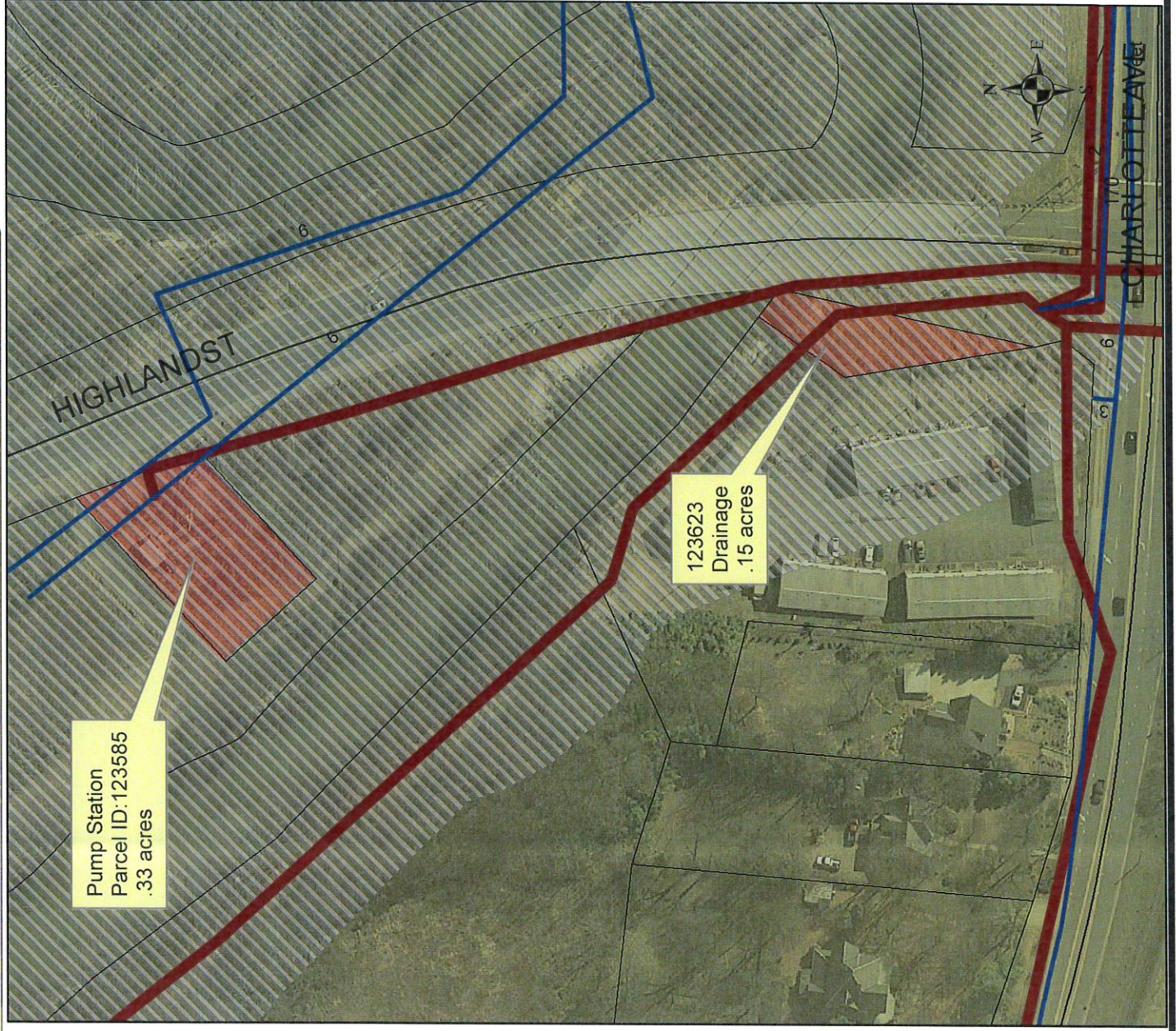
Parcel ID-123162 – current site of the city's Utilities Department, located on North Main Street, adjacent to Alsace Mill. Water and sewer are available.



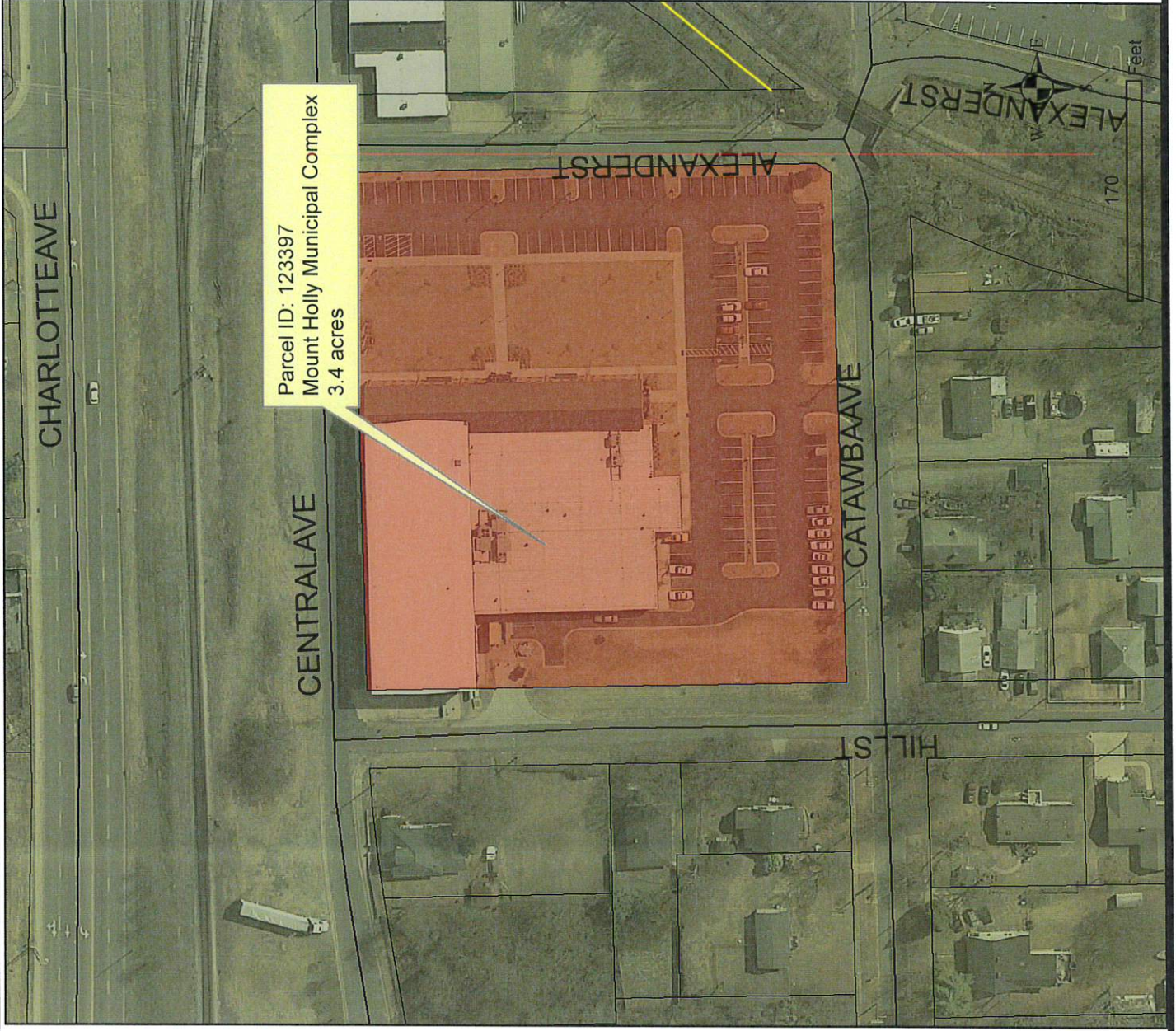
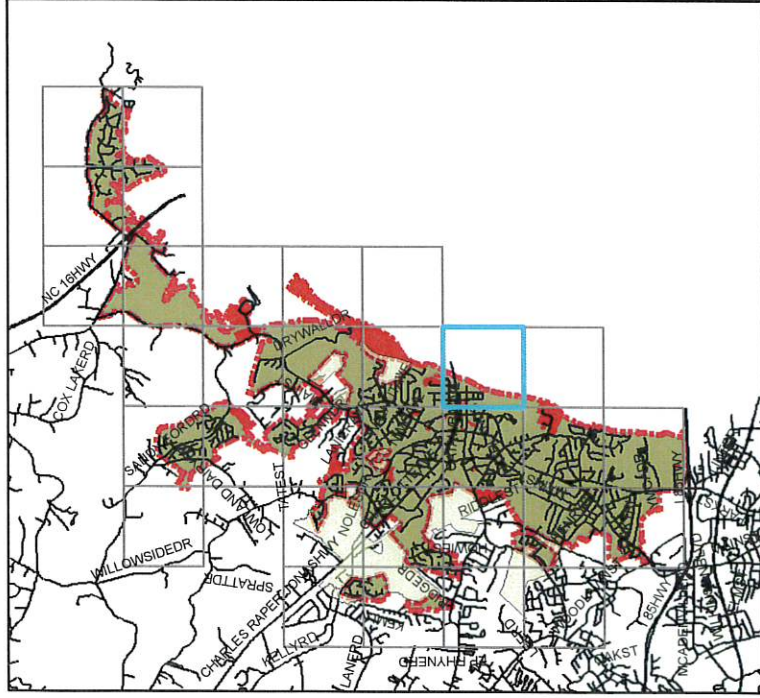
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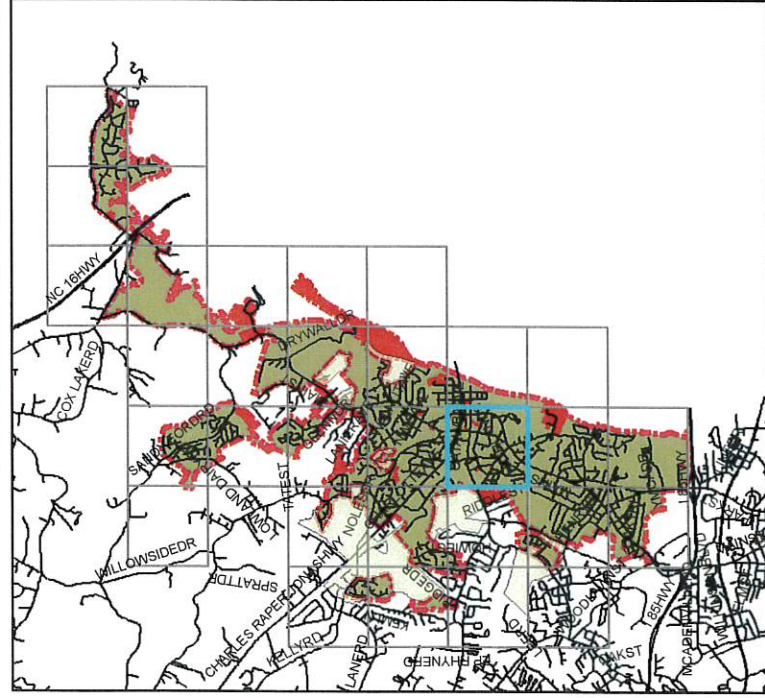
Dutchman's Creek Pump Station and proposed Screen area for apartments.



City of Mount Holly Properties 2013



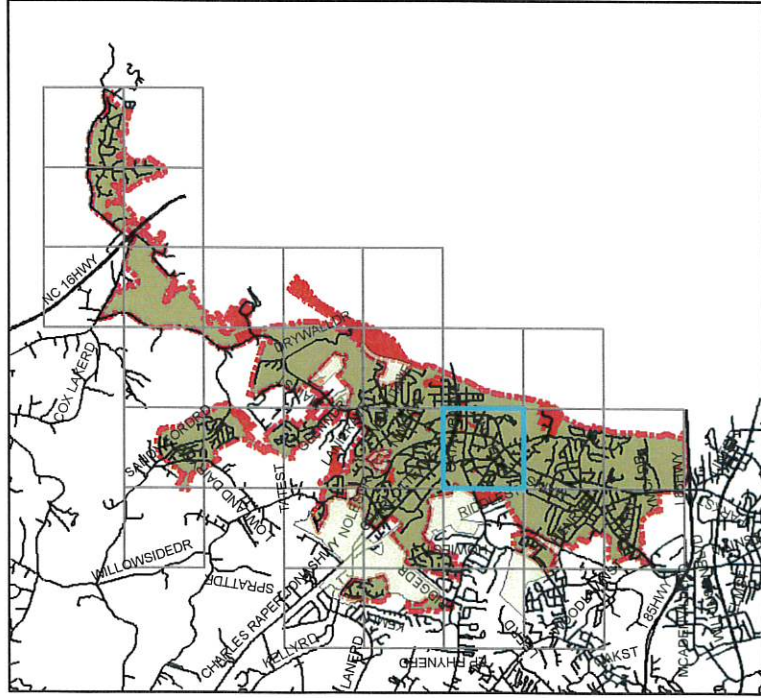
City of Mount Holly Properties 2013



Parcel ID-123834 to 123837 –Vacant lot
at the corner of Highland Street and
East Central Avenue. Water and Sewer
border the property.



City of Mount Holly Properties 2013

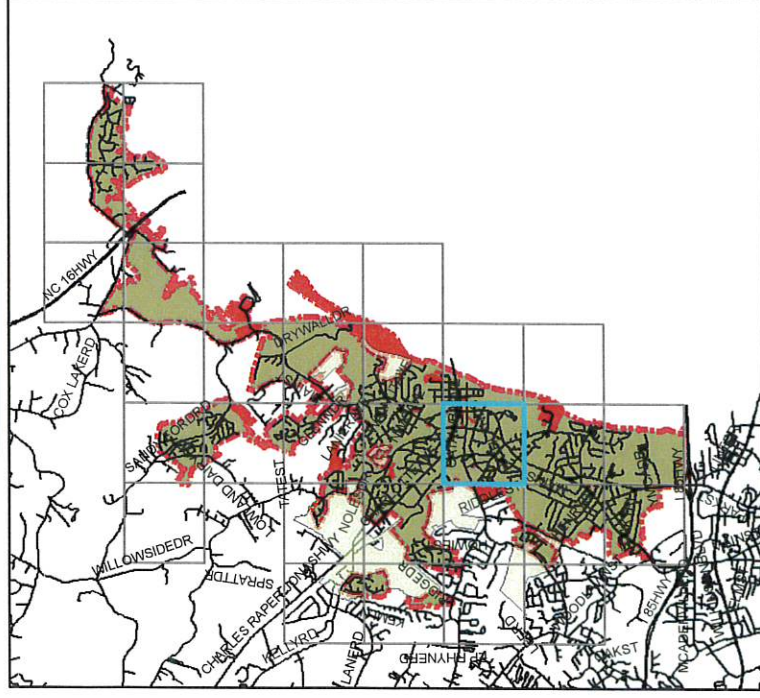


Parcel ID-123809 & 123810 – former City Hall and Annex.
City Hall portion now occupied by the
Mount Holly Historical Society. Annex is vacant.

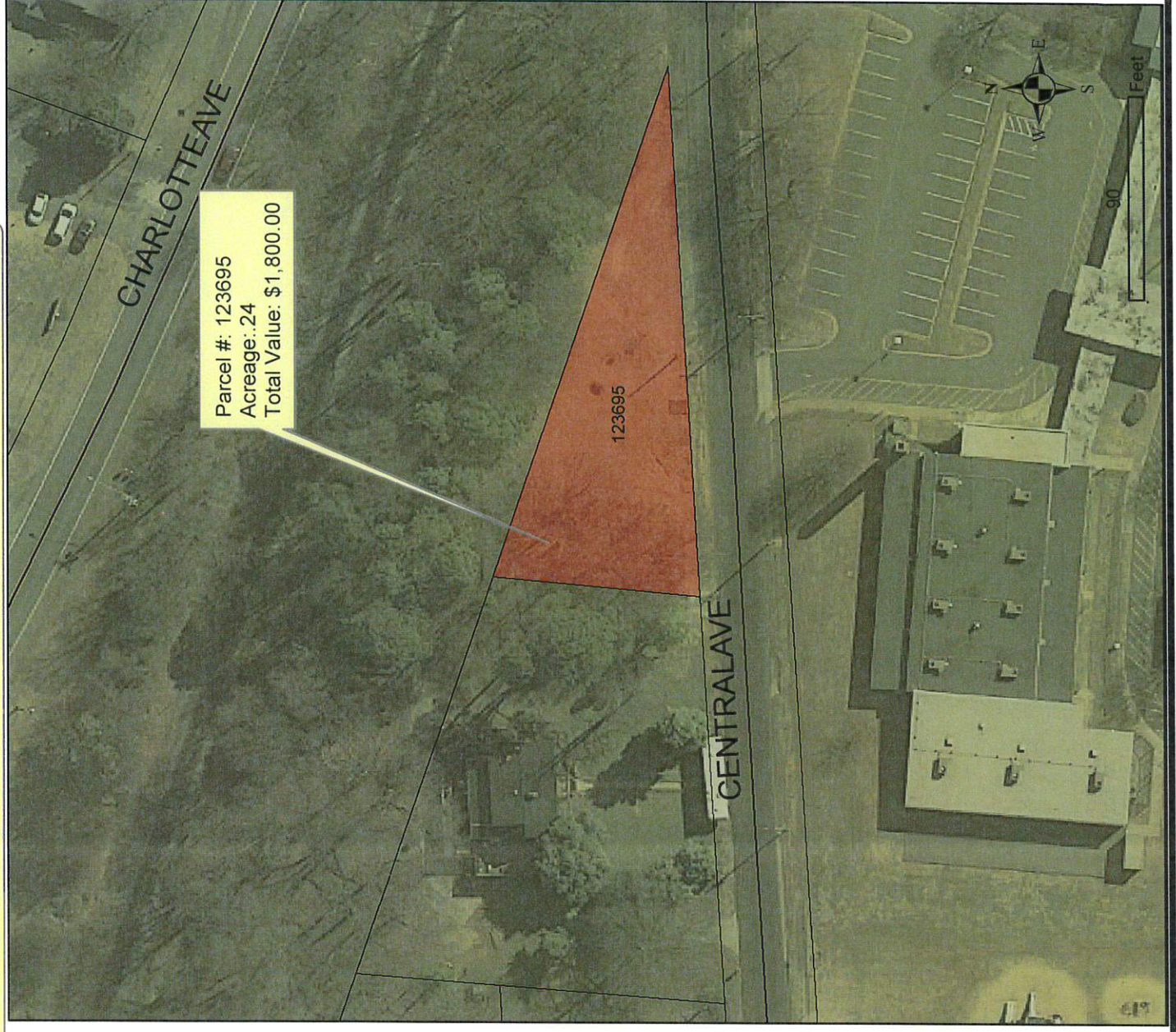


Historical Society, City Annex.
Parcel #: 123809
Acreage: .24
Total Value: \$384,860
Parcel #: 123810
Acreage: .24
Total Value: \$169,920

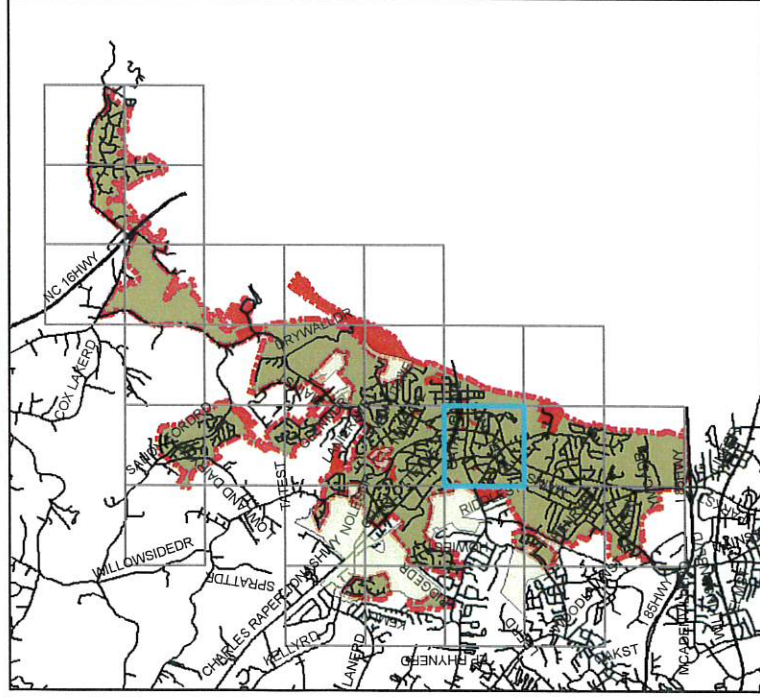
City of Mount Holly Properties 2013



ID-123695 – vacant lot across from
Ida Rankin Elementary School.



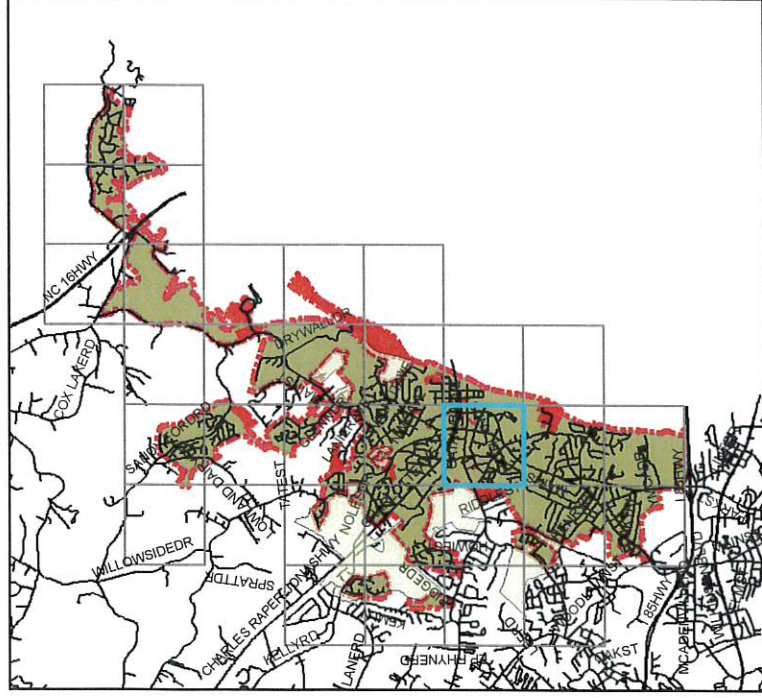
City of Mount Holly Properties 2013



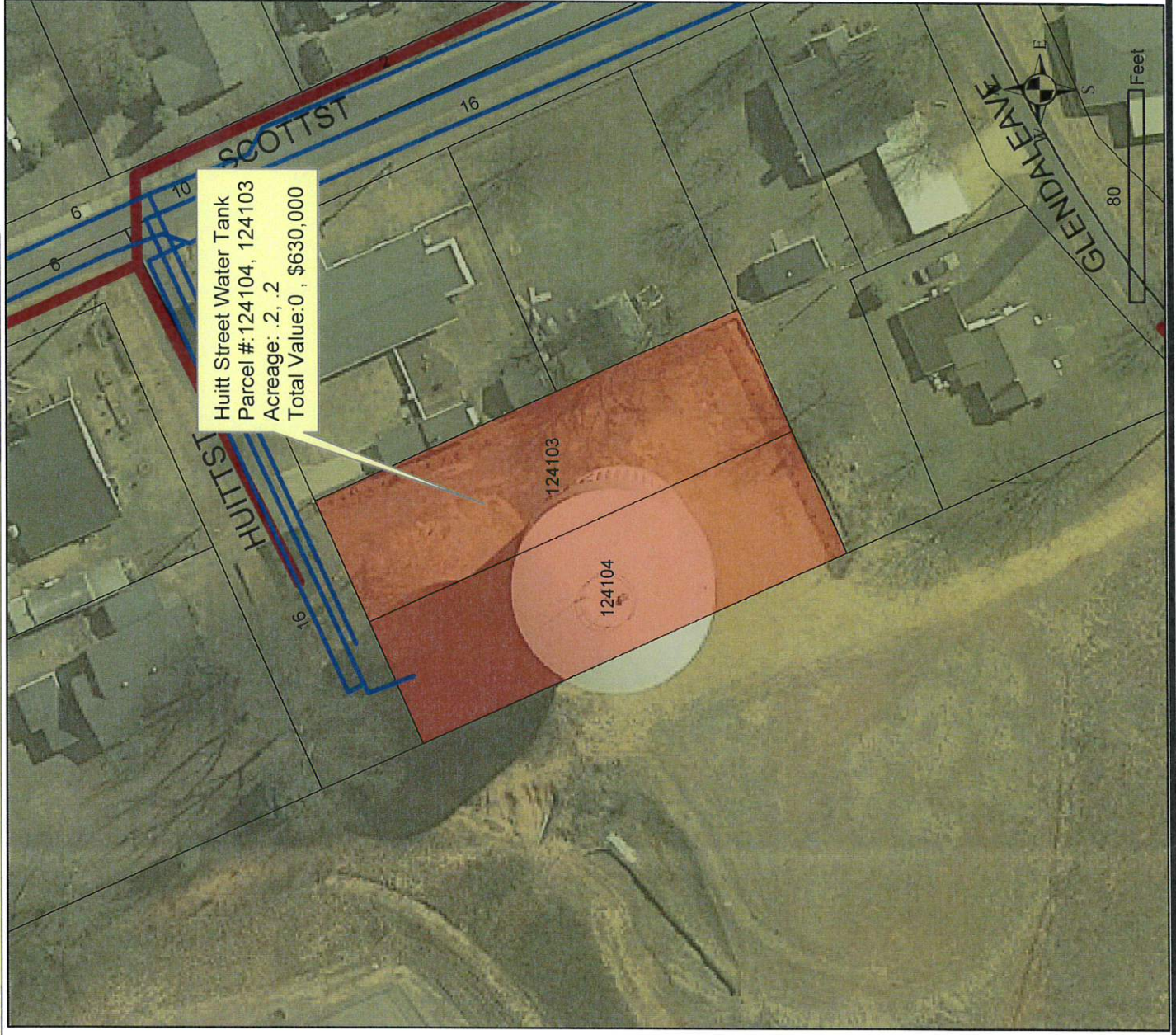
Veterans Park is a centrally located park in the City of Mount Holly



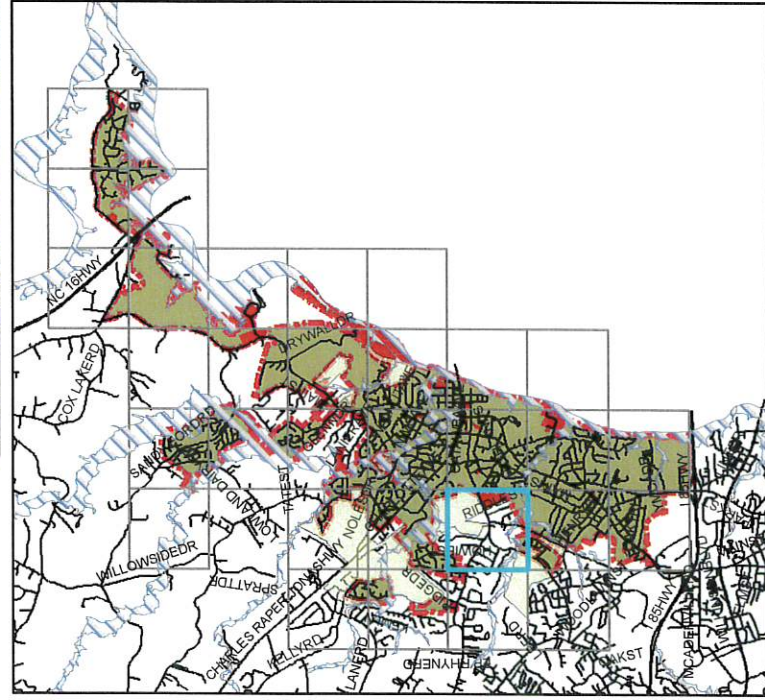
City of Mount Honey Properties 2013



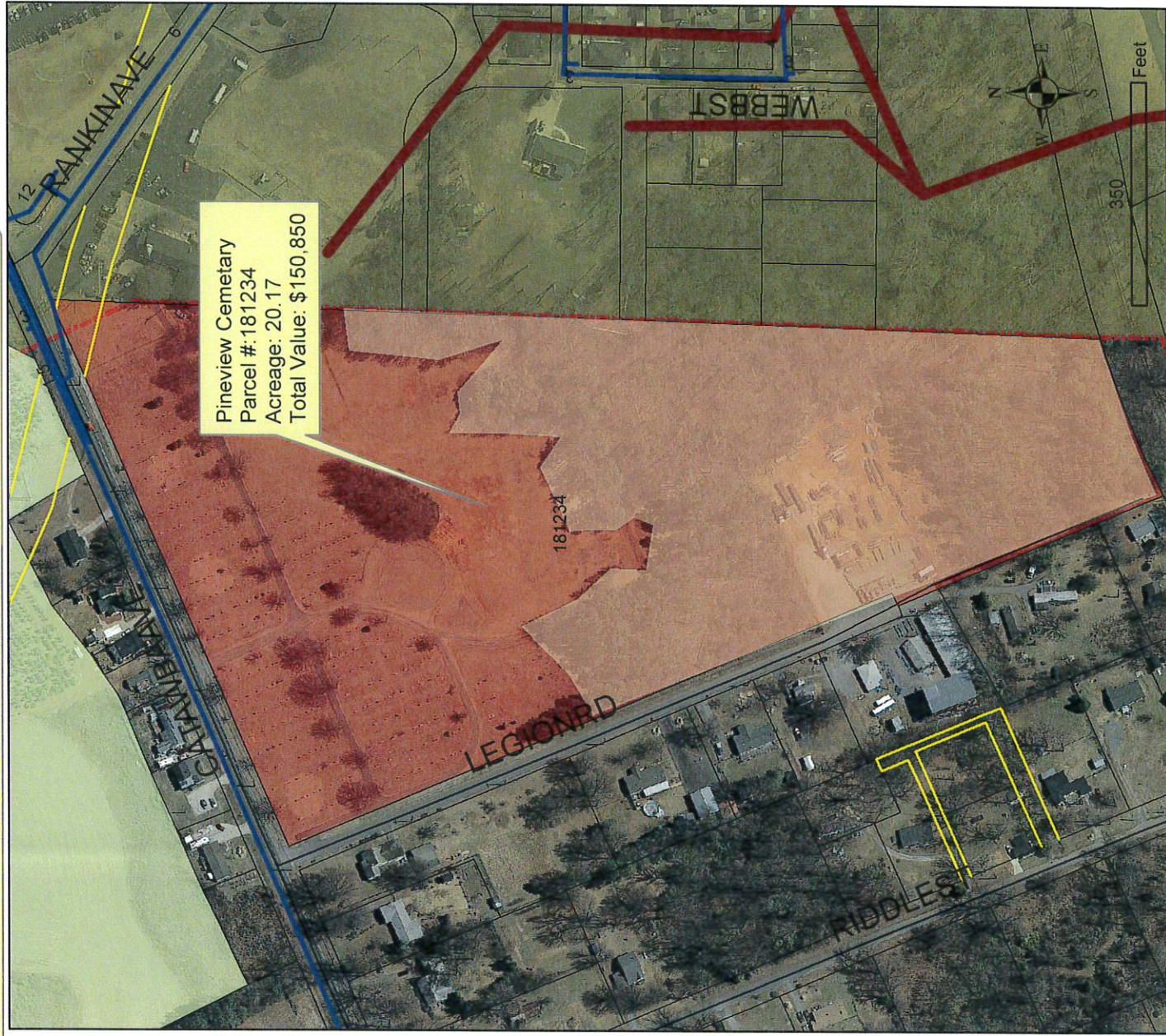
Parcel ID-124103 & 124104 – site of the new
Huitt Street water tank.



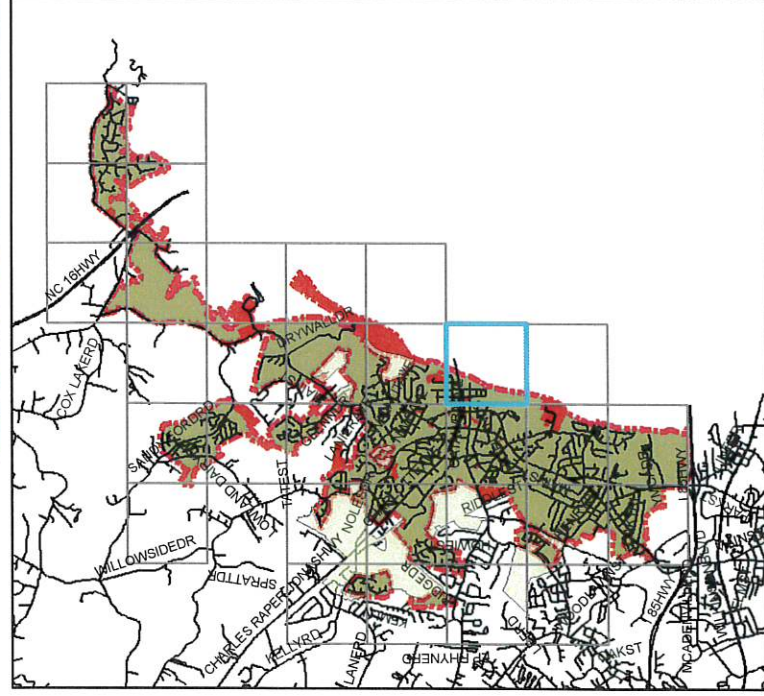
City of Mount Holly Properties 2013



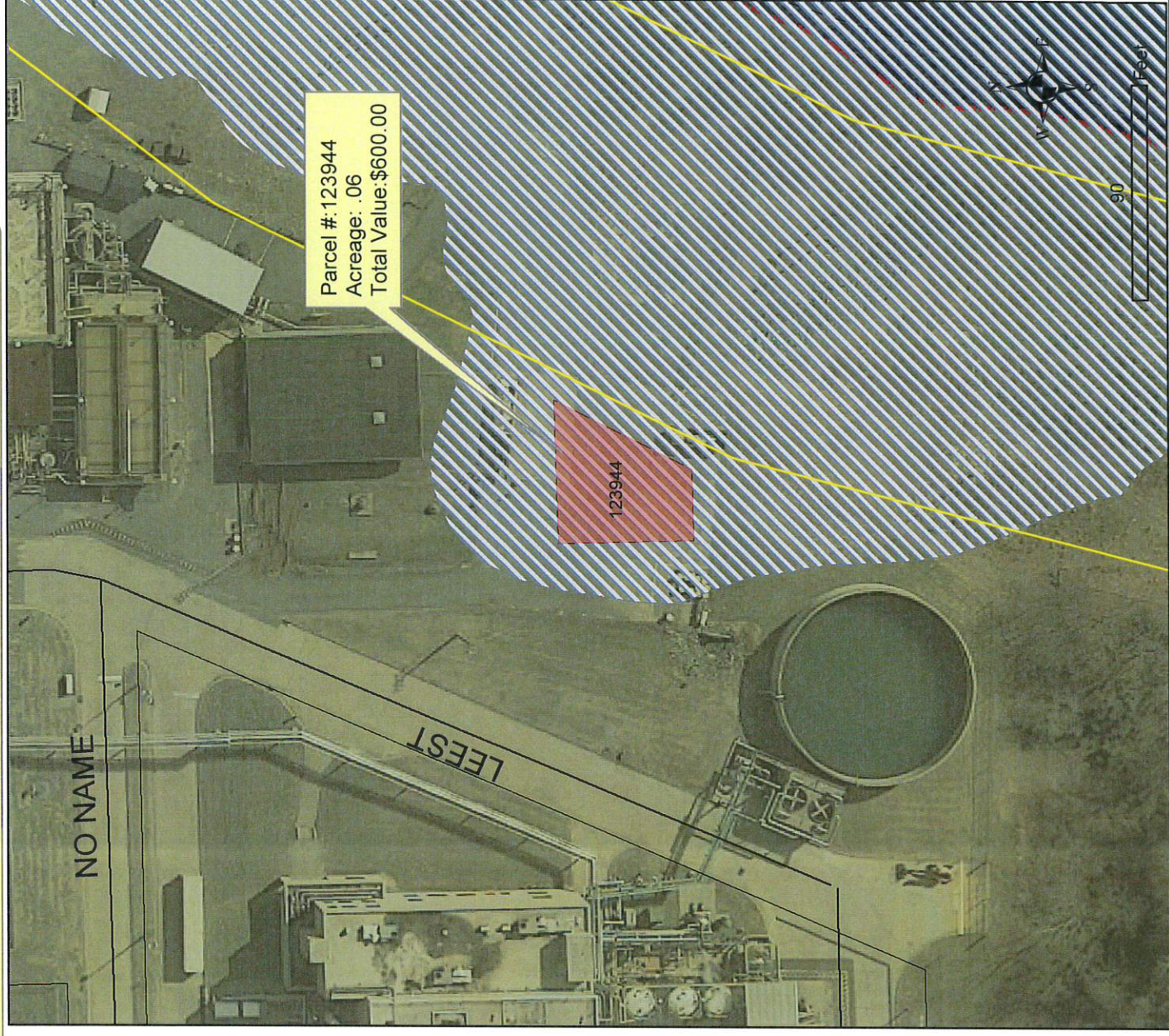
Parcel ID-181234 – site of the city's Pineview Cemetery, located at the intersection of West Catawba Avenue and Legion Road. Water lines are present at the front of the property.



