



# PLAN AMENDMENT/ REZONING REPORT

► **FILE #:** 5-E-25-RZ (REVISED) **AGENDA ITEM #:** 30  
5-C-25-PA **AGENDA DATE:** 5/8/2025

► **APPLICANT:** MATTHEW L TINKHAM, JR  
**OWNER(S):** Georgia-Cumberland Association of Seventh Day Adventist Church

**TAX ID NUMBER:** 155 00302 [View map on KGIS](#)

**JURISDICTION:** Commission District 4

**STREET ADDRESS:** 9123 S NORTSHORE DR

► **LOCATION:** North side of S Northshore Dr, West of Cottingham Ln

► **TRACT INFORMATION:** 2.46 acres.

**GROWTH POLICY PLAN:** Planned Growth Area

**ACCESSIBILITY:** Access is via S Northshore Drive, a major arterial road with a 20-ft pavement width within a right-of-way which varies from 60 ft to 70 ft.

**UTILITIES:** Water Source: First Knox Utility District

Sewer Source: First Knox Utility District

**FIRE DISTRICT:** Rural Metro Fire

**WATERSHED:** Tennessee River

► **PRESENT PLAN DESIGNATION/ZONING:** SR (Suburban Residential), HP (Hillside Protection) / A (Agricultural)

► **PROPOSED PLAN DESIGNATION/ZONING:** CC (Corridor Commercial), HP (Hillside Protection) / CA (General Business)

► **EXISTING LAND USE:** Public/Quasi Public Land (Church)

**EXTENSION OF PLAN DESIGNATION/ZONING:** This is not an extension of the plan designation or the zoning.

**HISTORY OF ZONING REQUESTS:** None noted.

**SURROUNDING LAND USE, PLAN DESIGNATION, ZONING**

North: Single family residential, public/quasi public land (cemetery) - SR (Suburban Residential) - PR (Planned Residential) up to 4 du/ac

South: Office, Agriculture/forestry/vacant land, water - CC (Corridor Commercial), SR (Suburban Residential), SP (Stream Protection), HP (Hillside Protection) - CA (General Business), A (Agricultural), F (Floodway)

East: Single family residential, agriculture/forestry/vacant land, water - SR (Suburban Residential), HP (Hillside Protection) - PR (Planned Residential) up to 4 du/ac, A (Agricultural)

West: Single family residential, agricultural/forestry/vacant land - SR

(Suburban Residential) - PR (Planned Residential) up to 5 du/ac

**NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT:** This area is characterized by residential and commercial uses, and by natural water features. The residential uses are single family dwellings on small, suburban style lots. The commercial uses are retail businesses associated with the commercial node at the intersection of Northshore Drive and I-140, approximately one mile from the subject property. Natural water features include the Tennessee River as well as a number of small lakes, ponds, and streams associated with the river's watershed.

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

► **Deny the CC (Corridor Commercial) place type because it does not meet the criteria for a plan amendment.**

► **Deny the CA (General Business) zone because it does not meet the criteria for a rezoning.**

**COMMENTS:**

PURSUANT TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, CHAPTER 3 IMPLEMENTATION, A PLAN AMENDMENT MAY BE APPROPRIATE IF THERE IS AN OBVIOUS OR SIGNIFICANT ERROR OR OMISSION IN THE PLAN, OR IF TWO OR MORE OF THE OTHER CRITERIA APPLY.

**OBVIOUS OR SIGNIFICANT ERROR OR OMISSION IN THE PLAN:**

1. The SR (Suburban Residential) place type designation currently on the subject property is consistent with the predominantly single-family detached dwellings and curvilinear street layouts surrounding the lot. The existing land use on the property is a church, and this is aligned with the civic buildings contemplated in the SR place type as a secondary land use. The SR place type in this location is not the result of an error or omission in the Comprehensive Plan.

IF THERE ARE NO ERRORS OR OMISSIONS, TWO OF THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA MUST BE MET: CHANGES OF CONDITIONS (SUCH AS SURROUNDING LAND USES, ZONING, UNCONTROLLED NATURAL FORCES/DISASTERS, ETC.):

1. This is a built-out and established single-family residential area east of Ebenezer Road, with modest office land uses on the south side of S Northshore Drive. There have been no changes of conditions in this area since the Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2024 that support an expansion of the CC (Corridor Commercial) place type to the subject property.

2. In 1999, there was a minor extension of CA (General Business) zoning and what is now the CC (Corridor Commercial) place type approved at 9142 S Northshore Drive across from the subject property. At the time, staff had recommended denial of this rezoning and plan amendment because it could adversely impact nearby residential uses and traffic safety along this narrow and often congested section of S Northshore Drive. Staff also recommended denial because it could cause a pattern of expanding strip commercial development in this residential area constrained by a floodway to the south. Denial of this request for another expansion of the CC place type is recommended by staff for the same reasons, especially since it is surrounded on three sides by residences.

INTRODUCTION OF SIGNIFICANT NEW UTILITIES OR LOCAL/STATE/FEDERAL ROAD PROJECTS THAT WERE NOT ANTICIPATED IN THE PLAN AND MAKE DEVELOPMENT MORE FEASIBLE:

1. There are no new utilities or capital improvements to transportation infrastructure planned or ongoing in this area that warrant a more intensive place type at this location.

NEW DATA REGARDING TRENDS OR PROJECTIONS, POPULATION, HOUSING CONDITIONS, OR TRAFFIC GROWTH THAT WARRANT RECONSIDERATION OF THE ORIGINAL PLAN:

1. There is no new information pertaining that supports an expansion of commercial activity along this section of S Northshore Drive.

THE PROPOSED CHANGES SUPPORT THE POLICIES AND ACTIONS, GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND CRITERIA OF THE PLAN:

1. The requested CC place type is inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan's Implementation Policy 2, to ensure that development is sensitive to existing community character. The existing suburban residential

character could be adversely impacted by the intensity of zones and uses that can be considered in the CC place type.

PURSUANT TO THE KNOX COUNTY ZONING ORDINANCE, ARTICLE 6.30.01, THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS MUST BE MET FOR ALL REZONINGS (must meet all of these):

THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT SHALL BE NECESSARY BECAUSE OF SUBSTANTIALLY CHANGED OR CHANGING CONDITIONS IN THE AREA AND DISTRICTS AFFECTED, OR IN THE CITY/COUNTY GENERALLY:

1. The requested rezoning from the A (Agricultural) zone to the CA (General Business) zone is not made necessary by any changing conditions in this area or in the County. The subject property is surrounded on three sides by established single-family residential development that is more compatible with the generally less intensive A zone than the CA zone.
2. The most recent substantial change of conditions occurred 26 years ago when a small property across the street was rezoned to CA. Staff had recommended denial of the rezoning because it was incompatible with surrounding development and street conditions, and it could cause a pattern of spreading commercial development along this section of the S Northshore Drive corridor that is not suitable for such intensive uses. The existing land uses of the commercially zoned properties on the opposite side of this arterial street do not reflect the more intensive types of development that could be permitted by right under the CA zone. More CA rezonings are not warranted in this context.

THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT SHALL BE CONSISTENT WITH THE INTENT AND PURPOSE OF THE APPLICABLE ZONING ORDINANCE

1. The CA zone is intended for general retail business and services that do not include the manufacturing or processing of materials.
2. The current land use on the subject property is a long-standing church. The surrounding development on three sides of this property is single-family residential neighborhoods with a suburban cul-de-sac pattern. The section of S Northshore Drive accessed by the subject property has no turn lanes or shoulders, and expanding this roadway would be challenging with the constraints of the floodway on its south side. This setting is inconsistent with the retail-oriented intent of the CA zone.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT SHALL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT ANY OTHER PART OF THE COUNTY, NOR SHALL ANY DIRECT OR INDIRECT ADVERSE EFFECTS RESULT FROM SUCH AMENDMENT:

1. While there are several uses permitted by right in the CA zone that could have adverse ambient and traffic impacts on adjacent residential properties, it is noteworthy that the applicant, who represents the place of worship established on the property, provided a warranty deed along with a cover letter explaining their motivation for the rezoning to CA. The deed shows that commercial uses are explicitly prohibited on the property, which seems to be at odds with a commercial rezoning. However, the motivation for the request is to have the installation of an illuminated electronic messaging center sign permitted on the property, which is not permitted in the A zone or any residential zones. This context makes it unlikely that the CA zoning would have an adverse impact on surrounding properties.

THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT SHALL BE CONSISTENT WITH AND NOT IN CONFLICT WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF KNOX COUNTY, INCLUDING ANY OF ITS ELEMENTS, MAJOR ROAD PLAN, LAND USE PLAN, COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLAN, AND OTHERS:

1. The requested CA zone is not a permitted zone within the property's current SR place type in the Comprehensive Plan. A plan amendment to the CC place type is not recommended by staff.
2. A rezoning to the CA zone in this location would typically be contrary to the Comprehensive Plan's Implementation Policy 2, to ensure that development is sensitive to existing community character. The intensive uses permitted in the CA zone could be incompatible with the surrounding residential context. This rezoning would also normally be inconsistent with Implementation Policy 9, to coordinate infrastructure improvements with development. The scale of business-oriented development that could be permitted in the CA zone could strain existing roadway infrastructure, which is not slated or easy to improve due to the road's close proximity to a floodway. However, with the noted conditions on the deed for this property that commercial activity cannot occur on site, these Comprehensive Plan conflicts with the CA rezoning are less relevant.

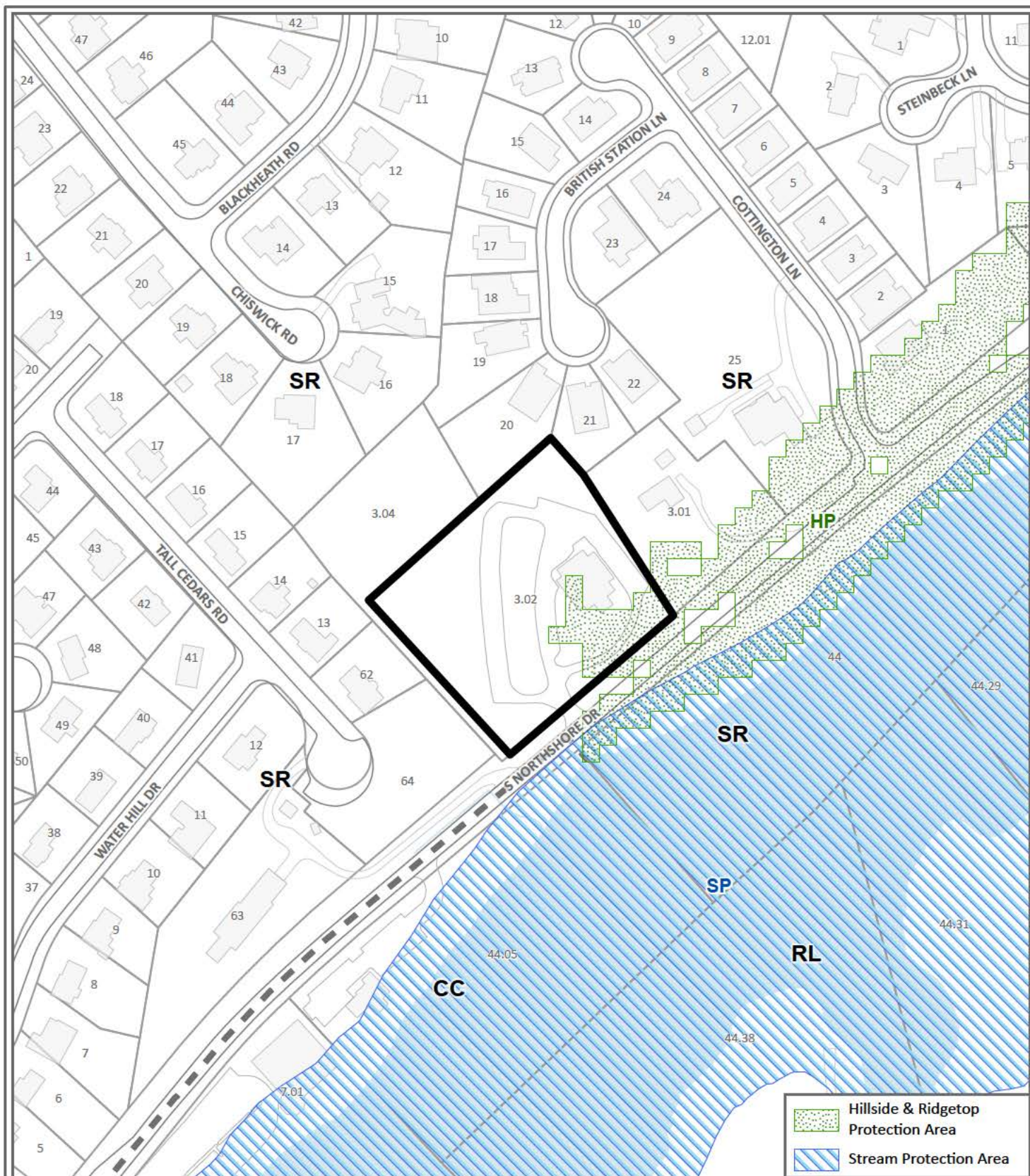
ESTIMATED TRAFFIC IMPACT: Not required.

ESTIMATED STUDENT YIELD: Not applicable.

Schools affected by this proposal: Blue Grass Elementary, West Valley Middle, and Bearden High.

If approved, this item will be forwarded to Knox County Commission for action on 6/16/2025. If denied, Knoxville-Knox County Planning Commission's action is final, unless the action to deny is appealed to Knox County Commission. The date of the appeal hearing will depend on when the appeal application is filed. Appellants have 30 days to appeal a Planning Commission decision in the County.





