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Date: 6/8/2009 9:21:32 AM
Subject: Flenniken Housing

My email is regarding the Flenniken Housing issue on the MPC agenda for this Thursday, June 11, 2009 MPC File No. 6-G-09-UR.

I must adamantly contest this issue for several reasons. I ask the MPC commissioners to seriously consider not only my reasons for objecting, but the community's as well.

The first issue I see with allowing Flenniken to house homeless individuals is the sheer number being proposed. Forty eight individuals with not only chronic housing issues but mental disabilities as well? This is simply way too many unstable individuals for one location. Another reason for my opposition is Flenniken is centrally located in what may already be considered an unstable community. There is residential housing, businesses, and more importantly elderly housing situated on the same plot of land directly beside of the Flenniken building. It is also less than a block from a dangerous highway, Chapman, and two other very busy streets, Martin Mill and Maryville Pikes. Picture the daily scenario outside of the mission on Broadway and then place that on either of these streets and it is a disaster waiting to happen.

Finally, I just feel this particular community simply cannot handle another strain such as this type of housing of such a large number of unstable, homeless individuals. This added pressure may be the breaking point instead of positive turning point for our community.

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6-G-09-UR

To: Trey Benefield

From: Karen Welch
Joe Minicheiello
Elizabeth Monday

Date: June 1, 2009

Re: Flenniken School

We are asking that you deny the use on review for multi-family units for Flenniken School. We have put together information that we feel is very important for you to understand South Knoxville, the Vestal area in particular, and what our vision is for this area, many of which come from the Sector Plan and the Empowerment Zone plan. Please take the time to look through it and if you have any question please feel free to call us or e-mail us.

The disk included are pictures taking 4-6-09 around the Flenniken School area, references that are made throughout the packet and pictures of apartment units/complexes near Flenniken School, many of which are income based already. The pictures of the homes are as close as right beside the school and only as far out as half a mile. As well the statistics from the Knoxville Police Department are from Overbrook Drive, behind Sonic, to Volena Place and includes Montgomery Village.

Each MPC member who voted to rezone Flenniken said that it makes sense to rezone it to 0-1, please do not change your decision at this time, please allow it to stay 0-1 and be used for offices as we need this building for future endeavors.

Sincerely,
Karen Welch, Joe Minichiello, Elizabeth Monday

**Vestal Community:
A Fragile and Depressed
Neighborhood, at Best**

- I. Overview of South Knoxville, specifically the Vestal area, with crime statistics for the past six months.
- II. Our Vision of the Future of South Knoxville
- III. The 10 Year Plan
- IV. Mental Illness
- V. Newsworthy Crimes Committed by the Homeless
- VI. Summary

Overview of South Knoxville, specifically the Vestal area

The Vestal Community is at a turning point right now, it can either go forward or it can decline further to a point of no return. In 2002 the Knoxville Empowerment Zone studied the Vestal Community and it was noted, that crime, homelessness and “The Young High Pike area between Chapman and Martin mill were highlighted as a drug trafficking area. High crime was noted in Montgomery Village at the dead end of Daylily.” (Empowerment Zone report, pg. 133, <http://sunsite.utk.edu/cpc/downloads/Vision%20For%20Empowerment.pdf>). These were problems in 2002 and are the same problems that plague us now. We have many areas that are known to be used by addicts, areas that are known to be unsafe and there are areas that are known to be problematic with domestic violence issues. Knoxville Police know about all of these areas and do what they can to help, however, it is almost impossible to get anyone to talk with them for fear of what might happen after they leave.

I took the time to go around Vestal area and take pictures, see insert CD, these pictures are of homes and businesses that were less than one quarter mile from Flenniken School, the furthest was half a mile which was the Boys and Girls Club. As you can see from these pictures there are many problems just on the surface, these pictures do not tell the complete story, however, they do show you a neighborhood that is depressed and fragile and cannot sustain another income based housing unit for the chronically homeless/severely mentally ill/drug and alcohol addicts or any other population. As you can see from the pictures there are many dilapidated houses and businesses, homes with trash all around and piled on the porches, vacant homes and buildings, etc. The 2002 Empowerment Zone saw this back then as well and stated, “Housing is a hot topic at this time. Residents noted that because Vestal is convenient to downtown, property is being renovated and

re-priced out of the range of community members. There are also many run-down properties. Some board members suggested more codes enforcement as a solution, but others pointed out that when people do not have the means to keep their property up, it is an economic issue.” (Empowerment Zone report, <http://sunsite.utk.edu/cpc/downloads/Vision%20For%20Empowerment.pdf>, pg. 135). Jon Lawler has met with the neighborhood association and has told us that they are putting the chronically homeless housing units, 48, in this neighborhood as long as the funding comes through for him. South Knoxville is not a community that could easily support the gentlemen that would be living in this housing unit, and as Jon Lawler said they must have community support and faith based support for this housing unit to work, South Knoxvillians are having a hard time helping themselves and can't even reach out to their neighbors to offer a helping hand, let alone another forty eight units of income based housing, as I hope the pictures will show you.

As it stands now there are five income based apartments that are within a half a mile from Flenniken School, six if you count Montgomery Village, though it is approximately a half mile to two miles at most. Many of these apartment complexes are not listed in the phone book and do not have signs, for example, there is a freestanding apartment complex with five apartments on Blount Avenue right across from Mary Vestal Ball Park. These apartments are known to have the Knoxville Police there frequently for domestic violence incidents, they are owned by the church that is beside them. There are also two on Ogle Road across from L and M Home Improvement, Flenniken Square and the Verandas, which is a new complex for sixty five and older people. And if you look at South Knoxville as a whole there are approximately forty complexes and freestanding units, of those I am only aware of four that are not income based. These forty units, pictures included, are all within a mile and a half to Flenniken School. There are currently twenty seven halfway

houses in South Knoxville, that we are know of since most are kept confidential, one is on Volena Place that is for women only (Volena Place is located three hundred yards from the Flenniken School site). Information that I have found just by a search online shows there are seven “available” income based homes for rent, though we know there are many untold ones in the neighborhood that are currently being rented. There is also a motel on Chapman Highway, approximately a third of a mile from Flenniken School, The Executive Inn. Two KPD officers have told me that the gentleman that owns the business is wonderful, honest and hardworking, however, the clientele of this motel are crack addicts. He also said that when working the night shift he will drive through the motel parking lot and will call in tag numbers, he said more times than not there is at least one stolen car there. Please remember this is not South Knoxville as a whole, this is only the side of Chapman Highway that Flenniken School is located on and the hotel is directly across Chapman Highway from the site.

