

**KNOXVILLE/KNOX COUNTY METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION
 REZONING REPORT**

▶ **FILE #:** 1-C-11-RZ

AGENDA ITEM # 22

AGENDA DATE: 1/13/2011

▶ **APPLICANT:** MID-ATLANTIC FOUNDATION

OWNER(S): Mid-Atlantic Foundation

TAX ID NUMBER: 82 P D 001

JURISDICTION: City Council District 6

▶ **LOCATION:** South side Washington Ave., west side Mitchell St.

▶ **APPX. SIZE OF TRACT:** 8.9 acres

SECTOR PLAN: Central City

GROWTH POLICY PLAN: Urban Growth Area (Inside City Limits)

ACCESSIBILITY: Primary access is via Washington Ave., a minor collector street with 20' of pavement width within 50' of right-of-way. Access may also be gained from various local streets around the site, including Abilene Pl. and Mitchell St.

UTILITIES: Water Source: Knoxville Utilities Board
 Sewer Source: Knoxville Utilities Board

WATERSHED: First Creek

▶ **PRESENT ZONING:** I-3 (General Industrial)

▶ **ZONING REQUESTED:** C-2 (Central Business District)

▶ **EXISTING LAND USE:** Vacant industrial building

▶ **PROPOSED USE:** Combination of commercial spaces on the 1st floor/railroad side and residential apartments on the upper floors and the 1st floor on the ballpark side.

EXTENSION OF ZONE: No

HISTORY OF ZONING: None noted

SURROUNDING LAND USE AND ZONING: North: Washington Ave. - Parking / I-3 (General Industrial)

South: Ballfield, KAT facilities / I-3 (General Industrial)

East: Caswell Park, business and residences / O-2 (Civic & Institutional), C-3 (General Commercial) and I-3 (General Industrial)

West: Railroad ROW and industrial businesses / I-3 (General Industrial)

NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT: This area is developed with a mix of uses, including a park, greenway trails, residences, civic buildings, businesses and numerous industrial uses, under various zoning districts.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

▶ **RECOMMEND that City Council APPROVE C-2 (Central Business District) zoning.**

C-2 zoning will allow redevelopment and reuse of this now vacant site. It is consistent with the sector plan proposal, as amended by the Magnolia Avenue Corridor Plan, and is compatible with surrounding land uses and zoning.

COMMENTS:

NEED BASED ON SUBSTANTIALLY CHANGED/CHANGING CONDITIONS IN THE AREA OR THE COUNTY GENERALLY:

1. C-2 zoning is compatible with the scale and intensity of the surrounding development and zoning.
2. This site has been identified in the Magnolia Avenue Corridor Plan as appropriate for redevelopment. The plan states that the First Creek Greenway can be a catalyst for reuse and redevelopment. The plan proposes mixed uses for this site that will allow reuse of Standard Mills for a mix of higher density residential, wholesale commercial/distribution and utility uses.
3. C-2 zoning allows a wider range of uses than I-3, including residential. C-2 is the primary zoning used for downtown business district development.

CONSISTENCY WITH INTENT AND PURPOSE OF THE ZONING ORDINANCE:

1. The C-2 zoning district, with complementary office, medical, civic, residential and historical areas, forms the metropolitan center for commercial, financial, professional, governmental and cultural activities. The intent is to protect and improve the central business district for the performance of its primary functions. In addition, uses are discouraged which do not require a central location or would create friction in the performance of functions that should be centralized.
2. Based on the above general intent, this area is appropriate for C-2 zoning.

THE EFFECTS OF THE PROPOSAL:

1. Water and sewer utilities are in place to serve this site.
2. The impact on schools and the street system will depend on the type of redevelopment that eventually takes place.
3. There are numerous existing and proposed greenways in the vicinity of this site. (See attached maps.) The applicant will be expected to work with MPC and the City of Knoxville Greenways Coordinator to maintain easements for future greenway connections to the north and south of the site. The Magnolia Avenue Corridor Plan specifically proposes to continue the significant public improvements in and around Caswell Park to the southeast of the subject property.
4. The Magnolia Avenue Corridor Plan includes this site within the Hall of Fame and Magnolia Gateway area. One specific recommendation for this area is to complete the First Creek Greenway with a rails-to-trails connection to downtown. Also, easements should be maintained along the railroad on the western portion of the site in order to accommodate a future rails-to-trails connection to downtown. The attached aerial photo shows a proposed greenway at the southwest corner of this site.
5. MPC's historic preservation planner has determined that the building on site is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, but it is not currently listed. An H-1 (Historical Overlay) zone may also be appropriate for this site in the future.