**5-C-25-PA  
COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN MAP**

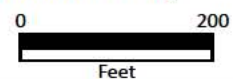


**From:** SR (Suburban Residential)  
**To:** CC (Corridor Commercial)

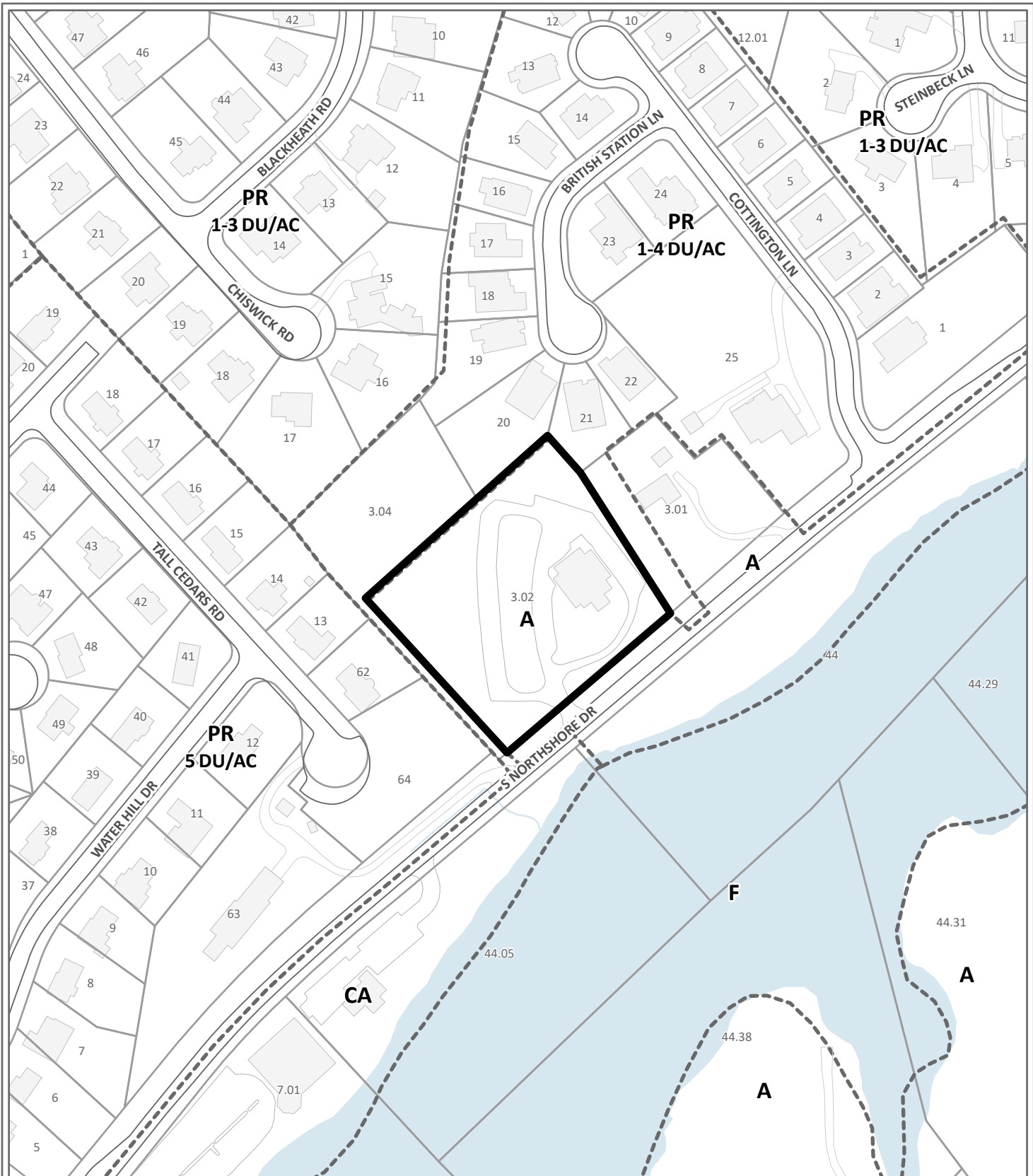
**Original Print Date:** 4/3/2025  
Knoxville - Knox County Planning Commission \* City / County Building \* Knoxville, TN 37902

**Petitioner:** Matthew L Tinkham, Jr

**Map No:** 155  
**Jurisdiction:** County



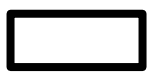




**REZONING**

**5-E-25-RZ**

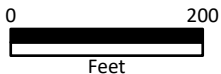
**Petitioner:** Matthew L Tinkham, Jr



**From:** A (Agricultural)  
**To:** CA (General Business)

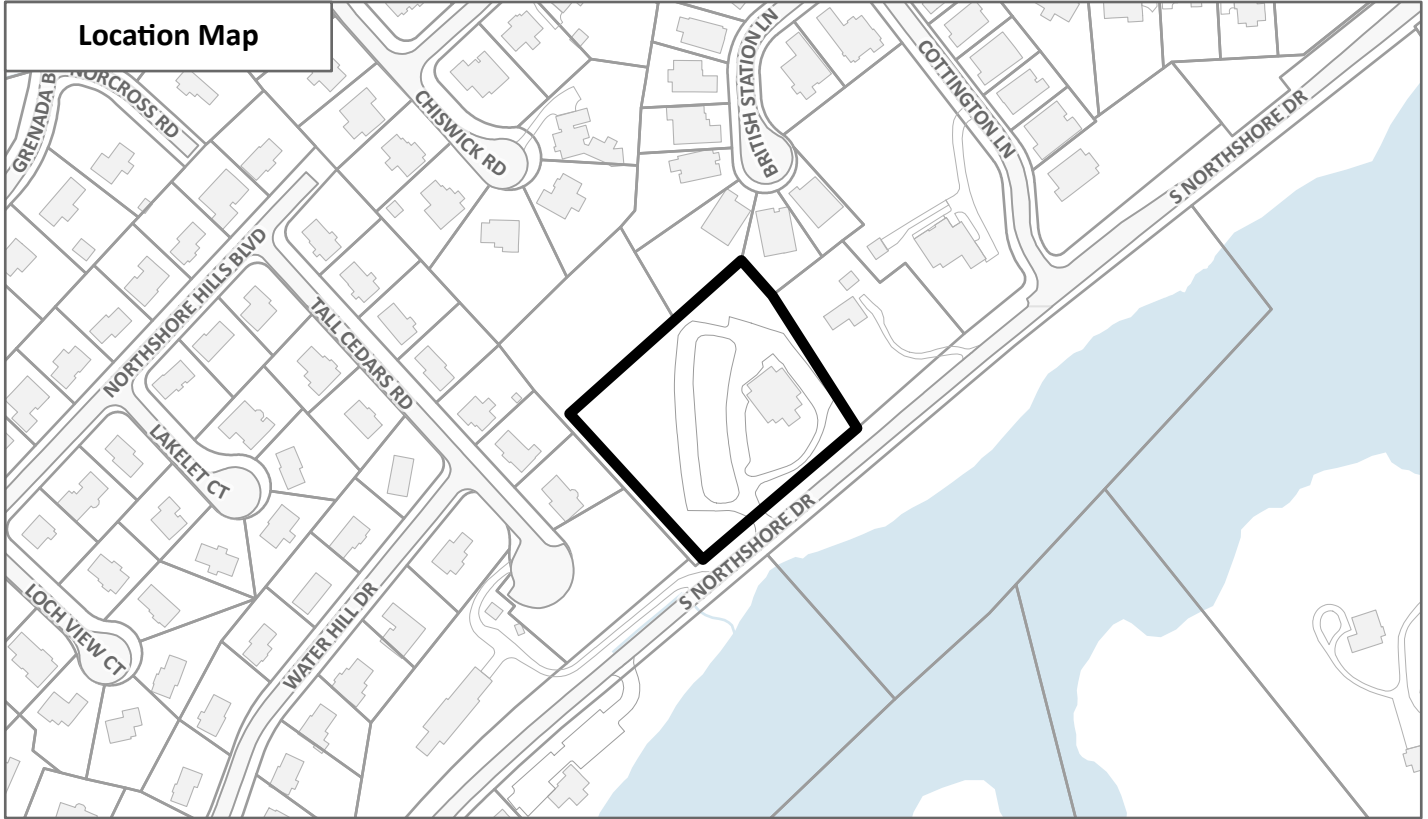
**Original Print Date:** 3/28/2025  
 Knoxville - Knox County Planning Commission \* City / County Building \* Knoxville, TN 37902

