

Think Quality - Think Future

Blount County Planning Department

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TO: Blount County Planning Commission

FROM: John Lamb

DATE: February 15, 2011

SUBJECT: Long Range Planning agenda items for the February 24, 2011 meeting.

1. Noise Issue in Zoning Site Plan Process.

The Planning Commission forwarded this item for legal review. Staff met with the Attorney for the County Mayor on Feb 14, and legal review should be ready for the March meeting.

The Commission considered modifications to address concerns of broad applicability at its December meeting. The following is intended to update the modifications for review of the Planning Commission.

The following is an alternative that specifies objective criteria for considering noise in the RAC site plan process. Note that the first section is newly expanded to include provisions for applicability (***bold italics***) to address concerns that applicability of the previous proposal was too broad.

That the last sentence in Section 9.10 reading “Where noise is determined to be a probable off-site impact of a proposed use, a noise mitigation barrier of solid structure or earth berm, in addition to vegetative buffer, shall be designed as part of the site plan and constructed” be deleted, and that the following be placed therein:

The following requirements shall be met to address noise for any use requiring a site plan where, a) the use includes design elements not fully enclosed within a

principal structure and which would be expected to produce substantial noise, specifically compressor, HVAC unit, loading area for more than two axel trucks, or b) the use includes external venting of exhaust from combustion engines contained within buildings that are part of the design of the use, and c) the site abuts any parcel zoned S-Suburbanizing, R-1-Rural District 1, or R-2-Rural District 2, or where the site abuts property containing any sensitive use listed in subsection 3 table below the following requirements shall be met to address noise:

1. The purpose of noise standards, noise study and mitigation requirements is to ensure that future development minimizes the impact of noise on adjacent properties, by establishing maximum noise levels and standards for evaluating noise impacts.

2. Definitions.

a. dBA – the A-weighted scale for measuring sound level in decibels (dB) as a unit used to express the relative intensity of a sound as it is heard by the human ear.

b. Leq – the energy equivalent level, defined as the average sound level on the basis of sound energy (or sound pressure squared). It is the level of constant sound which, in a given situation and time period, has the same sound energy as does a time varying sound.

c. Lmax – the maximum sound pressure level for a given period of time.

3. Noise standards. The site plan shall be designed to meet the following exterior noise limit standards at site property line in relation to abutting land zoned S, R-1, and R-2 and specific sensitive uses .

Exterior Noise Limits at property line of site

For Abutting Zone or Use	Time Period		Noise Level, dBA	
	Begin	End	L eq	L max
S-Suburbanizing District	7:00 AM	7:00 PM	55	75
	7:00 PM	7:00 AM	45	60
R-1-Rural District 1	7:00 AM	7:00 PM	55	75
	7:00 PM	7:00 AM	40	55
R-2-Rural District 2	7:00 AM	7:00 PM	55	75
	7:00 PM	7:00 AM	40	55
Sensitive Uses *	7:00 AM	7:00 PM	55	75
	7:00 PM	7:00 AM	40	55

* residences, schools, hospitals, nursing homes, churches, and libraries

If the measured ambient noise level prior to project construction and operation exceeds that indicated in the table above at the property line of the site, then the allowable noise limits shall be set at 5 dBa above the ambient level.

4. A noise study shall be part of the site plan and shall be prepared and certified by a qualified professional showing how the site design shall meet the requirements in subsection 3 above. A qualified professional shall be one that is experienced in the field of environmental noise assessment and architectural acoustics.
 5. The site design shall incorporate design controls and mitigation measures necessary to meet the requirements in subsection 3 above.
 6. Compliance with the noise study, site plan design, and requirements in subsection 3 above shall be determined by measuring the noise level based on the mean average of not less than three 20 minute measurements for any given time period. The compliance measurements shall be conducted by the same qualified professional that produced the noise study, and shall be taken at full operation of the subject use for the site plan.
 7. Compliance with the noise study, site plan design, and requirements in subsection 3 above shall be a continuing requirement after site plan approval, construction of project and operation of project, and shall be subject to continued enforcement through compliance inspections and/or response to complaints.
 8. The above standards shall not apply to those activities associated with actual construction of a subject site plan project or to those projects associated with provision of emergency, law enforcement or necessary governmental or utility services or functions.
 9. A legal nonconforming use meeting requirements in other sections of this resolution shall not be subject to the above standards, provided that if the nonconforming use loses its nonconforming status by any means, then future operation and/or modification of the site requiring a site plan shall meet all requirements of this section.
- (Note: this alternative may require county staff expertise in continuing compliance measurement and may require more resources than presently available.)