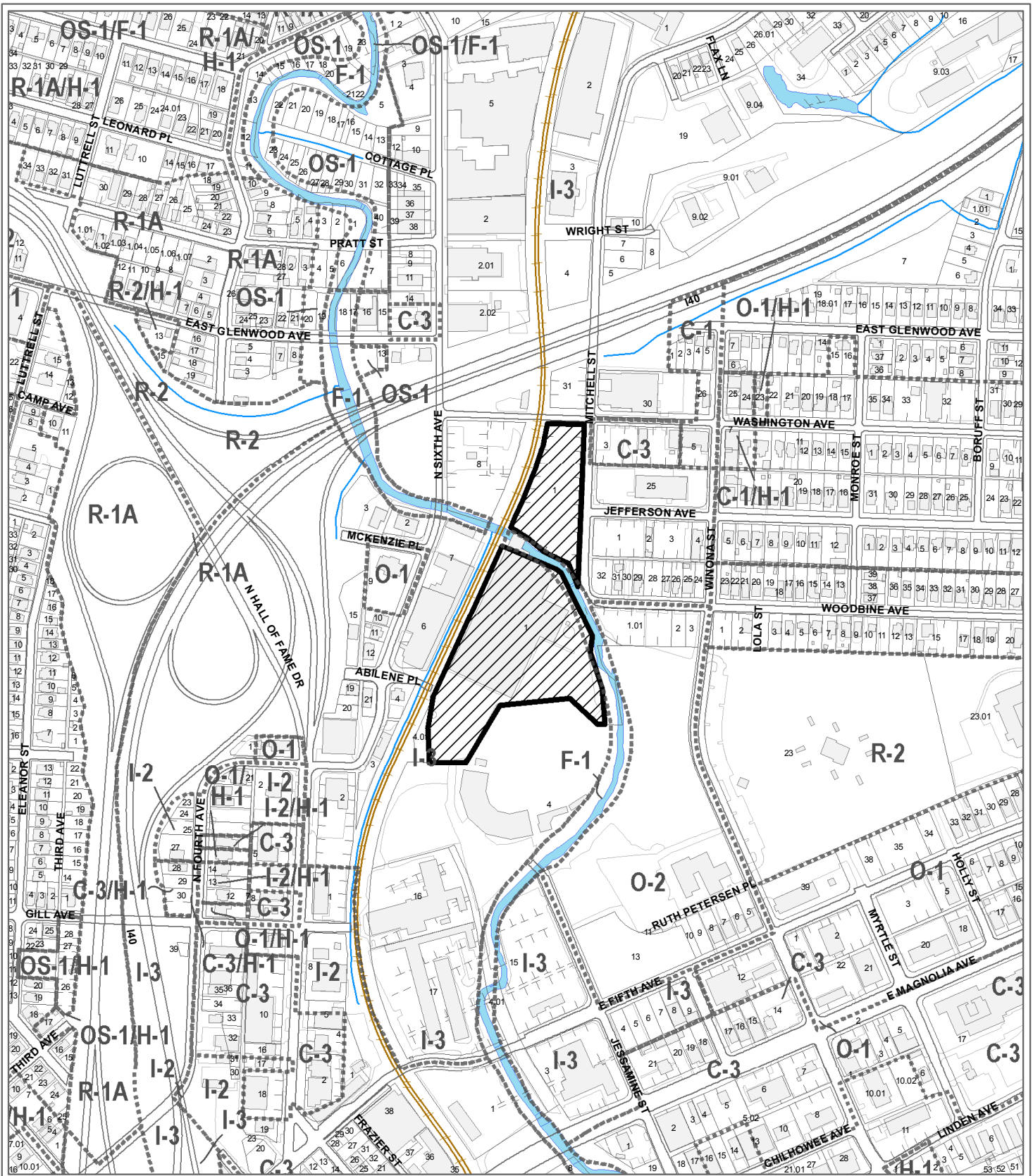
CONFORMITY OF THE PROPOSAL TO ADOPTED PLANS

1. The Central City Sector Plan, as amended by the Magnolia Avenue Corridor Plan, designates the area containing this site as a mixed use special district, eligible for C-2 zoning, which is a mixed use zoning district.
2. C-2 zoning is consistent with the City of Knoxville One Year Plan, which also designates the site as the same mixed use special district.
3. Approval of this request could lead to future requests for C-2 zoning on other parcels in the area. These requests will need to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis according to their own merits. Since C-2 zoning does not require on-site parking, the availability of off-site parking will have to be considered as part of any future requests.

