

**MEMORANDUM**

DATE: July 23, 2002  
TO: The Board of Supervisors  
FROM: John T. P. Horne, Development Manager  
SUBJECT: Greenspace Land Acquisition Update

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The purpose of this Work Session is to discuss the overall objectives of the County's Greenspace Program in the CIP. The equivalent of one-penny on the tax rate, less the debt service for Mainland Farms has been approved by the Board for the acquisition of greenspace. These acquisition efforts continue the Board's previous policy to acquire environmentally threatened properties, certain properties with historical significance or property where development threatens to destroy a unique community characteristic.

The areas the Board previously identified as having the greatest need for conservation or preservation were Jamestown Road, John Tyler Highway, and Greensprings Road. Since then, additional parcels have been added but not evaluated according to these criteria. The Powhatan Creek Watershed Study also identified several parcels for acquisition.

Previous Greenspace Land Acquisition Recommendations

A greenspace matrix was developed in order to assist staff in evaluating and ranking an initial set of potential properties. Criteria include:

- Parcel status (if it was for sale or threatened by development)
- Significance of the site (are there natural, scenic, historic, or cultural qualities which make this site unique), community character issues (does it affect the fabric, character or heritage of a community)
- Other factors (such as multiple staff selection or alternative means of acquisition)

Based on this evaluation, an initial list was reduced to thirty-four parcels for consideration by the Board. Since then staff, the Board, Planning Commission and citizens have suggested additional parcels.

Current Status of Potential Greenspace Parcels

Of the previous top ten parcels, three have been protected, three have been temporarily resolved (property owners not interested in County acquisition) and one is pending owner consideration. With the successful resolution of Mainland Farm, Gajaski Indian Village, and Exxon, staff continues to work on the acquisition or protection of the remaining parcels. The time frame for acquiring some of these parcels is significant due to their complexity, location, and size. As a result, staff maintains a master list of sixty-six parcels for consideration.

Powhatan Creek Watershed Study Land Conservation Recommendations

With the completion of the Watershed Study, forty-seven parcels are recommended for some form of conservation. These parcels form an addition to the priority acquisition properties.

Additional Open Space Considerations

On June 25, 2002, the Board of Supervisors approved the Greenway Master Plan. Staff anticipates developing a separate list of priority acquisitions to satisfy the needs of this plan. In addition, staff will develop a list of properties to be protected due to timbering. The County recently acquired a scenic easement on one such property on Route 5.

Also note that the PDR program is separate from these open space acquisitions, and the Board will be receiving acquisition recommendations in the near future for that program.

Finally, the Chickahominy Riverfront Park purchase was partially funded from the Greenspace Fund.

Recommendation

Staff recommends continuation of the Greenspace Land Acquisition Program, based on the general objectives outlined above.

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John T. P. Horne

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GreenspLandAcquis.mem

Attachment