

CASE SUMMARY

APPLICATION TYPE: SUBDIVISION

CONCEPT PLAN



File Number: 4-SA-25-C

Related File Number:

Application Filed: 2/21/2025

Date of Revision:

Applicant: BELLTOWN LLC

PROPERTY INFORMATION

General Location: North of the Liberty Bell Rd terminus, north of the Golden Bell St terminus

Other Parcel Info.:

Tax ID Number: 66 121, 122

Jurisdiction: County

Size of Tract: 55.14 acres

Accessibility: Access would be via W Emory Rd, a major arterial roadway with a 22-ft pavement width within a right-of-way which varies in width from 50 to 55-ft, northwest of W Emory Rd

GENERAL LAND USE INFORMATION

Existing Land Use: Agriculture/Forestry/Vacant Land

Surrounding Land Use: North: Agriculture/forestry/vacant land - A (Agricultural), PD (Planned Development)
South: Agriculture/forestry/vacant land - A (Agricultural), PD (Planned Development)
East: Single family residential, agriculture/forestry/vacant land - A (Agricultural), PR (Planned Residential) up to 5 du/ac
West: Single family residential, rural residential, agriculture/forestry/vacant land - A (Agricultural)

Proposed Use: Detached residential subdivision **Density:** 2.9 du/ac

Planning Sector: Northwest County **Plan Designation:** TN (Traditional Neighborhood), HP (Hillside Ridgeway)

Growth Policy Plan: Planned Growth Area

Neighborhood Context:

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

Street: 4510 MARKET BELL WAY

Location:

Proposed Street Name:

Department-Utility Report:

Reason:

ZONING INFORMATION (where applicable)

Current Zoning: A (Agricultural), PD (Planned Development)

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: Belltown

No. of Lots Proposed: 161 No. of Lots Approved: 0

Variances Requested: VARIANCES

- 1) Reduce the minimum vertical curve on Road "H" from STA 6+45 to 7+95 from K=25.00 to K=23.23.
- 2) Reduce the minimum vertical curve on Road "I" from STA 6+75 to 7+61.9 from K=25.00 to K=23.82.
- 3) Reduce the minimum broken back tangent on Road "K3" at STA 0+69 to 1+16 from 150 ft to 47 ft.
- 4) Reduce the minimum intersection angle for Road "K3" at Liberty Bell Road at STA 18+75 from 75 degrees to 73.91 degrees.

ALTERNATIVE DESIGN STANDARD REQUIRING PLANNING COMMISSION APPROVAL

- 1) Reduce the minimum horizontal curve radius on Freedom Bell Avenue from 250 ft to 200 ft at STA 32+18 to 33+54.
- 2) Reduce the minimum horizontal curve radius on Road "H" from 250 ft to 200 ft at STA 0+31 to 1+45.
- 3) Reduce the minimum horizontal curve radius on Road "H" from 250 ft to 200 ft at STA 11+27 TO 12+37.

ALTERNATIVE DESIGN STANDARDS REQUIRING KNOX COUNTY ENGINEERING AND PUBLIC WORKS APPROVAL (PLANNING COMMISSION APPROVAL NOT REQUIRED)

- 1) Increase the maximum intersection grade on Road "H" at Liberty Bell Road from 1.0 percent to 2.00 percent.
- 2) Increase the maximum intersection grade on Road "K1" at Freedom Bell Avenue from 1.0 percent to 1.50 percent.
- 3) Increase the maximum intersection grade on Road "K1" at Liberty Bell Road from 1.0 percent to 1.50 percent.
- 4) Increase the maximum intersection grade on Road "K3" at Liberty Bell Road at STA 16+14.35 from 1.0 percent to 2.00 percent.
- 5) Increase the maximum intersection grade on Road "K3" at Liberty Bell Road at STA 18+75.35 from 1.0 percent to 2.00 percent.
- 6) Increase the maximum intersection grade on Road "P" at Freedom Bell Avenue from 1.0 percent to 2.0 percent.
- 7) Increase the maximum intersection grade on Road "P" at Liberty Bell Road from 1.0 percent to 1.42 percent.
- 8) Increase the maximum intersection grade on Alley "B" at Gold Bell Street from 1.0 percent to 2.5 percent.
- 9) Increase the maximum intersection grade on Alley "C" at Road "I" from 1.0 percent to 2.0 percent.
- 10) Increase the maximum intersection grade on Alley "C" at Liberty Bell Avenue from 1.0 percent to 2.49 percent.
- 11) Increase the maximum intersection grade on Road "H" at Gold Bell Street from 1.0 percent to 2.30 percent.
- 12) Increase the maximum intersection grade on Road "P" at Road "I" from 1.0 percent to 1.42 percent.
- 13) Increase the maximum intersection grade on Alley "B" at Road "P" from 1.0 percent to 1.31 percent.

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 to reduce the minimum vertical curve on Road "H" from STA 6+45 to 7+95 from K=25.00 to K=23.23, based on the following evidence of hardship.

- A) The natural topography prevents the ideal extension of a vertical curve without requiring excessive cut and fill, and the reduced K value will allow for less filling within the adjacent closed contour.
- B) The site has several closed contours and a Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) easement that are unique to the site.
- C) Approval of the variance is not anticipated to be detrimental to public safety, health, or welfare because the request meets the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) design standards. The Knox County Department of Engineering and Public Works

recommends approval of this variance based on the justification provided by the applicant.

Approve the variance to reduce the minimum vertical curve on Road "I" from STA 6+75 to 7+61.9 from K=25.00 to K=23.82.

A) The natural topography in the area makes it challenging to meet the standards with the intersection of Road "P" and Alley "C" in close proximity, and prevents the ideal extension of a vertical curve without requiring excessive cut and fill.

B) The location of this request has topographic constraints, and the site has several closed contours and a TVA easement that are unique to this site.

C) Approval of the variance is not anticipated to be detrimental to public safety, health, or welfare because the request meets the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) design standards. The Knox County Department of Engineering and Public Works recommends approval of this variance based on the justification provided by the applicant.

Approve the variance to reduce the minimum broken back tangent on Road "K3" at STA 0+69 to 1+16 from 150 ft to 47 ft.

A) The shape of the property and the topography in this location do not allow the street grid to connect further to the west, resulting in a short loop road.

B) The location of this request has topographic constraints, and the site has several closed contours and a TVA easement that are unique to this site.

C) Approval of the variance is not anticipated to be detrimental to public safety, health, or welfare because of the stop condition on Road "K3," and the short loop road will result in low traffic speeds. The Knox County Department of Engineering and Public Works recommends approval of this variance based on the justification provided by the applicant.

Approve the variance to reduce the minimum intersection angle for Road "K3" at Liberty Bell Road at STA 18+75 from 75 degrees to 73.91 degrees.

A) Reducing the intersection angle allows the road to follow the natural contours of the land, preserving slope integrity.

B) The shortness of this loop road does not allow for this intersection to be at a greater angle without resulting in other road design issues.

C) Approval of the variance is not anticipated to be detrimental to public safety, health, or welfare because the minimum sight distance can be obtained in both directions. The Knox County Department of Engineering and Public Works recommends approval of this variance based on the justification provided by the applicant.

Approve the alternative design standards based on the justification provided by the applicant and the recommendations of the Knox County Department of Engineering and Public Works.

Approve the Concept Plan subject to 11 conditions.

Staff Recomm. (Full):

- 1) Connection to sanitary sewer and meeting other relevant utility provider requirements.
- 2) Provision of street names consistent with the Uniform Street Naming and Addressing System within Knox County (County Ord. 91-1-102).
- 3) Meeting the approved development standards in the preliminary plan for the Belltown planned development (11-A-22-PD).
- 4) Provide a reference on the final plat to the dimensional standards for the Single Family Designated Area of the Belltown preliminary plan, Section 8.1, as provided on the Belltown, Phase I plats. See Exhibit C for the approved dimensional standards.
- 5) If during design plan approval or construction of the development, it is discovered that unforeseen off-site improvements within the right-of-way are necessary as caused by the development, the developer will either enter into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the County for these improvements or reimburse the County for their direct expenses (if completed by County crews) to make corrections deemed necessary.
- 6) Complying with the terms and conditions of the Memorandum of Understanding with Knox County to implement the recommended improvements to W. Emory Road and the Clinton Highway intersection as outlined in the Belltown Planned Development Traffic Impact Study by Cannon & Cannon (Exhibit B) and as revised and approved by Planning Commission staff, Knox County Engineering and Public Works, and Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT).
- 7) Providing a sight distance easement through the inside of the horizontal curve of Road "K3", if determined necessary by Knox County Engineering and Public Works during the design plan phase.
- 8) If any building construction is proposed within the 50-ft buffer area around the designated sinkholes/depressions (including the depressions), a registered engineer must prepare a geotechnical report to determine soil stability. That report must be submitted to the Knox County Department of Engineering and Public Works for consideration. Any construction in these areas is subject to approval by the County following a review of the report. Engineered footings must be designed for these areas. For those lots that do not have a building site outside of the 50-ft buffer, approval by Knox County will be required prior to final plat approval. The sinkholes/depressions and 50-ft buffer shall be designated on the final plat even if they are approved to be filled.