As you can see from the pictures alone we have our share of problems in South Knoxville and we cannot take on more than we have already in the fact of helping others and having more income based housing projects in our neighborhood.

KPD Crime statistics...From 10-15-08 through 4-15-09

Want officer for investigation: (Want for Officer Investigation - Basically someone calls in and has something they are requesting an Officer to come talk to them about.)
436

Officer initiated incident: (Officer Initiated Incident - That is any incident or event where an Officer initiates contact with a citizen instead of being called out by the citizen or dispatched through E-911.) **691**

Murder: 2

Dead Person: 2

Assault: 42

Property Check: (That is when a citizen, either residential or business, requests Officers to do random or specific patrol to check on the property. As an example, if you were to have suspicious activity around your home you would be able to call the Police Department and request for Officer's to do property checks on your residence for a while.) **117**

Disturbance: 370

Hit and Run: 45

Prowler on Premises: 11

Indecent Exposure: 1

Property <Lost or Found>: (Property Lost & Found - This is kind of a catch category for when property is missing, but not known to be actually stolen. A good example of this could be a license plate that is known to be held on with bread ties or bailing twine and the owner of the vehicle notices at some point that the license plate is missing. The plate could have fallen off, and is not necessarily stolen. Other examples are lost keys, lost wallet, etc.) **14**

Attempt Burglary: 7

Theft not in progress: 99

Theft in progress: 29

Burglary in progress: 2

Threaten Suicide: 14

Attempted Suicide: 15

Domestic Trouble: 188

Domestic Alarm: 32

Domestic Standby: 34

Burglary/Residence: 65

Burglary/Business: 20

Burglary/Vehicle: 35

Burglary/Vehicle in progress: 1

Vehicle Theft: 32

Vehicle Theft in Progress: 4

Shoplifter: 5

Missing Person: 39

Suspicious Person: 246

Warrant Service: 52

Loud Party, Noise: 74

Fight: 24

Armed Robbery: 1

Armed Robbery in Progress: 10

Armed Robbery not in Progress: 2

Strong Armed Robbery in Progress: 4

Cutting Scrape in Progress: 3

Shooting Scrape in Progress: 1

Shooting Scrape: 6

Hold Up: 2

Child Abuse: 34

Forgery and Fraud: 11

Vandalism Not in Progress: 42

Vandalism in Progress: 15

Suspect in Area: 12

Driving Wrecker to Scene unless Called: 195

Public Drunk: 17

Drunk Driver: 38

Forgery and Fraud: 16

Confiscated Property: 5

***Please see attached disk for KPD reference.**

As you can see just in the last six months South Knoxville has its share of problems, drugs, petty crimes, property crimes, domestic assaults, shootings, stabbings and many more. I am sure many people wonder why the residents don't just move, well my family has been in this area for thirty years. Many of the elderly people who live there have lived there and raised their families there and have a vested interest in staying, just like my parents do. Though some are trying to sell their homes and have been for years with no prospects. I suggest if you were to ask someone if they wanted to live near Mary Vestal Ball Park or on Blount Avenue they would tell you no. Our community is not the same as it was when I was growing up, thirty years ago, but if we allow yet another income based housing unit into our community it could be the last straw. No one wants to buy or live beside or near an income based housing unit and no one wants to live near a housing unit that houses males severely mentally ill with drug addiction and/or alcohol addiction combined. If you don't understand the severity of the mental illnesses these gentlemen will probably have or the severity of them not taking their medication or using drugs and drinking please see the section on mental illness.

Our Vision for the Future of South Knoxville

We envision South Knoxville as an area that will attract a diverse group of people. We are hoping to attract specialty businesses into the area, an example would be the kind of business that Ron Emory owns and runs on Chapman Highway, the type of stuff that you can't find anywhere else. The area from Chapman Highway up to Flenniken School is a prime example of space that could be used to attract several small businesses such as these specialty shops. It could also be used as an art center where local artists could come and show off their work and gain recognition for it, as well as get their name out in the community. The empty lot on Chapman Highway down from Fort Dickerson could be used as a museum for not only Fort Dickerson, but for South Knoxville to show visitors what our neighborhood used to look like. This would also be an attraction for local schools to bring the students so that they can learn the history first hand. A good example of a specialty business that we would like to attract would be the Horse Emporium on Chapman Highway in the Colonial Village area. There are no stores like it anywhere else and the owners are local and they are thriving even during this downturn. Still yet another example could be dress shops, hat shops/shoe shops, not the "big box" shops of Wal-Mart, K-Mart, etc. Food City has a building sitting empty currently on Chapman Highway, I envision it to be a small movie theatre. We do not have anything like this in our area or in Seymour, this would allow the Seymour families, as well as the South Knoxville families and people to go see a show without having to travel out East or West in order to do it.

We are looking for the small business types that our country runs on. This would allow job opportunities in our neighborhood as well to increase property values. A woman I know has been looking into starting a business importing Italian shoes for children, we would love to see this type of business in our area. In

order to get businesses to South Knoxville we must have the backing of the City in order to give tax incentives to the people who are willing to make South Knoxville their business home.

We also are looking to beautify South Knoxville. Mr. Emory is currently working to get Fort Dickerson made into a garden area, which will attract visitors and families there to enjoy the sites. This is a very beautiful area already and needs to be preserved.

As for Mary Vestal Ballpark we would like to clean up the area and have a nice and safe playground for families to have a place to spend the day, have a picnic and enjoy quality time together. Our vision of the park fits in with the South Knoxville Waterfront greenways that we have been told will be placed throughout our community. As it stands now we have a growing number of cyclists in our area, many of whom live on Neubert Springs, who train and ride down Martin Mill Pike all the way down through Blount Avenue. We would like to encourage them to stay and to provide the opportunity to bring more of their fellow cyclists into our community by having bike lanes and walk ways that would attract them and have the area safe.

