

# CASE SUMMARY

**APPLICATION TYPE: ORDINANCE AMENDMENT**

KNOXVILLE • KNOX COUNTY

**M P C**  
METROPOLITAN  
P L A N N I N G  
C O M M I S S I O N

T E N N E S S E E

Suite 403 • City County Building  
4 0 0 M a i n S t r e e t  
Knoxville, Tennessee 37902  
8 6 5 • 2 1 5 • 2 5 0 0  
F A X • 2 1 5 • 2 0 6 8  
w w w • k n o x m p c • o r g

**File Number:** 1-A-11-OA                      **Related File Number:**  
**Application Filed:** 12/21/2010              **Date of Revision:**  
**Applicant:** KNOXVILLE CITY ADMINISTRATION

## PROPERTY INFORMATION

**General Location:**  
**Other Parcel Info.:**  
**Tax ID Number:** 999 999                      **Jurisdiction:**  
**Size of Tract:**  
**Accessibility:**

## GENERAL LAND USE INFORMATION

**Existing Land Use:**  
**Surrounding Land Use:**  
**Proposed Use:**                                      **Density:**  
**Sector Plan:**                                      **Sector Plan Designation:**  
**Growth Policy Plan:**  
**Neighborhood Context:**

## ADDRESS/RIGHT-OF-WAY INFORMATION (where applicable)

**Street:**  
**Location:**  
**Proposed Street Name:**  
**Department-Utility Report:**  
**Reason:** Amendments to the Knoxville Zoning Ordinance at Article V, Section 10, regarding regulations and definitions for on-premise incidental signs

## ZONING INFORMATION (where applicable)

**Current Zoning:**  
**Former Zoning:**  
**Requested Zoning:**  
**Previous Requests:**  
**Extension of Zone:**  
**History of Zoning:**

## PLAN INFORMATION (where applicable)

**Current Plan Category:**  
**Requested Plan Category:**

## ***SUBDIVISION INFORMATION (where applicable)***

**Subdivision Name:**

**No. of Lots Proposed:**

**No. of Lots Approved:** 0

**Variances Requested:**

**S/D Name Change:**

## ***OTHER INFORMATION (where applicable)***

**Other Bus./Ord. Amend.:** Amendments to the Knoxville Zoning Ordinance at Article V, Section 10, regarding regulations and definitions for on-premise incidental signs

## ***MPC ACTION AND DISPOSITION***

**Planner In Charge:** Mark Donaldson

**Staff Recomm. (Abbr.):** Approve the amendments as shown in Exhibits A, B, C & D

**Staff Recomm. (Full):** MPC staff received a letter, dated December 14, 2010, from the City of Knoxville administration requesting that MPC develop regulations for on-premise wayfinding signage. Recent cases before the City Board of Zoning Appeals indicate there is a need in the zoning ordinance to permit and properly regulate one or more on-premise signs that are incidental to primary use of the property and provide directions and information on large lots with campus-style development.

### **ANALYSIS**

Sign codes found in many cities contain lists of signs that are: 1) exempt from the need for a permit to allow installation, and 2) exempt from the regulations that may apply to other signs on a property. These "exempt" signs often include directional, information and on-premise directory signs, with dimensional requirements established in the definition of the sign, or as a part of the exemption section. The City of Knoxville sign code has no such section.

In the City's sign code there is a reference to traffic control signs at Article V, Section 10. A. 11, wherein a traffic control sign is allowed on a site with a maximum sign area of nine (9) square feet and a maximum height of 3 feet. There is no definition of a traffic control sign and no context for its use.

Elsewhere in the City's sign code, at Article V, Section J. 1, there is a provision for a single sign in a parking lot with maximum sign area of nine (9) square feet for an exit or entry sign and an additional sign in a parking lot of up to twelve (12) square feet for an informational sign.

### **STRATEGY**

The City sign code should allow the use of a comprehensive package of signs to direct vehicles and pedestrians to and from facilities located on large, campus-style developments without the need to pursue and obtain approval of variances.

There currently is no separate section in the City's sign code, as is found in many sign codes, for signs that are exempt from regulations or for signs that are prohibited in the city. To reorganize the entire sign code to provide for such sections is warranted, but that is not what has been requested.

The provision in the City's sign code for the master sign plan, if reorganized, provides a model for the treatment of signs as a comprehensive package on developments that are large in scale. An amendment to the master sign plan regulations allowing a development directory sign within the private street is also proposed.

The proposed regulations for incidental signs on large tracts are similar to the approach for a master sign plan. Such a provision could require the submittal and approval by City staff of a site plan showing all incidental signs proposed for a site.

The current regulations for traffic control signs and parking lot signs need to stay in place for use on sites that do not qualify as large sites as proposed in Exhibit B. However, these provisions should be amended for clarity and dimensions as shown in Exhibit D.

### **Comments:**

MPC staff received a letter, dated December 14, 2010, from the City of Knoxville administration requesting that MPC develop regulations for on-premise wayfinding signage. Recent cases before the City Board of Zoning Appeals indicate there is a need in the zoning ordinance to permit and properly regulate one or more on-premise signs that are incidental to primary use of the property and provide directions and information on large lots with campus-style development.

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**Action:** Approved **Meeting Date:** 2/10/2011  
**Details of Action:**  
**Summary of Action:** Approve the amendments as shown in Exhibits A, B, C & D  
**Date of Approval:** 2/10/2011 **Date of Denial:** **Postponements:** 1/13/2011  
**Date of Withdrawal:** **Withdrawn prior to publication?:**  **Action Appealed?:**

### **LEGISLATIVE ACTION AND DISPOSITION**

**Legislative Body:** Knoxville City Council  
**Date of Legislative Action:** 4/19/2011 **Date of Legislative Action, Second Reading:** 5/3/2011  
**Ordinance Number:** O-30-2011 **Other Ordinance Number References:**  
**Disposition of Case:** Approved **Disposition of Case, Second Reading:** Approved  
**If "Other":** Postponed until April 19 **If "Other":**  
**Amendments:** **Amendments:**  
**Date of Legislative Appeal:** **Effective Date of Ordinance:**