2. Needed change to the recommended campground regulations.

The Planning Commission recommended amendment to the zoning regulations to add standards for campgrounds at its November 23, 2010 meeting. Upon further review, Roger Fields found needed changes to make application consistent with other provisions in the zoning regulations as a whole, more clearly define applicability, and to give proper section number to the recommended regulations. The following includes necessary changes from original recommendation. Note particularly the change in wording in sub-section 5, and definition of campground. This is open for action to recommend to the County Commission.

1. That the following definitions be added to Section 13 of the zoning regulations:

Camping Cabin; small cabins located within a campground that are intended for temporary shelter, and includes sleeping quarters, in some cases a bathroom, but no kitchens.

Campgrounds or Commercial Campground and Recreational Vehicle Parks: the area or place (as a field or grove) used for a camp, for camping, or for a camp meeting, and is conducted as a commercial business, or associated with private groups, clubs or churches.

2. That sections 9.1B, 9.2B, and 9.3B be amended to add campgrounds and recreational vehicle parks as special exceptions as follows:

9.1 B. Uses Permitted as Special Exceptions: multifamily dwellings including three or more of any dwelling units per lot (see also Section 7.6) and their associated sales or rental offices for the development, high density multifamily planned development (see also Subsections F and I below); family commercial enterprises (see Section 7.10), nursing homes, retirement homes, sanitariums, assisted care living facilities, and resident facilities with special services, treatment, or supervision; day care facilities commercial cemeteries not associated with a church or other place of worship; government and utility uses of a regional character necessary for providing service to the land and population within a broader region including the district; bed and breakfast accommodations; golf driving range; *commercial campgrounds and recreational vehicle parks (see also section 7.18)*; and accessory structures customarily associated with the above uses.

9.2 B. Uses Permitted as Special Exceptions: multifamily dwellings including three or more of any dwelling units per lot (see also Section 7.6) and their associated sales or rental offices for the development, family commercial enterprises (see Section 7.10), nursing homes, retirement homes, sanitariums, assisted care living facilities, and resident facilities with special services, treatment, or supervision; day care facilities; commercial cemeteries not associated with a church or other place of worship; government and utility uses of a regional character necessary for providing service to the land and population within a broader region including the district; sawmills and associated lumberyards; bed and breakfast accommodations; golf driving range; vacation cabin rental (see also section 7.11); *commercial campgrounds and recreational vehicle parks (see also section 7.18)*; and accessory structures customarily associated with the above uses.

9.3 B. Uses Permitted as Special Exceptions: multifamily dwellings including three or more of any dwelling units per lot, and their associated sales or rental offices for the development (see also Section 7.6), family commercial enterprises (see Section 7.10), nursing homes, retirement homes, sanitariums, assisted care living facilities, and resident facilities with special services, treatment, or supervision; *vacation cabin rental (see also section 7.11)*, tourist accommodations, bed and breakfast accommodations, tourist oriented recreation facilities; day care facilities; commercial cemeteries not associated with a church or other place of worship; government and utility uses of a regional character necessary for providing service to the land and population within a broader region including the district; sawmills and associated lumber yards; ***commercial campgrounds and recreational vehicle parks (see also section 7.18)***; and accessory structures customarily associated with the above uses.

3. That the following new Section 7.18 be added to the Zoning Resolution:

Section 7.18 – Commercial Campground and Recreational Vehicle Parks

The purpose of this section is to provide opportunities for quality designed commercial campgrounds and recreational vehicle parks that are properly located in the community where street access and capacity and other infrastructure are favorable for higher density development. In order to create a desirable recreational environment and protect the public health, safety, and welfare, site plans are required for all new commercial campgrounds and recreational vehicle parks. A commercial campground and recreational vehicle park shall meet the following regulations:

1. Minimum lot size requirement: The minimum development site for a commercial campground and recreational vehicle park shall be five (5) acres.
2. Permitted uses and activities: The following uses, vehicles and activities shall be permitted in all commercial campgrounds and recreational vehicle parks.
 - A. Recreational vehicles, travel trailers, pick-up coaches, motor homes, camping trailers, *camping cabins* (not to exceed 25% of the total camp sites), and tents suitable for temporary habitation and used for travel, vacation and recreation purposes provided:
 - 1) Underpinning or the removal of wheels, except for the temporary purpose of repair or stabilizing is prohibited.
 - 2) External structures permanently attached to the ground such as carports, or cabanas associated with individual campsites, shall not be permitted.
 - B. A recreational vehicle shall not remain in a recreational vehicle park for more than two hundred-seventy (270) days in any three-hundred-sixty-five (365) day period except:

- 1) Vehicles owned and operated by seasonal camp workers shall be exempt from this requirement.
- 2) Storage of unoccupied recreational vehicles may be allowed in a designated storage area, with number of stored vehicles not to exceed 40% of total number of campsites, and shall not encroach on primary subsurface sewage disposal system, and shall be visually buffered from and public road, and shall be set back from lot lines by the required principle structure setbacks for the zone.

C. Camp Workers: Each commercial campground or recreational vehicle park may have campsites available for camp workers directly employed by the campground.

3. Accessory Uses: Management headquarters, toilets, dumping stations, showers, coin-operated laundry facilities, commercial uses exclusive to the park that cater to camp patrons only, and structures which are customarily incidental and subordinate to the operation of a commercial campground or recreational vehicle park are permitted as accessory uses to the park, subject to the following restrictions:

A. Such establishments and parking areas primarily related to their operations shall not occupy more than five (5) percent of the gross area of the park.

4. Prohibited uses and structures:

A. Mobile homes and mobile home parks,

B. Permanent residences, excluding the accessory use of a resident management structure.

5. Design standards for recreational vehicle parks and campgrounds. All commercial campgrounds and recreational vehicle parks shall meet the following requirements in addition to other requirements in specific zones.

A. Density. The maximum number of campsites shall be controlled through this section and environmental health department approval.

B. Access and location criteria:

- 1) Commercial campgrounds and recreational vehicle parks (campgrounds) shall be limited to specific areas deemed significant to tourism, generally the Highway 411 North corridor leading to Maryville, Highway 321 corridor leading to Townsend, and the Highway 129 corridor leading to Tallassee. With exceptions specified below, campgrounds will be limited to direct access on the following arterial and collector status roads: Highway 411 North from the Maryville city limits to the Blount/Sevier county line,

Lamar Alexander Parkway (Highway 321) from Maryville city limits to the city limits of Townsend, Highway 321 from the Townsend city limits to the Blount/Sevier county line, Old Tuckaleechee Road around the southern boundary of Townsend, Old Walland Highway from intersection with Ellejoy Road to intersection with Six Mile Road to intersection with Happy Valley Road. For roads directly intersecting the above listed arterial and collector status roads, commercial campgrounds and recreational vehicle parks (campgrounds) may be permitted if direct access on such roads is within (see alternatives below) feet of direct intersection with the arterial and collector status roads, and such roads meet standards of subsection 2 below.

(Alternatives forwarded from Planning Commission for County Commission choice are 2500 feet and 5000 feet distance along intersecting roads).

