File #: 15-21693, **Version:** 1

Land Acquisition for Tree Canopy Preservation Program

Action:

A. Approve the purchase of an approximately 9.481-acre parcel (parcel identification number 227-092-17) located at 3516 Lakeside Drive for a purchase price of $2,175,575, and

B. Authorize the City Manager to grant a conservation easement to the Catawba Lands Conservancy and execute any documents necessary to complete these transactions.

Staff Resource(s):
Alyson Craig, Planning, Design & Development
Tim Porter, Planning, Design & Development

Explanation

- The city was approached by the broker representing the owners of 3516 Lakeside Drive to determine interest in an acquisition for the Tree Canopy Preservation Program (TCPP).
- Staff assessed the property using the current TCPP conservation scoring model. The property scored high in comparison to previously TCPP-acquired and targeted properties with significant value related to property location, acres of contiguous tree canopy, overall ecosystem value, forest health, and overall conservation value.
- This property contains high quality mature hardwood and floodplain forest, supports a confluence of two tributary channels numerous, floodplain pools and north/northeast facing slopes. Protection of the site will benefit a diversity of resident and migratory wildlife and help to protect the water quality of the Four Mile Creek watershed.
- The property, located in Council District 7, is in general proximity to numerous development projects that submitted tree save payment-in-lieu fees.
- The city will donate a conservation easement to the Catawba Lands Conservancy to ensure stewardship of the tree canopy and monitoring of the property in perpetuity.
- Staff negotiated the purchase price with the property owners based on appraised value and the list price.
- On July 18, 2023, the Planning Committee reviewed the proposed land acquisition and had no comments.
- This transaction is consistent with the City-Owned Real Estate and Facilities Policy, adopted by City Council in June 2017.

Background

- In 2011, City Council adopted a goal of 50 percent tree canopy coverage by the year 2050. The Tree Canopy Preservation Program supports the goal through acquisition and protection of properties that are already forested or provide planting opportunities.
- The city's Unified Development Ordinance allows developers in some cases to pay into tree conservation funds administered by the city, in lieu of preserving trees on site. The city uses these funds for property acquisition to support long-term tree canopy conservation and related expenditures associated with ongoing forest management and property maintenance needs.
- TCPP has acquired and preserved 330 acres of land to date and protected approximately twice as much land than developers would have been required to under the on-site tree save option.

- TCPP supports tree canopy policy objectives outlined in City Council's 2040 Comprehensive Plan, adopted June 21, 2021, and Urban Forest Master Plan, adopted September 25, 2017.
- All acquisitions through the program are voluntary.

Fiscal Note
Funding: Neighborhood Development Grants Fund (tree conservation)

Attachment(s)
Map