

August 30, 2018

Dear Knoxville Metropolitan Planning Commission,

This letter is written regarding the second draft of Recode Knoxville.

We realize the zoning ordinance needs "updating", but it seems we are throwing out many provisions that have served the City well over time. For example, removal of "requiring" and replacing with "considering" standards to be met for rezoning will make appeals virtually impossible.

Our neighborhood, Tazewell Pike-Beverly Station Neighborhood Coalition, with an NC-1 Neighborhood Conservation Overlay, has grave concerns about this document, from allowing 2-family dwellings as a special use to very few local regulations on in-home day cares in residual zones.

One of the most disturbing elements of the proposed new zoning code is the decision to allow by right accessory dwelling units in ALL residential districts. What problem are we trying to solve? We have heard explanations that include, "it will provide more affordable housing," that it is for walkability," "Many people are moving to Knoxville" etc.

We haven't heard an explanation that makes sense to us yet.

More affordable housing: With an additional home on the property, the property would be even more expensive to purchase. You would essentially "exclude" people from owning homes because they can no longer afford them, and force them to be "renters" for life.

We actually randomly looked at the value of 17 homes in our 6-block neighborhood- they range in value as follows:

- 1- \$75,000
- 4- \$115,000-\$135,000
- 6- \$140,000-\$180,000
- 4- \$200,000-\$250,000
- 2-\$320,000-\$350,000

You can see that most homes in this list fall into the "affordable" category.

For Walkability: Several of us grew up in neighborhoods that had churches, groceries, dry cleaners, drug stores, and other businesses- all within walking distance with reliable public transit. As adults, many of us chose to live in a neighborhood without those amenities. Our neighborhood is not a walkable neighborhood and reliable public transit is not an option.

Many people are moving to Knoxville: That is simply not so! More reliable documents and research need to be relied on for this determination regarding population growth. The August 19, 2018 *Knoxville News Sentinel* page 1 B- states, "the population of the city proper hasn't grown much in 30 years while the unincorporated area's population increased by nearly 50% in the same period".

Why would we want all the neighborhoods In Knoxville to be alike? One of the purposes of zoning districts is to preserve the existing character of an area. The character of our neighborhood and many others will be compromised and even destroyed with the accessory dwelling units in ALL residential districts. At one MPC meeting for recode, when asked about the problems that would follow regarding

density, the sewer system, police and fire departments, additional road traffic, parking issues, etc.- we were told by the Chicago firm, Camiros, **"We don't expect that many people to actually build an accessory dwelling unit."** Really!!! A proposed zoning ordinance is going to allow this sweeping provision for every residential district based on the "hope, wish, or daydream", that most people won't do it- that is absurd, poor planning, and frankly ridiculous.

Edward T. McMahon's article *The Secrets of Successful Communities* (PlannersWeb.com, July 29, 2013) states that when "it comes to 21st century economic development, a key concept is community differentiation. If you can't differentiate your community from any other, you have no competitive advantage." On the matter of distinctiveness, McMahon quotes Joseph Cortright, an authority on economic development: **"the unique characteristics of place may be the only truly source of competitive advantage for communities."** McMahon says, "Every single day in America people make decisions about where to live, where to invest, where to vacation and where to retire **based on what communities look like."**

"Quality urban development . . . wants no part of an unstable, unplanned, uncontrolled environment as they know this is not a place to make a long-term investment." *Planning America's Communities: Paradise Found? Paradise Lost? Herbert Smith* (1991)

"If everyplace was just like everyplace else, there would be no reason to go anywhere." **"This is the reason why local land use planning and urban design standards are so important."** Edward T. McMahon, *Responsible Tourism: How to Preserve the Goose that Lays the Golden Egg, Virginia Town & City, May 2015.*

Community meetings being held across the city for only a one-hour time period are simply inadequate for the tremendous changes and long-term permanent effects this document will have on the City. A large part of the hour is a presentation by MPC. Our most valuable asset, our homes, and our neighborhoods will feel the repercussions from this document for many years. Many neighborhoods are just now realizing the zoning code is being overhauled.

Community Forum has representatives from many different and diverse neighborhoods and has always offered sound well thought-out advice that will lead to the betterment of all communities. They frequently advocate on issues affecting the character and integrity of neighborhoods.

Our neighborhood is indebted to the comprehensive and diligent hours of work by Community Forum on the recode document. **We agree totally with all of the comments and recommendations of Community Forum.**

We e-mailed comments on recode May 21, and a copy is included with this document. Additionally, we are including a copy of comments from May 10 by Community Forum regarding draft 1.

Also, we are including a copy of 2 articles written by former Councilman Nick DellaVolpe.

Sincerely,



Jamie Rowe

President, Tazewell Pike-Beverly Station Neighborhood Coalition