- 2) Location of campgrounds shall be limited to off site roads with at least 18 foot wide pavement with 2 foot shoulders.
- 3) Entrances and exits to the campgrounds shall be designed for safe and convenient movement of traffic into and out of the park and to minimize traffic conflict and facilitate free movement of traffic on adjacent streets. All traffic into and out of the park shall be thru such entrances and exits. No entrance or exit shall require a turn at an acute angle for vehicles moving in the direction intended. Curb radii, driveway cut and placement at intersections shall have a **minimum of** fifty (50) feet turning radius and exits shall be designed to allow ingress and egress simultaneously.
- 4) A deceleration lane may be required to entrance of the campground if recommended by the Blount County Highway Department or the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT). When a deceleration lane is proposed to be located off a state right-of-way, the deceleration lane is subject to review and approval by the Tennessee Department of Transportation. When a deceleration land is proposed to be located off a county maintained right-of-way, the deceleration lane is subject to review and approval by the Blount County Highway Department.

C. Internal Roadways. All internal roadways shall meet the following requirements:

- 1) Internal roadways shall be maintained so emergency vehicles can safely access all areas of the site.
- 2) All interior roadways shall be constructed with an adequate, well-drained base and be surfaced with a minimum four (4) inches of

gravel. Roadway grades shall not exceed ten (10) percent for gravel roads and thirteen (13) percent for paved roads.

- 3) An erosion control plan shall also be required.
- 4) All internal roadways shall have a minimum width of no less than fourteen (14) feet for one-way traffic and no less than eighteen (18) feet for two-way traffic.

- D. Check-in Facility. Designate on the site plan a central vehicle check-in facility with the queuing capacity for a minimum of three (3) recreational vehicles, to insure check-in does not become congested.
 - E. Parking for workers and guests. Parking spaces shall be provided for the manager and camp workers. A minimum of one (1) guest parking space shall be provided for every five (5) campsites.
 - F. Sewage Disposal. All campgrounds will be required to be connected to a public sewer system or have a subsurface sewage disposal system approved by the Blount County Environmental Health Department.
 - G. Any site plan shall address provision for fire service with fire hydrants and adequate access for emergency vehicles within the development.
 - H. Any site plan shall address garbage service, particularly if common receptacles are used in which case screening of receptacles shall be required.
 - I. Fire Pits. Campfires shall only be permitted in designated fire pits.
 - J. Lighting and Noise. All campgrounds shall be designed to meet the current outdoor lighting standards found in section 7.15-D. All campgrounds should conduct business in accordance to any existing noise laws within the county.
6. Design Requirements for Recreational Vehicle Campsites and Tent Campsites.
- A. Recreational Vehicle Campsite.
 - 1) All recreational vehicle campsites shall have a minimum of 1,400 square feet.
 - 2) A recreational vehicle campsite shall be designed so there is a minimum of ten (10) feet between recreational vehicles.
 - 3) Each campsite shall contain a stabilized vehicular parking pad.
 - 4) No building or storage sheds are permitted on individual recreational vehicle campsites.

- 5) Recreational vehicle campsites shall include a minimum of one (1) automobile vehicle parking space with minimum dimensions of ten (10) feet by twenty (20) feet.
- 6) Each campsite shall abut at least one internal roadway within the boundaries of the Recreational Vehicle Park and campground. Ingress and egress to the campsite shall be limited to an internal roadway.
- 7) Recreational vehicle campsites shall be set back at least fifteen (15) feet from any river bank or stream bank.

B. Tent Campsite.

- 1) All tent campsites shall have a minimum area of 1,400 square feet.
- 2) Tent campsites shall include a minimum of one (1) automobile parking space with minimum dimensions of ten (10) feet by twenty (20) feet.
- 3) Each campsite shall abut at least one internal roadway within the boundaries of the Recreational Vehicle Park and campground. Ingress and egress to the campsite shall be limited to an internal roadway.
- 4) Tent campsites shall be set back at least fifteen (15) feet from any river bank or stream bank.

