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[MPC Comment] Grassy Creek

1 message

cdgreenwood via Commission <commission@knoxmpc.org>

Tue, Jun 12, 2018 at 5:07 AM

Reply-To: cdgreenwood@cs.com

To: commission@knoxmpc.org

MPC Commissioners,

When you consider the Grassy Creek Concept Plan and Use on Review (Items #15, 6-SC-18-C and Item #49, 4-J-18-UR) this week, please be sure to add a condition that development shall not begin until the Schaad Road Widening Project, between Pleasant Ridge Road and Oak Ridge Highway, is complete. Without this condition, this new development will put too much additional stress on a road that is already notorious for being too narrow and dangerous and the site of numerous crashes. It is not unusual for cars and trucks to run off the road, hit a power pole and knock out service, since there are no shoulders (and no curbs, gutters, sidewalks) on most of the road and therefore no room for the slightest error. [Incidentally, do not be fooled by the Case Summary and Use on Review reports that describe Schaad Road as a minor arterial street with 4 lanes and a center median within 112' of right-of-way. That is only true for Schaad Road south of Oak Ridge Highway and for a very short piece of Schaad Road north of Oak Ridge Highway. To the north, Schaad Road almost immediately merges back into a narrow two-lane road.]

Since there is little or no connectivity between streets in that area, there is no nearby alternate route for getting to your destination, whichever way you are headed, so traffic backs up for extended periods of time while waiting for a wreck to be cleared up. I have seen it take over an hour to clear a wreck on Schaad Road. Meanwhile, traffic was lined up and waiting over almost the entire stretch of road.

For years, residents have been assured that the Schaad Road Widening Project was on the list of transportation projects to be done soon. The Northwest County Sector Plan says it is to be completed in 2019, but according to information provided to the community last week by County Commissioner Brad Anders, it is now estimated to be complete in 2022. Apparently, construction of the new Schaad Road Extension, south of Oak Ridge Highway, has been bumped up in priority, instead. Given that new development will inevitably take place along this Extension Road, if you do not start putting conditions on when new development may start, we are headed for a perfect storm of added traffic coming from the Extension Road, from Grassy Creek, from other approved new developments up and down Schaad Road and throughout the community (keep in mind that between 10,000 and 17,000 people are projected to be added to the Northwest County Sector by 2025), trying to negotiate this same narrow two-lane road.

During community meetings that MPC held to collect input for the 2016 Northwest County Sector Plan, many residents said they wanted to see road improvements keep up with new development in order to be safe and to improve traffic flow. Until we can be certain that the infrastructure will be there to support more people coming to the Grassy Creek development, construction should not be started. This community cannot withstand more development without corresponding improvements in infrastructure (roads, in particular), especially at this location which will increase traffic on the north part of Schaad Road.

With regard to the kinds of businesses that will go in at Grassy Creek, the last thing this community needs is another Walmart, Dollar store, gas station, and fast food restaurant, so if there is any way to create a condition or something similar, to discourage such businesses, and encourage something different and a bit more upscale, that would be much appreciated.

Thank you.

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This message was directed to commission@knoxmpc.org