**Map No:** 155  
**Jurisdiction:** County



## Exhibit A. Contextual Images

Location Map



Aerial Map



CONTEXTUAL MAPS 1

5-C-25-PA / 5-E-25-RZ

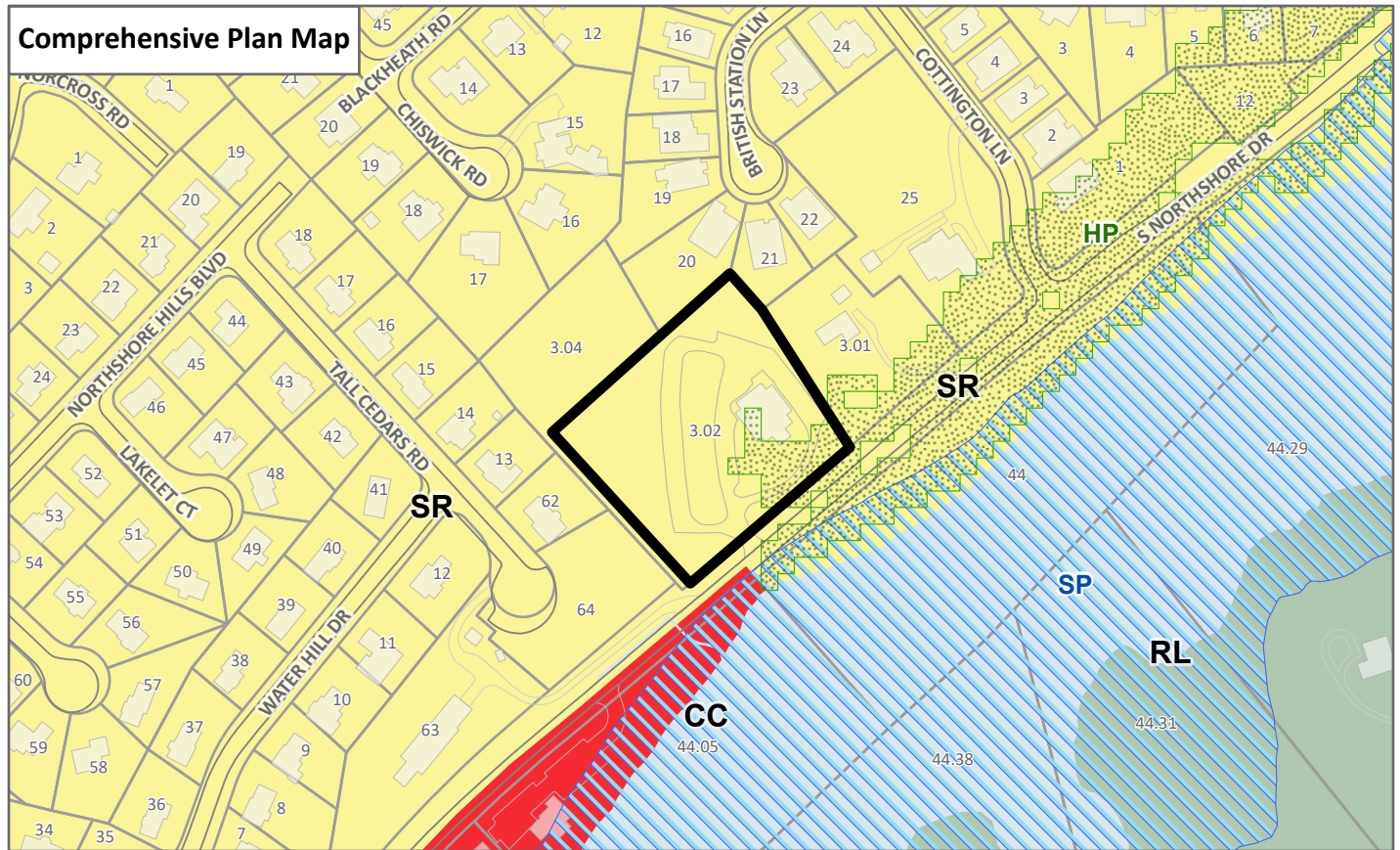



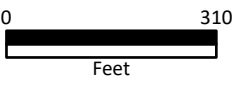

Case boundary

0 330  
Feet



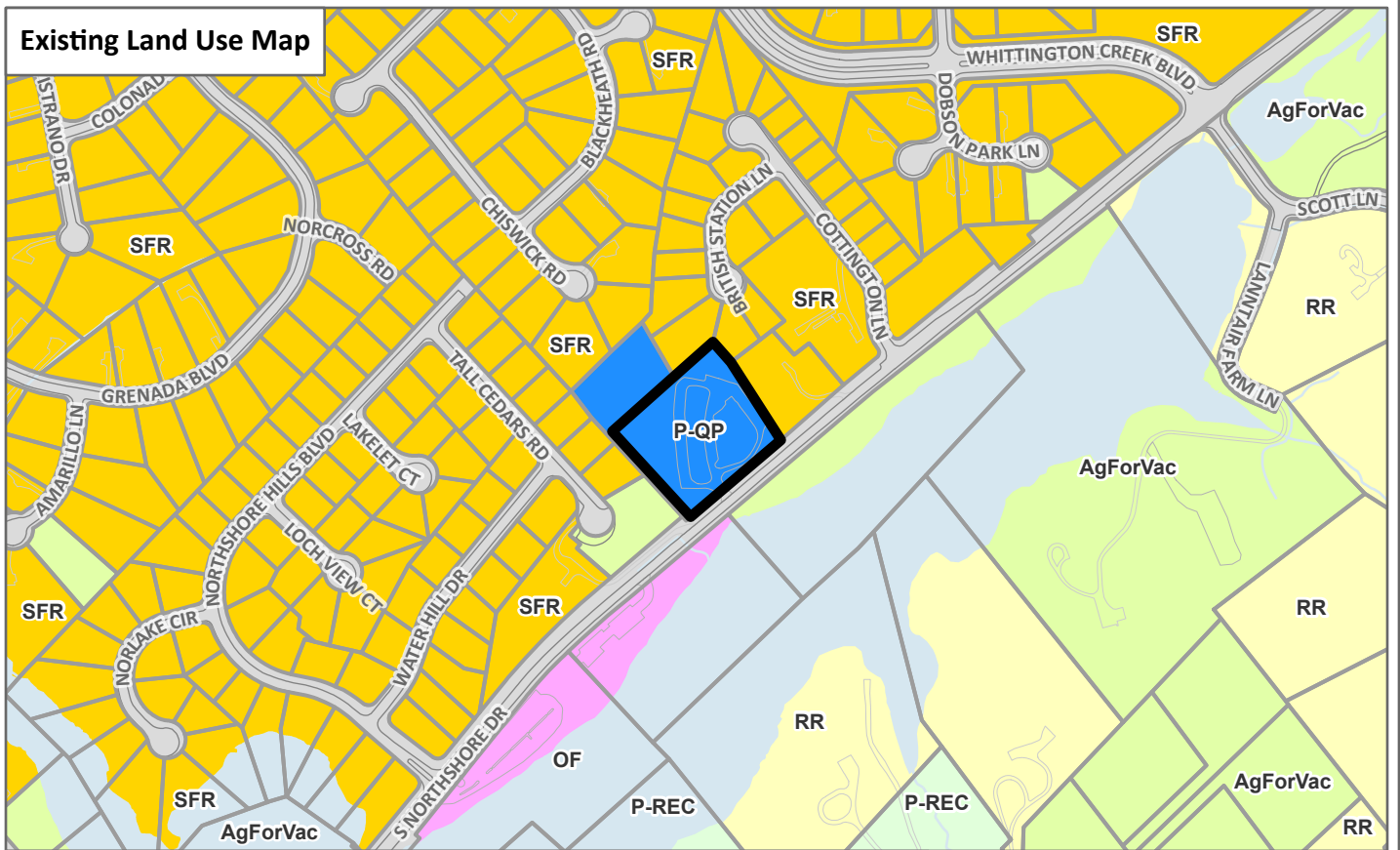




<b>CONTEXTUAL MAPS 2</b>		<b>5-C-25-PA / 5-E-25-RZ</b>	
 Case boundary		 	



**Existing Land Use Map**

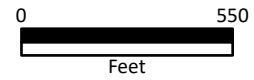


**CONTEXTUAL MAPS 3**

**5-C-25-PA / 5-E-25-RZ**



Case boundary



# Warranty Deed

*for CHURCH Property*  
*MAILED 6-27-80 to CON-*  
From

J. FRED SCOTT and wife DORA LOU SCOTT

To

GEORGIA CONFERENCE ASSOCIATION OF 7th  
DAY ADVENTIST , CALHOUN, GEORGIA,  
A religious corporation of Gordon County,  
Georgia.

Date August 10, 1978

## WARRANTY DEED

THIS INDENTURE, made this 10th day of August, A. D., 1978,  
between

J. FRED SCOTT and wife, DORA LOU SCOTT

of Knox County, Tennessee, First Parties, and  
GEORGIA CONFERENCE ASSOCIATION OF 7TH DAY ADVENTIST, CALHOUN, GEORGIA,  
a religious corporation of Gordon County, Georgia  
of Knox County, Tennessee, Second Parties,

WITNESSETH: that said First Parties, for and in consideration of the sum of

Dollars (\$10.00)

to us in-hand paid by Second Parties, the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, and other  
valuable consideration.

I certify that the consideration has  
on the within Deed has been paid.  
Witness my hand this

State Tax 26.00  
Clerk Fee 50  
Total 26.50

JUN 10 1980

Deputy Register

RECEIVED FOR  
RECORDING

JUN 10 2 45 PM '80

have granted, bargained, sold and conveyed, and do hereby grant, bargain, sell and convey  
unto the said Second Parties the following described premises, to wit: Situated in District

No. Six of Knox County, Tennessee,

BEGINNING at an iron pin situated 2,042.05 ft. from point of  
intersection of the center line of Ebenezer Road and Northshore  
Drive, said iron pin being in the Northeastern right-of-way line  
of a fifteen ft. cemetery road: Thence from said beginning point  
N. 39 deg., 20 min. W., 314.99 ft. to iron pin: Thence N. 53 deg.  
49 min. E. 389.07 ft. to iron pin: Thence S. 36 deg. 2 min. E.,  
72.70 ft. to an iron pin: Thence S. 26 deg., 30 min. E. 242.06  
ft. to an iron pin in the northern right-of-way line of Northshore  
Drive: Thence with right-of-way line of Northshore Drive, S. 53  
Deg., 16 min. W., 330.89 ft. to an iron pin. Said iron pin being  
the point of beginning.