City of Mount Holly Properties 2013

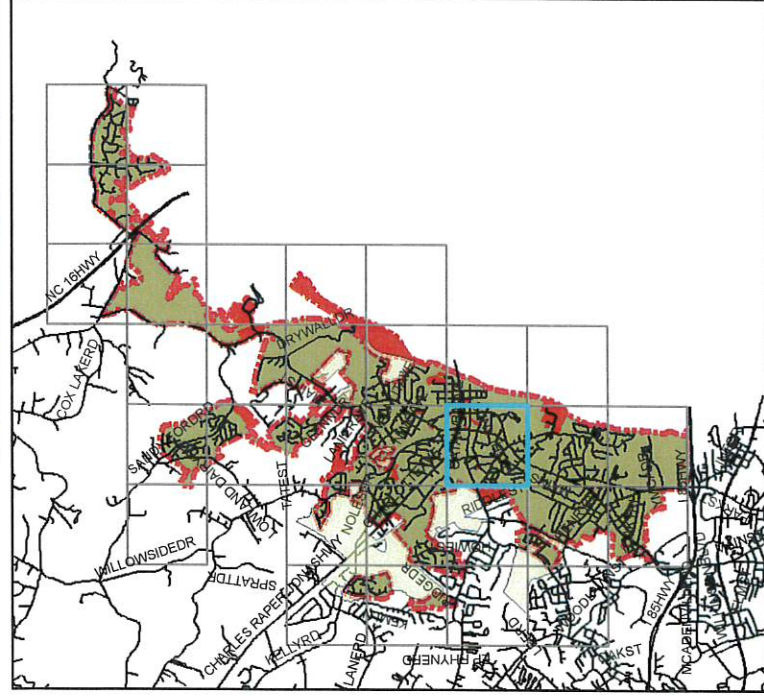


This Property is being released to Clariant.
Was the site of an old pump station and
was deeded to Clariant.

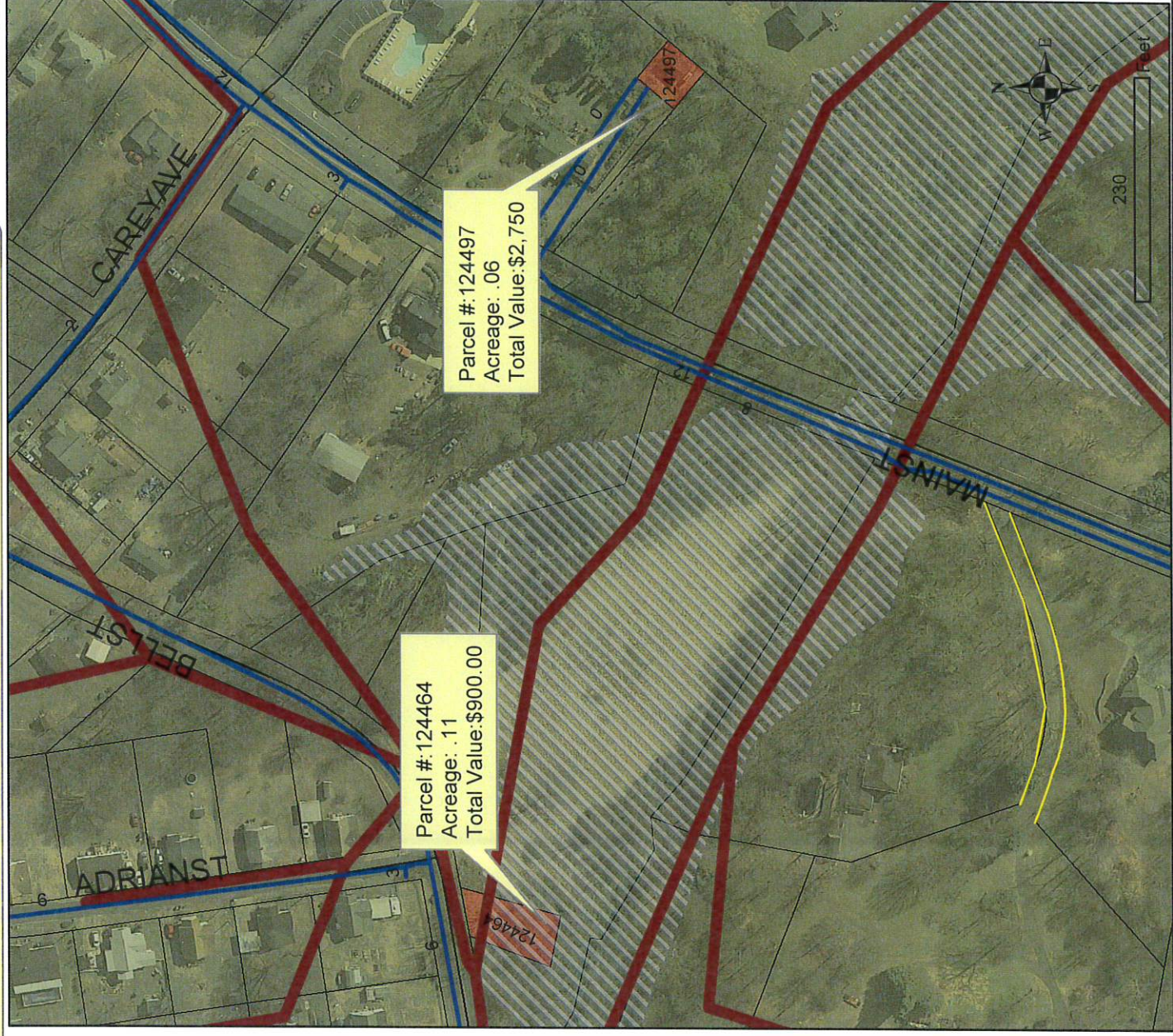


90 Feet

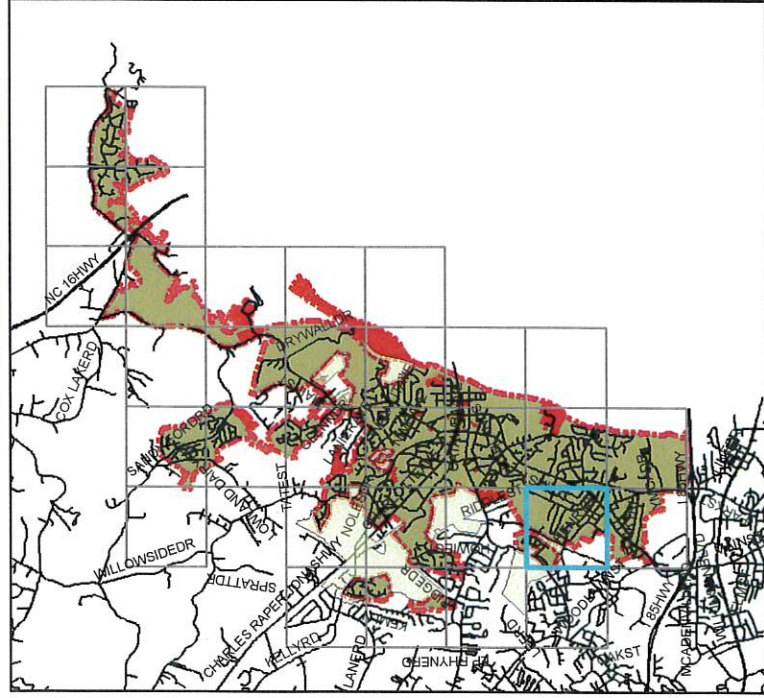
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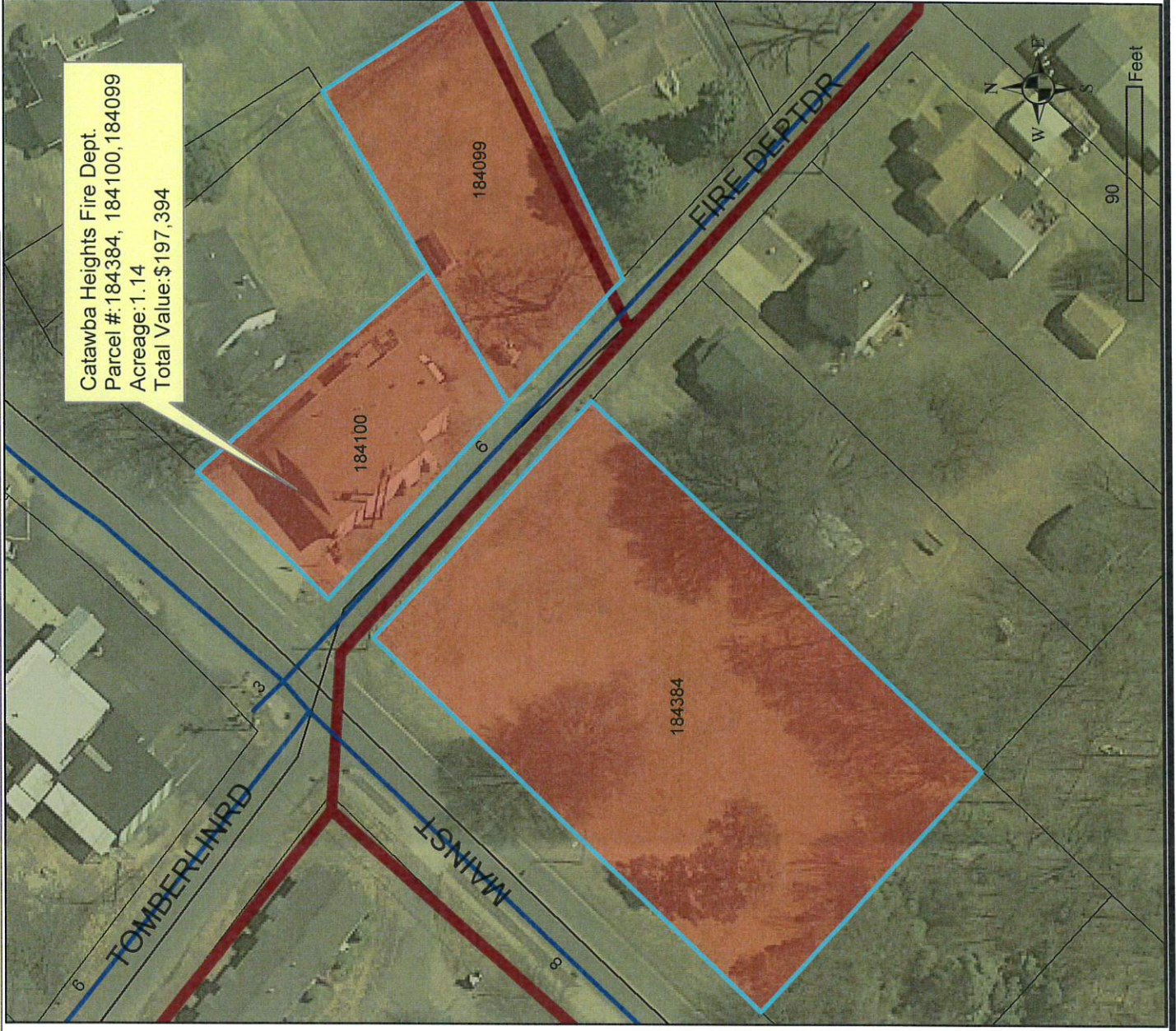
Parcel 124464, 124497 are lift and pump station sites.



City of Mount Holly Properties 2013

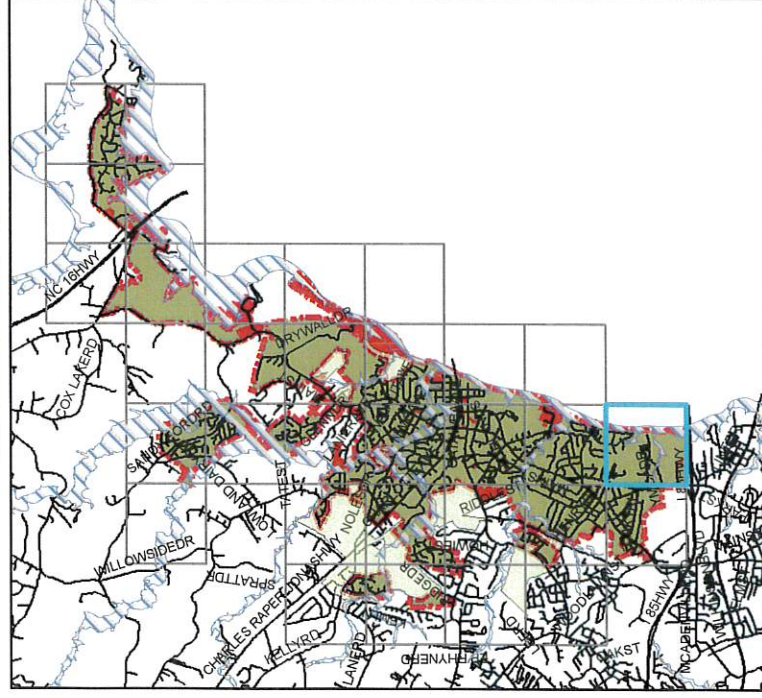


Parcel ID-184100, 184099 & 184384
 Site of Catawba Hgts. Fire Department,
 vacant lot behind the building and
 vacant lot across the street. Water and Sewer are
 available to both properties.

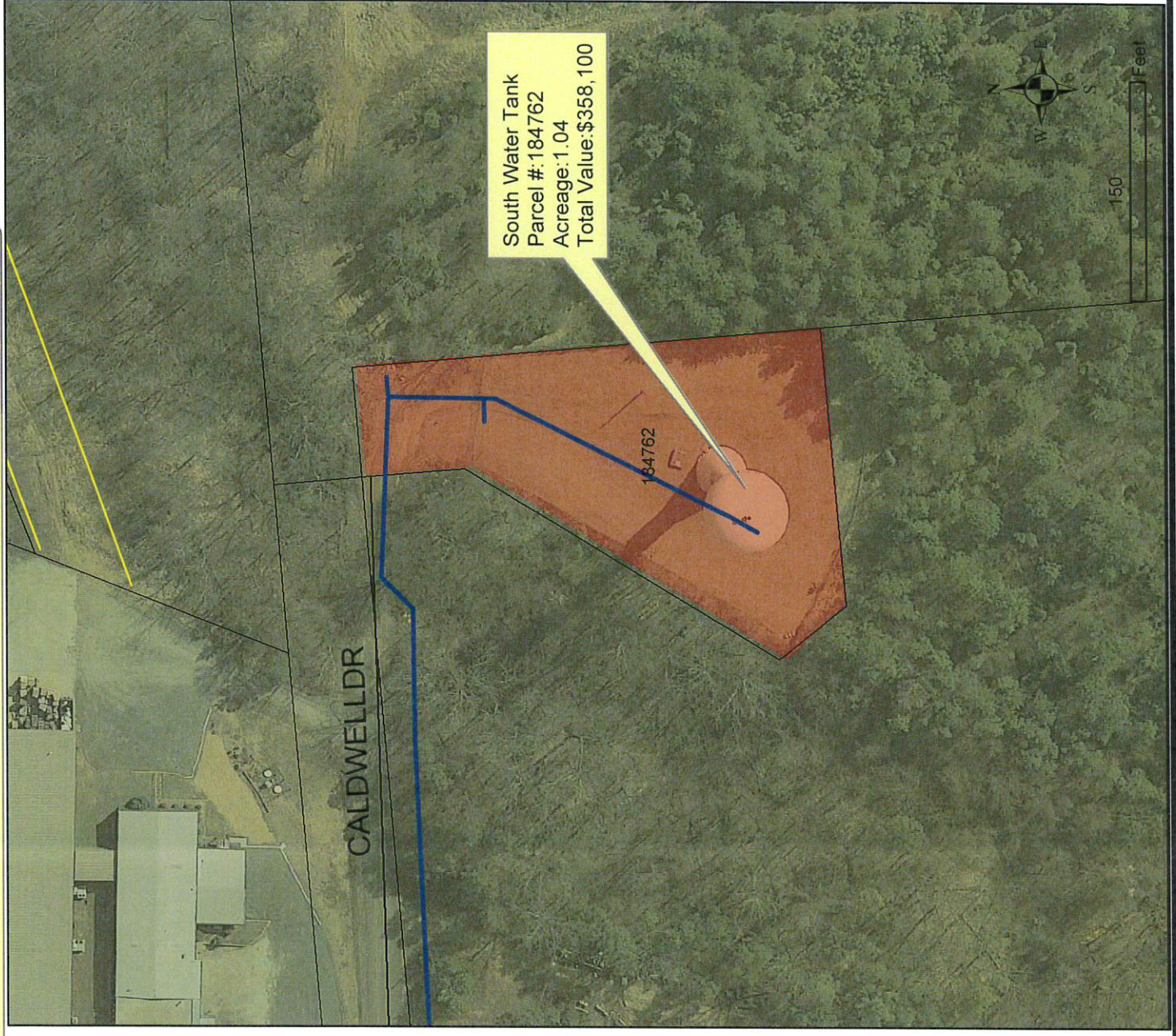


Catawba Heights Fire Dept.
 Parcel #: 184384, 184100, 184099
 Acreage: 1.14
 Total Value: \$197,394

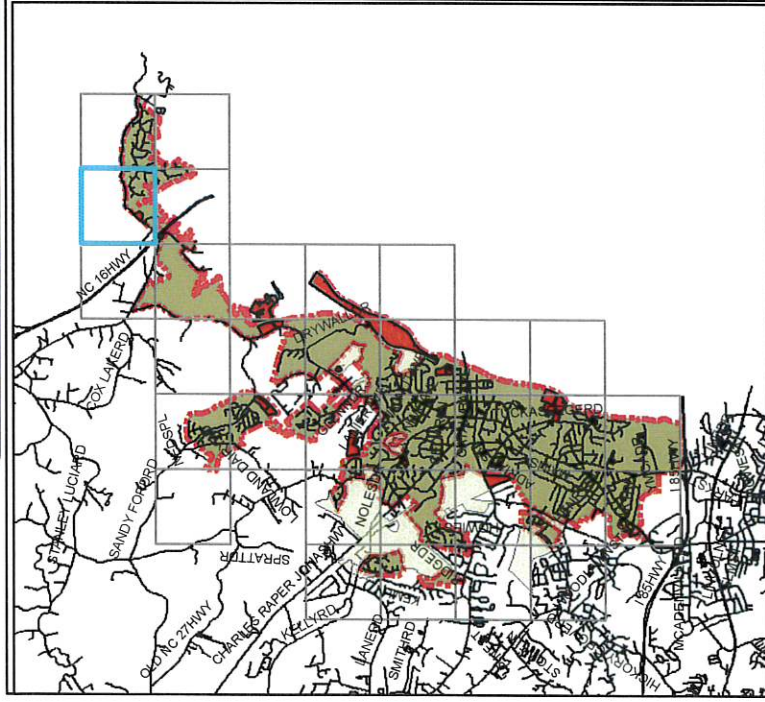
City of Mount Holly Properties 2013



Caldwell Street water tank is the above ground water tank visible from I-85 in the Southern most part of the city limits.



City of Mount Holly Properties 2013

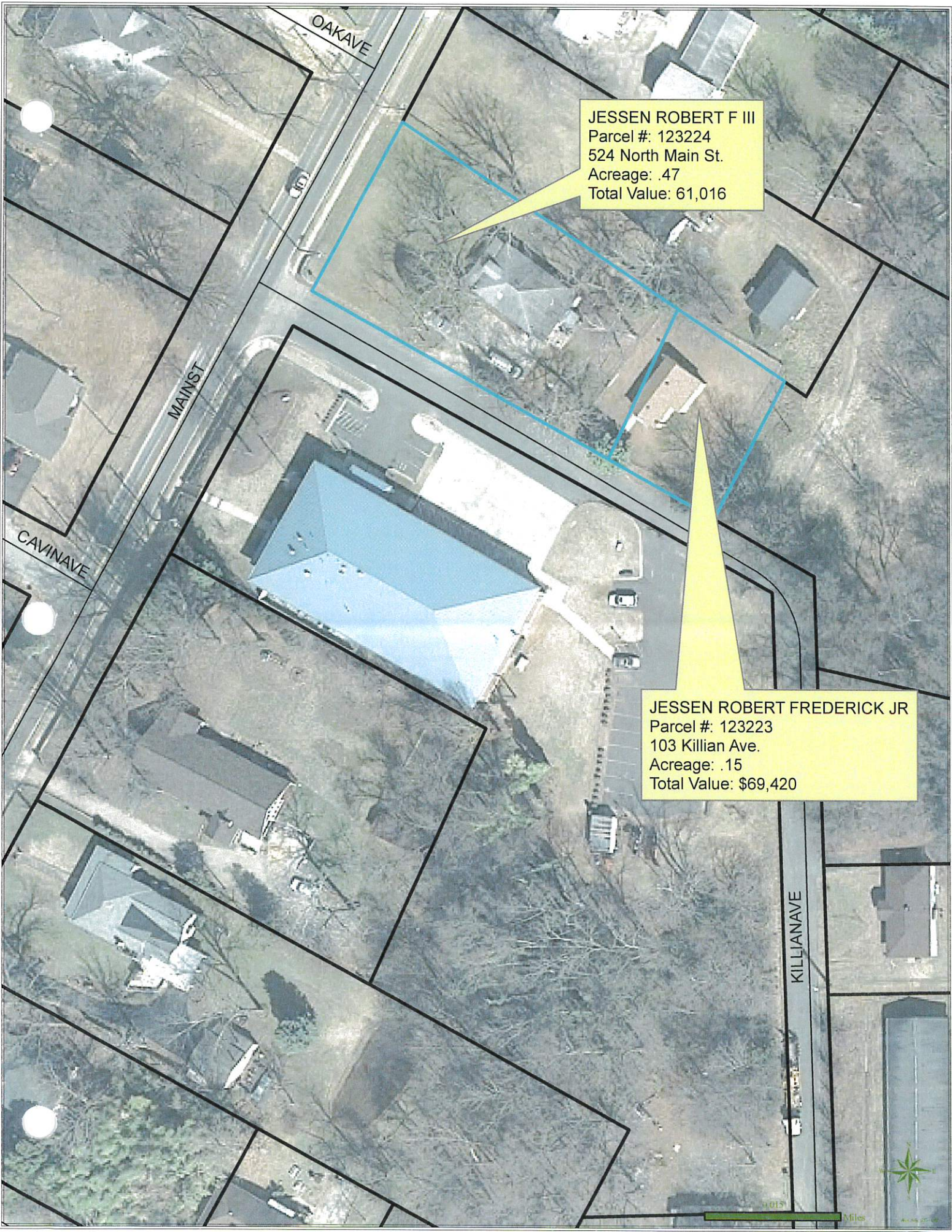


City property that is for sale in front of Holiday Inn.



All Selected Parcels are Owned by the Estate of Kathy Wagner
Acreage: 2.35
Total Vale:\$121,230





JESSEN ROBERT F III
Parcel #: 123224
524 North Main St.
Acreage: .47
Total Value: 61,016

JESSEN ROBERT FREDERICK JR
Parcel #: 123223
103 Killian Ave.
Acreage: .15
Total Value: \$69,420



0.015 Miles

MEMO TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Greg Beal, Planning & Development Director

SUBJECT: Vision Plan Process

DATE: January 31, 2014

This memo serves to initiate discussion of a new Visioning Plan Process. There are a couple of routes that Council can choose to take as it relates to the Plan. I would first like to state that there is a difference between a Vision Process and a Visioning Plan. The 2003 Vision Process laid the framework of many accomplishments over the past decade. Over 300 citizens participated in the 2003 Vision Process for Mount Holly. The 2008 Strategic Vision Plan utilized the Vision Process, in putting core goals into a formal document. It is recommended that the Strategic Vision Plan be updated every 3-5 years. The Strategic Vision Plan was adopted in May of 2008. Here are some things that resulted from the heavily-attended, public meetings of the 2003 Vision Process, hosted by the City and conducted by our consultant, Ron Morgan:

- Economic Development & Greenways were listed as priorities
- \$5 million bond referendum was passed by 2:1 majority
- Liquor-by-the-drink passed by a 2:1 majority
- Mount Holly Community Development Foundation was started by core participants of the Vision Process
- Downtown Streetscape project began in 2005 and was dedicated in early 2007, utilizing around \$3 million in bond money
- In 2006, nearly 200 acres of land along the Catawba River and Mountain Island Lake was purchased with the help of a \$2.1 million Clean Water Management Trust Fund grant and \$500,000 City match with bond money
- In 2007, the Community Development Foundation funded an \$80,000 Greenway Master Plan and Green Print Plan, which helped the City acquire \$900,000 in greenway funding.

Results from the 2008 Strategic Vision Plan

- The Strategic Vision Plan was adopted in 2008, utilizing many of the core goals of the 2003 Vision Process. This approach also involved public meetings, and it actually incorporated recommendations from our citizens, staff and Mayor and Council, into one comprehensive 5-Phase Plan.
- The South Gateway and Downtown Gateway were formally established in 2008 and 2009, respectively, based on recommendations from the 2008 Vision Plan.
- The Linear Park Project began construction in late 2010, with the use of \$1.4 million in remaining bond money and a \$100,000 Carolina Thread Trail grant. The City exhausted the funds in June 2013, with the completion of the Catawba and Central Avenue streetscapes.

stakeholders and Mount Holly Staff, reviewing relevant documents, performing GIS analysis and meeting with the Advisory Committee. These steps will lead to the development of a Strategic Plan for the City.

Phase 2 Market Study and Annexation Strategy

Phase 2 focuses on the economic considerations that face Mount Holly. To do this, the Consultant Team will gather demographic data, analyze current markets within the region and City, forecast economic demand for the City and suggest opportunities for Mount Holly to remain economically stable and viable in the future.

Phase 3 Gateways and Downtown Plans

Phase 3 focuses on developing a small area land use plans for the Historic Downtown and Riverfront Area and the gateway locations at I-85 and Highway 273. The project areas for this Phase consist of the riverfront between the River Street Park and Tuckasee Park and Highway 27 corridor connecting the Downtown and the Riverfront.

Phase 4 Design Guidelines

Phase Four focuses on developing Strategies and Design guidelines to assist the City in maintaining quality standards for future subdivision developments that may be seeking Annexation, as well as commercial developments in the gateway areas.

Phase 5 Implementation

Phase Five focuses on the Implementation Strategies needed to complete the planning process and bring actionable items to Mount Holly Residents and City Council. Phase Five will be inclusive of all previous phases and will provide Implementation Options to cover a range of ideas for the City.



Strategic Vision Plan 01

Adopted May 12, 2008

VALUES → VISION → GOALS

Mount Holly's community values are reflected in our vision for our city's future. Our values and vision form the basis of our goals. Together, our values, vision and goals are the Strategic Vision Plan for Mount Holly.

Our Community Vision

Mount Holly is a neighborly place where we seek to preserve and enrich our community's distinctive small town character, historic downtown, and unique setting along the Catawba River. We welcome development that practices sound environmental stewardship, and creates good jobs and good neighborhoods. As we grow, we will develop a safe and expanded transportation network while promoting active living through walking, biking, and other recreational opportunities.

The Strategic Vision Plan. This Strategic Vision Plan documents Mount Holly's core community values and its vision for the City's future. The values and vision are based on the strategic visioning process conducted by the City in 2003, and on an updated inventory of community assets and challenges. The Strategic Vision Plan also outlines Mount Holly's strategic goals for achieving its vision, and illustrates them in a strategic vision map.

The Strategic Vision Plan is the first part of a five-part community planning process undertaken by Mount Holly beginning in 2006 (see back page for a description of all five phases). The planning process was conducted for the City by a consultant team from UNC Charlotte, with oversight by City staff, and with input from a citizen advisory committee and the public.

Core Value #1
Small Town Character

Core Value #2
Natural Environment

Core Value #3
Visionary Leadership

Core Value #4
Broad Business Base

Core Value #5
Efficient Transportation

Core Value #6
Excellence in Education

Mount Holly Community Planning 2006-2008, a collaborative effort of City Planning Staff, a Citizen Advisory Team, the public in Mount Holly, and consultants from the Charlotte Community Design Studio, the UNC Charlotte Urban Institute, and Warren and Associates.

01

Strategic Vision Plan

Our Community Assets & Challenges

ASSETS

Downtown

Historic District
Traditional Neighborhoods
New Main Street streetscape
Citizens Center (opens Fall 2007)
Charlie's Drug Store
Depot
Farmers' Market
Oakleigh
Public Library
Mount Holly Cotton Mill

Natural and recreational assets

The River and Mountain Island Lake
Dutchman's Creek
Plentiful water access points
Extensive tree canopy
Large stretches of protected land along the Catawba
Potential for significant greenways
Tuckasee Park, River Street Park, other parks and school playgrounds
YMCA
National Whitewater Center (in Mecklenburg)
Proposed Educational Forest facility

Schools

Catawba Heights School
Rankin School
Pinewood School
Mount Holly Middle School
Belmont Abbey College (in Belmont)

Major employers

American and Efird
Freightliner
National Gypsum

Other assets

Rehabilitation Hospital (under construction)
Water Treatment Plant

CHALLENGES

Economic Development

Gateways into City don't convey the City's distinctive character or image
Downtown hasn't yet reached "thriving" status
Need for more targeted strategies
Creekside shopping center on Highway 27

Natural resources

Natural resources still somewhat fragmented
Industrial plants on prime river frontage
Tuckasee Park lacks connection to river, new plans may not maximize its potential
Quality of many river access facilities is poor

Transportation

Traffic congestion
Transportation network is vehicle-dominated, marginalizes pedestrian and bicyclist needs
Newer neighborhoods not interconnected, not walkable

Education

Overcrowded schools (High School)

Managing for Growth

Need for expanded planning area for growth areas
Increased water and sewer capacities
Need for longer-term planning and investment
Expanded public involvement and more open communications in government

Mount Holly Community Planning 2006-2008:

01 Strategic Vision Plan

Where does Mount Holly want to go?

02 Market Study & Annexation Strategy

Can we get there?

03 Gateways & Downtown Plans

Where should different land uses go?

04 Design Guidelines

What should it look like?

05 Implementation Plan

How to get started...

Mount Holly Community Planning 2006-2008, a collaborative effort of City Planning Staff, a Citizen Advisory Team, the public in Mount Holly, and consultants from the Charlotte Community Design Studio, the UNC Charlotte Urban Institute, and Warren and Associates.

Strategic Vision Plan

OUR COMMUNITY VALUES

Small Town Character. Friendliness, quiet and peaceful neighborhoods, and locally-owned shops and community traditions define the City's small town character.

Natural Environment. The City's natural resources, especially the Lake, River, and creeks, are essential assets to be protected and preserved.

Visionary Leadership. The City depends on leaders who inspire trust and who can see the big picture.

Broad Business Base. A diverse set of businesses provide good and varied jobs for residents and a strong tax base for the City.

Efficient Transportation. The City's network of highways, streets, and sidewalks provides safe and efficient mobility for people and vehicles.

Excellence in Education. The City has strong neighborhood schools through the Gaston County School system.

These additional values support our core values:

Distinctive Identity. The City's mill town history and its place on the Catawba River combine to create a distinctive identity for it in the region.

Family-Oriented. Families find the City a safe and friendly place to raise children.

Housing Choices. A wide range of housing choices is available, from affordable apartments and starter homes to higher-end homes.

Our History. The City's historic properties and its long history as a mill town on the river create a rich heritage to be preserved for future generations.

Public Involvement. Residents and business owners in the City participate in public dialogue on City issues.

Public Safety. The City is a safe place to live, with respect for the law and effective law enforcement.

Public Utilities. City water and sewer services are reliable and cost-efficient.

Recreation for Active Living. Walkable neighborhoods and passive and active recreation facilities for people of all ages and abilities encourage active living.

Thriving Central Business District. Having a strong downtown brings the community together and reinforces the City's image as a great place to live, work and play.

OUR COMMUNITY GOALS

Woods and Waters District. Reinforce the City's image as an active living-friendly city by providing water's edge trails, parks and access points in a district that stretches from Mountain Island Lake to Belmont.

Thriving Downtown. Re-establish downtown as the center of the community's social and economic life.

Gateway Corridors. Establish four key gateway corridors into Mount Holly: Riverfront Gateway, along Highway 27/Central Avenue from the Catawba River to Downtown; South City/Gaston Gateway, at Highway 273 and I-85; North City Gateway, at Mountain Island Lake and Highway 16; and, West City Gateway, at Highway 27 and Kelly Road.

Transportation. Provide an expanded network of interconnected streets and sidewalks that is safe and efficient for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles as the community grows.

Economic Development. Implement an economic development strategy that broadens the City's business base while complementing the City's distinctive character and natural assets, explores the potential of an increased tourism base, and, focuses commercial development in commercial hubs, gateways, and downtown.

Great Neighborhoods. Grow great neighborhoods that are walkable, interconnected, and compatible with the City's traditional neighborhood design.

Additional goals

Public Utilities. Plan for expansion of water and sewer capacity as the community grows.

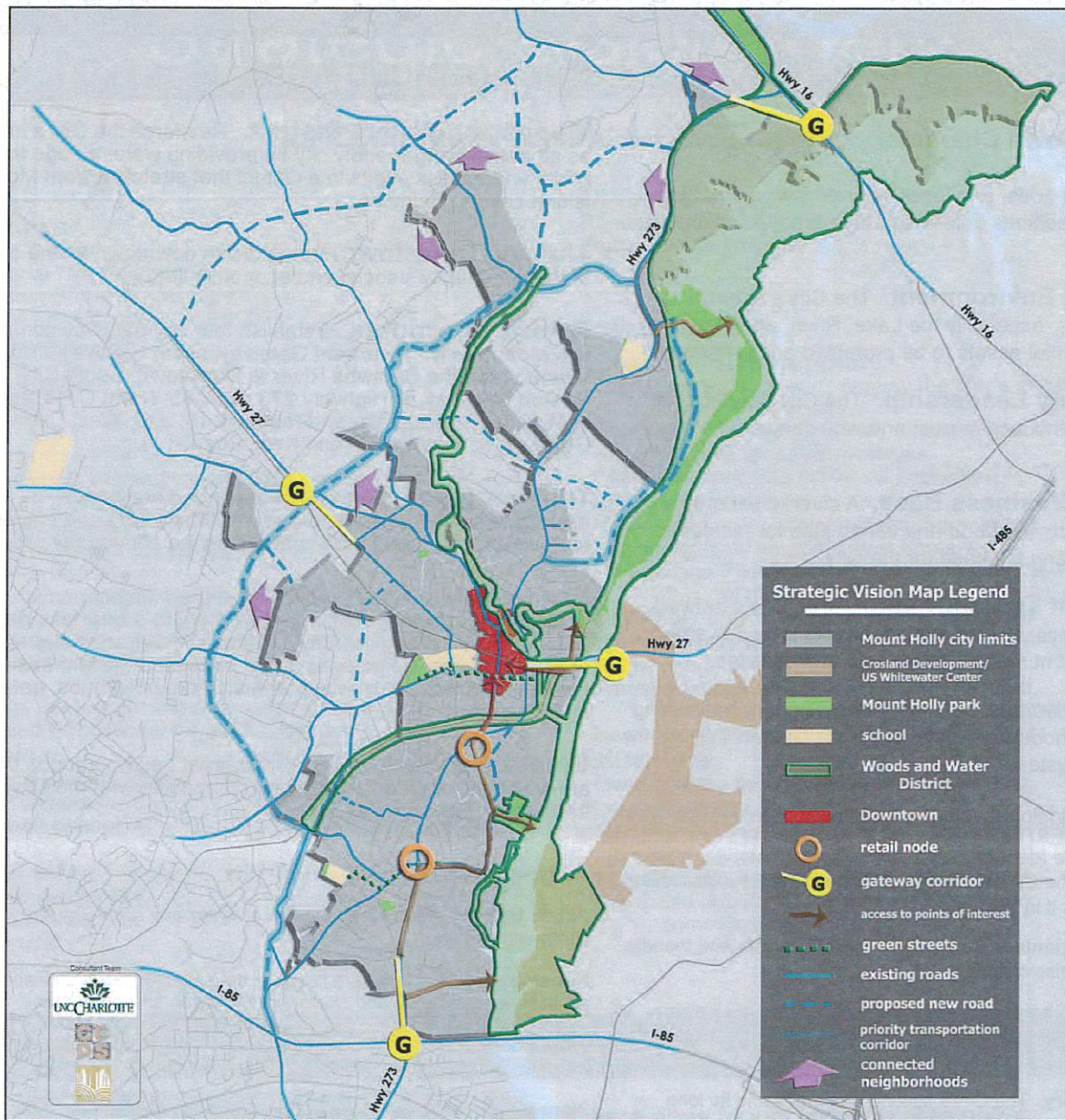
Housing Choices. Ensure a range of housing choices is available, from affordable apartments and starter homes to higher-end homes.