ESTIMATED TRAFFIC IMPACT: Not calculated.

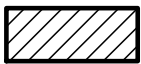
ESTIMATED STUDENT YIELD: Not applicable.

If approved, this item will be forwarded to Knoxville City Council for action on 2/8/2011 and 2/22/2011. If denied, MPC's action is final, unless the action to deny is appealed to Knoxville City Council. The date of the appeal hearing will depend on when the appeal application is filed. Appellants have 15 days to appeal an MPC decision in the City.



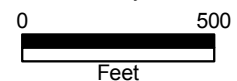
**1-C-11-RZ
REZONING**

From: I-3 (General Industrial)
To: C-2 (Central Business District)



Petitioner: Mid-Atlantic Foundation







Map No: 82
Jurisdiction: City

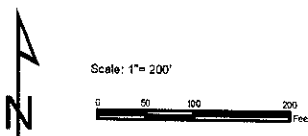


Original Print Date: 12/22/2010 Revised:
Metropolitan Planning Commission * City / County Building * Knoxville, TN 37902



Legend

-  Proposed Greenway
-  Existing Greenway
-  Existing Parks
-  Proposed Parks
-  Schools
-  City of Knoxville Property



First Creek Greenway Under I-40

First Creek Park to Caswell Park

City of Knoxville
Department of Engineering

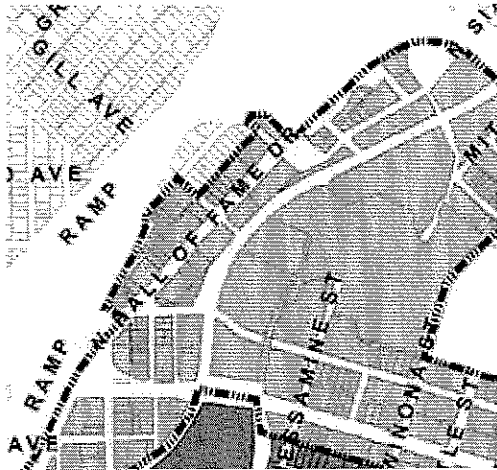
Magnolia Avenue Corridor Plan

May 2009

Adopted by:
the Knoxville-Knox County Metropolitan Planning Commission on July 9, 2009
and
the Knoxville City Council on August 25, 2009

Hall of Fame and Magnolia Gateways

Both Hall of Fame Drive and the first portion of Magnolia Avenue are significant gateways to Downtown Knoxville. This portion of the plan is directed to a series of enhancements within the area. Historical development plays an important role in forming the proposals:

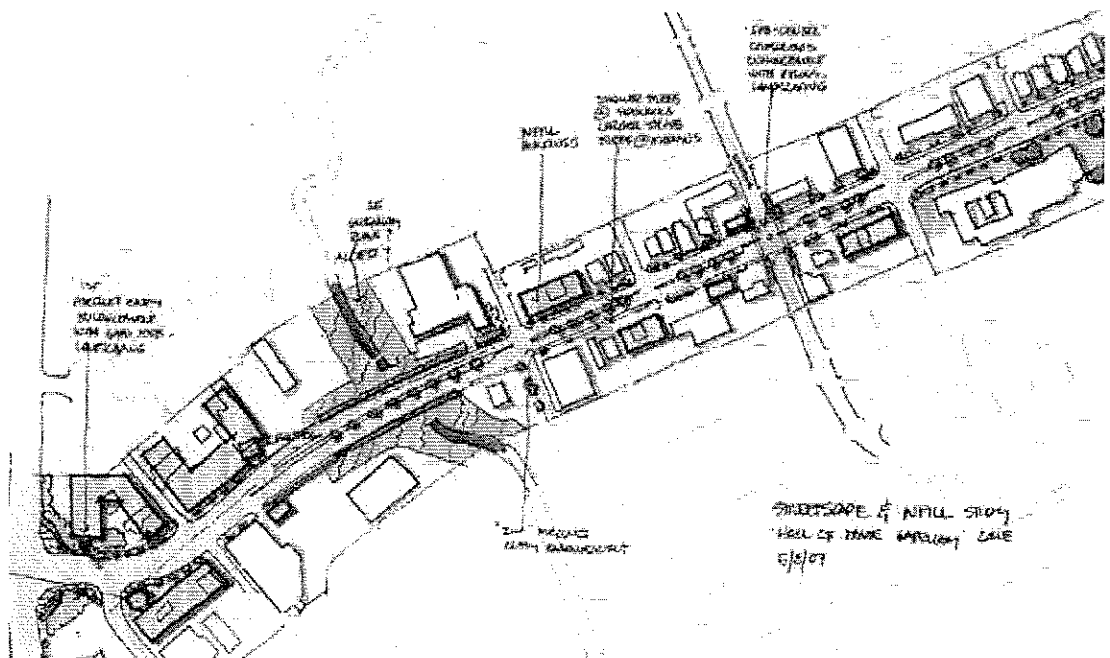


Hall of Fame Drive

It has only been a few years since the section of Hall of Fame Drive included in this plan was widened, using the old Mulvaney Street right-of-way. It was once lined with large Victorian-era houses and a collection of one-story commercial buildings. With the I-40 improvement program, the character changed considerably as North 5th Avenue was reconfigured to form a direct connection from Summit Hill Drive to the new I-40 interchange and Broadway. New overpasses, landscaping, sidewalks and bike lanes have been positive improvements.

The area west of First Creek

This area contains manufacturing, retail and wholesale commercial, and a few shotgun houses. It was an extension of the grid streets that began to be formed along the rail lines in the mid-1800s.



Magnolia Avenue/Park City area

Some of the oldest development along Magnolia Avenue stood and, partially, still stands along the blocks between Jessamine Street and Bertrand Street. While it was once almost entirely residential, it is now a mix of uses.

The First Creek railroad corridor

Large scale rail-oriented industrial and utility uses dominated development in this area. Standard Knitting Mills was the centerpiece of the area's industrialization. The Knoxville Area Transit site was originally the home base of Knoxville's trolley system.

Caswell Park

This was among the best facilities in Knoxville's park and recreation system in the early 20th century and was restored a few years ago. The park was largely surrounded by the Park City neighborhood and the Park Junior High School (now residential).

Washington Avenue/Jefferson Avenue area

This was the eastern edge of Park City. A small commercial hub near the Washington Avenue-Winona Street intersection provided day-to-day goods for workers and residents.

Hall of Fame and Magnolia Gateways Special District Land Use Plan

(see the MU CC 4 area on the proposed land use map)

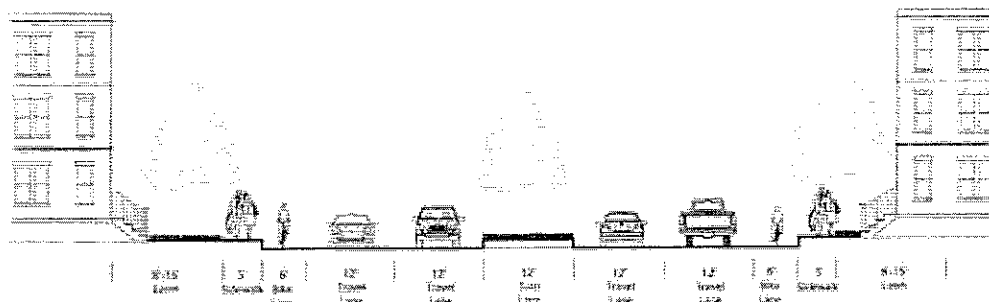
Because of the complex patterns of historical development, several sub-areas should be considered.

Hall of Fame Drive Area: A mix of uses should be allowed in this corridor, including office, commercial, institutional and residential development. Current zoning should be replaced with a form code. The scale of the Victorian-era houses is appropriate for future development.

the former knitting mills – form a derelict edge between the Hall of Fame gateway and the Park Ridge neighborhood. A mix of higher density residential, wholesale commercial/distribution and utility uses should be fostered. The First Creek greenway can be a catalyst for reuse and redevelopment. The mixed use proposal will allow reuse of Standard Mills for residential use, which should be sought.

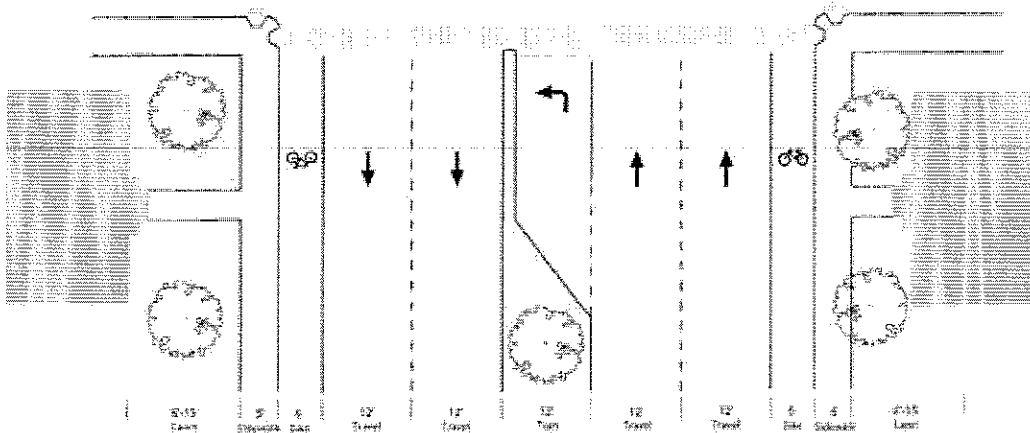
Magnolia Avenue and Washington Avenue Area: The same mix of uses should be allowed as in the SOMAG district.

The pedestrian-friendly, landscaped boulevard should be the setting for higher intensity uses, including commercial, office and apartment development.



Caswell Park Residential-Office Area:

with the park is a centerpiece, higher intensity uses should be fostered along East Fifth Avenue and Woodbine Avenue, taking advantage of this recreation asset.



Illustrations representing the proposed street designs and their relationships to future buildings

The Rail Corridor: After nearly a century of railroad-oriented uses, this area has changed. Vacant and underutilized resources – particularly



An example of the type of housing that could be created overlooking Caswell Park



An architect's rendering of what the gateway could be like

HALL OF FAME AND MAGNOLIA GATEWAYS

Provisions for development historic preservation

Future development/redevelopment

A mix of uses are proposed in each of the sub-areas (see above). Along the gateways, vertical mixed use buildings (such as offices or residential above retail) should be permissible; multi-level structures, including apartment buildings, offices, institutional buildings and hotels are also appropriate.

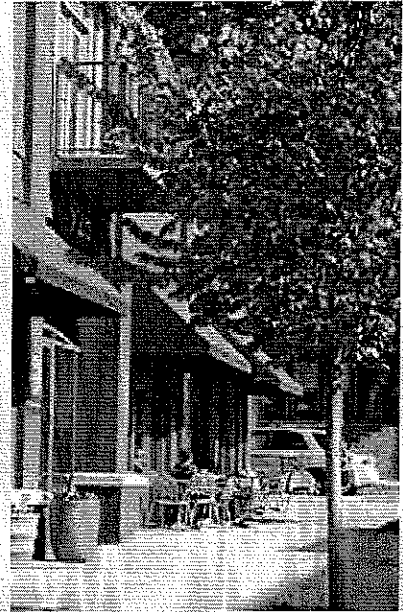
Connectivity/circulation

Continuity in the streets, sidewalks and greenway trails are necessary to the success of revitalization. Opportunities for redesign, like a landscaped median, are possible.

Location/orientation of uses

The historic forms of buildings, such as the houses along Hall of Fame Drive and multi-story structures across from the Pellissippi State Technical Community College, are appropriate along the gateways and around Caswell Park. Limited yard space and front door orientation to the street are basic goals.

Urban forms of development, such as the type of commercial structures in downtown should be allowed between Georgia Avenue and Bertrand Street and around the Washington Avenue/Winona Street intersection.



An example of the types of urban structures that would be appropriate in the Winona Street area.

Parking

On-street parking, which is another measure in fostering safety for pedestrians, should be encouraged, especially along Magnolia Avenue and side streets. Off-street surface parking should be located under, to the side or behind buildings in the future.

