

UPDATE

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

June 1, 2010

Meetings

On Wednesday, **June 9** at 4:30 p.m. in CAC/LT Ross Building, MPC staff will meet with the **City's Neighborhood Advisory Council** to discuss the proposed ordinance amendment to add nursing homes as a use permitted on review in the Planned Residential (RP1, RP-2, and RP-3) zone districts.

City Council, at its June 1st meeting, requested MPC conduct an additional meeting regarding the **proposed R-4 (Residential/Office) zone district**. A public meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday, **June 22nd**, at 5:30 p.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City County Building. The proposed district, which has been recommended for approval by the Planning Commission, will replace the existing R-4 zoning regulations with new regulations intended to create a flexible, mixed-use zone district that will allow the development of residences and low intensity office and professional uses within mixed-use land use plan classifications. The district is intended to be used: 1) as a transition between more intense development and low density residential uses, 2) within a neighborhood center, or 3) at the edge of established neighborhoods along arterial and major collector streets.

Requested Ordinance Amendment and Zoning Studies

Knoxville City Council has requested MPC conduct a **rezoning study of the 100 block of W. Baxter Avenue** in the Central City sector. The area is within the I-275 Redevelopment area, in close proximity to the Central Street Redevelopment corridor, zoned I-2 (Restricted Manufacturing and Warehousing) and C-3 (General Commercial), but has been the site of recent residential redevelopment activity. Council asked consideration of a residential zone district.

Knoxville Plans Review and Inspections department has requested MPC staff consider amendment of the Knoxville Zoning Ordinance to allow consideration of **public safety facilities** – such as commercial fire and rescue stations – as a permitted use or use permitted on review in all of the zone districts in the city.

Let the Voting Begin (Soon)

All Planning Commissioners are invited to a luncheon for the **2010 Excellence Awards** on June 10. It will be held before the monthly MPC meeting at 11:30 in room 453 (just down the hall from the MPC offices) for a chance to view a presentation of the finalists and vote for the winners. Lunch will be provided to commissioners, so please call Laura Stout at 215-3234 or email her at laura.stout@knoxmpc.org to RSVP.

- *Commissioners who are not able to attend the luncheon or who would like to review the finalist before then will be able to vote online June 7-18. Commissioners will receive an email with a link to the finalist gallery next week. Between the luncheon and online voting we look forward to having 100 percent participation from the planning commissioners!*

Comprehensive Planning

On May 24, County Commission decided to postpone a vote on the **East County Sector Plan** for 120 days, after the election of a new county mayor and county commission. City Council on June 1st passed on first reading the municipal element of the East County Sector Plan. Second reading is scheduled for June 15.

Comprehensive Planning staff are in the process of studying other city's approach to **urban parking standards** including the potential for minimum and maximum parking requirements.

The proposed **R1-HK (Heart of Knoxville) zone district** was reviewed by the Infill Housing Review Board at their May 26 meeting.

TPO

The **2010 spring bicycle/pedestrian counts** along with counts dating back to 2005 are available at <http://www.knoxmpc.org/locldata/TrafCnts/trfcnt00.htm>. The spring counts took place at nine intersections and were conducted by Dr. Gene Fitzhugh's Exercise Science 350 class at UT.

- The number of bicyclists seen in downtown Knoxville has nearly tripled in the past five years, according to counts conducted by the Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization with assistance from University of Tennessee students. During this year's bicycle and pedestrian counts, 108 bicyclists utilized the intersection of Summit Hill and Gay Street, a 125 percent increase from Spring 2007, when 48 bicyclists were counted. At the intersection of Clinch Avenue and Henley Street, 111 bicyclists were counted this year, a significant increase from 43 in 2007. Additionally, 67 bicyclists were counted at the intersection of Gay Street and Hill Avenue, more than double the 29 counted in 2007.

The City of Knoxville recently selected Lawrie & Associates of Alexandria, Virginia to design a **pedestrian/bicycle bridge** that will span the Tennessee River from the South Waterfront to the University of Tennessee's Thompson-Boling Arena.

The **MPC Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Plan and Goal** is available on the TPO website, www.knoxtrans.org, for public review and comment until June 21. MPC's annual goal is to contract at least 3.4% of the U.S. DOT funds directly contracted with MPC to DBEs.

Sustainable Development

Knox County recently broke ground on the **Blueberry Ridge Affordable Housing Development for seniors**. This new project in Powell will provide 30 two-bedroom units and is projected to reduce energy use by 33% over conventional residential buildings to meet code. It is anticipated to achieve a **LEED platinum rating**, the highest certification offered by the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED for Homes program, as well as an Energy Star Qualification. Energy, lighting, water efficiency and sustainable materials have all been optimized to achieve the highest number of LEED credits and to reduce maintenance costs and utility bills.