



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

[MPC Comment] Fwd: Sidewalks

1 message

Gerald Green <gerald.green@knoxmpc.org>
Reply-To: gerald.green@knoxmpc.org
To: Planning Commissioners <commission@knoxmpc.org>

Thu, Sep 21, 2017 at 4:31 PM

FYI

Gerald Green AICP
Executive Director
Knoxville-Knox County
Metropolitan Planning Commission
400 Main Street, Suite 403
Knoxville, TN 37902
[865.215.3758](tel:865.215.3758)
gerald.green@knoxmpc.org

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Danny Kirby <dkirby@5881000.com>
Date: Thu, Sep 21, 2017 at 12:57 PM
Subject: Sidewalks
To: "county.mayor@knoxcounty.org" <county.mayor@knoxcounty.org>, "dean.rice@knoxcounty.org" <dean.rice@knoxcounty.org>, "gerald.green@knoxmpc.org" <gerald.green@knoxmpc.org>

Mayor Burchett/Mr. Rice/Director Green,

I'm writing to express my concerns over the potential new regulations requiring sidewalks in new subdivisions. As a developer in Knox County, I can tell you that it is already impossible to produce building lots for affordable homes, without the additional expense of sidewalks. While sidewalks may be an amenity that is affordable to some, there are many more that just want the ability to own a home...those who are willing to forego the luxury of sidewalks to achieve the American dream of home ownership.

As I'm sure you all are aware, there is no end to regulation when it comes to housing development...and all regulations come with a price. We have all but eliminated "affordable" homes in our area and across the country with over-regulation. Attached is a screenshot of "new" homes in the area under \$200,000. As you can see there are literally a handful of homes available and virtually zero in West Knoxville. Do you know why? Because the lots cannot be produced at a price that makes it financially feasible. This means that working class citizens of Knox County are forced to buy used homes and absorb the risks associated with used and depreciated homes, such as expensive repairs. Those homes are also likely to be in areas not close to the workplace, and therefore they suffer the financial burden of driving long distances to work. It's literally a discriminatory practice to continue this assault on the working class citizens of this County...just so we can "encourage" people to walk more.

It has been discussed, that a sidewalk only costs \$20 per linear foot to install and that, on a 60' wide lot, the additional cost to a new homebuyer is only around \$1,200. However, the cost of the sidewalk is an expense built into the price of a lot sold to the builder. In homebuilding, the price of the home to be built is dictated by the cost of the lot. Typically a lot is 20% of the home price. Therefore, an additional \$1,200 in lot cost equates to an additional \$6,000 in home price. This can be verified by talking to any homebuilder in town.

While there are locations that are more urban in nature, that might justify the addition of sidewalks, the majority of the County does not fall into that category. And while I have great respect for the Planning agencies and the outspoken neighborhood organizations that constantly push for more regulations and more amenities, they often do so more from the position of comfort than reality.

Besides the affordability issue, here are some other issues that concern me with this regulation:

1. There are never any provisions to off-set expenses with new regulations like this. MPC needs to consider reducing the required road and right of way widths in exchange for adding amenities like sidewalks. MPC always brings up that these reductions are permitted under the "Alternative Hillside Regulations", but they refuse to make the reductions part of the sidewalk plan. If they can allow it for hillside development, they can allow in other developments. Increasing allowed density and reducing the required lot sizes should also be considered to allow for off-setting the additional expenses.

2. Who is responsible for the maintenance of the sidewalks? While it's assumed that the City or County would be responsible, it needs to be spelled out in the document. One of the Sidewalk Committee's guiding Research and Support documents poses this question with the following answers.

9. Who will maintain the sidewalks? • In Shelby, Hamilton, and Davidson Counties, the suburban residents are left to maintain the sidewalks pertaining to their property.

Are Knox County citizens going to be "left to maintain the sidewalks pertaining to their property"?

3. There should be a minimum amount in the County's budget for maintenance before any sidewalk requirements are adopted, lest we end up in the above-described scenario of citizens being responsible for maintenance. I'm sure County Engineering and Public Works will tell you that they can't keep up with road maintenance due to lack of funds, so what makes anyone think they will be able to keep up with sidewalk maintenance. Will property taxes be raised to cover this new expense?

4. And who is responsible for ADA compliance after the sidewalks are constructed? Again, it's assumed the County is responsible, but Jim Hagerman stated at a public meeting, that the homeowner would be responsible where their driveway crosses the sidewalk. As you can imagine, almost everyone in the room was shocked that a homeowner could get tangled up in an ADA lawsuit over a sidewalk. If every potential homebuyer knows they could be responsible for maintaining their driveway to ADA standards, then new homebuying will come to a halt. The only way for this issued to be handled, is for the City or County to indemnify any homeowner against any ADA lawsuits, so I'd like to see that language added to the Ordinance.

I appreciate your consideration of my comments and look forward to continuing this discussion, but I think there are for too many uncertainties surrounding the proposed regulations, for them to be adopted any time in the near future.

Sincerely,

Danny Kirby

First Commercial Real Estate

P.O. Box 10226

Knoxville, TN 37939

[\(865\)588-1000](tel:(865)588-1000)



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

[MPC Comment] Amendments to the Knoxville-Knox County Minimum Subdivision Regulations MPC FILE # 9-A-16-OA

1 message

Jack W <ajwoodal@gmail.com>
Reply-To: ajwoodal@gmail.com
To: commission@knoxmpc.org
Cc: gerald.green@knoxmpc.org, tom.brechko@knoxmpc.org

Wed, Oct 4, 2017 at 11:20 AM

To: Knoxville – Knox County Metropolitan Planning Commission

I am a member of Community Forum. I have appeared before the MPC several times to address the sidewalk requirement in the revised subdivision regulations. Community Forum, established in 1987, is an organization that includes representatives from many neighborhoods in the City of Knoxville and Knox County.

At the September MPC meeting, MPC staff presented sidewalk options to MPC for the new proposed subdivision regulations.

Community Forum supports the requirement for sidewalks in all new subdivisions in Knox County without exception for secondary streets that have 12 or fewer lots or a length of less than 400 feet.

The original sidewalk proposal a year and a half ago included a requirement for sidewalks in all new subdivisions. As part of MPC discussions, MPC distributed an excellent video emphasizing walkability and the importance of sidewalks. Knox County's new subdivisions are not only for next year but will represent the life of the community for the next 50 years.

Sidewalks encourage people to get out of their houses and cars and provide opportunities for walking and physical activity that improve health and well-being. A subdivision with sidewalks has an enhanced sense of community by giving residents better connections to their neighbors.

Sidewalks are important to the everyday lives of children. They are critical to the safety of children who walk to schools and walk through their subdivisions to meet school buses. Sidewalks enable children to walk safely with their parents and to walk safely to meet friends. Sidewalks are a place to use wheeled toys that cannot be safely be used on the streets.

In addition to requiring sidewalks in all new subdivisions, MPC should not exempt secondary streets with a length less than 400 feet in those subdivisions. There is no definition of a "secondary street" in the regulations, and a secondary street could be nearly any street in a subdivision. 400 hundred feet is longer than a football field including the end zones. A blanket exemption for 400 foot streets is unsafe for families that live on these streets and destroys their connection to the neighborhood.

The importance of sidewalks has not been disputed at MPC. MPC delayed the subdivision regulations with suggestions to the City of Knoxville and Knox County to broaden the requirements for sidewalks beyond subdivisions. While the City of Knoxville has proceeded with MPC's suggestion to develop a walkability ordinance, Knox County decided not to broaden the scope of the overall sidewalk issues.

