

CASE SUMMARY

APPLICATION TYPE: ORDINANCE AMENDMENT

KNOXVILLE-KNOX COUNTY

M P C
METROPOLITAN
P L A N N I N G
C O M M I S S I O N

T E N N E S S E E

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File Number: 9-A-12-OA
Application Filed: 8/8/2012
Applicant: KNOXVILLE CITY COUNCIL

Related File Number:
Date of Revision:

PROPERTY INFORMATION

General Location:

Other Parcel Info.:

Tax ID Number: 999 999

Jurisdiction:

Size of Tract:

Accessibility:

GENERAL LAND USE INFORMATION

Existing Land Use:

Surrounding Land Use:

Proposed Use:

Density:

Sector Plan:

Sector Plan Designation:

Growth Policy Plan:

Neighborhood Context:

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

Street:

Location:

Proposed Street Name:

Department-Utility Report:

Reason: Amendments to the City of Knoxville Zoning Ordinance to permit courtyard development in some residential zone districts

ZONING INFORMATION (where applicable)

Current Zoning:

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:

No. of Lots Proposed:

No. of Lots Approved: 0

Variances Requested:

S/D Name Change:

OTHER INFORMATION (where applicable)

Other Bus./Ord. Amend.: Amendments to the City of Knoxville Zoning Ordinance to permit courtyard development in some residential zone districts

MPC ACTION AND DISPOSITION

Planner In Charge: Mark Donaldson

Staff Recomm. (Abbr.): Approve the amendment to allow courtyard development as a use permitted on review in the R-1A, R-2, R-3, R-4, RP-1, RP-2, and RP-3 residential zones and the O-1 office zone as described in Exhibits A, B-2 and C.

Staff Recomm. (Full):

Comments: At its July 10, 2012 meeting Knoxville City Council requested that the MPC review the Knoxville Zoning Ordinance and make a recommendation to allow courtyard development in appropriate residential zone districts.

Courtyard development is a style of infill housing that has been introduced in a draft RHK-1 (Residential, Heart of Knoxville) zone district that has been prepared by MPC staff. Several city council members have seen the draft ordinance and have requested that courtyard development be considered in other residential zone districts as well.

Courtyard development is a grouping of small detached or attached houses around a courtyard or common space rather than requiring lot frontage for each house on a public street. Design helps promote a sense of community and neighborliness.

The former houses around Forest Court off Sutherland Avenue in the Bearden area are similar to this style of courtyard development. Development of this type has been successfully completed throughout the U.S. in areas that are redeveloping from a residential pattern of large lots to a development pattern of greater residential density.

PREVIOUS CONSIDERATION

The planning commission initially considered this item at its September 13, 2012 meeting. Prior to that meeting the draft zoning ordinance amendment was posted on the MPC website. The standard for required setbacks shown at subsection e.(3) of the development standards is altered from the original draft posted on the MPC website. The required setbacks from adjacent property and alley right-of-way have been increased. In addition, the numbering of items 4 through 7 has been changed for clarification.

At its September meeting the planning commission postponed consideration to its November meeting and requested staff meet with neighborhood groups that extended invitations and, in addition, hold a public meeting for discussion of the proposal. Staff was invited to two south Knoxville meetings and attended both. A public meeting was conducted on Thursday evening, October 25th, at the Candler Family YMCA. Approximately 20 people were in attendance, including several City Council members and planning commissioners.

ANALYSIS

The primary difference between courtyard development and housing of comparable scale and density that can already be achieved in several of the city's residential zone districts is the standard that courtyard development may front upon a dedicated courtyard, rather than the requirement that lots have frontage on a public or private street. This single change makes courtyard development much more flexible as a type of infill development and helps support the sense of community and neighborliness that can be achieved in a courtyard development.

The Knoxville Zoning Ordinance has a number of residential zone districts that generally fall in the following categories:

Low density residential: R-1, R-1A and R-1E;

Established Neighborhoods: EN-1 and EN-2;
Medium and high density residential: R-2, R-3 and R-4; and
Planned Residential: RP-1, RP-2 and RP-3.

In addition, residential uses are allowed in the O-1 and O-2 zone districts by reference to R-2 and R-3 districts, respectively, and in the C-2 zone district dwelling units are a permitted use.

The established neighborhood zone districts (EN-1 and EN-2) already allow a type of housing similar to courtyard development, except for the frontage requirement, at a density of at least twice the density of the standard requirements, through its infill parcel provisions which may be approved as a use-on-review.

The planned residential zone districts (RP-1, RP-2 and RP-3) already allow a type of housing similar to courtyard development, at a gross density as established by city council, through its provisions documented in development plan approval. Densities within a sub-area of a planned residential zone district can be significantly higher than the overall gross density.

The medium and high density zone districts (R-2, R-3 and R-4) allow the permitted uses of the R-1 zone district as well as other styles of development at much greater scales and densities.

In the O-1 office zone district that allows R-2 uses, courtyard development would be allowed by reference to the R-2 uses if these amendments are approved. In the O-2 (Civic and Institutional) and C-2 (Central Business) districts, courtyard development probably isn't appropriate due to its limited density.

The low density zone districts (R-1, R-1A and R-1E) allow a variety of densities but generally are developed at very low densities. The proposed maximum density of the courtyard development is about twice that recommended for low density residential areas in the Knoxville-Knox County General Plan 2033. Used as infill, courtyard development can help add diversity to the stock of housing in neighborhoods and increase the existing density in many neighborhoods to a level that is sustainable. This is a type of housing that will allow many residents to "age in place" by providing more housing options within established neighborhoods.

STRATEGY

Courtyard development is compatible in density and style of development to housing that is permitted in the R-2, R-3, R-4, RP-1, RP-2 and RP-3 zone districts, and should be allowed in these districts as a use permitted on review.

In the Established Neighborhood districts, EN-1 and RN-2, there is already a provision for infill development, but to date there have been no applications for consideration. The provision of courtyard development requiring frontage only on a courtyard rather than on a public street may prove useful in the future but there seems to be no interest in denser infill development at this time.

Resistance to allowing courtyard development in the R-1 and R-1E zone districts has been expressed, even with the public scrutiny, compatibility criteria and approval by the planning commission which comes with consideration as a use permitted on review. There are many areas of the city that are zoned R-1 that would be appropriate for courtyard development, but the majority of post-World War II suburban style development, where courtyard development is less like the prevailing development, is also zoned R-1.

The R-1A zone district can be used within those areas classified as low density residential of the future land use plan of each Sector Plan. The R-1A zone district allows multi-dwelling structures as a use permitted on review at a density of up to twelve dwellings per acre, the same maximum density proposed for courtyard development. Courtyard development would provide a style of development that is compatible with existing development characterized primarily by detached housing and should be allowed.

In areas zoned R-1 that carry a low density residential land use classification, properties that may be appropriate for courtyard development could first be rezoned to R-1A, then considered as a use permitted on review.

Action: Approved **Meeting Date:** 11/8/2012

Details of Action:

Summary of Action: Approve the amendment to allow courtyard development as a use permitted on review in the R-1A, R-2, R-3, R-4, RP-1, RP-2, and RP-3 residential zones and the O-1 office zone as described in Exhibits A, B-2 and C.

Date of Approval: 11/8/2012 **Date of Denial:** **Postponements:** 9/13/2012

Date of Withdrawal:

Withdrawn prior to publication?: Action Appealed?:

LEGISLATIVE ACTION AND DISPOSITION

Legislative Body: Knoxville City Council

Date of Legislative Action: 3/5/2013

Ordinance Number:

Disposition of Case: Tabled

If "Other": Postponed 12/11/12 1/22/13

Amendments:

Date of Legislative Appeal:

Date of Legislative Action, Second Reading:

Other Ordinance Number References:

Disposition of Case, Second Reading:

If "Other":

Amendments:

Effective Date of Ordinance: