

11/11/20

Re: 11-A-20-SP and 11-C-20-RZ

Knox County Commissioners and Planning Commissioners,

We are writing to you today in opposition of the Low Density Residential (LDR) zoning request and potential new development at the 1737 N. Campbell Station Rd. and 0 Long Farm Way parcels. Hardin Valley is one of the fastest growing areas of Knox County, however, the infrastructure is simply not keeping up with the pace of growth. We also believe the Rural and Agricultural areas designated by the Growth Plan and the Northwest County Sector plans are not being fully protected or preserved. The Hillside and Ridgetop Protection Plan is also in need of stronger adherence.

- Road Safety -

According to the Traffic Impact Letter completed in October 2020 and provided by the applicant, this new development will increase road traffic on N. Campbell Station Rd. by an additional 1,932 trips per day. The estimate by the planning staff has this figure higher at 1,985 daily trips. This is in addition to the increase of 648 daily trips as a result of The Highlands development (case #5-C-16-RZ) and 446 daily trips added from the Brandywine at Pepper Ridge development (case #5-B-17-RZ). According to the planning staff's own figures, this would be a projected increase of 3,079 daily trips from just these three new developments. In each of these rezoning cases brought to the planning commission, it is claimed N. Campbell Station is a MINOR arterial street capable of handling the additional traffic. At what point will it be deemed this minor arterial street is no longer capable of handling additional traffic? It has already been discussed, researched, and agreed upon that this road needs to be widened or rerouted based on current traffic. How will this road support an additional 3,079 projected daily trips? In fact, according to the county's own Hardin Valley Mobility Plan completed in October 2019, this new development seems to remove two of the three proposed solutions to the existing traffic issues on N. Campbell Station Rd. If this new development is approved, how will the county address the rerouting of N. Campbell Station Rd. then? If it is widened, how will that construction take place with all these additional daily trips? Any solution to reroute or widen N. Campbell Station Rd. will not be completed for years, more likely, decades, while waiting for funding and actual construction. Adding this much traffic to a winding, narrow, two lane country road does not add value or quality of life to the current residents in the community.

To our knowledge, there have been 3 accidents just in the last 10 days on N. Campbell Station Rd. which will not appear on any traffic study for your review prior to your meeting (dates of accidents: single car accident on 11/2/20, single car accident on 11/6/20 and some sort of construction delivery truck incident near the intersection at Yarnell Rd. just yesterday, 11/10/20). Again, this is just in the last 10 days.

The proposed development location is on a bend in the road, directly across from another new development (Brandywine at Pepper Ridge) which is approximately 1,400 feet from the ingress/egress of another new development (The Highlands). These also add to the traffic, congestion, and road safety issues.

The Traffic Impact Letter, referenced above, also suggests a left turn lane be installed. Will this be a condition of the development? Where will this fit on the road? Will this be a safe addition to the road, add to the existing problems or potentially create new traffic issues?

The intersection on N. Campbell Station Rd. and Yarnell Rd. is dangerous and must be addressed BEFORE more traffic is added to the area. This oddly shaped intersection adds to the congestion as the offset angles create too much confusion. Because of the strange angle on Yarnell Rd. and no stop sign or traffic signal on N. Campbell Station Rd., turning left onto N. Campbell Station Rd. from Yarnell Rd. in either direction is stressful at times. Adding a potential 1,932 daily trips (or 1,985 daily trips depending on which figure is used) with the approval of this new development will significantly exacerbate these issues of concern.

We are in agreement with the many concerned residents who suggest these traffic, safety and road infrastructure issues on N. Campbell Station Rd. be addressed BEFORE more developments are approved to be built on this specific road. At a minimum, a postponement of the case to allow time to complete a Traffic Impact Analysis Study should be completed prior to rezoning these parcels to Planned Residential.

- Hillside and Ridge Protection Plan and Slope Analysis -

According to the Hillside and Ridge Protection Plan (HP), for parcels with slopes of 15-25%, housing densities should not exceed 2 du/ac. A quick measurement using kgis.org tools shows the 0 Long Farm Way parcel has over 35 of its 41.5 acres in the HP. We are concerned with the effects grading this parcel will have to all the parcels below this proposed development. Long Farm Way is a private road which is maintained by the residents. Will the grading impact any part of this road where it meets this parcel? What will happen with drainage or flooding after the grading takes place?

In regard to the other parcel of this proposed development at 1737 N. Campbell Station Rd., we are not sure how the kgis.org maps of the HP are not including much of this parcel. We drove to the existing kennel and it is a beautiful drive directly through a forest. We would like to have the planning commission research and confirm if more of this parcel should be designated HP, therefore, possibly retaining the majority of the parcel as Rural zoning rather than changing it to Planned Residential. Having driven the property, kgis.org maps do not do it any justice. Removing what seems to be thousands of trees from this parcel does not service the community or bring quality of life to the surrounding residents.

- Prior Rezoning Case at 0 Long Farm Way parcel -

In reference to the prior rezoning case in 2006 (case #10-C-06-SP and case #10-R-06-RZ), this zoning change from Agricultural to Planned Residential was allowed prior to the adoption of the Hillside and Ridgetop Protection Plan (HP). The HP, adopted by Knox County Commission in January 2012, now has more appropriate and specific guidelines to protect and preserve the land designated as such in Hardin Valley. The planning commission should view this parcel with the HP in mind as opposed to any prior rezoning cases as they are no longer relevant.

In 2017 (case #12-D-17-RZ), all of the parcel owners on Long Farm Way at the time requested their parcels be rezoned back to Agricultural. The planning commission and Knox County commissioners agreed that Agricultural zoning is more appropriate for this site than Planned Residential zoning. Just three years ago, both the planning commission and Knox County commissioners did not even think Rural Residential was appropriate for these parcels. We would encourage the planning commission to read the case for other wording in regards to why this specific parcel is a better fit as Agricultural within the Northwest County Sector Plan and the Rural area of the Growth Policy Plan.

- Spot Rezoning -

This proposed development, if rezoned, would occur on two parcels. Many of the concerns are related to both parcels. We'd like to speak specifically regarding the 41.5 acre parcel located at 0 Long Farm Way (130AA00214). This parcel is currently designated Rural and Agricultural on the Northwest County Sector Plan and the Growth Plan. It is one of 8 parcels located on a private road. There are four easements allowed on this private road which dictates only 2 lots per easement. All current owners have purchased the property knowing this to be the current zoning status. The only legal way this parcel would be able to be sub-divided is by accessing the parcel from a surrounding parcel. In this particular case, the parcel would be the west side of the 1737 N. Campbell Station Rd. parcel. Approval of any rezoning at 0 Long Farm Way would drastically affect the other residents of the neighboring lots on this private road. Rezoning this parcel would constitute a spot rezoning, giving this property development rights that no one in the immediate area would be afforded. The other seven immediate surrounding lots of this rural community are as follows:

- Lot 1: 12.47 acres at 1661 Long Farm Way
- Lot 2: 20.64 acres at 1717 Long Farm Way
- Lot 3: 18.86 acres at 0 Long Farm Way (not the parcel in this case)
- Lot 4: 7.98 acres at 1731 Long Farm Way
- Lot 6: 25.60 acres at 1670 Long Farm Way
- Lot 7: 5.32 acres at 1664 Long Farm Way
- Lot 8: 10.21 acres at 1660 Long Farm Way

Approval to amend 0 Long Farm Way from Agricultural to Planned Residential would allow incompatible lot sizes compared to the surrounding lots mentioned above. These parcels are in the Rural area of the Growth Plan and rezoning them to Planned Residential will set a precedent for future development in rural areas that need protection and preservation. This development could potentially reach from N. Campbell Station clear over to the development on Marietta Church Rd. Is this remaining true to the goals of the Hillside and Ridgetop Protection Plan? Is this how the Rural areas of the Growth Plan are being protected and preserved? Does it serve the residents of Hardin Valley to approve multiple developments on an entire ridgetop from one street to the next?

- Schools -

Each new development is having an impact on the overcrowding of Hardin Valley schools. One parcel at a time may not seem to have a huge effect by itself, however, in only a 2.3 square mile vicinity of this proposed rezoning case, (Hardin Valley Rd. to N. Campbell Station Rd. to Yarnell Rd. to Marietta Church Rd. and back to Hardin Valley Rd.), there are four other new developments that are just in their early phases of construction. The schools have not seen their impacts yet. Here is a list of these developments and their projected incoming students totaling an additional 406 students:

- Brandywine at Pepper Ridge development (5-C-16-RZ) = 21
- Broady Glen development (12-D-18-RZ) = 21
- Vining Mill development (7-J-16-RZ) = 114
- Seal Property by Ball Homes development (10-H-19-RZ) = 167
- Catatoga development (current case 11-C-20-RZ) = 83

If the new NW Elementary School project is hoping to lighten the HV Elementary School by 300-400 students, just these five new developments could easily yield the same amount of students, if not more. In no time at all, these five developments alone could bring Hardin Valley schools back to the same overcrowding they are experiencing today. These are only estimates. If Hardin Valley is attracting new families because of their new schools, these estimates could be extremely low. What will be done then? This exponential growth is unsustainable. Again, Hardin Valley is in urgent need of a long-term growth plan BEFORE more Rural and Agricultural parcels are rezoned one parcel at a time for such high-density developments.

Our family is new to Knox County and TN. We are not anti-growth, nor anti-development. We are proponents when it is done with long-term care and thoughtful overall planning. We came from an area that is over built with very few open spaces, no forests, and limited green landscape. There were no rural areas, nor multi acreage parcels. We chose Hardin Valley because of its remaining rural feel on the outskirts of big city living. Slowly, one parcel at a time, the rural feeling of Hardin Valley is fading. While we know growth is happening, we are fearful the pace of rezoning Agricultural land to

Planned Residential without a long-term outlook will remove one of the reasons this town is attracting so many new residents. Please consider a pause in rezoning parcels in the Rural areas of Hardin Valley until a thorough consideration is given and infrastructure is allowed to catch up to all of these new developments. An updated overall Growth Policy Plan is desperately needed in Hardin Valley.

We would encourage all of the commissioners to put the reports, analysis, and studies away for just a brief moment and drive these two rural parcels. They are very different yet both are stunning. These landscapes are an important aspect of what gives Hardin Valley its rural charm which draws so many to choose the area for their home.

For all of these reasons, please consider keeping these parcels in Agricultural and Rural zoning where they have already been designated for preservation. If the zoning must be changed, which we don't want to see happen, please adhere to the Growth Plan, Hillside and Ridgetop Protection Plan, and similar surrounding parcels and keep the Rural Residential zoning at less than 2 du/ac. These beautiful parcels do not fit the Land Use Classification for Low Density Residential (LDR). Please don't let the beautiful rolling hills of Hardin Valley be over developed.

Thank you,

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