

## Knoxville Neighborhood Advisory – Vol. 11, No. 07 – Tuesday, February 20, 2018

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1. Morningside to Host Community Café This Saturday
2. Bill Threatens City's Restrictions on Short-Term Rentals

### Neighborhood Conference

3. Register Now for the March 24 Neighborhood Conference
4. Last Call for Neighborhood Photos
5. Hatcher-Hill, TIS Join List of Conference Sponsors
6. Businesses, Neighborhoods, Nonprofits Contribute Door Prizes

### Other News

7. Blighted Properties Up for Review This Week
8. Anti-Blight Conference Offers Scholarships
9. Meet Your West Knoxville Elected Officials
10. Meet the Knox County Mayor, Sheriff Candidates
11. City Reviews 2017 Accomplishments, Projects, Services
12. [Neighborhood and Government Calendar](#) (clickable to online calendar)

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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. Morningside to Host Community Café This Saturday

**Morningside Heights Home Owners Association** will host a Community Café on Saturday, Feb. 24, from 10:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the Morningside Heights Community Center, 1617 Dandridge Ave. The Café --- facilitated by Hannah Freeman, the AmeriCorps VISTA for the Office of Neighborhoods --- was rescheduled due to illness.

The Community Café is an adaptation of the [World Café method](#), a method for conversational leadership. The World Café process uses the collective knowledge of all present community stakeholders to provide profound and inclusive insights into various issues. Using this process, Community Café seeks first to connect active residents across the city and second to provide community support for neighborhood specific issues and solutions.

This particular Community Café will focus on barriers to voter education and registration within lower income neighborhood groups. All active residents of Knoxville's neighborhood groups are welcome; however, this café focuses on providing

opportunities for lower income neighborhood groups to collaborate. Limited coffee and refreshments will be provided.

The Office of Neighborhoods is available to assist any neighborhood groups who may wish to host a Community Café. For more, contact Hannah Freeman at 215-3456 or [hfreeman@knoxvillekn.gov](mailto:hfreeman@knoxvillekn.gov).

## **2. Bill Threatens City's Restrictions on Short-Term Rentals**

It's ba-a-a-ack!

Certain members of the Tennessee General Assembly once again are pushing a piece of legislation that would reach into the domain of local government to mandate that short-term rentals be allowed in any residential zone, regardless of whether the rental unit is owner-occupied or not.

This article will explain the situation and suggest ways in which individual residents and neighborhood organizations can express their views.

Short-term rentals of less than 30 days (STRs) are a relatively new phenomenon, spurred by the growth of Airbnb, Vacation Rentals by Owner (VRBO), and other online booking platforms that match persons looking for hotel and motel alternatives with individuals and corporations with homes or condo units to rent.

STRs have been the subject of much debate in Knoxville and across the state for the last year or two. Late last year, after months of public input and debate, Knoxville City Council adopted an ordinance allowing short-term rental units in residential zones --- but only if the units are owner occupied.

The ordinance carefully balanced many competing interests, including those of some neighborhood advocates who argued for a complete ban on STRs in residential neighborhoods and individual homeowners seeking a way to help with the mortgage. For details on this ordinance and the permitting process now required by the City, [see this City web page](#).

At the same time, Airbnb and other online platforms retained the services of various PR and lobbying firms and urged state legislators to support new laws that would upend the ability of local government to decide their own zoning. The primary intent of this legislation appears to be aimed at mandating that STRs be allowed in any home, in any residential district, regardless of whether the owner lives there or not.

The problem with allowing STRs in non-owner-occupied homes is that investors could buy homes and turn them into full-time vacation units, thereby potentially endangering the neighbor-to-neighbor fabric of some of our residential neighborhoods. In fact, this is already happening in some cities. Local hot spots such as neighborhoods adjacent to our thriving downtown and the urban wilderness could be particularly vulnerable.

So here's the situation in Nashville. The House of Representatives adopted a pro-Airbnb bill last year, but at final passage HB1020 applied only to Nashville. However, in the Senate, a new bill by Sen. John Stevens, R-Huntington, would apply statewide.

Under Stevens' [SB1086](#), "a local government shall not 1) prohibit the use of property as a short-term rental unit or 2) restrict the use of or otherwise regulate a short-term rental unit based on the short-term rental unit's classification, use or occupancy." In other words, the type of zoning district would not matter, nor would the issue of whether the unit is owner-occupied.

The bill would apply to all local laws adopted across the state before Jan. 1, 2019, and therefore would undermine the city ordinance adopted by City Council last year.

