RESULTS OF THE KNOXVILLE SOUTH WATERFRONT CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT

The primary vehicle for citizen input into the vision planning of the Knoxville South Waterfront were public workshops held in the district in November and December of 2005 and February of 2006. This information was augmented by regular input from Oversight Committee members, by City Council members, and by comments posted on the project website. The results of the input, in raw and summary form, and photographs of the process in action were documented by the design team and posted on the website. This input played a significant role in shaping and reshaping the content of the vision plan as presented by the consultant team. Attendees at the first public workshop helped craft an overall vision for the South Waterfront, at the second one they focused in on three potential development scenarios over time, and in the third workshop they reacted to the preferred option.
At the first Knoxville South Waterfront Public Workshop on the evening of November 17, 2005 at Kerbela, citizens came together to help define the city’s vision for the future of the Knoxville South Waterfront area. Citizen comments throughout the meeting were recorded on large sheets of paper and summarized for everyone at the end of the meeting. Below are citizen responses to two questions:

1. What is special about the Knoxville South Waterfront District?

2. What is our vision for the Knoxville South Waterfront District?

**People?**
- Small town community feel
- Community groups – involved & active
- Rowing associations & teams
- Close proximity to people/parades (Boomsday Foot Race)
- Eclectic/diverse population
- Right between where people live and people work
- Some good schools
- Always been called “God’s Country”
- Laid back – down to earth place for regular people

**Places?**
- Forested hillsides
- Existing housing stock
- Green space
- Small town atmosphere
- Affordable housing stock
- Proximity to City Center
- Bluffs/caves/spring-fed lakes
- Civil War historical sites
- Wildlife & plant life/habitat
- Stair steps to nowhere – (right of Sevier, in front of Kerbela)
- Proximity to greenways, Ijams nature center
- Fort Dickerson Park
- Slower pace and feel on Sevier Avenue
- IJAMS – nature park
- No gated communities
- Boyhood home of Pulitzer winner
- 10 degrees cooler than downtown in the Summer
- Proximity to well preserved forest
- Safe
- Shape/curvature of the river
- Three bridges – visual identity; accessibility; connectivity
- It’s home
- It’s affordable

**Activities?**
- Rowing, racing & practicing creates a great atmosphere
- Access is easy
- Island home airport
- Easy transport to Smokies
- Bicycling
- Road races (running)
- No traffic (as in W. Knoxville)
- Sewage pumped across river
- Varied use of River
WHAT IS OUR VISION FOR THE SOUTH WATERFRONT’S FUTURE?

People?
• Creative culture that encourages entrepreneurship
• More residents – infill
• Maintain the demographic diversity of the area
• Development that respects that rights of the current property owners
• A new South Knox High School
• Preserve the character & feel of Phillips Avenue
• Detached single family housing for lower income households
• Preserve neighborhood stability (zoning)
• Enhance residential property values
• Preserve “country” feel of the area
• A full range of housing opportunities
• Housing rehabilitation assistance
• Development that preserves nearby neighborhood safety
• No gated communities

Places?
• A great public space – like the mall in Washington DC or the Chicago waterfront
• Shore to shore pedestrian access to take advantage of existing greenways
• Mixed use development – residential over retail, like some places in Europe and New England
• Develop Fort Dickerson Park – maximize use of walking and mixed use
• Waterfront public access
• Artist cooperative in a rehabilitated building
• Preserve and promote Fort Dickerson as a history and culture destination
• Mixed use without losing historical charm and houses
• Development that benefits people on both sides of the river
• Better mix of restaurants
• Counter point to North Shore – softer, more natural, smaller boats
• Model sustainable structures
• Full service boat yard
• Waterfront public access
• Preserve and promote urban forests
• A main library with greenspace and trail connections
• Do environmentally sensitive development
• Promenade riverwalk below Baptist Hospital
• No strip commercial
• Preservation of wooded steep slopes
• Save the JFG sign gateway to South Knoxville
• Preservation of historically significant structures
• Clean up watershed
• Preserve viewshed (cell tower restriction)
• Better use of airport

continued on next page
• More community gardens
• Main street look (sign limitations)
• Model sustainable buildings
• Preserve the scale of Sevier Avenue
• Connect quarry to Fort Dickerson – build gardens & connect to UT agricultural & horticulture center
• Landscape with native species
• Emphasis on use of sustainable materials and building practices (US Green Building Codes)
• Use curve of river to emphasize structures
• A great coffee shop
• Preserve Fort Stanley
• Gallon of milk & a loaf of bread within walking distance
• Spectator areas for rowing events

Activities?
• More rowing and paddling access & facilities (multiple entry points)
• A centrally located amphitheater for musical activities
• Bike ways into the area from adjacent neighborhoods
• Water taxi for connectivity
• Walkable schools
• A river walk along the river that allows bikes too
• Wildlife corridors
• Greater use of UT facilities by the community
• Public market for local produce growers
• More sidewalks
• Interactive children’s museum
• Use existing railroad bridges to bring people from UT to South Knoxville via train/trolley that runs on rail and road
• Locally owned commercial not “chain” oriented
• Pedestrian bridges attached to the railroad
• Transit and light rail as transportation options

Comments Received Not in Response to Questions
• Extend the study area South to J. Burk Karnes Bridge or to Alcoa Bridge (to include the Cherokee trails, river bluffs) (include Longhaven –Rose property)
• Put boundaries on the three dimensional model
• Protect view shed from “downtown” side
• Accessibility issues for Fort Dickerson Park
• Assess carrying capacity of traffic network – especially bridges – existing and new opportunities – all four
• Perpetual traffic jam
• Prevent the “gated community” feel – keep open/accessible/friendly/for everyone
• Lobby state legislature to allow T.I.F. without redevelopment districts
The Knoxville South Waterfront Oversight Committee met on Wednesday, November 16, 2005 to review information and analysis presented by the Consultant Team and to respond to two questions, What is special about the Knoxville South Waterfront District and What is our vision for the Knoxville South Waterfront District? Following are the Committee member responses.

WHAT IS SPECIAL ABOUT THE SOUTH WATERFRONT?

People
- Neighborhood – down to earth, comfortable in their own skins
- Distinct community character
- Independent & fair minded
- People are committed to the area
- Slower pace of life out of the hustle & bustle

Places?
- Good street network
- Views - both north and south of the river
- The river
- River unites the North & the South as two front porches
- Parks & green spaces
- Cultural resources
- Environmentally rich & sensitive area

Activities?
- Water activities
- Boomsday viewing
WHAT IS OUR VISION FOR THE SOUTH WATERFRONT’S FUTURE?

People?
• Bring more of all kinds of people & tourists
• Preserve the diversity of the area

Places?
• Organic transportation improvements
• Views
• Chapman Highway as a revived commercial entrance
• Gateway to South Knoxville
• Connect residential streets to riverfront & make it pedestrian friendly
• Critical mass of buildings and activities
• Improve live work opportunities
• Urban densities
• Better river access
• Fort Dickerson connected to the rest of the area
• Synergy of multiple projects
• Preserve wildlife habitat
• A high standard public realm
• An inviting Gay Street gateway
• Better river access
• Places for public festivals and gatherings

Activities?
• Attention to possible water traffic conflict
• Improved walking opportunities
• Public access to water
• Preserve the viewshed
• Parking tucked behind buildings
• Preserve the resources
• 24-hour activities
• More along the river activities – walking & biking
Knoxville’s South Waterfront will be an active, attractive and distinctive part of downtown Knoxville and a gateway to diverse neighborhoods, waterfront recreation, revitalized business districts and places of employment. It will preserve and enhance things that make it special today. It will be a better place to live, work, play and move around.

Live
Knoxville’s South Waterfront will offer a range of housing opportunities, types, locations and prices. It will reflect the country and neighborhood feel of the area, respect property rights, preserve views, wooded hillsides and places of historic significance. It will attract new entrepreneurial residents and will be well connected to the area as a whole and to the rest of the city.

Vision Components (contributed by citizens, stakeholders & oversight committee)
- More residential infill
- Creative culture that encourages entrepreneurship
- Maintain the demographic diversity of the area
- Development that respects the rights of property owners
- New Knoxville south high school
- Preserve the character and feel of Phillips Ave.
- Detached single family housing for lower income households
- Residential condominiums
- Enhanced residential property values
- Country feel
- Housing rehabilitation assistance
- Safe
- Student/parent condominiums
- Mixed use residential above retail that preserves historic charm
- Revitalized or reused elementary school
- No gated communities
- Walkable schools
- Urban densities

Implementation (Program)
- Enhanced and new single family detached housing that is income diverse
- Condominiums
- Student/parent condominiums
- Housing above retail
- Public schools
- Townhouses
- Apartments

Work
Knoxville’s South Waterfront will be a place with a variety of employers and small businesses, a place that invites large and small scale investment that compliments the river location and character of the area and serves as an economic generator for the city.

Vision Components
- Artist cooperative in rehabbed building
- Development that benefits both sides of the river
- Commercial main street
- Office campus class A space with parking
- Boat manufacturer office campus with marina
- Model sustainable structures and environmentally sensitive development
- No strip commercial
- Main street look with sign limitations
• Preserved scale of Sevier St.  
• A great coffee shop  
• Milk and bread in walking distance  
• Outdoor outfitters  
• A public market for local growers  
• Locally owned commercial  
• A critical mass of buildings and activities

Implementation (Program)  
• Mixed use retail development  
• Major office campus employers  
• Commercial upgrades  
• Live work places

Play  
Knoxville’s South Waterfront will be a place that attracts residents and visitors to a variety of waterfront recreational and entertainment venues while respecting and enhancing neighborhood quality of life and the natural environment.

Vision Components  
• Waterfront public access  
• A great public space  
• Shore to shore pedestrian access  
• Preserved and enhanced Fort Dickerson park as a historic destination with walking & mixed use development at the quarry  
• A mix of restaurants with parking  
• A waterfront complex with hotel, banquet facilities, restaurants and entertainment  
• Neighborhood park  
• More tourists  
• Regional park and play ground  
• Full service boat yard  
• Urban forest and protected wooded hillsides  
• Main library with greenspace and trail connections  
• Riverwalk below Baptist Hospital  
• JFG Sign  
• Community gardens  
• A continuous riverwalk with bike access  
• Native landscaping  
• Preserved Fort Stanley  
• Spectator areas for rowing events  
• White and flat water venture at quarry  
• Transient boater facilities  
• Fishing spots  
• Rowing club expanded facilities  
• Amphitheater for musical performances  
• Preserved wildlife habitat  
• Places for public festivals and gatherings  
• Boat ramp

Implementation (Program)  
• Regional public park with a variety of venues and activities  
• Waterfront activity areas within walking distance of each other and residential  
• Fishing pier  
• Marina/boatyard  
• Transient boating facilities  
• Waterfront entertainment complex, hotel, restaurants, etc.  
• JFG sign  
• Riverwalk and greenways for walking and biking  
• Natural areas  
• Restaurants  
• Entertainment/cultural venues

Move Around  
Knoxville’s South Waterfront will offer residents and visitors well connected ways to move around the district on foot, in a car, by transit and by watercraft, taking advantage of waterfront views and locations. Roads and streets will contribute to the integration of residences, businesses and public places and will help reconnect the area to Knoxville’s downtown and to areas south of the city.

Vision Components  
• Greenway corridor  
• Ferry to Ijams  
• Water taxis across river  
• Public access to river’s edge  
• Pedestrian bridge over river  
• Improved road network circulation and orientation  
• Streetscape improvements  
• Rotaries/roundabouts  
• Chapman Highway as a revived commercial entrance  
• Light rail on Norfolk Southern RR as shared or dedicated line  
• Bikeways from adjacent neighborhoods  
• Trolley from UT to area on rail or roads  
• An inviting Gay Street gateway  
• Transit opportunities

Implementation (Program)  
• Water taxi and river ferry connections  
• Light rail line and terminal  
• Transit stops  
• Upgraded streets, sidewalks, streetscape  
• Street and road access along the river  
• Bikeways  
• Road, street and intersection improvements  
• Parking facilities  
• Pedestrian facilities
7.4 FIRST PUBLIC WORKSHOP: PRESS

Waterfront visions flow

Dreams bring ideas to public workshop on South Knoxville project

BY KRISTEN SORGINO

The meeting space was packed with more than 200 people, many of whom had never before attended a planning meeting. The room was filled with tables and chairs, and the walls were covered with posters and handouts.

The meeting began with an introduction from the project manager, who outlined the goals and objectives of the workshop. He then invited the participants to share their thoughts and ideas on how the waterfront could be improved.

Several speakers took the floor to present their ideas, ranging from green spaces to new parks. One woman proposed a floating park, while another suggested a new marina for boats. The group discussed the potential benefits of each idea, as well as the challenges that might arise.

The participants then broke into small groups to discuss their ideas further. The groups were facilitated by volunteers who helped to keep the conversation on track.

The meeting was concluded with a summary from the project manager, who thanked everyone for their participation and promised to continue working towards a better future for the waterfront.

See WATER on A17
Ann Coulter, a consultant with Hargreaves & Associates consulting firm, writes down suggestions during a public workshop Thursday night for ideas on developing the South Knoxville waterfront.

"WATER"
from AI.

"You'll be able to give additional input all along the way," he said, urging the attendees to keep the suggestions coming.

Hadlam, who already has championed the redevelopment of downtown as a central priority during his first term, also emphasized how far-reaching the waterfront project may become.

"This is how important I think this is," he said. "I think what we're talking about tonight has a better chance to change our city than anything else."

South Knoxville's vision for their future is clearly about smart growth and the value of open spaces, said George Hargreaves, the consulting firm's principal-in-charge, once the comments had filled the wall.

Hargreaves said his team, which was awarded a $644,000 city contract to draft the master plan, would return for a second workshop next month to follow up on participants' initial ideas. He said he would present several planning options and offer the opportunity for more feedback.

"We're going to look very closely at these comments, and if we don't bring back something that reflects this, you tell us," he said. "In the end, you'll be the ones who fulfill the vision."

Hayes Hickman may be reached at 955-342-6223.
7.5 SECOND PUBLIC WORKSHOP: CHARRETTE
7.5 SECOND PUBLIC WORKSHOP: CHARRETTE
7.6 THIRD PUBLIC WORKSHOP: VISION PLAN PRESENTATION
7.7 THIRD PUBLIC WORKSHOP: FEEDBACK

PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM THE THIRD KNOXVILLE SOUTH WATERFRONT PUBLIC WORKSHOP – FEBRUARY 2, 2006

- Railroad spur-if not using, tear it out.
- Who will implement the plan and enforce the design?
- Is there a provision to control the wake of boats?
- Will there be bike access?
- Where will the funding come from for major road improvements?
- Where will the parking be for the casual visitor to the waterfront?
- Do studies indicate the river can support that much motorized traffic?
- How will areas further up river be integrated?
- I like everything but the four lane road with light rail in the middle of it. It will change the character of the area.
- This will be to the long range benefit of our city, but I don’t like the new section of Blount near the river.
- I don’t want existing homes, churches or businesses removed.
- Can the district expand to take in the wooded areas to the west?
- How can we have more ongoing input? I don’t like the buildings between Phillips and the river.
- Was there a second pedestrian bridge?
- I like all the connections, but there is a missing element of the natural river environment. Could be more sensitive to that.
- I like aspects of the plan – security issues are important on the continuous walkway along the river. Don’t let them be fenced off.
- I like the plan – but I’m worried about street and other naming conventions.
- Will the old brick buildings on Sevier be preserved?
- The marina traffic and docks out in the river make rowing difficult.
- Can the website act like a bulletin board?
- I have questions and concerns about building heights.
- What will the children’s museum look like?
- Will open space be incorporated?
- Will there be signage?
- Cycle/pedestrian bridges and more docks are a great improvement.
- Too many existing residences appear to have their river views obstructed.
- Why are there no bike lanes – west of Chapman?
- Too many condos.
- Move pedestrian bridge to connect “campus cove” pier, reaching UT closer to circle park.
- No tax incentive financing for private development.
- The concept of “porousness” that you mentioned as an asset of the City View development – this porousness appears to be lacking in the development behind Phillips Avenue. We would like to see the same quality there. This would help maintain the connection – physical and visual – between the neighborhood and the river.