

Knoxville Planning Commissioners,

I'm writing my concerns regarding the rezoning of address 8022 Hill Rd (4-0-25-RZ), currently zoned Agriculture, but is before you today with a proposal to be rezoned as Planned Residential.

I want to start out by saying I do not personally know the current owners of 8022 Hill Rd, but what I do know is that they've been lovely neighbors and have a gorgeous piece of preserved land that has probably been around for decades, if not centuries. It's a shame to hear about my neighbors through the woods selling the property but I wish them nothing but the best in their future life.

8022 Hill Rd and its beautiful 14.3 acres are currently zoned Agriculture, and certain parts of the property are under Hillside and Ridgetop Protection according to The Knoxville Knox County Hillside and Protection Plan. According to said plan, "*forested ridges have become a defining characteristic of our region's natural heritage. Not only do the ridges and hillsides embody the historical landscape, they are also a primary contributor to maintaining long term property values, clean air and water, and wildlife protection.*" Properties that have Hillside and Ridgetop Protections, such as 8022 Hill Rd, been reviewed by Knox Planning and according to them, "*offer viewshed protection, slope restoration and reforestation, fire safety protection, water quality, and habitat protection.*" The development of this property would also cause air pollution, light pollution and noise pollution to the surrounding properties, and potentially for the whole community, for months and/or years to come. All for the sake of homes for people that probably have no ties to this city or community and are desirous of the beauty East Tennessee has to offer, that ironically enough, is being destroyed to build these homes.

I'm no expert on land development or wildlife management, but common sense would think it would be a lot easier to build homes on 1 of the 1,000 empty fields in the surrounding area than it would be to deforest 14.3 acres. According to Zillow, there are currently over 1,350 homes up for sale in Knoxville, TN – that seems like a reasonable amount for prospective homebuyers to choose from. The Halls community and Knoxville's infrastructure is already under enough stress as it is, we do not need another development adding fuel to the fire we cannot already contain. I do not need to go into any more detail about this because every Knoxvilleian has felt the pain and suffering for the past 5-7 years of this unprecedented growth our city has had. As Ray from the movie *Field of Dreams* once said "if you build it, he will come" but as I like to say "if you don't build it, they won't come". I would consider myself to be a progressive when it comes to growth in our city, but not at the expense of deforesting 14.3 acres, leading to more issues the members of the Halls community already face in their day-to-day lives.

Furthermore, these 14.3 acres offer refuge and are the home to animals/wildlife that I have personally seen, but most certainly isn't limited to: deer, squirrels, rabbits, bats, snakes, redtail fox, cats, frogs, skunks, raccoons, owls, hawks, dozens of varieties of birds, salamanders, opossums, turtles, chipmunks, bees, moles/voles (I have tunnels in my backyard as proof), groundhogs, turkeys, and the national emblem of the United States, the Bald Eagle. Development and deforestation of this property would not only displace, but most likely kill, thousands of animals for the sake of 50 or so homes, that will probably be sold or leased to out-of-towners that do not appreciate the natural beauty that East Tennessee has (had) to offer. At the pace the Knoxville Planning Commissioners and these land hungry developers are going, Knox County residents and its wildlife won't have any land or beauty left to call home.

Please reconsider the rezoning of 8022 Hill Rd from Agriculture to Planned Residential and let's keep East Tennessee and the Halls community beautiful!