

Myers Park Neighborhood Association
August 27, 2016

Statement Regarding Integrity of the Comprehensive Plan and the Potential Development of Park Land

The Myers Park Neighborhood Association supports and encourages the responsible redevelopment of under-utilized built-up property, and unused private property, when this is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and zoning. The Association understands the perils of urban sprawl, and the desirability of responsible infill.

However, the Myers Park Neighborhood Association, as a matter of public policy, opposes opportunistic changes to the Comprehensive Plan, and spot zoning.

- The Comprehensive Plan and zoning constitute a fiduciary relationship between the government and the citizens whereby citizens purchase property, pay taxes on that property for many years, and make improvements to their property with the expectation that the government will protect their property and investment.
- The Comprehensive Plan and zoning should be used to guide development on a long-term and large-scale basis. Changes to them should not be made on a parcel-wise or small-area incremental basis to the advantage of a few, and to the disadvantage of the football match results many impacted neighbors.

The Myers Park Neighborhood Association also opposes, as a matter of public policy, the sale and development of public open-space and recreational land. The Association particularly opposes the sale and development of the City Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Affairs office parcel.

- The parcel is designated as Open Space in the 2030 Comprehensive Plan; it is designated as park land by the city-owned on-line property mapping application; and it links two signature parks: Myers and Cascades. Such green park space is a precious and unrenovable city resource. It should be retained by the public for the benefit of current and future generations.
- In addition, foliage and parks are a primary noteworthy characteristic of Tallahassee, and are often cited as a key attribute in bringing people into our community. Destroying a part of our park system is short-sighted, and inconsistent with both our values and our continued attractiveness.
- The City Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Affairs office complex is an important part of the City legacy and serves vital public and neighborhood purposes. Furthermore, it is heavily used, and thus, under existing city policy, it cannot be considered as surplus, and therefore cannot be sold (City Commission Policy 136 - Real Property - 136.13).
- The Association understands a change of the above-mentioned city policy is being considered, in part to facilitate the sale of this parcel. Such an opportunistic sale of public park land is a violation of the public trust.