

2-B-10-UR-COR-Hayward

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February 8, 2010

Members of the Knox County
Metropolitan Planning Commission

VIA FAX (215-2068)

Ladies and Gentlemen:

We are writing regarding your February 11, 2010 agenda item 44—Banyan Senior Living—not to oppose this project, but to express concern about one aspect of it as currently encompassed in your meeting materials.

Should this project go forward, we would be its “neighbors” across Wellsley Park Rd. in the Wellsley Park Estates subdivision. We are not opposed to a “senior living” development on the subject property, provided that it meets dwelling unit per acre density requirements currently in effect.

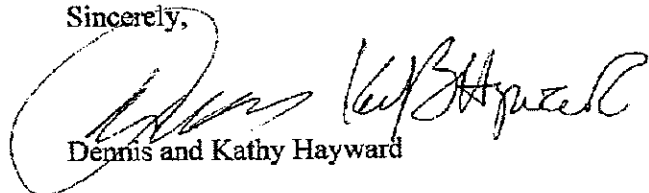
However, we are very concerned about the height of the buildings shown in the materials submitted for your consideration. The architectural renderings of these structures indicate that several of the buildings will be at least five stories tall, and at least one of the structures will be eight or more stories above ground. These would be totally out of character with the nature of the structures surrounding the proposed Banyan Senior Living. The apartment buildings of The Grove at Deane Hill (west of the subject property) are no more than three stories. The commercial buildings of the Centre at Deane Hill (north of the subject property—across Gleason Drive) are one to two stories. Homewood Residences, the existing assisted living facility that is also north of the subject property has buildings that are limited to three stories. And the neighborhood housing east of the subject property (The Villas at Wellsley Park and Wellsley Park Estates) includes nothing that is more than three stories.

Furthermore, the fact that the proposed Banyan Senior Living will be located on a hill that is higher than any of the surrounding properties will further exaggerate the height of the proposed buildings and make them look even more out of place. Your current staff analysis of the Banyan project states that the proposed “use will not significantly injure the value of adjacent property,” but we dispute that conclusion if multiple story buildings significantly in excess of surrounding structures are part of the plan. Even with extensive landscaping, they will look as if they were “plopped” on top of the hill without regard to the nature and character of the rest of the neighborhood.

If you approve this Banyan Senior Living project, we strongly urge you to require the developer to submit a site plan and individual building plans that lower the height of the structures to no more than four stories above ground. And we ask that our comments be included in any future MPC consideration of this project as it moves through the approvals process.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dennis and Kathy Hayward". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "D".

Dennis and Kathy Hayward