



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Happy Holler Nominated to National Register of Historic Places

Knoxville, Tennessee, June 10, 2014 – The Happy Holler commercial district has been nominated to the National Register of Historic Places for its cultural and historic significance to Knoxville’s early days of development. The nomination, submitted to the U.S. National Park Service, was written by Metropolitan Planning Commission staff and was pre-approved by the Tennessee Historical Commission.

Happy Holler’s historic and cultural value is tied to its collection of early 20th-century buildings, the most complete example in Knoxville outside of Downtown. The district runs along both sides of the 1200 block of N. Central Street and forms the core of a community-oriented shopping district established along early trolley lines.

Most buildings in Happy Holler are one-story commercial structures built between 1900 and 1930. The area served northside residents, from the community now known as Old North Knoxville, a Victorian-era neighborhood lying to the east of Happy Holler, as well as the families of textile, railroad, and iron workers who lived to the west. Trolley lines brought other Knoxvilleians—many from nearby Lincoln Park and Oakwood subdivisions—to the grocery, drug, and hardware stores, movie theater, and other venues in Happy Holler.

The name “Happy Holler” came from both its low-lying topography and its popularity during Prohibition, well known for its bootleggers who operated from back rooms in the district. Despite its notoriety, Happy Holler also became a popular entertainment area. The first suburban movie theater in Knoxville, The Picto, opened at 1205 Central Street in 1916.

Today, Happy Holler retains a unique identity that has not diminished with the passage of time, and it remains a distinctive and vital retail and service area.

The National Register documents properties that are historically and culturally important to local, state, and national heritage and highlights their significance by placing the nomination reports within the National Archives of History. A Register nomination establishes a review and mitigation process in cases where a federal project would have a negative impact on the properties. Another benefit is a Federal Income Tax Credit for the certified rehabilitation of properties listed in the National Register.

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Knoxville-Knox County Metropolitan Planning Commission

The Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC) was established in 1956 by Knoxville and Knox County as the agency responsible for comprehensive county-wide planning and administration of zoning and land subdivision regulations and remains so today (except for the town of Farragut). Funding for MPC activities comes primarily from city and county appropriations and from federal grants for specific studies. The Commission prepares and adopts a general plan, reviews subdivision regulations and site plans, prepares and recommends zoning ordinances and maps to the Knox County Commission and Knoxville City Council, reviews proposed zoning amendments, and prepares a capital improvements plan for the City of Knoxville. For more information, visit our website: www.knoxmpc.org