

**City Planning Commission Meeting
Tuesday, April 14, 2015**

PRELIMINARY STAFF REPORT

To: City Planning Commission

Prepared By: Nicholas Kindel

Date: March 24, 2015

Council District: C – Ramsey

Property Acquisition: 003/15

Consideration: Consideration of the acquisition of Elmwood Square 57, in the Fifth Municipal District, bounded by Seine Street, Idaho Street, Memorial Park Drive, and Indiana Street. (PD 12)

Applicant: City of New Orleans

Purpose: In accordance with Section 6-302 subsection 3 of the City Charter, “[n]o immovable property shall be acquired by the City without the approval of the City Planning Commission as to its use[.]”

**General Property
Description:**

The petitioned site is owned by the Orleans Parish School Board. The property is a vacant site, with vegetation of grass, shrubs, and trees. The total area of this site is approximately 165,000 square feet or 3.8 acres. This proposed property acquisition is part of a land swap with the Orleans Parish School Board where the City will acquire this site in exchange for Fox Playground adjacent to L.B. Landry High School.¹ The City proposes to use this property as a passive park.

Analysis:

The criteria for the evaluation are as follows:

1. **Consistency with the Master Plan and the Future Land Use Map:**

The Plan for the 21st Century

The property is currently vacant and is publicly accessible as open space, and the City proposes to essentially continue that use as a passive park. The proposed use as a park is addressed in Chapter 7 “Green Infrastructure: Parks, Open Space, and Recreation” in *The Plan for the 21st Century*, commonly known as the Master Plan. Goal 4 of Chapter 7 states that there should be “a park within walking

¹ This request, Property Disposition 004/15, is under consideration by the City Planning Commission at this April 14, 2015 meeting.

distance – approximately one-third mile – of every New Orleans resident.” The acquisition of this property would increase the available of park space in the City, and place a park that is within walking distance of more residents. As such, this proposal is consistent with Chapter 7 of *The Plan for the 21st Century*.

Future Land Use Map

Chapter 14 “Land Use Plan” of the Master Plan designates the future land use of the petitioned site as Residential Post-War Single-Family. The goal, range of uses, and development character for this designation are provided below:

RESIDENTIAL POST-WAR SINGLE-FAMILY

Goal: Preserve the existing character and scale of low density single-family residential in post-war (WWII) areas of the city and allow for compatible infill development.

Range of Uses: Single-family dwellings and supporting public recreational and community facilities allowed (e.g., schools and places of worship).

Development Character: New development will fit with the character and scale of surrounding neighborhoods where single- and two-family residential structures are typically set back away from the street on larger lots than in older, pre-war neighborhoods. Maximum density of 10 units/acre.

The City proposes to acquire this property for use as a passive park. Public recreational facilities are within the allowed range of uses in the Residential Post-War Single-Family future land use designation for the property. Therefore, the proposed land acquisition is **consistent with** the future land use designation in *The Plan for the 21st Century*.

2. **Appropriateness of current zoning for existing and proposed land uses:**

Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance

The petitioned site is located within an RS-2 Single-Family Residential District. The City is proposing to acquire the site from the Orleans Parish School Board for use as a passive park. Recreational uses, including public parks, are permitted uses in the RS-2 District.

Draft Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance

The City Council is currently considering a major revision to the zoning of the entire City, which will be referred to as the Draft Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance (Draft CZO). Currently the Draft CZO proposes this site to be in an S-RS Single-Family Residential District. Parks and Playgrounds are permitted uses

in the S-RS District; therefore, the proposed property acquisition is consistent with the Draft CZO.

3. **Impact of the proposed purchase, disposition, or lease on adjacent properties and surrounding area:**

The proposed property acquisition should have a continuing positive impact on the surrounding area. The property's current use is as passive open space. After the City acquires the property, it proposes to use it as a passive park.

4. **Impact of the proposed action on traffic and the City's transportation system:**

Since the proposed use of the site will essentially remain unchanged, the the proposed property acquisition should not result in any increase in traffic and will have little impact on the City's transportation system.

5. **Public purpose of the proposed action and potential impacts to public services and public safety:**

This land acquisition will result in the City acquiring this property for use as a passive park. Since residents will have access to this property, this property acquisition will serve a public purpose. This action will have positive impacts on public services and public safety.

6. **Advice of the City Planning Commission's Planning Advisory Committee:**

The property acquisition of this site and this property disposition of Fox Playground were discussed during the October 30, 2013 Planning Advisory Committee meeting. The departments in attendance did not have any comments on the proposed property acquisition, and the Committee unanimously passed a motion of no objection subject to further review by the City Planning Commission and the Division of Rear Estate and Records.

7. **Potential future public use of property:**

This property acquisition request is part of a proposed property swap with the Orleans Parish School Board. The potential future public use of this property is as a passive park. Future use of this property would be limited by the Single-Family Residential zoning. Permitted uses would include single-family dwellings, government offices, places of worship, agriculture uses, and parks and playgrounds.²

² Potential uses such as community centers, educational facilities, social clubs, and other uses would require conditional use approval.

8. **Compliance with the Capital Improvement Plan:**

The subject property is not part of, or in conflict with, any project approved in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). There is not any cost associated with the proposed property acquisition since it is part of a land swap with the Orleans Parish School Board for Fox Playground. Therefore, the proposed property acquisition is in compliance with the CIP.