- 9) Meeting all application requirements of the Knox County Stormwater Management Ordinance (Chapter 26, Article VI of the Knox County Code), including but not limited to obtaining approval from the director of the Department of Engineering and Public Works to modify or fill any sinkholes (closed contours).
- 10) Providing a detailed landscape plan for the eastern boundary of the development, consistent with the requirements of Section 8.1.4 (Peripheral Boundary) of the Belltown preliminary plan. This shall be reviewed and approved by the Planning staff during the design plan phase.
- 11) Meeting all applicable requirements of the Department of Engineering and Public Works.

Comments:

This proposal is phase 4 of the Belltown Subdivision, with 161 detached residential lots on 55.14 acres. Phases 1 through 3 of the residential subdivision include 236 detached residential lots on approximately 75.62 acres and the widening and installation of turn lanes on W. Emory Road along the development's frontage. The development must conform with the approved Belltown Preliminary Plan (11-A-22-PD).

BACKGROUND

The Belltown development was approved through the Planned Development process (Article 6.80), which provides an optional process for projects that may not fit within the bounds of the standard zoning districts established by the Knox County Zoning Code. The underlying zoning for the subject site is A (Agricultural). The underlying zoning district dimensional, design, and use regulations apply unless an exception is granted as part of the planned development approval. The Belltown Preliminary Plan was approved in January 2023, which added permitted uses to those already allowed in the A zone and replaced the dimensional standards in their entirety.

Belltown was approved to have up to 1,200 residential units and 64,000 sqft of commercial floor area. The residential units are split into three categories: single-family, townhouse, and multi-family. The single family designated area had 561 lots proposed in the conceptual Master Plan Map, Exhibit J in the preliminary plan document; however, the maximum number of single-family lots is 752. If this concept plan is approved, there will be 397 house lots, leaving 164 additional lots based on the conceptual Master Plan Map or 355 based on the maximum allowed. The single family designated area is on the 215 acres north of W. Emory Road. The south side of W. Emory Road is proposed to include townhouses, multi-family units, and commercial uses.

NEXT STEPS

The next steps for the Belltown development are to submit concept plans for creating lots and public roads, as well as development plans, for Final Plan approval. The Planning Commission must approve the concept plans, which must comply with the Knoxville-Knox County Subdivision Regulations, the Belltown preliminary plan, and any other applicable requirements of the Knox County Zoning Code. The Final Plans for individual developments must be reviewed and approved by the Planning staff to certify compliance with the Belltown preliminary plan and any other applicable zoning standards.

CONCEPT PLAN

The current application is a concept plan, which includes a detailed review of the lot layout, roads, and preliminary stormwater drainage plan and may include plans for off-site improvements. The proposed lot layout and road design conform to the approved area regulations for the single family designated area and the general road layout presented in the preliminary plan.

CLOSED CONTOUR

A closed contour on a topography map represents a depression that may indicate a potential sinkhole. The topography layer on KGIS shows several closed contours on the site, the largest of which is labeled as a sinkhole on the eastern portion of the site between lots 1-25. The director of the Department of Engineering and Public Works must approve proposals that modify or fill any sinkholes (closed contours). Several lots do not have buildable areas outside the rim of the closed contour, which may need to be eliminated or combined with adjacent lots to obtain buildable areas. Notably, this includes lots 1-3 and 21-25. A portion of Liberty Bell Rd also extends through the large, closed contour.

BELLTOWN PRELIMINARY PLAN

The Belltown development must conform to the preliminary plan and the conditions of approval (11-A-22-PD).

Applicable conditions of approval (see Exhibit D, case summary, for the full list of conditions):

- 1) Submitting a Concept Plan application for review and approval by the Planning Commission. The Concept Plan shall include additional details regarding the required road improvements and the pedestrian facilities across and along W. Emory Road, and that planning staff is to be a part of the design plan review process along with Knox County Engineering and Public Works, Knox County Parks and Recreation and TDOT to oversee the additional items as outlined [Conditions #9, 10 and 11], as well as working with the developer.

NOTE: The W. Emory Road improvements are under construction.

2) Partnering with Knox County to implement the recommended improvements to the W. Emory Road and Clinton Highway intersection by providing funding commensurate to the projected 2030 traffic volumes added to this intersection by the development as outlined in the Bell Farms (Belltown) Master Plan Traffic Impact Study (CDM Smith, 9/21/2022), and as revised and approved by Planning Commission staff and Knox County Engineering and Public Works. The Traffic Impact Study must be revised to be consistent with the maximum allowed development intensity in Section 7.2. (Proposed Density) of the Belltown preliminary plan (revised 12/5/2022) and, if applicable, condition #4 to provide design details for the westbound receiving lane on W. Emory Road at the Clinton Highway intersection. The details regarding the shared costs of the improvements for this intersection shall be determined during the design plan phase.

NOTE: The applicant has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with Knox County to complete the required road improvements.

3) Amending Section 13. (Project Phasing) to clarify that the developer will provide funding toward the improvements at the W. Emory Road and Clinton Highway intersection commensurate to the projected 2030 traffic volumes added to this intersection per the revised Traffic Impact Study.

NOTE: The applicant has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with Knox County to complete the required road improvements.

4) Amending Section 7.2. (Proposed Density) to state that there shall be no more than 1,200 residential dwelling units in the areas designated single family, townhouse, and multi-family, and to clarify that each residential area shall not exceed the maximum density as presented in Section 7.2. (Proposed Density) and Section 7.3. (Proposed Land Use Map) of the Belltown preliminary plan (revised 12/5/2022).

NOTE: This has been updated.

11) Add construction of amenities to the phasing plan [Section 13, Exhibit L] for the north (separately) and south sides of the development.

NOTE: The phasing plan has been updated.

Applicable standards in the Belltown preliminary plan:

Section 7.2.A. – The single family designated area shall not exceed 3.5 du/ac acre.

NOTE: Phases 1-4 have a density of approximately 3.04 du/ac.

Section 8.1.1. (Area Regulations) – The standards applicable to the creation of the lots are below.
D. Lot Width.

1. For front-loaded dwellings, the minimum lot width shall be forty (40) feet.
2. For alley-loaded dwellings, the minimum lot width shall be thirty (30) feet.
3. For side-loaded dwellings, the minimum lot width shall be fifty (50) feet.

E. Lot Area

1. For front-loaded dwellings, the minimum lot area shall be 4,000 square feet.
2. For alley-loaded dwellings, the minimum lot area shall be 4,000 square feet.
3. For side-loaded dwellings, the minimum lot area shall be 5,000 square feet.

NOTE: All lots meet the lot width and area standards.

Section 8.1.4. (Peripheral Boundary) -- All buildings shall be set back at least twenty-five (25) feet from any peripheral boundary, including W Emory Road. At least ten (10) feet of natural vegetation shall be left undisturbed along any peripheral boundary. If natural vegetation must be removed for development, then the developer must install a landscape buffer of at least one (1) evergreen tree every twenty-five (25) linear feet where natural vegetation is removed. The boundary abutting W Emory Road shall be landscaped with a minimum of one (1) evergreen tree every twenty-five (25) linear feet.

NOTE: All lots have buildable areas outside the 25-ft peripheral setback. Per condition #9 of this concept plan, a detailed landscape plan must be provided during the design plan phase.

Section 8.1.5. (Sidewalk) -- Each street shall have at least one (1) sidewalk with the exception of the "estate lots".

NOTE: All roads have a sidewalk on at least 1 side.

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

Details of Action:

Summary of Action: Approve the variance to reduce the minimum vertical curve on Road "H" from STA 6+45 to 7+95 from K=25.00 to K=23.23, based on the following evidence of hardship.
A) The natural topography prevents the ideal extension of a vertical curve without requiring excessive cut and fill, and the reduced K value will allow for less filling within the adjacent closed contour.
B) The site has several closed contours and a Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) easement that are unique to the site.
C) Approval of the variance is not anticipated to be detrimental to public safety, health, or welfare because the request meets the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials

(AASHTO) design standards. The Knox County Department of Engineering and Public Works recommends approval of this variance based on the justification provided by the applicant.

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Approve the alternative design standards based on the justification provided by the applicant and the recommendations of the Knox County Department of Engineering and Public Works.

Approve the Concept Plan subject to 11 conditions.

Date of Approval:

4/10/2025

Date of Denial:

Postponements:

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: