

Fort Sanders Long Range Planning Meeting  
October 1, 2009  
3:00-4:30pm  
Knoxville Museum of Art  
**Meeting Notes:**

**Agenda Item I:**

Welcome and introductions were made and Stakeholders introduced themselves.

**Agenda Item II, Special Presentation:**

David Butler, Executive Director of the Knoxville Museum of Art (KMA), presented a model of the museum master plan. This planning was done by Sasaki Associates out of Boston, MA. The concept plan shows connectivity to the neighborhood and World's Fair Park, as well as, some inventive ideas for reusing parking lots and providing additional landscape in the area. The plan does include recommendations on property outside of KMA's ownership and that has not necessarily been adopted by the museum, but shows potential possibilities for future use. For more information on the KMA Master Plan please visit Sasaki's website: [www.sasaki.com](http://www.sasaki.com) or KMA's website: [www.knoxart.org](http://www.knoxart.org).

**Agenda Item III, Subcommittee Updates:**

A. Physical Land Use Planning:

Anne Wallace provided an overview of the items discussed at the meeting including the recommendation that MPC revise the current R-2 (medium density residential zoning) and begin the process of rezoning a majority of the neighborhood from R-3 to the revised R-2. This should help to reduce the number of variance requests within the neighborhood for development or redevelopment projects. MPC plans to move forward with this item during its One Year planning process.

Another item that was discussed was the possibility of a redevelopment area. KCDC provided information about how to establish a redevelopment area (pros and cons) at the subcommittee meeting and cautioned the group that this tool is something that would have to be pursued at the will of the City administration. The full committee should consider whether or not to pursue a redevelopment area for Fort Sanders as one of the future action items.

The hospital representatives at the subcommittee meeting raised concerns regarding the back up of traffic on Cumberland Ave. due to the light cycle of the Metron Center Way traffic signal. In response to this concern a meeting between the City, KAT and UT has been scheduled for October 5<sup>th</sup>.

B. Quality of Life Subcommittee:

David Massey, Neighborhood Coordinator, provided an update from this Subcommittee meeting. Most of this meetings discussion focused on student behavior and suggestions on how to deal with the behavior. There were links

noted between rowdy behavior and absentee landlords in some instances. It was also noted that students tend to respond more to UTPD than KPD because of the impact to student status that UTPD can have.

Recommendations were made to improve KPD and UTPD interaction and increase the consequences to students through the University from KPD. Recommendations were also suggested to define landlord responsibilities regarding tenant behavior and building standards; document the cost to the city of KPD and Codes Enforcement calls in Ft. Sanders; consider a “codes sweep” to i.d. substandard housing; and finally i.d. revisions or additions to ordinances that would address problems more effectively.

Another item that was suggested was the continuation of the Quality of Life subcommittee past the wrap up of the current Ft. Sanders Long Range Planning process to deal with these on-going issues. The University supported and encouraged the continuation of the subcommittee.

Another item that was discussed was the concern with the Greek system within the neighborhood because of a transition from using the more affordable, older housing as “off campus fraternity party houses”. One suggestion was to work with the local and national administrators of the Greek organizations.

David Massey also noted that the City intends to organize a pilot project “code sweep” in an East Knoxville neighborhood within the next few months. Previously the system has been complaint driven, but the City is considering a new approach to be more proactive than reactive (modeling after a program in Chattanooga that has seen increased voluntary compliance). Ft. Sanders is on the list of areas to consider for this sweep and a sweep could occur within 6 months.

Bob Whetsel noted that this approach may mean more vacant buildings within the neighborhood. Randall DeFord expressed concern that this might precipitate the demolition of historic housing and John Haas noted that it might also mean stripping historic structures of important details. A concern was noted that the quality of housing decreasing has led to a decrease in the quality of tenant over time. There was some push back on that thought with the idea that low to moderate income tenants typically paid on time and kept the area nicer than middle to upper income tenants because they were concerned with keeping their housing.

Houses left unoccupied tend to be at greater risk for fires and other damages. It will be important to get KCDC involved early in the process if a code sweep moves forward in order to find alternative housing for residents that may be forced to vacate because of code violations. Additionally, it is important for the health, safety and welfare of the community that the City continues to address these issues. One suggestion for vacant houses was “artistic boarding” that uses

heavy duty plywood and painted images on the plywood to fool the eye into thinking the houses are occupied. This idea was received skeptically. Additionally, the neighborhood representatives felt it would be important to have a “carrot and stick” approach to the code violations within the neighborhood so as to minimize the negative impacts. Some suggestions for the “carrots” would be break for owner occupied units, find ways to encourage keeping the historic detail, set up something specifically for this sweep.

**Agenda Item IV, Implementation Strategies and Prioritization:**

Many items were suggested during the discussion of the subcommittee meetings. The subcommittees are tasked with bringing a list of items to proceed with to the next full committee meeting in December so that the items can be compiled and distributed to the appropriate agencies for action. The items from both subcommittees are anticipated to be partnered with the land use map and documentation of this process and distributed to the various stakeholders. Periodic meetings may be scheduled in the future to determine if goals are being accomplished.

**Agenda Item V, Stakeholder Updates:**

University of Tennessee:

The University has experienced a slight decrease in student population (600) by design. There are several major construction projects occurring on the campus right now, including: Ayers Hall renovation class space should be opened 2011; Engineering building at Cumberland and 11<sup>th</sup> should be open fall 2011 and street should be re-opened after steel work is finished in a few weeks; Easterbrook Building may start next summer and last 24-36 months; expansion of Neyland Sports Complex will shut down Chamique Holdsclaw Drive; Health Clinic will start construction on the site of the Old Rock in January and last 18 months; completion of Neyland Stadium work will start after last home game and end in August 2011. Finally, grading work has started for the Sorority Village and the City thanked the University for their work to preserve both natural and historic resources including significant trees and Civil War trenches. The infrastructure on this site should be completed in May 2010.

Ft. Sander Regional Hospital/Covenant Health:

The construction of the new medical office building should be complete within a year. The crane work will likely be finished in 2-3 more months. At that point the siding and interior work will start.

**Agenda Item VI, Upcoming Meetings:**

Subcommittee meetings: November 5th, 3:00 (Baker Center)

Conclusion Meeting - Full committee meeting: December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 3:00 (Baker Center)

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

**Follow Up:**

Representatives from the City (Engineering Department and Policy & Communications), University of Tennessee (UT) and Knoxville Area Transit (KAT) met on October 5, 2009 to discuss the concerns regarding the signal light at Metron Center Way. From this discussion, City Engineering was requested to examine the current light to see if it is functioning on an actuation system. Additionally, Engineering has been asked to examine the turning movements onto Alcoa Hwy (north & south bound). Also KAT was requested to provide documentation on the number of riders on these routes. The group agreed to reconvene in 3-4 weeks to continue discussion of possible solutions to this problem trying to balance all the user's needs.