9. **Street naming policy (for the naming of new streets):**

The applicant has not proposed the establishment of new streets or the renaming of any existing street rights-of-way within the City.

10. **Any other applicable CPC policies or special studies of the area:**

The staff is not aware of any other City Planning Commission policies or special studies relevant to this request.

Conclusion and Recommendation:

Based on the above criteria, the staff recommends **APPROVAL** of Property Acquisition 003/15.

Reasons for Recommendation:

1. This request is consistent with the property acquisition criteria for evaluation.
2. The proposed use will provide residents with additional access to open space in this proposed passive park.
3. The proposed use of the petitioned site is consistent with the City's Master Plan and the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance.



RS-2

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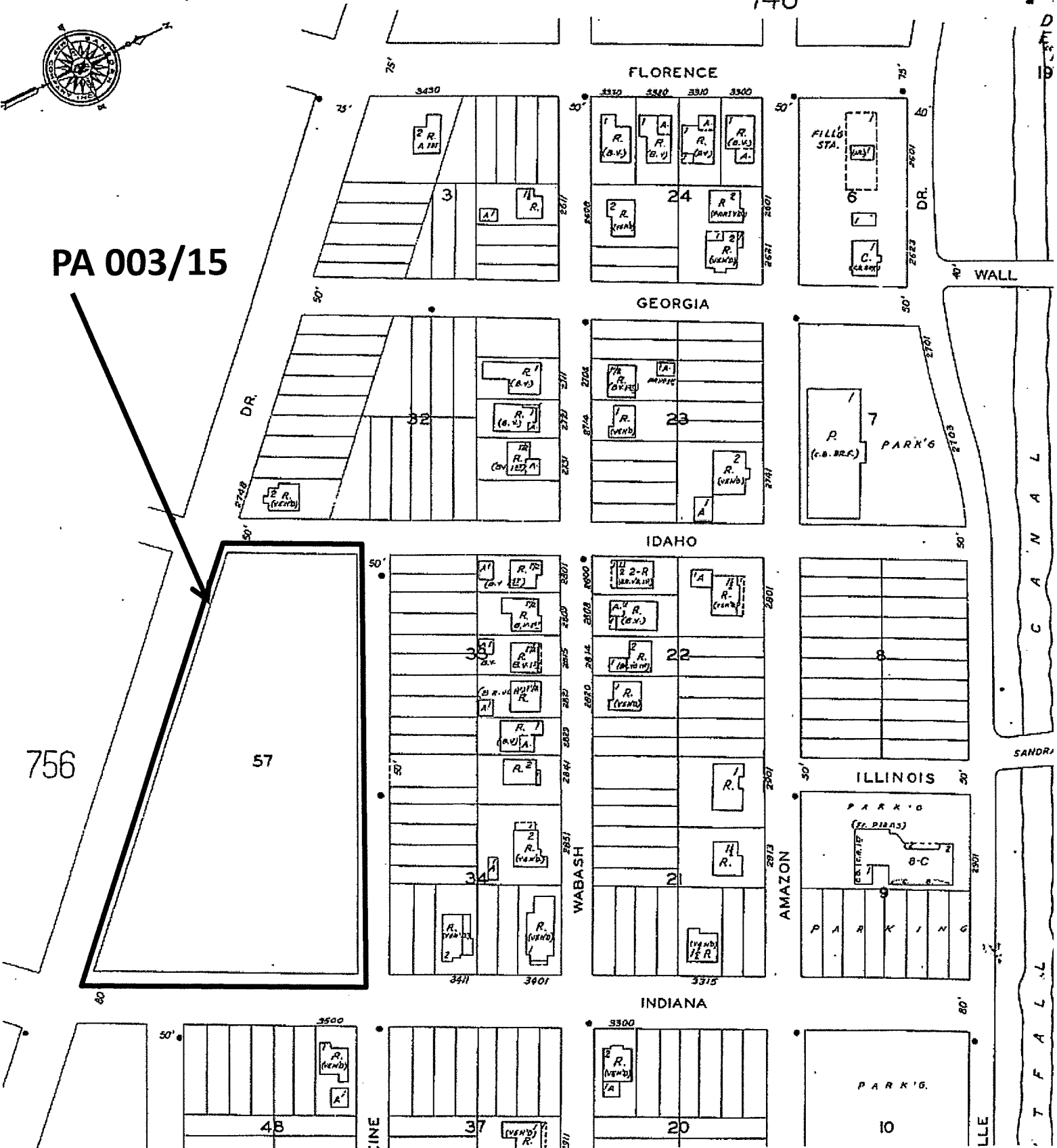
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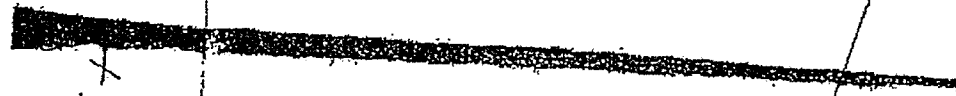
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57





Stat: 7' 2" 6x24
Indiana St.



57
Seine

615' 10" 24'

ELMWOOD SQ 57
5th M.D.

642' 10" 5th 24'

Memorial Park
and
Idaho
Vacant

Memorial Park Drive

177' 6" 2" 6x24'

Idaho St

Locate on holaassessor.com
as tax bill #513605204

