



Knoxville Neighborhood Advisory – Vol. 10, No. 38 – Tuesday, October 10, 2017

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Published by the City of Knoxville's Office of Neighborhoods to report news important to Knoxville's residential neighborhoods. Include your neighborhood-related event or meeting in this space. Call 215-4382. News deadline: 5 p.m. Mondays.

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1. Montgomery Village Seeks Donations for Trunk-or-Treat Event

The **Montgomery Village Residents Association** (MVRA) is planning to hold a trunk-or-treat Halloween event for the 400 children who live in the South Knoxville housing development.

The event will be held from 4-7 p.m. on Sunday Oct. 29, at the MVRA office at 4600 Joe Lewis Road, Unit 175.

MVRA is seeking donations from individuals, businesses, and other neighborhood organizations. If you or your organization would like to donate candy, costumes, or art activity supplies, please drop off donations at the Mojo's Southside Market, 1316 Maryville Pike.

For questions, or to schedule an alternate location, please contact MVRA Vice President Diana Hill at 865-309-6501 or mvtenantboard@gmail.com.

2. Early Voting Begins Next Week

Early voting begins on Wednesday, Oct. 18, for the upcoming General Election for five seats on Knoxville City Council, and runs through Thursday, Nov. 2. Election Day is Nov. 7.

Visit the [Knox County Election Commission](#) to see a list of voting times and locations, and to find out if you are registered.

Visit www.govoteknoxville.com --- a website maintained by the City of Knoxville --- for a list of candidates, their websites and contact information, a map of City Council districts, upcoming candidate forums, and other information.

All registered city voters can vote in all five districts. This election will determine the majority of City Council members for the next four years.

3. MPC to Tackle Two Controversial Neighborhood Issues

The Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC) this Thursday will revisit the proposed ordinance regulating short-term rentals and decide whether to recommend expansion of the Edgewood-Park City Historic Overlay District in the Parkridge neighborhood.

Both issues have been controversial, one across the city and the other primarily in one neighborhood. And both issues have seen long delays that now give the current City Council just three meetings (Nov. 7, Nov. 21, Dec. 5) to pass these items before five of the nine members leave office.

Five new members of City Council will be elected on Nov. 7, and they take office on Saturday, Dec. 16, with their first meeting scheduled for Dec. 19. See article above.

The City administration proposed the short-term rental ordinance earlier this year following several public meetings and opportunities for citizen input. As crafted, the ordinance seeks to balance the many different competing interests involved in the debate over short-term rentals (STR's) of less than 30 days, such as those arranged through online platforms such as Airbnb.

At its last consideration of this measure, City Council on Aug. 29 asked MPC to consider a long list of issues and questions about the ordinance and related matters. In the agenda package for Thursday's MPC meeting, MPC staff recommends no changes other than one minor change suggested by the City's Law Department.

As noted by MPC, comments from the general public can generally be described as 1) those who want tighter restriction on STR's located in residential districts, and 2) those who want lesser restrictions on STR's. The 53-page package contains messages opposing and supporting the existing ordinance from neighborhood groups, along with MPC's response to the City Council questions and a copy of the proposed ordinance. [See the agenda item package.](#)

The historic overlay issue in Parkridge actually consists of two separate items on the MPC agenda. The first is a [revision](#) to the Edgewood-Park City Historic Overlay Design Guidelines for both the existing district and the targeted expansion area, should it be approved. The second is the [expansion](#) itself, which would more than double the historic overlay area in Parkridge.

Following approval of the matter by the [Historic Zoning Commission](#), the MPC staff is recommending approval of both measures. The rezoning must be approved by City Council.

It was the **Parkridge Community Organization** that requested the overlay expansion. The issue has been controversial for a number of reasons, including concerns voiced by some residents that the extra cost of meeting historic guidelines would be out of reach for lower income homeowners and low-margin landlords, thus contributing to gentrification in the neighborhood. As a result, guidelines were modified to a point that may not have satisfied the opponents but drew criticism that the guidelines are now too relaxed for the George Barber houses in the neighborhood.

As always, neighborhood groups are urged to review [the full MPC agenda](#) to find out if any of the proposed rezonings or uses-on-review might impact your community. Visit the [MPC website](#) to see videos of past meetings and sign up for notifications about agenda postings.

4. Changes Ahead for The Neighborhood Conference

Changes are in store for the City of Knoxville's annual gathering of neighborhood leaders and advocates.

In 2013, 2015, and 2017, the Office of Neighborhoods (OON) organized **The Neighborhood Conference** --- a very large, six-hour-long event with a free breakfast, a free luncheon, a large number of information booths, and 20 or more workshops and breakout sessions.

In 2014 and 2016, OON staged the smaller **Neighborhood Awards and Networking Luncheon** with just one large workshop and a fewer number of information booths. Both events included the Good Neighbor of the Year Award, door prizes, and other features.

Starting in 2018, however, OON will hold The Neighborhood Conference every year. It will start later (no breakfast) and offer two to three workshops instead of 20 or more. The free Neighborhood Awards & Networking Luncheon remains, along with the Good Neighbor of the Year Award, the Neighborhood Achievement Awards, door prizes, and information booths.

“We are making this change mainly because attendees were unable to take advantage of all of the workshops they wanted to attend,” explained Debbie Sharp, assistant neighborhood coordinator. “With 10 workshops all scheduled for the same hour, you choose one and miss out on the other nine.”

Instead, OON now conducts many of these same workshops on a monthly basis throughout the year. “This not only gives more people an opportunity to attend more workshops, but also allows us to budget more time on topics that cannot easily be crammed into a one-hour session,” Sharp noted.

The “Neighborhood Workshop Series” is already underway. See article below.

One other change is in store, Sharp noted. “We are moving out of the Convention Center. **The next Neighborhood Conference will be held on Saturday, March 24, 2018, at the Knoxville Marriott.** Please mark your calendars and plan on attending!”

5. Submit Your Ideas for Neighborhood Workshops

The Office of Neighborhoods (OON) is requesting ideas for classes and workshops on neighborhood organizing and neighborhood improvement.

Over the last several months, OON has offered workshops on a variety of topics, including tenant rights & responsibilities, neighborhood improvement projects, the Neighborhood Small Grants program, the new traffic calming program, and tips on using www.KGIS.org. A five-session workshop called “Fight the Blight” is currently underway.

Starting in January, the **Neighborhood Workshop Series** will feature at least one workshop per month. Some workshops will last one hour, but others may last longer, depending on the topic.

If you would like to express your support for a particular workshop topic, or to suggest a new topic that is not on our radar, [please take this survey](#).

Workshop topics, dates, times, and venues for the first quarter of 2018 will be announced later this year.

6. Speakers Available to Address Emergencies, Disasters

Are you prepared to protect your family from a natural or man-made disaster? Is your neighborhood prepared?

Natural and man-made disasters can strike at any time, often when we least expect them. Informed action and preparation are the best ways to ensure the safety of loved ones during disasters.

Now, you and your community can get educated by the professionals who work every day to keep Knoxville safe. The Office of Neighborhoods offers an **Emergency Preparedness Speaker Series** to help educate your neighborhood. The following agencies are dedicated and ready to ensure the safety of your community by sending a speaker to your neighborhood or community meeting:

*** **KEMA** (Knoxville Emergency Management Agency): Find out how emergency management works in Knoxville. Who are the key players and what are their functions during an emergency?

*** **American Red Cross of East Tennessee:** Learn how to prepare yourself and your family by creating a family preparedness plan. Red Cross can offer unique strategies that they have seen work first hand.

*** **Knox County Health Department:** Hear tips on handling health-based emergencies and everyday preparedness tips for individuals and organizations.

*** **Knoxville Fire Marshal's Office:** A fire marshal will walk you through the best paths to evacuate your building and show you alternate routes in case your main escape route is inaccessible.

*** **Knoxville Fire Department:** Provides various educational programs including fire extinguisher use, burn prevention, first aid, and CPR.

*** **Knoxville Police Department:** Let KPD share their expertise on dealing with a terrorist-related event, homicide, or mass shootings.

*** **Knoxville Utilities Board (KUB):** Learn about everyday utility safety and what to do with your gas and water lines during an emergency.

Request the individual speaker you find most interesting or go through the whole series for a holistic approach. To get started, contact Hannah Freeman at 215-3456 or hfreeman@knoxvilletn.gov.

7. City Seeks Applications for Affordable Housing Fund

The City of Knoxville's [Community Development Department](#) is now accepting applications from developers who wish to construct or redevelop affordable rental housing units with support from the City's \$2 million Affordable Housing Fund.

The new fund was established in the current city budget with a goal of increasing the number of affordable rental units for people and families of modest incomes.

In her [2017 State of the City address](#), Mayor Madeline Rogero noted that while rising housing prices are a sign of a rebounding real estate market, related increases in rental prices have out-priced many moderate- to low-income earners.

"Knoxville has lost hundreds of affordable units in recent years," Mayor Rogero said. "Our goal with the fund is to increase the supply and long-term availability of rental housing options for persons with modest incomes by incentivizing the development of quality affordable rental units."

The need for more affordable rental housing was highlighted as a priority in the Annual Action Plan of the Community Development Department.

"Since the mortgage crisis of 2008, more families, particularly those with modest incomes, are in the rental housing market and the increased demand for affordable rental housing has surpassed the supply," said Community Development Director Becky

Wade. “The new Affordable Housing Fund is intended to incentivize the development of new affordable housing in Knoxville.”

[Visit this page](#) to download the Program Guidelines and Application. Requests for paper copies can be made by contacting Housing Manager Janna Cecil at 865-215-3079 or icecil@knoxvilletn.gov.

8. Board of Zoning Appeals Meets Next Week

Fifteen properties are on the agenda for next week’s meeting of the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA).

Established by city ordinance, BZA hears appeals of denials of building permits by the city's Building Inspections Department. The board, consisting of five citizens appointed by the Mayor, meets at 4 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month in the Small Assembly Room of the City County Building.

BZA meets next Thursday, October 19. Addresses on the agenda include: 913 Henley Street, 2209 N. Central Street, 7407 Middlebrook Pike, 3812 Boyds Bridge Pike, 4508 W. Martin Mill Pike, 7305 Lorimar Place, 1415 Old Weisgarber Road, 4960 Kingston Pike, 501 Arthur Street, 3842 Shipwatch Lane, 6112 Creekhead Drive (2 files), 3804 Kenilworth Drive, and 5317 Pratt Road.

Keep up with how the BZA might impact your neighborhood. Watch for the signs indicating that there is a pending decision on a particular piece of property. Most signs are for Metropolitan Planning Commission issues --- which are also important --- but signs with the word “variance” are BZA items.

The BZA agenda is posted on the city website. Browse to www.knoxvilletn.gov/boards and click on Board of Zoning Appeals. The agenda is posted no later than the Monday prior to the BZA meeting each month.

A neighborhood group interested in keeping track of BZA should call the Plans Review & Inspections Department at (865)-215-3669 to request and study the paperwork on a particular appeal, decide whether to take a position on the appeal, and then attend the BZA meeting to voice the group’s support or objections. A group can also request a postponement to allow time to meet with the applicant.

Decisions of the BZA can be appealed within 15 days of the BZA decision to Knoxville City Council. Appeals of a City Council decision are made to Chancery Court within 60 days of a City Council decision related to BZA.

9. Mayor Burchett Schedules Constituent Meetings

Knox County Mayor Tim Burchett is hosting nine constituent meetings to give citizens the opportunity to meet one-on-one and speak individually with him about issues that are important to them.

These half-hour meetings are open to the public. A meeting at Bearden Library took place last week. Other meetings within City limits are:

** Thursday, Oct. 26, 5 p.m., Fountain City Library, 5300 Stanton Road.

** Monday, Oct. 30, 5:30 p.m., Cedar Bluff Library, 9045 Cross Park Drive

** Wednesday, Nov. 1, 3:30 p.m., Burlington Library, 4614 Asheville Highway.

10. Walk with Steps for Health

[Five Points Up](#) and [Smoke Free Knoxville](#) are sponsoring Steps for Health, a free “walking” event that will take place on Saturday, October 21, from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m.

Gather at Eternal Life Harvest Center, 2410 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue, to begin the walk. The event will feature two levels of walkers --- the Modest Walker, who will be encouraged to complete 2.4 miles at a moderate pace, and the Power Walker, who will aim to complete 4.5 miles at a more rapid pace.

To pre-register, visit www.thevillageofknox.com. Or you may register on site at the event. A power breakfast will be provided to kick-start the walk. Health organizations will be set-up to provide information and screenings. There will be hydration stations along the routes to make sure walkers have plenty of water.

Five Points Up is a community organization that includes leaders of some neighborhood groups. It focuses on health, health equity, and beautification in East Knoxville, and also publishes a [resource guide](#). For more, contact Tanisha Baker, president of Five Points Up, at villageofknox@aol.com.

11. Knoxville Neighborhoods Calendar (clickable to online calendar)

Call 215-4382 to include your neighborhood event or meeting in [this Google calendar](#).

If you are a person with a disability who requires an accommodation in order to attend a City of Knoxville public meeting, please contact Stephanie Brewer Cook at scook@knoxvilletn.gov or 215-2034 no less than 72 hours prior to the meeting you wish to attend. For an English interpreter, contact the City Law Department at 865-215-2050.

Other Calendars

Here are other online calendars that cover events outside of the neighborhood realm:

- [Arts & Culture Alliance](#) (There’s More to Knoxville)
- [Arts & Fine Crafts Center Classes](#) (City of Knoxville)
- [City of Knoxville General Calendar](#)

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: 5 p.m. Mondays*

** *May be copied and forwarded via neighborhood e-mail lists and newsletters.*

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

** *Don’t have Internet access? Call 215-4382 if you need a copy of a particular document.*