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May 6, 2024

Re: Agenda Item No. 27
0 and 1476 Lyons Bend Road, 0 Northshore Drive
File # 4-J-24-SP, 4-H-24-PA and 4-Q-24-RZ

Dear Planning Commissioners,

I represent Scott Smith and Green River Holdings. Our request is to amend the Sector/One-Year Plan at this location from LDR to MDR and to rezone the Property from RN-1 to RN-3 to allow for consideration of a future potential townhome development. Although staff has recommended a denial, we would respectfully request you recommend to City Council that they approve this application.

I. The Property:

The Property is 15.07 acres total; however, much of the property is in the floodway or below the summer pool mark for the Tennessee River. The Property was formerly the residence of Mr. Smith but following the expansion of the ballfields across the river at Lakeshore Park, Mr. Smith has moved from the property and the existing home has been demolished. Given its proximity to the River and Lakeshore Park and the Westminster Presbyterian Church, it is particularly suited for townhomes or other diversified housing stock that an RN-3 zoning would allow for consideration under this zoning via a subsequent Special Use application.

II. The Sector Plan/One Year Plan Amendment is Appropriate.

A Sector Plan and One-Year Plan only requires one condition to be met to justify the change in the Plans. Here staff tacitly acknowledges that it meets the "Trends in Development, Population, or Traffic" condition. Staff notes "[w]hile the City has been experiencing an overall increase in population and housing demand, the traffic and environmental conditions around the subject property do not warrant reconsideration of the land use classification." Respectfully, the traffic and environmental conditions around the subject property are not exclusions to trends in development or population changes. Knox County has recently exceeded the 500,000-population milestone and the demand for housing, especially townhomes and middle-form housing that offer more diverse options for young professionals or older individuals looking to move out of their current single-family homes. As noted below, the traffic and environmental conditions can and will be studied and potentially mitigated at the time a Special Use application and site plan is

proposed. Because the property meets this condition, a change in the Sector Plan and the One Year plan is warranted.

Additionally, staff notes that this is not an extension of the MDR plan. While true, that is only because of errors and omissions in the plan related to other properties in the immediate area. Approximately 185' east of the Property is existing RN-5 zoning; however, the Sector Plan and One-Year Plan at that location remains LDR which is inconsistent with the current RN-5 zoning. Those plan designations should be consistent with the underlying zoning and is an error or omission in the plan.

III. The Zoning Amendment is Appropriate:

RN-3 zoning is the lowest residential zoning category in the City to allow for consideration of townhouse developments. As noted above, there are changing conditions due to the ever-increasing population changes and the need for more diverse and affordable housing. There are already townhome developments across from S. Northshore Drive, any traffic impacts from this development could be addressed and mitigated as part of the required Special Use process necessary for the development of townhomes, and it would be consistent with the amended Sector and One-Year Plan amendments as noted above. As with traffic, the environmental concerns would be present with any development currently allowed in the RN-1 zoning, and their impacts would be studied and mitigated as part of the Special Use process.

It's noted that one online comment that the property could accommodate up to 72 townhouses. That number is a function of the raw acreage¹ that is above the 812-813 summer pool elevation line of the Tennessee River. This estimate, provided by Mark Riehl, the Zoning Chief for the City of Knoxville's Plans, Review and Inspections Department, did not factor in topography, infrastructure, parking, stormwater facilities, buffer zones, or greenspace. What could actually be built there would likely be much less and would require a surveyor and an architect to identify the actual development potential for the Property.

IV. Conclusion.

For the reasons stated above, I would respectfully request that you recommend to City Council that they approve the Plan Amendments to MDR and the Zoning Amendment to RN-3. I look forward to discussing this more at Thursday's meeting.

Sincerely,



Benjamin C. Mullins
FRANTZ, McCONNELL & SEYMOUR, LLP

BCM:mlk

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¹ ~217,800sqft. (5ac) - 12,000 for 3 townhomes = 205,800sqft. / 3,000sqft for each additional townhome = 68.6 (69) + the original 3 = 72 townhomes