C. Camping Cabin sites.

- 1) All camping cabin sites shall have a minimum area of 1,400 square feet.
- 2) A camping cabin site must be designed so there is a minimum of twenty (20) feet between camping cabins.
- 3) No storage sheds are permitted on an individual camping cabin site.
- 4) Camping cabin sites shall include a minimum of one (1) automobile vehicle parking space with minimum dimensions of ten (10) feet by twenty (20) feet.
- 5) Each campsite shall abut at least one internal roadway within the boundaries of the Recreational Vehicle Park and Campground. Ingress and egress to the campsite shall be limited to an internal roadway.

- 6) Camping cabin sites shall be set back at least twenty-five (25) feet from any stream bank, and at least fifty (50) feet from the bank of the Little River.

D. All campsites shall be designed in conformity with the Floodplain Regulations if within a flood zone.

3. Training for the calendar year 2011.

For reference, the following is text of TCA 13-3-101(j) on training requirements for Planning Commission members.

(j) (1) Each planning commissioner shall, within one (1) year of initial appointment and each calendar year thereafter, attend a minimum of four (4) hours of training and continuing education in one (1) or more of the subjects listed in subdivision (j)(5).

(2) Each full-time or contract professional planner or other administrative official whose duties include advising the planning commission shall, each calendar year, attend a minimum of eight (8) hours of training and continuing education in one (1) or more of the subjects listed in subdivision (j)(5). A professional planner who is a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) shall be exempt from this requirement.

(3) Each of the individuals listed in subdivisions (j)(1) and (2) shall certify by December 31 of each calendar year such individual's attendance by a written statement filed with the secretary of such individual's respective planning commission. Each statement shall identify the date of each program attended, its subject matter, location, sponsors, and the time spent in each program. A professional planner who is a member of the AICP shall be exempt from this requirement.

(4) The legislative body of a county in a single county regional planning commission, or the legislative bodies of the counties in a multiple county planning commission, or the legislative bodies of the county and the municipality in a joint municipal and county planning commission shall be responsible for paying the training and continuing education course registration and travel expenses for each planning commissioner and full-time professional planner or other administrative official whose duties include advising the planning commission.

(5) The subjects for the training and continuing education required by subdivisions (j)(1) and (2) shall include, but not be limited to, the following: land use planning; zoning; flood plain management; transportation; community facilities; ethics; public utilities; wireless telecommunications facilities; parliamentary procedure; public hearing procedure; land use law; natural resources and agricultural land conservation; economic development; housing; public buildings; land subdivision; and powers and duties of the

planning commission. Other topics reasonably related to the duties of planning commission members or professional planners or other administrative officials whose duties include advising the planning commission may be approved by majority vote of the planning commission prior to December 31 of the year for which credit is sought.

(6) Each local planning commission shall keep its official public record originals of all statements and the written documentation of attendance required to comply with these provisions for three (3) years after the calendar year in which each statement and appurtenant written documentation is filed.

(7) Each planning commissioner and each professional planner or other administrative official whose duties include advising the planning commission shall be responsible for obtaining written documentation signed by a representative of the sponsor of any training and continuing education course for which credit is claimed, acknowledging the fact that the individual attended the program for which credit is claimed. A member of the AICP shall be exempt from this requirement.

(8) If a planning commissioner fails to complete the requisite number of hours of training and continuing education within the time allotted by this subsection (j) or fails to file the statement required by this subsection (j), then this shall constitute a cause for the removal of the planning commission member from the planning commission.

(9) The legislative body of a county in a single county regional planning commission, the legislative bodies of the counties in a multiple county planning commission or the legislative bodies of the county and the municipality in a joint municipal and county planning commission may, at any time, opt out of the provisions of this subsection (j) by passage of a resolution or ordinance, as appropriate; provided, that for a multiple county planning commission or joint municipal/county planning commission, all governmental entities included in such multiple or joint planning commission must pass the resolution or ordinance in order to opt out of this provision. Further, any such legislative bodies that have opted out may, at a later date, opt in by passage of a resolution or ordinance in the same manner required to opt out.

