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City Wants Broad Creek Homes Site

The decision of Norfolk City Council to acquire 33 acres in the Broad Creek Shores development for a future high school site and a park will have other results which may or may not have been in the minds of the administration, namely:

- (1) Prevent Negroes from building and occupying homes on this Broad Creek waterfront property along Virginia Beach Boulevard.
- (2) Prevent colored children who might otherwise live in these homes from attending the new Ingleside elementary and junior high schools immediately adjacent in the event the Supreme Court decrees require their admission.

These consequences were being discussed by recent purchasers of lots following the action of Council on Wednesday in authorizing an offer of \$75,000 for 33 acres on the south side of Broad Creek Road and west of Broad Creek.

THIS IS A PART of the Tanners Creek district which on January 1 was annexed by Norfolk.



BROAD CREEK SHORES—Map shows recently subdivided development where 22 of 38 homebuilding sites already have been purchased by Negroes. City officials now plan to acquire the property for a park and future high school. Council Wednesday authorized an offer of \$75,000 for the land. Owners say they will not sell voluntarily. City may take legal steps to get it by condemnation action.

Citation: "City Wants Broad Creek Homes Site," Norfolk Journal and Guide, March 5, 1955

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The area sought by the city includes some of the choicest property available to Negro homeowners in Tidewater. Other than a few parcels in the Lindenwood section it is the only waterfront property available to Negroes for home sites.

Broad Creek Shores is a part of the 75 acres purchased from the Federal government in August 1953 by Dr. Irving Watts and W. T. Mason, Sr. for \$127,000. Subsequently, 30 acres immediately adjacent to the new Ingleside school were sold to Norfolk county which had threatened to acquire it by condemnation if the owners had not agreed to sell.

OF THE remaining 45 acres, 12 to 15 have been subdivided into 38 lots and 22 of them have been sold to individuals for home building sites.

The plat was recorded, after approval by both the county and city authorities, (in June 1954.

These lots have been sold at prices ranging from \$2,500 to \$3,500. According to one purchaser, only 3 of the sites were priced at less than \$3,000.

USING \$3,000 as an average price this would make the cost of these 12 to 15 acres \$114,000. The city will offer only \$75,000 for all 33 acres.

Mr. Mason told the Guide that he has had several conversations with City Manager H. H. George 3rd, who indicated the city's interest in purchasing the property.

Mr. George confirmed to the Journal and Guide Thursday morning that the property sought includes these home sites recently subdivided and sold to prospective home builders.

THE DECISION to acquire the land was endorsed in a report from the City Planning Commission and the Department of Parks and Recreation. The 33-acre tract was described as follows:

"The property is located on the south side of Broad Creek Road immediately west of the new city line in Broad Creek, and adjacent to the new Junior High and Ingleside Elementary Schools on the west, and Tippeton Place Subdivision on the south."

While the city planners say they would like to see the entire site used for park and recreational purposes, a study now shows, they claim, a new high school ultimately must be located in this area

IN THIS conclusion, they are repudiating recommendations of the Batchelor Report recently submitted to Council. This proposed a different location for the new high school.

Among recent purchasers of home sites in Broad Creek Shores are Dr. J. Q. A. Webb, Mrs. Sallie Selden Durham, Mrs. Avis Robinson, Maurice Collette and Mrs. Eloise Collette, jointly (11 lots on which they have offered to build homes for sale to prospective buyers), and Mr. and Mrs. Leroy Berry.

ALSO, DR Charles Ireland, Dr. George E. Peace, Mr. and Mrs. P. Bernard Young Jr., Miss Teresa Griffin and Mr. and Mrs. Willie Marsh, Leroy Robertson and Miss Myrtle Griffin.

Mr. Mason said that he had been approached by City Manager George even before the property in question was annexed by the city, but had consistently refused to sell voluntarily. He said he had told the City Manager that if the city acquired the property it would have to do so by condemnation and legal action.

HE TOLD the Guide that he

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has an appointment to confer with the City Manager on Friday morning, but that he will oppose any condemnation action instituted by the city and assumes that all other purchasers in the area would do likewise.

Dr. Peace told the Guide that he would not sell voluntarily, but would force the city to condemn his lot by legal action.

"It's the only property I've got on which I can build my home," he said.

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MR. COLLETTE also told the Guide that he would not voluntarily sell any of his nine lots to the city.

"I intend to fight it out in the courts, if necessary," he added, "to help hold on to these few desirable sites that Negroes can buy to build homes."

Mr. Robertson also expressed determination not to let his lot go to the city without a fight. "I will oppose condem-

nation by every legal means available," he declared.

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OTHER purchasers were unavailable for comment prior to press time.

Commenting on the city's need for this particular tract as a future high school and park site, Mr. Mason said that Norfolk had very recently acquired title to Broad Creek Village, just across the Virginia Beach Boulevard from his development.

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MOREOVER, Mr. Mason said, a part of the Broad Creek Village has already been designated as the site for a new wholesale produce market.

"Why can't they take some of that for the new school and park?" he asked.

According to Mr. Mason, surveyors are already at work platting the remaining 30 acres which likewise will be offered for sale to Negro home builders.

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