

Knox Planning Commission Comments

AGAINST case 10-I-21-PA (Francis, Old Amherst, Helmbolt)

My husband and I were excited to move to Tennessee 6 years ago because of the beauty it has to offer. The case currently being considered, and many others like it, are exactly what are ruining that beauty in many ways. We appreciate the opportunity to know about possible changes nearby our home and voice several concerns to why rezoning and building houses is not in the best interest for this area. Our main points of concern are road safety becoming worse, the already large volume of traffic increasing, and conservation of animals and trees.

Our house is just about in the middle of Amherst Rd, with the railroad and forest behind us, a few neighbors around us, industrial businesses south, and residential north. Traffic was decently busy when we moved here in 2016, but noticed it has gotten much worse over the last 6 years. We now have major difficulty pulling in and out of our driveway and getting the mail across the street, as a result of the speed and volume of traffic coming over our hills, in both directions. Many times, we, our visitors, and our neighbors are almost hit just trying to access our driveways or walk out to get the mail. This is already a dangerous road and will continue to get worse with added traffic.

Amherst Rd. is a major cross road between Middlebrook Pike and Ball Camp Pike already. We have backed up traffic at the stop lights on either end, as well as in the middle at the Dollar General 4-way stop. There are more days than not, that traffic is backed up for up to 15 minutes at those locations, in any direction, coming or going, due to the amount of traffic already there. The new Grassy Creek Development on Schaad Rd and Oak Ridge Hwy., which is still being added onto, has brought many more people on our road. We also have the Amherst Business Park being cleared for development yet, so will bring even more people. I also noticed land being cleared on Cain Rd. for development, just up from our house. Yet again, more people still. To add an additional 16.6 acres of housing to this area will only overload Amherst Rd. even more than it already is.

Tennessee is known for its mountains and naturistic vibe. That is what draws people here. Continuing to take that nature away from the people and animals that live here is, to be frank, inconsiderate. That land is home to numerous wildlife. Taking their habitat away only displaces them and forces them to relocate, if they even can. They are much more susceptible to becoming roadkill on the even busier roads and populations are sure to decrease and some be wiped out, as they no longer have a home. In our own backyard, we have seen deer, fox, coyote, owls, bats, hawks, lizards, snakes, various birds, and of course rabbits, squirrels, rodents, etc. The trees are not only homes to animals, but provide better air quality and block out noise for residents that already live here, making us feel like this is our getaway from the big city and the busier roads. We love our beautiful, naturistic, back roads and wish they would also be appreciated by the city and county, as they currently are.

We feel like the city and county of Knoxville, these days, is more interested in cramming people in places that can't handle the residents and traffic that are already there, just because it will make money, regardless of the affect it has on the existing residents, forested areas, and already major road issues. I have seen SO many forested areas cut down and more pasture land cleared, within miles of my home, just to be built on. At what point will the city and county recognize and support the conservation, safety, and volume of traffic on its roads, before it continues to allow more housing developments and businesses to move into areas that are struggling as it is. Because you do not live in this area and may not be aware of how critical these points are already, I plead for you to set aside the profits and truly consider the hearts of the people that live here, by not allowing more housing to be built. I ask that you take these comments and apply them to ALL cases like this.

On the Visit Knoxville website, the first thing you see is "A nature loving adventure seeking artsy kinda town" and "Something for Everyone" describing our wonderful city. Something for everyone means the city is for those that want a city vibe, the suburbs for those that don't want big city challenges, such as the concerns I mentioned above, and rural for those who enjoy the country. I urge you to keep the preservation of our natural habitat and current beauty that exists, which will be destroyed with additional building. Please don't lose sight of the reason people come here and the diversity our city offers. Thank you for your time.