

I am a retired housing developer now living in South Knoxville. I welcome and support apartments being built at the Kerbela site. However, the developer could do a much better job on the exterior architecture without significant additional cost, especially on the north elevation. Knoxville doesn't need another soviet-style apartment complex, like so many uninspired, basic apartments that have already been built along the river. There needs to be more variety of color and materials, and more variety of architectural features.

For the north elevation:

1. There are only three colors (from three different materials), with only two different colors/materials used on the residential floors. These materials/colors are very drab and boring, and could be much more interesting. Additional colors should be added to break up the massing. Furthermore, when interior window blinds are closed, they will likely be the same color as the white exterior.
2. There is no vertical movement of the different materials/colors: everything goes straight up in large blocks. If you look, for example, at the nearby One Riverwalk apartment buildings you will see the brick extends to varying heights on the buildings, as do the different colors. As for the horizontal movement, there are only six main planes for the entire north-facing width of the residential levels. These planes are far too large and uninspired.
3. There are only three gable ends on the north elevation, and these gable ends are very basic—nothing stands out about them. The roofline needs more articulation and the gable ends need to be more interesting and distinct.
4. A main viewpoint for the north elevation is from the Gay Street Bridge. Is there some way an architectural color on the north elevation could tie in the bridge's green color, so pedestrians' eyes are lifted upward?
5. Window are all very similar, with no variation of their height, and all of the balconies are the same small size and very repetitive.
6. Could street lights of the same style that are on the Gay Street Bridge be incorporated on the site, or leading up to the site?
7. Determine in advance who will be responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the JFG sign and mural, a have a written agreement that enforces this.

Traffic: A City-directed traffic study should be done at this point—prior to approval, in order to determine the project's traffic impacts and whether adjustments to the project need to be made and to provide decisionmakers with complete information. It makes little sense to approve the project first and then perform a traffic study once you're "pregnant."

How will the more than 200 units affect E. Blount Ave. traffic and the queuing of cars turning right from E. Blount Ave. onto Henley Bridge? Ingress to the project via Kerbela Avenue is problematic given the often backed up northbound traffic on Chapman Highway that will block turns onto Kerbela Avenue.

The City should work closely with the developer to help design an apartment complex that is more beautiful and aesthetically pleasing. The site is a visually important focal point for South Knox, especially from the Gay Street Bridge. It deserves to be an exemplary standout, not just another apartment building.