



As a neighbor of the proposed development on the Kerbela Shriners site, City Church broadly supports thoughtful investment in the Old Sevier area. Additional residential density and neighborhood activity can strengthen local businesses, expand housing opportunities, and contribute to a more vibrant waterfront community. We appreciate the developer’s interest in reinvesting in this important corridor. At the same time, we have significant concerns regarding vehicle circulation, congestion, and pedestrian and cyclist safety — concerns we have already raised directly with the developer.

### **Vehicle Congestion & Safety**

As noted by the South Waterfront Advisory and Advocacy Group (SWAAG), the South Waterfront Vision Plan was intended to “ensure that proposed development is of human scale,” while also seeking to “minimize automobile congestion through pedestrian-oriented development, compact community form, safe and effective traffic circulation, and adequate parking facilities.” Our concern is not with residential growth itself, but with the degree to which the current proposal remains oriented towards vehicles despite its reduced parking ratio. In genuinely walkable urban environments, reduced parking demand is typically supported by strong pedestrian engagement, active streetscapes, and safe multimodal connectivity. As currently designed, the project appears to rely heavily on vehicle access while providing limited street-level activation or pedestrian-oriented infrastructure improvements.

Given the likely household composition of many multi-bedroom units, the on-site parking will not adequately reflect anticipated vehicle ownership, increasing pressure on surrounding streets and nearby private lots. City Church and the Immanuel Community School already experience overflow parking impacts from the waterfront area.

Additionally, because the church alleyway and parking lot sit directly opposite the proposed garage entrance and exit, we are concerned about the future unsafe traffic conflicts along Dawson Road and Sevier Avenue. Increased cut-through traffic through the alleyway will inevitably place additional vehicle activity in direct proximity to children and families using the church and school facilities daily.

### **Requests**

We respectfully ask that the City require:

- An independent traffic impact study and road safety audit of affected intersections and circulation patterns, with findings made publicly available and solutions incorporated as binding conditions of approval.
- A demonstration that the project's parking strategy realistically reflects anticipated household vehicle ownership without relying on surrounding streets or neighboring properties to absorb parking demand.
- Full compliance with the adopted South Waterfront form-based code and Vision Plan, particularly as it relates to pedestrian-oriented urban design, streetscape engagement, and human-scaled development patterns.
- Consideration of closing the alleyway exit onto Dawson Road behind the church in order to improve safety for children, pedestrians, and nearby residents.

City Church remains supportive of quality residential development in the South Waterfront area and believes growth can occur in a manner that strengthens both the neighborhood and the public realm. We trust the City will continue to balance the interests of existing residents and institutions alongside those of the incoming community.

Stephen Ellett

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