Containing 2.62 acres, more or less, as shown by survey of  
William C. Malone, dated April 14, 1978, property of J. Fred  
Scott, Drawing Number 159-178.

BEING a part of the same property conveyed to the parties of  
the first part by Warranty Deed of record Warranty Book 930,  
at Page 61.

The following restrictions and covenants are to run with the land:

1. The property is never to be sold or used for any type of  
commercial or rental property.
2. The property is to be used only as a Seventh-Day Adventist  
Church and Church School.
3. The original church and church property has always been  
available to the community for funeral and wedding  
privileges. Due to the fact that our relationships to  
the people in the Blue Grass Community go back through  
many generations both in blood ties and friendship, this  
policy is to be continued. Permission will have to be  
obtained from the acting church board but no one of any  
other faith or denomination is to be denied these two  
privileges.



with the hereditaments and appurtenances thereto appertaining, hereby releasing all claims to homestead and dower therein. TO HAVE AND TO HOLD THE said premises to the said Second Parties, their heirs and assigns forever.

And said First Parties, for themselves and for their heirs, executors and administrators do hereby covenant with said Parties, their heirs, and assigns, that they are lawfully seized in fee simple of the premises above conveyed and have full power, authority and right to convey the same, and that said premises are free from all encumbrances except 1978, Knox County taxes to be prorated to date of closing.

and that they will forever warrant and defend the said premises and the title thereto against the lawful claims of all persons whomsoever.

Whenever in this instrument a pronoun is used it shall be construed to represent either singular or plural, as the case may demand.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the said First Parties hereunder set their hands and seals the day and year first above written.

J. Fred Scott (L.S.) Dora Lou Scott (L.S.)  
J. FRED SCOTT DORA LOU SCOTT  
(L.S.) (L.S.)

STATE OF TENNESSEE, } ss.  
KNOX COUNTY

Personally appeared before me, the undersigned authority, a Notary Public in and for said County and State J. FRED SCOTT and wife, DORA LOU SCOTT

the within named bargainors, with whom I am personally acquainted, and who acknowledged that they executed the within instrument for the purposes therein contained.

Witness my hand and official seal at office, in Knox County, this 17th day of August, 1978

My Commission expires April 14, 1979

Notary Public

STATE OF \_\_\_\_\_ } ss.  
COUNTY OF \_\_\_\_\_

Personally appeared before me, the undersigned authority, a Notary Public in and for said County and State \_\_\_\_\_

the within named bargainors, with whom I am personally acquainted, and who acknowledged that they executed the within instrument for the purposes therein contained.

Witness my hand and official seal at office, in \_\_\_\_\_ County, this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_\_\_

My Commission expires \_\_\_\_\_

Notary Public

RESPONSIBLE TAX-PAYER

George L. Scott, Jr.  
Adventist Collierville, GA.

BOOK 1708 PAGE 335

I hereby swear or affirm that the actual consideration or true value of this transfer, whichever is greater, is \$ 10,000.00 Affiant J. Fred Scott

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 17th day of August, 1978

KEITH PRESS, INC., PRINTERS, KNOXVILLE

Notary Public



1. The property is never to be sold or used for any type of commercial or rental property.
2. The property is to be used only as a Seventh-day Adventist Church and church school.
3. The original church and church property has always been available to the community for funeral and wedding privileges. Due to the fact that our relationship to the people in the Blue Grass Community goes back through many generations both in blood ties and friendship this policy is to be continued. Permission will have to be gotten from the acting church board but no one of any other faith or denomination is to be denied these two privileges.

J. Fred Scott



# Development Request

## DEVELOPMENT

- ☐ Development Plan  
☐ Planned Development  
☐ Use on Review / Special Use  
☐ Hillside Protection COA

## SUBDIVISION

- ☐ Concept Plan  
☐ Final Plat

## ZONING

- ☐ Plan Amendment  
☐ SP ☐ PA  
☒ Rezoning

Matthew L. Tinkham, Jr.

Applicant Name

Pastor

Affiliation

11/15/2024

Date Filed

May 8, 2025

Meeting Date (if applicable)

File Number(s)

5-E-25-RZ /  
5-C-25-PA

## CORRESPONDENCE

All correspondence related to this application should be directed to the approved contact listed below

- ☒ Applicant ☐ Property Owner ☐ Option Holder ☐ Project Surveyor ☐ Engineer ☐ Architect/Landscape Architect

Matthew L. Tinkham, Jr.

Grace Seventh-day Adventist Church

Name

Company

9123 S Northshore Drive

Knoxville

TN

37922

Address

City

State

ZIP

423-599-8083

Phone

Email

## CURRENT PROPERTY INFO

Georgia-Cumberland Association of Seventh-day Adventists 255 Conference Road NE, Calhoun, GA 30706 706-629-7951

Property Owner Name (if different)

Property Owner Address

Property Owner Phone

9123 S Northshore Drive, Knoxville, TN 37922

155 00302

Property Address

Parcel ID

First Utility District of Knox County

First Utility District of Knox County

N

Sewer Provider

Water Provider

Septic (Y/N)

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Sign and return the **Public Notice & Community Engagement** form with this application

Planning strives to provide community members with information about upcoming cases in a variety of ways. In addition to posting public notice signs, our agency encourages applicants to provide information and offer opportunities for dialogue related to their upcoming case(s). **We require applicants to acknowledge their role in this process.**



## DEVELOPMENT REQUEST

☐ Development Plan ☐ Use on Review / Special Use ☐ Hillside Protection COA

Related City Permit Number(s)

☐ Residential ☐ Non-Residential

Home Occupation (specify)

Other (specify)

## SUBDIVISION REQUEST

Related Rezoning File Number

Proposed Subdivision Name

Unit / Phase Number ☐ Combine Parcels ☐ Divide Parcel Total Number of Lots Created

☐ Other (specify)

☐ Attachments / Additional Requirements

## ZONING REQUEST

Pending Plat File Number

☒ Zoning Change **CA General Business Zone**

Proposed Zoning

☐ Plan Amendment Change Proposed Plan Designation(s)

Proposed Density (units/acre) Previous Rezoning Requests

☐ Other (specify)

## STAFF USE ONLY

### PLAT TYPE

☐ Staff Review ☒ Planning Commission

Fee 1

Total

0608 \$650.00

### ATTACHMENTS

☐ Property Owners / Option Holders ☐ Variance Request

Fee 2

☐ Amendment Request (Comprehensive Plan)

0803 \$1,000.00 \$1,650.00

### ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

☐ Use on Review / Special Use (Concept Plan)

Fee 3

☐ Traffic Impact Study

☐ COA Checklist (Hillside Protection)

## AUTHORIZATION

By signing below, I declare under penalty of perjury the foregoing is true and correct. 1) He/she/it is the owner of the property AND 2) The application and all associated materials are being submitted with his/her/its consent. If there are additional owners or options holders, each additional individual must sign the Property Owners/Option Holders Form

Matthew L. Tinkham, Jr. Digitally signed by Matthew L. Tinkham, Jr.  
Date: 2024.12.18 15:13:59 -05'00'

Matthew L. Tinkham, Jr. / Pastor

12/18/2024

Applicant Signature

Print Name / Affiliation

Date

423-599-8083

Email

Phone Number  
BY: J. Nalzar, ASSOCIATE TREASURER  
GEORGIA - CUMBERLAND ASSOCIATION  
OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

Please Print

JUNDEL NALZAR/ASSOCIATE TREASURER

03/

Date Paid

MARVIN G. MEDLEY/Treasurer

**All requests to amend the Knox County Comprehensive Land Use and Transportation Plan must include justification for the changes as part of the application process.**

The applicant must provide justification per Implementation Action IM.6, demonstrating:

### Either

- ☒ There is an obvious or significant error or omission in the Plan

OR

### 2 or more of the following criteria apply

- ☐ **Conditions Have Changed** Changes of conditions, such as surrounding land uses, zoning, uncontrolled natural forces/disasters, etc.
- ☐ **New Utilities / Projects** Introduction of significant new utilities or local/state/federal road projects that were not anticipated in the Plan and make development more feasible
- ☐ **New Data** New data regarding trends or projections, population, housing conditions, or traffic growth that warrant reconsideration of the original Plan
- ☐ **Proposed Changes Support Plan** The proposed changes support the Policies and Actions, goals, objectives, and criteria of the Plan

### PLEASE EXPLAIN

The Grace Seventh-day Adventist Church is requesting that the current place type, which is SR Suburban Residential, be changed to CC Corridor Commercial to allow for the Church's land parcel (155 00302) located at 9123 S. Northshore Drive, Knoxville, TN 37922, to be rezoned from A Agricultural to CA General Business Zone. According to the "Place Type and Zoning Correspondence Matrix" for Knox County, the Church's current zoning for its land parcel (i.e., A Agricultural) is not related to or appropriate for its current place type (SR Suburban Residential), and neither this zoning or place type appropriately fits its historic (for over one hundred years) and present (for the last more than forty years) land use.