Other design elements

Landscaping, lighting and signs should be compatible from one block to another. Street trees should be planted within medians, sidewalk planting strips and bulb-outs.

Historic Preservation

The variety of historic resources in this area is remarkable because of manufacturing along the rail line and its association with Fourth and Gill and Park City history. The following should be preserved:

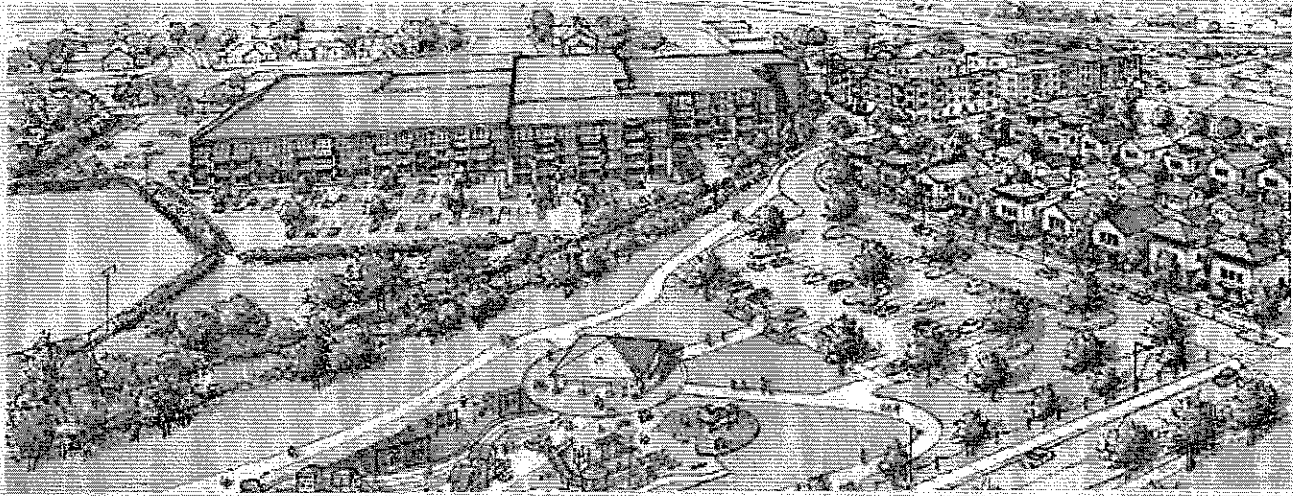
- Holly Street to Bertrand Street historic district: This collection of craftsman-style houses, Mediterranean-style apartment buildings and Swan's Bakery building are part of the original fabric of the corridor. A nomination for listing on the National Register of Historic Place and the creation of a local (H-1) historic zoning overlay are recommended as are facade improvement programs.
- The Standard Knitting Mill complex: A National Register nomination is recommended, potentially allowing tax credit programs for restoration and reuse.
- Washington Avenue/Winona Street commercial buildings: These structures are appropriate candidates for facade improvement programs.
- The turn-of-the-last century houses along Hall of Fame Drive, which include examples of Four-square, East Lake and Colonial Revival architectural styles. They were once part of the residential area, nick-named "Fourth and Gill." The form code would complement the setting of these houses.

Parks and Greenways

The creation of the First Creek Greenway trail, reusing the abandoned rail line, is essential to the revitalization process. That open space and trail is necessary to link Park Ridge and Old North Knoxville neighborhoods to Caswell Park and beyond to downtown. The trail should be routed under Magnolia Avenue via the edge of the Knoxville Utility Board properties. Additionally, the Caswell Park walking loop should be extended and a connection should be made across the railroad to the Fourth and Gill neighborhood.

