

# CASE SUMMARY

APPLICATION TYPE: SUBDIVISION  
CONCEPT PLAN



File Number: 1-SA-22-C                      Related File Number: 1-D-22-UR  
Application Filed: 11/29/2021              Date of Revision:  
Applicant: SAFE HARBOR DEVELOPMENT, LLC

## PROPERTY INFORMATION

General Location: South side of Couch Mill Road, west of Caspian Drive  
Other Parcel Info.:  
Tax ID Number: 117 8 (PART OF)                      Jurisdiction: County  
Size of Tract: 131.2 acres  
Accessibility: Access is via Couch Mill Rd, a major collector street with 18ft of pavement width within 50-60ft of right-of-way.

## GENERAL LAND USE INFORMATION

Existing Land Use: Vacant land  
Surrounding Land Use: North: Agriculture/forestry/vacant, single family residential, rural residential -- A (Agricultural)  
South: Agriculture/forestry/vacant -- A (Agricultural)  
East: Agriculture/forestry/vacant, single family residential, rural residential -- A (Agricultural)  
West: Agriculture/forestry/vacant -- A (Agricultural)  
Proposed Use: Detached & attached residential subdivision                      Density: 2.74 du/ac  
Sector Plan: Northwest County              Sector Plan Designation:  
Growth Policy Plan: Rural Area  
Neighborhood Context:

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

Street: 11636 Hardin Valley Rd.  
Location:  
Proposed Street Name:  
Department-Utility Report:  
Reason:

## ZONING INFORMATION (where applicable)

Current Zoning: PR (Planned Residential)  
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: Brown Property- Couch Mill Road

No. of Lots Proposed: 359                      No. of Lots Approved:

Variations Requested: VARIANCES

1) Reduce the minimum tangent length between broken back curves from 150 ft to 123 ft on Road 'C' from STA 5+97 to 7+20

ALTERNATIVE DESIGN STANDARDS REQUIRING KNOXVILLE-KNOX COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION APPROVAL

1) Reduce the minimum horizontal curve radius from 250 ft to 125 ft on Road' B' at STA 21+50

ALTERNATIVE DESIGN STANDARDS REQUIRING KNOX COUNTY ENGINEERING AND PUBLIC WORKS APPROVAL

1) Increase the intersection grade from 1 percent to up to 3 percent for the intersections listed in Note #13 on the Concept Plan.

S/D Name Change:

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

Other Bus./Ord. Amend.:

### **PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION AND DISPOSITION**

Planner In Charge: Mike Reynolds

Staff Recomm. (Abbr.): Approve the variance and alternative design standard based on the justifications provided by the applicant and the recommendations of the Knox County Department of Engineering and Public Works, and because the site conditions restrict compliance with the Subdivision Regulations and will not create a traffic hazard.

Approve the Concept Plan subject to 16 conditions.

Staff Recomm. (Full):

1. Connection to sanitary sewer and meeting any other relevant requirements of the utility provider.
2. Provision of street names consistent with the Uniform Street Naming and Addressing System within Knox County (County Ord. 91-1-102).
3. All sidewalks and crosswalks within the public right-of-way shall meet the applicable ADA standards. The design details shall be worked out with Knox County Engineering and Public Works during the design plan phase.
4. Implementation of the street and intersection improvements and recommendations outlined in the Couch Mill Road Subdivision Transportation Impact Study prepared by AJAX Engineering (Revised 2/18/2022), as revised and approved by the Knox County Department of Engineering and Public Works and Planning staff (see Exhibit A). The design details and timing of the installation of the improvements shall be worked out with the Knox County Department of Engineering and Public Works during the design plan stage for the subdivision.
5. Providing a minimum 200-ft sight distance easement across Lot 162 on the final plat. The driveway on this lot must have a depth of 20-ft beyond the sight distance easement.
6. Providing the 25-ft common area along the Couch Mill Road frontage where the adjacent lots do not meet the double frontage lot depth standard per Section 3.02.A.4. of the Subdivision Regulations.
7. Providing the proposed road stub-outs per Section 3.04.C.2.b. of the Subdivision Regulations.
8. Providing notification of future street connections at the terminus of the stub-out per Section 3.04.C.2.d. of the Subdivision Regulations.
9. Providing the location of all sinkholes/closed contours and the 50-ft buffer (building setback) on the final plat per Section 3.06.B of the Subdivision Regulations.
10. Providing a note on the final plat that all structures are to be located outside of the 50-ft buffer (building setback) for sinkholes/closed contours unless a geotechnical study prepared by a registered engineer states that building within the 50-ft sinkhole/closed contour buffer (building setback) is acceptable and the study is approved by the Knox County Department of Engineering and Public Works. The geotechnical study must be reviewed and approved by Knox County Department of Engineering and Public Works prior to approval of a plat for any proposed lots that do not have adequate building area outside of the 50-ft buffer (building setback) area. Building construction is not permitted within the sinkhole/closed contour area or any required drainage easement for the sinkhole/closed contour area.
11. Meeting all applicable requirements of the Knox County Zoning Ordinance.

