



Betty Jo Mahan <bettyjo.mahan@knoxmpc.org>

[MPC Comment] 12/16/2017 Agenda Item #15 (Karns Valley Business Park)

1 message

cdgreenwood via Commission <commission@knoxmpc.org>

Wed, Dec 13, 2017 at 8:05 AM

Reply-To: cdgreenwood@cs.com

To: commission@knoxmpc.org, contact@knoxmpc.org

MPC Commissioners,

One of the agenda items you will be asked to make a decision on at Thursday's MPC meeting is in regard to the Karns Valley Business Park. I live in one of the neighborhoods that is adjacent to this property.

This property is zoned EC (Employment Center) which means that you will be evaluating general proposed uses for this property and making a decision without knowing what type of businesses or industry will be proposed to be located there. After this decision, you will not have a say on what can be located there. As long as whatever is proposed meets the Development Plan (a "Final Draft" Development Plan has been drafted, though it has not been included in the agenda materials that are posted online), the proposed facility must be approved and it will be the MPC staff and not you who will approve it.

I am concerned about what this could mean for the health, safety, quality of life, and property values of the residents who live adjacent to the property on its north side or in close proximity to it. I am also concerned about the effect on Karns High School students and others who attend or visit the school and the athletic fields that are immediately adjacent to this business park property on its south side. EC zoning can include everything from very benign businesses, such as a bank, to industries such as textile mills or high diesel fume generating distribution centers. EC zoning allows siting of industries that can emit toxic chemicals which can harm students and residents within about 300 feet, while the Development Plan for this site allows setbacks of a maximum of only 100 feet (which is twice the 50-foot buffer noted in the EC zoning regulation, but still falls short of what is needed to protect children and residents). Some people think that as long as an industry is meeting its air permit, there is no danger, but in fact if such facilities are not properly zoned to allow a sufficient buffer from sensitive receptors, (in this case, students and residents and many of the residents are elderly) then significant harm to peoples' health can result, in addition to harm to their safety, quality of life, and property values (due to hazardous emissions as well as the risk of explosions, etc.).

The Development Plan currently excludes certain inappropriate uses, such as landfills and animal rendering facilities. There is also a lot of attention to detailed building design standards and landscaping requirements, which should help ensure the park looks as attractive as reasonably possible. However, little attention seems to have been given to health, safety, and economic factors.

Please expand the list of excluded uses to also exclude other industrial facilities and businesses that are inappropriate due to the threat they pose when located adjacent to a school and residences. While I can appreciate that EC zoning is designed to streamline the approval process, it should not be used as a way to subvert basic zoning principles to allow inappropriate industrial uses onto property that abuts a school and residences. Alternatively, if you have not had time to review the Development Plan, since it does not seem to have been posted as of the time of this writing, then please postpone action on this item for at least a month to give time for you to review it.

One small note to MPC staff -- I believe there is an error in the Staff Recommendation -- a reference to the Midway Business Park Property Owners Association in Condition #10.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Greenwood
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This message was directed to commission@knoxmpc.org