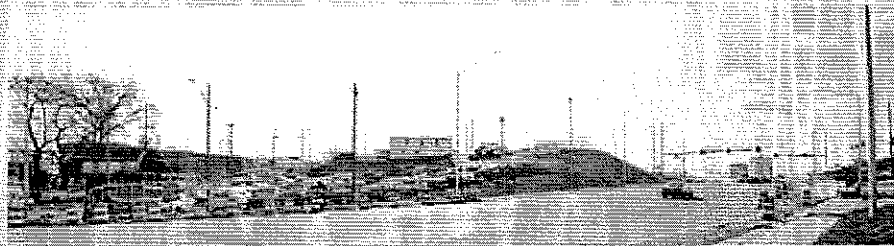
**HALL OF FAME AND MAGNOLIA GATEWAYS Special Emphasis:
The Winona Street and Caswell Park area revitalization.**

X The improvements to Caswell Park have been significant, including a walking path, a new playground and additions to the O'Conner center. The First Creek trail will be extended through the area. The land use plan and form code proposals would allow office uses and a variety of residences, such as the infill housing and apartments northwest of the park. Reuse of the Standard Knitting Mills, depicted here to show a residential renovation, is also a foremost concern.

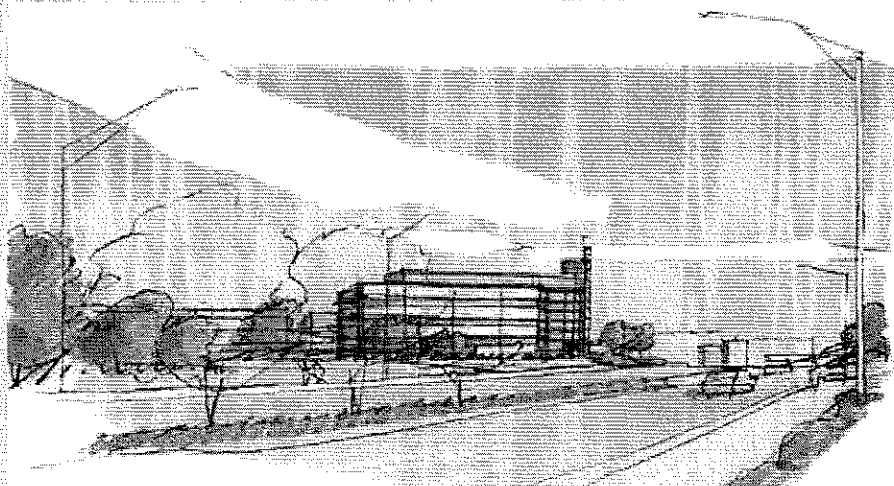


**HALL OF FAME AND MAGNOLIA GATEWAYS Special Emphasis:
The northeast corner of the Magnolia Avenue-Hall of Fame Drive intersection.**

This is the signature block for redevelopment. This School Board-owned area rises on a knoll above the streets. The views of the site and of the skyline would be dramatic. The changes in topography can be used for more intensive development, particularly with underground parking.



Hall of Fame Drive today



This AIA drawing captures the potential for this area

Recommendations for the Hall of Fame and Magnolia Gateways

1. Work with the Knox County School Board and other property owners in the area west of First Creek to redevelop the Hall of Fame/Magnolia corner, the "signature site" on these gateways
2. Create a bike and trail connection from the Fourth and Gill neighborhood to Caswell Park.
3. Start the first section of the "complete street" program between the Hall of Fame intersection and Pellissippi State's Division Street campus
4. Develop form codes for the sub-areas to foster a wider range of pedestrian-oriented uses, higher intensity development and expansion of investment
5. Continue aesthetic improvements, including tree-lined streets and landscaped medians
6. Complete First Creek Greenway with a rails-to-trails connection to downtown
7. Develop improvement programs, such as tax increment financing, to foster reuse and redevelopment.
8. Extend façade improvement program, particularly focusing on the historic commercial properties in this area.

structures remain, often expanded or converted to office or commercial use

In the post-World War II era, when Magnolia Avenue was designated a federal highway route, the avenue became an attractive location for commercial development. Following I-40 construction, the corridor changed again: traffic volumes dropped significantly as it no longer served as a major road for travelers heading through Knoxville and the types of investment changed with more fast food and strip centers being created.



One of several early 20th Century houses that have been converted into commercial property.

North Bertrand Street to Chilhowee Park Area

Early development east of First Creek was primarily residential, with pockets of small commercial structures around major intersections. The residential styles included Victorian-era houses and Craftsman houses. There were also Mediterranean-style apartments, often two-story but, on occasion, three-story designs like the Aston. Many residential

North Bertrand Street to Chilhowee Park Special District: Land Use Plan

A mix of uses should be allowed along Magnolia Avenue. Current zoning, largely the C-3 general commercial district, should be replaced with a form code similar to the proposed