Tennessee state law gives the responsibility to MPC for the overall development of new subdivisions, including sidewalks in those subdivisions, in these terms:

Such [subdivision] regulations may provide for the harmonious development of the municipality and its environs, for the coordination of streets within subdivisions with other existing planned streets or with the plan of the municipality or of the region in which the municipality is located, for adequate open spaces for traffic, recreation, light and air, and for a distribution of population and traffic which will tend to create conditions favorable to health, safety, convenience and prosperity, and identify areas where there are inadequate or nonexistent publicly or privately owned and maintained services and facilities when the planning commission has determined the services are necessary in order for development to occur. Tennessee Code Annotated 13-4-303 (a). Subdivision regulations — Adoption.

Those opposed to sidewalks have not told us why sidewalks should not be required. They have focused on how building sidewalks interferes with construction practices. Sidewalks regularly are built in new subdivisions across the country. Construction issues can be resolved with Knox County engineering.

The subdivision regulations have a variance procedure that contains a standard that would permit MPC to revise sidewalk requirements in those subdivisions where sidewalk construction would constitute a hardship. That variance procedure is public and is adequate to deal with these construction issues.

MPC should adopt sidewalk rules that require sidewalks in all new subdivisions and should not exempt "secondary streets" from these requirements.

Jack Woodall
[9520 Westland Drive](#)
[Knoxville, TN 37922](#)

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This message was directed to commission@knoxmpc.org



serving Knox County, the City of Knoxville, and the Town of Farragut

October 4, 2017

Dear MPC Commissioners:

We are writing to urge you to support the version of Knoxville-Knox County Subdivision Regulations that would require sidewalks in all new developments. As currently written, the Subdivision Regulations say that the Metropolitan Planning Commission “may” require sidewalks. As a result, sidewalks are required only on a case-by-case basis. This results in inequities between different neighborhoods, and also uncertainty for the development community. Revising the Regulations to require sidewalks in all new developments would increase walkability, decrease inequity, and positively impact the health of our community.

In 2016, the Community Health Council (CHC) serving Knox County, the City of Knoxville, and the Town of Farragut approved a [Community Health Improvement Plan \(CHIP\)](#) based on an extensive [Community Health Assessment](#). Both of these documents are available online at healthyknox.org. The CHIP identified increasing access to safe parks, greenways, and sidewalks as one of our most important health priorities for furthering our vision of “A healthy life for all.”

Access to sidewalks and greenways relates to community health in several important ways (as noted in our *Community Health Assessment*):

- Sidewalks make children safer and healthier by increasing opportunities to walk to school safely, and reducing traffic-related pollution.
- Lack of sidewalks and other pedestrian infrastructure is a key cause of pedestrian fatalities.
- Those who live in walkable communities are twice as likely to meet physical activity guidelines, and are at reduced risk of obesity and developing diabetes as those who do not.

Community Health Council

Kristy Altman
Martha Buchanan
Jim Dickson
Lara Fleming, *Chair-elect*
Gaye Fortner
Pam Frye
Kindall Hurley
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Dorothy LaMarche
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Lisa Wagoner
Amanda Weber
Ellen Zavisca, *Past Chair*



Page 2

In addition, our *Community Health Assessment* suggests that most people prefer living in neighborhoods with sidewalks and good places to walk (84% of Knox County residents reported that sidewalks are “somewhat or extremely important” for improving the quality of life in the county). Also, time to sell is shorter for homes with sidewalks. The investment in infrastructure for active transportation benefits a substantial portion of the population, with 11% of all trips are taken by walking or bicycling. Finally, getting street design right the first time, rather than having to come in and build sidewalks later on, saves our local governments money.

Given the relationship between walkability and bikeability to community health, we have made increasing access to sidewalks and greenways one of our top health priorities. We urge you to do the same and support the version of the Subdivision Regulations that would require sidewalks in new developments.

Please feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns you have regarding our position.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joe Miles". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "J".

Joe Miles
Chair, Policy and Advocacy Committee
Community Health Council



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

[MPC Comment] Sidewalks, please!

1 message

DEBRA <vanmetes@comcast.net>

Tue, Oct 10, 2017 at 12:02 AM

Reply-To: vanmetes@comcast.net

To: commission@knoxmpc.org

Dear Commissioners,

Please support the inclusion of sidewalks on all streets of the new subdivisions to be built in Knox County.
Thank you for moving Knox County forward.

Sincerely,
Debra Van Meter
[8700 Darien Ct.](#)
[Knoxville, TN 37922](#)

Sent from XFINITY Connect Mobile App

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This message was directed to commission@knoxmpc.org



serving Knox County, the City of Knoxville, and the Town of Farragut

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Given the relationship between walkability and bikeability to community health, we have made increasing access to sidewalks and greenways one of our top health priorities. We urge you to do the same and support the version of the Subdivision Regulations that would require sidewalks in new developments.

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Sincerely,

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Joe Miles
Chair, Policy and Advocacy Committee
Community Health Council



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

[MPC Comment] Sidewalks, please!

1 message

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Joe Miles
Chair, Policy and Advocacy Committee
Community Health Council



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

[MPC Comment] Sidewalks, please!

1 message

DEBRA <vanmetes@comcast.net>

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Sent from XFINITY Connect Mobile App

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This message was directed to commission@knoxmpc.org



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

[MPC Comment] Promote sidewalk requirements

1 message

Meschke, Laurie L <lmeschke@utk.edu>

Fri, Oct 6, 2017 at 4:52 PM

Reply-To: lmeschke@utk.edu

To: "commission@knoxmpc.org" <commission@knoxmpc.org>

I am writing to urge you to vote in support of the Knoxville-Knox County Subdivision Regulations that would require sidewalks in all new developments. Sidewalks provide a safe place to walk, promoting enhanced mental health, physical activity, social interactions, sense of community, and assist in preventing obesity and its many associated chronic conditions.

Sidewalks developed with the community will be much more affordable and effective. Ideally walking destinations will soon follow, enhancing the use of sidewalks all the more.

Knox County has so many fantastic opportunities to be active, but the convenience and proximity are critical to ensuring that our citizens are active EVERY day.

Please support the requirement of sidewalks in all new developments in Knox County. Our local friends and neighbors deserve fantastic emotional and physical health – and sidewalks are an asset toward this end.

With respect,

Laurie L. Meschke, 4th and Gill neighborhood, 37197



Laurie L. Meschke (she, her, hers)

Associate Professor

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville
Department of Public Health
383 HPER Building
[1914 Andy Holt Avenue](#)
Knoxville, TN 37996

lmeschke@utk.edu
865-964-8368

Big Orange. Big Ideas.



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

[MPC Comment] Amendments to the Knoxville-Knox County Minimum Subdivision Regulations MPC FILE # 9-A-16-OA

1 message

Jack W <ajwoodal@gmail.com>
Reply-To: ajwoodal@gmail.com
To: commission@knoxmpc.org
Cc: gerald.green@knoxmpc.org, tom.brechko@knoxmpc.org

Tue, Oct 10, 2017 at 7:14 PM

To: Knoxville – Knox County Metropolitan Planning Commission

MPC takes up revisions to the Knoxville-Knox County Minimum Subdivision Regulations at their October 12, 2017 meeting. At the September MPC meeting, MPC staff presented sidewalk options to MPC for the new proposed subdivision regulations, which included an option which would require sidewalks in all new subdivisions. Despite extensive staff work on sidewalk issues in Knox County, the October proposal does not have an option which would require sidewalks, or have any explanation why the staff abandoned an option for required sidewalks.

Tennessee state law provides that developing standards for new subdivisions are the duty of the Planning Commission. Subdivision regulations are not the duty of other governmental bodies. State law requires the Planning Commission to assure that new subdivisions provide “conditions favorable to health, safety, convenience and prosperity” [Tennessee Code Annotated 13-4-303 (a). Subdivision regulations — Adoption]. The subdivision regulations provide they are adopted for “for the harmonious development of the City of Knoxville and Knox County. . . [including] adequate open spaces for traffic, light, air and recreation” [Proposed Subdivision Regulations, section 1.01]. These new subdivisions will represent the community for the next 50 years.

Sidewalks have been under consideration for a year and a half. Rather than insist the MPC resolve every potential construction issue before sidewalks are required, MPC should vote to require sidewalks. Knox County Engineering can work with the development community to resolve construction issues. The variance procedure is adequate to deal with claims of hardship.

Jack Woodall
[9520 Westland Drive](#)
[Knoxville, TN 37922](#)

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This message was directed to commission@knoxmpc.org



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

[MPC Comment] October 2017 Agenda Item #5 (9-A-16-OA) - Knoxville/Knox County Subdivision Regulations

1 message

cdgreenwood via Commission <commission@knoxmpc.org>
Reply-To: cdgreenwood@cs.com
To: commission@knoxmpc.org
Cc: gerald.green@knoxmpc.org

Wed, Oct 11, 2017 at 4:03 AM

Dear Commissioners,

Knox County desperately needs more sidewalks. It is already going to take a long time to catch up to where we should be in this regard. Please do not continue to put off addressing the problem by allowing more development without sidewalks because it will just make it significantly harder for future generations to address it.

Having grown up in a military family before settling in Knoxville over 30 years ago, I have lived in many different suburbs in many different states, and have visited many more, and have never seen a place with so few sidewalks and so many people walking in the road or on dangerous roadsides to get from place to place or to exercise, walk their dogs, etc. as I have seen in Knox County. I understand how this has come to be, due to the rural nature of housing along the original roads, but it is short-sighted and dangerous for Knox County to continue to allow new developments to be put in without sidewalks. Growth is happening rapidly and the toll on people's health and safety, as well as the quality of life in the County, will only get worse as more developments are put in without sidewalks.

It is undisputed that the cost of retrofitting neighborhoods with sidewalks greatly exceeds the cost of putting sidewalks in as new neighborhoods are developed. Since raising property taxes and putting the County into debt are probably not politically realistic options, the best option is to build the cost into the cost of new homes and have the homeowners who largely benefit from the sidewalks, pay for their cost as part of the cost of their new house.

Unfortunately, it appears that the desire to maximize short-term profits on new housing is being put above the long-term health and safety of the residents of Knox County. While claiming to be concerned that sidewalk costs would price low-income people and typical first-time buyers out of the market, developers actually provided quite low estimates for sidewalk costs when the discussion was about the possibility of fee-in-lieu (FIL) payments by developers as an alternative to requiring sidewalks. The truth is that adding the cost of sidewalks will not make a significant difference when considering the total cost of new home ownership and will provide homeowners with a higher quality of life and higher potential resale value.

I am aware that there is little or nothing that the citizens of Knox County can do about requiring sidewalks in new developments at this time. It became very clear when, earlier this year, I attended a meeting where citizen input on the subdivision regulations was being solicited. During the meeting, MPC staff noted they had already decided not to continue discussion about requiring sidewalks in new developments in the County because they said there was insufficient support for it at this time. With County Commission being heavily weighted, by the appointments of our County Mayor, in favor of developers, it is clear such a requirement will not be implemented.

Still, you should know that there is tremendous support from County residents for sidewalks to be put in as new homes are developed, yet numerous developments are going up in our communities right now without them.

Thank you.

Carolyn Greenwood
3224 Boomerang Lane
Knoxville, TN 37931
865-254-5039

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This message was directed to commission@knoxmpc.org



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

[MPC Comment] proposed updated subdivision regulations

1 message

Paul Laudeman <paul@laudeman.com>

Tue, Oct 10, 2017 at 10:17 PM

Reply-To: paul@laudeman.com

To: commission@knoxmpc.org

Sidewalks are an important part of neighborhoods for many reasons. Walkability and community are the most obvious. Safety and desirability are others. I realize that developers say "money" is the most important consideration. However sidewalks add little to the cost of development. Building sidewalks creates jobs which help grow the economy and the small cost of installing them initially can be easily rolled into the price of new houses. Home buyers want sidewalks and are willing to pay a little more for them.

Please vote to require sidewalks in all new construction as well as significant redevelopments. For a better Knoxville.

Paul Laudeman

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This message was directed to commission@knoxmpc.org



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

[MPC Comment] Sidewalk Requirements

1 message

Brittany Bentley <brittanydavisbentley@gmail.com>

Wed, Oct 11, 2017 at 9:03 AM

Reply-To: brittanydavisbentley@gmail.com

To: commission@knoxmpc.org

Hi,

As a relatively new addition to the Knoxville area and someone who falls within an increasingly important cohort, older millennials, I wanted to voice my support for the proposal to require sidewalks in new subdivisions.

When my husband and I were looking to purchase a home in Knoxville we focused in on only those where we would be able to walk to amenities such as parks and restaurants, unfortunately this narrowed our search to a very small number of neighborhoods. We eventually decided on living in the Old North Neighborhood because of what we saw every time we drove down around the neighborhood, people out walking their dogs, pushing strollers, and talking to neighbors sitting on front porches.

Sidewalks build connected, healthy communities which should be the aim of a city like Knoxville.

I appreciate your consideration and hope you will support the proposal,

Brittany Bentley

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This message was directed to commission@knoxmpc.org



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

[MPC Comment] MPC meeting tomorrow - urgent affordable housing issue

1 message

Jennifer Roche <jennifer@kaarmls.com>

Wed, Oct 11, 2017 at 2:24 PM

Reply-To: jennifer@kaarmls.com

To: commission@knoxmpc.org

Commissioners,

I write to you on behalf of the Knoxville Area Association of Realtors in reference to your meeting tomorrow, 10-12-17, and the issue of sidewalks and affordable workforce housing (homes under \$200K) in Knox County (outside City limits).

KAAR, and other groups, are concerned that MPC may move to require sidewalks in subdivisions in Knox County at the meeting tomorrow. While realtors are all for promoting walkability and sidewalks, where appropriate, we are greatly worried about a growing concern in our county and across the nation: affordable workforce housing.

We want to see sidewalks and better walkability along roads outside of subdivisions, where the cost of such improvements can be enjoyed by the greater community and not just the residents of 1 subdivision. Requiring sidewalks in County subdivisions is simply something our current market conditions and our home buyers cannot afford.

Our Knox County residential market statistics demonstrate this: inventory is down and demand is high, pushing prices above pre-recession highs:

-we have 2.1 months of inventory available; this is a severe shortage; this is a crisis level for buyers; a healthy, balanced market has 6 months of inventory available

-comparing 2016 vs 2017, new listings are down 38% and sales are down 18%

-average price of new construction in the County is \$351K and \$495K in the City

Realtors and mortgage lenders have ready and qualified buyers who can't find homes to purchase or find a home only to lose it in a multiple-bidding-war.

We simply cannot add the cost of sidewalks to new construction or we will be pushing our Knox County workforce out of the County to lower priced homes in Blount, Anderson, and Loudon Counties.

Sidewalks not only add thousands of dollars to the price of homes but push homes further back on lots, adding to grading issues, reducing backyard space, limiting placement of lots and homes, all adding more and more to the total cost of housing. All development costs are pushed onto buyers; it's simple economics; and that reduces housing affordability.

Please, I respectfully ask you to make a priority call: please prioritize affordably-priced housing over sidewalks in subdivisions. Our Knox County workforce deserves to live in Knox County as well.

Thank you very much and please let me know if I may provide any further information to you.

Knox County MLS Data	City of Knoxville MLS Data
123 listings between \$100K-\$200K (that may seem like a lot but many of these homes are severely outdated and would require significant upkeep and deferred maintenance costs) (over twice that available in the \$200K-\$400K price range)	174 listings between \$100K-\$200K (that may seem like a lot but about half of these are 2 bed, 1 bath, and quite old and small)
9 new construction	8 new construction (1 less than county)
Average age is 34 years old	Average age is 55 years old
Average size is 1700 square feet, 3 beds and 2 baths	Average size is 1600 square feet, 3 beds and 2 baths (100 SF smaller than County houses)

3 are listed as having sidewalks, all new construction, all with HOA fees of \$120-\$300 annually	6 are listed as having sidewalks, all older *many more with sidewalks but Realtors aren't notating sidewalks in listings because it's not a critical selling point
15 total properties have mandatory HOA's, all newer construction	1 total properties have mandatory HOA
Average property taxes is \$700	Average property taxes is \$1,240 (\$540 more than County houses)
Average PPSF is \$102 and Average DOM is 62	Average PPSF is \$102 (same as County) and Average DOM is 60 (same as County)
Sales prices are up an average of \$8,000	Sales prices are up an average of \$10,000
Number of 2017 sales, compared to 2016 is down over 18%	Number of 2017 sales, compared to 2016 is down over 18%
Number of new listings is down 38%	Number of new listings is down 37%
240 new construction on the market with an average list price of \$351K (over \$100K less than the City)	42 new construction on the market (200 less than county) with average list price of \$495K (over \$100K more than the County)
It's a seller's market – severe hardship market for buyers with 2.1 months of inventory available (6 months is a healthy market)	It's a seller's market – severe hardship market for buyers with 1.9 months of inventory available (6 months is a healthy market)

Jennifer Roche, J.D.
Governmental Affairs Director
Knoxville Area Association of Realtors
609 Weisgarber Road, Knoxville, TN 37919
cell: 865-789-9057
office: 865-584-8647 x8



Serving the real estate interest of our members and the public for more than 100 years.



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This message was directed to commission@knoxmpc.org



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

[MPC Comment] New Construction Sidewalk Regulations

2 messages

Susy Yeatman <susyyeatman@gmail.com>

Wed, Oct 11, 2017 at 3:57 PM

Reply-To: susyyeatman@gmail.com

To: commission@knoxmpc.org

To Those Who Serve on the Knox County MPC:

Mr. Kirby's words below express my opposition to consideration of Sidewalk Regulation, as now placed on tomorrow's MPC Meeting Agenda:

"I'm writing to express my concerns over the potential new regulations requiring sidewalks in new subdivisions. As a developer in Knox County, I can tell you that it is already impossible to produce building lots for affordable homes, without the additional expense of sidewalks. While sidewalks may be an amenity that is affordable to some, there are many more that just want the ability to own a home...those who are willing to forego the luxury of sidewalks to achieve the American dream of home ownership.

As I'm sure you all are aware, there is no end to regulation when it comes to housing development...and all regulations come with a price. We have all but eliminated "affordable" homes in our area and across the country with over-regulation. Attached is a screenshot of "new" homes in the area under \$200,000. As you can see there are literally a handful of homes available and virtually zero in West Knoxville. Do you know why? Because the lots cannot be produced at a price that makes it financially feasible. This means that working class citizens of Knox County are forced to buy used homes and absorb the risks associated with used and depreciated homes, such as expensive repairs. Those homes are also likely to be in areas not close to the workplace, and therefore they suffer the financial burden of driving long distances to work. It's literally a discriminatory practice to continue this assault on the working class citizens of this County...just so we can "encourage" people to walk more.

It has been discussed, that a sidewalk only costs \$20 per linear foot to install and that, on a 60' wide lot, the additional cost to a new homebuyer is only around \$1,200. However, the cost of the sidewalk is an expense built into the price of a lot sold to the builder. In homebuilding, the price of the home to be built is dictated by the cost of the lot. Typically a lot is 20% of the home price. Therefore, an additional \$1,200 in lot cost equates to an additional \$6,000 in home price. This can be verified by talking to any homebuilder in town.

While there are locations that are more urban in nature, that might justify the addition of sidewalks, the majority of the County does not fall into that category. And while I have great respect for the Planning agencies and the outspoken neighborhood organizations that constantly push for more regulations and more amenities, they often do so more from the position of comfort than reality.

Besides the affordability issue, here are some other issues that concern me with this regulation:

1. There are never any provisions to off-set expenses with new regulations like this. MPC needs to consider reducing the required road and right of way widths in exchange for adding amenities like sidewalks. MPC always brings up that these reductions are permitted under the "Alternative Hillside Regulations", but they refuse to make the reductions part of the sidewalk plan. If they can allow it for hillside development, they can allow in other developments. Increasing allowed density and reducing the required lot sizes should also be considered to allow for off-setting the additional expenses.
2. Who is responsible for the maintenance of the sidewalks? While it's assumed that the City or County would be responsible, it needs to be spelled out in the document. One of the Sidewalk Committee's guiding Research and Support documents poses this question with the following answers.
 9. Who will maintain the sidewalks? · In Shelby, Hamilton, and Davidson Counties, the suburban residents are left to maintain the sidewalks pertaining to their property.
Are Knox County citizens going to be "left to maintain the sidewalks pertaining to their property"?
3. There should be a minimum amount in the County's budget for maintenance before any sidewalk requirements are adopted, lest we end up in the above-described scenario of citizens being responsible for maintenance. I'm sure County Engineering and Public Works will tell you that they can't keep up with road

maintenance due to lack of funds, so what makes anyone think they will be able to keep up with sidewalk maintenance. Will property taxes be raised to cover this new expense?

4. And who is responsible for ADA compliance after the sidewalks are constructed? Again, it's assumed the County is responsible, but Jim Hagerman stated at a public meeting, that the homeowner would be responsible where their driveway crosses the sidewalk. As you can imagine, almost everyone in the room was shocked that a homeowner could get tangled up in an ADA lawsuit over a sidewalk. If every potential homebuyer knows they could be responsible for maintaining their driveway to ADA standards, then new homebuying will come to a halt. The only way for this issued to be handled, is for the City or County to indemnify any homeowner against any ADA lawsuits, so I'd like to see that language added to the Ordinance.

I appreciate your consideration of my comments and look forward to continuing this discussion, but I think there are for too many uncertainties surrounding the proposed regulations, for them to be adopted any time in the near future."

Susy Yeatman, Realtor

Slyman Real Estate

865-742-4283

865-862-6161

Susyyeatman@gmail.com

105 Center Park Drive, #200

Knoxville, TN. 37922

Sent from my iPhone; please forgive any typos or abbreviations.

--

This message was directed to commission@knoxmpc.org

Gerald Green <gerald.green@knoxmpc.org>
Reply-To: gerald.green@knoxmpc.org
To: Planning Commissioners <commission@knoxmpc.org>

Wed, Oct 11, 2017 at 4:04 PM

FYI

Gerald Green AICP
Executive Director
Knoxville-Knox County
Metropolitan Planning Commission
[400 Main Street, Suite 403](mailto:gerald.green@knoxmpc.org)
[Knoxville, TN 37902](mailto:gerald.green@knoxmpc.org)
[865.215.3758](tel:865.215.3758)
gerald.green@knoxmpc.org

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Susy Yeatman <susyyeatman@gmail.com>
Date: Wed, Oct 11, 2017 at 3:52 PM
Subject: New Construction Sidewalk Regulations
To: gerald.green@knoxmpc.org

Mayor Burchett/Mr. Rice/Director Green,

I'm writing to express my concerns over the potential new regulations requiring sidewalks in new subdivisions. As a developer in Knox County, I can tell you that it is already impossible to produce building lots for affordable homes, without the additional expense of sidewalks. While sidewalks may be an amenity that is affordable to some, there are many more that just want the ability to own a home...those who are willing to forego the luxury of sidewalks to achieve the American dream of home ownership.

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Attached is a screenshot of “new” homes in the area under \$200,000. As you can see there are literally a handful of homes available and virtually zero in West Knoxville. Do you know why? Because the lots cannot be produced at a price that makes it financially feasible. This means that working class citizens of Knox County are forced to buy used homes and absorb the risks associated with used and depreciated homes, such as expensive repairs. Those homes are also likely to be in areas not close to the workplace, and therefore they suffer the financial burden of driving long distances to work. It’s literally a discriminatory practice to continue this assault on the working class citizens of this County...just so we can “encourage” people to walk more.

It has been discussed, that a sidewalk only costs \$20 per linear foot to install and that, on a 60’ wide lot, the additional cost to a new homebuyer is only around \$1,200. However, the cost of the sidewalk is an expense built into the price of a lot sold to the builder. In homebuilding, the price of the home to be built is dictated by the cost of the lot. Typically a lot is 20% of the home price. Therefore, an additional \$1,200 in lot cost equates to an additional \$6,000 in home price. This can be verified by talking to any homebuilder in town.

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I appreciate your consideration of my comments and look forward to continuing this discussion, but I think there are for too many uncertainties surrounding the proposed regulations, for them to be adopted any time in the near future.

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105 Center Park Drive, #200

Knoxville, TN. 37922

Sent from my iPhone; please forgive any typos or abbreviations.

MPC Meeting of 10/12/17: KAAR Talking Points: Sidewalk Requirements in the County

Main Point: We are asking MPC to make a priority call – to prioritize affordably-priced workforce housing over sidewalks in Knox County

Why: because of Current Market Conditions: inventory is low and demand is high, pushing prices higher than pre-recession numbers with average list and sales prices well over the \$200K mark (pushing \$225K)

Knox County MLS Data	City of Knoxville MLS Data
123 listings between \$100K-\$200K (that may seem like a lot but many of these homes are severely outdated and would require significant upkeep and deferred maintenance costs) (over twice that available in the \$200K-\$400K price range)	174 listings between \$100K-\$200K (that may seem like a lot but about half of these are 2 bed, 1 bath, and quite old and small)
9 new construction	8 new construction (1 less than county)
Average age is 34 years old	Average age is 55 years old
Average size is 1700 square feet, 3 beds and 2 baths	Average size is 1600 square feet, 3 beds and 2 baths (100 SF smaller than County houses)
3 are listed as having sidewalks, all new construction, all with HOA fees of \$120-\$300 annually	6 are listed as having sidewalks, all older *many more with sidewalks but Realtors aren't notating sidewalks in listings because it's not a critical selling point
15 total properties have mandatory HOA's, all newer construction	1 total properties have mandatory HOA
Average property taxes is \$700	Average property taxes is \$1,240 (\$540 more than County houses)
Average PPSF is \$102 and Average DOM is 62	Average PPSF is \$102 (same as County) and Average DOM is 60 (same as County)
Sales prices are up an average of \$8,000	Sales prices are up an average of \$10,000
Number of 2017 sales, compared to 2016 is down over 18%	Number of 2017 sales, compared to 2016 is down over 18%
Number of new listings is down 38%	Number of new listings is down 37%
240 new construction on the market with an average list price of \$351K (over \$100K less than the City)	42 new construction on the market (200 less than county) with average list price of \$495K (over \$100K more than the County)
It's a seller's market – severe hardship market for buyers with 2.1 months of inventory available (6 months is a healthy market)	It's a seller's market – severe hardship market for buyers with 1.9 months of inventory available (6 months is a healthy market)

KAAR Realtor Walkability Survey results & comments:

- 317 Residential Realtors in Knox County completed the survey
- 60.6% said buyers ask for sidewalks/access to trails/greenways Never or Not Very Often
- 70% said sidewalks are a good selling point Not Very Often or Somewhat Often
- 75% Somewhat or Strongly Agree buyers might be willing to pay more for homes with WALKABILITY (i.e. connectivity to amenities) (not sidewalks) but 72% said buyers won't pay more than 10% more (many comments reduced that to less than 5% more)
- Comments from realtors in the survey:
 - New construction affordability is a problem
 - More walkability around schools is more important than in neighborhoods
 - Sidewalks on main roads is the issue, not in neighborhoods
 - Sidewalks are a great amenity but location, value, schools are bigger concerns for buyers

- County buyers prefer open space versus sidewalks
- Walkability is more about walking to/from commercial areas, rather than inside neighborhoods
- Buyers mention they like sidewalks in a subdivision but bought a house in a subdivision without sidewalks because the road was walkable
- Subdivisions sell either way (with or without sidewalks)
- Price of similar homes in similar subdivisions is a large part of what a buyer will pay
- Sidewalks are more important in city areas with mass transit
- Walkable neighborhood doesn't mean it has sidewalks
- Sidewalks are great but are just a small part of walkability... where do they take you?
- It's a cost to developers with no ROI. Appraisers don't put much value on sidewalks
- I have listings in both types of subdivisions (with and without sidewalks) and I use the sidewalk as a good selling point but most buyers are looking at price, house, and location

Talking Points KAAR made to MPC in May about Walkability:

- The realtor walkability survey was discussed
- Sidewalks may help a house sell faster but not for more money
- Walkscore.com is an algorithm – what it takes into account is WALKABILITY FROM HOMES TO AMENITIES (that's why Farragut, with all its sidewalks has a walk score of 13)
 - Walkscore.com says each point increase in walk score adds over \$3,000 to home values; again, this is an algorithm (just like your Zestimate on Zillow.com)
- KAAR generally favors walkability, where funded by broad-based revenue streams, where neighborhoods and amenities are connected, where it makes sense with topography
 - We need added flexibility in the codes to allow developers to recoup sidewalk costs somewhere else (setbacks, lot sizes, etc)
 - If all you can give a neighborhood is connectivity to their neighbors (no amenities around), then try to give that to them WHERE IT MAKES SENSE

Final points:

- We are asking MPC to make a priority call – to prioritize affordably-priced workforce housing over sidewalks in Knox County
 - When I was a realtor, I had buyers who chose to live outside city limits to get more house for the money or because they couldn't afford city taxes added onto the price of housing
 - If buyers can't afford city taxes, they can't afford sidewalks that cost 3x what city taxes are
 - Adding sidewalk costs will price buyers out of Knox County
- Yes, \$150K home buyers deserve the same amenities as \$300K buyers, they also deserve to be able to live in the same county
 - But if you add sidewalk requirements in the County you are going to price your workforce out of Knox county - \$150K BUYERS DESERVE TO BE ABLE TO LIVE IN THE COUNTY THEY WORK IN, JUST LIKE \$300K BUYERS
 - More of our workforce will face higher commute costs because they'll be living outside Knox County (because regulations to build will allow lower priced homes to be built)
- Adding sidewalks, especially to both sides of a street, causes grading problems especially for driveways in our County topography, forcing homes to be built further back on the lot, reducing density (which increases cost), and reducing backyards
- Comments on the Fee-in-Lieu: it will be passed onto buyers (all construction costs are!) so you'll see the following types of homes in Knox County:
 - Homes priced \$7K-\$10K higher than normal because of sidewalk costs, or homes priced where they should be but with lower cost finishes and amenities because of sidewalk costs
 - Another scenario: homes priced \$7K-\$10K higher than normal because of sidewalk costs, or homes priced \$7K-\$10K higher because of Fee-in-Lieu costs and they don't get sidewalks either!

Final statement: I am not anti-sidewalk, I am pro-walkability, and I am not deviating from the comments I made to MPC in May, but in May, sidewalk requirements were being discussed as in the City only. KAAR has always expressed concern about affordability and housing costs and our market continues to move towards an affordability crisis.

Realtors in general, want to see connected communities, but even more so, we want to see people have access to housing at all price ranges. I've talked with multiple mortgage loan officers and even more realtors who have qualified buyers ready to buy, but there are no homes available; or in many cases, the homes go under a multiple-offer situation and they lose out on many homes before becoming the winning bidder.

Connected communities/walkability means connecting people to places. Knox County needs to put its priorities in its budget and start putting sidewalks on streets that front subdivisions and are outside subdivisions. Adding sidewalks in subdivisions creates a large cost for a small number of people; sidewalks outside subdivisions serve so many more people and they are funded through broad-based taxation. Developers don't have a guaranteed annual income like the County does. Please do your best to put sidewalks outside subdivisions and please rework your code to allow more affordably-priced homes; because right now, the codes – the builder's instruction manual – does not allow homes under \$250K to be built.