Originally scheduled to be heard today by the Senate Commerce and Labor Committee, the hearing on this bill has been postponed to an indefinite date in the future. Watch this space for future developments.

Meanwhile, individuals or neighborhood groups wishing to express their views on this bill can write the nine members of the Senate Commerce and Labor Committee by visiting the [committee website](#) and clicking on each individual member.

The website does not provide a means to write the entire committee with a single email, so here are the addresses of the nine members: [sen.jack.johnson@capitol.tn.gov](mailto:sen.jack.johnson@capitol.tn.gov), [sen.mark.green@capitol.tn.gov](mailto:sen.mark.green@capitol.tn.gov), [sen.kerry.roberts@capitol.tn.gov](mailto:sen.kerry.roberts@capitol.tn.gov), [sen.dolores.gresham@capitol.tn.gov](mailto:sen.dolores.gresham@capitol.tn.gov), [sen.bill.ketron@capitol.tn.gov](mailto:sen.bill.ketron@capitol.tn.gov), [sen.frank.niceley@capitol.tn.gov](mailto:sen.frank.niceley@capitol.tn.gov), [sen.reginald.tate@capitol.tn.gov](mailto:sen.reginald.tate@capitol.tn.gov), [sen.bo.watson@capitol.tn.gov](mailto:sen.bo.watson@capitol.tn.gov), [sen.ken.yager@capitol.tn.gov](mailto:sen.ken.yager@capitol.tn.gov).

Local legislators last year supported the City's position that Knoxville should be exempted from any statewide bill. Neighborhood groups may wish to express their appreciation for their support. The legislature's website provides a handy way to find your local Senate and House representatives. [Start here](#).

### **3. Register Now for the March 24 Neighborhood Conference**

Four weeks are left to register for **The Neighborhood Conference** on Saturday, March 24, at the Knoxville Marriott.

Plan now to attend this citywide neighborhood event of the year, complete with a free Neighborhood Awards and Networking Luncheon, workshops, 80 information booths, door prizes, and lots of opportunities to meet others, like you, who are working to make their neighborhoods safer, more livable and more friendly. [Learn more and register](#).

### **4. Last Call for Neighborhood Photos**

The Office of Neighborhoods is preparing a slide show of photographs that will be shown throughout the day at **The Neighborhood Conference**, to be held Saturday, March 24, at the Knoxville Marriott.

Images will be grouped together by neighborhood, so this is a great way to showcase and promote your neighborhood.

Send your digital photos to [dmassey@knoxvilletn.gov](mailto:dmassey@knoxvilletn.gov) with your neighborhood name in the subject line. Be sure to include the name of the neighborhood organization and a phone number. Photo captions are optional. Call David at 215-3232 if you have

questions. Please include a photo of your neighborhood entrance sign if you have one. **Photos are due Feb. 26.**

## **5. Hatcher-Hill, TIS Join List of Conference Sponsors**

[Hatcher-Hill Properties](#) --- one of Knoxville's premier real estate developers --- has signed on as a platinum sponsor for **The Neighborhood Conference**, to be held Saturday, March 24, at the Knoxville Marriott.

Also returning for a second year as a conference bronze sponsor is [TIS Insurance Services](#), an independent, privately-owned insurance consulting and brokerage agency.

This now makes for a total of nine sponsors. The other platinum sponsor is [Waste Connections of Tennessee](#), which holds the City of Knoxville's garbage and recycling hauling contracts.

Others are Gold Sponsors [Home Federal Bank](#) and [Cannon & Cannon Inc.](#), Silver Sponsors [Coldwell Banker Wallace and Wallace Realtors](#) and [Vaughn & Melton Consulting Engineers](#), and Bronze Sponsors [Dover Development](#) and [Knoxville Area Association of Realtors](#).

The City of Knoxville expresses its appreciation to these community stakeholders for their support of Knoxville's residential neighborhoods. The Office of Neighborhoods is still accepting sponsorships for the March 24 event. To learn more, contact David Massey at 215-3232 or [dmassey@knoxvilletn.gov](mailto:dmassey@knoxvilletn.gov).

## **6. Businesses, Neighborhoods, Nonprofits Contribute Door Prizes**

Businesses and at least one neighborhood organization have offered to contribute door prizes for the upcoming Neighborhood Conference, which will be held from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, March 24, at the Knoxville Marriott.

The drawing for door prizes will occur at the very end of the conference, following the Neighborhood Awards and Networking Luncheon.

