

# CASE SUMMARY

**APPLICATION TYPE: REZONING**



**File Number:** 2-H-25-RZ      **Related File Number:** 2-A-25-PA  
**Application Filed:** 12/30/2024      **Date of Revision:**  
**Applicant:** BENJAMIN C. MULLINS

## PROPERTY INFORMATION

**General Location:** South of Oak Ridge Hwy, east of Gray Hendrix Rd  
**Other Parcel Info.:**  
**Tax ID Number:** 91 019, 018      **Jurisdiction:** County  
**Size of Tract:** 18.42 acres  
**Accessibility:** Access is via Gray Hendrix Road, a local street with 10-ft of pavement width within a right-of-way width that varies from 52-62-ft.

## GENERAL LAND USE INFORMATION

**Existing Land Use:** Agriculture/Forestry/Vacant Land, Rural Residential  
**Surrounding Land Use:**  
**Proposed Use:**      **Density:**  
**Planning Sector:** Northwest County      **Plan Designation:** TN (Traditional Neighborhood), RC (Rural Conservation), H  
**Growth Policy Plan:** Planned Growth Area  
**Neighborhood Context:** This is part of Karns primarily features single family residential uses in subdivisions and in large 1+ acre lots, with some commercial and office uses along Oak Ridge Highway to the north. Karns Community Park and Karns Library lie approximately 0.25 miles to the east, and Karns Middle and Elementary Schools lie approximately 0.5 miles to the west.

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

**Street:** 3110 GRAY HENDRIX RD  
**Location:**  
**Proposed Street Name:**  
**Department-Utility Report:**  
**Reason:**

## ZONING INFORMATION (where applicable)

**Current Zoning:** CA (General Business), A (Agricultural)  
**Former Zoning:**  
**Requested Zoning:** PR (Planned Residential) up to 12 du/ac  
**Previous Requests:**  
**Extension of Zone:** Yes, it is an extension of a plan designation.  
**History of Zoning:** None noted.

## PLAN INFORMATION (where applicable)

Current Plan Category: RC (Rural Commercial)  
Requested Plan Category: TN (Traditional Neighborhood)

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.:

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION AND DISPOSITION

Planner In Charge: Jessie Hillman  
Staff Recomm. (Abbr.): Approve the PR (Planned Residential) zone with a density of up to 12 du/ac for the TN (Traditional Neighborhood) and CMU (Corridor Mixed Use) place types because it is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and supported by residential amenities, subject to 1 condition.  
Staff Recomm. (Full): 1. Access to Gray Hendrix Road shall be reserved as a secondary access point for emergency vehicles only.  
Comments:

PURSUANT TO THE KNOX COUNTY ZONING ORDINANCE, ARTICLE 6.30.01, THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS MUST BE MET FOR ALL REZONINGS (must meet all of these):

THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT SHALL BE NECESSARY BECAUSE OF SUBSTANTIALLY CHANGED OR CHANGING CONDITIONS IN THE AREA AND DISTRICTS AFFECTED, OR IN THE CITY/COUNTY GENERALLY:

1. This area of the Karns community continues to see a trend of more intensive residential and commercial development along the Oak Ridge Highway corridor. The Padget Hill subdivision was completed around 2024 nearby to the east, and the Karns Landing residential subdivision was approved in 2023 adjacent to Padget Hill. Recent commercial development includes an urgent care clinic and new retail businesses. Commercial infill development around 7630 Oak Ridge Highway resulted in the construction of a new road providing better connectivity between Beaver Ridge Road and Oak Ridge Highway.
2. In addition to changing conditions, existing amenities in the area support more residential intensity at the requested PR (Planned Residential) zone density of 12 du/ac. A short distance to the east of the subject property is the Karns Library and Karns Community Park, which has baseball fields, a playground and a public pool. The Karns Elementary and Middle School are nearby to the west. These community facilities support more residential development on the TN (Traditional Neighborhood) and CMU (Corridor Mixed Use) place types of the subject property.

THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT SHALL BE CONSISTENT WITH THE INTENT AND PURPOSE OF THE APPLICABLE ZONING ORDINANCE:

1. The PR zone is designed to enable residential development that is responsive to environmental conditions on a site. Ecologically sensitive areas such as streams or steep slopes can be preserved by concentrating residential density in the optimal areas of a property.
2. The subject property has wooded, steep slopes in the rear of the lot that are part of the Beaver Ridgeline as seen on the third page of context maps in Exhibit A. The PR zone allows development that can preserve this forested, natural feature.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT SHALL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT ANY OTHER PART OF THE COUNTY, NOR SHALL ANY DIRECT OR INDIRECT ADVERSE EFFECTS RESULT FROM SUCH AMENDMENT:

1. This rezoning case was postponed while the applicant pursued a land swap to enable direct access to Oak Ridge Highway, as shown in Exhibit B. The Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) has provided a letter indicating preliminary permission for an access point to Oak Ridge Highway where the property was expanded (see Exhibit C), subject to meeting all TDOT regulations. This new access point would replace an existing commercial driveway.
2. The new direct access to Oak Ridge Highway addresses staff's concerns about the potential traffic of 212 new units accessing Gray Hendrix Road, which is a relatively narrow, local street with limited sight distance around a sloped curve to the south. Access to this residential street is also through a 10-

ft wide "rec-NB" (recorded-Not Built) road that was never accepted by the County and has been privately maintained by property owners abutting the subject property. The noted condition that access to Gray Hendrix Road be reserved for emergency purposes only addresses concern about traffic safety on Gray Hendrix Road resulting from this residential rezoning.

THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT SHALL BE CONSISTENT WITH AND NOT IN CONFLICT WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF KNOX COUNTY, INCLUDING ANY OF ITS ELEMENTS, MAJOR ROAD PLAN, LAND USE PLAN, COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLAN, AND OTHERS:

1. Staff recommend approval of the requested PR zone up to 12 du/ac for the portion of the subject property that is designated with the TN and CMU place type only. This would exclude a .7-acre area in the rear that staff recommend be maintained as the RC (Rural Conservation) place type, which does not permit consideration of PR zoning at this density.
2. The PR zone up to 12-du/ac is partially related to both the TN and CMU place types. It meets the criteria for a partially related zone because it is consistent with the primary and/or secondary uses of those place types. The TN place type is intended to provide a mix of housing forms ranging from single family dwellings to townhomes and small multifamily buildings with a walkable block pattern. The CMU place type describes attached and multifamily residential development as a secondary use and housing mix form. The PR zone up to 12 du/ac supports both of these descriptions.
3. Approving the recommended rezoning is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's Implementation Policy 5, to create neighborhoods with a variety of housing types and amenities in close proximity. This property is ideally located along a mixed-use corridor with easy access to a library, a public park and an elementary and middle school. The density of this rezoning, and its access to a major arterial street, is also supported by Policy 6.3 - to promote attainable housing that meets the needs of current and future residents - by identifying areas for multifamily development that have the appropriate supportive infrastructure.
4. The recommended condition that access to Gray Hendrix Road be reserved for emergency purposes only is consistent with Policy 9 to coordinate infrastructure improvements with development. The property's access point on this two-lane residential street with no shoulders and a steep curve to the south is not suitable for the 212-dwelling unit potential of this rezoning.
5. This rezoning is consistent with the property's location in the Planned Growth Area of the Growth Policy Plan.

**Action:** Approved with Conditions **Meeting Date:** 4/10/2025

**Details of Action:**

**Summary of Action:** Approve the PR (Planned Residential) zone with a density of up to 12 du/ac for the TN (Traditional Neighborhood) and CMU (Corridor Mixed Use) place types because it is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and supported by residential amenities, subject to 1 condition.

**Date of Approval:** 4/10/2025 **Date of Denial:** **Postponements:** 2/13/25, 3/13/2025

**Date of Withdrawal:** **Withdrawn prior to publication?:** ☐ **Action Appealed?:**

## LEGISLATIVE ACTION AND DISPOSITION

**Legislative Body:** Knox County Commission

**Date of Legislative Action:** 3/24/2025 **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:**