

February 22, 2021

Knoxville-Knox County Planning Commission & MPC Board Members

400 Main St SW #403

Knoxville, TN 37902

Reason: Opposition to Subdivision Concept Plan 3-SB-21-C (Applicant: RC Ruggles, LLC).

Dear Planning Commissioners & Board Members:

As per the MPC website page denoting the board's authority and responsibilities, one primary duty is to "Review subdivision regulations and site plans...approving those proposals that encourage the harmonious development of the community and create conditions favorable to health, safety, convenience and prosperity." As East Knox County residents, we appreciate your recognition and commitment to the identified conditions since they directly impact the quality of life we currently enjoy. Furthermore, we commend you for previously working closely and cooperatively with area residents to develop the current East Knox County Community Plan.

My extended family, neighbors and, I suspect, the vast majority of area residents moved and/or remain here because we value the ever-disappearing lifestyle this area offers. Although we understand the need for appropriate growth and development, the proposed project is in direct opposition to the agreed upon East Knox County Community Plan.

The majority of lots within several miles of the proposed subdivision are 1 acre or larger. This "elbow room" allows residents to enjoy a somewhat quiet and peaceful lifestyle, with country views, room for children to safely play, grow gardens, etc. The proposed development is just the opposite, with 482 building lots averaging less than 1/3 acre each. Houses packed that close together will not only look out of place, obstruct/destroy pastoral and wooded views, and damage the country flavor of the area, its' vast footprint and density will create serious traffic and safety issues (especially given the proposed entrances/exit locations and since there are only 2). And with no nearby greenway, the significant number of bicyclists and walkers/runners who travel Ruggles Ferry and the surrounding smaller roads will be at particular risk. Not to mention area farmers traveling the roads on slow moving equipment which is very common here.

In addition, we've heard that the substantial completion of the development could take up to 10 years. Although I realize this allows time to incrementally upgrade infrastructure, it would also mean that road damage, truck/construction traffic and the associated safety and environmental issues that accompany construction would be a long-term issue. And when inevitable housing downturns occur within this 10-year period, the likelihood of a change in developers, restrictions, etc. is very probable. Following the last housing downturn, we all remember the unsightly/mostly vacant subdivisions that remained as such until recently. And we can all cite examples of developments that changed hands resulting in the construction of subsequent homes being radically different from those originally planned/constructed which vastly changed the flavor of the subdivision (i.e. Cottages at Governor's Crossing).

Given your past cooperation with the local citizenry as is reflected in the current East Knox County Community Plan, I feel confident you will again accept input from local residents. This will allow us to agree on a development that allows for economic and tax base growth but that preserves the flavor of the existing community. The existing Plan accurately states our collective desire for our area as is noted on page 1 of the Executive Summary of the current East Knox County Community Plan:

PURPOSE. Over time, the purpose of this community planning effort is to preserve East Knox County's rural identity and enhance community character. It, along with strategies identified in previous plans, is a guide to improve the livability of the area, to prioritize infrastructure investment, and provide the public with the opportunity to participate in shaping the community's future.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION. The East Knox Community Plan brings together the best targeted growth and preservation strategies to preserve and enhance the area's rural character and landscape.

COMMITMENT TO THE PLAN. "Many people who participated in the East Knox County community said preserving rural character is their number one priority. Likewise, the County Commissioners allocated funds for this plan, "to make sure the county has a suitable plan in place to protect the character of the area."

Thank you again for the time and energy you invest in our shared county/community. My neighbors and I look forward to meeting with you soon to further discuss this proposed development.

Respectfully,
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