12. Meeting all applicable requirements of the Knox County Department of Engineering and Public Works.
13. Providing a note on the final plat that all lots will have access to internal streets.
14. Submitting to Planning staff prior to final plat review by the Planning Commission or Planning staff, the certification of design plan approval form as required by the Knoxville-Knox County Subdivision Regulations.
15. Prior to certification of the final plat for the subdivision, establishing a property owners association that will be responsible for the maintenance of the common areas, amenities, and drainage system.
16. [ADDED 3/8/2022] Per discussion at County Commission, offsite improvements (including sidewalk and intersection improvements at Sam Lee/Steele/Swofford) shall be completed in partnership with Knox County Engineering and Public Works. Before issuing a plat, an agreement codifying the timeline and cost-sharing shall be executed.

**Comments:**

Condition #16 was added 3/8/2022.

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This proposal is for a 359-lot detached residential subdivision on 131.2 acres, at a density of 2.74 du/ac. There are two access points to Couch Mill Road and three stub-out roads to the large undeveloped properties to the south. There are several large sinkholes on the site, many of which are proposed as open space amenities with walking trails. The property was rezoned from A (Agricultural) to PR (Planned Residential) up to 3 du/ac on January 24, 2022 (12-I-21-RZ).

**AMENITIES**

The 33.54 acres of common areas are primarily located around sinkholes and provide buffers to adjacent houses. Several walking trails in the common areas make internal pedestrian connections throughout the neighborhood. A community pool, bathhouse, and playground are proposed near the western entrance to the site with access to Road 'G'.

**TRANSPORTATION IMPACT STUDY (TIS)**

The conclusions and recommendations of the Coach Mill Road TIS (AJAX Engineering, 2/18/2022) are presented in Exhibit A. The primary recommendation is to widen Coach Mill Road to 21' from the western entrance (Road 'G') to the Steele Road intersection. The study concluded that the Sam Lee Road/Swofford Road/Steele Road 4-way intersection does not warrant conversion from a 2-way stop control to 4-way stop control. The study further recommends that Knox County consider converting this intersection to a roundabout because of the large, undeveloped tracts remaining in this area (see condition #16). The TIS makes additional recommendations regarding the design of the new internal streets.

**CONNECTIVITY**

This proposal has two access points to Couch Mill Road and three stub-out roads to properties that border to the south. Two of the proposed stub-outs are located on the east half of the development and connect to the remaining portion of the subject property. The third stub-out is located in the southwest corner of the property. Multiple stub-outs are desired for this property because it is the most feasible opportunity for a north-south connection between Hardin Valley Road and Couch Mill Road/Sam Lee Road, west of Steele Road. This is approximately the same location as the proposed north-south connector proposed in the Hardin Valley Mobility Plan (2019) (see Exhibit B).

**SIDEWALKS**

The applicant is proposing sidewalks on one side of all roads within the subdivision and sidewalk along the Couch Mill Road/Sam Lee Road from the western access point (Road 'G') to the Sam Lee Road/Swofford Road/Steele Road intersection. The Knox County sidewalk ordinance requires sidewalks along the Couch Mill Road frontage and on internal roads that is projected to have over 1000 daily vehicle trips. At the request of Knox County Engineering and Public Works, some of the sidewalk required along the western portion of the Couch Mill Road frontage will be constructed on Sam Lee Road to the east, to make a sidewalk connection to Steele Road. The final details of the sidewalks will be determined during the design plan phase.

