

City Council – Action Request Form

Date: November 12, 2019

To: Mayor, Mayor Pro Tempore, and Members of the City Council

From: Tasha Logan Ford, Assistant City Manager
William L. Royston, Recreation and Parks Director

Council Action Requested:

Resolution to Assist Piedmont Land Conservancy in Acquiring a Conservation Easement on Land at Crossnore School (North Ward)

Strategic Focus Area: Livable Neighborhoods

Strategic Objective: Expand Open Space and Recreational Facilities

Strategic Plan Action Item: No

Key Work Item: No



Summary of Information:

On October 14, 2019, an informational item was presented to the Finance Committee by Mr. Kevin Redding, Executive Director of the Piedmont Land Conservancy (PLC). The PLC’s Peace of Land Campaign is raising \$7.9 million for development rights that includes the need for a public trail and parking.

The Piedmont Land Conservancy (PLC) and the Crossnore School & Children’s Home are partnering to conserve 92 acres of their land to preserve it for the children of the Crossnore School & Children’s Home and the Winston-Salem Community. In addition to remaining an outdoor classroom for children, the PLC feels that the preserved land will provide a beautiful escape to anyone who comes for a peaceful visit in this uncommonly urban-centered project.

Committee Action:

Committee	Finance 11/12/19	Action	Forwarded without recommendation
For	Council Member Clark and Council Member Adams	Against	Council Member MacIntosh; Abstaining: Mayor Pro Tempore Burke

Remarks:

The PLC's Peace of Land Campaign looks to raise \$7.9 million to purchase the development rights, or conservation easement on Crossnore land. The conservation easement will allow for the construction of a 1.5 mile open walking trail that will be available for public use. The project also includes public parking to the newly preserved area as well. Fair-market value will be paid to Crossnore for the 92 acres of land that primarily consist of open fields, pastures, and creeks. In exchange for placing the property in a perpetual conservation easement, it will ensure that the property remains forever undeveloped. Crossnore will retain ownership while ceding development rights. PLC's purchase of the easement preserves the land for programmatic use by Crossnore and enables a new level of recreational engagement with the community. Funds received by Crossnore will enable them to monetize the fair value of the land and begin their own development efforts to serve more children as they address our state's growing foster care crisis.

The Piedmont Land Conservancy believes that this project provides additional recreational options for Arbor Acres to the north, the Boston Thurmond neighborhood to the east, West End Business District to the south, and Buena Vista to the west. To date, the PLC have \$4.1 million in financial commitments to the Peace of Land Campaign. Of that, Forsyth County has committed \$100,000; the City could contribute \$200,000, of which \$100,000 to be contributed from 2018 General Obligation Bond funds and the remaining \$100,000 to be contributed from Capital Project Reserves from Union Station. Staff anticipates the City will receive a future request for additional assistance related to the construction of the proposed pathway.

In addition to Forsyth County's support, \$4 million has been received from private, corporate, and foundational support. Notable donors include BB&T, Winston-Salem Foundation, John and Anna Hanes Foundation, Tom Davis Fund, Wells Fargo, and Bank of America. Kevin Redding, Executive Director of the Piedmont Land Conservancy, will be available to provide a presentation on this project.