

CASE SUMMARY

APPLICATION TYPE: ALTERNATIVE COMPLIANCE



File Number: 4-A-26-OB Related File Number:
Application Filed: 2/23/2026 Date of Revision:
Applicant: RYAN ROBERTSON

PROPERTY INFORMATION

General Location: South side of Sevier Ave, west side of Dawson St
Other Parcel Info.:
Tax ID Number: 109 A B 00103 **Jurisdiction:** City
Size of Tract: 5.7 acres
Accessibility: Access is via Kerbela Ave, a local road with 21-27 ft of pavement width within 35-40 ft of right-of-way, via Mimosa Ave, a local road with 20-26 ft of pavement width within 35-40 ft of right-of-way, via Dawson St, a local road with 21 ft of pavement width within 24-30 ft of right-of-way, and via Sevier Ave, a major collector with 30 ft of pavement width within 46-58 ft of right-of-way.

GENERAL LAND USE INFORMATION

Existing Land Use: Public/Quasi Public Land
Surrounding Land Use:
Proposed Use: Multifamily **Density:**
Planning Sector: South City **Plan Designation:** MU-SD / SC-1 (Mixed Use-Special District, South Waterfront)
Growth Policy Plan: N/A (Within City Limits)
Neighborhood Context: This property is located at the southern terminus of Gay Street, between the established commercial and residential districts along Sevier Avenue to the east and Blount Avenue and Chapman Highway to the west.

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

Street: 315 KERBELA AVE
Location:
Proposed Street Name:
Department-Utility Report:
Reason:

ZONING INFORMATION (where applicable)

Current Zoning: SW-6 (South Waterfront, Henley Gateway), SW-5 (South Waterfront, Bell Tower Walk)
Former Zoning:
Requested Zoning:
Previous Requests:
Extension of Zone:
History of Zoning: The property was rezoned from C-2 and R-3 to SW-6 and SW-5 as part of the adoption of the South Waterfront Form Code District (10-Y-06-RZ).

PLAN INFORMATION (where applicable)

Current Plan Category: MU-SD / SC-1 (Mixed Use-Special District, South Waterfront District)

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.:

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION AND DISPOSITION

Planner In Charge: Mike Reynolds

Staff Recomm. (Abbr.): Per Article 7.0.2.G., the Planning Commission should consider this request based on the approval criteria in subsection 8.a. and the attached Zoning Administrator report.

Staff Recomm. (Full):

Comments: This request is a Level III Alternative Compliance Review of the Form Base Code Districts (Article 7.0.2.G.), which requires approval by the Planning Commission. Below is a list of the most recent revisions, the list of alternative compliance requests, and the Planning Commission review criteria for reference.

PLAN REVISIONS

7/27/26 - 8/5/26 Sketch drawing of the public breezeway (tunnel), conceptual rendering view from the corner of Sevier Avenue and Dawson Street, and response documents (see Exhibits G, H, and I).

6/24/26 Revisions (these drawings are marked as being a draft for conversation only and have not been incorporated into the site plans at this time):

1. A "public tunnel" has been proposed to run beneath the amenities deck that spills out onto a public observation deck at the top of the westernmost existing staircase (shown on the pages titled, "Public Private Diagram").

5/27/2026 Revisions (case postponed at June meeting, therefore these revisions have not been reviewed by the Planning Commission):

1. Extension of the east-west pedestrian pathway approximately 75 ft from the western "ghost stair" to a newly proposed public plaza comprising 1,400 sqft within a public use area of 2,400 sqft. The measurements are based on the information presented in the revised site plan. [Rendered Site Plan (New Design), page 34 of the plan set (revised 5/27/2026)]

2. Installation of approximately 155 ft of sidewalk and other streetscape improvements along Mimosa Avenue that would not otherwise be required per Article 7.1.5, Streetscape Standards, of the South Waterfront Form Code (SW code). [Rendered Site Plan (New Design), page 34 of the plan set (revised 5/27/2026)]

NOTE: The required streetscape improvements along the subject property's frontages on Sevier Avenue, Dawson Street, Mimosa Avenue, and Kerbela Avenue remain unchanged from the original submittal.

3. Lighting the existing rock pile and providing an art installation to activate the Sevier Avenue and Dawson Street corner of the property. [Rendered Site Plan (New Design), page 34 of the plan set (revised 5/27/2026), and the corner activation narrative in Exhibit D, applicant's response document]

4. Lighting the ghost stairs. [Rendered Site Plan (New Design), page 34 of the plan set (revised 5/27/2026), and Exhibit D, applicant's response document]

NOTE: The nighttime renderings in the original submittal showed the ghost stairs illuminated, implying that lighting would be installed, but the plan did not explicitly state this.

5. Replacing the brick exterior on the eastern and westernmost massings that are oriented perpendicular to Sevier Avenue (and the river) with a stacked stone veneer to match the inner massings that are also perpendicularly oriented. [Perspective, pages 42, 43, and 44 with the revision date 5/27/2026]

NOTE: The material change is based on the three new nighttime perspective renderings; however, this change was not noted in any other submittal documents. The applicant's intent is unknown. The SW

Code building envelope and materials standards are in Article 7.1.4.B.

The revised plan sheet, response document, and new perspective renderings and contextual images, submitted on 5/27/2026, incorporate the following modifications and clarifications. See the applicant's response document (Exhibit D) for justification of why certain comments were not addressed and confirmation of the requested zoning standard calculations.

NOTE: The plan set pages are not numbered sequentially, and some of the page numbers are out of order because the revised plan sheet page numbers do not match those of the original plan set. See the Rendered Site Plan (New Design), revised 5/27/2026, for the most current site plan (page 34 of the plan set).

ALTERNATIVE COMPLIANCE REVIEW REQUESTS

Alternative compliance review is intended to allow developments and nonprohibited uses that would not otherwise be allowed under a strict interpretation of the Form District regulations but nevertheless comply with the intent of the applicable Form District and Plan.

The applicant is requesting relief from the following seven standards of the SW5 and SW6 South Waterfront Form-Based Code districts as a Level III: Alternative Compliance Review pursuant to Article 7.0.2.G.

1. Request to increase the maximum perimeter block size from 1,400 feet to the existing condition (approximately 3,000 feet), in the SW5 and SW6 Districts (Articles 7.1.3.F.3.a/b & 7.1.3.G.3.a/b).
2. Request to increase the maximum lot size from 3 acres to the existing condition (approximately 5.7 acres), in the SW5 and SW6 Districts (Articles 7.1.3.F.4 & 7.1.3.G.4).
3. Request to increase the maximum building footprint/floorplate from 30,000 sqft to 39,000 sqft in the SW5 District (Article 7.1.3.F.4).
4. Request to increase the front setback from 0' to 69'-0" from Sevier Avenue, in the SW5 and SW6 Districts (Articles 7.1.3.F.4 & 7.1.3.G.4).
5. Request to reduce the minimum building frontage at the setback from 75% to 0%, in the SW5 District (Article 7.1.3.F.4).
6. Request to increase the maximum side setback from 25' to 56'-0" from the Dawson Street interior side lot line and 32'-0" from the eastern interior lot line, in the SW5 and SW6 Districts (Articles 7.1.3.F.4 & 7.1.3.G.4).
7. Request to reduce the ground level transparent glass on the principal frontage from 70% to 63%, in the SW5 and SW6 Districts (Articles 7.1.3.F.6 & 7.1.3.G.6).

KNOXVILLE-KNOX COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION FOR LEVEL III, ALTERNATIVE COMPLIANCE REVIEW (Article 7.0.2.G.7)

THE COMMISSION MAY TAKE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS:

- a. The Knoxville-Knox County Planning Commission must hold a public hearing subsequent to notification, consistent with its Administrative Rules and Procedures.
- b. The Knoxville-Knox County Planning Commission must approve or deny the application, or send the application back to the Administrative Review Committee for additional consideration.
- c. In the exercise of its approval, the Knoxville-Knox County Planning Commission may impose such conditions regarding the location, character or other features of the proposed buildings as it may deem advisable in the furtherance of the general purposes of the applicable Form District Plan.

APPROVAL CRITERIA (ARTICLE 7.0.2.G.8)

- a. In reviewing an application for Alternative Compliance Review in cases other than applications concerning reconstruction or expansion of nonconforming structures in which nonconforming uses operate, the Knoxville-Knox County Planning Commission must consider the following:
 - i. Consistency with the applicable adopted Plan;
 - ii. That the development will not have a substantial or undue adverse effect upon the neighborhood, the character of the area, traffic conditions, parking, public infrastructure, and other matters affecting the public health, safety and general welfare;
 - iii. That the development will be constructed and operated to be compatible with the district;
 - iv. That the proposed development can be adequately served by public facilities;
 - v. That the proposed development will not result in the destruction, loss, or damage of any significant natural, scenic, or historical district, site, or feature;
 - vi. Compliance with the intent of the applicable Form District and Plan;
 - vii. Compliance with all applicable Zoning Ordinance requirements;
 - viii. Compliance with all applicable Subdivision regulations;
 - ix. Compliance with the Major Road Plan;
 - x. Compliance with the One Year Plan; and
 - xi. Compliance with the Stormwater and Street Ordinance.

Action: Approved with Conditions

Meeting Date: 8/13/2026

Details of Action: Approve as submitted with the condition that public access areas be open at minimum from dawn to dusk.

Summary of Action: Approve as submitted with the condition that public access areas be open at minimum from dawn to dusk.

Date of Approval: 8/13/2026 **Date of Denial:** **Postponements:** 4/9/2026, 5/14/2026

Date of Withdrawal: **Withdrawn prior to publication?:** ☐ **Action Appealed?:** 8/27/2026

LEGISLATIVE ACTION AND DISPOSITION

Legislative Body:	Knoxville City Council	Date of Legislative Action, Second Reading:	
Date of Legislative Action:	9/29/2026	Other Ordinance Number References:	
Ordinance Number:		Disposition of Case, Second Reading:	
Disposition of Case:		If "Other":	
If "Other":		Amendments:	
Amendments:		Effective Date of Ordinance:	
Date of Legislative Appeal:			