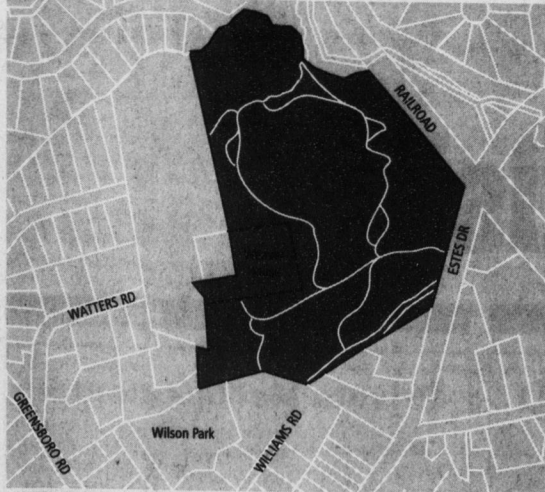


**ADAMS TRACT SITE PLAN**

The 27-acre plot of land known as the Adams Tract was assigned for purchase by the town of Carrboro in August.



SOURCE: COUNTY OF ORANGE ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION DEPT DTH STAFF/MARY JANE KATZ

# Adams Tract to go untouched

BY SHANNAN BOWEN  
ASSISTANT CITY EDITOR

Mountain bikers and hikers can soon rest assured that one of their favorite outdoor spots will remain undeveloped.

The town of Carrboro and Orange County are collaborating in an effort to assure that the Adams tract, a stretch of land along Bolin Creek Trail, will be a permanent greenway for area residents.

The two entities are sharing the \$1.55 million purchase of about 27 acres of the 30-acre area, located off Estes Drive between Carrboro and Chapel Hill.

The Adams tract is at the center of the area and extends from the Chapel Hill section north to Homestead Road and the Carolina North property.

Last Tuesday, the Orange County Board of Commissioners authorized the assignment of the signed contract for purchase of the Adams family property to the town of Carrboro, one of the final steps in closing the purchase.

Barry Jacobs, chairman of the board, said the land will be made available to the public for low-impact recreation and to protect the natural area and water quality of Bolin Creek.

"Bolin Creek is part of the greenway's largest undeveloped area," he said.

The county will pay \$750,000 with money from a 2001 parks and open space bond and \$25,000 from the Department of Environment and Resource Conservation's Lands Legacy fund.

Carrboro will fund its purchase with \$222,000 from a Clean Water Management trust fund and by borrowing the rest.

The land will be owned and operated by the town of Carrboro and will be held to standards set in

a county conservation easement, which is yet to be written.

Jacobs said Carrboro will only accept proposed changes to the land that follow the easement.

In 2001, Carrboro Alderman Jacquelyn Gist was among several people who opposed a proposal to build a new public works facility on the Adams tract.

Richard White, assistant to the Carrboro town manager, said the area now will remain undeveloped.

"We will not have any more proposals for development," he said.

The land's closing will follow a survey of the tract that will be completed next week, White said.

The town, county and Adams family attorneys then will schedule a date before the end of September for closing on the purchase.

Dave Stencil, director of the Department of Environment and Resource Conservation, said the Lands Legacy program has goals associated with the Adams tract.

"Lands Legacy has goals to protect natural resources, such as future parks and wildlife," he said. "Adams tract falls into the category of parks and open space and natural area."

While no new developments will be built on the land, Stencil said, the town of Carrboro has the authorization to modify existing trails or areas of the tract.

The town also will be examining ways to make the area safer.

Stencil said the area has been sought for conservation since the late '90s.

Other areas of interest are outlined in the Lands Legacy program, which has acquired 1,100 acres of land since it began in 2000.

Contact the City Editor at [citydesk@unc.edu](mailto:citydesk@unc.edu).

# Council might rethink school sites

BY MEREDITH LEE MILLER  
ASSISTANT CITY EDITOR

The Chapel Hill Town Council will consider an amendment to its 2000 Land Use Plan and possibly reconsider locations earmarked as potential school sites at its Sept. 7 work meeting.