Please make a priority call today vote for affordably-priced workforce housing over sidewalks in Knox County.



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

[MPC Comment] Subdivision Regulations re: sidewalks

1 message

C Cooley <cecooley51@gmail.com>

Wed, Oct 11, 2017 at 11:16 PM

Reply-To: cecooley51@gmail.com

To: commission@knoxmpc.org

Dear Metropolitan Planning Commissioners,

I am writing you to state my support of sidewalk requirements for all new subdivision development in Knox County . There are numerous health, safety and economic benefits for neighborhoods and communities that have connectivity by sidewalks. I am sure you have already heard the data that supports this statement.

Sidewalks are one element of a transportation system that allows people of all ages and abilities to get to their destinations safely. Many people cannot afford or are unable to drive a car. Other options should be available to them; walking is the most fundamental transportation.

The cost of sidewalk construction is lowest when included in the development construction. The subdivision regulations should include a fee in lieu exception for defined unsuitable topography.

I also support narrower streets which will improve traffic safety by lowering vehicle speeds. A person walking who is hit by a car going 30 mph has a 50% chance of being killed. Sidewalks substantially reduce the pedestrian risk of motor vehicle injury or death.

Additionally, allowing smaller lot sizes can decrease housing costs. More current home buyers want compact housing and walkable neighborhoods.

Knox County is expected to grow by 30% over the next 15-20 years; we must plan for where these people will live and how they will travel to work, school, recreation. etc. Sprawl with car-centric development will not be the answer.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments.

Sincerely,
Caroline Cooley

--

Caroline Cooley, MD
President Bike Walk Knoxville
Knoxville, TN
[865.604.3497](tel:865.604.3497)

--

This message was directed to commission@knoxmpc.org



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

[MPC Comment] Fwd: Sidewalk Regulations

2 messages

Gerald Green <gerald.green@knoxmpc.org>
Reply-To: gerald.green@knoxmpc.org
To: Planning Commissioners <commission@knoxmpc.org>

Wed, Oct 11, 2017 at 4:04 PM

FYI

Gerald Green AICP
Executive Director
Knoxville-Knox County
Metropolitan Planning Commission
[400 Main Street, Suite 403](#)
[Knoxville, TN 37902](#)
[865.215.3758](#)
gerald.green@knoxmpc.org

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Daniel Rochat <daniel@4perfectwater.com>
Date: Wed, Oct 11, 2017 at 3:42 PM
Subject: Sidewalk Regulations
To: "Gerald.green@knoxmpc.org" <Gerald.green@knoxmpc.org>

Dear Gerald,

First of all, thank you for serving on the MPC Commission. I am a Knoxville native and live in the North Hills community. My family's businesses have been operating in Knoxville since 1997.

I strongly oppose the proposed minimum requirement for sidewalks in all subdivisions in Knox County.

Thank you,

Daniel Rochat

Daniel Rochat

PerfectWater

[800 E. Governor John Sevier Hwy.](#)

[Knoxville, TN 37920](#)

[865-803-7562](#) – Cell

[865-544-7873](#) – Office

www.4perfectwater.com

--

This message was directed to commission@knoxmpc.org

Gerald Green <gerald.green@knoxmpc.org>
Reply-To: gerald.green@knoxmpc.org
To: Planning Commissioners <commission@knoxmpc.org>

Wed, Oct 11, 2017 at 5:18 PM

FYI

Gerald Green AICP
Executive Director
Knoxville-Knox County
Metropolitan Planning Commission
400 Main Street, Suite 403
Knoxville, TN 37902
865.215.3758
gerald.green@knoxmpc.org

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Cobren Rochat <cobren@4perfectwater.com>
Date: Wed, Oct 11, 2017 at 5:09 PM
Subject: Sidewalk Regulations
To: "gerald.green@knoxmpc.org" <gerald.green@knoxmpc.org>

Good Evening,

Thank you for serving on the MPC Commission.

I strongly oppose the proposed minimum requirement for sidewalks in all subdivisions in Knox County.

Thank you,

Cobren

Cobren Rochat
Office Administrator

PerfectWater™

www.perfectwater.com
800 E. Gov. John Sevier Hwy.



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

[MPC Comment] Sidewalks

2 messages

Ashley Healy <Healyash@hotmail.com>

Wed, Oct 11, 2017 at 4:24 PM

Reply-To: healyash@hotmail.com

To: "county.mayor@knoxcounty.org" <county.mayor@knoxcounty.org>, "gerald.green@knoxmpc.org" <gerald.green@knoxmpc.org>, "commission@knoxmpc.org" <commission@knoxmpc.org>, Dave Healy <healydave@me.com>

Mayor Burchett, Members of the commission, Mr. Green,

We ask that you consider the potentially negative effects a unilateral sidewalk ordinance will have on both our housing market and local economy. Members of this very board have expressed their dismay at the lack of affordable housing in our county. This displeasure is voiced at a time when developers and builders are being nothing short of assaulted with price increases. According to NHAB, material costs are up at least 12.9% since 2016. Knox County Codes is preparing to adopt new building regulations, and new codes never result in reduction to expense, or cost savings to the end user. Mandating that sidewalks be installed in every new neighborhood would not only further exacerbate these cost increases, but would undoubtedly drive affordable housing even further out of reach of those striving for homeownership. Increased development costs creates the risk of pricing locally owned, family companies like ours out of the desirable areas in the home building market.

Thank you for considering the attached talking points from Jennifer Roche. We confirm that the new construction sales are driven by affordability, location and availability. While we enjoy walkability, in the county, sidewalks that lead to nowhere increase sales prices not sales.

We ask that the members of the commission and MPC continue to review each subdivision on a case by case basis with regard to necessity, feasibility and common sense.

We too ask that you vote for affordably-priced workforce housing over sidewalks in Knox County.

Thank you,

David and Ashley Healy

Ashley Healy
Healy Homes LLC

11020 Kingston Pike
Suite 250 Knoxville, TN 37934
Cell:865-679-0780
Fax: 865-675-2344
Email: healyash@hotmail.com

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It has been discussed, that a sidewalk only costs \$20 per linear foot to install and that, on a 60' wide lot, the additional cost to a new homebuyer is only around \$1,200. However, the cost of the sidewalk is an expense built into the price of a lot sold to the builder. In homebuilding, the price of the home to be built is dictated by the cost of the lot. Typically a lot is 20% of the home price. Therefore, an additional \$1,200 in lot cost equates to an additional \$6,000 in home price. This can be verified by talking to any homebuilder in town.

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Besides the affordability issue, here are some other issues that concern me with this regulation:

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9. Who will maintain the sidewalks? • In Shelby, Hamilton, and Davidson Counties, the suburban residents are left to maintain the sidewalks pertaining to their property.

Are Knox County citizens going to be "left to maintain the sidewalks pertaining to their property"?

3. There should be a minimum amount in the County's budget for maintenance before any sidewalk requirements are adopted, lest we end up in the above-described scenario of citizens being responsible for maintenance. I'm sure County Engineering and Public Works will tell you that they can't keep up with road maintenance due to lack of funds, so what makes anyone think they will be able to keep up with sidewalk maintenance. Will property taxes be raised to cover this new expense?

4. And who is responsible for ADA compliance after the sidewalks are constructed? Again, it's assumed the County is responsible, but Jim Hagerman stated at a public meeting, that the homeowner would be responsible where their driveway crosses the sidewalk. As you can imagine, almost everyone in the room was shocked that a homeowner could get tangled up in an ADA lawsuit over a sidewalk. If every potential homebuyer knows they could be responsible for maintaining their driveway to ADA standards, then new homebuying will come to a halt. The only way for this issue to be handled, is for the City or County to indemnify any homeowner against any ADA lawsuits, so I'd like to see that language added to the Ordinance.

I appreciate your consideration of my comments and look forward to continuing this discussion, but I think there are too many uncertainties surrounding the proposed regulations, for them to be adopted any time in the near future.

Sincerely,

Danny Kirby

First Commercial Real Estate

P.O. Box 10226

Knoxville, TN 37939

[\(865\)588-1000](tel:(865)588-1000)

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This message was directed to commission@knoxmpc.org



MPC Meeting of Oct 12.pdf
192K

Gerald Green <gerald.green@knoxmpc.org>
Reply-To: gerald.green@knoxmpc.org
To: Planning Commissioners <commission@knoxmpc.org>

Wed, Oct 11, 2017 at 5:05 PM

FYI

Gerald Green AICP
Executive Director
Knoxville-Knox County
Metropolitan Planning Commission
[400 Main Street, Suite 403](http://400>Main Street, Suite 403)
Knoxville, TN 37902
[865.215.3758](tel:865.215.3758)
gerald.green@knoxmpc.org

----- Forwarded message -----

From: doyle webb <doylewebb@hotmail.com>
Date: Wed, Oct 11, 2017 at 4:43 PM
Subject: Sidewalks
To: "Gerald.green@knoxmpc.org" <Gerald.green@knoxmpc.org>

Mr. Green

I sale new construction homes in Knoxville and My buyers will not pay more for sidewalks in a subdivision. If the buyers will pay more and want them then the builders will build them. Let the market not the Government tell us what to build and what they want to pay for.

Doyle Webb

www.doylewebb.com Website
doylewebb@hotmail.com Email
[865-238-5010](tel:865-238-5010) Office at

EXIT GLENN JACOBS REAL TY

865-388-0166 Cell

CRS Representative

[2017 Vice Chair TR Government Affairs](#)

2014 Past President KAAR

2011 Past President HBAGK

CRS, ABR, GRI, CRB, CIPS, SRES, MRP

[Quoted text hidden]



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

[MPC Comment] Sidewalks in the County

1 message

Christopher D Folden <cfolden@frontiernet.net>
Reply-To: cfolden@frontiernet.net
To: commission@knoxmpc.org

Wed, Oct 11, 2017 at 4:47 PM

Dear Commissioners,

I am not a developer, but I am a custom home builder. We build mostly in Knox County, and the surrounding area. I would like to strongly urge you NOT to require sidewalks in every subdivision in Knox County. The problem is that those costs will eventually get passed along to the Homeowners. I have found that many people over the past few years who thought they could afford to build, actually cannot. County regulations/code requirements already cost the Homeowner thousands of dollars on top of their lot and their building costs. I'm referring to the fact that we follow the International Building Code which has many unnecessary requirements for this particular area. Requiring sidewalks is impractical in the County because you will end up with lots that cost too much in empty subdivisions that have sidewalks out to the main road, where the next sidewalk is 5 miles away. Optional sidewalks are great because some Homeowners can afford and would be attracted to subdivisions with sidewalks and all those other amenities that many just cannot afford.

It's the same inside the city as well, but other sidewalks are more accessible. Is it the wish of the Commission to prevent any new residential developments? Requiring sidewalks in every instance will certainly push people toward other surrounding Counties.

Sincerely,

Chris Folden

Chief Manager, Folden Construction LLC

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This message was directed to commission@knoxmpc.org

August 14, 2017

Mr. Gerald Green
Executive Director
Knoxville-Knox County Metropolitan Planning Commission
400 Main Street
Knoxville, TN 37902

Dear Gerald:

We understand that the Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC) staff is preparing to publish a set of recommended updates to the Knoxville-Knox County Minimum Subdivision Regulations. We appreciate the many months of work that have gone in to bringing these changes forward, in particular the efforts of Mr. Tom Brechko.

Although the Minimum Subdivision Regulations are a body of development standards that fall under the auspices of the MPC, we think it important that they accurately reflect the views of the current administrations of both city and county government.

We remain concerned that some elements of what is proposed in the update may be inconsistent with what would be appropriate for Knox County. Specifically, in Section 3.05 A, Required Sidewalk Improvements, the proposed regulations read as follows:

1. **Within Knox County, sidewalks shall be provided by the developer in all subdivisions that will include more than 12 lots as follows:**
 - a. **At a minimum, sidewalks shall be provided on one side of all public or private streets within the subdivision with the following exception. Streets within the subdivision that will serve 12 or fewer lots, or will have a length of 400 feet or less, will not be required to have sidewalks.**
 - b. **Sidewalks shall be provided along adjacent street frontages where the adjacent street is classified as a minor collector or higher in the Major Road Plan.**
 - c. **Sidewalks shall be provided along adjacent streets frontages located in a Parent Responsibility Zone (PRZ).**
 - d. **Whenever sidewalks can be connected to existing or proposed sidewalks or pathways in adjacent areas, such proposed sidewalks shall be designed on that side of the street which will make this connection possible.**

Mr. Gerald Green
August 17, 2017
Page 2:

- e. **A pedestrian circulation plan shall be submitted with the Concept Plan to document that the proposed sidewalk system will work with the proposed street layout, grading plan, proposed amenities and required design and construction standards.**

We recognize the value that pedestrian facilities can bring, when appropriately placed, and supported by market demand. However, the proposed update to the Minimum Subdivision Regulations observes a uniform requirement for sidewalks in all subdivisions in Knox County with more than 12 lots. This may not be the best approach for Knox County at this time.

We request that for the upcoming revisions, the requirement for sidewalks be limited to those subdivisions of 12 lots or more located within the established Parental Responsibility Zone (PRZ) around any Knox County school. In all other cases, we request that sidewalks be considered on a case by case basis at the time of Concept Plan approval, or where required by zone, or both. Implementing a uniform requirement for sidewalks everywhere can result in disconnected segments which don't contribute to a larger, and more effective, interconnected pedestrian network.

At the staff level, those of us in Knox County Engineering & Public Works want to continue to do our part to lead a productive discussion about where and when pedestrian improvements can bring the greatest value. We are beginning internal discussions about completing a sidewalk study, to provide a complete analysis of our existing network, identify critical areas of need for additional facilities to close gaps in that network, and develop a long-term proposal for where additional facilities should be planned.

On behalf of everyone at Engineering & Public Works, please accept my thanks for all that you and your staff do for us on a daily basis. Our partnership with the MPC and MPC staff is a key part of our efforts to help ensure that Knox County continues to be a community characterized by safe, efficient transportation, vibrant neighborhoods, and open opportunities for economic progress.

Sincerely,

Dwight Van de Vate
Senior Director
Engineering & Public Works



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

[MPC Comment] MPC Subdivision Regulations - Proposed Sidewalk Requirements

1 message

Jay Lewis <jay@landtechco.com>

Wed, Oct 11, 2017 at 4:05 PM

Reply-To: jay@landtechco.com

To: "commission@knoxmpc.org" <commission@knoxmpc.org>, "Gerald.green@knoxmpc.org" <Gerald.green@knoxmpc.org>

Dear Mr. Green and MPC Commissioners,

I'm sending this email to express my concerns about the proposed changes to the MPC Minimum Subdivision Regulations, requiring sidewalks in all subdivisions.

My primary concern is the impact of this regulation on the cost of land development and housing affordability. According to a study by the Home Builders Association, on average "regulations imposed by government at all levels account for 24.3 percent of the final price of a new single-family home built for sale. Three-fifths of this—14.6 percent of the final house price—is due to a higher price for a finished lot resulting from regulations imposed during the lot's development."

By mandating sidewalk construction, rather than allowing land developers to respond to consumer demand, the cost of homes built in subdivisions will increase, whether the consumer wants this increased cost or not.

Please consider the economic impact on the citizens of Knoxville and Knox County when considering this regulation.

I appreciate your consideration of my concerns.

Sincerely,

Jay Lewis

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James J. Lewis, Jr, PE*, LS*
LandTech Engineering & Surveying
P. O. Box 5412
100 McCamey Road
Knoxville, Tennessee 37928

Phone: (865) 978-6510
Fax: (865) 978-6523
Email: jay@landtechco.com
Web: www.landtechco.com

*Licensed Professional Engineer in TN & VA
*Licensed Land Surveyor in TN, VA, NC, MD & DC

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This message was directed to commission@knoxmpc.org



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

[MPC Comment] Subdivisions

2 messages

Wallace McClure <wallace.mcclure@mcclurerealty.com>
Reply-To: wallace.mcclure@mcclurerealty.com
To: commission@knoxmpc.org

Thu, Oct 12, 2017 at 9:09 AM

MPC Commissions,

We do not advocate that sidewalks be included in the subdivision regulations minimum requirements. Small subdivisions such as we develop do not have the desire by the homeowners to have sidewalks. They rather have the extra green in the yards. The lots available nowadays do not give builders much room to provide buyers with a decent front yard. Mandating sidewalks will drive prices up in a negative way. Sidewalks equal higher costs and more maintenance. I do not support sidewalks in subdivisions.

Wallace

--

Wallace McClure, Jr

McClure Realty Co.

114 Durwood Road

Knoxville, TN 37922

Phone: (865) 693-3000

Fax: (865) 693-3069

Mobile: (865) 740-3005

Email: wallace.mcclure@mcclurerealty.com

--

This message was directed to commission@knoxmpc.org

Gerald Green <gerald.green@knoxmpc.org>
Reply-To: gerald.green@knoxmpc.org
To: Planning Commissioners <commission@knoxmpc.org>

Thu, Oct 12, 2017 at 9:26 AM

FYI

Gerald Green AICP
Executive Director
Knoxville-Knox County
Metropolitan Planning Commission
400 Main Street, Suite 403
Knoxville, TN 37902
865.215.3758
gerald.green@knoxmpc.org

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Wallace McClure <wallace.mcclure@mcclurerealty.com>



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

[MPC Comment] Bike Walk Knoxville Support!

1 message

Morrison, Mallory Brooke <mrhodes7@vols.utk.edu>
Reply-To: mrhodes7@vols.utk.edu
To: "commission@knoxmpc.org" <commission@knoxmpc.org>

Thu, Oct 12, 2017 at 9:48 AM

Hi there,

My name is Mallory Morrison, I am a resident in North Knoxville and would love to see sidewalks in our neighborhood (and many other neighborhoods in Knoxville). My husband and I would find great value in having sidewalks to run, bike and walk our dog on while feeling very safe with a healthy distance from the cars on the road. Sidewalks would naturally encourage people to get more active and choose walking/biking versus driving. This would be an amazing change for the city (especially a city with limited public transportation). Please hear my support and consider adding sidewalks to neighborhoods when updating subdivision regulations today. Thank you!

Mallory Morrison

Accounting Specialist

Early Learning Center for Research and Practice

The University of Tennessee

1206 White Avenue | Knoxville, TN 37916

(865) 974-4678

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This message was directed to commission@knoxmpc.org



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

[MPC Comment] Minimum subdivision regulations

1 message

Margot Kline <margotkline@gmail.com>

Wed, Sep 7, 2016 at 9:52 AM

Reply-To: margotkline@gmail.com

To: Knoxville-Knox County Metropolitan Planning Commission <gerald.green@knoxmpc.org>, commission@knoxmpc.org, rebeccalongmire@hotmail.com

Dear Mr. Green, Mrs.Longmire, MPC staff, and MPC Commissioners,

The Council of West Knox County Homeowners (CWKCH) respectfully asks you to postpone consideration of the Subdivision Regulations for 90 days to

- 1) provide the public with discussion meetings scheduled in the evening and with at least two weeks notice so that community groups may share their concerns about sidewalks and maintainable of existing mature trees in new subdivisions.
- 2) provide the MPC subcommittee on sidewalks time to conclude their research and include their recommendations at the same time the rest of the minimum subdivision regulations go before MPC for a vote.

The CWKCH supports a requirement for sidewalks in the minimum regs for new subdivisions.

The CWKCH supports the preservation of existing mature trees where possible rather than clear-cutting in new subdivision development.

Margot Kline
President, Council of West Knox County Homeowners Inc.

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This message was directed to commission@knoxmpc.org



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

[MPC Comment] September 14th MPC Meeting

2 messages

Scott Davis <swd444@gmail.com>

Tue, Sep 26, 2017 at 10:25 AM

Reply-To: swd444@gmail.com

To: "Rev. Charles Lomax" <commission@knoxmpc.org>

Dear Commissioner,

First and foremost, I have tremendous respect for MPC and I am sincerely grateful for the time you and your colleagues selfishly commit to studying the facts and issues and the time you sacrifice away from your work and family serving on MPC.

I reviewed the video of the September 14th meeting and it appears there may have been some misunderstanding as to what was on MPC's web site, the Agenda and the information that was available to the public regarding the Minimum Subdivision Regulations and proposed amendments for sidewalks in Knox County.

Unfortunately, there was nothing on the MPC web site that would have given notice to anyone that these items were going to be discussed and voted on at the September 14th meeting. Whether you are a proponent of sidewalks or in opposition to sidewalks, the information was not available to the public.

The discussion on September 14th prior to the vote and after the vote was taken on Agenda item #5 would indicate Commissioners presumed these items were available to the public prior to the meeting and it was the public's responsibility to review the Agenda and become knowledgeable and familiar with the issues coming before Commission. I agree, generally MPC staff does a great job with the web site and informing the public. This may have simply been an oversight but the information was not available on the web site.

Ordinance Amendments:

5. **METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION**

9-A-16-OA

Amendments to the Knoxville-Knox County Minimum Subdivision Regulations.

If you go to the link below, it will take you to the Agenda for the September 14th meeting. If you click on item #5, it will take you to the attached September 7th memorandum regarding utility standards and preservation of woodlands. The memo dated September 13th, which outlined voting Options for County sidewalks, was not available to the public prior to the meeting.

<http://agenda.knoxmpc.org/Sep17.pdf>

I appreciate MPC granting the postponement on Agenda item #5 which gives all interested parties notice and the right to voice their opinion on the sidewalk issue.


Again, thank you for your time and service.

Sincerely,

Scott Davis
865-806-8008

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This message was directed to commission@knoxmpc.org

 Sept., 7th Memo.pdf
523K

Gerald Green <gerald.green@knoxmpc.org>

Thu, Sep 28, 2017 at 9:17 AM

Reply-To: gerald.green@knoxmpc.org
To: Planning Commissioners <commission@knoxmpc.org>

FYI

Gerald Green AICP
Executive Director
Knoxville-Knox County
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400 Main Street, Suite 403
Knoxville, TN 37902
[865.215.3758](tel:865.215.3758)
gerald.green@knoxmpc.org

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Tim Kuhn <tim.kuhn@knoxmpc.org>
Date: Tue, Sep 26, 2017 at 11:32 AM
Subject: Re: Fwd: [MPC Comment] September 14th MPC Meeting
To: Amy Brooks <amy.brooks@knoxtrans.org>, Gerald Green <gerald.green@knoxmpc.org>, Dan Kelly <Dan.Kelly@knoxmpc.org>

For the record, they were posted here:

<http://knoxmpc.org/agenda/changes/2017-09>

Changes are always posted to a changes page each month.

On Sep 26, 2017 10:31 AM, "Amy Brooks" <amy.brooks@knoxtrans.org> wrote:

Just a FYI - Tim, sorry if this is a duplicate.

[Quoted text hidden]

--

Amy Brooks, AICP
Planning Services Manager

[\(865\) 215-4001](tel:(865)215-4001)



See what's happening on our social sites



[Quoted text hidden]