Public Schools. Retain strong neighborhood schools by coordinating with the County School Board to plan for community growth.

Planning for Growth. Elevate the importance of Planning in the City, commit to longer-term planning and investments, set higher development expectations.

City Governance and Management. Promote open communications in government and encourage public involvement in community decision-making.

OUR COMMUNITY VISION



The Strategic Vision Map illustrates the following focus areas for reaching the Strategic Vision:

- **Woods and Waters District:** stretching from Mountain Island Lake to Belmont, this district highlights the City's recreational water and open space assets; it includes parks, greenways, mountain bike trails, a canoe portage, a marina, boat landings, campgrounds, preserved forests and wooded areas, and a proposed scenic drive.
- **Gateway Corridors:** important entrances to the City that reflect its distinctive character.
- **Thriving Downtown:** the historic central business district serves as the center of community life.
- **Great Neighborhoods:** walkable, interconnected new neighborhoods that complement the City's traditional neighborhoods in design.
- **Commercial Hubs:** key intersections with shopping and services convenient to neighborhoods.
- **Access to Points of Interest:** signage and marked routes that reinforce the City's image and provide direction for visitors to river access and other points of interest.



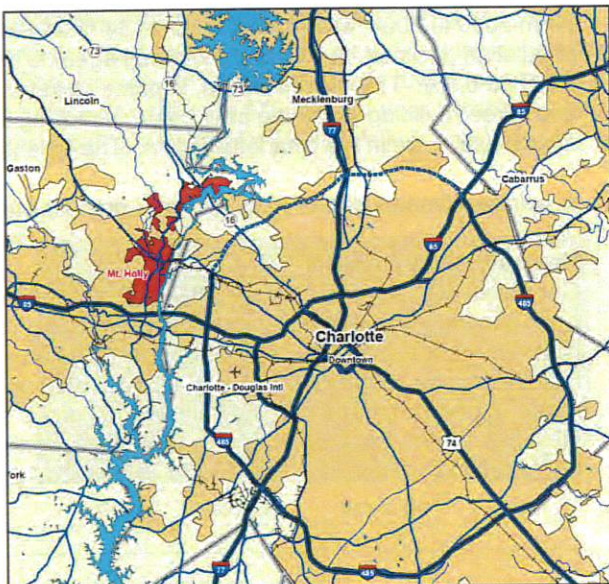
Market Study

02

Adopted on May 12, 2008

Mount Holly, North Carolina is transitioning from its textile manufacturing heritage to a period of unprecedented growth. The city is pursuing a more balanced economic vision that capitalizes on its unique assets and pivotal location only 12 miles from downtown Charlotte.

This market study identifies opportunities for undeveloped Catawba River frontage and vacant downtown buildings to become regional destinations for recreation, arts, and entertainment.



Map 1: Mount Holly and Surrounding Region

Mount Holly is poised to benefit from its proximity to I-485, I-85, Charlotte/Douglas International Airport, the U.S. National Whitewater Center, and Crosland's Whitewater mixed-use project, all in neighboring Mecklenburg County. Because Charlotte's growth has only recently extended west of the Catawba River, Mount Holly has avoided the suburban sprawl that now characterizes other small towns in the region. More importantly, many historic buildings remain intact and available for renovation. With its *(continued next page)*

Demographics

Slow population growth
Aging population
Decreasing number of young adults
Manufacturing employment remains important

Real Estate Markets

Limited retail space
Low retail rents
7 years of unsold residential lots
70%+ homes sales from \$100K - \$200K

Growth Challenges and Opportunities

I-485
NC-16 Relocation
US National Whitewater Center
Daniel Stowe Botanical Gardens
Crosland - Whitewater
Little Italy - Bechtler Arts Colony

Strategic Plan Action Items

- Leverage control of Woods & Waters District to attract development
- Establish City of Mount Holly Economic Development Office
- Create a comprehensive and consistent marketing program
- Design and implement Woods and Waters District Wayfinding system
- Fill vacant downtown stores with arts/culture uses and family-oriented retail
- Encourage Mount Holly Cotton Mill adaptive re-use

Land Use Opportunities

Downtown & Waterfront

- Establish Art in Vacant Spaces, Outdoor Dining, Place for Small Events, Visitor's Center, Museum for History/Textiles, Higher Density Housing, and Recreation

I-85 Gateway

- Offices, Business Park, Commercial, Hotel and Housing

Mount Holly Community Planning 2006-2008, a collaborative effort of City Planning Staff, a Citizen Advisory Team, the public in Mount Holly, and consultants from the Charlotte Community Design Studio, the UNC Charlotte Urban Institute, and Warren and Associates.

(cont'd. from page 1) attractive and comparatively affordable downtown, and substantial open space hugging the Catawba River, Mount Holly offers an authentic alternative to towns that have expanded rapidly around Charlotte over the last 15-20 years. The combination of a downtown area within walking distance of the Charlotte region's major water amenity provides Mount Holly a truly unique market opportunity. In order to capitalize on these assets, Mount Holly should seek entrepreneurs, artists, and cultural and recreation enthusiasts who prefer authentic, lower-cost locations. Mount Holly can expand its economic brand beyond the "River Town of the Carolinas" to recruit a young, diverse, and well-educated workforce.

Middle- and high-income families are a vital part of Mount Holly's future. However, it is important to note that these households are only part of the target market. Any promotional efforts focusing solely on the family demographic will ultimately fail for two reasons: First, families with children now represent only 24% of all U.S. households, and that share is expected to fall to 20% over the next decade. Second, Mount Holly is losing its population in the prime child-rearing years of 25 to 44. The goal is to embrace a broader market that enlivens the downtown, supports the proposed Woods and Waters District along the Catawba River and Dutchman's Creek, and ultimately makes Mount Holly more competitive for higher-income households.

Demographics

Population

Although Mount Holly and the remainder of Gaston County have long been part of the Charlotte Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), they have historically grown at rates well below the rest of the region. From 2000 to 2006, Mount Holly's population increased 4.1%, slightly above the 3.7% rate for Gaston County, but well below 18.1% for the six-county Charlotte Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) (Table 1) that consists of Anson, Cabarrus, Gaston, Iredell, Mecklenburg, and York counties.

Area	2000	2006	2000-2006 Change	
			Number	Percent
Mt. Holly	9,618	10,012	394	4.1%
Gaston County	190,365	197,322	6,957	3.7%
Charlotte MSA	1,330,448	1,570,787	240,339	18.1%

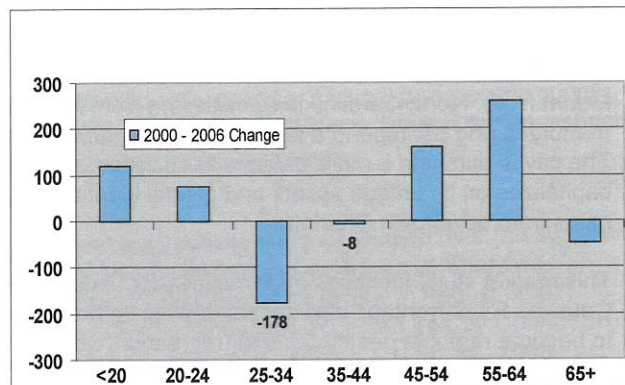
Source: ESRI

Table 1: Population Trends 2000-2006

While Mount Holly's slow growth rate reflects, in part, on limited annexation, Gaston County's similar pace indicates an overall inability to attract households relocating to the Charlotte region. The physical barrier of the Catawba River has been a primary factor in Gaston County's comparatively slow growth, but other reasons have included lower public school performance, longer distance to retail services and jobs, and an older housing stock.

Population by Age

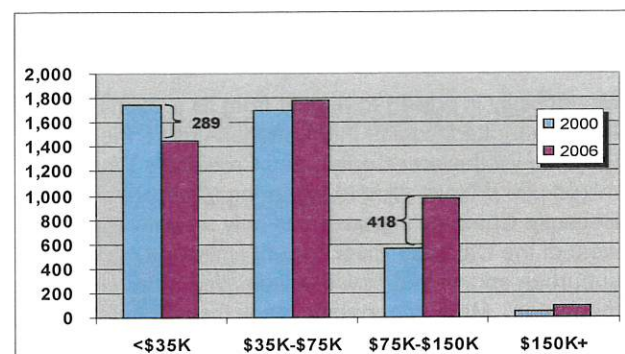
Within the town limits of Mount Holly, population growth over the last six years has been concentrated among 45- to 64-year-olds (Graph 1). The 45- to 54-year-old cohort increased 13% between 2000 and 2006, and the 55 to 64 age group increased 34.8%. These households, which are often in their peak earning years, have fewer children and are less concerned about school quality. While this group is important due to substantial disposable income and acceptance of higher density housing, it is important to note that growth could be difficult to sustain without an infusion of younger 25- to 44-year-olds.



From 2000 to 2006, Mount Holly's 25- to 34-year old population declined 10.1%, and the group aged 35 to 44 declined 0.5%. These households, in prime child-bearing and career-building years are presumably choosing to reside elsewhere in the Charlotte region. The 65 and over population also declined slightly, with retirees likely moving to warmer climates and/or to be closer to grandchildren.

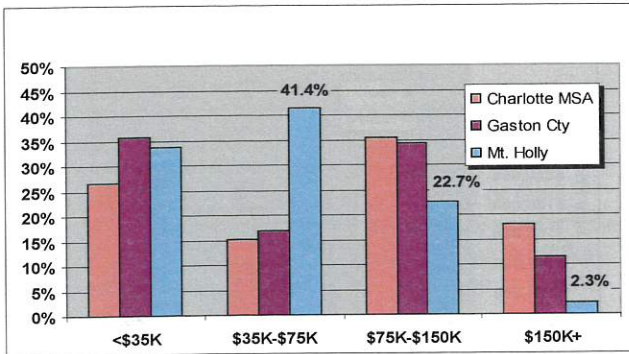
Households by Income

Consistent with the influx of 45- to 64-year-olds in their peak earning years, Mount Holly is becoming a slightly higher-income community. The number of middle- and high-income households increased between 2000 and 2006. Most notably, the \$75,000 to \$150,000 group grew by 418 households, or 75% (Graph 2). In contrast, households earning less than \$35,000 decreased 16.6%.

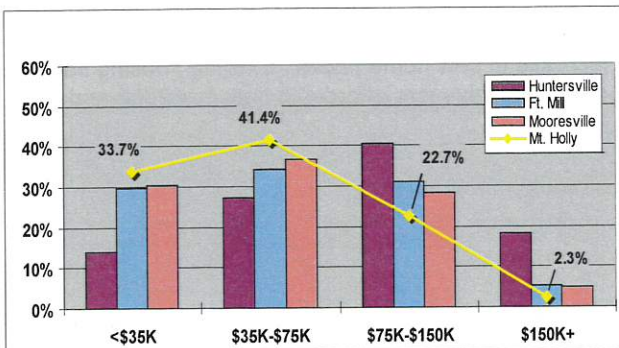


Graph 2: Household Trends by Income, Mount Holly, 2000-2006

In spite of this recent success in attracting affluent households, the core market remains predominantly middle-income. Households earning \$35,000 to \$75,000 represent 41.4% of the city, which is well above the 15% and 17% shares for the six-county Charlotte MSA and Gaston County (Graph 3). Mount Holly also has a 25% share of households earning \$75,000 or more, which is lower than 45% for Gaston County and 53% for the Charlotte MSA.



Huntersville, Fort Mill, and Mooresville are comparable jurisdictions to Mount Holly. Previously farming or manufacturing towns at distances of 15 to 25 miles from downtown Charlotte, they are now experiencing substantial suburban growth. In each of the three towns, at least 33% of households earn over \$75,000 per year (Graph 4). The corresponding measure for Mount Holly is only 25%.

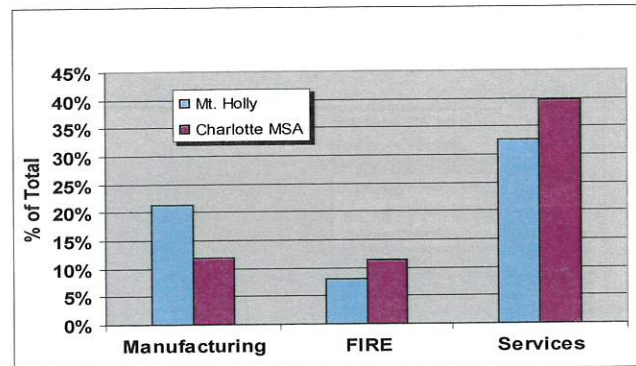


Mount Holly should confront this disadvantage with policies and programs to successfully attract a more affluent market. An important strategy is creating a unique set of arts, culture, recreation, and entertainment amenities for the Charlotte region.

Employment

Compared to the Charlotte MSA, the employment mix in Mount Holly is heavily weighted toward manufacturing. In 2006, the 1,055 manufacturing jobs represented 21.3% of

the city, almost double the 11.8% share for the Charlotte MSA (Graph 5). Mount Holly also has a smaller share of finance, insurance, and real estate (FIRE) and services jobs than Charlotte MSA.



There are basically three components of the office market: corporate, professional, and entrepreneurial. The corporate market is driven by proximity to executive housing, while professional office tenants such as insurance agents, attorneys, physicians, and financial planners follow household growth. Entrepreneurs, on the other hand, seek unique and affordable space that is consistent with a non-traditional marketing message. Mount Holly is well-positioned to serve entrepreneurial enterprises.

School Performance

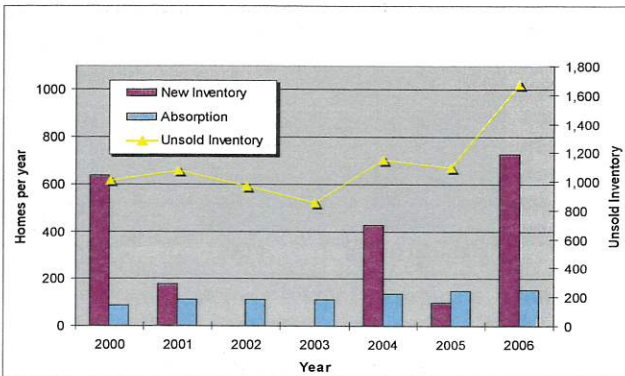
Any discussion of community competitiveness and changing demographics must include school performance. This is often the primary measure used by relocating middle- and high-income families to select a neighborhood. In Mount Holly, Ida Rankin Elementary is a School of Excellence. As a result, Mount Holly is successfully attracting young families. Retaining those families becomes more difficult, however, due to the comparative performance of East Gaston High School.

Similar to other Gaston County high schools, East Gaston's average Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) test scores typically lag those of other suburban Charlotte school districts. While the City of Mount Holly has no direct control over the Gaston County school system, there are investments that can be made by the community in facilities, teachers, and amenities to make East Gaston High School a stronger regional performer. Funding these improvements through private contributions and non-profit grants is an important economic development strategy. The school could also gain magnet programs that attract high-achievement students from across Gaston County to study languages, arts/music, and other curricula.

Real Estate Markets

Residential

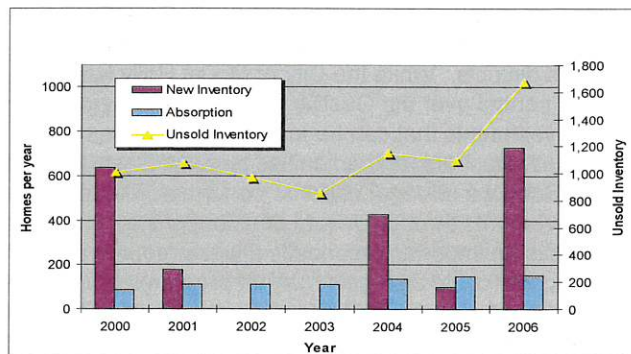
Mount Holly's unsold residential lot inventory has increased more than seven fold, from approximately 200 lots in 2001 to approximately 1,670 lots in 2006 (Graph 6). While absorption has been increasing, the annual pace remains below 200 lots.



Graph 6: Residential Inventory Trend, Mount Holly, 2000-2006

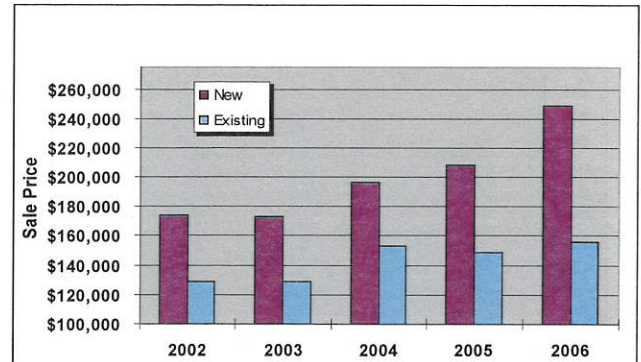
Currently, there are 14 residential communities under construction in or adjacent to Mount Holly, with a total of 2,972 lots. An estimated 1,972 lots, or 66%, remain unsold. Eight of the 14 communities, representing 1,550 lots, have been started over the last four years. Home prices in the communities range from \$70,000 to \$1.1 million, averaging \$194,000. Assuming an increase in the annual absorption pace to approximately 260 new homes per year, the current inventory equates to a seven-year supply of lots. In order to generate demand for these new units, developers will market to an increasingly diverse set of prospective buyers.

The price of new homes in Riverbend Township (including most of Mount Holly and Stanly) increased 43% from \$174,121 in 2002 to \$248,602 in 2006, and existing home prices increased 21% from \$129,047 to \$155,832 (Graph 7). The increasing difference between new and existing home prices reflects a market with adequate new supply. Rapidly increasing existing home prices is usually indicative of new supply constraints.



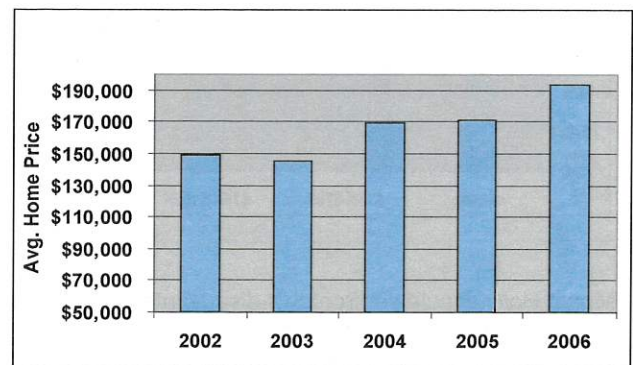
Graph 7: Avg. Sale Prices of New/Existing Homes, Mount Holly, 2002-06

The average sale price of all homes in Riverbend Township increased 30%, from \$149,144 in 2002 to \$193,589 in 2006 (Graph 8). While this is a strong achievement over a four-year period, the 2006 measure was still approximately \$95,000 below the average of \$244,271 in Mecklenburg County. Again, this is evidence that Mount Holly is attracting a higher-income demographic, but housing prices remain lower than in Mecklenburg County.



Graph 8: Average Home Prices, Mount Holly, 2002-2006

Concurrent with a substantial rise in prices over the last four years, the pace of both new and existing home closings increased dramatically in Mount Holly. The sale of new homes increased from 103 to 221 per year, an annual increase of 29% (Graph 9). Existing homes sales increased from 128 to 322 per year, an annual increase of 38%. It is interesting to note that the new home share of sales decreased from 45% to 41% during the period, possibly indicating some buyer resistance to the 43% increase in new home prices. Existing housing became comparatively more affordable between 2002 and 2006.



Graph 9: Residential Closing Trends, Mount Holly, 2002-2006

Retail

There are two shopping centers in Mount Holly's immediate market area, totaling 86,144 square feet (Table 2). The centers were built in 1987 and 1997.

Overall, there is only one vacant space, a 25,000-square foot former supermarket at Creekside. This space results in a 29% vacancy rate. At a quoted rent of only \$4.00 per square foot, the former supermarket space is likely to transition to a non-profit, institutional, or office use.

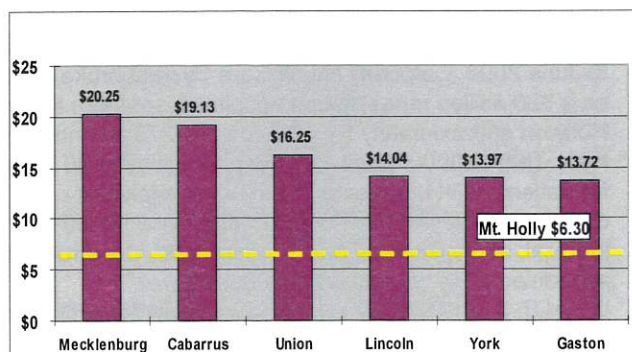
Center	Location	Year Built	Total Sq. Ft.	Vacant Sq. Ft.	Vacancy Rate	Quoted Rent	Quoted Anchors
Creekside Shopping Center	799 W. Charlotte Ave.	1987	49,949	25,000	50.1%	\$4.00	Dollar General
Springs Crossing	617 Highland St.	1997	36,195	0	0.0%	N/A	Food Lion
Total			86,144	25,000	29.0%		

Source: Warren & Associates and Karnes

Table 2: Shopping Center Inventory, Mount Holly Market Area, 2007

The absence of small-shop vacancy and the aging of existing shopping centers is an indication of retail development opportunities in Mount Holly. Based on the area's expected population growth, a new supermarket-anchored shopping center is likely to emerge in Mount Holly over the next five years.

Gaston County has an average retail rent of \$13.72 per square foot, lowest in a six-county area around Charlotte (Graph 10). The average for all six counties is \$16.23 per square foot. With only one vacant space available in Mount Holly at \$4.00 per square foot, the city's rents are lower than Gaston County's. The low rent could delay construction of a new retail center without demand from a supermarket anchor. At the same time, the availability of lower-cost space in Mount Holly makes it competitive for arts, recreation, or other civic organizations.



Graph 10: Charlotte Region Retail Rents, 2006

Making Mount Holly more competitive for young families should include a plan to accommodate more privately-operated day care centers. A downtown center would be particularly desirable as a strategy to generate morning and evening traffic and potential retail customers.

Downtown

The four blocks surrounding the Main Street/Charlotte Avenue intersection in downtown Mount Holly contain an estimated 333,512 square feet of building space (Table 3).

Retail uses occupy 134,556 square feet, or 40.3% of the total. The retail vacancy rate is approximately 15%-20%, with the two largest spaces on North Main Street formerly occupied by Kimbrell's Furniture and a department store. Residential uses, including apartments and single family houses, comprise another 82,835 square feet, or 24.8% of the inventory.

Use	Square Feet	% of Total
Residential	82,835	24.8%
Retail	134,556	40.3%
Office	64,557	19.4%
Civic/Institutional	51,564	15.5%
Total	333,512	100%

Note: Includes four blocks at Main St. and Charlotte Ave.

Source: Gaston County

Table 3: Land Uses in Downtown by Square Feet, Mount Holly, 2007

The four-block area around Main Street and Charlotte Avenue contains a total of 48.8 acres (Table 4). Residential uses occupy 47.2% of the land in a low-density development pattern that could transition to higher density townhouses and condominiums over time. The 5.6 unimproved (or vacant) acres represent additional infill development opportunities.

Use	Acreage	% of Total Acres
Residential	23.0	47.2%
Retail	7.9	16.1%
Office	4.4	8.9%
Civic/Institutional	8.0	16.3%
Unimproved	5.6	11.6%
Total	48.8	100%

Note: Includes four blocks at Main St. and Charlotte Ave.

Source: Gaston County

Table 4: Mix of Land Uses in Downtown by Acreage, Mount Holly, 2007

There are an estimated 50 residential units in the four-block core of downtown Mount Holly, including 32 single family houses, 16 apartments, and a duplex (Table 5). Increasing this residential inventory is a primary economic development goal to boost retail spending, employment, and pedestrian activity.

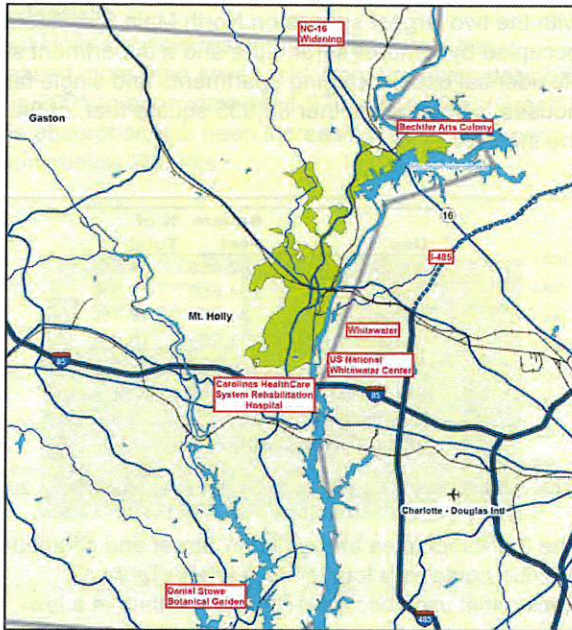
Type	Units	Sq. Ft.
Single Family	32	65,371
Multi-Family	2	2,690
Apartment	16	14,774
Total	50	82,835

Note: Assumes 900 sq. ft. average apartment size

Source: Gaston County

Table 5: Downtown Residential Uses by Type, Mount Holly, 2007

Growth Challenges and Opportunities



Map 2: Mount Holly Growth Challenges & Opportunities

I-485

Interstate 485 (I-485) is the planned 67-mile outer beltway around Charlotte. Approximately three quarters of the beltway is complete. The latest section from NC-27 to NC-16 opens in June 2007. The phase from NC-16 to I-77 by the end of 2007. The northeast segment from I-77 North to I-85 North has been delayed until 2013.

IMPACT: **Increased residential growth.**

NC-16 Widening

NC-16 is in the process of being expanded to a four-lane divided highway on new right-of-way from NC-273 in Mount Holly to NC-150 in Catawba County. The phase from NC-273 to NC-73 opened in June 2007. The next phase from NC-73 to NC-150 is scheduled for completion by 2011.

IMPACT: **More traffic and potential for "inflow" retail sales.**

U.S. National Whitewater Center

The U.S. National Whitewater Center (USNWC) is the world's only multi-channel re-circulating man-made whitewater river. Located on the eastern edge of the Catawba River approximately one mile north of I-85, the park has over 300 acres of woodlands along the Catawba River, including mountain-biking and running trails, a climbing center, and a challenge course. The United States Olympic Committee (USOC) has designated the USNWC an official Olympic Training Site, and the national governing body for the sport, USA Canoe and Kayak (USACK), is also based there. The USNWC hosts World

Cup competitions and Olympic Trials, and serves as the home of international Olympic athletes.

IMPACT: **13,812 square feet of retail and restaurant demand for Mount Holly (Table 6), 40 hotel rooms, and 100 jobs (Table 7). Marketing materials at the ticket booth will raise visibility of Mount Holly.**

Use	Direct	Indirect/ Induced	Total	Sales/ Sq. Ft.	Demand Sq. Ft.	Mt. Holly Capture	Mt. Holly Sq. Ft.
Whitewater	\$6,037,344	\$3,078,165	\$9,115,509	\$250	36,462	20%	7,292
Other Activities	2,275,594	1,160,222	3,435,816	\$250	13,743	20%	2,749
Special Events	3,121,910	1,591,719	4,713,629	\$250	18,855	20%	3,771
Total	\$11,434,848	\$5,830,106	\$17,264,954	\$250	69,060	20%	13,812

Table 6: Off-Site Retail and Restaurant Demand from US National Whitewater Park

Use	Total	Mt. Holly
Retail/Restaurant Sq. Ft.	69,060	13,812
Hotel Rooms	154	40
Jobs	460	100

Table 7: Impact Potential of US National Whitewater Park, Mount Holly

Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden

Opened in 1999, the Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden occupies 450 acres between Lake Wylie and NC-279, approximately eight miles south of Mount Holly. The center has been constructed in phases, and now includes a visitor pavilion, nine themed gardens, 12 fountains, and a woodland trail.

IMPACT: **Collective marketing effort for "ecotourism" inflow, retail spending, and hotel guests.**

Carolinas HealthCare System Rehabilitation Hospital

In June 2006, Carolinas HealthCare System broke ground on a \$20 million rehabilitation hospital in southern Mount Holly on approximately 31 acres on NC-273 just north of I-85. The 48,000-square-foot hospital will have 40 beds for patients with brain or spinal injuries, stroke, or other debilitating illness. The hospital will employ 90 full-time medical, administrative, and support staff. Construction is scheduled to be completed in 2008.

IMPACT: **Additional 90 jobs and catalyst for office and retail development around hospital.**

Little Italy – Bechtler Arts Colony

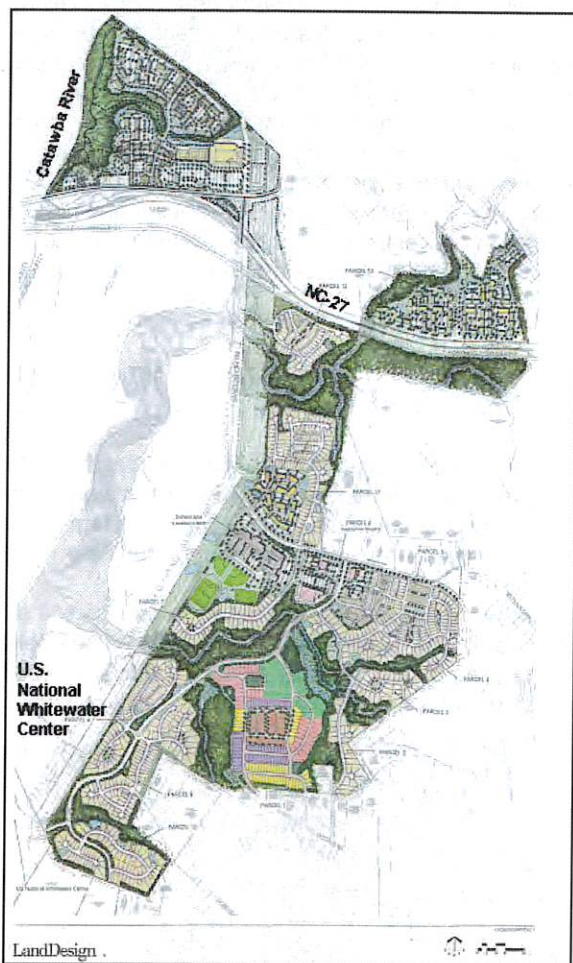
Dr. Andreas Bechtler, a well-recognized artist and collector, operates Little Italy as a visual arts colony along the shores of Mountain Island Lake immediately north of Mount Holly. The 294-acre property hosts visiting artists, some of international notoriety, in a natural setting accessed from Horseshoe Bend Road near the Stonewater Bay subdivision.

IMPACT: **Presence of well-known visual artists who could exhibit works and validate Mount Holly as a progressive arts and culture community.**

Crosland - Whitewater

Whitewater is Crosland's master planned development between NC-27 and the U.S. National Whitewater Center east of the Catawba River and less than one mile from Mount Holly. The 908-acre community will be phased-in over a ten-year period. The 642 acres south of NC-27 will be developed first, with 975 single-family houses, 165 townhouses, 90,000 square feet of retail, and 20,000 square feet of office space. Later phases north of NC-27 will include more commercial space, including a hotel and multi-family housing.

IMPACT: Market support for downtown Mount Holly retail and restaurants. Business owners will lease office and flex space downtown and at the I-85 Gateway. Challenge will be diverting traffic flow toward Mount Holly.



Map 3: Crosland Whitewater Site Plan

Example Communities

Four precedent communities have successfully integrated arts, culture and recreation uses into economic development (Table 8). They include:

- Redding, California
- Clarksville, Tennessee
- Mangum, Oklahoma
- Lambertville, NJ and New Hope, PA

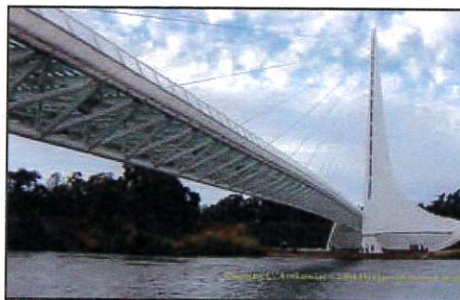
As a result of grassroots efforts by local organizations, these five towns have renovated and reused older downtown buildings. Redding and Clarksville have also connected urban redevelopment to natural areas along rivers.

City	Population	River	Recreation	Visual Arts	Performing Arts
Redding, CA	100,000	Sacramento	Sundial Bridge, Sacramento River Trails	Old City Hall Arts Center	Cascade Theater
Clarksville, TN	100,000	Cumberland	Riverwalk, wharf	Public art/statues	Roxy Theatre
Mangum, OK	2,924	NIA		Art galleries/Artist Co-ops	
Lambertville, NJ	3,868	Delaware	Delaware/Raritan Canal State Park	Art Galleries	Roxey Ballet Company
New Hope, PA	2,252	Delaware	Delaware River access	Art Galleries/New Hope School	Bucks County Playhouse

Source: Warren & Associates

Table 8: Downtown Recreation & Arts, Example Communities, 2007

Redding, CA



Sundial Bridge

Redding, California is a community of 100,000 residents on the banks of the Sacramento River 150 miles north of Sacramento. Tapping into the extensive Sacramento River Trail System, Redding has spent over \$7 million to create the Turtle Bay Exploration Park in two campuses on either side of the river. The dramatic, harp-shaped Sundial Pedestrian Bridge connects downtown Redding with the park and trails. Redding has restored the historic Cascade Theater, which now operates as a multi-use performance arts venue. The city has also invested in the Old City Hall Arts Center, which now serves as a gallery, classroom, and video production facility. A small city park and brick courtyard host receptions, and an upstairs performance hall seats 150 people.

Clarksville, TN



Sundial Bridge
Clarksville Streetscape with Roxy Theater

Clarksville, Tennessee, population 100,000, is located 50 miles west of Nashville on the Cumberland River. In 1983, two area artists opened the Roxy Regional Theatre in downtown Clarksville, hosting Roxy's Professional Company and a Summer Drama Camp. It became the cornerstone of downtown redevelopment, including a downtown artist co-op. After two years, it restructured to become a non-profit. Clarksville prides itself on public art, with the Millennium Fountain, a statue of Wilma Rudolph, the eternal flame, and the Mural of Spires. The city's waterfront is showcased in the River Walk, which provides recreation opportunities, picnic areas, a wharf, and walking and biking trails.

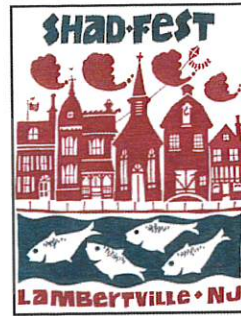
Mangum, OK



Artist Alley in Mangum, OK

In the rolling hills and cotton fields 160 miles southwest of Oklahoma City, tiny Mangum (population 2,924) has begun an arts renaissance. Using a grant from the Oklahoma Arts Council in 2006, Mangum developed an artist alley just off the town square, with potters, painters, and sculptors. Resulting from restored fountains and revitalized shops on the square, the town has realized an increase of 9% in local sales taxes attributed to the arts.

Lambertville, NJ and New Hope, PA



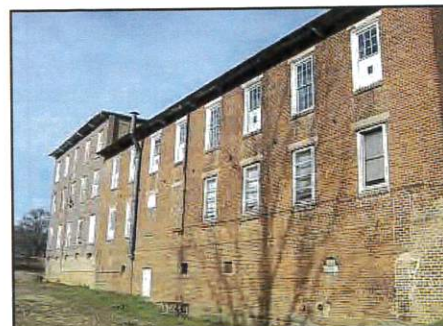
Lambertville, NJ and New Hope, PA, on opposite sides of the Delaware River 28 miles north of Philadelphia, have long histories as arts communities. Together, they boast 30 art studios and galleries. Lambertville, population 3,868, bills itself as the antiques capital of New Jersey. Historic homes and restored public buildings are now art galleries, antique stores, bed-and-breakfasts, inns, and restaurants. The Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park runs through the heart of downtown, providing walking, jogging, biking, and water sports. Each year the town hosts Shadfest, with artists, crafters, food, and music, drawing on twin commitments to the river and the arts. Nearby New Hope (population 2,252) turned the old Parry gristmill into the Bucks County Playhouse, and paper mills have been converted into condos. New Hope was the birthplace of The New Hope School, an artist community founded in 1939.

Visual Preference Survey

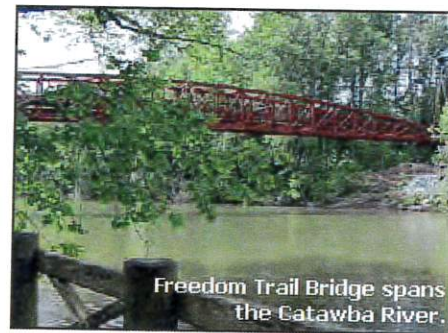
A visual preference survey was conducted at the May 2007 public meeting in Mount Holly. Participants were given two series of photos: one showed existing conditions, and the other potential arts and recreation opportunities.

Existing Conditions Visual Preferences

In the existing conditions series, the three photos below were chosen most frequently as what participants liked about Mount Holly.



Mount Holly Cotton Mill



Participants focused on the waterfront and the potential to renovate existing buildings to bring added character to the town, particularly the Mount Holly Cotton Mill on Dutchman's Creek.

Future Opportunities Visual Preferences

The second series of photos contained images of a variety of community options and environmental scenes from other markets.

The five photos below were selected as the preferred alternatives for Mount Holly to realize its recreational, arts, and cultural opportunities. Participants chose images that conveyed recreation and pedestrian-oriented activities.



Market Opportunities

Mount Holly's market opportunities are characterized below within the context of the six core values of the Strategic Vision Plan.

Small Town Character

Small town character is an attribute that resonates with a large portion of today's home-buying market. Mount Holly has a unique opportunity in the Charlotte region to redefine small-town character. Embracing a diverse population would be the catalyst for economic vitality.

Essentially, the target market must be expanded to include persons of varying ages, professions, incomes, and personal interests. The City has invested heavily in a new streetscape program that has made downtown a more walkable and urban environment. This is the first step in pursuing higher-density infill development that complements the existing historic fabric.

Some of Mount Holly's most valuable assets, particularly the Mount Holly Cotton Mill and Dutchman's Creek, are ignored or forgotten by many residents. These community anchors could become more integrated into the community fabric as icons for Mount Holly's small town character. As part of the proposed Woods and Waters District, they would also support a more diverse demographic.

Natural Environment

There are numerous opportunities to reconnect Mount Holly with the Catawba River. Much effort has been focused on the new design for Tuckasee Park between downtown and I-85. From a market perspective, however, the City should concentrate on a continuous trail system along the river and Dutchman's Creek in the proposed Woods and Waters District. The trail system would serve Mount Holly residents and attract visitors from across the Charlotte region. The trail system could also be connected with the U.S. National Whitewater Center by a high-visibility pedestrian bridge across the Catawba River.

River Street Park is currently hidden and underutilized, in spite of its strategic location at the mouth of Dutchman's Creek less than one mile from downtown. The area around this park provides numerous development opportunities, particularly along the Catawba River on the site of the current City of Mount Holly Service Yard.

Visionary Leadership

The City of Mount Holly has virtually no municipal voice in economic development. As a result, the all-volunteer

Mount Holly Community Development Foundation functions as unpaid City staff. Long-term, this model will not survive. The Town should reclaim ownership of economic development, with a funded structure for operations and investment. A paid staff person would champion the cause and implement change.

Volunteer organizations typically fade when their leaders move, priorities change, and there is no dedicated funding source. A City of Mount Holly Economic Development Department would operate independently of the Gaston County Chamber or Gaston County Economic Development Commission. The City could fund this effort with minimal impact on the \$0.54 per \$100 tax rate. The investment would be more than offset by returns to the community.

Broad Business Base

Mount Holly has the capacity to accommodate a wide variety of businesses, focusing on two different target markets for downtown and the I-85 Gateway. Existing downtown buildings would be very competitive for grassroots arts and cultural organizations, as well as entrepreneurial businesses that seek less expensive space.

The I-85 Gateway has vacant land that could be developed as professional office and flex space for companies seeking proximity to I-85 in a lower-tax environment than Charlotte. This area provides an opportunity for businesses to own buildings as the supply of developable business park land continues to decline in adjacent Mecklenburg County. Tightly defined design standards would guarantee long-term building investment values and create a more commanding entrance into Mount Holly.

Partnering with the Gaston County Economic Development Commission (EDC) is essential to attracting jobs and business investment to Mount Holly. The City should actively pursue "product", or buildings, that can be marketed through the EDC. The buildings would supplement land opportunities for larger industrial facilities.

Efficient Transportation

There are few small cities in the Charlotte region that have attempted to integrate pedestrian, bicycle, and automobile transportation systems. As part of its recreation-themed marketing efforts, Mount Holly could promote an environmentally-conscious system of greenways and alternative modes of transportation. Negotiations with CSX Railroad should be accelerated to determine the availability of unused lines for purchase by the City.

The most critical elements in this network are the connections between downtown and the NC-27 and I-85 gateways. Sidwalks and bike paths should be present along NC-273 and NC-27, complemented by a greenway in the Woods and Waters District along the Catawba River.

Excellence in Education

East Gaston High School could become a model of improvement for Gaston County, spurred by a commitment of money and resources from Mount Holly residents. Investments in facilities and teachers can be pursued through a variety of public, non-profit, and private funding sources, separate from Gaston County.

Foundations frequently select public schools for targeted improvements, with matching funds from the community. A unique magnet program could also be pursued that would be mutually supportive of Mount Holly's evolution toward arts, culture, and recreation. This magnet, which would generate positive publicity for Mount Holly, could operate concurrently with a more standard curriculum.

Colleges and universities across the region are opening satellite campuses to serve burgeoning enrollment by Generation Y, the children of the Baby Boom generation. Examples include Pfeiffer, Wingate, and UNC-Charlotte. The City of Mount Holly could provide a long-term lease for Gaston College, Gardner-Webb, Lenoir Rhyne, or another area college to conduct classes in City-owned buildings that would generate evening traffic downtown. The strongest opportunity would be the second floor of the current City Hall, which could be expanded after the City offices are relocated.

In conjunction with a possible events venue at the Mount Holly Cotton Mill, culinary classes and a co-op could be operated in partnership with Johnson & Wales University in Charlotte. A garden in the Dutchman's Creek floodplain could provide organic ingredients for the facility.

In order to expand the presence of families in downtown Mount Holly, a full-time day care center should be opened in a highly-visible location. It is possible that this facility could be accommodated in or adjacent to the future City Hall. It could also be operated by a church, but should be open to the public without preference to members.

Action Items

Implementation of Mount Holly's market strategy will be multi-faceted, requiring a long-term commitment by City leaders.

Municipal Investments

- Purchase strategic property in the Woods and Waters District and downtown for greenway right-of-way, conservation, or future development.
- Establish a City of Mount Holly Economic Development office to market the community and specific real estate opportunities, provide a liaison to the Gaston County Economic Development Commission for business relocation and retention efforts, represent the City's interests with developers, and pursue funding partnerships.
- Encourage preservation and possible re-use of the Mount Holly Cotton Mill as an events venue with an educational component.
- Negotiate with CSX Railroad to purchase or obtain easements for abandoned or surplus lines outside of the Woods and Waters District that could become part of a regional trail system.
- Explore the feasibility of a downtown service district with a supplementary tax rate to fund public improvements and marketing efforts.

Marketing

- Hire an outside consultant to prepare a comprehensive and consistent marketing program that includes a new City logo and tag line, web site redesign, signage, and written materials. Focus visuals on the Woods and Waters District, Mountain Island Dam, Catawba River boat launch, and the historic district.
- Conduct a photographic contest of Mount Holly's assets with a cash prize to the winning entry. Use the winning entries on promotional material.
- Negotiate agreements to display marketing materials at the U.S. National Whitewater Center and the sales center for Crosland's planned Whitewater community.
- Implement a Wayfinding system with signage directing visitors from I-85 and NC-16 to the Woods and Waters District and downtown. Also identify downtown public parking areas.
- Create a Downtown Merchant's Association to represent the collective interests of business owners.
- Expand the current downtown river festival and farmer's market schedule to attract residents from across the Charlotte region.

(continued next page)

Action Items *(continued from page 11)***Regulations and Policies**

- Implement a sign ordinance that improves the visual approach into Mount Holly and preserves the character of downtown.
- Allow and promote outdoor dining in the downtown area, including beer and wine sales.
- Promote higher-density housing in and around downtown.

Real Estate

- Open a downtown visitor's center in a visible location, possibly in conjunction with a Museum of History.
- Provide a City-owned property for a grassroots arts organization.
- Designate a business park site for assembly and negotiate a joint venture with prospective developers.

Education

- Provide a City-owned property for a college or university satellite facility.
- Invest resources to reposition East Gaston High School.
- Encourage the opening of a full-time downtown daycare facility.

About the Market Study

This market study was conducted from November, 2006 to April, 2007. It includes a review of Mount Holly's demographics and real estate markets. It identifies growth challenges and opportunities, and refers to the City's Strategic Vision Plan to guide assessment of market opportunities. It outlines a preliminary market strategy and provides illustrative examples from other cities. As part of a May, 2007 public meeting, a visual preferences survey was conducted to gauge residents support for key aspects of the proposed market strategy.

Recommended actions were developed over the summer of 2007, and the completed draft Market Study was presented to City Council for review in August, 2007. The final Market Study was accepted by City Council on November 12, 2007 and adopted on May 12, 2008.

Mount Holly Community Planning 2006-2007:

01 Strategic Vision Plan

Where does Mount Holly want to go?

02 Market Study & Annexation Strategy

Can we get there?

03 Gateways & Downtown Plans

Where should different land uses go?

04 Design Guidelines

What should it look like?

05 Implementation Plan

How to get started...

Mount Holly Community Planning 2006-2008, a collaborative effort of City Planning Staff, a Citizen Advisory Team, the public in Mount Holly, and consultants from the Charlotte Community Design Studio, the UNC Charlotte Urban Institute, and Warren and Associates.



Annexation Policies 02.1

Adopted May 12, 2008

Intent of the Policy

A municipality's power to annex is one of two important tools for managing its growth and providing for efficient and effective delivery of public services. The other tool is the use of extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ), which allows cities and towns to exercise land use and zoning control over areas that are likely to be annexed in the future without taxing them or providing public services to them. Together, these tools allow for more orderly growth and development that is compatible with the community's long-term vision and that can most-effectively be provided with public services.

Annexation of land may occur by petition (voluntary) or by the city exercising its authority (City-Initiated). In both cases, North Carolina law dictates what specific requirements must be met in order to proceed with the annexations. In addition to these legal requirements, the City of Mount Holly believes it is acting in the best interest of its residents by evaluating each annexation request for conformity with Mount Holly's adopted plans and policies, and for its impacts on provision of governmental services. Accordingly, the City Council has established this Annexation Evaluation and Approval Policy.

Annexation Evaluation and Approval Policy

Prior to legal certification of any annexation proposal, whether voluntary petition or city-initiated, the City Manager shall submit for City Council's review a written Annexation Evaluation Report prepared according to the evaluation criteria laid out in this document.

All voluntary annexation petitions must be submitted

Policy Element #1 Planning Review

Policy Element #2 Evaluation Criteria

Policy Element #3 Annexation Evaluation Coversheet

to the City Manager's office and be accompanied by payment of the required fee. If the City Council wishes to consider a petition, then a planning review shall take place as specified below followed by a written Annexation Evaluation Report prepared by the City Manager according to the criteria laid out in this policy document. The City may require supporting information from the petitioner in order to fully evaluate the proposal.

City-initiated annexation proposals must be submitted to City Council by the City Manager accompanied by a written Annexation Evaluation Report prepared according to the criteria laid out in this policy document.

If upon consideration of the written Annexation Evaluation Report the City Council determines it wishes to pursue the proposed annexation, North Carolina statutory provisions for annexations shall be followed, including certification by the City Clerk and public hearing requirements, before City Council may act to approve an annexation.

02.1

Annexation Policies

Policy Development Process

A study of Mount Holly's annexation policies and practices was conducted from February to September, 2007. The study found that as the volume of voluntary annexation petitions has grown in recent years, the City's existing policies and informal procedures for handling them have been strained.

The recommendations in the study's draft report addressed the need for a more strategic approach to annexations and more transparent and methodological procedures for evaluating and approving annexations. The recommendations are in three categories:

- o Revised Annexation Evaluation Policy
- o Annexation Strategic Priorities
- o Long-Range Planning for Growth

Revised Annexation Policies were developed based on the study's recommendations over the fall

and winter of 2007-2008. The study's final report was presented to City Council on April 14, 2008, including the draft revised Annexation Policies. Following a public hearing, the final Annexation Policies were adopted by City Council on May 12, 2008 as contained in this document.

The report also provides three general criteria for developing annexation strategic priorities:

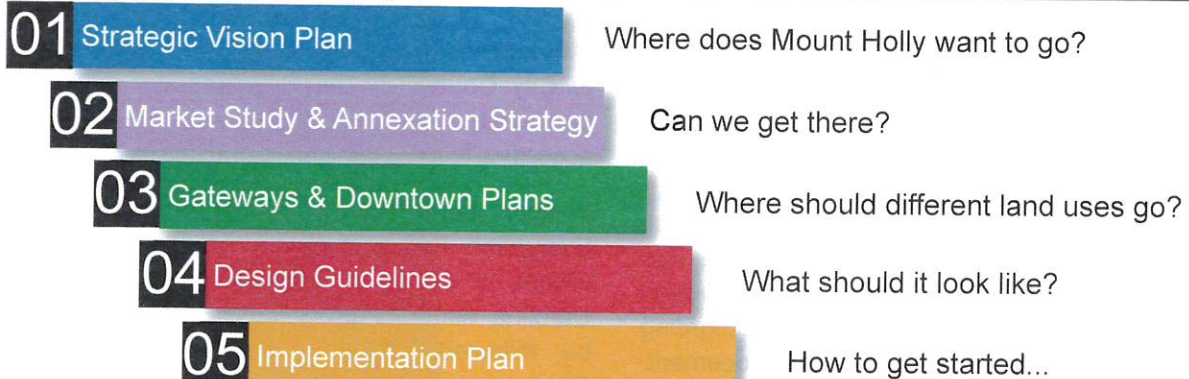
- o Contribution to the Strategic Vision Plan – does it help achieve the City's vision?
- o Logical extension of services – does it fill in an obvious gap in the City's boundaries and allow for cost-efficient extension of public services?
- o Tax base and competitive advantage – does it allow the City to avoid losing a desirable tax base to another municipality?

Finally, the report's Long-Range Planning for Growth recommendations include:

- o Periodically revise the Annexation planning tools
- o Apply extra-territorial planning tools
- o Conduct a yearly "planning review" session for City Council and Planning Commission

Note: Copies of the April 2008 report, "Annexation Strategies: The City's policies and procedures for evaluation and approval of annexations," may be obtained by contacting the Mount Holly Community Development Department, 131 S. Main St., P.O. Box 406, Mount Holly, NC 28120, tel. 704. 822-2938.

Mount Holly Community Planning 2006-2008:



Mount Holly Community Planning 2006-2008, a collaborative effort of City Planning Staff, a Citizen Advisory Team, the public in Mount Holly, and consultants from the Charlotte Community Design Studio, the UNC Charlotte Urban Institute, and Warren and Associates.

POLICY ELEMENT #3

Figure 1. Annexation Evaluation Coversheet

City of Mount Holly, North Carolina Annexation Evaluation Coversheet

Proposed Annexation Area: _____

(Check one box for either City-Initiated or Voluntary Petition)

☐ City-Initiated Proposal

Planning Review Submittal Date

☐ Voluntary Petition Submitted by: _____

_____ Initial Petition Submittal Date

_____ Planning Review Initiated by Council Request

_____ Petitioner's Planning Review Submittals Completed

Planning Review Completion Due

This coversheet accompanies a written Annexation Evaluation Report prepared by the City Manager in accordance with City policy, and summarizes the Annexation Evaluation Report's findings for each of the criteria required by City policy to be evaluated.

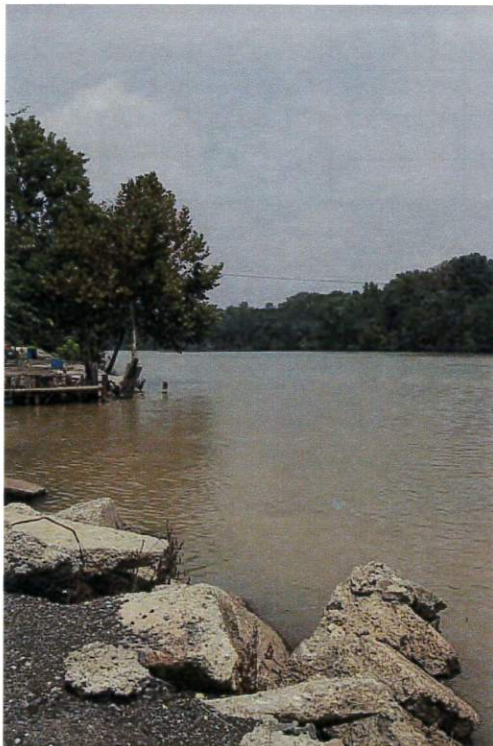
Criteria	Place an X in the column that best reflects Staff's assessment of the criteria		
Conformity:	Fully	Partially	Does Not
Strategic Vision Plan			
Voluntary Residential Annexation Design Guidelines			
Land Development Plan			
Other Relevant Plans or Studies			
Impacts:	Pro	Neutral	Con
City Services Capacities			
Fiscal Cost/Benefit Analysis			
Special Circumstances:			
Opportunity Costs			
Other Factors:			

POLICY ELEMENT #1

Planning Review Procedure:

The procedure for conducting the planning review of voluntary petitions is as follows:

1. The City Council shall determine whether or not it wishes to pursue the petition.
2. If City Council determines it does not wish to pursue the proposal, no further action shall be taken on the proposal except as the proposal is modified and re-submitted.
3. If City Council determines it does wish to consider the petition, the following procedure will apply:
 - a. The petitioner shall submit to the City Manager a site plan together with an engineering report regarding anticipated utility extensions and cost estimates, and the proposed rezoning request.
 - b. The City Manager to submit to the City Council within ninety (90) days from petitioner's completed submittals a written Annexation Evaluation Report, prepared in accordance with the evaluation criteria established herein.



POLICY ELEMENT #2

Evaluation Criteria:

The City Manager's written Annexation Evaluation Report shall include a complete Annexation Evaluation Coversheet as shown herein (see Figure 1), along with a more detailed discussion of each Evaluation Criteria as listed below.

1. Conformity: Is the proposed annexation consistent with:
 - a. The Strategic Vision Plan
 - b. The Residential Voluntary Annexation Design Guidelines (if applicable)
 - c. The Land Development Plan
 - d. Other relevant adopted plans or studies
2. Impacts:
 - a. City Services Capacities: What is the impact of the annexation on existing facilities and services including the water treatment plant, the sewer treatment plant, police and fire protection, parks and recreation, the street system and capacity of local schools?
 - b. Fiscal Cost/Benefit Analysis: What are the costs and benefits of the annexation in terms of the city's annual operating and capital expenditures and revenues?
 - c. Special Circumstances: Are there special circumstances involved such as failing septic systems, contaminated wells, the protection of natural resources, or a need for infill development?
 - d. Opportunity Costs: What is the impact from not annexing the property into the city; and if applicable, will the proposed development still occur?
 - e. Other Factors: Are there any other extenuating circumstances or factors which enhance or diminish the suitability of the proposed annexation?
3. Staff's comments. Staff shall provide written comments on the proposed annexation.



Small Area Plan

03.1

Adopted May 12, 2008

South Gateway

Purpose. The South Gateway Small Area Plan defines the City's expectations for the future of the southern entrance to the City at Interstate 85 and Highway 273 and how Highway 273 and the neighborhoods along it relate to the Catawba River. The Small Area Plan is intended to be used as a guide by property owners, developers, and the City's Planning Staff, Planning Commission, and City Council as in-fill development and re-development opportunities arise. The Small Area Plan will be implemented through design guidelines, modifications to the City's zoning and other land development ordinances, and through voluntary action by property owners and developers. The land use recommendations of this Small Area Plan are intended to work hand-in-hand with design guidelines that allow a broad range of actual uses to be compatible with each other and with the City's traditional character and sense of place.

Small Area Plan Study Area. The South Gateway Small Area Plan covers the area roughly bounded by I-85, Highway 273, East Henry Street and the Catawba River. It also describes connections to important places nearby, such as the Rehabilitation Hospital and Catawba Heights neighborhood to the west and the potential greenway connection through the Riverfront neighborhood south of Fites Creek.

Contents. The Small Area Plan presents future land use recommendations for the South Gateway area based on the City's Strategic Vision Plan goals, the findings of the Market Study, and the Mount Holly Greenprint Master Plan. The land use recommendations are in six major categories shown to the right, and are supported by four "catalyst" projects that will help implement the land use recommendations. Each of these is described in more detail in pages 2-7 of this document. A future land use map is shown on pages 4-5 along with the Strategic Vision Plan goals and relevant Market Study findings. The Small Area Planning Process is described on page 8.

Welcoming City Entrance

Landscape buffer

Wayfinding signage program

Woods & Waters Open Space

Make Open Space an integral part and destination

Establish the Woods & Waters District & Greenways

Expanded Employment Base

Pedestrian-oriented Gateway Retail Village

Light industry along I-85

Transportation Network

Expanded street network

Improved pedestrian streetscapes

Growth in Housing

Designate residential areas next to the Greenway

Continue single-family use in existing Catawba Heights neighborhoods

Catalyst Projects

Gateway Retail Village

Gateway Street/Network Improvements

South End Greenway & Boat House

South Gateway Business Park

Mount Holly Community Planning 2006-2008, a collaborative effort of City Planning Staff, a Citizen Advisory Team, the public in Mount Holly, and consultants from the Charlotte Community Design Studio, the UNC Charlotte Urban Institute, and Warren and Associates.

WELCOMING CITY ENTRANCE

Require a 100' landscape buffer along Highway 273:

Control signs and curb cuts in the buffer

Provide sidewalks

Establish a "Wayfinding" city signage program to point to important sights and destinations within the South Gateway and beyond:

Primary Gateway sign

Trailblazer and Proximity signs:

Greenway/Catawba River access locations

South Gateway Retail Village (& Medical Offices)

Downtown

Tuckasee Park

Establish zoning, overlay and design requirements for the South Gateway District:

Establish design standards and reduce visual clutter along Highway 273:

Control signage, dumpsters and highway-oriented uses such as gas stations, franchise restaurants and hotels

Define 100' landscape buffer requirements along Highway 273

Require buildings to face the street

Require parking to be to the side and in the rear

Screen dumpsters from view

Specify design requirements for building materials and colors

Encourage a carefully balanced mix of residential and employment uses (such as appropriately-designed and sited retail, medical office, hotel, and light industrial,) while providing public access to the river and protecting its ecological values

Improve the pedestrian streetscape with landscaped sidewalk plantings between curb and sidewalk:

Along Pearl Beatty Road and Caldwell Drive

Intensify South Gateway uses and link to Catawba Heights neighborhoods



Architecture set back 100 feet beyond limbed up trees

WOODS & WATERS DISTRICT

Acquire and develop the Greenways, providing public access to the river while protecting its ecological values:

Along the Catawba River near the YMCA from I-85 north to the Riverfront subdivision

Provide greenway links from the river to YMCA Drive and Highway 273, and from the Riverfront subdivision to the proposed Gateway Retail Village

Link the Catawba Heights School and surrounding neighborhood to the greenway system via a pedestrian-safe crossing at Pearl Beatty Road

Complete the connection with improved pedestrian-friendly streetscape with landscaped sidewalk plantings between curb and sidewalk along Pearl Beatty Road and Caldwell Drive

Provide trailhead parking

Provide a Boat House

Establish zoning overlay and design requirements for the Woods and Waters District:

Establish zoning overlay and design requirements for the Woods and Waters District, to ensure that uses such as a boathouse or other amenities reflect the City's historic, small town character

Allow medium-density residential neighborhoods between the employment uses and the Greenways (allow owner-occupied multi-family under specific design guidelines) in order to maximize public access to the Greenways, buffer the Greenways from the employment uses, and support the intensified employment uses along Highway 273 near the Rehab Hospital



Walkable retail districts encourage pedestrian connectivity and promote community character.

EXPANDED EMPLOYMENT BASE

Plan for a Gateway Retail Village across from the hospital at Pearl Beatty Road:

Designate a small cluster of retail/mixed use on four key blocks facing Highway 273 and Pearl Beatty Road.

Make it pedestrian-friendly with brick sidewalks, trees, lighting, and discourage automobile-dependent uses such as retail drive-through windows

Develop a pedestrian-safe crossing of Highway 273 at Pearl Beatty Road

Establish zoning overlay and design standards:

- Require buildings to face the street

- Limit curb cuts and require parking to be to the side and in the rear

- Screen dumpsters from view

- Specify design requirements for building materials and colors

Surround the retail cluster at Pearl Beatty Road with medical offices and other professional offices

Designate land along I-85 for light industrial and distribution uses with zoning overlay and design standards:

- Incorporate the Highway 273 landscape buffer requirements

- Control automobile-dependent uses such as gas stations and franchise retail

Encourage economic development catalyst projects in the South Gateway area:

- South Gateway Retail Village and Medical Offices

- Ferstl Avenue Traffic Circle

- South End Greenway & Boat House

- South Gateway Business Park

ALLOW FOR GROWTH IN HOUSING

Designate areas between the Greenway and the expanded employment base areas for residential land use:

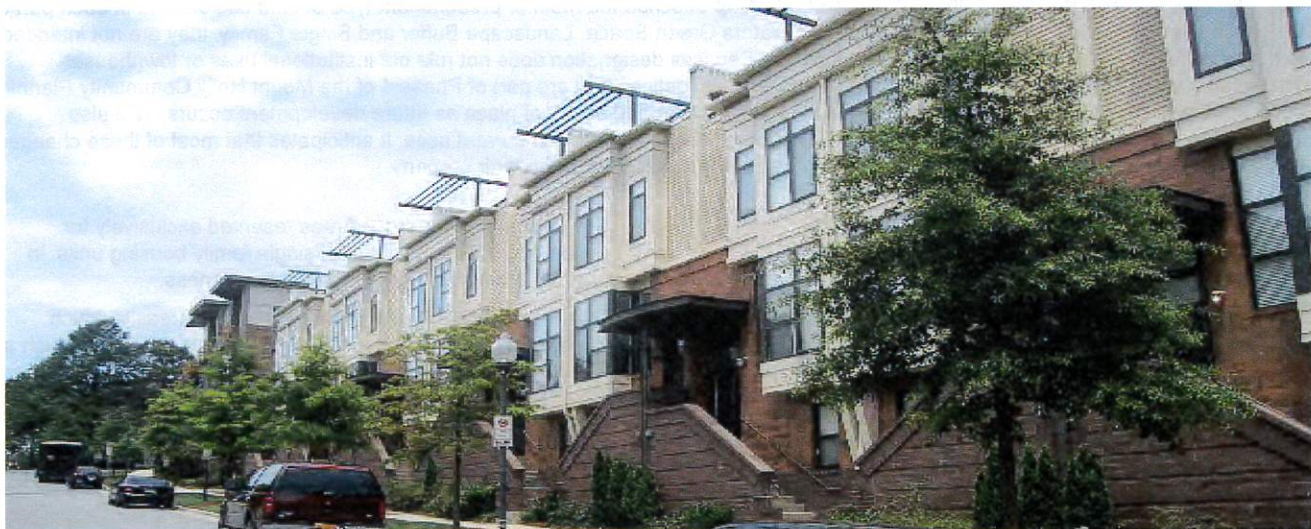
- Maximize access to the River and use of the Greenway by allowing owner-occupied multi-family next to the Woods and Waters Open Space and acting as a buffer for that open space to the employment areas

- Allow for additional single family neighborhood off East Henry Street

Continue single family use in existing Catawba Heights neighborhoods

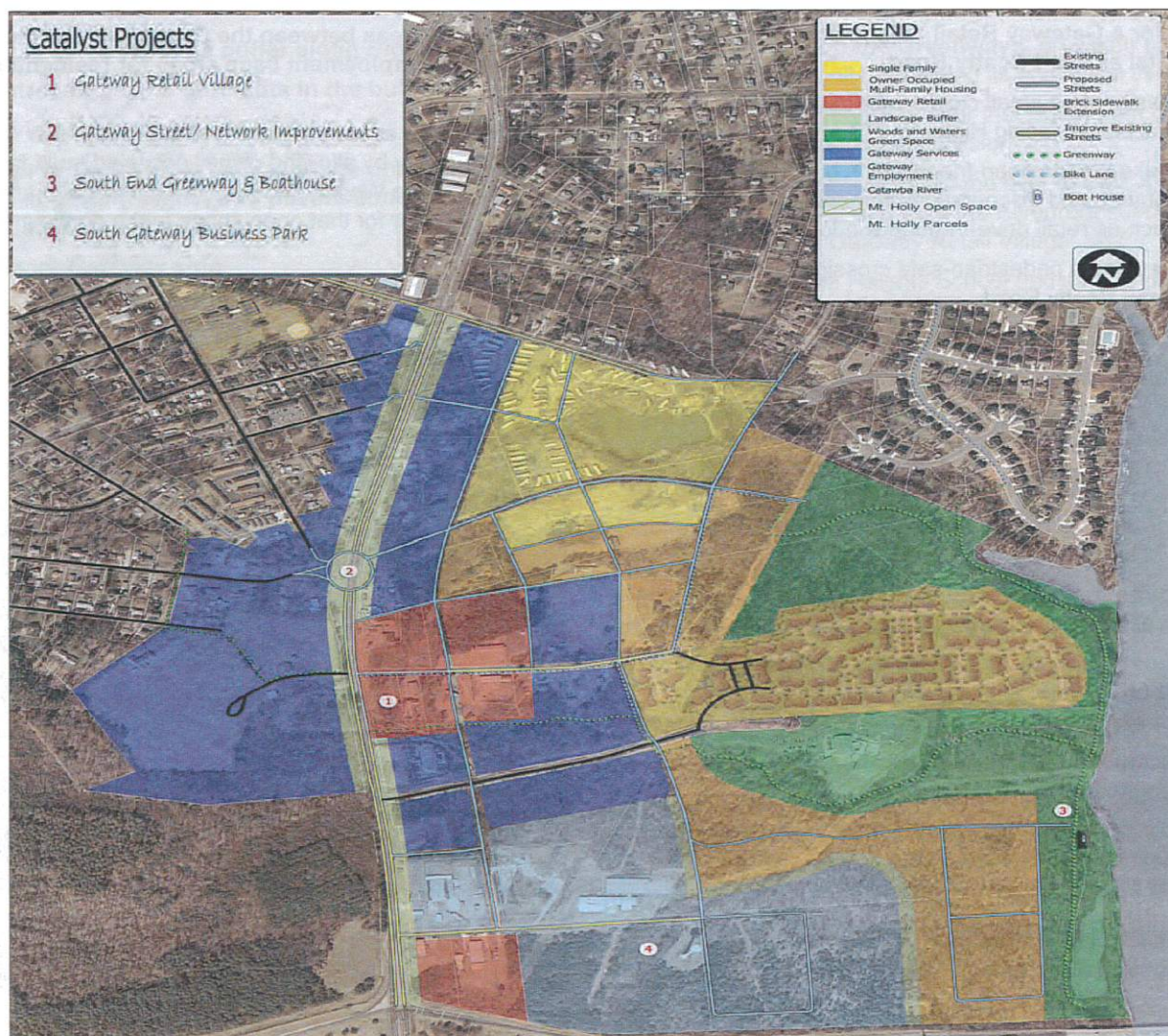


Hospital and medical offices are a component of the South Gateway.



Appropriately designed Multifamily housing located in Charlotte, NC

FUTURE LAND USE MAP



FUTURE LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

The land use designations used in the Future Land Use Map describe the main or predominant type of land use desired in each part of the South Gateway area, but, except for Woods and Waters Green Space, Landscape Buffer and Single Family, they are not intended to define exclusive uses. So, for example, the gateway Services designation does not rule out institutional uses or townhouses. These land use designations must be used with the Design Guidelines that are part of Phase 4 of the Mount Holly Community Planning 2006-2007 process in order to achieve the City's desired character and sense of place as future development occurs. It is also important to note that the Future Land Use Map does not require any change in current uses; it anticipates that most of these changes will happen over the course of time as property owners decide to sell or develop their property.

Gateway Retail: Areas in which retail land uses are mixed to provide maximum walkable access to housing, jobs, and the Woods and Waters open space amenities.

Gateway Services: Areas in which the primary land uses are medical or other professional offices.

Gateway Employment: Areas in which office, distribution and light industrial land uses predominate.

Woods and Waters Green Space: Areas reserved exclusively for recreation and conservation of natural amenities such as the river, greenways, and parks.

Single-Family Housing: Areas reserved exclusively for residential uses in the form of single family housing units, in order to promote neighborhood cohesiveness.

Owner-occupied Multi-Family Housing: Areas in which multi-family for-sale residential land use predominates (such as townhomes or condos), in order to provide a strong customer base for Downtown Business and Woods and Waters Mixed Use areas.

Landscape Buffer: An area reserved for landscaping to provide an aesthetic and physical buffer between the street and structures or pedestrians.

SMALL AREA PLAN GOALS

The Small Area Plan Recommendations for the South Gateway area are based on the Community Goals identified in the City's Strategic Vision Plan:

Woods and Waters District. Reinforce the City's image as an active living-friendly city by providing water's edge trails, parks and access points in a district that stretches from Mountain Island Lake to Belmont.

Thriving Downtown. Re-establish downtown as the center of the community's social and economic life.

Gateway Corridors. Establish four key gateway corridors into Mount Holly: Riverfront Gateway, along Highway 27/Central Avenue from the Catawba River to Downtown; South City/Gaston Gateway, at Highway 273 and I-85; North City Gateway, at Mountain Island Lake and Highway 16; and, West City Gateway, at Highway 27 and Kelly Road.

Transportation. Provide an expanded network of interconnected streets and sidewalks that is safe and efficient for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles as the community grows.

Economic Development. Implement an economic development strategy that broadens the City's business base while complementing the City's distinctive character and natural assets, explores the potential of an increased tourism base, and, focuses commercial development in commercial hubs, gateways, and downtown.

Great Neighborhoods. Grow great neighborhoods that are walkable, interconnected, and compatible with the City's traditional neighborhood design.

The Recommendations also build on the recent Market Study's recommendations:

Leverage the opportunities represented by the Carolinas HealthCare System Rehabilitation Hospital and the U.S. National Whitewater Center.

Implement a sign ordinance and Wayfinding program.

Acquire land in the Woods and Waters District for greenway development .

Designate a business park site and negotiate a joint venture with prospective developers.



Tree lined streets with sidewalks setback from the road protect pedestrians and encourage use.

TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

Create a sense of entry into the City from I-85 with Highway 273 improvements:

- Landscape buffer from I-85 to Henry Street

- Primary Gateway Sign (City Wayfinding program)

Emphasize the Pearl Beatty Road intersection (and South Gateway Retail Village and Medical offices) across from the Rehab Hospital entrance:

- Install brick streetscaping and brick cross-walks on both sides of Highway 273 between Holiday Inn and Ferstl Avenue, and one block in on Pearl Beatty Road

- Provide safe pedestrian crossing of Highway 273

Emphasize important neighborhood connections by improving the pedestrian streetscape with landscaped sidewalk planting strips:

- Caldwell Drive and Pearl Beatty Road

Tame Highway 273 traffic, while still allowing high volume throughput:

- Install pedestrian-safe crossings at Pearl Beatty Road and Rehab Hospital entrance

- Traffic Circle at Ferstl Avenue

Expand the street networks east of Highway 273 to enhance neighborhood connectivity, increase river access, and reduce local traffic on Highway 273:

- New streets proposed between Caldwell Drive and East Henry Street, and between Caldwell Drive and Howard Street

- Additional proposed streets provide access to the Greenway and improve neighborhood circulation

Provide marked bike lanes on Pearl Beatty Road and from it along the proposed new street leading to the Greenway trailheads



Streetscape designed for pedestrian safety and enhancing community character

CATALYST PROJECTS

Catalyst Projects are development projects, either public or private, that initiate development or re-development of areas that are key to realizing the City's long-term strategic vision. The initial development of a catalyst project stimulates further private investment in development.

1 South Gateway Retail Village

The South Gateway Retail Village is envisioned as a walkable, four-block area immediately across from the hospital. Wide brick sidewalks, sidewalk tree plantings, decorative lightposts and buildings next to and facing the sidewalks along Highway 273 at the Pearl Beatty Road intersection signal that this is the heart of the South Gateway.

Retail uses at street level will be mixed with other office uses above, and can serve the employees of the hospital and surrounding medical and other professional offices, as well as nearby residents, who will walk to restaurants and other shops.

A human-scaled and pedestrian-friendly environment is the overriding theme of the design. This will be achieved through placing parking to the side and rear of buildings, and by having buildings face the street, creating "outdoor rooms" by framing the street and sidewalks.



This retail center in Colorado Springs, CO is oriented towards the street to provide for pedestrian access and encourage walkability.



Traffic Circle

CATALYST PROJECTS (cont'd.)

2 Gateway Street/Network Improvements

This catalyst project will address both practical concerns about traffic and strategic vision goals for maintaining small town character and sense of place as the City grows.

A landscape buffer along Highway 273 as people enter the Gateway from I-85 will introduce the Woods & Waters theme of pedestrian-friendly access to natural amenities, and underscore the value the City places on them. By controlling signage and curb cuts in the buffer, the City also signals that it is a place where typical strip development is not allowed to displace small town character and sense of place.

An expanded and more connected street network in the Gateway area east of Highway 273 will allow for additional employment and residential development in the area without overburdening Highway 273. Two north-south streets are proposed to run parallel to Highway 273, each connecting from Caldwell Drive to East Henry Street. The plan also envisions completing the Gateway's major circulation routes by connecting the dead-ends of Pearl Beatty Road and Howard Street and extending East Henry Street. Minor streets complete an interconnected network and provide important access to the Greenway and the River.

A traffic circle at the three-way intersection of Ferstl Avenue and Beatty Road with Highway 273 just north of the hospital will calm traffic moving through the Gateway without the need for an additional traffic signal. At the same time, it will provide safer and more efficient access to and from Highway 273 for vehicles traveling on Ferstl Avenue or Beatty Road.

A pedestrian-safe crossing on Highway 273 between the hospital and Pearl Beatty Road is critical to the success of the Gateway Retail Village concept. Not only does it ensure access for hospital employees who will use its services, but it underscores the pedestrian-friendly nature of this part of the Gateway and further induces traffic to slow down and take note of this heart of the Gateway.

Landscaped sidewalk planting strips on Caldwell Drive and Pearl Beatty Road will improve the pedestrian streetscape and emphasize those important neighborhood connections.

Woods and Waters destinations should be safely accessible for bicyclists as well as pedestrians. This can be provided for with marked bike lanes on Pearl Beatty Road and along the proposed new streets leading from Pearl Beatty Road to the Greenway trailheads.

3 South End Greenway & Boat House

The South End Greenway will extend north of the I-85 Bridge along the Catawba River to the Riverfront street network and Fites Creek.

It should include a Boat House or similar amenity that can serve as a destination within the Woods and Waters District as well as trails connecting the Greenway to the Gateway street network.

The South End Greenway will also create the opportunity for a new residential neighborhood with prime access to the River.

4 South Gateway Business Park

The South Gateway Business Park will assist in meeting the City's strategic vision goal of expanding its employment base and will take advantage of an important location in close proximity of I-85.

For existing and future highway-dependent businesses, investment in the South Gateway Business Park will provide a marketing opportunity for Mount Holly both in terms of economic development and community character.

This can be achieved by balancing efforts towards preserving environmentally sensitive land along the river, enhancing the Highway 273 streetscape as defined in the South Gateway Design Guidelines and encouraging land uses appropriate for retail and commercial development.

Highway-dependent retail should be allowed along the first block of Highway 273 (from I-85 exit ramp to Caldwell Drive). Design controls will need to be maintained for automobile-dependent land uses such as gas stations and franchise retail to ensure an appealing gateway for residents and visitors, alike.

Land adjacent to I-85 and along Caldwell Drive should form the core of the business park. This will build upon existing land uses and assist in marketing towards additional light industrial, distribution and similar land uses within the business park core.

Incorporate a landscape buffer between light industrial land use and proposed residential property. This will establish a transition from light industrial to that of residential land uses and provide a buffer for residents living adjacent to the business park.

03.1

Small Area Plan

South Gateway

SMALL AREA PLANNING PROCESS

Building upon the Strategic Vision Plan Goals, results of the Market Study, and the Greenway Plan, the consultants developed concept ideas and a draft future land use map for the South Gateway area.

The City Planning Staff, Community Planning Process Advisory Committee and Planning Commission then reviewed the concept ideas and draft future land use map and provided feedback to the consultants. Based on this feedback, the consultants refined the concept ideas and draft future land use map.

On October 18, 2007, a public meeting was held at which the revised concept ideas and future land use map were presented and feedback from the participants was solicited. The concept ideas married the land use recommendations, such as those reflected in this Plan, with elements of potential design guidelines. They were presented in the form of photographic images of recommended land use conditions and design features.

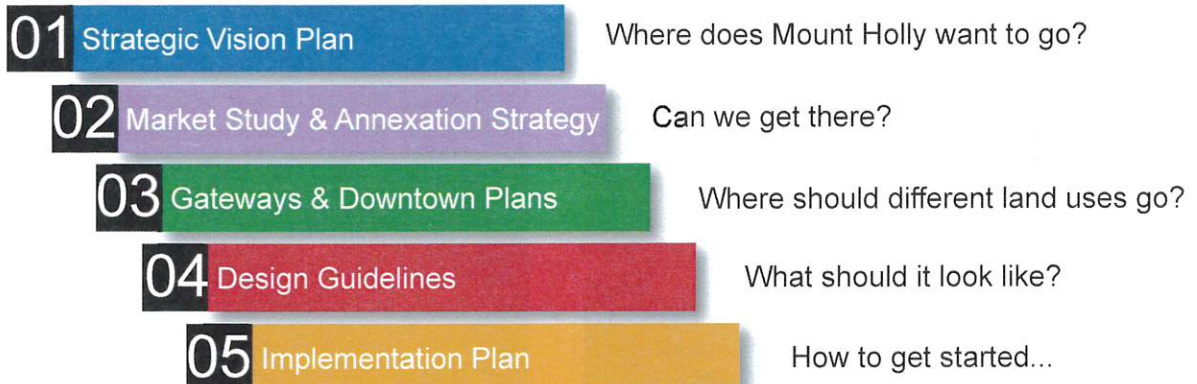
Participants were then given a visual preference survey that illustrated each concept idea with examples of current land use conditions and design features in Mount Holly side-by-side with alternative examples of land use conditions and design features. Participants were asked to select their most and least favorite images and to record those so that all participants could see which

concept ideas and design elements received the strongest consensus.

The concept ideas and design elements presentation was also posted on the city's community planning website for additional public comment and feedback. Based on the information received from the public and Staff, the consultants compiled a draft Small Area Plan - South Gateway document for review and consideration by City Council.

City Council reviewed the draft Small Area Plan on January 28, 2008. The required legal notice was given of a public hearing, which took place on April 14, 2008. City Council adopted the Small Area Plan on May 12, 2008.

Mount Holly Community Planning 2006-2008:



Mount Holly Community Planning 2006-2008, a collaborative effort of City Planning Staff, a Citizen Advisory Team, the public in Mount Holly, and consultants from the Charlotte Community Design Studio, the UNC Charlotte Urban Institute, and Warren and Associates.



Adopted May 12, 2008

Downtown and Riverfront

Purpose. The Downtown and Riverfront Small Area Plan defines the City's expectations for the future of its historic downtown, the riverfront at its East gateway and how the two relate to each other. The Small Area Plan is intended to be used as a guide by property owners, developers, and the City's Planning Staff, Planning Commission, and City Council as in-fill development and re-development opportunities arise. The Small Area Plan will be implemented through design guidelines, modifications to the City's zoning and other land development ordinances, and through voluntary action by property owners and developers. The land use recommendations of this Small Area Plan are intended to work hand-in-hand with design guidelines that allow a broad range of actual uses to be compatible with each other and with the City's traditional character and sense of place.

Small Area Plan Study Area. The Downtown and Riverfront Small Area Plan covers all of the designated Historic Area, plus the area between Historic Downtown and the Catawba River that is roughly bounded by Dutchman's Creek and Glendale Avenue. It also describes connections to important places nearby, such as the Ida Rankin Elementary School, the potential rails-to-trail greenway along the CSX line, and the Clean Water Management Trust preserved open space along the Catawba River north of Dutchman's Creek.

Contents. The Small Area Plan presents future land use recommendations for the Downtown and Riverfront area based on the City's Strategic Vision Plan goals, the findings of the Market Study, and the Mount Holly Greenprint Master Plan. The Small Area Plan's land use recommendations are in the major categories shown to the right, supported by ten "catalyst" projects that will help implement the land use recommendations. Each of these is described in more detail in pages 2-7 of this document. A future land use map is shown on pages 4-5 along with the Strategic Vision Plan goals and relevant Market Study findings. The Small Area Planning Process is described on page 8.

Woods & Waters District

Acquire land and build the Greenways

Establish zoning overlay and design requirements for the Woods and Waters District

Link Downtown to River Gateway

Create a more welcoming entrance into Mount Holly via the Highway 27 Bridge

Extend Main Street's brick streetscaping along East Central Avenue and Lee Street to the River

Downtown Character

Supplement the existing zoning overlay and design requirements for the Downtown district

Provide green spaces throughout and preserve the City's historic legacy of contributing buildings

Transportation Network & Wayfinding

Emphasize important neighborhood connections with landscaped sidewalk planting strips

Develop a "Wayfinding" signage program to direct people to important sights and destinations

Catalyst Projects

Encourage Catalyst Projects, either public or private, that initiate development or re-development of areas that are key to realizing the City's long-term strategic vision.

Mount Holly Community Planning 2006-2008, a collaborative effort of City Planning Staff, a Citizen Advisory Team, the public in Mount Holly, and consultants from the Charlotte Community Design Studio, the UNC Charlotte Urban Institute, and Warren and Associates.

WOODS & WATERS DISTRICT

Establish zoning overlay and design requirements for the Woods and Waters District:

Encourage natural resource/outdoor-based tourism uses, such as appropriately-designed and sited hotel, restaurant, marina, while providing public access to the river and protecting its ecological values.

Allow medium-density residential neighborhoods near the tourism uses (allow owner-occupied multi-family under specific design guidelines) in order to support the intensified uses there and in the CBD.

Acquire land and build the Greenways:

Immediately north and south of the Highway 27 Bridge;

Along Dutchman's Creek;

Along the unused Piedmont and Northern rail line;

Connecting to the Clean Water Management Trust easement lands north of the Dutchman's Creek confluence with the Catawba.

Encourage economic development catalyst projects along the river:

River Park Cove;

Clariant Park.

Renovate River Street Park and expand the street network in the River Street Park area:

Acquire adjacent parcels along Dutchman's Creek, install a canoe/kayak launch and pedestrian bridge crossing the creek.

Extend Nassau Place through River Street Park, around to Lee Street.

Create a creek crossing from extended Nassau north to Dogwood Drive.

Expand the street networks south of Central Avenue and east of Hill Street:

Extend Glendale Avenue to the river and extend Lee Street to meet it.

Create a River promenade on Catawba Avenue from Lee Street down to the river.

Riverside Greenway



DOWNTOWN TO RIVERFRONT GATEWAY

Renovate the Bridge and Railroad Underpass to create a more welcoming entrance into Mount Holly:

Install a pedestrian sidewalk and decorative lightposts and guardrails on the bridge.

Screen the railroad overpass with trellis and landscaping.

Emphasize the Lee Street intersection:

Install brick streetscaping on both sides of Lee Street between East Central Avenue and Elm Street.

Provide safe pedestrian crossings at the Lee Street intersection with Charlotte Avenue.

Close off the River Street entrance onto Charlotte Avenue with landscaping.

Encourage East Central Avenue infill development for retail storefront mixed-use:

From South Main to Highland Avenue, and then from Highland Avenue to the new City Hall and the Depot.

Extend Main Street's brick streetscaping, placing East Central Avenue, the Depot, and the new City Hall on an equal footing with Charlotte Avenue as a way into central downtown:

From Downtown along the south side of East Central Avenue, across the rail line on both sides of Lee Street, and down the south side of Elm Street to the river.

Create a landscape buffer along the rail line:

Visually enhance this dominant feature and use it to link the Gateway and Downtown, while keeping pedestrians on the sidewalks across Central and Charlotte Avenues from the greenscape.

"Green" the Highland Avenue - Charlotte Avenue intersection:

Bring the Dutchman's Creek Greenway out to Charlotte Avenue at Highland Avenue, "greening" that highly visible and high-traffic intersection.

Improve the pedestrian streetscape landscaped sidewalk plantings between curb and sidewalk:

Along Charlotte Avenue's north side and along both sides of Highland Avenue from Charlotte to North Main.

DOWNTOWN CHARACTER

Add to existing zoning overlay and design requirements for the Downtown district:

Encourage a mix of pedestrian-scale uses, such as storefront retail aimed at a diverse consumer base (from family-friendly such as ice cream parlor to outdoors such as outfitter or health foods store to cultural such as local history museum or artists' gallery) with office or apartments above.

Correspondingly, discourage automobile-dependent uses such as retail drive-through windows.

Allow medium-density residential neighborhoods near the central business district (allow condos, townhomes, small urban-scale single-family lots in R-8 type zoning) in order to support intensified uses in the central business district.

Encourage economic development catalyst projects in downtown:

Mount Holly Cotton Mill adaptive re-use (as a place for special events, with an educational component);

Dutchman's Creek Village (at North Main between Woodlawn and Highland);

Woodlawn Avenue Mill Offices/Arts and Crafts Studios (adaptive re-use for mill at Woodlawn).

Extend Main Street's brick streetscaping to better define downtown and encourage private re-investment and in-fill development:

Include North Main to Woodlawn, the retail-oriented sections of the north side of Charlotte Avenue, and the south side of East Central Avenue.

Develop a pedestrian-safe crossing on East Central Avenue at Highland Avenue.

Provide green spaces throughout:

Establish a landscape buffer along South Main from Catawba Avenue to oak Grove Street that creates a sense of entrance into downtown and preserves traditional building setbacks.

Link improved and more walkable streetscapes with the greenway at Charlotte and Highland Avenues and at North Main by connecting to Veterans' Park, Ida Rankin Elementary School and the Oakleigh property.

Provide a canoe/kayak boat launch along Dutchman's Creek near North Main.

Preserve the City's historic legacy of contributing buildings, including the current City Hall, the Depot, Oakleigh property, and Mount Holly Cotton Mill

Utilize public/private partnerships to re-invest in character defining buildings to enhance interest and visitation in downtown areas.

TRANSPORTATION NETWORK & WAYFINDING SIGNAGE PROGRAM

Create a sense of entry into downtown along Main from both South and North:

Install traffic circles at Glendale and South Main and at Highland and North Main.

Emphasize important neighborhood connections by improving the pedestrian streetscape with landscaped sidewalk planting strips:

Catawba Avenue from Hawthorne Street to Lee Street;

Glendale Avenue from South Main to proposed Lee Street extension.

Tame Highland Avenue traffic, while still allowing high volume throughput:

Improve the pedestrian streetscape with landscaped sidewalk planting strips between Catawba and North Main.

Install pedestrian-safe crossings at Central and between Charlotte and North Main.

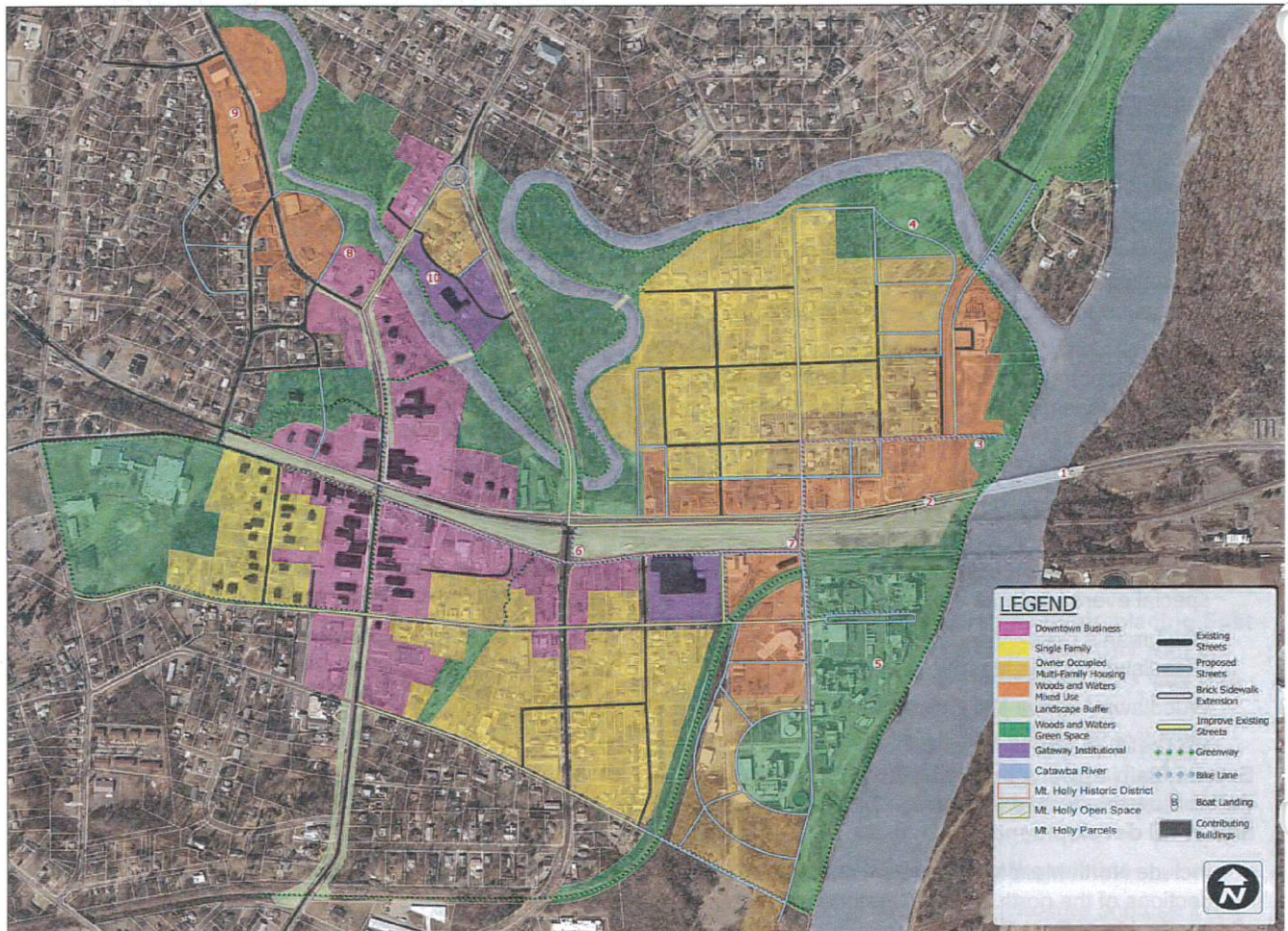
Develop a "Wayfinding" signage program to direct people to important sights and destinations within the City's Downtown and River Gateway:

Greenway/Catawba River/Creeks access locations;
Dutchman's Creek canoe/kayak launches;
River Street Park Cove;
Center City / Historic District;
Cotton Mill;
Oakleigh;
Depot;
Citizens Center;
Dutchman's Creek Village;
Farmer's Market;
Mountain Island Lake Dam.



Wayfinding signage in Chattanooga, TN

FUTURE LAND USE MAP



FUTURE LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

The land use designations used in the Future Land Use Map describe the main or predominant type of land use desired in each part of the Downtown and Riverfront area, but, except for Woods and Waters Green Space, Landscape Buffer and Single Family, they are not intended to define exclusive uses. So, for example, the Downtown Business designation does not rule out institutional uses or townhouses. These land use designations must be used with the Design Guidelines that are part of Phase 4 of the Mount Holly Community Planning 2006-2007 process in order to achieve the City's desired character and sense of place as future development occurs. It is also important to note that the Future Land Use Map does not require any change in current uses; it anticipates that most of these changes will happen over the course of many years as property owners decide to sell or develop their property.

Downtown Business: Areas in which commercial land uses predominate, such as retail and offices.

Gateway Institutional: Areas in which the primary land uses are institutional, such as educational or governmental facilities.

Woods and Waters Mixed Use: Areas in which commercial and residential land uses are mixed to provide maximum walkable access to housing, jobs, and the Woods and Waters open space amenities.

Woods and Waters Green Space: Areas reserved exclusively for recreation and conservation of natural amenities such as the river, greenways, and parks.

Single Family: Areas reserved exclusively for residential uses in the form of single family housing units, in order to promote neighborhood cohesiveness.

Owner-occupied Multi-Family Housing: Areas in which multi-family for-sale residential land use predominates (such as townhomes or condos), in order to provide a strong customer base for Downtown Business and Woods and Waters Mixed Use areas.

Landscape Buffer: An area reserved for landscaping to provide an aesthetic and physical buffer between the street and structures or pedestrians.

SMALL AREA PLAN GOALS

The Small Area Plan Recommendations for the Downtown/River Park Gateway area are based on the Goals identified in the City's Strategic Vision Plan:

Woods and Waters District. Reinforce the City's image as an active living-friendly city by providing water's edge trails, parks and access points in a district that stretches from Mountain Island Lake to Belmont.

Thriving Downtown. Re-establish downtown as the center of the community's social and economic life.

Gateway Corridors. Establish four key gateway corridors into Mount Holly: Riverfront Gateway, along Highway 27/Central Avenue from the Catawba River to Downtown; South City/Gaston Gateway, at Highway 273 and I-85; North City Gateway, at Mountain Island Lake and Highway 16; and, West City Gateway, at Highway 27 and Kelly Road.

Transportation. Provide an expanded network of interconnected streets and sidewalks that is safe and efficient for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles as the community grows.

Economic Development. Implement an economic development strategy that broadens the City's business base while complementing the City's distinctive character and natural assets, explores the potential of an increased tourism base, and, focuses commercial development in commercial hubs, gateways, and downtown.

Great Neighborhoods. Grow great neighborhoods that are walkable, interconnected, and compatible with the City's traditional neighborhood design.

The Recommendations also build on the recent Market Study's recommendations:

Leverage the opportunities represented by the U.S. National Whitewater Center and the Little Italy – Bechtler Arts Colony.

Implement a sign ordinance and Wayfinding program, and open a downtown Visitor's Center.

Enliven downtown: provide property for a grassroots arts organization and for a college or university satellite facility; encourage preservation and adaptive re-use of the Mount Holly Cotton Mill; and, promote medium density housing in and around downtown.

Acquire land in the Woods and Waters District and downtown for greenway development and explore rails-to-trails possibilities.

CATALYST PROJECTS

Catalyst Projects are development projects, either public or private, that initiate development or re-development of areas that are key to realizing the City's long-term strategic vision. The initial development of a catalyst project stimulates further private investment in development.



Greenway located in downtown Greenville, SC.

CATALYST PROJECTS (cont'd.)

1 Gateway Bridge and 2 Rail Overpass

The City's Riverfront Gateway, consisting of the Highway 27 Bridge and Rail Overpass, can be made more welcoming with architectural and landscape improvements.

A pedestrian walkway and decorative lampposts and guardrail will signal that Mount Holly is a special place with distinctive small town character and appreciation of its natural features, chief of which is the Catawba River itself.

The utilitarian character of the railroad overpass can be screened with trellises and landscaping.

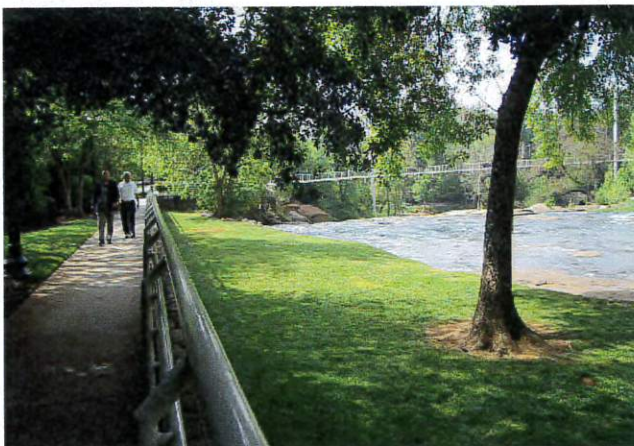
3 River Street Park Cove and Greenway

This section of the Greenway will run north from the Hwy 27 Bridge to River Street Park at Dutchman's Creek, and will create a signature landmark at the City's East Gateway.

An outdoors- and entertainment-oriented mix of land uses can leverage the natural amenity of the river and Greenway. These could include a marina, a hotel, or restaurant which overlooks the greenway and river.



Pedestrian friendly bridge overpass



Riverside greenway located in Greenville, SC.

4 Dutchman's Creek Greenway and River Street Park Extension

This section of the Greenway will run upstream along Dutchman's Creek from River Street Park to North Main and beyond.

It will extend the Woods and Waters District into the historic downtown and will provide visual and physical access to this important amenity at the intersection of Highland and Charlotte avenues and again at North Main and Woodlawn avenues.

It can create an opportunity for kayakers and canoeists to paddle from the Catawba River or River Street Park to a renovated Mount Holly Cotton Mill and North Main Street.

A pedestrian bridge from River Street Park over the Creek will connect this section of the Greenway to northern sections.

5 Clariant Park and Catawba River-Fites' Creek Greenway

This section of the Greenway will extend south of the Highway 27 Bridge along the Catawba River to Fites Creek.

It will connect to the Catawba River-Dutchman's Creek Greenway (including River Street Park) on the north side of the Bridge and also include the start of the unused Piedmont & Northern rail line as a potential rail-trail greenway.

It will create the opportunity for a new neighborhood and meadow-like park space if Clariant should decide to close its industrial plant currently on the site.

A "green" promenade or tree-lined boulevard down to the river serves as an extension of Catawba Avenue from the Lee Street intersection while emphasizing the Woods and Waters District.



Riverside greenway located in Greenville, SC.

6 Charlotte / E. Central Avenue Landscaped Median (River Green Gateway Streetscape)

Although creating a linear "River Green" park along the rail line may not be feasible, the name River Green may be used to designate this important entrance to the city and the "River Green" theme may be established through "green" streetscape both on the pedestrian and Railway sides of Charlotte and East Central Avenues.

7 Downtown Streetscaping Standards / Extensions

The wide brick sidewalks, decorative lampposts, tree plantings, and parking bulb-outs that define Main Street will extend down East Central Avenue to Lee Street to encourage retail mixed-use infill development along East Central towards the River.

8 Dutchman's Creek Village

This section of North Main Street between the Highland Avenue and Woodlawn Avenue intersections will showcase the City's strategic linkage of its small town character with its natural amenities. Adaptive re-use of the service station at North Main and Woodlawn will create a highly visible focal point for the area and anchors additional retail mixed use along North Main Street towards the traffic circle at Highland Avenue. A canoe/kayak launch will bring the Woods and Waters District and outdoor-oriented uses into downtown's northern end and with paths leading to the restored Mount Holly Cotton Mill.

9 Woodlawn Avenue Mill Arts and Crafts Studios

The Woodlawn Avenue Mill is well-positioned close to the heart of downtown and the Dutchman's Creek Greenway for renovation and re-use as studio space for artists and craftsmen.

10 Mount Holly Cotton Mill Adaptive Re-use

The historic Mount Holly Cotton Mill may anchor an eclectic mix of institutional land uses that cluster between North Main, Highland Avenue, and Dutchman's Creek.

The Mill can also act as an events venue, providing patrons with a unique setting for receptions, concerts or other events.

Nearby educational institutions (such as a culinary institute or other non-traditional educational institution) may form a public plaza opening from the Mill to Highland Avenue. This will increase the visibility and prominence of this historic asset for the City.



Adaptive re-use of historic structure



Mount Holly downtown streetscape



Dutchman's Creek boat launch

03.2

Small Area Plan

Downtown and Riverfront

SMALL AREA PLANNING PROCESS

Building upon the Strategic Vision Plan Goals, results of the Market Study, and the Greenway Plan, the consultants developed concept ideas and a draft future land use map for the downtown and riverfront area.

The City Planning Staff, Community Planning Process Advisory Committee and Planning Commission then reviewed the concept ideas and draft future land use map and provided feedback to the consultants. Based on this feedback, the consultants refined the concept ideas and draft future land use map.

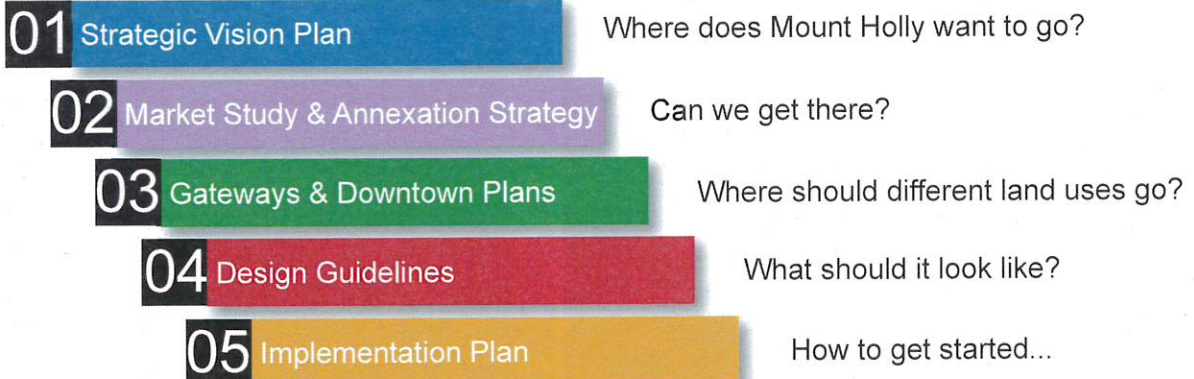
On October 18, 2007, a public meeting was held at which the revised concept ideas and future land use map were presented and feedback from the participants was solicited. The concept ideas married the land use recommendations, such as those reflected in this Plan, with elements of potential design guidelines. They were presented in the form of photographic images of recommended land use conditions and design features.

Participants were then given a visual preference survey that illustrated each concept idea with examples of current Mount Holly land use conditions and design features side-by-side with alternative examples. Participants were asked to select their most and least favorite images and to record those so that all participants could see which concept ideas and design elements received the strongest consensus.

The concept ideas and design elements presentation were also posted on the City's community planning website for additional public comment and feedback. Based on the information received from the public and Staff, the consultants compiled a draft Small Area Plan - Downtown and Riverfront document for review and consideration by City Council.

City Council reviewed the draft Small Area Plan on January 28, 2008. The required legal notice was given of a public hearing, which took place on April 14, 2008. City Council adopted the Small Area Plan on May 12, 2008.

Mount Holly Community Planning 2006-2008:



Mount Holly Community Planning 2006-2008, a collaborative effort of City Planning Staff, a Citizen Advisory Team, the public in Mount Holly, and consultants from the Charlotte Community Design Studio, the UNC Charlotte Urban Institute, and Warren and Associates.



Design Guidelines

04

Adopted May 12, 2008

for Voluntary Residential Annexations

Voluntary Residential Annexations are offers made by the City of Mount Holly in response to a petition by the owner of property outside the City's municipal limits, to expand our community by extending our municipal limits to include that property, to zone it for residential land uses, and to provide infrastructure and City services to that property.

Because **our goals are to increase economic value, the community image, and the quality of life in Mt. Holly**, we want new neighborhoods to be well designed and sought after places to live.

Because **we value our history**, we want new development to complement what is already here in Mt. Holly.

Because **we value neighborliness**, we want:

- great streets and gathering spaces, where the pedestrian is prioritized;
- connections between adjoining developments; and,
- connections made to gathering places.

Because **we are family oriented**, we want:

- narrower streets because they slow down traffic and are safer for children; and,
- sustainable, lasting neighborhoods where family members of all ages want to live.

Because **we value our environment and especially our rivers and creeks**, we want:

- these natural places preserved for public use, and access to them provided;
- our streams and creeks protected;
- the reduction of polluting runoff;
- the preservation of mature trees; and,
- energy conservation.

Because **we support an active and healthy lifestyle**, we want:

- open space that provides recreational opportunities in the form of greenways, playing fields and/or playgrounds; and,
- the preservation of mature trees and planting of street trees to filter the air that we breathe.

Key Point #1

New development should reflect Mt. Holly's DNA.

Key Point #2

New development should protect and preserve Mt. Holly's natural amenities while also providing usable open space.

Key Point #3

New development should be built around great streets.

Key Point #4

New development should connect with Mt. Holly's street and trail network.

Because **we value a strong city image**, we want:

- buildings, green yards or landscaped buffers (rather than parking lots or paved areas) to front streets;
- back yards screened from existing city streets; and
- parking lots screened from public streets by buildings.

Design Guidelines

for Voluntary Residential Annexations

KEY POINT #1

New development should reflect Mt. Holly's DNA.

Architectural Guidelines

All new residential structures must:

- have occupiable front porches that are at least 50 square feet in size;
- be built on foundations with crawl spaces of at least 24 in height as measured on the front elevation, not as slabs on grade;
- have siding of brick, stone, stucco, wood hardiplank, or wood shingles, the treatment of which shall be consistent among the front and side facades. No aluminum or vinyl siding will be allowed on the exterior of buildings, except as trim, windows, doors, and overhangs.



Mt. Holly's neighborhood DNA includes front porches, street trees, planting strips, sidewalks, and garages not visible from the street

KEY POINT #2

New development should protect and preserve Mt. Holly's natural amenities while also providing usable open space.

Open Space Guidelines

All new residential or mixed-use subdivisions must:

- provide one acre of usable open space in the form of a recreational amenity for every 20 homes. These amenities may include paved greenway trails (a 10' wide paved trail built to the City's standard), playing fields or play courts, and/or a playground, the cost of which are born by the petitioner;
- set aside a 100 foot undisturbed buffer strip along both sides of all creeks, rivers or lakes. This set aside will only count towards the city's open space requirement if a trail (per the City's standards) is built within the buffer strip. The petitioner will be credited for one acre of open space for every 2000 linear feet of trail;
- if wooded, retain 10% the entire site in its pre-construction condition (Stream buffers may count towards this set aside);
- if open fields, plant 16 additional three inch (or larger) caliper trees on the site per each one acre developed in addition to the street tree requirement;
- preserve at least a third of the large, mature trees (those having a caliber of 18" or greater) existing on the site;
- if the property to be annexed is located in an area where the city has planned a greenway, then building that greenway will be a requirement for annexation and will count towards the petitioner's open space allotment;
- if the property is adjacent to an existing greenway, the petitioner of the new property must connect to the existing and abutting trail system;
- no clear cutting or massive site grading will be allowed. Only site grading needed to construct streets, sidewalks, utilities, building pads, and a 30 foot clear zone around the foundation will be allowed.

Design Guidelines

for Voluntary Residential Annexations

KEY POINT #3

New development should be built around great streets.

Street Guidelines

All new residential streets must:

- have a minimum of five foot wide sidewalks on both sides of the street;
- have a minimum of six foot wide planted strip between the sidewalk and the road on both sides of the street
- have street trees of at least a 3" caliper planted every 40' on center in the planted strip on both sides of the street; Preferred tree species are those recommended by The Urban Forestry Administration's Recommended Street Tree List available at <http://trees.ddot.dc.gov>.
- have underground utilities;
- have low level decorative street lighting located at a minimum of every 200';
- have maximum curb to curb widths of 24' for residential streets;
- have vertical rather than rolled curbs and gutters where driveways are not present;
- have no more than 20% of the garage doors or carport entrances facing the street unless:
 - a. the home is located on a corner lot, in which case the garage door or carport entrance should be located on the side not the front face of the home, and
 - b. the garage or carport is located behind or even with the rear façade of the building.
- have maximum driveway widths of 12' within 20' feet of the street, if driveways are present.
- hold all homes to a similar set back distance throughout the subdivision to ensure consistency.

KEY POINT #4

New development should connect with Mt. Holly's existing street and trail network.

Connectivity/ Street network

If located adjacent to an undeveloped parcel, all new subdivisions must stub out and pave their streets to the adjacent property line to potentially join with future development. If street stubs exist in adjoining neighborhoods, new developments must connect into them.

- Whenever possible, all new annexations should have more than one vehicular entry and exit point.
- All entry/ exits must contain at least two exit lanes in addition an entry lane.

04

Design Guidelines

for Voluntary Residential Annexations

Compliance

Prior to the offer of annexation, the petitioner of the property must submit written documentation, a site survey showing all existing trees with an 18" caliper or greater, and a site plan that illustrates compliance with the new guidelines. After payment by the petitioner of a compliance review fee, a Compliance Officer will review the plans for consistency with the Annexation Guidelines and make a report and recommendation to the City Council. The compliance review fee is initially set at \$2,000 or the actual costs to the City, whichever is greater, and may be amended from time to time by the City Council. The compliance review fee is in addition to the existing annexation fee covering the City's legal costs of considering voluntary residential annexation petitions.

No Annexation Resolution shall be introduced by the Mayor and Council unless and until the party or parties seeking annexation have paid the compliance fee and submitted the appropriate documentation that allows for a review by the Mount Holly staff and the City's compliance officer. No offer of annexation shall be made by City Council until staff and the Compliance Officer have submitted to council a written report as specified by the existing Annexation Policy (July 2000), documenting the impact of the annexation on City infrastructure and further including documentation of its consistency with these design standards.

Additional Studies and Plans

For all developments of 20 homes or more, the petitioner must provide a study by a licensed traffic engineer addressing the impact of the new neighborhood on the City's existing streets and roads and offer a mitigation plan to address all the impacts identified in the study.

Legal Adoption

These guidelines are an addendum to the existing Annexation Policy (July 2000) and the following added to the Annexation Evaluation Criteria:

10. Does the proposed annexation meet the Mount Holly Design Guidelines (Proposed 2006) for annexation?

Quid Pro Quo

The Design Guidelines that are included in this document are meant to be viewed as standards that if met in combination with all other existing regulations and policies, would allow for the offer of voluntary residential annexation. Negotiations would be allowed, if in the form of a quid pro quo, i.e. one guideline might be lessened if another was strengthened.

Mount Holly Community Planning 2006-2007:

01 Strategic Vision Plan

Where does Mount Holly want to go?

02 Market Study & Annexation Strategy

Can we get there?

03 Gateways & Downtown Plans

Where should different land uses go?

04 Design Guidelines

What should it look like?

05 Implementation Plan

How to get started...

Mount Holly Community Planning 2006-2008, a collaborative effort of City Planning Staff, a Citizen Advisory Team, the public in Mount Holly and consultants from the Charlotte Community Design Studio, the UNC Charlotte Urban Institute, and Warren and Associates.



Design Guidelines 04.1

Adopted May 12, 2008

for The South Gateway

The South Gateway should reflect the city's vision outlined in the Small Area Plan. Rather than simply a commercial corridor, the overall look and feel along NC 273 (Beatty Drive) should be a long, green corridor lined with existing tree canopy and a cleared under-story. The tree canopy will provide a shaded middle ground that frames views to business set back beyond the preserved buffer. The green space should contain only pedestrian amenities, human scaled signs and utilities placed underground if possible.

Although the Gateway should primarily announce down town Mount Holly, it should also make some reference to the Catawba River that flows parallel to NC 273, Access points and visual connections should be emphasized throughout the South Gateway area.

Goals and Objectives

The intent of the South Gateway Design Guidelines is to provide a baseline for quality as growth occurs with the gateway corridor.

The specific objectives for the South Gateway Guidelines are:

- to establish a clear definition of urban design standards that informs property owners, developers, builders and decision-makers;
- to serve as a tool for planners, designers and City Officials to use and incorporate into their plans to achieve and support the City's design objectives;
- to act as a basis for a uniform and consistent review of development and redevelopment proposals by the City Council.

Because our goals are to **increase economic value, the community image**, and the quality of life in Mount Holly, we want:

- the South Gateway to be well designed and a sought after place to live, work and play;
- to preserve and enrich the entrance experience into the small town character of Mount Holly;
- to communicate the community's high expectations for new development in Mount Holly.

Because we **value our history**, we want:

Key Point #1

New development should reflect Mount Holly's DNA.

Key Point #2

New development should protect and preserve Mount Holly's natural amenities while also providing usable open space.

Key Point #3

New development should be built around great streets.

Key Point #4

New development should connect with Mount Holly's street and trail network.

- to establish a threshold or baseline for design and quality,
- new development to complement the unique surroundings and characteristics that define the Southern Gateway into Mount Holly.

Because we value **a strong city image**, we want:

- to maintain a harmonious visual environment within the existing context;
- buildings, green yards or landscaped buffers (rather than parking lots or paved areas) to front streets;

Because we value our environment and **especially our rivers and creeks**, we want:

- access to these natural places preserved for public use;
- physical and visual connections to these areas;
- our streams and creeks protected;
- the reduction of polluting runoff;
- the preservation of mature trees; and,
- energy conservation.

KEY POINT #1

New development should reflect Mount Holly's DNA.

To maintain the unique character of Mount Holly, buildings should not be branded using an architectural style of a company. Franchise architecture (building design that is trademarked or identified with a particular chain or corporation and is generic in nature) is not allowed. Franchises or national chains must follow these standards to create a unique building that is compatible with Mount Holly, blends in with the existing environment and is sensitive to its surroundings.



Building with contributing character elements.



Residential buildings with defining characteristics -- appropriate scale, mass, and materials.

Architectural Guidelines

All new residential structures shall:

- have occupiable front porches that are at least 50 square feet in size;
- be built with crawl spaces of at least 24 inches in height as measured on the front elevation, not as slabs on grade;
- use the following approved materials for front and side facades: brick, stone, stucco, wood hardiplank, or wood shingles;
- have front doors located on a raised foundation and on a public street;
- not use building wall and foundation materials of exposed or unfinished cmu (concrete masonry units);
- have parking located beside or behind the buildings;
- not have garage doors that are visible from the street;
- have windowsills and doorjambs that are wood (painted). Porch rails shall be wood (painted) or metal (painted);
- not use the following materials on the front or side facades: vinyl or aluminum siding, rough sawn lumber, synthetic stucco systems (EIFS), OSB (particle board);
- have roofs constructed with asphalt shingle, cedar shingle or standing steel seam with 8:1 to 12:1 pitch;
- use operable and double hung windows.

All new commercial structures shall:

- not have new structures that are branded using an architectural style of a company;
- have the primary façade (facing the primary street) constructed with 50% glass (glazing and doors) with internal activities visible from the street;
- not use building wall and foundation materials of exposed or unfinished cmu (concrete masonry units);
- use windowsills and doorjambs constructed of wood or metal (painted).
- not have garage doors that are visible from the street;



Residential buildings with on-street parking, porches, operable windows and street trees creating a neighborhood.

- have upper floors constructed with 35% glass (glazing and doors) on primary street façade;
- have exterior steps and ramps constructed with finished masonry;
- have roofs constructed with a cornice and parapet wall or be pitched 8:1 to 12:1.
- not use the following materials on the front or side facades: vinyl or aluminum siding, rough sawn lumber, synthetic stucco systems (EIFS), OSB (particle board);
- if implementing vehicular canopies, have pitched roofs or parapet walls that match primary structure. Lighting for vehicular canopies shall maintain "Dark Skies" standards available at www.darkskyinitiative.org;
- limit vehicular canopies over gas pumps to 250 sq ft per dispenser;
- not use reflective materials or surfaces;
- have a maximum vertical dimension not to exceed area not to exceed nine inches and a maximum horizontal dimension not to exceed the length of the longest elevation with backlit awnings.

All new storefront structures shall:



National retail stores can implement adaptive designs and contribute to the character of the community.



National restaurants can implement strategies of locating at the back edge of sidewalks, and include sill heights and windows to allow viewing of inside activities.

- be constructed as storefront at street level;
- be located at the back edge of sidewalk or along the easement line;
- include storefront windows that are 12 inches (min) and 36 inches (max) above the finished floor;
- be designed with a mass and scale in concert with not only immediately adjacent storefronts.

All new mixed-use structures must:

- follow storefront guidelines for commercial, retail or office at ground level;
- follow residential guidelines for residential units above;
- provide facades and roof lines that respond to context and dominant use with the exception for culturally or historically significant features.



Store fronts with low window sills connect inside activities to passers-by outside.

Design Guidelines

for The South Gateway

KEY POINT #2

New development should protect and preserve Mount Holly's natural amenities while also providing usable open space.

A 100 foot wide landscaped buffer is required along both sides of NC 273 in the gateway area. To develop and maintain the unique character of this long, green corridor to be lined with the existing tree canopy and a cleared under-story, open space plans should be an integral phase of all new development projects. Minimal requirements in the setback area limit parking, signage and trash receptacles in this area. The second objective should include planting appropriate species in the setback and regular landscape maintenance.



Architecture set back 100 feet beyond limbed up trees.

Open Space Guidelines

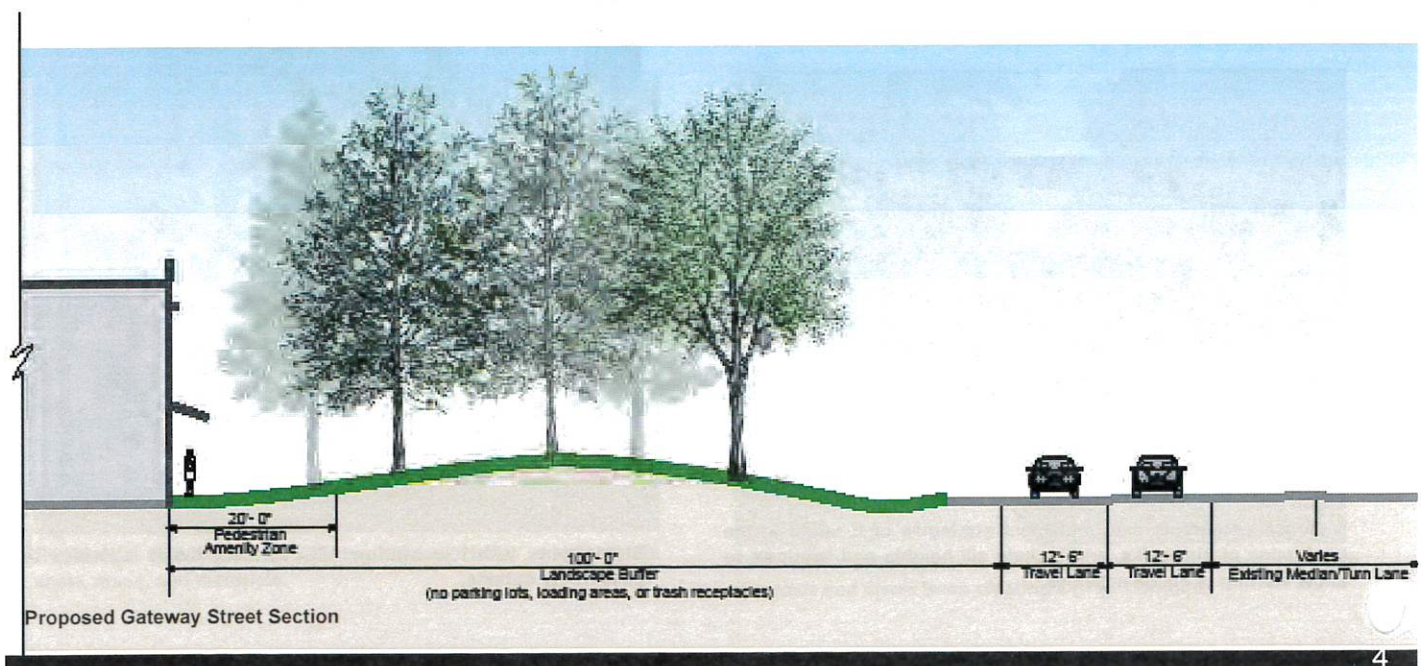
All new projects with one property line immediately adjacent to NC 273 shall include provisions for a Landscape Buffer. The provisions shall:

- maintain 100' green buffer measured from the outside edge of the existing paving;
- encourage clearing of under-story trees in the buffer area .Pedestrian amenities (sidewalks, paths, benches, bike racks, etc) shall be located within 20 feet of outer most edge of 100 foot setback; (See Gateway Street Section)
- encourage the planting of street trees from The Urban Forestry Administration's Recommended Street Tree List available at <http://trees.ddot.dc.gov>; in the landscape setback.

- prohibit parking, loading areas and/or trash receptacles within the landscape buffer. All dumpsters must additionally be screened from surrounding roads.

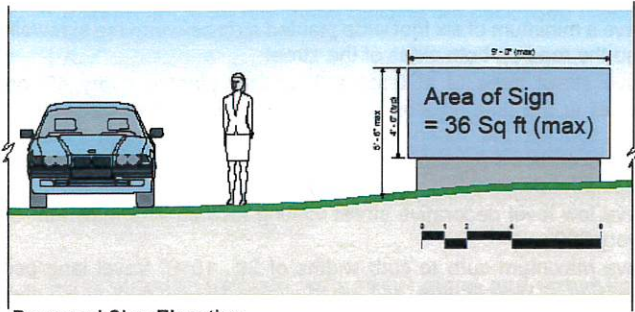
All new projects shall include Open Space provisions. The provisions shall:

- provide one acre of usable open space in the form of a recreational amenity for every 20K sq. ft of building footprint. These amenities may include paved greenway trails (a 10' wide paved trail built to the city's standard), playing fields or play courts, and/or a playground, the cost of which are born by the petitioner developer;



Design Guidelines

for The South Gateway



Proposed Sign Elevation

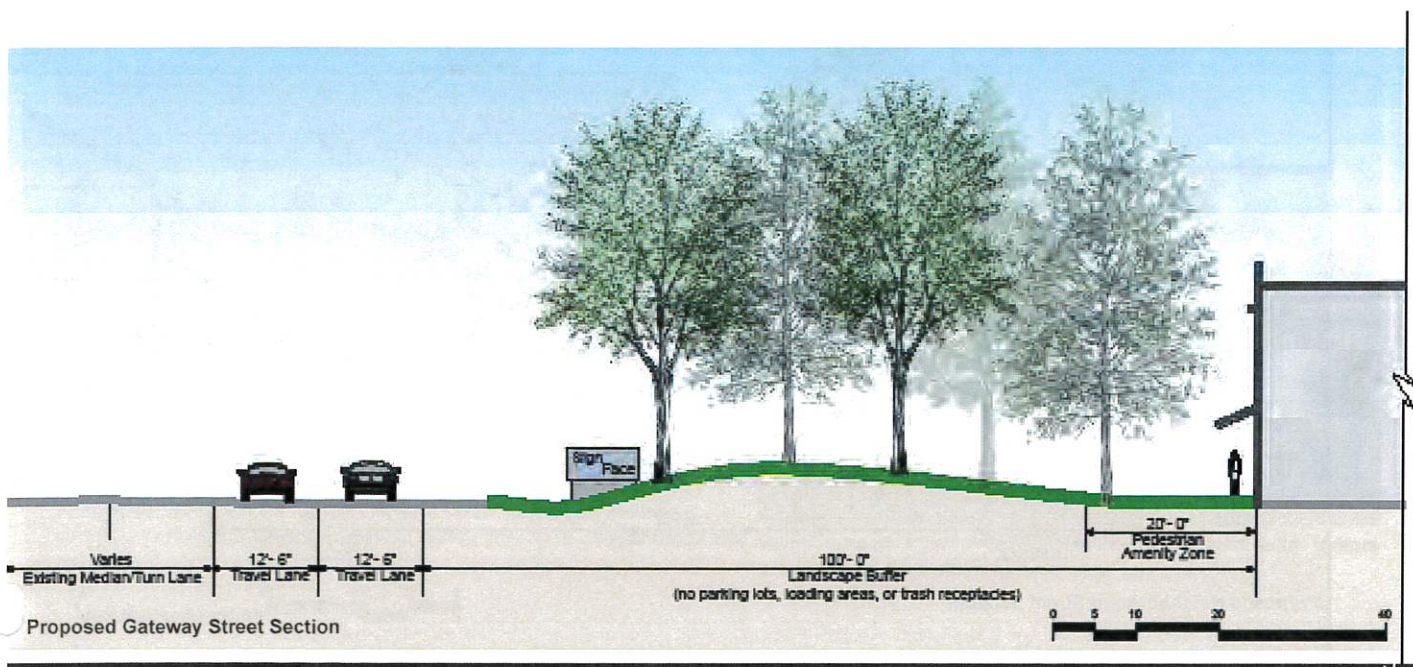
- if wooded, retain 10% of the entire site in its pre-construction condition (stream and highway buffers may count towards this set aside);
- if with open fields, plant 16 additional three inch (or larger) caliper trees on the site per each one acre developed in addition to the street tree requirement;
- preserve at least a third of the large, mature trees (those having a caliper of 18" or greater) existing on the site;
- not implement clear cutting or massive site grading. Only site grading needed to construct streets, parking lots, sidewalks, utilities, building pads, and a 30 foot clear zone around the foundation will be allowed;
- if nonresidential sites, develop 5% of open space within the boundaries of the site. This includes adding sidewalks, benches, bicycle racks, playgrounds, etc.

All new projects shall include landscape setback provisions. The provisions shall:

- set aside a 100 foot undisturbed buffer strip along both sides of all creeks, rivers or lakes. This set aside will only count towards the city's open space requirement if a trail (per the city's standards) is built within the buffer strip. The developer will be credited for one acre of open space for every 200 linear feet of trail;
- if the property to be developed is located in an area where the city has planned a greenway, build that greenway as a requirement for development and will count towards the petitioner's open space allotment;
- if the property is adjacent to an existing greenway, develop the new property connecting to the existing and abutting trail system.

All new projects with Signage shall adhere to the following provisions.

- Off-premise signage is not allowed in the landscaped buffer unless it is erected by the city.
- Freestanding signs in the gateway may not exceed 36 square feet or exceed 6' in height. (See Sign Elevation)
- Façade mounted signs may not exceed 36 square feet or be located on more than one wall. All signs are to be mounted 18" below the first floor ceiling line.
- Freestanding neon and variable message reader board types signs are not allowed.
- Signage shall be incorporated into the architecture.
- Reflective materials are permitted only for NC DOT and MUTCD (Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices)



Proposed Gateway Street Section

KEY POINT #3

New development should be built around great streets.

To create and promote a sense of place, Mount Holly must establish a clear network of streets in the South Gateway area. Neighborhood streets should look, feel and perform differently than Highway 273. The neighborhood streets should encourage slower traffic and include lanes for bike and sidewalks for pedestrians. These same neighborhood streets should minimize cul de sacs and create connections to adjacent neighborhoods. The street network provides not only opportunities to connect open space and pedestrian amenities, but it also provides alternate traffic patterns to help avoid congestion.

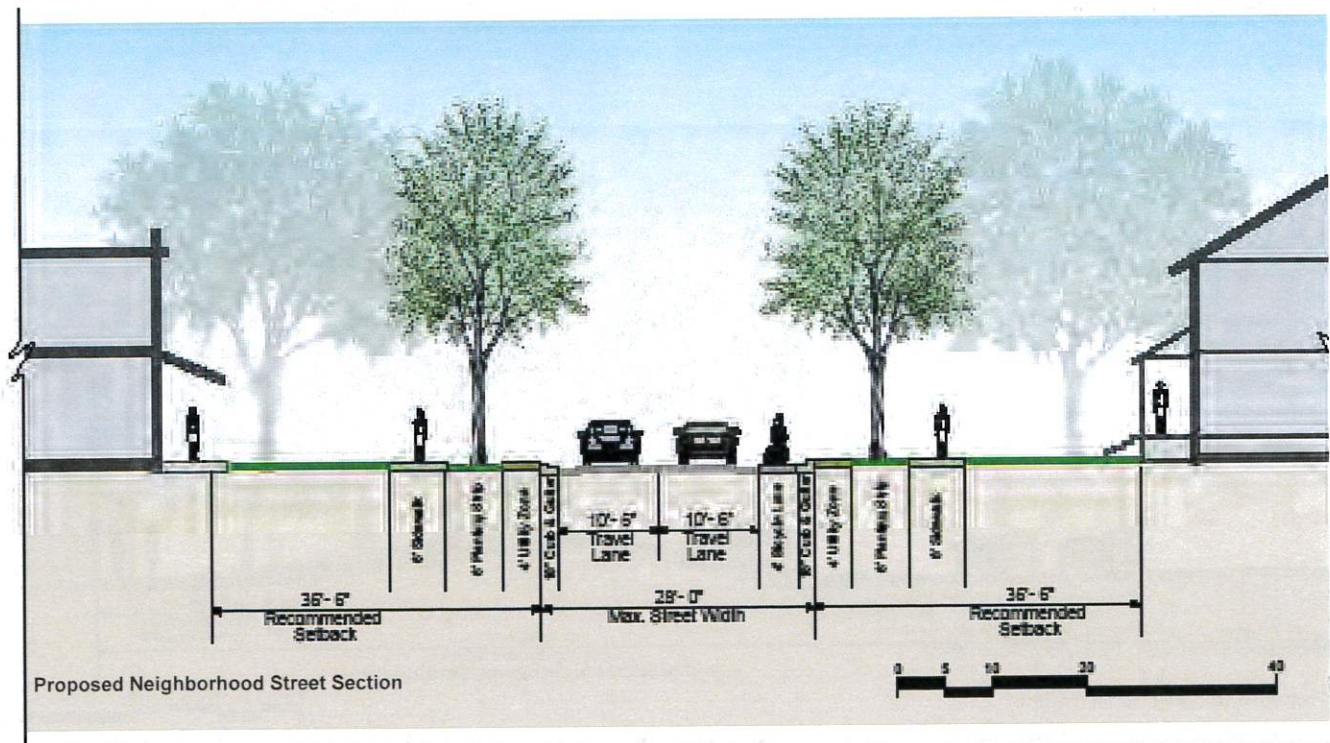


A great street with appropriate traffic signals, street lights, street trees and accent paving on the sidewalks.

Street Guidelines

All new streets shall:

- have a minimum of six foot wide sidewalks on both sides of the street;
- have a minimum of six foot wide planted strip between the sidewalk and the road on both sides of the street;
- have street trees of at least a 3" caliper planted every 40' on center in the planted strip on both sides of the street; Preferred tree species are those recommended by The Urban Forestry Administration's Recommended Street Tree List available at <http://trees.ddot.dc.gov>;
- have low level decorative street lighting located at a minimum of every 200';
- have maximum curb to curb widths of 28'; 10'-6" travel lane per direction, 4' bicycle lane, and an additional 18 inch curb and gutter on each edge for a max street width of 28 feet (See Proposed Neighborhood Street Section). Traffic calming measures in residential areas are encouraged. These include on-street parking, closer spacing of street trees, curb chokes and tighter turning radius;
- have stand-up curbs and gutters where driveways are not present;
- have only one curb cut per parcel (max. width of cut not to exceed 24')
- have maximum driveway widths of 12' within 20' feet of the street, if driveways are present;
- hold all buildings to a similar set back distance throughout the subdivision to ensure consistency.



Street Guidelines

(continued)

- 4 feet utility easement, 6 feet planting strip, 6 feet side walk, 9 feet (min) to 20 feet (max) building set back (See Proposed Neighborhood Street Section).
- (for residential areas) have no garage doors or carport entrances facing the street unless:
 - a. the home is located on a corner lot, in which case the garage door or carport entrance should be located on the side not the front face of the home, and
 - b. the garage or carport is located behind or even with the rear façade of the building;

All new project streets with street signs and street lights, shall:

- have a 4' bicycle lane consistent with the vehicular surface between the curb and gutter.
- have street signs constructed to NC DOT specifications as a minimum;
- have streetlights (DOT required) post mounted with max height of 20 feet; 'cobra head' style streetlights (typical light head extended from utility pole) shall not be allowed in residential areas;
- have site lighting limited to parking areas. Light poles shall be pole mounted with a max. height of 20 feet;
- have security lights that maintain "Dark Skies" standards available at www.darkskyinitiative.org;
- have surface parking with one street tree per 10 spaces. Tree placement shall be evenly spaced as to provide consistent refuge throughout the parking surface area. The planting area for each tree shall have a minimum area of 200 sq. ft.



Pedestrian connections along streets with on-street parking and appropriate scaled trees provide safety, structure and visual interest.

KEY POINT #4

New development should connect with Mount Holly's existing street and trail network.

To promote unique neighborhoods, Mount Holly must create a network of streets that provides for both alternate traffic patterns, and opportunities to connect open space and pedestrian amenities to adjacent neighborhoods.

Connectivity/ Street network

If located adjacent to an undeveloped parcel, all new development must stub out and pave their streets to the adjacent property line to potentially join with future development. If street stubs exist in adjoining neighborhoods, new developments must connect into them.

Whenever possible, all new developments should have more than one vehicular entry and exit point.

All new residential projects shall:

- have streets with all entry/ exits containing at least two exit lanes in addition an entry lane;
- minimize cul de sacs and dead-ends unless part of a phase which will eventually connect to another street;
- have all neighborhoods interconnected via a trail network that corresponds with state, county or city trail plans;
- have trails constructed 10' wide and built using asphalt.



Neighborhood streets with sidewalks and curbs with gutters provide safer pedestrian connections.

04.1

Design Guidelines

for The South Gateway

Compliance

These Design Guidelines describe the desired character of Mount Holly's South Gateway (located along NC 273 from I-85) as outlined in the Mount Holly Gateway Small Area Master Plan. These guidelines are intended to reinforce existing character and protect the qualities that Mount Holly values most in the face of change. These Design Guidelines have an emphasis on siting and design conditions, and priorities supported by the community, and they aim to guide the design of new development in a manner that not only creates a memorable experience within the Southern Gateway, but also strengthens the identity of Mount Holly. The community has clearly stated its desire to maintain the small town atmosphere and the qualities that have historically characterized Mount Holly. However, it was also recognized that new development provides the opportunity for a broader mix of businesses and services, residential units, employment and an expanded tax base. The Gateway Small Area Master Plan recommended the development of design guidelines to ensure residents and visitors alike recognize Mount Holly as they enter through the South Gateway. In short, the look of the gateway is more important than the kind of land uses that are located within.

Additional Studies and Plans

For all developments of 20K sq. ft of building footprint or more, the petitioner must provide a study by a licensed traffic engineer addressing the impact of the new neighborhood on the city's existing streets and roads and offer a mitigation plan to address all the impacts identified in the study.

Legal Adoption

The intent of the South Gateway Design Guidelines is to provide a baseline for quality as growth occurs. These Design Guidelines serve as a companion to the Manual for Development in Downtown Mount Holly (March 2005).

Quid Pro Quo

The Design Guidelines that are included in this document are meant to be viewed as standards in combination with all

other existing regulations and policies. Negotiations would be allowed, if in the form of a quid pro quo i.e. one guideline might be lessened if another was strengthened.

Design Review Process

Design Review provides a framework for citizens and developers to work toward achieving a better built environment through attention given to fundamental design principles. Design Review is intended to affect how new development can contribute positively to Mount Holly's contextual setting. Design guidelines offer a tool for consistency—an alternative (or an addition to) to prescriptive zoning requirements—and will allow new development to better respond to the distinctive character that is Mount Holly.

Prior to development, the petitioner of the property located within the South Gateway Area must submit written documentation, a site survey showing all existing trees with an 18" caliper or greater, and a site plan, architectural elevations, and illustrations of proposed signage that demonstrates compliance with these Design Guidelines. After payment by the petitioner of a compliance review fee, a Compliance Officer will review the plans for consistency with the Design Guidelines and make a report and recommendation to the city council. The Compliance Review Fee is initially set at \$2,000 or the actual costs to the City, whichever is greater, and may be amended from time to time by the City Council. The Compliance Review Fee is in addition to any existing fees covering the City's legal costs of considering development petitions.

Development plans shall not be introduced to the City Council unless and until the party or parties seeking development have paid the Compliance Fee, submitted the appropriate documentation that allows for a review by the Mount Holly staff and the City's Compliance Officer, and a written report evaluating compliance with these guidelines is completed.

Mount Holly Community Planning 2006-2008:

01 Strategic Vision Plan

Where does Mount Holly want to go?

02 Market Study & Annexation Strategy

Can we get there?

03 Gateways & Downtown Plans

Where should different land uses go?

04 Design Guidelines

What should it look like?

05 Implementation Plan

How to get started...



Design Guidelines

04.2

Adopted May 12, 2008

for The Downtown & Riverfront

In the continuing development of Mount Holly, the most important initiative outlined in the Small Area Plan should be to strengthen the connection between the city's downtown to the Catawba River and Dutchman's Creek. Whether in the greening of the Hwy 27 bridge, the improvement of the landscape buffer along the railroad tracks, the construction of new sidewalks and streets, or in the architectural control of new buildings located within the boundaries of the new Downtown and Riverfront Small Area Plan, it should be recognized that the quality of the development in these areas will influence the character of the entire city because this is quite simply, its heart.

In addition, the edges of the Catawba River and Dutchmans Creek must be preserved and maintained to ecologically and environmentally function. Strategic access points and visual connections to the water should be part of future development.

Goals and Objectives

The intent of the Mount Holly Downtown and Riverfront Design Guidelines are to provide a baseline for quality as growth occurs.

The specific objectives for the Downtown and Riverfront Design Guidelines are:

- to establish a clear definition of urban design standards that informs property owners, developers, builders and decision-makers;
- to serve as a tool for planners, designers and City Officials to use and incorporate into their plans to achieve and support the City's design objectives; and
- to act as a basis for a uniform and consistent review of development and redevelopment proposals by the City Council.

Because our goals are to **increase economic value, the community image**, and the quality of life in Mount Holly, we want:

- new neighborhoods to be well designed and sought after places to live, work and play;
- new development to connect the downtown to the riverfront; and
- to communicate the community's high expectations for new development in Mount Holly.

Key Point #1

Preserve and expand the architectural character of Mount Holly's downtown.

Key Point #2

Create a greener, pedestrian friendly gateway into Mount Holly

Key Point #3

Strengthen the connection between downtown Mount Holly to the Catawba River and Dutchman's Creek.

Key Point #4

Expand and improve the city's "Woods and Waters District" as a visual, recreational, environmental and economic asset.

Because we **value our history**, we want:

- to preserve the small town character of Mount Holly,
- new development to complement what is already here in Mount Holly,
- new development to better define the edges of the East Charlotte Avenue and East Central Avenue corridor.

Because we value our environment and **especially our rivers and creeks**, we want:

- these natural places preserved for public use,
- physical and visual connections to these areas
- our streams and creeks protected;
- the reduction of polluting runoff;
- the preservation of mature trees; and,
- energy conservation.

Because we value **neighborliness**, we want:

- great streets and gathering spaces, where the pedestrian is prioritized;
- connections between adjoining developments; and
- connections made to gathering places.

KEY POINT #1

Preserve and expand the architectural character of Mount Holly's downtown.

To maintain the unique character of Mount Holly, buildings should not be branded using an architectural style of a company. Franchise architecture (building design that is trademarked or identified with a particular chain or corporation and is generic in nature) is not allowed. Franchises or national chains must follow these standards to create a unique building that is compatible with Mount Holly, blends in with the existing environment and is sensitive to its surroundings.

Architectural Guidelines

All new commercial and retail structures shall:

- not have new structures that are branded using an architectural style of a company;
- have the primary façade (facing the primary street) located at the back edge street easement constructed with 65% glass on the ground floor (glazing and doors) with internal activities visible from the street;
- have sill heights not exceed 30" from finished sidewalk;



Downtown Mount Holly with appropriate scale, mass, materials, roof lines, transparency and street presence.

- not use building wall and foundation materials of exposed or unfinished cmu (concrete masonry units);
- use windowsills and doorjambs constructed of wood or metal (painted);
- not have garage doors that are visible from the street;
- have upper floors constructed with 35% glass (glazing and doors) on primary street façade;
- have roofs constructed with a cornice and parapet wall or be pitched 8:1 to 12:1; and
- not use the following materials on the front or side facades: vinyl or aluminum siding, rough sawn lumber, synthetic stucco systems (EIFS), OSB (particle board).

All new residential structures shall:

- have occupiable front porches that are at least 16 square feet in size;
- be built with crawl spaces of at least 24 inches in height as measured on the front elevation, not as slabs on grade;
- use the following approved materials for front and side facades: brick, stone, stucco, wood hardiplank, or wood shingles;
- have front doors located on a raised foundation and on a public street;



National retail stores can implement adaptive designs and contribute to the character of the community.



Mixed-use project that clearly defines the street edge.



Commercial project along the back edge of sidewalk that clearly defines the street edge.

All new residential structures shall:

- not use building wall and foundation materials of exposed or unfinished cmu (concrete masonry units);
- have parking located beside or behind the buildings;
- not have garage doors that are visible from the street;
- have windowsills and doorjambes that are wood (painted). Porch rails shall be wood (painted) or metal (painted);
- not use the following materials on the front or side facades: vinyl or aluminum siding, rough sawn lumber, synthetic stucco systems (EIFS), OSB (particle board);
- have roofs constructed with asphalt shingle, cedar shingle or standing steel seam with 8:1 to 12:1 pitch; and
- use operable and double hung windows.

Note:

All new mixed-use developments shall follow Architectural Guidelines in Key Point 2.

Street Guidelines

In Mount Holly the roads, rails and trails create a large portion of its community identity. These Design Guidelines recommend a distinct integration between residential areas, commercial corridors, town centers and the regional connectors. Existing and proposed street networks should provide sound structure for The Downtown and Riverfront Small Area Plan to develop and grow.



Residential project with occupiable front porch, built above crawl space and no garage doors facing the street.

All new “Proposed Network” streets shown on the Downtown and Riverfront Small Area Master Plan shall:

- have a minimum of six foot wide sidewalks on both sides of the street;
- have a minimum of six foot wide planted strip between the sidewalk and the road on both sides of the street;
- have street trees of at least a 3” caliper planted every 40’ on center in the planted strip on both sides of the street; Preferred tree species are those recommended by The Urban Forestry Administration’s Recommended Street Tree List available at <http://trees.ddot.dc.gov>;
- have low level decorative street lighting located at a minimum of every 200’;
- have maximum curb to curb widths of 28’; 10’-6” travel lane per direction, 4’ bicycle lane, and an additional 18 inch curb and gutter on each edge for a max street width of 28 feet (See Proposed Neighborhood Street Section);
- have stand-up curbs and gutters where driveways are not present;
- have only one curb cut per parcel (max. width of cut not to exceed 24’);
- have maximum driveway widths of 12’ within 20’ feet of the street, if driveways are present;
- hold all buildings to a similar set back distance throughout the subdivision to ensure consistency. From back of curb maintain 4 feet utility easement, 6 feet planting strip, 6 feet side walk, 9 feet (min) to 20 feet (max) building set back (See Proposed Neighborhood Street Section).
- (for residential areas) have no garage doors or carport entrances facing the street unless:
 - a. the home is located on a corner lot, in which case the garage door or carport entrance should be located on the side not the front face of the home, and
 - b. the garage or carport is located behind or even with the rear façade of the building;

Notes:

- 1) Recommend all new infill developments to improve existing street network with above conditions as appropriate.
- 2) All signage should follow Signage Guidelines in Key Point 4.



A great street with appropriate traffic signals, street lights, street trees and accent paving on the sidewalks.

Design Guidelines

for The Downtown & Riverfront

KEY POINT #2

Create a greener, pedestrian friendly gateway into Mount Holly.

East Charlotte Avenue (NC 27) is a gateway into downtown Mount Holly. The highway, bridge, rail overpass and the river are the elements in the gateway. These elements are joined, via a gentle, upward sloping topographic profile toward the downtown core. However, the edges of the Highway 27 gateway are underdeveloped. The edges should be better defined by building mass, bridge railing, signage and street trees.

Mixed-Use development should be encouraged along the edges of East Charlotte Avenue (NC 27) and East Central Avenue. The traditional mixed-use style of storefront base and office/residential above should be encouraged along these two streets. The storefronts should be pushed up to the edge of the right away with 10' wide sidewalks. These mixed-use developments have a more utility and delivery requirements and should have alleys that serve them. On street parking should be encouraged along East Central Avenue. Additional parking should be located behind and shared parking solutions should be encouraged.

In addition, South Main Street is a gateway into downtown Mount Holly. The edges of this street should have recognizable pattern of street trees and an accompanying landscape easement to announce downtown Mount Holly.

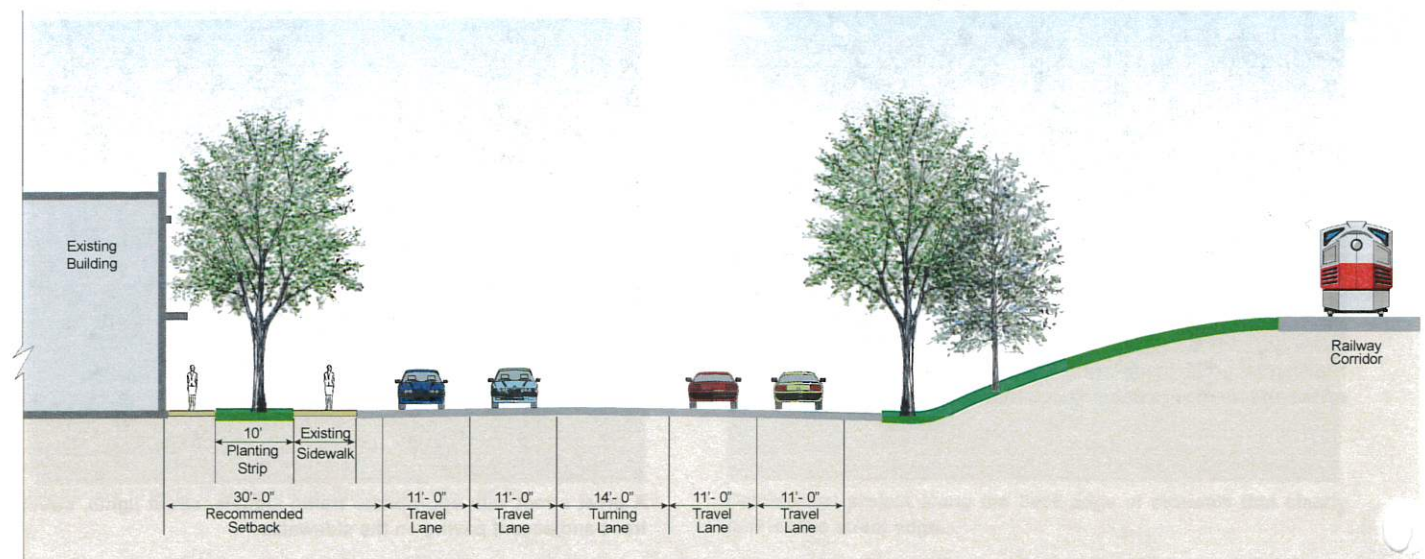
Gateway and Landscape Guidelines

Recommended improvements for, the NC 27 bridge, the railway corridor and new projects along East Charlotte Avenue (NC 27), East Central Avenue and South Main Street shall adhere to the following landscape provisions.

- Add turf along railway as necessary and maintain as continuous grass fields.
- Add street trees along adjacent street edges of railway.
- Three inch caliber street trees shall be planted 25' on center (Select species from The Urban Forestry Administration's Recommended Street Tree List available at <http://trees.ddot.dc.gov>)
- Street trees shall be planted and maintained to enhance pedestrian experience and not impede vehicular views to storefronts.
- Views to Dutchmans Creek are encouraged by select cutting to promote view sheds.
- Increase transparency along the railings to improve views to the river.
- Increase visual interest with objects such as decorative street lamps, and accented surfaces of brick or stone.
- Increase safety through greater vehicular separation from bicycles and pedestrians; widen sidewalks
- Improve landing areas with plantings, pedestrian and bicycle amenities.
- Soften with plantings to introduce the "Woods and Waters District."



Bridge with characteristics that define its edges -- sidewalks with pavers, decorative lamps and transparent railings.



Design Guidelines

for The Downtown & Riverfront

Architectural Guidelines

All new commercial projects along East Charlotte Avenue (NC 27) and East Central Avenue shall:

- not have new structures that are branded using an architectural style of a company;
- have the primary façade (facing the primary street) located at the back edge highway easement and constructed with 65% glass (glazing and doors) with internal activities visible from the street;
- have sill heights not exceed 30" from finished sidewalk;
- not use building wall and foundation materials of exposed or unfinished cmu (concrete masonry units);
- use windowsills and doorjambes constructed of wood or metal (painted).
- provide parking behind or beside the building (partial screening must be provided when parking is beside the building to ensure street edge continuity.
- not have garage doors that are visible from the street;
- have upper floors constructed with 35% glass (glazing and doors)



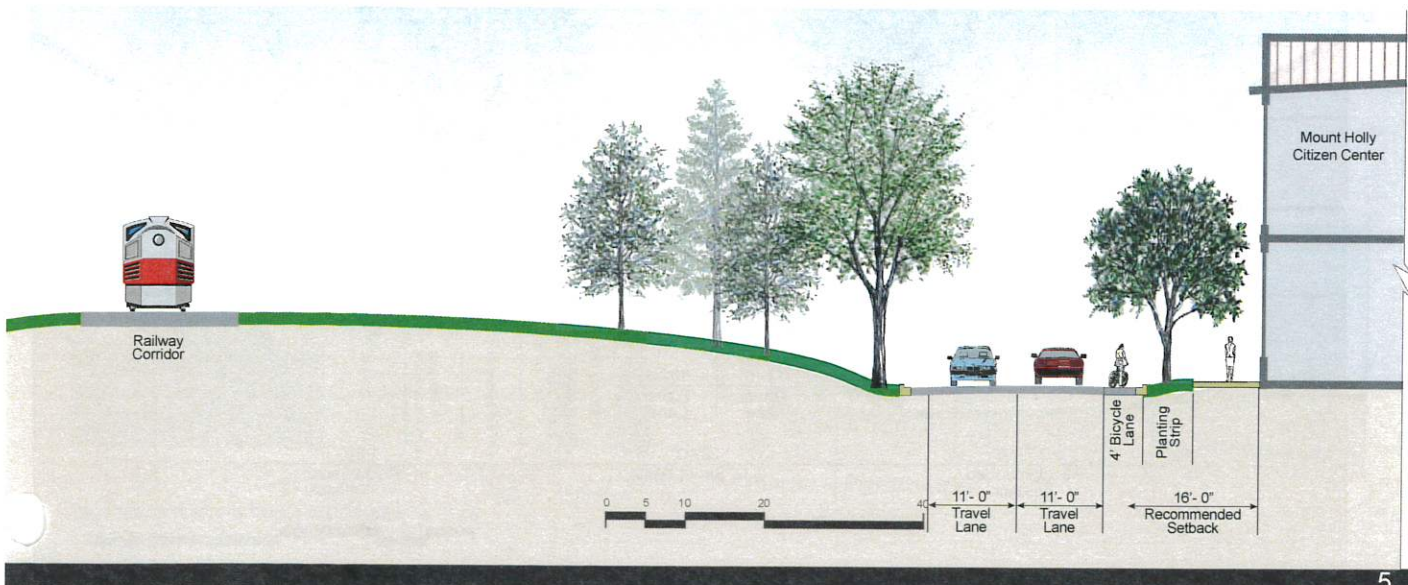
Mixed-use project with building along the back edge of sidewalk and appropriate sill height.

on primary street façade;

- have roofs constructed with a cornice and parapet wall or be pitched 8:1 to 12:1.
- not use the following materials on the front or side facades: vinyl or aluminum siding, rough sawn lumber, synthetic stucco systems (EIFS), OSB (particle board);
- have pitched roofs or parapet walls that match primary structure. Lighting for vehicular canopies shall maintain "Dark Skies" standards available at www.darkskyinitiative.org;
- limit vehicular canopies over gas pumps to 250 sq ft per dispenser;
- not use reflective materials or surfaces; and
- have a maximum vertical dimension not to exceed area of nine inches and a maximum horizontal dimension not to exceed the length of the longest elevation with backlit awnings.

All new mixed-use structures along East Charlotte Avenue (NC 27) and East Central Avenue shall:

- follow storefront guidelines for commercial, retail or office at ground level;
- follow residential guidelines for residential units above; (See Key Point 3)
- provide facades and roof lines that respond to context and dominant use with the exception for culturally or historically significant features.



KEY POINT #3

Strengthen the connection between downtown Mount Holly to the Catawba River and Dutchman's Creek.

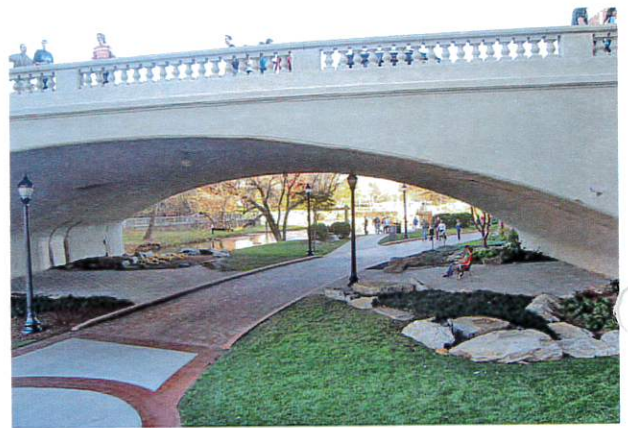
To develop a unique place with unique set of experiences, Mount Holly should physically connect the Catawba River and Dutchmans Creek with the downtown core by providing physical and visual connections to the water. The existing boat launch and access point should serve as a primary focal point for a connection to the river. The pressures of impending residential development on the eastern shore of the Catawba River will create more value and more demand for this access point. Recommended development of this area includes an improved vehicular connection and a "Welcome to Mount Holly" gateway sign on or about the north-south rail overpass. Other improvements to the overpass abutment structures include painting the façade and planting of appropriate vegetation. Trees and shrubs play an important role in creating a welcoming atmosphere; the planting of appropriate plant material is encouraged in and around this entire area.

To promote a unique place Mount Holly must connect downtown and the riverfront areas physically with building facades, streets, alleys, sidewalks and greenways. Mount Holly must create a street network that not only provides alternate diverse uses, but also creates a rhythm, or recognizable pattern, block to block. Specifically the neighborhood between Dutchmans Creek, NC 27 and the Catawba River must be physically

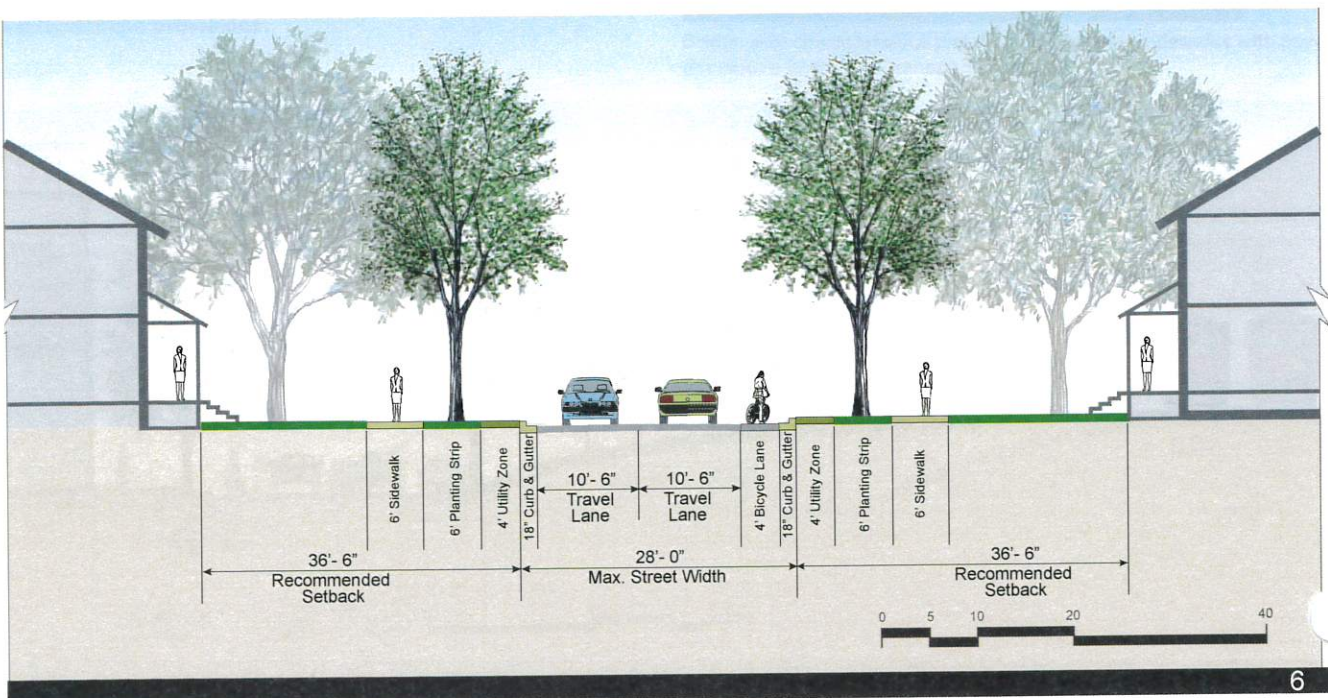
connected by a street hierarchy that establishes NC 27 as the primary collector. This area should also incorporate the neighborhood street and alley pattern to facilitate deliveries, utilities and off-street parking. There should be at least one street connection to the Catawba River. In addition, visual connections should be created to Dutchmans Creek.

Notes:

- 1) All new development shall follow Gateway, landscape and Architectural Guidelines in Key Point 2.
- 2) All new development shall follow Woods and Waters Guidelines in Key Point 4.



Bridge with surface treatment upgrade and transparent edges above that promotes pedestrian connection and a safe gathering node underneath.



KEY POINT #4

Expand and improve the city's "Woods and Waters District" as a visual, recreational, environmental and economic asset.

The Catawba River and Dutchmans Creek are both vital community assets. These areas along with their respective setbacks, provide opportunities to not only join downtown and the river, but also be a part of the larger network of trails and greenways planned throughout the region called The Carolinas Thread Trail. Moreover, in years to come portions of the Clariant Industries complex may become available. Waterfront land is a valuable asset for Mount Holly. The City should work to control, obtain and preserve any and all pieces of waterfront land identified as The Woods and Waters District in the Downtown and Riverfront Small Area Master Plan. Much of the Woods and Waters District is located in critical watershed areas and open space requirements for future development should guide how these areas look and perform. In addition, all future industry should be encouraged to locate near the Brookshire Freeway or Interstate 85.

In addition, The Downtown and Riverfront areas need a recognizable wayfinding system that helps residents and visitors alike easily find the important destinations in Mount Holly. A wayfinding system would also provides an opportunity to begin a Mount Holly branding program.

Wayfinding General Description

Wayfinding signs are a systematic network of directional signs installed and maintained by The City of Mount Holly to guide the traveling public to major civic, cultural, visitor, and recreational destinations within a specified region with the minimum number of signs. The goal of a Wayfinding System should be to take advantage of local geographical areas (downtown district and riverfront) and place turn by turn trailblazing signs to specific, individual locations. With this process, Mount Holly's most prominent features and assets would be called out and promoted. The wayfinding system should be a cohesive family of signs with a



Wayfinding System for Leesburg, VA

unified palette of materials, colors and fonts so visitors and residents recognize the system at a glance.

Woods and Waters Guidelines

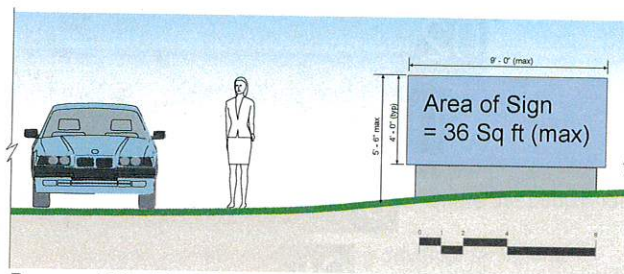
All new projects shall include landscape setback provisions. The provisions shall:

- set aside a 100 foot undisturbed buffer along both sides of all creeks, rivers or wetlands. This set aside will only count towards the city's open space requirement if a trail (per the city's standards) is built within the buffer. The developer will be credited for one acre of open space for every 200 linear feet of trail;
- if the property to be developed is located in an area where the city has planned a greenway, build that greenway as a requirement for development and will count towards the petitioner's open space allotment;
- if the property is adjacent to an existing greenway, develop the new property connecting to the existing and abutting trail system.
- require all neighborhoods to be interconnected via a trail network that corresponds with state, county or city trail plans.
- Trails shall be maintained by HOA or dedicated to the City.

Signage Guidelines

All new projects with Signage shall adhere to the following provisions.

- Off-premise signage is not allowed unless it is erected by the city.
- Freestanding signs may not exceed 36 square feet or exceed 6' in height (See Proposed Sign Elevation in Key Point 1).
- Façade mounted signs may not exceed 36 square feet or be located on more than one wall. All signs are to be mounted 18" below the first floor ceiling line (See Proposed Sign Section in Key Point 1).
- Freestanding neon and variable message reader board types signs are not allowed.
- Signage shall be incorporated into the architecture.
- Reflective materials are permitted only for NC DOT and MUTCD (Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices).



04.2

Design Guidelines

for The Downtown & Riverfront

Compliance

These Design Guidelines identify the character of downtown and the riverfront in Mount Holly, reinforce the existing visual character and protect the qualities that Mount Holly values most in the face of change. The overriding objective of the Design Guidelines is to ensure new development fits in well with its surroundings. In addition, these guidelines were created with an emphasis on siting and design conditions and priorities supported by the community. They aim to guide the design of new development in a manner that strengthens the identity of Mount Holly. The community has clearly stated its desire to maintain the small town atmosphere and qualities that have historically characterized Mount Holly. However, it was also recognized that new development provides the opportunity for a broader mix of business services, residences, employment and an expanded tax base. The Downtown and Riverfront Small Area Master Plan recommended the development of Design Guidelines to ensure new developments create a compact, mixed-use commercial core that is pedestrian oriented in scale, character and function. Several design issues and related priorities were identified and have been incorporated into the Design Guidelines for the downtown and riverfront areas. These Design Guidelines respond to not only unique issues related to each area, but also respond to the comprehensive issues associated with the physical characteristics that define Mount Holly.

Additional Studies and Plans

For all developments of 20K sq. ft of building footprint or more, the petitioner must provide a study by a licensed traffic engineer addressing the impact of the new development on the city's existing streets and roads and offer a mitigation plan to address all the impacts identified in the study.

Legal Adoption

The intent of the Downtown and Riverfront Design Guidelines is to provide a baseline for quality as growth occurs. These Design Guidelines serve as a companion to the Manual for Development in Downtown Mount Holly (March 2005).

Quid Pro Quo

The Design Guidelines included in this document are meant to be viewed as standards in combination with all other existing regulations and policies. Negotiations would be allowed, if in the form of a quid pro quo i.e. one guideline might be lessened if another was strengthened.

Design Review Process

Design Review provides a framework for citizens and developers to work toward achieving a better built environment through attention given to fundamental design principles. Design Review is intended to affect how new development can contribute positively to Mount Holly's contextual setting. Design guidelines offer a tool for consistency—an alternative (or an addition to) prescriptive zoning requirements—and will allow new development to better respond to the distinctive character that is Mount Holly.

Prior to development, the petitioner of the property located within the Downtown and Riverfront Area must submit written documentation, a site survey showing all existing trees with an 18" caliper or greater, a site plan, architectural elevations, and illustrations of proposed signage that demonstrates compliance with these Design Guidelines. After payment by the petitioner of a compliance review fee, a Compliance Officer will review the plans for consistency with the Design Guidelines and make a report and recommendation to the City Council. The Compliance Review Fee is initially set at \$2,000 or the actual costs to the City, whichever is greater, and may be amended from time to time by the City Council. The Compliance Review Fee is in addition to any existing fees covering the City's legal costs of considering development petitions.

Development plans shall not be introduced to the City Council unless and until the party or parties seeking development have paid the Compliance Fee, submitted the appropriate documentation that allows for a review by the Mount Holly staff and the City's Compliance Officer, and a written report evaluating compliance with these guidelines is completed.

Mount Holly Community Planning 2006-2008:

01 Strategic Vision Plan

Where does Mount Holly want to go?

02 Market Study & Annexation Strategy

Can we get there?

03 Gateways & Downtown Plans

Where should different land uses go?

04 Design Guidelines

What should it look like?

05 Implementation Plan

How to get started...

Mount Holly Community Planning 2006-2008, a collaborative effort of City Planning Staff, a Citizen Advisory Team, the public in Mount Holly and consultants from The Charlotte Community Design Studio, the UNC Charlotte Urban Institute, and Warren Associates



Implementation Plan

05

Adopted on May 12, 2008

Purpose. The Implementation Plan prioritizes recommendations introduced in Phases 1-4 of the Mount Holly Community Planning Project. Phase 1-4 recommendations operate in the Implementation Plan as action steps and organize where to begin and when to start. The Implementation Plan will be used as a timeline for the recommended action steps and will provide a measure of success as tasks are completed.

Contents. The Implementation Plan presents an orderly sequence of recommended actions for implementing the City's Strategic Vision Plan goals, the findings of the Market Study, the South Gateway Small Area Plan and Design Guidelines, and the Downtown and Riverfront Small Area Plan and Design Guidelines.

The action steps for each section of the timeline are separated into three major categories: Overall, Downtown and Riverfront, and South Gateway Initiatives. Each initiative reflects the areas within Mount Holly for which an action step should be taken. The initiative is then identified as either an Immediate, Intermediate, or Long Range Goal. Immediate Goals reflect action steps to be started during 2008-2009. Intermediate Goals should be started during 2010-2011 and Long Range Goals should be initiated at 5 years or more from Implementation Plan adoption.

OVERALL INITIATIVES

- Add an Implementation Plan progress update as a standing agenda item for City Council's monthly worksessions
- Adapt the Zoning Ordinance to incorporate Small Area Plan and Design Guideline recommendations
- Establish Greenway Initiatives Goal to extend Greenway from Mountain Island Lake dam to Tuck Park.
- Develop a Wayfinding program to identify local attractions and facilities.
- Staff adequately: Hire a Zoning Officer and establish an Economic Development Office.

DOWNTOWN AND RIVERFRONT INITIATIVES

- Establish the Woods and Waters District through a zoning overlay.
- Extend streetscape improvements from Main Street to the Mount Holly Citizens Center
- Gain control of strategic property within the Woods and Waters District.

SOUTH GATEWAY INITIATIVES

- Establish the landscape buffer overlay district as called for in the Small Area Plan and Design Guidelines.
- Begin the Small Area Plan's street improvements as detailed in the Design Guidelines by establishing ordinance language.
- Encourage the Gateway Village as a catalyst site

Implementation Plan

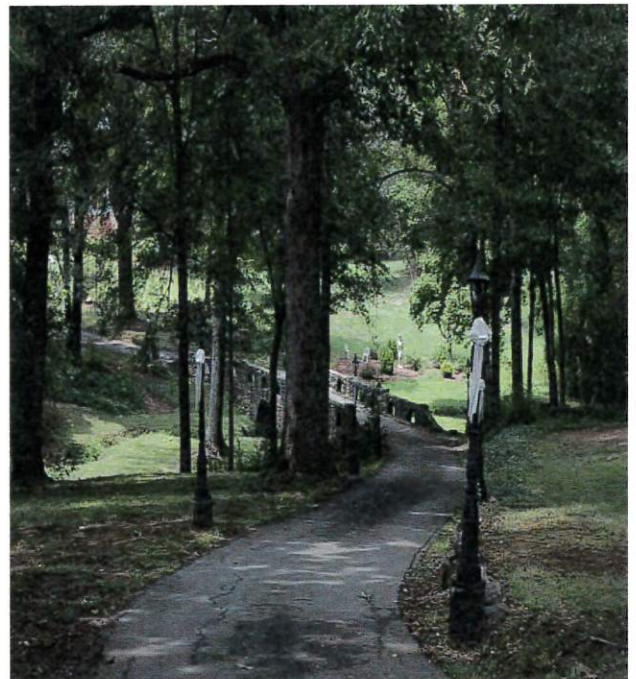
IMMEDIATE PRIORITY

Overall Initiatives

- Adopt the remaining Project Plans: South Gateway Small Area Plan and Design Guidelines, Annexation Strategy Policies and the Downtown and Riverfront Small Area Plan and Design Guidelines.
- Commit to a regular agenda item at the City Council's monthly worksessions to establish updates on progress being made on the implementation Plan
- Create "Partnerships for Progress" by asking corporate citizens to participate in Mount Holly's new vision
- Organize a "Walk Along the River" event
- Establish Greenway goal to build one mile of Greenway per year
- Staff Planning Department with a Zoning Officer and a Long Range Planner
- Establish a City of Mount Holly Economic Development Office
- Conduct a Photographic Contest: display the entries in vacant storefronts and on the City website
- Display currently available marketing materials at Whitewater Center
- Develop a Wayfinding Program: establish signage from Interstate 85 and NC Highway 16, and install signs to identify local attractions and facilitates
- Incorporate street improvements identified in both the Small Area Plans and Design Guideline Recommendations into ordinance language

Overall Initiatives

- Rewrite zoning ordinance
- Incorporate all levels of the Design Guidelines into Ordinance language: including Annexation Design Guidelines
- Begin to work with the Carolina Thread Trail and the US Whitewater Center to develop a pedestrian bridge across the Catawba River
- Begin an Industrial Recruitment/Improvement Plan
- Identify conflicts in existing ordinances and add or revise land use classifications to achieve desired usage



Mount Holly, NC

Implementation Plan

IMMEDIATE PRIORITY

Downtown and Riverfront Initiatives

- Begin discussions regarding the current City Hall as an adaptive re-use project for grass roots arts organization
- Create a downtown Municipal Services District with a dedicated tax revenue
- Hang artistic works in vacant storefront windows
- Begin rail overpass beautification project
- Begin bridge renovation/beautification
- Allow and promote outdoor sidewalk dining, including beer and wine sales
- Expand the River Festival and Farmer's Market
- Create Downtown Merchant's Association
- Encourage East Central Avenue infill development
- Protect contributing buildings by establishing an Ordinance Overlay District
- Create a landscaped buffer along the rail line
- Extend streetscape improvements in downtown to the new Mount Holly Citizens' Center
- Acquire riverfront property located adjacent to River Street Park to gain strategic options for future improvements and use
- Establish the south Main Street landscape buffer overlay
- Gain control of the strategic property within the Woods and Waters District
- Encourage catalyst site: Dutchman's Creek Village

South Gateway Initiatives

- Begin the South Gateway street improvements by establishing Ordinance language to reflect street improvements as detailed in the South Gateway Small Area Plan and Design Guidelines
- Establish landscape buffer overlay district
- Establish Woods and Waters District by incorporating the Strategic Plan into Ordinance language
- Promote property across from the Medical Center for office use



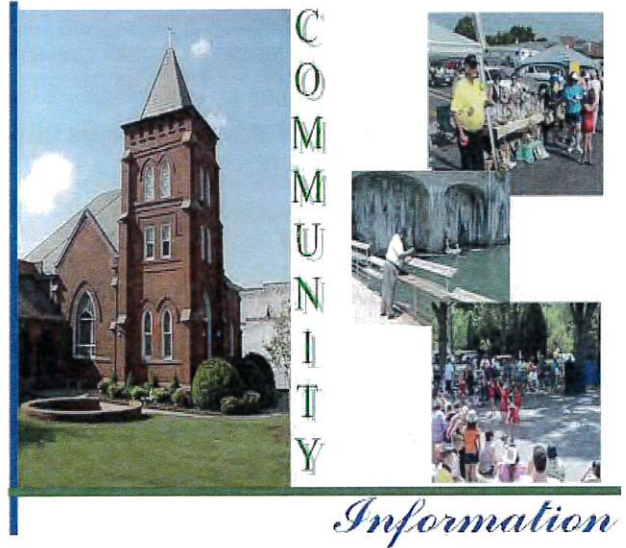
Mount Holly, NC

Implementation Plan

INTERMEDIATE PRIORITY

Overall Initiatives

- Budget for continued Greenway development
- Monitor status of surplus CSX rail lines outside of The Woods and Waters District for potential future trail use
- Request citizen input on pedestrian safety issues and wayfinding initiatives
- Prepare a comprehensive marketing plan that emphasizes the City's assets and especially the Woods and Waters District
- Begin to investigate ways to invest in Community Schools
- Begin establishing a city wide Bike Plan
- Display updated marketing materials at Whitewater Center and the residential sales center for Crosland's Whitewater development
- Explore additional marketing opportunities with regional attractions



Mount Holly, NC



Mount Holly, NC

Implementation Plan

INTERMEDIATE PRIORITY

Downtown and Riverfront Initiatives

- Move Mount Holly Maintenance Facility to a more appropriate location
- Encourage catalyst site: River Street Park area
- Improve streetscape with landscaped sidewalk plantings
- Update the design for River Street Park area and extend the road network
- Promote higher density housing after Design Guidelines are implemented
- "Green" the Highland Avenue/ Charlotte Avenue intersection
- Emphasize the Lee Street intersection as a gateway into Mount Holly and a connection downtown to the river
- Open a downtown Visitor's Center possibly with a History Museum

South Gateway Initiatives

- Improve existing roads within the gateway
- Encourage catalyst site: South Gateway Business Park
- Install pedestrian safe crossing at Highway 273/ Pearl Beatty Road
- Encourage catalyst site: Gateway retail village



Mount Holly, NC



Mount Holly, NC

Implementation Plan

LONG RANGE PRIORITY

Overall Initiatives

- Complete Greenway from the dam to Tuck Park
- Budget for continued Greenway development along secondary streams within Small Area Plans

Downtown and Riverfront Initiatives

- Install traffic circle at Highland Avenue/ North Main Street
- Promote potential adaptive re-use for Mount Holly Cotton Mill
- Improve Pedestrian streetscape on Highland Avenue from Charlotte Avenue to North Main Street and install a pedestrian safe crossing
- Establish Dutchman's Creek canoe launch near North Main Street
- Encourage catalyst site: Woodlawn Avenue Mill office site
- Link improved pedestrian streetscapes to greenway trails and open space
- Improve Catawba Avenue streetscape
- Improve Glendale Avenue streetscape
- Extend Glendale Avenue to the Catawba River
- Expand street networks south of Catawba Avenue and east of Hill Street



Greenville, SC



Mount Holly, NC

Implementation Plan

LONG RANGE PRIORITY

South Gateway Initiatives

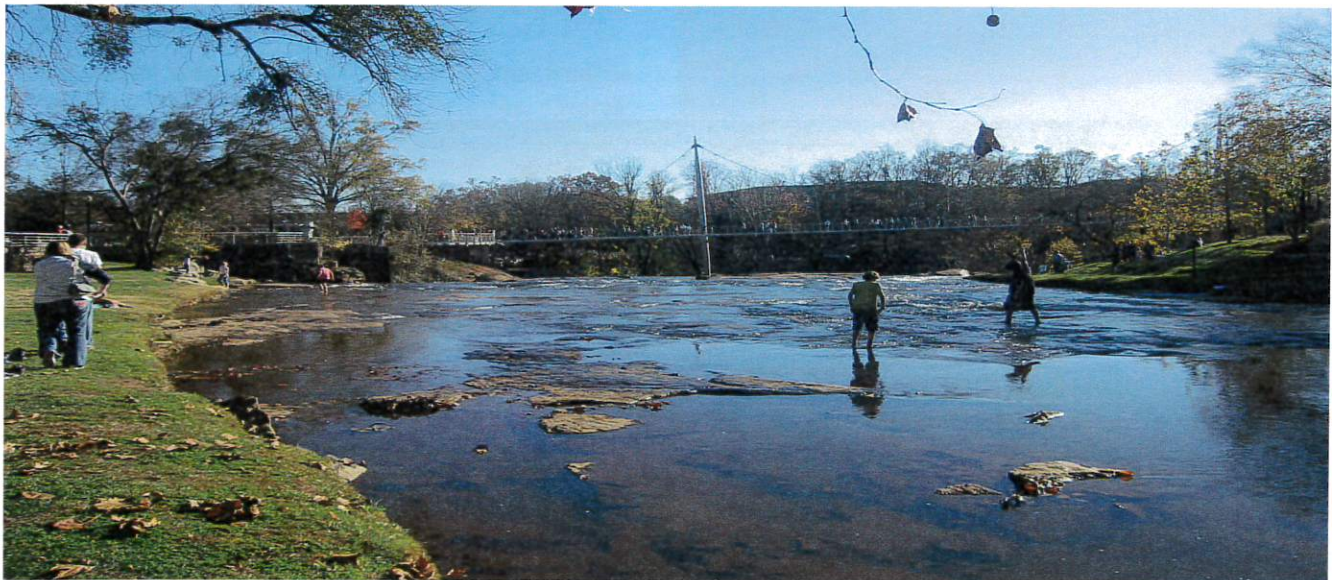
- Improve pedestrian mobility and provide network improvements
- Encourage catalyst site: Begin efforts towards a Southend Greenway boathouse by opening a dialogue with Belmont Abbey about future land use intentions within gateway area



Mount Holly, NC



Mount Holly, NC



Greenville, SC

05

Implementation Plan

IMPLEMENTATION PLANNING PROCESS

Following adoption by City Council of the Strategic Vision Plan and acceptance by City Council of the Market Study, and the Small Area Plans and Design Guidelines for the South Gateway and the Downtown-Riverfront area, the consultants developed a program of recommended actions for both short-term and long-term implementation of those policy documents.

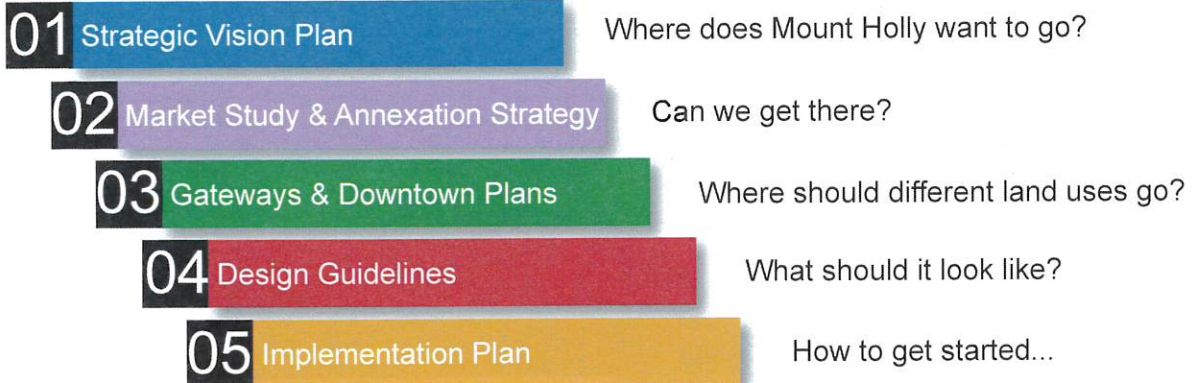
The City Planning Staff and City Council provided feedback to the consultants on the resulting draft Implementation Plan. Based on this feedback, the consultants refined the draft Implementation Plan.

On February, 25 2008, the draft Implementation Plan was presented to City Council at an open-to-public worksession where feedback from the participants was solicited. The Implementation Plan was further reviewed for comment during City Council's yearly budget retreat.

Based on the information received from the Staff and City Council, the consultants compiled a final draft Implementation Plan document for review and consideration by City Council.

Therequiredlegalnoticewasgivenofapublichearing, which took place on April 14, 2008. City Council adopted the Implementation Plan on May 12, 2008.

Mount Holly Community Planning 2006-2008:



Mount Holly Community Planning 2006-2008, a collaborative effort of City Planning Staff, a Citizen Advisory Team, the public in Mount Holly, and consultants from the Charlotte Community Design Studio, the UNC Charlotte Urban Institute, and Warren and Associates.

MEMO TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Greg Beal, Planning & Development Director

SUBJECT: Discussion of Sign Ordinance

DATE: January 31, 2014

This memo serves to encourage further discussion on the current Sign Ordinance and possible incorporations of new text amendments, as well as discussion on a community message board sign for the City. This is my 13th year working for the City of Mount Holly. I can tell you that I have seen my share of difficult hearings on rezonings, variance requests, appeals, etc. but perhaps the most challenging task that I have ever experienced involves amendments to the Sign Ordinance. I hope this information that I provide you is helpful. Staff will work diligently to incorporate any changes that Council suggests, but staff must have direction on what changes we should make as the first step.

Background-The 1996 Sign Ordinance

The Old Mount Holly Sign Ordinance was adopted in 1996, and I am sure that there was one prior to the 1996 Zoning Ordinance, which was new at that time. The 1996 Sign Ordinance served the City well until 2009, when a newer version of the Sign Ordinance was adopted. Here are some highlights of the 1996 Sign Ordinance:

- Temporary signs (i.e. banners) were not allowed back then; although the language was vague on how to regulate them because temporary signs were not defined and banners were not mentioned by name. My interpretation is that a banner is not a permanent sign; banners are temporary and therefore were not allowed. However, this ordinance was hardly enforced because of the lack of City staff to handle these matters.
- I called the 1996 Ordinance the, "***If, And or But*** Sign Ordinance," because there were so many exceptions. For instance, a business was allowed 2 sq ft per linear foot of front of building wall, BUT in no case shall the sign exceed 90 sq ft.
- The 1996 Ordinance did not allow for A-frame or sandwich board signs (think downtown sidewalk signs), projecting signs or hanging arm signs.
- The 1996 Ordinance banned the use of off-premise advertising signs, which was a good thing in limiting signs to the business property, and not allowing multiple signs up and down the streets of Mount Holly.
- In 2006, the Mayor and City Council at that time tasked the Planning Commission and staff to draft a new Ordinance to allow some flexibility. 6 months were spent on the drafting of this Ordinance, but no action was taken by Council at that time.

2009 Sign Ordinance

- In 2009, staff and the Planning Commission were asked by Council to dust off the proposed 2006 Sign Ordinance and also address pole and portable signs throughout town, similar to what Belmont did in banning those types of signs.

