



**The Neighborly Notice** – Vol. 15, No. 21 – Tuesday, June 7, 2022

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*Published by the City of Knoxville's Office of Neighborhood Empowerment, we report news important to Knoxville's residential neighborhoods. Include your neighborhood-related event or meeting in this space. Call 215-3232. News deadline: 12 noon on Fridays.*

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### **1. Neighborhood Advisory Council Meets Tomorrow**

The [Neighborhood Advisory Council](#) (NAC) meets tomorrow, Wednesday, June 8, from 4:30-6 p.m. at the Cansler YMCA Community Room, 616 Jessamine St.

Aaron Browning from the City's Parks and Recreation Department will give updates to current projects and speak about the upcoming proposed projects approved by City Council.

All residents are welcome to attend. As a matter of procedure, we allow NAC members to voice their input first. If there is time at the end, other attendees may be allowed to give input as well.

The NAC advises and provides input only to the Mayor and the City administration. It does not advise Knoxville City Council, Knoxville-Knox County Planning and other elected and appointed bodies; however, they may speak on behalf of their neighborhoods or as individuals.

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To request language translation services, contact Diversity and Inclusion Officer, Charles Lomax at [clomax@knoxvilletn.gov](mailto:clomax@knoxvilletn.gov) or 865-215-2536. For disability accommodations, contact City ADA Coordinator Stephanie Brewer Cook at [scook@knoxvilletn.gov](mailto:scook@knoxvilletn.gov)

## **2. Planning Commission Addresses County Board of Zoning Appeals**

Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs is proposing an Ordinance that will remove the [Board of Zoning Appeals](#)' (BZA) power to hear appeals about use on review from the Knoxville-Knox County Planning ([Planning Commission](#)). Moreover, the proposal seeks to clarify the BZA's power with regards to appeals on development plans. This Ordinance primarily refers to subdivision concept plans.

This will not affect the City of Knoxville's Board of Zoning Appeals.

Currently, the BZA can hear appeals regarding use on review, the procedure by which hazards and overall impact on the community are evaluated for proposed developments. Mayor Jacobs argues that the power to hear use-on-review appeals has often been conflated with the power to hear development plan appeals. *Development plans* are necessary for development within a Planned Residential zone, and must be approved before building permits can be issued. The Knox County Mayor clarifies that the BZA does not have the power to hear appeals of development plans. Moreover, the Knox County Mayor looks to remove the BZA's current power to hear use-on-review appeals. If the new ordinance passes, a new appeals process will form, as appeals will likely have to be directed straight to court.

This proposition affects Knox County property. Therefore, if you have property in Knox County and have an opinion regarding the Knox County Mayor's ordinance, you are invited to share your opinion on Thursday, June 9, at 1:30 p.m., in the Main Assembly Room, 400 Main St.

### **3. Public Input Sought on Proposed Washington Pike Improvements**

The City of Knoxville is hosting a public meeting to present updated designs and obtain additional input from residents about the proposed Washington Pike improvements on Wednesday, June 15, at 6 p.m. at the New Harvest Park Community Room, 4775 New Harvest Ln.

This is an update from the meeting held in September 2021.

The project, estimated at \$17 million, is planned to improve traffic flow and safety along the Washington Pike corridor inside the northeastern city limits, between I-640 and Murphy Road. The proposed design includes bicycle and pedestrian paths. Project documents are available on the [City's website](#).

Neighbors directly affected by these proposed upgrades have met with project planners on several occasions. The designs being presented in this meeting reflect the input of these neighbors and are open to wider community feedback.

Washington Pike would remain five lanes on the western end of the project area, where Greenway Drive ties in near the Target store. The pike would narrow to three lanes by New Harvest Lane, then expand back to five lanes, including a turn lane, at Steeple Shadow Way and Babelay Road and continue in that configuration to the city limits at Murphy Road. There, turn lanes would carry traffic onto Murphy or Pullman roads, and Washington Pike to the east would continue in its current two lanes.

Along the project corridor, two 10-foot multi-use pedestrian and bicycle paths would be built, connecting to existing parks and greenways.

The most accident-prone intersection, at what's now Washington Pike and Lifespring Lane, would be reconstructed to improve safety.

Once the plan is finalized and right-of-way acquired, work would begin in early 2024. The City's goal is to have the project completed by the end of 2026 or mid-2027.

### **4. Save the Date – World Refugee Day**

[Bridge Refugee Services](#) is hosting a celebration of World Refugee Day on Saturday, June 18, from 11 a.m.-2 p.m., at Village Church, 1705 Merchant Dr.

All are invited to join in a celebration of diversity and unity!

This celebration will include a market fair with international vendors and food, as well as organizations who assist in refugee resettlement. The theme is "Seeking Safety as a Human Right." This is the first in-person celebration in two years.

Refugees have moved to East Tennessee from a wide variety of countries, including Ukraine, Afghanistan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Bridge Refugee Services has been working with refugees for more than 40 years, and currently serves as the only refugee resettlement agency in East Tennessee. In 2020, Bridge served over 400 people in East Tennessee.

Past World Refugee Day festivities have included glimpses into the lives of local refugees through videos that tell the stories of local refugees. World Refugee Day provides an opportunity to share and spread refugees' stories, allowing people to celebrate and connect with local refugees.

Bridge Refugee Services is accepting donations and they invite interested vendors to sign up for the event. For more, visit the [Bridge Refugee Services](#) website.

### **5. Free Training Offered Combating Blighted Properties**

Do you have blight in your neighborhood?

The Center for Community Progress is offering a free Vacant, Abandoned, and Deteriorated (VAD) Properties Training Academy, which will give practical ideas and tools you can use to help return VAD properties to purposeful use.

The event will be on Wednesday, June 15, from 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. virtually. Learn more and register for the intensive, all-day professional development opportunity [here](#). The training is free.

A diverse group of technical experts—including renowned urban policy expert Alan Mallach—will guide participants through session topics including:

- The basics of vacant property impacts and the property revitalization framework
- The elements of strategic code enforcement and property tax management
- Land banks, land banking partnerships, and their applications

### **6. Knoxville Neighborhoods Calendar** (click link for online calendar)

Call 865-215-3232 to include your neighborhood event or meeting in [this Google calendar](#).

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[scook@knoxvilletn.gov](mailto:scook@knoxvilletn.gov) or 865-215-2034 at least 72 hours before the meeting.

### **Other Calendars**

Additional online calendars that cover events outside the neighborhood realm include:

- [Arts & Culture Alliance](#) (There's More to Knoxville)
- [Arts & Fine Crafts Center Classes](#) (City of Knoxville)
- [City of Knoxville General Calendar](#)
- [Parks and Rec Community Programming](#)

### **About This Newsletter**

*\*\* This Advisory is produced on most Tuesdays of the year.*

*\*\* Ideas and contributions are welcome. We reserve the right to edit submissions.*

*\*\* Deadline for news & calendar items: 12 p.m. Fridays.*

*\*\* May be copied and forwarded via neighborhood email lists and newsletters.*

*\*\* See past issues at our website: <http://www.knoxvilletn.gov/neighborhoods>*

*\*\* Don't have internet access? Call 865-215-4382 if you need a copy of a particular document.*