When speaking of safety those of us who live in South Knoxville are aware of the statistics and the crime that happens on a daily basis that is why we are engaging with the Knoxville Police Department to find out what it is that we can do in our neighborhood to stop these crimes before they happen and to cut down any type of crime. I know that there has been a lot of crime lately some say due to the economic downturn, however, many of the crimes that you find in South Knoxville have been going on long before the downturn, it is our responsibility to try to engage our neighborhoods and see what can be done to prevent these things from happening. Will it work? Currently we don't know, though we must be given the opportunity to try.

Our vision is to make South Knoxville a destination for many people to come and enjoy and to be able to shop at places they can't find anywhere else in Knoxville.

With the South Knoxville Waterfront development and the condos being built on Cherokee Trail as these areas develop they will most certainly spread into our neighborhood and bring with them people who have never experienced South Knoxville before. At that time we want to be able to have a safe and secure neighborhood, one that people will want to come and visit and shop in, one that will make people from all over Knoxville want to come and see, which is why we need Flenniken School property and those behind it to allow for our business development.

On another note, the Empowerment Zone which was conducted a few years ago made these suggestions for Flenniken School, which I find very interesting and very useful and would be a great asset to South Knoxville.

Empowerment Zone...

“Night classes and educational programs that foster good citizenship and a strong civil society. (pg. 141)

Neighborhood Resource Center project is an effort to support and encourage neighborhood organizations. The center would staff a city liaison, a crime prevention specialist, and a neighborhood organizer. With this type of staffing we could strengthen existing neighborhood watch programs, create watch programs, create watch programs in neighborhoods that do not have them, and implement the Knoxville Police Department's Crime Control Plan, which would enhance community safety and community policing programs. This would help prevent neglect and abuse, preserve families to protect children and adults who are unable to protect themselves from neglect, abuse or exploitation, and preserve, rehabilitate or reunite families living in South ZAC.

This project would provide the community with a meeting place, which could also be used for grant proposals writings and access to computers.

The specifics...

Identify neighborhood watch programs in need of strengthening.

Negotiate space by user.

Locate programs.

Hire staff.

Identify areas in need of a neighborhood watch.

To sustain this project we will negotiate with KCDC, KPD, and the City of Knoxville Center for Neighborhood Development, University of Tennessee Community Partnership Center and the Urban League to see what each would be willing to do. THE EZ ALSO HAS A PROPOSED A BUDGET FOR SUCH A PROJECT. THIS IS A FEASIBLE AND LONG AWAITED PROJECT. (pg. 144-145)

The 10 Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness

I have grave concerns about the 10 Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness. First, there have been no cities who have implemented this plan for ten years, so we have no idea if this is going to work or not. Second, many of these cities are going about different ways to implement their own version of the 10 Year Plan, there is no one set way of saying this is what we are going to do, each city can do it any way they see fit. Which would be nice, however, some cities are focusing on not only the chronically homeless, but domestic violence victims, families, people who have been forced out of their homes due to job loss, etc. There are also cities who are instituting counseling, drug and alcohol treatment for the members who are being housed. Third, some cities are making it part of their program to have nurses or nurse practitioners on site at these units and fourth, some cities have even taken the “one stop shopping” approach where the apartment complex has medical and psychological services within the building, case managers, therapy sessions, anything that the residents would need in order to truly allow them to get off drugs and alcohol and stay compliant with their medication, and if they have a need for a physician they are in the facility as well. This would allow the residents to be able to learn the skills they would need in order to reintegrate back into society.

Our 10 Year Plan, as I understand it from Jon Lawler, is a housing first approach. Give them housing and, as he told us at the Vestal Neighborhood Association meeting, that will give them some stability. While I am no expert on homelessness or mental illness, drug or alcohol abuse I can see that the residents in any of the homes for the chronically homeless anywhere in Knoxville would need far greater support for them to be able to overcome what they have gone through. Mr. Lawler told our group that the men who would be housed at Flenniken School, if this is approved, will have severe mental illness AND be drug addicts and/or alcoholics.

These gentlemen will NOT be checked to ensure they are taking their medication, not drinking or using drugs, the only requirement that they will have is to pay their rent on time. My feeling is that these gentlemen will have payees for their SSI checks which will ensure that no matter what goes on in the housing units their checks will arrive to pay their rent on time. I was the payee for many of the clients at a local social service provider for several years and once their rent was paid the case managers would give them a check each week to allow them to spend it on whatever they wanted too, so it will not actually be up to these men to pay their rent, I suspect it will be up to the payee to do this and then will give them their “allowance” throughout the month.

I posted a question on the 10 Year Plan’s website...

1 Karen Welch

Posted April 9, 2009 at 8:50 pm | [Permalink](#)

I would like to know since Mayor Haslam has approved the sites for the homeless housing, why aren't you all looking at the empty lot that is on Jackson Avenue? It is my understanding that the developer was supposed to develop condos, but since the city is already paying 11,000 a month for this property would it be viable for the 10 Year Plan to use this for the homeless?

2 Robert

Posted April 13, 2009 at 9:17 am | [Permalink](#)

There are a couple of reasons that we're not looking at that site, Karen. First, that's a valuable piece of property that is very close to Minvilla and other homeless service providers. Second, I imagine that the City would be very reluctant to embrace permanent supportive housing as the best use for the property.

The response from Robert leads me to understand that the city is not going to allow the housing units placed on a “valuable piece of property” so that would only mean one thing, they are looking for cheap property in every neighborhood, well the cheap property is only in depressed and struggling neighborhoods which are having a hard time sustaining themselves let alone an income based housing project for any population. This is not fair, not fair to

residents, business owners or property owners of any neighborhood. Mr. Lawler has said time and again that the community must support this and there must be a faith based community onboard in order for this to work, well I can only speak about South Knoxville, Vestal area in particular, we do not have a faith based community at all much less one that would be involved in this project and the residents have said we have enough, we have enough income based houses, housing units, apartments, etc.. Let me give you an example of the property values, my parents who live on Volena Place received their "reappraisal" a few weeks ago and while most of Knoxville's appraisals are going up, theirs went down almost ten thousand dollars. Please note that their house is less than three hundred yards from Flenniken School.

When we have brought our questions and concerns to Mr. Lawler, in one specific meeting to be exact, Mr. Lawler's reply to us was that they were just waiting on the funding, to which he crossed his fingers and looked up at the ceiling. We had the feeling from the beginning that what we wanted or needed would not be taken into account. And someone actually said, "They are going to ram this down our throats," which is exactly what has been done up to this point. I have even e-mailed the Mayor and he has said that while he supports the 10 Year Plan he wants to do what's best for the residents and the homeless, well I would like it to be taken into account every area that these units are asking to be placed in and study the crimes that go on, the property values, how many income based apartment units/homes are in these areas and see if these neighborhoods can sustain an income based housing unit. Please also see if these areas have the social services that are needed to help individuals who have these types of severe mental illnesses, drug and alcohol addiction and if they are available without a waiting list. Our section of town has no social services at all, Helen Ross McNabb has moved, there is no Cherokee Mental Health, no Health Department, no Interfaith, and the few doctors' offices that are located at Baptist are in the process of building new

offices out of our area and most have already moved. Which means the men in these units, which will not be driving per Mr. Lawler, will have to catch a bus, though there is no bus stop at Flenniken and these men don't know how to transfer from the buses to get across town to go to their doctor's appointments. This makes absolutely no sense to me at all.

These units, in my humble opinion, should be placed in an area that is within walking distance to a hospital, a grocery store, doctors offices and social services, that way the residents would be able to walk to wherever they need to go and would be surrounded with experienced people who can help them and keep them safe and stable.

(I know that your decision on an income based housing unit cannot be primarily on who the residents will be, however, I would like to at least inform you of the types of men who will be housed at Flenniken if you let this pass.)

Mental Illness

Clif Tennison of Helen Ross McNabb said, “Among the homeless, the most common brain diseases are schizophrenia and bipolar disorder.”

I will discuss these two types of mental illnesses both of which there is a tie in with substance related disorders, i.e. nicotine dependence, alcohol dependence, drug addiction, etc.

The DSM IV describes Schizophrenic characteristics as “delusions, hallucinations, disorganized speech (e.g. frequent derailment or incoherence), grossly disorganized or catatonic behavior, negative symptoms, i.e. affective flattening, alogia, or avolition. Note: Only one criterion A (symptoms describe above), is required if delusions are bizarre or hallucinations consist of a voice keeping up a running commentary on the person’s behavior or thoughts, or two or more voices conversing with each other.” (DSM IV, pg. 285).

The National Institute of Mental Health describes Bipolar disorder, “also known as manic-depressive illness, is a brain disorder that causes unusual shifts in a person’s mood, energy, and ability to function. Different from the normal ups and downs that everyone goes through, the symptoms of bipolar disorder are severe.

(<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/bipolar-disorder/introduction.shtml>)

The signs and symptoms of the mania of this disorder, according to The National Institute of Mental Health, are

- “increased energy
- activity, and restlessness
- excessively “high” overly good, euphoric mood
- extreme irritability
- racing thoughts and talking very fast
- jumping from one idea to another

- distractibility
 - can't concentrate well
 - little sleep needed
 - unrealistic beliefs in one's abilities and powers
 - poor judgment
 - spending sprees
 - a lasting period of behavior that is different from usual
 - increased sex drive
 - abuse of drugs, particularly cocaine, alcohol, and sleeping medications
 - provocative, intrusive, or aggressive behavior and
 - denial that anything is wrong.”
-
- The signs and symptoms of depression for this disorder are, “lasting sad, anxious, or empty mood
 - feelings of hopelessness or pessimism
 - feelings of guilt, worthlessness, or helplessness
 - loss of interest or pleasure in activities once enjoyed, including sex
 - decreased energy
 - a feeling of fatigue or of being “slowed down”
 - difficulty concentrating, remembering, making decisions
 - restlessness or irritability
 - sleeping too much, or can't sleep
 - change in appetite and/or unintended weight loss or gain
 - chronic pain or other persistent bodily symptoms that are not caused by physical illness or injury
 - thoughts of death or suicide, or suicide attempts.”

“Sometimes, severe episodes of mania or depression includes symptoms of psychosis. Common psychotic symptoms are hallucinations (hearing, seeing, or otherwise sensing the presence of things not actually there) and delusions (false, strongly held

beliefs not influenced by logical reasoning or explained by a person's usual cultural concept.”

(<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/bipolar-disorder/introduction.shtml>)

People who have these mental illnesses more likely than not to be drug addicted and alcoholics. And as Mr. David Arning said at the February, 2009 MPC meeting, “The tenant population that we are working with DOES have severe mental illness and drug and alcohol addiction...”

(<http://archive.knoxmpc.org/aboutmpc/minutes/feb09min.pdf>)

The danger of severe mental illness is great for those who are non-compliant with their medication, drink or use drugs. Anyone who has ever had a family member or loved one who was diagnosed with either of these two mental illnesses will tell you that it is hard, very hard to get them to take their medication, very hard to even get them to go to the doctor, very hard to get them to understand that something is wrong with them. Some stop taking their medication because they don't like the side affects, others, stop because they think they are cured. Not only is medication non-compliance an issue with these and many other mental illnesses, the family members who experience their own loved ones will tell you that it is a struggle every day to see to it that they get the help that they need, to have the right social services around them in order to help out and even with those social services it is still a struggle every day.

Dr. Noe's study *Homelessness In Knoxville/Knox County: 2004* has a story about a man named Thomas. “Thomas is mentally ill-and very angry. He acknowledges hearing voices and it upsets him. He has been on medication before but cannot administer it himself; he becomes confused about how to take it, so he doesn't take it at all. He has a great deal of difficulty expressing himself and becomes frustrated when people don't understand his very garbled

speech. Thomas has a payee who receive his check. He is never clear on when it is due and becomes frustrated when he doesn't get his money "on time." When he calls his payee, he accomplishes nothing because he cannot understand what she is telling him either. People have offered to make the call for Thomas, but he doesn't trust them to tell the truth about his money. After such a phone call, Thomas becomes very angry and begins to throw things. In his rage, Thomas has broken windows at local shelters and been barred from them. At one time, he was barred from all the shelters in town due to his destructive behavior. Thomas has had to sleep outside under the bridge."

(<http://web.knoxnews.com/pdf/homeless2004study.pdf>, pg. 13).

Thomas is an example of the gentlemen whom Jon Lawler says will be placed in the housing unit at Flenniken.

Please understand that I have nothing against persons with mental illnesses, I understand and have worked at Helen Ross McNabb Center, Penninsula Hospital and was a Victim Advocate for domestic violence victims with KPD, so I am very familiar with mental illness and drug and alcohol addiction. I have seen the heartbreak it causes when a family member who is mentally ill stops taking their medication and the turmoil that it causes in the family. I have seen families at their wits end because they cannot force their loved one to take medication that will stabilize them. I have seen drug addicted people who will go back into abusive relationships because they feel there is no other way out. I have also seen people who have gone into shelters, who have worked the programs, stayed clean/sober, gotten on medication and stabilized their lives. These people followed the rules, rules that some say are too rigid for the chronically homeless, and took some self responsibility and took back their lives. With all that having been said, the residents and business leaders of South Knoxville are concerned about having the chronically homeless housing in our neighborhood because Mr. Lawler told us that these men will only have to agree that they want a place to live and that they will

pay their portion of the rent, as this will be yet another income based housing project in South Knoxville. We questioned him on the problems with mental illness, medication non-compliance, drug addiction, alcohol, etc, and he told us that if the person pays their rent on time that is the only thing required of them. These people will be allowed to wander the streets, use drugs, drink, anything that anyone else would be able to do in their own homes, is what he said. He also stated that these men would be on disability, SSI I suspect, and that they will not work, perhaps a few might work one or two hours, but that would be all they would be able to handle. As well, Flenniken School is not on the bus line, these gentlemen will have to walk to get to one for their appointments as they will not have transportation otherwise. There are no guidelines as to who will be allowed to rent, the only thing we were told is that they would be allowed to have a criminal record, only "certain felonies" wouldn't be allowed, though they wouldn't tell us which ones. When I contacted Robert Finely of the 10 Year Plan's office he told me he didn't know and that I should contact KCDC. I then called KCDC and was told that no one with a criminal history or any outstanding issues with the courts would be allowed in these housing units, though they can appeal the decision. I think read on KNS of a gentleman who has been in and out of prison for thirteen years and was recently kicked out of Section 8 apartments because police found a crack pipe in there, this gentleman is on the waiting list for a unit for the chronically homeless.

(<http://www.knoxnews.com/news/2009/mar/02/seeking-normal-life/>)

On this site there will be two case managers, though they will not be responsible for overseeing the gentlemen's medication or anything of that nature. Two case managers for forty eight chronically homeless, severely mentally ill/drug addicts/alcoholics, if each case manager were to see each of their clients this would only entail one visit per month in order to spend time with them and actually find out what's going on. I figured out that with 48 chronic homeless to service each case worker would have only 97 minutes a week for each person. That is a 40 hour week minus a 30

minute lunch and two 15 minute breaks a day leaving 2340 minutes a week divided by 24 clients. From that subtract time for scheduling clients, phone calls, referrals to other agencies and follow-up. If a client missed an appointment, what happens to the time line then? Another question is what happens after hours when there is no one on site who is qualified to help these men? When one case manager goes on vacation this will leave only one person per forty eight tenants.

Dr. Noe's report *Homelessness In Knoxville/Knox County: 2004* states **"In some respects Knoxville has more housing resources than other metropolitan areas. The combination of public housing, private facilities and emergency shelters results in less than twenty-five percent of the homeless living in outside locations and this is often by choice."**

(<http://web.knoxnews.com/pdf/homeless2004study.pdf>, pg. 22)

"The need for comprehensive supportive services to maintain persons in housing is underscored by the Knoxville studies' consistent findings that many persons placed into housing without support services simply recycle back into homelessness." (*Ten Year Plan, 2005; Homelessness in Knoxville-Knox County, 2004, <http://knoxtenyearplan.org/>*).

Here's a list of shelter sites:

The Salvation Army 409 North Broadway.

2 emergency shelters:

Joy Baker Center has a capacity of 36 individuals

Shafer Center has a capacity for up to 20 individuals.

Transitional housing: located on the premises and can house up to 66 individuals

Knoxville Area Rescue Ministries 418 North Broadway.

Lazarus Hall is a single men's facility that has a recovery program for 40 men and an overnight care shelter for 200 men.

New Life Inn is a family program that has 18 family rooms for transitional services for up to 61 individuals.

Hope Haven, provides emergency overnight services for 40 women.

Serenity Shelter provides assistance to women in crisis.

Volunteer Ministry Center, 511 North Broadway

Jackson Apartments, 16 rent-subsidized apartments for men at 103 South Gay Street.

The future *Minvilla Manor*, located at the corner of Fifth Avenue and Broadway, will replace the Jackson Apartments and increase the number of units of permanent supportive housing to 57

Family Crisis Center

offers shelter and other advocacy services to adult and child victims of domestic violence at 30 a site kept confidential for the safety and security of the clients. The shelter has a capacity for sixteen individuals with potential for slight expansion in emergency situations.

Serenity Shelter,

Runaway Shelter The *Runaway Shelter* is located at 2701 E. Fifth Ave, providing short-term shelter and counseling for runaway and homeless youth, ages 12 to 18 years. It has a capacity for five individuals.

Great Starts/New Beginnings Structured Living, 3006 Lake Brook Boulevard is an intensive outpatient program with a residential component. The program houses women with co-occurring disorders who are pregnant or with children in need of

treatment. The program has a capacity to house 22 women and 38 children.

Great Starts/New Beginnings Transitional Housing is located at 114 Dameron Avenue. The service sustains recovery and improves the homeless status for women and children as a continuum of support after discharge from treatment settings. This “step down” site contains eight apartments ranging from one bedroom to three bedroom units.

YWCA 420 W. Clinch Avenue and has fifty-eight private rooms for single women in transition.

AGAPE 428 E. Scott Avenue. It offers a six-month individualized program for chemically dependent adult women. Three Victorian houses provide residence for eight clients each, for a total capacity of 24.

E.M. Jellinek Center 130 Hinton Ave. It has a capacity of 45 and length of stay is generally 6 months to one year.

John Tarleton Home,

Transitional Living 2701 E. Fifth Avenue, providing residential and case management services to homeless or street youth ages 16-21 years. The main center has a capacity for five individuals with scattered community based sites available for additional clients.

Steps House 712 Boggs Ave. It offers a residential program for alcohol and drug recovery. The capacity is 112 with one section designated for veterans (40 beds) and the other for addiction recovery care (72 beds), indigent care is available.

Eagle's Nest,
Family Promise,

Catholic Charities operates two programs that focus on housing the homeless in Knoxville: Samaritan Place a Homeless Shelter for the Elderly is located at 3009 Lake Brook Blvd. It includes an emergency shelter for people 55 years of age and older.

Elizabeth's Home is a HUD-funded transitional housing program for homeless families. The case coordinator is located at 119 Dameron Avenue, and housing is provided at multiple sites throughout the county. Families in the Knoxville and surrounding areas that are homeless are eligible to apply. Referrals into this program are provided by many of the shelters listed in this book.

Outside locations included various camps as well as *Lost Sheep Ministries*.

Pleasant Tree Apartments is permanent supportive housing for mentally ill homeless women, along with their dependent children. The program provides 24 single-family dwelling apartments at two different sites, located at 2460 E. Fifth Avenue and 1909 Dawn Street.

Parkridge Harbor, 1501 East Fifth Avenue, provides case management, alcohol and drug treatment services and housing services. It offers services to persons with HIV/AIDS in Knox and the surrounding counties. There is a 24-bed capacity for men who were formerly homeless.

Helen Ross McNabb has developed and maintains a variety of housing options that provide for safe, affordable housing for individuals with mental illness. Independent living is available in several locations in Knoxville. Apartment buildings located in two buildings in the Fourth and Gill neighborhood, one new and one

renovated, offer a total of 8 apartments with a capacity of 12 tenants.

**New Hope* is divided into two apartments with four tenants each and shared common areas.

*A house in South Knoxville offers a family living environment with 5 bedrooms. *Two houses in other locations offer housing for three tenants each.

* *Helen Ross McNabb Center* housing services are available to any seriously and persistently mentally ill consumer who meets the qualifying criteria. Over 200 individuals participated in Center housing services.

Angelic Ministries operates a faith-based transitional housing program for men. Housing is provided in several scattered-site group homes, with a total capacity for approximately fifteen men.

Calculate capacity of above listed homes (excluding Catholic ministry) 1169 individuals. If we have eight hundred chronically homeless individuals, one would think that perhaps they could get into one of these programs and make a success out of themselves. Yes it would be hard to stay clean and sober and on medication and follow the rules, however, it would be much easier to integrate into society after they are taught those things.

Knoxville's Community Development Corporation (KCDC) provides affordable housing for low income individuals and families, including those who are homeless. For those who are eligible, The *Section 8 Housing* choice voucher program offers help toward rent in the private rental market.

The differences with the housing unit they are wanting to put at Flenniken is that while in a shelter you must "work the program," that is you must stay clean/sober, you must obey rules, you cannot fight, you must take your medication, do group therapy or

whatever therapy is conducted on site. Also at these shelters there are qualified people working there in order to help if a situation becomes uncontrollable, i.e. hallucinations, mania, delusions, etc. they know how to handle the crises. At Flenniken there will be none of that, as I said before, Mr. Lawler said the only thing the men have to do is agree to live there and pay their rent, otherwise they will live just like anyone else. While this is admirable it is certainly setting these individuals up for failure. Flenniken, as well as any other housing proposed by the 10 Year office is in essence, to me, an all day long shelter where there are no rules and you can hang out as long as you want.

A woman wrote into KNS regarding this issue and I feel compelled to add it to this information for you in case you didn't see it.

Theory homeless need housing first is reckless

Regarding the recent News Sentinel's reporting on our homeless situation, in my professional opinion, the current social theory that the homeless first need a residence and then stabilization of their illness is a reckless fallacy.

Almost all of the chronically homeless are addicted, or psychotic, or both. The "dually diagnosed," with both chronic psychosis and chronic addiction, are the most difficult to treat.

The thought distortions of mental illness reduce the judgment and motivation to overcome the addiction, which precludes compliance with medication regimens, which in turn, could improve mental status - a truly vicious circle and difficult to straighten out.

Even medication compliance by those adults with serious mental illness does not guarantee normal thought processes and behavior.

These people cannot just be picked up off the street and relocated to community housing without prior intensive treatment which could, after all, prove ineffective. They need to be institutionalized, by court order if necessary, where access to their "drugs of choice" can be prevented and compliance with medications can be enforced until they are proved stable and willing to continue the necessary treatment which keeps them in remission.

They also need prior behavioral and occupational therapies to achieve minimal social norms, including hygiene and personal boundaries. These people certainly should not be released into residential communities until all communicable diseases they may carry, including, hepatitis, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS, are brought under control.

Success in this most serious public health matter is not accomplished on the cheap.

Penny Frick, RN, MSN

Loudon”

Here is another person who has grave concerns about the “housing first” approach as well.

“But Bob Cote, a former homeless person who now runs a program for male addicts, "Step 13," is critical of the Housing First program.

"I've watched them have homes be all set up and the next thing you know, it's diabolical. They're out drunk again or shooting heroin," Cote said.

Cote, a recovered alcoholic, said Denver's plan lacks an appropriate emphasis on self-responsibility.

"Some people will abuse it. They're system abusers. They're system dependent. And they'll say, 'Oh, I got a free pad.'"

Providing the **homeless** with jobs and housing, while offering voluntary programs for their addictions and mental illnesses, is part of a national model called "Housing First.""

<http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,164234,00.html>

A City Council Member expressed concerns as to why the 10 Year Plan wasn't using existing apartment complexes and here is a story of just that being used in another state...

Haynes-Green said the region's plan on homelessness has "to look at leasing rather than building housing.

"Because of rising land prices, I don't see our first move out the door being to build housing," she said.

She said that the plan recommends "utilizing existing rental housing ... spread out on scattered sites."

Ten-year plans to end homelessness were first advocated in the United States in 2000, and since then more than 300 municipalities and several states have made the commitment. The concept's pioneer, the National Alliance to End Homelessness, says it's a feasible goal if leaders work hard at it, although the group cannot prove that its time frame works to fully eradicate homelessness."

<http://www.ask.com/bar?q=critics+of+the+10Year+Plan+to+End+Chronic+Homelessness&page=1&qsrc=2417&ab=6&u=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ndpopposition.ab.ca%2Fsite%2Findex.cfm%3Ffuseaction%3Dpage.details%26ID%3D7728%26t%3D11%26i%3D56>

Newsworthy Crimes Committed by the Homelessness

“Weymouth, Mass. – The body of a 7-year-old girl taken from a relative’s home in the middle of the night was found early Sunday in the car of a homeless man, who was charged with murder.

Police said Ryan Bois took the girl after she was dropped off at the home for a sleepover. Officers said they tried to stop Bois for driving erratically, but he fled and crashed the car into a taxi. He fled on foot but was caught by a police dog. Bois, 20, was arrested on motor vehicle charges and accused of threatening a police officer. A murder charge was added after the girl’s body was found in the back seat of his car.”

[\(http://www.knoxnews.com/news/2007/aug/06/national-briefs/\)](http://www.knoxnews.com/news/2007/aug/06/national-briefs/)

Knoxville, TN:

“Schools taking extra security measures”

“Halls remembers officer with ribbons”

“Security officer Russell Kocur died on Halloween night last year when a homeless man from Virginia shot him in the back in the parking lot of Halls High School in North Knox County.”

[\(http://www.knoxnews.com/news/2007/oct/31/schools-taking-extra-security-measures/\)](http://www.knoxnews.com/news/2007/oct/31/schools-taking-extra-security-measures/)

“A dispute between two homeless people culminated in a woman hacking at a man’s neck with a hatchet, a police spokesman said Friday.”

[\(http://www.knoxnews.com/news/2008/jun/14/state-briefs-june-14/\)](http://www.knoxnews.com/news/2008/jun/14/state-briefs-june-14/)

“Homeless man charged in East Knoxville arson

The Knoxville Fire and Explosive Investigation Unit arrested a homeless man Wednesday and charged him with setting a fire that gutted an East Knoxville store last week, according to Knoxville Fire Department spokesman Capt. D.J. Corcoran.

Johnny Eugene Rogers, 48, was charged with aggravated arson for allegedly setting the blaze at Global Tire Service, 2313 E. Magnolia Ave., that started around 7:30 p.m. Friday. Owners told investigators a vagrant might have been staying there.

Knoxville police took Rogers into custody for questioning Monday, and he was being held Wednesday on \$150,000 bond.

KFD officials didn't release information about how the fire was allegedly started.”

Johnson City:

“Homeless man gets 17 years in hatchet murder of fellow camper

Associated Press

Originally published 11:10 a.m., April 8, 2009

Updated 11:10 a.m., April 8, 2009

JOHNSON CITY, Tenn. - A man has pleaded guilty to a lesser charge in the hatchet murder of another man in a homeless camp in Johnson City.

James Garner pleaded entered his plea Tuesday to a second-degree murder charge in the June 2007 killing of Scott Babb, whose body was found covered with sleeping bags between two tents.

Autopsy results documented 73 "chop wounds," including 66 injuries to Babb's head, face and neck.

The 45-year-old Garner had been charged with first-degree murder.

His plea to second-degree murder was in exchange for a 17-year prison term.

Another homeless man, Terry McIntosh, had been arrested during the initial investigation, but charges against him were dropped after a DNA analysis failed to show blood evidence on his clothing.

More details as they develop online and in Thursday's News Sentinel.”

Athens, TN:

“Monroe man charged with rape of 3-year-old

ATHENS, Tenn. - A homeless Monroe County man has been charged with aggravated rape of a 3-year old child and is being held in the McMinn County Jail on a \$250,000 bond.

Detective Gary Miller said 62-year-old Angus Ray Huskey Sr. faces a Feb. 6, preliminary hearing in the case. He was arraigned on the charge Tuesday in McMinn County General Sessions Court.

According to a report filed by Miller, a complaint was filed about the incident and a forensic interview was conducted with the girl by the local Department of Human Services. After the interview, Huskey was called to the Justice Center and he admitted to the allegations, officials said.

He did not live at the north McMinn County home where the alleged rape occurred, but was at the home.”

(<http://www.knoxnews.com/news/2009/jan/28/state-briefs-jan-28/>)

“2 charged with murder in shooting of plant owner

Associated Press

Originally published 10:05 a.m., February 19, 2009

Updated 10:05 a.m., February 19, 2009

ATHENS, Tenn. - A jail escapee and a homeless man have been indicted in the death of an Athens plant owner, who was camping at his business to ward off burglaries.

Felony murder indictments were served on Daniel Lankey and Jeff Coleman on Tuesday at the McMinn County Jail, according to The Daily Post-Athenian.

Lankey and Coleman are accused in the fatal shooting of Jeff Beene, who was shot Jan. 29 inside the Plastic Industries plant. He died two days later.

Lankey escaped from the Meigs County Jail in December and was captured Feb. 9 near Riceville. Coleman was picked up Friday at a homeless encampment near the plant.

Investigators said Tennessee Bureau of Investigation tests on a pistol Lankey threw out during the chase that led to his capture confirm it is the murder weapon.

More details as they develop online and in Friday's News Sentinel.”

I have grave reservations about the housing first plan. I tried to speak to Mr. Jon Lawler about other cities that have what they call one stop shopping, it is an apartment complex for the chronically homeless that has psychiatric workers, doctors, nurses, anything that they need onsite in order to help them get stable and to teach them to reintegrate into society. As one man named Soto said, “At the top of his list of objections is that the homeless community wasn't brought into the process.

‘How can you tell me they know what's going on?’ Soto asked after reading a list of people who helped compile the plan that included politicians, professionals and law enforcement officials.

‘You can do all the research you want and all the surveys you want, but you haven't lived it,’ Soto said.

“Soto said the Ten-Year Plan’s focus on substance abuse and mental illness is right on target, but he wonders how many of the hardcore homeless will opt to take advantage of its programs. ‘It’s too easy to subsist on the streets,’ he said, ‘although it’s far from comfortable.’” (<http://www.knoxnews.com/news/2006/nov/21/one-man-says-key-element-of-ten-year-plan/>)

Summary

In summary, this isn't about not wanting to help the chronically homeless, it is about trying to make a community more viable. I certainly have many questions and concerns with the 10 Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness and have given you some of them, but when you break it down for the people who live and work in South Knoxville our feelings are that we have our share of income based homes, apartment units and halfway houses, we and the property values cannot sustain another one. The business leaders that I have spoken with in South Knoxville feel that as the revitalization efforts continue on Blount Avenue that South Knoxville will be booming with businesses, which is something we need and we have a clear vision for. We need companies that will give us the opportunity for jobs, we need a way to pull ourselves out of the hole we have fallen into in the past ten or fifteen years. South Knoxville needs support from the city government in order to make it a more viable, beautiful place. As it stands there are car lots, liquor stores (which doesn't bode well for the chronically homeless or anyone who has dual diagnosis, mental illness and alcohol addiction), we have drug use, crack, one block away from Flenniken, (which doesn't bode well for those who are mentally ill and drug addicts, or just addicts if they plan to get and stay clean), while we are trying to revitalize our neighborhood there are still many homes and businesses falling down, empty homes and businesses, if we are going to revitalize our neighborhood we cannot do it with an income based unit for the chronically homeless or any other population.

As you look through the pictures please remember that many of those homes are on the streets on each side of Flenniken School and one road over, this is not an area that can help out any population at all, let alone one that will need intense support.

On the 10 Year Plan's website it says, "So stay tuned, and speak up. We're not just talking: we're listening too."

(<http://knoxtenyearplan.org/>) Well he hasn't been listening. South Knoxville, and I suspect many of the neighborhoods Mr. Lawler has singled out are already saturated with income based homes, apartments, halfway houses, their property values decreased, another housing unit cannot be sustained in these environments.

As well, the money that Lawler and Co. received from the Tennessee Housing Development Agency states that the funds that are given the housing must stay low income for thirty years, so even if the chronically homeless housing doesn't last this unit will have to be low income, income based, for thirty years. Please remember that many of these residents in this area are elderly, as I stated earlier, and have lived in their homes for decades, it is not an option to sale their homes and pick up and move nor should they have to.

I am asking that you to deny the Use on Review for Flenniken School for an income based housing unit for the chronically homeless/mentally ill/drug and alcohol addicts, for that matter I would ask that you deny any type of housing unit at Flenniken School, please leave it as 0-1, offices. I have tried to explain how important this community is to its members and how we need revitalization. Those of us who live in South Knoxville and who have grown up here are proud of our neighborhood and we see great things on the horizon, if we can only have a say in it. The land that Mr. Lawler wants for this housing development is the perfect land for shops, unique shops with great views or the implementation of the South Sector Plan or the Empowerment Zone plan, which was completed by the city but nothing ever done.

As their own website says, "So stay tuned, and speak up. We're not just talking: we're listening too." (<http://knoxtenyearplan.org/>)

We are asking that you deny the Use on Review and allow us to institute the Empowerment Zone proposal at Flenniken School.

Please feel free to contact any one of us if you have any questions

Karen Welch, welchk2@bellsouth.net or by phone 865-579-9549,

Joe Minichiello, moochie747@comcast.net or by phone 865-573-5135,

Elizabeth Monday, mondayj2@comcast.net or by phone 865-577-1745.

Sincerely,

Karen Welch

Joe Minichiello

Elizabeth Monday

A noteworthy quote from Robert Finely of the 10 Year Plan, this is part of a post on KNS...

Ultimately, we want to transform the way we approach all homelessness, beginning with chronic homelessness. We want to make Knoxville a community where, if you are homeless for whatever reason, we will come alongside you and work just as hard as you will to end your homelessness. On the flip side of that, if you are homeless and you just want to be a parasite or a predator, we'd like to make sure you know that this is not the place for you to be.

(<http://www.knoxnews.com/news/2009/apr/22/council-votes-to-fully-fund-minvilla-manor/>) However, he never followed up on how he would do this.

Here's the list of apartment complexes in South Knoxville, most being within a mile and a half from Flenniken School...

Apartments in South Knoxville

Davenport Avenue –	Crescent South Gateway Spanish Trace (Susanne) Woodmeade South Studio Apartments
Behind Sonic - (five separate apartment complexes)	Zaina Hickory Hill Hialeah No sign No sign
— Avenue A -	No sign
Montgomery Village	
Ogle Street - (three separate apartment complexes)	No sign No sign No sign
Belvedere -	No sign
Blount Avenue -	No sign
Sevier Avenue - (five separate apartment complexes)	Stonewall I University Heights Southwood No sign
3337 Sevier Avenue	No sign

Chapman Highway/Stone Road -	Stonewall II
Flenniken Road -	The Verandas
Martin Mill - (three separate apartment complexes)	Flenniken Square No sign No sign
Mimosa -	No sign
Berittie Road -	One South Place
Baker Avenue -	Sandy Lane
Moody Avenue -	Southmont
Taliwa Gardens Road - (two separate apartment complexes)	No sign No sign
Green Pine Road - (two separate apartment complexes)	No sign No sign
Taliwa Drive - (this is a huge apartment complex and its right across Chapman Highway from Flenniken School)	Chapman Square
Woodlawn -	Cherokee Ridge
McClung/Buford-	No sign
Minnis -	No sign
Moody Avenue -	No sign

*This does not include the new units Helen Ross McNabb are going to build on Baker Avenue.

*Please note there are not pictures for Montgomery Village or Stonewall II apartments, however, there are pictures for all the rest.

*The pictures were taken within a mile and a half from Flenniken School, the majority were within a mile.

*I am aware of only four or five of them NOT being income based.