**HILLSIDE PROTECTION AREA**

There is 37.48 acres of this site within the Hillside Protection (HP) area, most of which is located around the large sinkholes in the northwest portion of the property. Besides the slope associated with the sinkholes, the property consists mainly of rolling hills. The slope analysis for this site recommends disturbing a maximum of 23 acres in the HP area. This proposal disturbs approximately 20.9 acres of the HP area and complies with the Hillside and Ridgeway Protection Plan recommendations.

**SINKHOLES**

There are several large sinkholes on this property which are identified with grey shading on plan sheet C3 (Sinkhole Site Plan). The dashed line around the sinkholes represents the 50 ft buffer around the uppermost closed contour of the feature required by the Subdivision Regulations (Section 3.06.B.).

Each lot must have a buildable area outside of the closed contour of a sinkhole. Still, a house can be built within the 50 ft buffer if a geotechnical study prepared by a registered engineer states that building within the 50 ft sinkhole area is acceptable. The houses must also have engineered foundations. During the design plan phase, the uppermost closed contour of the sinkholes will be further defined and could result in the sinkholes being larger than depicted on this Concept Plan and could result in the loss of lots.

#### VARIANCES AND ALTERNATIVE DESIGN STANDARDS

The applicant's engineer listed the requested deviations from the Subdivision Regulations on the Variances/Alternative Design Standards Request form (attached), as well as the stated hardships for the requests. The Knox County Engineering and Public Works department agrees with the requested variance and alternative design standard. The alternative design standard requested for the various intersection grades will be reviewed in more detail during the design plan phase to ensure ADA standards are met where there are crosswalks.

**Action:** Approved as Modified

**Meeting Date:** 3/10/2022

**Details of Action:**

1. Connection to sanitary sewer and meeting any other relevant requirements of the utility provider.
2. Provision of street names consistent with the Uniform Street Naming and Addressing System within Knox County (County Ord. 91-1-102).
3. All sidewalks and crosswalks within the public right-of-way shall meet the applicable ADA standards. The design details shall be worked out with Knox County Engineering and Public Works during the design plan phase.
4. Implementation of the street and intersection improvements and recommendations outlined in the Couch Mill Road Subdivision Transportation Impact Study prepared by AJAX Engineering (Revised 2/18/2022), as revised and approved by the Knox County Department of Engineering and Public Works and Planning staff (see Exhibit A). The design details and timing of the installation of the improvements shall be worked out with the Knox County Department of Engineering and Public Works during the design plan stage for the subdivision.
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6. Providing the 25-ft common area along the Couch Mill Road frontage where the adjacent lots do not meet the double frontage lot depth standard per Section 3.02.A.4. of the Subdivision Regulations.
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11. Meeting all applicable requirements of the Knox County Zoning Ordinance.
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15. Prior to certification of the final plat for the subdivision, establishing a property owners association that will be responsible for the maintenance of the common areas, amenities, and drainage system.
16. [ADDED 3/8/2022] Per discussion at County Commission, offsite improvements (including sidewalk and intersection improvements at Sam Lee/Steele/Swofford) shall be completed in partnership with Knox County Engineering and Public Works. Before issuing a plat, an agreement codifying the timeline and cost-sharing shall be executed.
17. [ADDED AT THE MEETING]: There is to be 100 feet of common space between Lot 241 and Lot 262.

**Summary of Action:**

Approve the variance and alternative design standard based on the justifications provided by the applicant and the recommendations of the Knox County Department of Engineering and Public Works, and because the site conditions restrict compliance with the Subdivision Regulations and will not create a traffic hazard.

Approve the Concept Plan subject to 17 conditions.

Date of Approval: 3/10/2022

Date of Denial:

Postponements: 1/13/2022,  
2/10/2022

Date of Withdrawal:

Withdrawn prior to publication?:  Action Appealed?:

## ***LEGISLATIVE ACTION AND DISPOSITION***

Legislative Body: Knox County Chancery Court

Date of Legislative Action:

Date of Legislative Action, Second Reading:

Ordinance Number:

Other Ordinance Number References:

Disposition of Case:

Disposition of Case, Second Reading:

If "Other":

If "Other":

Amendments:

Amendments:

Date of Legislative Appeal:

Effective Date of Ordinance: