

# CASE SUMMARY

## APPLICATION TYPE: PLANNED DEVELOPMENT



**File Number:** 6-A-20-PD                      **Related File Number:**  
**Application Filed:** 4/27/2020              **Date of Revision:**  
**Applicant:** CHRIS FORTUNE

### PROPERTY INFORMATION

**General Location:** South side of Richmond Ave., east of Richmond Hill and north of Keith Ave.  
**Other Parcel Info.:**  
**Tax ID Number:** 94 H Q 003, 002, & 02601                      **Jurisdiction:** City  
**Size of Tract:** 7 acres  
**Accessibility:** Richmond Avenue is a local road with a pavement width of approximately 18.5 ft and a right-of-way width of approximately 38.5 ft.

### GENERAL LAND USE INFORMATION

**Existing Land Use:** Vacant  
**Surrounding Land Use:**  
**Proposed Use:** Pocket neighborhood with passive recreational amenities                      **Density:**  
**Sector Plan:** Central City                      **Sector Plan Designation:** LDR (Low Density Residential)  
**Growth Policy Plan:** Within City limits  
**Neighborhood Context:** Richmond Avenue is populated with small-lot, single-family detached houses and vacant land. There is a cemetery to the south and a utility facility to the north. Richmond Orchard, a small-home community similar in concept to this proposal, is located off Richmond Avenue to the east.

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

**Street:** 600 , 512 & 0 Richmond Ave.  
**Location:**  
**Proposed Street Name:**  
**Department-Utility Report:**  
**Reason:**

### ZONING INFORMATION (where applicable)

**Current Zoning:** RN-2 (Single-Family Residential Neighborhood) / PD (Planned Development) / HP (Hillside Protection Overlay)  
**Former Zoning:**  
**Requested Zoning:**  
**Previous Requests:**  
**Extension of Zone:**  
**History of Zoning:** The same 3 parcels were rezoned from R-1A (Low Density Residential) to RP-1 (Planned Residential) in March, 2019 (# 11-C-18-RZ); they were also part of a larger rezoning from R-2 (General Residential) to R-1A in 1983 (# 11-H-83-RZ).

### 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.:

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION AND DISPOSITION**

**Planner In Charge:** Michelle Portier

**Staff Recomm. (Abbr.):** This plan is being submitted under the Optional Concept Plan section of the Planned Development procedures. The Commission will not vote on this project but should provide feedback and comments for the applicant to use in further developing his plan.

**Staff Recomm. (Full):** Article 16, Section 16.7 (E) (2) Optional Concept Plan:

Before submitting a formal application for a planned development, the applicant may present a concept plan before the Knoxville-Knox County Planning Commission, at his/her option, for the purpose of obtaining information and guidance prior to formal application.

The Knoxville-Knox County Planning Commission will review the concept plan, and provide such information and guidance it deems appropriate. Any opinions or advice provided by the Knoxville-Knox County Planning Commission is in no way binding with respect to any official action the Knoxville-Knox County Planning Commission or City Council may take on the subsequent formal application. The review of the concept plan is not a public hearing. No decision will be made on the application.

The concept plan will be presented at a public meeting. Mailed and posted notice in accordance with Section 15.2 is required for the public meeting at which the concept plan is to be presented.

**Comments:**

Site Description

The site consists of 6.66 acres on the south side of Richmond Avenue. There are some site constraints due to steep topography on the site, which is located in the Hillside Protection Overlay District. The steepest portion of the site will remain forested and would not be developed beyond the addition of walking trails.

Project Description

The applicant is proposing a pocket neighborhood containing 26 dwelling units and passive recreational amenities. The proposed development will consist of three sets of small houses arranged in double-rows with common space between them, placed perpendicularly to Richmond Avenue. Each set of dwelling units faces inward towards each other with a common open space area inside the arrangement at the front of the units. The common areas are like small parks, with trees and a walking trail that traverses throughout the development. Each set of dwelling units has a shared parking lot. These are centrally located on the site and positioned between each set of units. Each unit is provided 2 spaces separated from the others by a planted parking island; these spaces are accessible from the rear of the units. Cumulatively, there are sixty-two (62) surface vehicular parking spaces proposed.

The dwellings would be small, two-story houses with a large front porch and a swing in the "Modern Farmhouse" style. Each unit has a path at the front and rear of the unit connecting it to the walking trail, which meanders through the site. Other community amenities would include a small dog park and a large fire pit gathering area.

The current site plan is conceptual but must show that the development meets the standards of the Planned Development and other applicable City zoning and land development regulations. The plans will provide more detail during the Preliminary Plan review process.

Zoning Exception Requests

Exceptions to the zoning's design and development standards may be recommended by the Planning Commissions and approved by the City Council as part of the Planned Development approval process. The existing zoning for this property is RN-2 (Single-Family Residential Neighborhood) and HP (Hillside Protection Overlay) and in order to allow the proposed use of the site, the applicant is requesting exceptions to the RN-2 and HP district regulations.

The applicant is requesting the following exceptions from the City of Knoxville Zoning Code:

1. An increase in the number of primary structures allowed on a lot
2. An increase in density allowed in the HP district
3. An increase in the permitted land disturbance area within the HP district

The applicant is also working with the City of Knoxville Engineering Department on the following requirements (these are not within the purview of the Planning Commission):

1. Allowed driveway surface materials
2. Increase in the slope allowance for the access drives to allow a slope within a range of 15-17%

#### Community Benefits:

The community benefits identified by the applicant to justify the requested exceptions from the City's Zoning Code are:

1. The development meets the currently unfulfilled needs of buyers looking for smaller, unique, affordable homes.
2. The development maintains the natural beauty of the setting.
3. The development respects the topography and will only develop the flatter portions of the site.
4. The development proposes to retain as much of the trees and wooded areas as possible so that the houses are situated within.
5. The development is pedestrian-centric, and through the various passive recreational amenities, provides a unique experience for home owners within the development.
6. The development offers customizable homes (within aesthetic constraints) and avoids creating a monotonous neighborhood where all homes look the same.

The applicant describes the community benefits, as defined above, in the Project Overview document as a means to explain how the proposal meets the intent statements of the planned development regulations. Regulations regarding the number of primary structures allowed on a lot are based on the RN-2 (Single Family Residential Neighborhood) district, which is intended to accommodate low density residential development on relatively small lots with smaller setbacks. The HP (Hillside Protection) Overlay District regulates density and land disturbance in designated sloped areas. The HP Overlay zone is a new zone that was not in effect at the time of the applicant's original proposal.

#### Staff Analysis of Requested Exceptions

The project appears to provide community benefits warranting the requested exceptions to the development standards of the underlying zoning. The project provides an opportunity to meet the current demand of smaller, more affordable homes.

1. RN-2 zoning exception: The provision requiring one primary structure per lot is intended for traditional subdivisions consisting of detached single family homes. The proposed development is in keeping with the zone's stated intent of providing for small lots and setbacks as the proposal mimics a small lot subdivision.
2. HP Overlay zoning exception for density: Since the property is in the Hillside Protection Overlay, a slope analysis was performed to determine the appropriate level of density and land disturbance as recommended by the Hillside and Ridgetop Protection Area Plan. The slope analysis recommended a density of up to 2.52 du/ac, which would yield 16 dwellings. The applicant is proposing 26 dwellings, which is a density of 3.94 du/ac. The proposed density is roughly comparable to the surrounding area (density of 3.46 du/ac) but is more than the slope analysis recommendation. Comparatively, the base zone of RN-2 zone allows a minimum lot size of 5,000 square feet per dwelling, which equates to approximately 8.7 dwelling units per acre. The proposed density is significantly lower than that.
3. HP Overlay zoning exception for land disturbance: The slope analysis recommended 3.5 of the 6.6 acres be disturbed, with the remaining land to be retained as is. As proposed, the development will disturb 4.1 acres. However, the development would be constrained to the flatter areas of the site as no structures are proposed on the heavily sloped areas. The sloped areas are not to be disturbed beyond the addition of walking trails, minimizing erosion and providing similar stormwater percolation to the pre-development state of the site at these specific areas.

Items in question requiring discussion before the Preliminary Plan submission:

1. The applicant would like the access drives to allow a slope of 15-17%.
  - a. This is higher than the standard allowance. One of the reasons for the maximum slope required is for fire truck access to and from the site.

2. The parking spaces and drive aisles are not planned at the same slope.
  - a. The parking spaces will be almost flat; the slope is proposed to transition from the edge of the main driveway slope down to the lowest space. This situation creates an awkward transition for drivers maneuvering their vehicles from the drive aisle into the parking space, with the drive aisle being higher on the uphill side of the space and lower on the downhill side of the space.
  - b. This needs further review as the spaces and the drive aisles should have the same slope. This could impact the number of spaces they can accommodate if a longer strip of driveway is needed to transition vehicles from the grade at the roadway to where the parking area slope can meet the Zoning Ordinance requirement of 10%. Or, it could impact the amount of land disturbance if more land is required to accommodate the number of units and spaces proposed.
3. The applicant would like to use a gravel grid system in lieu of concrete or asphalt.
4. The preliminary plan will need to show the number of one- and two-bedroom units in order to determine project's compliance with the required number of parking spaces.

**Action:** No Action **Meeting Date:** 6/11/2020

**Details of Action:**

**Summary of Action:** This plan is being submitted under the Optional Concept Plan section of the Planned Development procedures. The Commission will not vote on this project but should provide feedback and comments for the applicant to use in further developing his plan.

**Date of Approval:** **Date of Denial:** **Postponements:**

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

## LEGISLATIVE ACTION AND DISPOSITION

**Legislative Body:**

**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:**