

Dear Staff and Commissioners,

We bought the Historic Loveday Springs Property across the road from the proposed Thunder Mountain Properties (TMP) subdivision (Case # 11-F-21-RZ and Case # 11-F-21-SP). Prior to buying our dream home we researched the Bowers Farm, and learned that it zoned mostly Agricultural and it's NOT in the designated Growth Area of the Sector Growth Plan; it's in the Rural Area. We thought it was safe from the kind of development being proposed by TMP and we decided to go ahead with our purchase. Imagine our horror in six months when approximately 3,000 trees were bulldozed with wildlife running for their lives. What was once a beautiful farm is now an eyesore with huge piles of trees and garbage for all the neighbors to enjoy for the last six months.

We met with the developers and tried to buy part of the property to give us a buffer to this 3-4 houses per acre overdevelopment. The developers declined our generous offer.

We STRONGLY REQUEST that the planning commission vote NO to Re-zoning and vote NO to amend the Sector Growth Plan. I also am requesting that all the developments already approved in our immediate area and the future plans of Thunder Mountain be viewed from a *Global Perspective* instead of piecemeal as a bunch of small, unrelated developments. If all the TMP land gets developed as proposed, combined with the recently approved projects this will add approx. 1,500 new homes in a three-mile radius. The residents of this small community will experience a tsunami of growth, traffic, auto accidents, wildlife habitat destruction and general overcrowding. Housing at 3-4 houses per acre, with the thousands of trees they've already cut down will result in housing blight and the natural beauty of our rural home place will be destroyed forever. Once all farmland is turned into large and ugly housing tracts what once made East Tennessee special and unique will be forever LOST!

COMMUNITY REACTION TO ALL THIS DEVELOPMENT

I went door to door from Hendron Chapel Road to Valley Grove Baptist Church; I spoke to approximately 120 people about all the development and what is coming soon to our community. Most people had zero idea what was happening. The two small yard signs put up on the project property for 10 days prior to the all-important planning hearing in which everyone's lives will be changed forever is a woefully insufficient way to inform the public! After speaking with my neighbors, it was very clear that they are overwhelmingly against this "KIND" of development and growth. Only one person I talked to was for the development of 3-4 houses per acre in our rural area. This single person wanted jobs and property rights considered above all else.

Here are some of the concerns the 119 people I talked to that are **against** the development shared with me:

- One guy's greed should not trump the rest of our needs.... We lose our wonderful rural way of life just so a developer can make a buck!!! **This is the exact kind of thinking that has led to the Harden Valley Disaster!**

- Traffic safety and extreme congestion—15,000 new car trips per day from 1,500 new home (those that have already been approved plus 4 houses/acre on TMP's nearly 400 acres in a three-mile radius of 8802 Sevierville Pike). That's a nightmare for this rural community.
- Our small country roads with lots of curves and no shoulders are not able to handle the new speedway that will result from adding all these cars.
- Fear of Chapman Highway—already one of the three deadliest roads in all of Tennessee—becoming much, much worse.
- Infrastructure cannot handle all these additional homes, people and traffic.
- Emergency services and response times getting worse (they're already bad—we had a home invasion *while we were at home* and it took half an hour for law enforcement to arrive).
- People are worried about overcrowding local schools.
- Nearly everyone said they DO NOT AGREE WITH OR BELIEVE the outdated traffic study numbers or the conclusions of the report saying our roads can handle the ***global number of new trips!*** Residents of the area experience these dangerous roads daily and adding these many cars is nuts!
- Everyone is concerned with their property values going down.
- We are concerned with additional crime brought to the area...It already takes law enforcement 30 minutes or so to come when there are intruders in your home!
- Beauty versus Blight. A subdivision with 3-4 houses per acre is NOT consistent with the character of this community. Dense new housing will destroy the rural beauty of our area.
- For many of our neighbors, this has been their home place for generations. More recent arrivals to the neighborhood moved to the "country", not to an area with subdivisions everywhere... The idea of turning this area into another Hardin Valley is appalling!
- The wildlife corridors and habitat are vital to the environment and the enjoyment of our community. This land is home to 50 deer, 40 turkeys, 2 beaver dams, a large bat cave, many woodchucks, foxes, and thousands of beautiful birds. When everything is bulldozed and the habitat no longer exists to support these native animals, they will all be lost—and they are irreplaceable.
- Extensive damage to wildlife habitat, the destruction of so many trees, the wild-cat grading already done... The lack of best management practices... All these activities tell us TMP are irresponsible stewards of the land. They should be made to restore what they've damaged. One neighbor told me, "Dear, sweet Mrs. Bowers—may she rest in peace—would be horrified at what they've done to the wildlife and the land. She was a lover of the wildlife and the land."
- The five waterways on the farmland have been altered and significantly changed, filled in and disturbed. It's shameful.
- Hillsides have been stripped of trees and the steep slopes are now subject to soil erosion and destructive soil slips and landslides.

- Trees and fences of neighboring property have been taken down and employees of the developers have destroyed cameras, yelled at people, and threatened people. These are not the tactics of responsible developers!

OTHER NOTABLE CONCERNS REGARDING PUBLIC OFFICIALS' COMMENTS AND ATTITUDE ABOUT THIS NEIGHBORHOOD'S OPPOSITION TO RE-ZONING AND SECTOR PLAN CHANGE FOR THIS PROPERTY:

- Most community members believe the only thing that matters is money and tax dollars.
- Most of our neighbors believe there is nothing the public can do about these crazy over-the-top developments. They feel the decision on whether to okay a development is made behind closed doors *prior* to seeking any public input.
- People feel public officials only listen to the developers. They feel steam-rolled in the process. Several neighbors told me when it comes to development, they feel powerless as they aren't included in the "back-room deals" between "good old boys".
- Public officials meet with the developers on a regular basis while our invitations to officials went mostly un-answered.
- The community is shocked that our group gets five minutes in the public hearing to express our concerns, given the decision to re-zone and change sector plan designation for this property is life-altering for us.

CONVERSATIONS WITH PUBLIC OFFICIALS SUPPORT THESE IMPRESSIONS AND FEARS THE COMMUNITY EXPRESSED... HERE ARE SOME OF THE THINGS WE'VE BEEN TOLD OVER THE LAST MONTH BY VARIOUS PUBLIC OFFICIALS:

- Homeowners' concerns are not considered in this process and are not important.
- Petitions are meaningless and can be manipulated.
- They are working with the developers to hit the number of housing units that makes the project profitable for the developer. They have had several meetings with the developers, the developers' engineer already.
- Overwhelming community opposition does not matter to the planners or the planning process.
- This Rezoning Change and Amendment to the Sector Growth Plan has most likely already been decided and there is nothing anyone can do about it.
- School overcrowding is nonexistent.
- Traffic studies don't matter at all. The growth is coming, period.
- We were told "we should have been" involved with creating the Sector Growth Plan and we are too late to this party.
- Public Officials given us a moving target on the number of houses as well as where they plan to actually build all the houses on the lot in question... The various numbers we have been given over the last six weeks are: 227 homes, 180 homes, 475 homes, 215 homes, and 238 homes.

- We have been told that 238 homes is what the planners have already agreed to without our input. We feel manipulated in the process... The number of homes requested on the developers' application is different from the actual number homes we are being told.

CONCLUSION

We believe in property rights. And we believe that we can meet our future housing demands *without* losing our way of life or destroying the land. We assert that a different project on this property—one conforming to the existing zoning and existing sector plan designation, consistent with the character of the existing community, supportive of the native wildlife, and sensitive to the site's unique ecology—can be made profitable and would be a positive and welcome addition to the neighborhood, if it is well designed, supported by the appropriate infrastructure, and is executed by responsible stewards.

In closing, I would like to thank each of you for taking the time to read my letter and hear the community's concerns.

We request a NO Vote to Rezoning and a NO Vote to Amending the Sector Growth Plan!

Warm Regards,

Dawn

PS – I am sending three additional documents to support the comments in my letter. I was unable to attach them to this letter.