It is the responsibility of each Planning Commissioner individually to meet the requirements of the statutes. The County Commission is responsible for paying training expenses. It is not the responsibility of staff to provide training, and Planning Department budget has no item for Planning Commission training.

In the past, staff has volunteered to provide low-cost or no-cost training opportunities, or to identify low-cost or no-cost opportunities, in order to control costs and to provide reasonable opportunities for meeting the four hours training requirement. With that in mind, staff has identified the following as possible training opportunities in the next few months.

Planning Commission members should have received invitation to a half-day Leadership Summit that will be held at Pellissippi State Community College

Blount County campus on March 11, preceded by a public presentation by the guest speaker/facilitator the evening of March 10. These two events should be sufficient for four hours of training. I am part of the planning team for the Leadership Summit and will take note of those who attend and certify such for purposes of documenting training hours. It is the responsibility of each Planning Commissioner to register for the session.

East Tennessee Quality Growth will conduct a two day Plain Talk on Quality Growth conference on March 30 and 31. Each Planning Commission member will be receiving information on the conference and registration requirements. This conference will be sufficient for at least four hours of training. I am part of the planning team for the conference and will take note of those who attend and certify such for purposes of documenting training hours. It is the responsibility of each Planning Commissioner to register for the conference.

If enough Commissioners are interested, I will schedule sometime in April a two hour training session on “Meeting Management: A Mock Planning Commission Hearing” produced by the American Planning Association, consisting of video and facilitated discussion. Commissioners McClellan and Roddy have already attended a session on this for 2010 training certification.

If enough commissioners are interested, I will schedule sometime in May a four hour training session on the roles and responsibilities of Planning Commissioners and the Planning Commission. This is an adaptation of a training provided by the State of Tennessee Local Planning Assistance Office. Some on the present Commission may remember this from several years back.

Other training opportunities will arise as the year progresses, and staff will inform the Commission of those opportunities. If the Commission comes to a consensus on specific topics for training, staff will either search for such training or develop training sessions internally if feasible.

4. Knox/Blount Regional Greenway Master Plan for Maryville, Alcoa and Blount County, Phase One.

This item is for information. Visit www.blounttn.org/planning under the Plans button to find a copy of the “Knox/Blount Regional Greenway Master Plan for Maryville, Alcoa and Blount County, Phase One”. This plan was produced by Barge Waggoner Sumner and Cannon, Inc. consultants, with funding from the State of Tennessee for \$20,000, and with 20% match from Great Smoky Mountains Greenway Council for \$2,000, and Maryville, Alcoa and Blount County for \$1,000 each.

The Maryville/Alcoa/Blount County Parks and Recreation Commission, which has members appointed by each government, has endorsed the plan.

In summary, the phase one plan identifies three alternative routes to connect from terminus of the planned Knox greenway system at the Alcoa Highway county line bridge continuing on to Heritage High School. The ultimate goal of a phase two plan would be to identify alternative routes to connect Heritage High School to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park through Townsend.

The three alternative routes identified in the plan are (see map provided in the plan):

- A) connection along the Little River in the vicinity of Rockford and Alcoa to then link to existing greenway system in Alcoa and Maryville and then link along Lamar Alexander Parkway to Heritage High School;

- B) connection along the Little River in the vicinity of Rockford and Alcoa to then link to a new greenway along the planned Pellissippi Parkway Extended and then link along Lamar Alexander Parkway to Heritage High School;
and

- C) connection running along the length of the Little River to terminus in the area of Heritage High School.

The final conceptual plan after community consultations was a slightly modified version of route A above. Staff has been contacted by a representative of farmers along the Little River who have expressed opposition to alternative route C above.

5. Staff reports.

Staff will present brochure on State of Planning in Blount County.

Staff will report on planning prospects related to the regional PlanET initiative.

Staff will report on data analysis activities.

Staff may supply other reports at the meeting.