Some property owners have been worried about being named as a potential school site after a N.C. Senate bill increased the time that schools have to review potential sites from 12 to 18 months.

Being identified as a potential school site can delay owners' development plans, said Roger Waldon, the town's planning director.

But there is not much land left for development, he added.

Dennis Whiting, Orange County Board of Education member, said he understands the desire to have land available for future schools.

"(Board members) want appropriate sites for schools," he said.

The Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools Board has requested five new sites to be considered by the town as potential school locations.

The Town Council will make its possible designations Sept. 7.

Once a property is cited as a potential school site, under the Land Use Ordinance, the property owner must submit a special use permit before developing the land for any other purposes.

The school board can delay the requested development plans as the board decides if the site will remain reserved for a future school.

The board has 18 months after the request is made to decide if the land should remain a potential school site.

Some property owners requested that their land not be cited as a school location during a town public hearing on May 24.

Owners of property on Eubanks and Weaver Dairy roads each requested that their sites be removed from consideration.

"It is common for property owners to be concerned about restrictions to their property," Waldon said.

He said the key struggle is trying to find a balance between what is fair for the property owners and what is best for the town.

"The Town Council is also concerned about property rights," Waldon said.

He said the council gives property owners the opportunity to discuss their concerns before designations are made.

Representatives from the American Legion Post 6 addressed the council at its June 15 meeting to discuss the removal of its Legion Road tract from the list of considered sites.

Post 6 Commander Al Hackney said Monday he was meeting with CHCCS Superintendent Neil Pedersen that afternoon to discuss removing the Legion's property from the list of potential sites.

He said he preferred not to comment until after the meeting.

Legion member Paul Romweber said the group was worried that the Legion Road tract was identified as a suitable school site.

"I guess it's because we don't know how safe we are," he said.

Waldon added that the board does not have the right to seize property from its owners.

"Once it is declared that the board wants to use designated property for schools, the free market prevails and negotiations begin, he said.

Contact the City Editor at [citydesk@unc.edu](mailto:citydesk@unc.edu).

# Town receives more control of land usage

BY RYAN C. TUCK  
CITY EDITOR

A technical correction in a new state law that will take effect Oct. 1 will give Chapel Hill and other municipalities more say as to how the University and other state agencies can develop their land.

The words "and land" were added to a bill introduced last year by Sen. Dan Clodfelter, D-Mecklenburg, that was intended to clarify city and county planning.

Those two words now give local governments authority over most land disturbance, whereas before, only buildings were required to undergo review by municipalities.

The law will significantly impact land-use management and is sparking debate around an already controversial University project.

The University's new parking lot on Cameron Avenue, between South Graham Street and Merritt Mill Road, will be completed before the new law goes into effect.

Council member Cam Hill, who owned property where the lot will be, said he doubts the University was planning on finishing the project before learning of the new law.

"The University should set a good example, instead of getting away with what they can," he said.

Bruce Runberg, associate vice chancellor for planning and construction, said the project has been in planning stages for years.

"We would have preferred to have finished ... in August," he said.

Under the new law, the University

would have to submit most development proposals, including any nonbuilding projects, to the town for review, town Planning Director Roger Waldon said.

A new parking lot, athletic fields and utility corridors are the types of development that the town will be able to review after Oct. 1.

Runberg said the new authority will have a big impact on University development but, like town officials, was unsure how much.

Runberg said the Cameron Avenue property is the only current project that would be affected by the new law.

With the additional zoning requests and fees associated with those requests, the new law could cost the University six figures every

year, Runberg estimated.

"It depends on how the town interprets the law," he said.

Hill said he thinks the new authority will be a good thing.

"It's another tool to help us patrol what's going on in the town," he said. "It means that we're involved in the discussion now."

But University Chancellor James Moeser said he does not think the law will last. "It's not only upsetting us but upsetting a lot of state agencies," he said. "My guess is that it will get undone in a year."

University Editor

Emily Steel contributed to this article.

Contact the City Editor at [citydesk@unc.edu](mailto:citydesk@unc.edu).

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