Our primary purpose for pursuing rezoning at this time is to designate appropriate zoning that matches our parcel's historical and actual land use and will permit us to install a new illuminated church sign with an electronic messaging center (EMC) on our property. We have attached the design of the proposed illuminated electronic sign. The need for a new church sign arose in 2021 when First Utility District of Knox County (hereafter FUD) required the removal of our old illuminated church sign due to its recent Ebenezer Sewer Basin Improvement Project.

The land parcel on the opposite side of S. Northshore Drive—Shultz Pediatrics, 9142 S. Northshore Drive, Knoxville, TN 37922 (155 04405), owned by Randall R. Shults—is zoned as a CA General Business Zone with a place type of CC Corridor Commercial, showing that the Knox County Planning Commission and/or the Knox County Commission has/have deemed this place type and this zone as allowable in our district along S. Northshore Drive. Furthermore, all the land parcels after Northshore Hills Boulevard on S. Northshore Drive are zoned CA General Business Zone, CH Highway Commercial Zone, or PC Planned Commercial Zone up to where I-140 and S. Northshore Drive intersect. Thus, a commercial district begins only a few feet southwest of our land parcel on S. Northshore Drive. This can be seen on the attached zoning map from KGIS Maps.

By: *Marvin G. Medley*

Property Owner Signature

By: *JUNIPER NAZZARO*

By signing above, you certify that criteria for a Plan Amendment have been met and that any information to justify such action is specified above.

*Marvin G. Medley, Treasurer*

Print Name

*JUNIPER NAZZARO, ASSOCIATE TREASURER*

*3/4/25*

Date

*3/4/25*

FILE NUMBER

5-E-25-RZ

March 11, 2025

Knoxville-Knox County Planning  
City-County Building  
400 Main Street, Suite 403  
Knoxville, Tennessee 37902 USA

RE: Request for Place-type Change and Rezoning

Dear Knox County Planning Commission and Knox County Commission:

I am writing on behalf of the Grace Seventh-day Adventist Church (henceforth "Church") to request formal consideration of the attached "Development Request" and "Amendment Request." Our Church is requesting to have (1) the place type for our land parcel, located at 9123 S Northshore Drive, Knoxville, TN 37922 USA (Parcel ID 155 00302), changed from SR Suburban Residential to CC Corridor Commercial and (2) the parcel itself rezoned from an A Agricultural Zone to a CA General Business Zone.

#### **(1) Place Type Change to CC Corridor Commercial**

According to the attached "Place Type and Zoning Correspondence Matrix" for Knox County, our Church's current zoning for its land parcel (i.e., A Agricultural) is not related to or appropriate for its current place type (i.e., SR Suburban Residential). We are requesting this change to correct this discrepancy. Changing our place type to CC Corridor Commercial and our zoning to CA General Business Zone (see below) will align our land parcel with the aforementioned matrix and zoning ordinances in the Code of Knox County, Tennessee.

Furthermore, neither our current place type nor zoning appropriately fits our Church's historic (for over one hundred years) and present (for the last more than forty years) land use. Our land parcel has not been and is not now being used for agricultural purposes. Neither are there any future plans to change our present land use. Additionally, our current place type and zoning do not allow for our goals for future development of our land parcel as specified in the section below and in our "Development Request."

#### **(2) Rezoning to CA General Business Zone**

We believe our current A Agricultural Zone is inappropriate and places unnecessary and unwanted planning and development limitations on our property's established land use. We also think this is a reasonable request because, according to Appendix A-Zoning, Code 5.31.01.F in the Code of Knox County, Tennessee, the CA General Business Zone (our requested rezoning) is an acceptable zoning for land parcels owned by churches.

Our Church has been a vital part of the Bluegrass community of Knox County for over forty years (being first organized as a church on September 12, 1981). Our current facilities (completed and occupied on May 11, 1991) and campus have served as a place of worship and a





community center for various events, services, and outreach programs. Additionally, it's important to note that the land parcel on which our Church is situated has been designated by land usage as a general business zone in the form of a church for over one hundred years, contributing to the community's heritage and continuity. However, our present zoning of A Agricultural Zone does not reflect this history of land use.

Furthermore, our primary purpose for pursuing rezoning at this time is to designate appropriate zoning that matches our parcel's historical and actual land use and will permit us to carry out our plans for future development. Our desire is to install a new illuminated church sign with an electronic messaging center (EMC) on our property. I have attached the production rendering of the proposed illuminated sign and EMC design along with a KGIS Map of our land parcel, highlighting the proposed placement of the new illuminated church sign.

The need for a new church sign arose in 2021 when First Utility District of Knox County (hereafter FUD) required the removal of our old illuminated church sign due to its recent Ebenezer Sewer Basin Improvement Project along our side of S. Northshore Drive. We made a "Temporary Construction Easement" agreement with FUD (see attached) that included the required removal of our old illuminated church sign with a changeable letterboard. Our understanding was that we would be allowed to install a new illuminated church sign that is, at minimum, comparable to the previous one; however, according to Appendix A–Zoning 3.90.06.A in the Code of Knox County, Tennessee, our current A Agricultural Zone does not allow us to permit and install a comparable sign since the old sign was illuminated and included a changeable letterboard. FUD did not disclose any zoning requirements that might complicate the fulfillment of their promise. We may have proceeded differently with FUD if we understood this when making the temporary easement agreement with them. Because of the above, FUD's project along S. Northshore Drive has placed undue financial and developmental hardship upon us.

There are significant grounds that merit your approval of our "Development Request" to rezone our land parcel as a CA General Business Zone.

- **Fulfillment of Agreement with FUD of Knox County:** As stated above, to fulfill the promises made to us by FUD and Knox County, Tennessee, regarding the permitting and installation of a new illuminated church sign with a messaging board after the completion of the Ebenezer Sewer Basin Improvement Project, our church's land parcel must be rezoned as a CA General Business Zone that permits such signage.
- **Historical Presence and Community Service:** Our Church has been established on this land parcel for over four decades. The land parcel has been a church property for over a century. Throughout this time, we have continually adapted to meet the needs of our congregation and the broader Bluegrass community in Knox County, Tennessee, providing essential services such as food, clothing, and school supplies drives and distributions; educational and faith-based programs; and emergency relief. The memorial garden on our land parcel has also provided the wider Bluegrass community with a peaceful place for personal prayer and rest.
- **Equity with Surrounding Institutions on Our Portion of S. Northshore Drive:** The land parcel on the opposite side of S. Northshore Drive—Shultz Pediatrics, located at 9142 S. Northshore Drive, Knoxville, TN 37922 (Parcel ID 155 04405), owned by Randall R. Shults—is has a place type of CC Corridor Commercial and is zoned as a CA General Business Zone, showing that the Knox County Planning Commission and/or the Knox County Commission has/have deemed the CA General Business Zone as allowable in our



district along S. Northshore Drive. It would reveal inequity if the Knox County Planning Commission and/or the Knox County Commission does/do not approve our Church's "Development Request" for the same CA General Business Zone as other land parcels along the same part of S. Northshore Drive. See also 9202 S. Northshore Drive, Knoxville, TN 37922 (Parcel ID 155 00701), zoned CA General Business Zone.

