

Dear Planning Commissioners, my name is Joseph and I live at 7714 Vista View Ln. I hope this letter finds you well and thank you for your time. I know the decisions you have to make regarding these cases are not easy and I appreciate your time. I am submitting a PowerPoint presentation that is in line with this letter to help visualize the ideas that we are suggesting. I am grateful the County Commissioners agreed to reduce housing density for 205 N. Wooddale Rd. from 6 units per acre to 2. However, I wish that we were able to find a compromise with conservation in mind because whether it is 22 houses or 66 all of the land would be cleared and its natural integrity lost without a designated conservation area in place.

I was excited to hear from Mr. Mullins and Mr. Kherani because they have been willing to review community concerns and ideas to try to reach a compromise that will benefit everyone. We haven't quite reached a satisfactory agreement yet but we have been working together to hopefully create a development plan that will:

- Preserve a wildlife corridor between two subdivisions,
- Allow for more housing on the east acreage,
- Protect neighboring property lines from grading,
- Reduce costs for the property owner, developer, and
- Hopefully get a plan that would solve some of the traffic concerns on the narrow road that is Wooddale.

After reading the Advanced Knox Plan I realized that what we are working on is in line with the vision, goals, and policies of the plan which are focused on finding a balance between conservation, growth, and community character to create "A thriving county that honors its natural beauty and cultural heritage, while supporting diverse people and businesses."- Advance Knox vision statement (p.g. 6). I was most intrigued by policies 2.3 & 2.4 which emphasize the importance of integrating open space into new developments in an effort to set aside natural areas for the purpose of preserving environmentally sensitive lands, rural vistas, buffer areas, or tree canopy. Additionally, policy 7.2 recognizes the importance of conservation and recommends devoting at least half of the potentially buildable land area to undivided and permanently protected open space.

The Wooddale Rd. property has a beautiful rolling hillside with a native meadow full of goldenrod, ironweed, frost aster, and broom sedge. Meadows like this help filter and control floodwaters, support wildlife biodiversity, and they are becoming increasingly rare in Knoxville. This is concerning because pollinators are in severe decline primarily due to not having access to enough native plants within their flight range and we need pollinators if we want food in our future. These plant communities are ideal for wildlife and, as such, it is an incredibly active wildlife habitat. The removal of healthy ecosystems, like this, results in wildlife being treated as pests when they enter people's backyards, where they used to find food, and drives these animals to extinction.

Knoxville is in a valley; the plateau to our west is over 2,000 feet and the Smokies to our east are over 6,000 feet, so all that water flows to the lowest point. To have this area completely developed would result in more water being diverted to Neal's Landing and surrounding properties, due to its topography. These properties are already inundated with flooding issues due to the development of Neal's Landing (see submitted surveys of those most affected and there are others already on record). Our subdivision is just below the Holston River and right next to Sinking Creek East; when flooding occurs our community will need as many trees and native plants as we can get to mitigate floodwaters.

We have three detention basins in Neal's Landing. Detention basins temporarily hold excess stormwater runoff then slowly release it into downstream infrastructure to minimize flooding. I have calculated how

much water these three basins can hold and the total holding capacity is 335,552 gallons of water. Then I took a look at the soil types on the N. Wooddale Rd. property and found that it is predominantly Corryton-Townley which is composed of silt, loam, clay loam, and clay. The water holding capacity for silty clay loam is 1.8-2 inches of water per foot of soil. The average depth for this soil profile in Tennessee is 3-6ft. Since I wasn't sure exactly how deep the soil is for this property I decided to use 3ft for my calculations, as that is a similar depth to the detention ponds and would provide us a fair comparison. An acre-foot of water is equal to 325,851 gallons of water. Using these figures I was able to determine that the proposed 4.43 acre conservation area's water holding capacity is approximately 721,727 total gallons of water (all math is broken down on the submitted PowerPoint). These figures are simply based on the soil content, however, I know that the plants and trees growing on this land are capable of taking up large amounts of water as well but the calculations required are beyond my ability. Native plants have extensive root systems that are well equipped to stabilize soil. Goldenrod roots, for example, can grow eleven feet deep. The best part is that any excess water would be filtered and enter groundwater; it wouldn't put any strain on our stormwater infrastructure and it would cost nothing to leave this acreage as it is.

I have drawn up a suggested corridor that would preserve 4.43 acres to protect some of the existing hillside meadow and the trees that surround it. This easement will:

- Create a safe wildlife corridor,
- Preserve the most ecologically valuable part of the land,
- Reduce grading and infrastructure costs,
- Eliminate the need for expensive detention ponds,
- Provide stormwater "credits" for the developer due to the reduced volume of stormwater runoff and minimized pollutant loads and
- Offers a tax incentive for the land owner through partnership with a land conservancy such as Tennessee or Foothills.

Most importantly, it would protect our neighborhood—current and future residents alike—from the increasing risks of flooding, biodiversity loss, and disappearing rural character. Let's not treat this land as just a blank slate for development. Let's recognize it as the living system it is and work together to preserve what makes our community special.

Thank you.

Gratefully,

Joseph Bailey