- The 2009 Sign Ordinance addressed banners as well, limiting them to grand openings of businesses and civic events for a period not to exceed 15 days.
- The 2009 Ordinance also allowed for A-frame signs on the sidewalk, as long as there were 5-feet of clearance. This Sign Ordinance also allowed hanging arm signs, and projecting signs that did not have to rest flat against a building wall like in years past, but could project out 3 feet to make the business more recognizable.
- Based on case law, Council chose to amortize or liquidate all portable and pole signs from the city limits and ETJ of Mount Holly. All businesses were given 3 years to comply, ending on August 10, 2012.
- This Sign Ordinance was adopted on August 10, 2009 by City Council.

2012 Sign Ordinance Amendments

- Given the fact that less than 10 businesses had complied with the removal of their respective pole and/or portable signs in the 3-year amortization period and given the economic recession, Council chose to extend the amortization period until December 31, 2013, to give businesses more time to comply with the removal of any and all portable and pole signs.
- On November 11, 2012, a detailed prohibition of banner signs, including flying banner on flexible poles, was added as an amendment. Also, at the City Attorney's recommendation, Council adopted an amendment, which allowed the changing of copy of a nonconforming sign. Changing the copy was not deemed a structural alteration, and thus did not require a permit.

2013 Sign Ordinance Amendments

- Staff was approached by two businesses, wishing to address two separate issues relating to sign regulations. First, McDonald's asked the City to allow for one professionally-made banner on the business property, and they removed the box truck, which had 3 banners attached to it. Our Ordinance did not and does not address vehicular signs, which made this difficult to enforce.
- Secondly, Jim Plyler of Piedmont Properties (Creekside Shopping Center) had asked that the City allow for a 12-foot high, 100 sq foot, monument sign for shopping centers over 25,000 sq ft in the B-3 zoning district. This would only affect Springs Crossing Shopping Center and Creekside. Currently, all multitenant signs must be 8 feet in height max with a maximum square footage of 64 sq ft.
- The Planning Commission made a unanimous recommendation that the two aforementioned text amendments be adopted.
- Council held the public hearing, but took no action on the matter on November 25, 2013.

Considerations

- Jonathan Wilson, City Planner, compiled a thorough list of businesses that have complied with the amortization by removing their pole or portable signs. Please refer to the attached document. As one can see, over 30 businesses have complied with the Ordinance, mandating that all pole and portable signs be removed.

- There are several other businesses that have partially complied and are awaiting a contractor to remove the pole, where their sign once stood.
- Many other businesses, such as those located along the Hwy 273 corridor, are willing to comply, but these businesses want to make sure that the now-delayed, Hwy 273 widening project does not affect their new signs before spending thousands of dollars.
- Some of the other businesses, which have pole signs and have not complied, are under new, recent ownership, and they have indicated that they will comply once direction to do so is given.
- We virtually have heard no complaints against this mandate; no business appealed this decision to remove their respective sign. The closest thing to a complaint was from Mark Perrigo of Perrigo Heating and Air, who stated that he would have to wait and see what other businesses did before lowering his sign; his business sign is now in compliance.
- Jim Plyler contacted me last week stating that he is fearful of rising costs associated with removing his pole sign and constructing a new one, and respectfully asks Council to consider allowing the text amendment for more square footage for shopping centers, due to multiple tenants.
- We are now receiving complaints from businesses that have spent thousands of dollars on complying with the amortization of pole and portable signs. These business owners have stated that they willingly complied with the Sign Ordinance and other should have to as well.

Other Considerations

- Planning staff is hardly any complaints on the current Sign Ordinance. Downtown business owners state that banners may not be seen by persons driving down Main Street. A-frame signs and the allowance of projecting signs from the building are much better for them according to recent conversations. Does the City want banners hanging off historic buildings through downtown, or are they better off being displayed in the storefront window, which is currently allowed?
- Our sign regulations are very consistent, and even less-restrictive, than Belmont, Gastonia, Huntersville, Cornelius and Davidson. During the Strategic Vision Process, some of these towns, particularly Davidson, Cornelius and Huntersville, were identified as models, due to successful economic growth. Mount Holly certainly does not have to follow similar regulations though.
- I think the goal of the Sign Ordinance is to encourage business growth and limit over-regulation. However, a bar has to be set. Does the City want to set the bar high to encourage quality economic growth, or set the bar lower, which may encourage unsightly signage?
- One main praise that I have received from business owners is a result of the initiative that the Mayor and Council took to introduce wayfinding signs to help guide folks into our Central Business District and places of interests. We are one of the only cities in the entire region that has wayfinding signs. Ten more wayfinding signs near downtown are in the planning process for this year.

- One request that I have received from business owners is a community message board sign and a downtown directory sign. Perhaps a good location would be at the intersection of Highland and South Main near Family Video?
- Bessemer City recently installed an electronic community message board sign in their downtown (see below). Josh Ross, Economic Development Officer for Bessemer City stated that officials from several other cities have visited their sign for study. The cost of Bessemer's sign was less than \$25,000. Gaston County only has two of these types of signs, one at the Gastonia Convention Center and the other in Bessemer City.
- A Downtown Directory Sign can also be incorporated. Businesses could pay a nominal fee to have their name on the sign; advertising space can also be sold on the community message board sign.

I hope this information will help facilitate some discussion on matters relating to the Sign Ordinance, and possible solutions. I look forward to answering any questions that you may have. Take care.



Properties that have complied with the current Pole Sign Requirements:

- 1.)** Diamler Trucks, 1800 North Main Street
(New Sign)



- 2.)** End Time Massage Tabernacle, 1116 West Charlotte Avenue
(Sign was removed from property and not replaced)

- 3.)** Collectible n' Such, West Charlotte Avenue
(Sign was removed from property and not replaced)

- 4.)** 3-Way Auto, 902 West Charlotte Avenue
(Prior Sign)



- 5.)** Sake Express, 101 South Hawthorne Street
(Portable Sign removed from property)



6.) Mt. Holly Lao Market, 603 East Charlotte Avenue
 (Replaced with Wall Sign) (Current Sign)



7.) Mt. Holly Monument, 701 East Charlotte Avenue
 (Lowered Sign) (Current Sign)



8.) Formally PC's BBQ, 140 East Central Avenue
 (Portable Sign Removed and not Replaced)

9.) Stroupe Electric, 138 East Central Avenue
 (Lowered Sign) (Current Sign)



10.) Formally Techni Serv, 128 East Central Avenue
 (Sign Removed and Not Replaced)

11.) City Café, 128 South Main Street
 (Removed from property) (Current Wall Sign)



12.) Stowe Insurance, 130 South Main Street
(Pole Sign Removed from Property) (Current Sign)



13.) BB&T, 150 South Main Street
(Pole Sign Removed) (Current Sign)



14.) Vasileio's, 200 South Main Street
(Current Sign)



15.) Park Sterling Bank, 233 South Main Street
(Current Sign)



16.) Community One Bank, 104 Tuckaseege Road
(Pole Sign) (Conforming Pole Sign)



17.) ABC Store, 2100 Spring Street
(Pole Sign Removed) (Current Wall Signs)



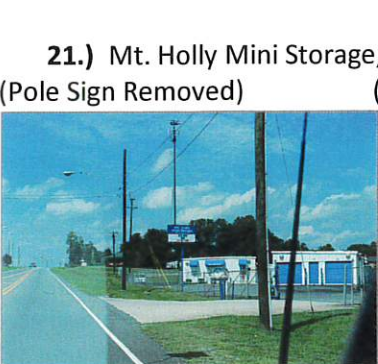
18.) The Pantry, 100 Rankin Avenue
(Pole Sign Removed and not Replaced)



19.) Mr. D's Pizza, 104 Rankin Avenue
(Removed Portable Sign from Property)



20.) Brightstar, 107 Bright Star Lane
(Pole Sign in compliance with "Landmark Sign")



21.) Mt. Holly Mini Storage, 540 Highland Street
(Pole Sign Removed) (Current Wall Sign)



22.) Dotson's, Beatty Drive
(Removed Pole Sign from Property)



23.) R & M Auto, 401 Beatty Drive
(Current Sign)



24.) Citgo Gas Station, 200 Beatty Drive
(Current Sign)



25.) Formally Texaco Gas Station, 210 Beatty Drive



26.) Holiday Inn, 250 Beatty Drive
(Current Sign)



27.) O'Reilly Auto, 421 Beatty Drive
(Removed Pole Sign from Property)(New Monument Sign)



28.) York Heating, 423 Beatty Drive
(Removed Pole Sign from Property) (Current Sign)



29.) Gail's Beauty Gallery, 922 West Charlotte Avenue
(Sign was removed from property and not replaced)



- 30.)** Box Express, 902 Belmont Mt. Holly Road
(Sign removed from property and not replaced)



- 31.)** Citgo on Tuckaseege, 700 Tuckaseege Road

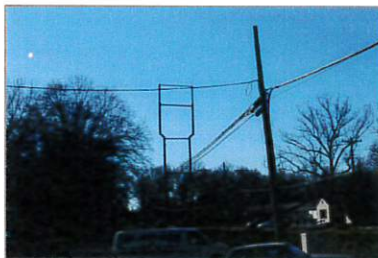


Properties that are in Partial Compliance with Pole Sign Requirements:

- 1.)** Formally Blacks Blue Water Seafood, 1118 South Main Street (Portable Sign Removed, Pole Sign Still In Place)



- 2.)** Long Johns Cycles, 608 Belmont Mt. Holly Road (Signs Removed but Pole Still in Place)



- 3.) Libs Beauty, 516 Belmont Mt. Holly Road (Sign Removed but Pole Still in Place)



- 4.) Formally Mt. Holly Body Shop, 306 Belmont Mt. Holly Road (Signs Removed but Pole Still in Place)



- 5.) Lee's Quick Stop, 303 North Main Street (Sign Removed but Pole Still in Place)



- 6.) Wash n' Dry, 106 Woodlawn Avenue (Sign Removed but Pole Still in Place)



Properties that are not in Compliance with current Pole Sign Requirements:

- 1.) Morningside Missionary Church, N. Main Street
(Former Sign) (Current Sign)



- 2.) Circle A Food Stores (3 Pole Signs), 1301 North Main Street



- 3.) Wills Gas Station, 1002 West Charlotte Avenue



- 4.) Victory Chevrolet (3 Pole Signs), 801 West Charlotte Avenue



5.) Creekside Center, 715 West Charlotte Avenue



6.) Chicken King, 130 West Charlotte Avenue



7.) Hawkins Group, 113 East Central Avenue



8.) Mt. Holly Eye Clinic, 612 South Main Street



9.) Family Video, 613 South Main Street



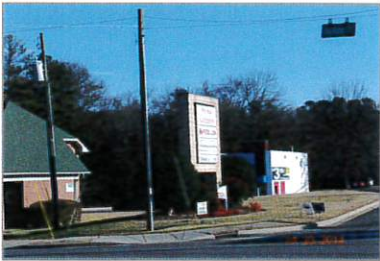
10.) Rite Aid, (2 Pole Signs) 617 South Main Street



11.) McDonalds, 704 South Main Street



12.) Springs Crossing, 609 Highland Street



13.) Nancy Self (Portable Sign), 312 Beatty Drive



14.) Browns Auto Sales, 298 Beatty Drive



15.) Shooters Express, 2 Caldwell Drive



16.) Brookshire Auto, 1128 South Main Street



17.)Allstate, 1127 South Main Street



18.)Family Auto Sales, 1202 South Main Street



19.)Wimco Gas, 1204 South Main Street



20.)State Farm, 305 Belmont Mt. Holly Road



21.)Lyons Automotive, 201 North Main Street



22.)Country Square Barber Shop, 1131 West Charlotte Avenue



23.)Billy's BBQ, 1127 West Charlotte Avenue



24.)Revival Tabernacle, 826 West Charlotte Avenue



25.)NU 2 U Consignment, 703 Belmont Mt. Holly Road



26.)Catawba Heights Baptist Church, 311 Belmont Mt. Holly Road



27.)Anna Bell's Florist, 601 Belmont Mt. Holly Road



28.)Unique Design, 900 Belmont Mt. Holly Road



<u>Breakdown of Pole and Portable Sign Compliance with Sign Ordinance</u> <u>(January 2014)</u>		
In Compliance	Partial Compliance	Not In Compliance
31	6	28

Article IX **Signs**

Section 9.1 **Purpose and Intent**

The purpose of this section is to provide sign regulations for the City of Mount Holly in order to:

- A. Protect the public welfare and city property values by preserving the aesthetic and environmental qualities of the City.
- B. Promote safety by eliminating traffic hazards or hazards due to collapse, decay, or abandonment of signs.
- C. Maintain the economic viability of businesses in our community through the availability of appropriate signage.
- D. Promote the efficient transfer of public and commercial information through sign management.

Section 9.2 **Sign Permitting Process**

Except as otherwise provided in this Ordinance, it shall be unlawful for any person to erect, construct, enlarge, move or replace any sign or cause the same to be done, without first having obtained a sign permit for such sign from the Zoning Administrator as required by this Ordinance. A fee, in accordance with a fee schedule adopted by City Council, shall be charged for each sign permit issued. The following information will be required as part of the sign permit application:

- A. A detailed description of any new sign for which a permit is requested. This will include, but not necessarily limited to, a detailed drawing of the sign showing size, height and site location relative to property lines and street right-of-way(s). (Professional drawings are not necessary).
- B. When, for new construction, a Site Plan is submitted for zoning permit approval, an appropriate sign plan for new construction shall be included. By so doing, and all other considerations being met, approval of such Site Plan shall constitute approval for the proposed signage.
- C. Existing signs must meet the Article requirements if, for any reason, the sign is to be structurally altered. However, changing or

replacing the copy only, i.e., names, addresses, phone numbers, logos, or other information, on an existing sign, whether such sign shall be conforming or non-conforming, shall not be deemed to be a structural alteration, and therefore will not require a permit.

- D. It shall be noted that the City Council of the City of Mount Holly adopted a three year amortization, requiring the removal of any and all portable signs and pole signs within the zoning jurisdiction of the City of Mount Holly as listed in Section 9.13, Prohibited Signs, J and M, respectively. The amortization period for portable and pole signs was set to expire on August 10, 2012, but shall be extended until December 31, 2013. Any portable and pole signs remaining on any property within the zoning jurisdiction of the City of Mount Holly after December 31, 2013, shall be deemed in violation of this ordinance. No new permits shall be issued for any portable and pole sign as they are considered non-conforming signs.

Section 9.3 **Denial of Permit**

If an application for a sign permit is denied by the Zoning Administrator or designee, a letter stating the reasons for the denial and the relevant Code Section number relating to the denial shall be sent by first-class mail to the applicant.

Section 9.4 **Sign Setbacks**

All signs shall be set a minimum of 5 feet from the right-of-way of a public or private street. At intersections, no sign shall be in the sight triangle as defined by this ordinance (see Section 3.15).

Section 9.5 **Removal and Disposal of Signs in Right-of-way**

The Zoning Administrator or designee may remove and destroy or otherwise dispose of any sign placed on public property or within any right-of-way of any public or private street. Political signs may be located within the right-of-way so long as said signs conform to the specifications in Section 9.11.

Section 9.6 **Sign Illumination**

- A. External illumination shall be directed solely at the sign.
- B. The light source shall not cause glare hazards to pedestrians, motorists, or adjacent properties
- C. Light source shall not be mounted on any part of the sign.

- D. Internal illumination shall be permitted.
- E. All lighting shall meet all applicable electrical codes.

A commercial sign within 100 linear feet of a pre-existing residential structure shall not be illuminated between the hours of 12:00 midnight and 6:00 a.m. A residence shall be deemed "pre-existing" for purposes of this Section if it has a valid Zoning permit in effect for construction of said structure or if construction of said structure was complete on or prior to the effective date of this provision.

Section 9.7 **Maintenance and Upkeep of Signs**

All signs shall be designed, constructed and maintained in accordance with the following standards:

1. All signs shall comply with applicable provisions of the state building code at all times.
2. Except where specifically exempted by this article, all signs, including the supports, frames and embellishments thereto, shall not be located within any public right-of-way, nor shall any sign be attached, affixed or painted on any utility pole, tree, rock or other natural object.
3. Except for flags and regulated temporary signs conforming in all respects with the requirements of this division, all signs shall be constructed of wood, metal, durable plastic or other similar materials and shall be permanently attached to the ground, a building or another structure by direct attachment to a rigid wall, frame or structure.
4. All signs shall be maintained in good structural condition, in compliance with all building and electrical codes and in conformance with the code at all times.
5. All signs shall be maintained in good working condition so as to present a neat and orderly appearance. The Zoning Official may give written notice to remove or repair, within thirty (30) days, any sign which show gross neglect or which becomes dilapidated. Failure to comply shall be a violation of this article.
6. The Zoning Administrator shall possess the authority to order the painting, repair, alteration or removal of a sign which constitutes a hazard to the health, safety or public welfare by reason of inadequate maintenance, dilapidation, or obsolescence. Notice to the owner shall be by personal service or registered mail, return receipt requested. Upon notification, the owner shall have thirty (30) days to complete repairs. If the

owner fails to complete repairs within appropriate time frames, then the City of Mount Holly shall have all remedies as available in this article.

7. The immediate premises around a sign shall be kept free from debris. However, no person may damage, destroy, or remove any trees, shrubs or other vegetation located within the right-of-way of any public or private street or road for the purpose of increasing or enhancing the visibility of any sign, unless specifically approved by the City Manager.

Section 9.8 **Removal of Sign upon Termination of Business**

A non-conforming sign, including its supporting structure or brackets, shall be removed by the owner or lessee of the premises upon which the sign is located when the business which it advertises is no longer on the premises. Such sign, if not removed within ninety (90) days from the termination of occupancy by such business, shall be in violation of this chapter, and shall be removed at the owner's expense.

Section 9.9 **Landmark Signs**

When revised sign regulations were adopted on August 10, 2009, changes were made which caused many signs to be nonconforming and subject to a five (5) year amortization. Some of these nonconforming signs may have special significance to a section of the community or to the entire City of Mount Holly. Therefore, the Zoning Administrator may designate certain signs as "landmark signs" which will permit them to remain and not be subject to the five-year amortization.

1. Application. Any persons may apply for designation of an existing on-premises sign as a landmark sign. Such application shall be submitted to and on a form determined by the Zoning Administrator.
2. Criteria. The Zoning Administrator may designate an existing on-premises sign as a landmark sign if:
 1. The sign is an on-premises sign which meets at least three (3) of the following:
 - a. It was expressly designed for the business, institution, or other establishment at that location; or
 - b. It bears a national or local emblem, logo, or other graphic that is unique to the property or the establishment; or
 - c. It is a remnant of an advertising program that is no longer used by the parent company; or

- d. The sign exhibits unique or rare characteristics that enhance the streetscape or identity of a neighborhood; or
 - e. The sign contributes to the historical or cultural character of the streetscape or the community at large.
 2. The sign complies with the appropriate provisions of the North Carolina State Building and Electrical Codes.
3. Designation: The Zoning Administrator shall have the authority to approve or to disapprove the designation of landmark signs based upon the criteria stated above. At the time of the filing of a landmark sign designation application, the applicant must file all necessary information in order for the Zoning Administrator to determine if the sign meets the criteria. The Zoning Administrator has the authority to request whatever other information is necessary in order to make a decision. The burden of proof for meeting the criteria is upon the applicant. In approving or disapproving a landmark sign application, the Zoning Administrator shall state the reasons in writing. An appeal of the Zoning Administrator's decision to the Zoning Board of Adjustment must be properly filed within sixty (60) days of the date of the Zoning Administrator's decision as shown on the face of the decision.
 1. After a sign is designated as a landmark sign, it shall be maintained in its original condition, shape and size, except for minor changes required for structural enhancements or changes required to comply with minimum Electrical or Building Codes, or to remove portions from a public right-of-way. Where original materials are unavailable, substitute materials which are as near as possible for the original material may be used.
 2. Once designated as a landmark sign, it shall be considered to be in compliance with any zoning regulation and will be exempt from any amortization provisions of Section 9.20. If the sign is moved on the premises, it shall be subject to the location standards of this Ordinance. The Zoning Administrator will then issue a certificate to the applicant stating that the sign has been duly designated as a landmark sign.

Section 9.10 **Permanent Signs Not Requiring a Permit**

Signs listed in this Section are exempt from the permit requirements of Section 9.2 and may be erected in any zoning district provided they comply with the conditions described herein.

- A. Address and Name Signs. Signs or plates on residential structures giving the name and/or address of the occupant.
- B. Memorial Signs. A sign, such as a plaque or grave marker, which is non-commercial in nature.
- C. Directory Signs. On premise signs directing traffic or identifying buildings within the premises that bear no advertising matter. Includes entrance/exit types of signage.
- D. Flags. Flags bearing the official design of a government, educational institution church, fraternal organization and like shall be permitted. An establishment may have three (3) flags depicting these official designs. Each builder within a subdivision may be permitted three (3) flags per sales office.
- E. Decorative/Ornamental flags shall not exceed 15 square feet. An establishment shall be permitted one (1) decorative/ornamental flag per location, which may include a seasonal flag or corporate logo flags (that include the company name, insignia or symbol). Such flag shall not be taller than ten (12) feet and shall be located at least five (5) feet from the public right-of-way. Flags shall not be intended for commercial promotion or as an advertising device.
- F. Governmental Signs. Signs of duly constituted governing bodies providing regulation and notice.
- G. Window Signs. On premise signs located inside an enclosed building and visible through a window or door.
- H. Historical plaques. Historical signs mounted in accordance with the United States Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
- I. Miscellaneous Exemptions. Such as handicapped parking space signs; with the operation of equipment or other functional elements such as menu boards, automatic teller machines, gas pumps, vending machines, scoreboards, license plates and similar incidental signs; signs visible only from the premises, markers which are non-commercial in nature.

Section 9.11 **Permanent Signs Not Requiring a Fee**

Signs listed in this Section must follow the permit requirements of Section 9.2 and may be erected in any zoning district provided they comply with the conditions described within this article.

- A. Church Signs. Church, non-profit and other non-commercial signage providing directions or organizational messages. Such signs shall not include identification signs.
- B. Permanent municipal, school, recreational and civic club sponsored signs, schedule of events, rules and regulations, signs. Such signs shall not include identification signs.

Section 9.12 Temporary Signs Not Requiring a Permit

Signs listed in this Section are exempt from the permit requirements of Section 9.2 and may be erected in any zoning district provided they comply with the conditions described herein.

1. Campaign and Election Signs provided that
 - a. Each sign shall not exceed sixteen (16) square feet in area.
 - b. All such signs may be erected no sooner forty-five (45) days prior to the election for which they were made.
 - c. All such signs shall be removed within five (5) days after the election for which they were made.
 - d. The property owner upon whose land the sign is placed shall give express permission for the placement of said signs and will be held responsible for violations.
 - e. Political signs may be located in the right-of-way so long as they are at least five (5) feet from the road's edge. However, political signs located within the right-of-way may not be placed within any site triangle nor exceed four (4) square feet in area.
2. Real estate signs advertising a specific property for sale, lease, or rent shall be located as follows:
 - a. One sign per street frontage advertising real estate ("For Sale", "For Rent", "For Lease" or "For Development") not greater than sixteen (16) square feet in area in a Residential District and thirty-two (32) square feet in area in a nonresidential districts may be located on property being advertised so long as said sign is located behind the street right-of-way line. If the property so advertised lies on a corner lot or double frontage lot, then a second sign may be oriented along the second street so long as the two signs are at least one hundred (100) feet apart as measured by the shortest straight line.

- b. In addition to the on-site real estate sign(s), a maximum of three (3) directional signs, each not exceeding four (4) square feet in area, shall be permitted off the subject premises. Such signs must be placed outside of all existing right-of-ways. The message of said signs shall be limited to the name of the property or development being advertised, an address, a telephone number, a directional arrow, mileage to the subject property, and the terms "Lot/Home For Sale", "For Lease", "For Development", etc.
 - c. No more than three (3) temporary directional signs advertising a specific planned commercial or mixed-use development, subdivision, multi-family development, etc. may also be permitted off site. Each such sign may have a maximum area of four (4) square feet and shall be placed out of all existing right-of-ways.
 - d. All such temporary signs shall be removed within seven (7) days after the property has been sold, rented, leased, etc.
 - e. No sign under this subsection shall be lighted.
3. Construction signs provided that:
- a. Signs in conjunction with any residential use shall not exceed ten (10) square feet each.
 - b. Signs in conjunction with all other uses shall have a maximum area of thirty-two (32) square feet each.
 - c. Only one (1) such sign oriented per street front per premises shall be erected. If lot is classified as having frontage on two streets, two signs shall be permitted provided that there is at least one hundred (100) feet minimum separation.
 - d. Such signs shall not be illuminated.
 - e. Such signs shall only appear at the construction site.
 - f. Such signs shall be removed within seven (7) days after issuance of the final Certificate of Occupancy of a single tenant building or the first Certificate of Occupancy of a multi-tenant structure.
4. Displays of decorations with no commercial message as part of a holiday or civic event so long as any such displays are not located within a street right-of-way unless the City of Mount Holly or NCDOT first grants permission for such. Such holiday displays are permitted only for a reasonable amount of time, as determined by the Zoning Administrator.

These signs may also be applied to individual properties within residential districts provided that such sign does not exceed four (4) square feet in area.

5. Yard Sale Signs. Such signs shall be removed within twenty-four hours after the yard sale has ended. Such sign shall not be greater than four (4) square feet in area, and must be located on a self-supporting stake. All such signs shall be located out of the street right-of-way and shall not be posted on utility poles, street signs, fire hydrants, etc.
6. On-premises bulletin boards and signs that contain information of a non-commercial nature. Such bulletin boards and signs may have a maximum area of thirty two (32) square feet.
7. Special event signs and banners for religious, charitable, civic, fraternal or similar non-profit or nonprofit organizations provided that:
 - a. Banners are permitted for a period not to exceed fifteen (15) days.
 - b. No such sign shall exceed thirty-two (32) square feet.
 - c. No such sign shall be illuminated.
 - d. All such signs shall be located off the street right-of-way, unless otherwise granted permission for such location by the City of Mount Holly or NCDOT. In no case may any such sign impede the view or travel of any motorists or pedestrians or be attached to any structure within the right-of-way (government signs, telephone poles, etc.)
 - e. Maximum of one on-premises sign.
8. On-premise grand opening signs for businesses provided that:
 - a. Sign is permitted for a period not to exceed fifteen (15) days.
 - b. No such sign shall exceed thirty-two (32) square feet.
 - c. No such sign shall be illuminated.
 - d. All such signs shall be located off the street right-of-way, unless otherwise granted permission for such location by the City of Mount Holly or NCDOT. In no case may any such sign impede the view or travel of any motorists or pedestrians or be attached to any structure within the right-of-way (government signs, telephone poles, etc.)

Section 9.13 Prohibited Signs

- A. Off-Premise Advertising Sign (Billboard). Any sign which is not located on the premises that it identifies or advertises. Not to be confused with an off-premise directional sign which is defined in Section 3.26.2.
- B. Flashing Signs. Any sign, includes scrolling message board signs, which displays intermittent or flashing illumination of lights, except a sign indicating time and/or temperature with changes alternating.
- C. Simulated Traffic or Public Safety Signs. Signs which contain lights, words, and other devices not erected by a public authority which may be erroneously construed as government signs, traffic signals, or emergency warning signs. An example of this is a sign, which contains a picture of a traffic sign plus the word "Stop", "Yield", etc.
- D. Obsolete or Abandoned Signs. Non-conforming Signs which advertise or pertain to a business, product, service, commodity, event, activity or purpose which either no longer exists, has been discontinued or has not been in use for one hundred eighty days or more shall be deemed to be an abandoned sign and shall be removed upon notice by the Zoning Administrator. This does not include removal of non-conforming signs after the termination of a business, as described in Section 9.8 herein.
- E. Right-of way Infringement. Signs within or over any public road right-of-way or signs placed on bridges, utility poles, street signs, fire hydrants, parking meter poles, etc., unless otherwise approved by the City of Mount Holly or NCDOT.
- F. Motorist Safety. Any sign which the Zoning Administrator determines obstructs the view of bicyclists or motorists using any street, approach to any street intersections, or which interferes with the effectiveness of or obscures any traffic sign, device, or signal shall be prohibited.
- G. Ingress/Egress. Any sign which interferes with free passage of any fire escape, window, downspout, stairway, ladder, door or opening intended as a means of ingress or egress or providing light or air. This also includes a-frame, sandwich board or easel signs that do not provide more than five (5) feet of clearance on any sidewalk or public walkway.
- H. Obscenity. Signs which contain obscene words or words and pictures which offend the public.
- I. Home Occupation. Any sign in a residential zone that promotes a home occupation.

- J. Portable Signs. Any sign that is intended to be portable or any sign that was initially constructed and designed to be placed on and/or transported on wheels or legs regardless if said sign face is removed from its base and placed on or in the ground so as to otherwise classify said sign as a "free- standing" sign as herein defined. It shall be noted that the property owner has until December 31, 2013, to remove any and all portable signs from said property as classified herein. Upon adoption of this Ordinance the Zoning Administrator shall not issue any permits for portable signs.
- K. Inflatable signs and balloons. Any sign that is inflatable and is intended for advertisement.
- L. Any sign located in such a way as to intentionally deny an adjoining property owner visual access to an existing sign.
- M. Pole Signs. Any sign that is attached to the ground by a pole constructed of any material. It shall be noted that the property owner has until December 31, 2013, to remove any and all pole signs from said property as classified herein. Upon adoption of this Ordinance the Zoning Administrator shall not issue any permits for pole signs.
- N. Banners. Any temporary sign made of cloth, vinyl, nylon, plastic or similar material used to display a commercial or civic message, or used for decorative purposes, including flying banners or wing banners attached to the ground by a flexible pole. Banners for special events may be utilized, so long as said banners conform to Section 9.12(7), as outlined in this Ordinance. Similarly, on-premise, grand-opening signs, including banners may be utilized, so long as said sign conforms to Section 9.12(8), as outlined in this Ordinance.

Section 9.14 **General Provisions for Signs**

- 1. The scale of the signs should be appropriate for the building on which they are placed.
- 2. Signs should not obscure architectural features and should be integrated with the design of the building.
- 3. Buildings should provide signage that is pedestrian-oriented.
- 4. All buildings may provide incidental wall signs such as tenant identification, historical markers or bulletin boards on any wall face provided that they do not exceed six (6) square feet in area.
- 5. Signs should reflect the proportional and dimensional relationships of the structure.

6. One Sandwich board, a-frame or easel sign for a business may be placed on sidewalks within the B-1 Downtown District provided that they maintain a clear path for pedestrians of five (5) feet and neither face shall exceed three (3) feet in width, four (4) feet in height and twelve (12) square feet in area.
7. Arm Signs may be utilized in lieu of monument signs provided that they do not exceed six (6) feet in height or eight (8) square feet in area.
8. Projecting signs may be utilized in lieu of wall signs, but not in addition to them, provided that they do not exceed ten (10) feet in height, are one square foot per linear foot in area and do not project more than three (3) feet from wall or extend beyond the parapet or eaves of a pitched roof.
9. Awning Signs may be utilized in lieu of wall signs, but may be combined with a projecting sign provided that they are sixteen (16) inches high by thirty-six (36) inches wide or less and have an eight (8) foot clearance.

Signage By District	
<u>Residential Districts</u> (R-A, R-20, R-12, R-10, R-8, R-D) Wall Sign 1 sq ft per linear foot of wall frontage AND/OR 32 sq ft monument sign; Max Height: 6 feet <u>Neighborhood Identifications</u> Maximum of 2 ground-mounted monument signs per neighborhood Max. Area: 32 sq ft Max. Height: 6 ft	<u>Civic Uses</u> (All Districts) <u>Ground-Mounted Monument Sign</u> Max Area: 32 sq ft Max Height: 6 ft <u>Wall Sign:</u> See District Regulations
	<u>Commercial Districts</u> (B-1, B-2, B-3, L-I and H-I) <u>Wall and Ground-Mounted Signs</u> 2 sq ft per linear foot of wall frontage AND/OR 32/sq. ft for ground-mounted with 6 ft max. height in B-1 and B-2 and 48 sq ft for ground-mounted with 8 ft max height in B-3, L-I and H-I
<u>Mixed-Use Districts</u> (MH-MUD) <u>Wall and Ground-Mounted Signs</u> 1 sq ft per linear ft of wall front up to 48 sq ft max AND/OR ground-mounted sign 32 sq ft with 6 ft in height.	<u>Office</u> (O-I) <u>Wall and Ground-Mounted Signs</u> 1 sq ft per linear ft of wall front AND/OR ground-mounted sign 32 sq ft with 6 ft in height
<u>Multi-Tenant Identification</u> (includes shopping centers, office complexes, etc.) <u>Ground-Mounted Monument Sign</u> Max. Area: 64 sq ft 1 per street frontage-no closer than 1000 ft Max Height: 8 ft No individual tenant ground-mounted signs	

Section 9.15 Residential District Signs

Residential districts contain developments that require signage. Such developments include, but are not limited to: Single Family Subdivisions, Multi-Family Developments, Nursing Homes, Mobile Home Parks, Churches, Day Care Centers, Schools, and Recreational Facilities. Allowable wall sign area shall not exceed one square foot per linear foot of the front of the building face. One (1) monument sign may be utilized providing it does not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet. Neighborhoods may be allowed two monument signs provided that each does not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in area or six (6) feet in height.

Section 9.16 Office / Institutional (O-I) Signs

Allowable sign area shall not exceed one (1) square foot per linear foot of the front of the building for signage on front of building face. One (1) monument sign may be utilized providing it does not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet and shall not exceed six (6) feet in height. In the event the building has walls facing a side street or rear street, then those areas are allowed one-half (1/2) square foot per each linear foot of building abutting said side or rear street.

Section 9.17 Downtown (B-1) Signs

Allowable wall sign area on the front of a business shall not exceed two square feet per linear foot of the building facing a public street. If a monument sign is utilized, then said monument sign shall not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet and shall not exceed six (6) feet in height. Projecting Signs may be utilized provided that there is no room for a monument sign. Projecting signs cannot be combined with a wall sign.

Section 9.18 Neighborhood (B-2) Signs

Allowable wall sign area on the front of a business shall not exceed two square feet per linear foot of the building facing a public street. If a monument sign is utilized, then said monument sign shall not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet and shall not exceed six (6) feet in height. In the event the building has walls facing a side street or rear street, then those areas are allowed one (1) square foot per each linear foot of building abutting said side or rear street.

Section 9.19 General Business (B-3) Signs

- A. Allowable sign area on the front of building shall not exceed two (2) square feet per linear foot of building facing a public street. If a monument sign is utilized, then said monument sign shall not exceed forty-eight (48) square feet or eight (8) feet in height. In the event the building has walls facing a side or rear street, then those areas are permitted to have one (1) square foot per linear foot of said building with public street facing.
- B. In the event of a shopping center; the monument sign shall not exceed sixty-four (64) square feet and eight (8) feet in height.

Section 9.20 Industrial (L-I) and (H-1) Signs

Allowable sign area on the front of building shall not exceed two (2) square feet per linear foot of building facing a public street. If a monument sign is utilized, then said monument sign shall not exceed forty-eight (48) square feet or eight (8) feet in height. In the event the building has walls facing a side or rear street, then those areas are permitted to have one (1) square foot per linear foot of said building with public street facing. In addition, required on premises directional signage is permitted, (i.e.; freight delivery entrance, etc.).

Section 9.21 MH-MUD Mount Holly Mixed Use District

Allowable sign area shall not exceed one (1) square foot per linear foot of the front of the building for signage on front of building up to forty-eight (48) square feet. One (1) monument sign may be utilized providing it does not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet and shall not exceed six (6) feet in height. In the event the building has walls facing a side street or rear street, then those areas are allowed one-half (1/2) square foot per each linear foot of building abutting said side or rear street. Illuminated signs shall only be allowed for businesses which are open for business later than 6:30 pm at last 4 days per week, Internal or external illumination is permitted.



Mount Holly Police Department

400 East Central Avenue • Mount Holly, NC • 28120 • (704) 827-4343

Donald R. Roper
Chief of Police

Memorandum

To: City Manager Danny Jackson

From: Chief Don Roper

Reference: Council Retreat Topic

Date: 01-31-14

I have been approached by local Law Enforcement leaders with a request to discuss the possibility of developing a partnership to provide E911 and emergency dispatch services for their Police Department. This discussion was preliminary, and the concept that was presented would require a good deal of research and due diligence.

I understand that the basic concept of this partnership has been discussed with the city administration of the other department, and a general discussion has occurred with some elected officials there.

Prior to moving forward with any further discussions or devoting any staff hours to the proposal, I would like to discuss the concept with members of our Council, and seek their input to determine if this is something they feel would be beneficial to Mount Holly.

I will be prepared to discuss what I see as several pros and cons of the proposal. I would also like to see what questions the Council would want to have addressed should this project move forward.