Furthermore, all the land parcels after Northshore Hills Boulevard on S. Northshore Drive are zoned CA General Business Zone, CH Highway Commercial Zone, or PC Planned Commercial Zone up to where I-140 and S. Northshore Drive intersect. Thus, a commercial district begins only a few feet southwest of our land parcel on S. Northshore Drive. This can be seen on the attached zoning map from KGIS Maps.

- **Unique Topographical Requirements:** The topography of our Church's land parcel presents visibility challenges for drivers approaching from either direction on S. Northshore Drive. The attached topographical map from KGIS Maps shows two sizable, steep hills flanking the entrance to our property, obstructing sightlines for drivers traveling north or south on S. Northshore Drive. Installing a more prominent, illuminated church sign that exceeds the size limitations specified in the Code of Knox County, Tennessee, for an A Agricultural Zone (while still complying with the restrictions established for a CA General Business Zone) would give drivers more time to see and read the new illuminated church sign and the messages displayed on its EMC.
- **Enhanced Communication and Safety:** Communication is crucial today, especially in emergencies. Having an EMC with our new illuminated church sign on S. Northshore Drive would allow us to disseminate information quickly and efficiently to Knoxville-area travelers and community members. This could include weather alerts, emergency notices, and important community updates that benefit our congregation and the public.
- **Minimal Impact, Community Aesthetics, and Residential Character:** We recognize that our Church's land parcel is bordered on three sides by residential properties in a more affluent community. We wish to enhance, not detract from, the community's curb appeal. The new illuminated church sign, featuring an EMC, is designed to blend harmoniously with the existing environment and incorporates beautiful landscaping. It will not compromise the residential character of the nearby neighborhoods. The wooded areas surrounding our land parcel will further mitigate any perceived disturbance from the light and EMC of the new illuminated church sign. Modern digital signs can be engineered to comply with aesthetic and brightness regulations, ensuring they are not intrusive. Our Church is committed to adhering to the ordinances regarding EMCs in the Code of Knox County, Tennessee.

Additionally, EMCs offer significant aesthetic and environmental advantages. With an EMC, our Church would no longer need to advertise our programs and events with obtrusive banners along the roadside that stretch and sag over time due to exposure to the elements. The EMC will allow for a cleaner and more visually-pleasing roadside. Moreover, not needing to produce such banners because of the EMC reduces wasteful marketing materials, contributing to a cleaner environment.

- **Future of Land Parcel:** We understand there may be hesitancy from the Planning Commission of Knox County and the Knox County Commission in approving our "Development Request" and "Amendment Request" due to concerns that our Church might sell the land parcel in the future, potentially allowing a commercial business to



acquire the property against the wishes of the surrounding Bluegrass community. However, we can definitively assure you that this will NEVER happen. First, our Church has no plans or desire to do this. Second, when the land parcel was deeded to our Church by J. Fred and Dora Lou Scott, two “restrictions and covenants” were incorporated into the “Warranty Deed,” stating: “1. The property is never to be sold or used for any type of commercial or rental property,” and “2. The property is to be used only as a Seventh-[d]ay Adventist Church and Church School.” Therefore, under no circumstance can the present owner, the Georgia-Cumberland Conference Association of Seventh-day Adventists, sell the property, especially not to any commercial entity. I have attached the “Warranty Deed” for your convenience. Furthermore, while our Church’s facility is currently not near maximum capacity, when that time comes, we have ample space on the land parcel to develop, accommodating such growth. If our Church were to outgrow the land parcel, our decision would be to divide the congregation and plant a new church somewhere else in West Knoxville instead of selling it.

Given these points, we respectfully request that the Planning Commission of Knox County and the Knox County Commission approve our “Development Request” and “Amendment Request.” This new illuminated church sign is not merely a convenience but a crucial tool to support our ongoing community service and outreach efforts.

Thank you in advance for considering our Church’s requests. If you would like to speak with me further, please do not hesitate to contact me on my mobile phone or by email at +1 (423) 599-8083 or [mtinkham@gccsda.com](mailto:mtinkham@gccsda.com). Mail can be sent to my personal address at 1001 Wyndham Way, Apt 1231, Knoxville, TN 37923, or to my attention at the Church’s address, 9123 S Northshore Drive, Knoxville, TN 37922.

Sincerely,



Matthew L. Tinkham, Jr., M.Div., *Pastor*  
Grace Seventh-day Adventist® Church (Knoxville, TN)  
Georgia-Cumberland Conference of Seventh-day Adventists®

*Attachments:* Development Request, Amendment Request, Public Notice and Community Engagement, Production Rendering of New Sign, KGIS Topographical Map, KGIS Zoning Map, KGIS Place Type Map, KGIS Land Parcel Map, Place Type and Zoning Correspondence Matrix, Temporary Construction Easement, Warranty Deed, Church Board Meeting Minutes 2023.09.19, Church Business Meeting Minutes 2023.10.07, Church Board E-mail Minutes 2024.12.18, and Church Board E-mail Minutes 2025.02.19





# Public Notice and Community Engagement

## Sign Posting and Removal

The Administrative Rules and Procedures of the Knoxville-Knox County Planning Commission require a sign to be posted on the property for each application subject to consideration by the Planning Commission.

**Planning staff will post the required sign.** If a replacement sign(s) is needed, the applicant is responsible for picking up the new sign(s) from Planning and will be charged \$10 for each replacement.

### Location and Visibility

The sign must be posted on the nearest adjacent/frontage street and in a location clearly visible to vehicles traveling in either direction. If the property has more than one street frontage, the sign should be placed along the street that carries more traffic. Planning staff may recommend a preferred location for the sign to be posted at the time of application.

### Timing

The sign(s) must be posted not less than 12 days prior to the scheduled Planning Commission public hearing and must remain in place until the day after the meeting. In the case of a postponement, the sign can either remain in place or be removed and reposted not less than 12 days prior to the next Planning Commission meeting. The applicant is responsible for removing the sign after the application has been acted upon by the Planning Commission.

## Community Engagement

Planning strives to provide community members with information about upcoming cases in a variety of ways. In addition to posting public notice signs, our agency encourages applicants to provide information and offer opportunities for dialogue related to their upcoming case(s).

### Acknowledgement

*By signing below, you acknowledge that public notice signs must be posted and visible on the property consistent with the guidelines above and between the dates listed below.*

04/25/2025

Date to be Posted

05/09/2025

Date to be Removed

**Have you engaged the surrounding property owners to discuss your request?**

☐ Yes ☐ No

☐ No, but I plan to prior to the Planning Commission meeting

Matthew L. Tinkham,  
Jr.

Applicant Signature

Digitally signed by Matthew L.  
Tinkham, Jr.  
Date: 2025.01.30 18:20:33 -05'00'

Matthew L. Tinkham, Jr.

Applicant Name

01/30/2025

Date

5-E-25-RZ\_5-C-25-PA

FILE NUMBER