Businesses that have donated so far include [Bliss Home](#), [Borderland Tees](#), [Chandler's Deli](#), [Glowing Body Studio](#), [Knox Brew Tours](#), [Knoxville Martial Arts Academy](#), [Litton's Restaurant](#), [Mo's Café](#), [River Dog Bakery](#), [Sokno Taco](#), and [Stanley's Greenhouse](#).

Also contributing are [KAT](#) (Knoxville Area Transit), the [Tennessee Theatre](#), [Visit Knoxville](#), and [Zoo Knoxville](#). In addition, **Fountain City Town Hall** will contribute a woodworking piece donated by one of its members, Holland Rowe.

If your business, nonprofit or neighborhood organization would like to contribute a door prize, just contact Johnathan Blevins at 215-2113 or [jblevins@knoxvillent.gov](mailto:jblevins@knoxvillent.gov).

## **7. Blighted Properties Up for Review This Week**

Both the Better Building Board (BBB) and the Public Officer will conduct meetings this week to consider action on a variety of blighted properties.

Neighbors affected by these properties may wish to be present at these meetings to testify on their impact on the neighborhood. See the [BBB and Public Officer agendas](#) as well as results from the previous meetings.

The BBB meets at 3:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 22, and the Public Officer hearing is set for 9:30 a.m. Friday, Feb. 23. Both meetings are held in the Small Assembly Room of the City County Building.

## **8. Anti-Blight Conference Offers Scholarships**

“Reclaiming Vacant Properties” --- a national and well-regard conference that focuses on abandoned, blighted and vacant properties --- is offering scholarships to this information-packed event, which be held May 15-17 in Milwaukee, Wis.

Check out the [conference](#) and then apply for a [scholarship](#) if you are interested. The deadline to apply for a scholarship is Monday, March 12. Of course, if you don't need or want a scholarship, you are still welcome to register and attend.

[The Center for Community Progress](#) is the host of this event. Their mission is to foster strong, equitable communities where vacant, abandoned, and deteriorated properties are transformed into assets for neighborhoods and cities.

## **9. Meet Your West Knoxville Elected Officials**

Three elected officials representing large parts of West Knoxville will be on hand to address concerns and meet constituents at an informal "drop-by" and "drop-in" event from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 28, at the West Hills Flats and Taps, 7403 Kingston Pike.

Come when you can and stay as long as you can. The elected representatives are Second District City Knoxville Council Member Andrew Roberto, Fourth District Knox County Commissioner Hugh Nystrom, and Fourth District Knox County Board of Education Member Lynne Fugate.

## **10. Meet the Knox County Mayor, Sheriff Candidates**

Candidates for Knox County Mayor and Knox County Sheriff have been invited to participate in a “meet-and-greet” event at Dogwood Elementary School, 705 Tipton Avenue, at 6 p.m. Monday, March 5.

The event is sponsored by the [South Knoxville Alliance](#), the business and professional association that sponsors the Knoxville SOUP micro-fundraising events.

County Mayor candidates are Brad Anders, Glenn Jacobs, Bob Thomas, Rebecca Deloa, Rhonda Gallman, and Linda Haney. Tom Spangler and Lee Tramel are the candidates for sheriff. [See a complete list of candidates](#), including those for County Commission, School Board, Circuit Court Clerk, Criminal Court Clerk, County Clerk, Register of Deeds, as well as County Mayor and Sheriff.

The Primary Election will be held on Tuesday, May 1. Early voting runs from April 11-26. The county general election and the primary election for state and federal offices will be

held Tuesday, Aug. 2. For more information, and to learn about registering to vote, see the [Knox County Election Commission](#) or call 215-2480.

If your group is planning a candidate event in the next several months, please give us the details. Contact David Massey at 215-3232 or [dmassey@knoxvilletn.gov](mailto:dmassey@knoxvilletn.gov).

## **11. City Reviews 2017 Accomplishments, Projects, Services**

City of Knoxville employees last year completed hundreds of projects and delivered a wide range of services – everything from patching potholes and building sidewalks and greenways, to coordinating more than 1,500 festivals, concerts and other special events, to police officers and firefighters responding to emergencies.

Calendar year 2017 also will be remembered for its redevelopment milestones --- Knoxville Area Transit being recognized as the No. 1 smaller-city transit service in North America, and major new investments to address equity and affordable-housing issues.

At the end of each year, Knoxville Mayor Madeline Rogero asks department directors for a report that details that year's major accomplishments. Those reports from all City departments have been compiled and summarized, and the 2017 Department Year in Review is now available on the City's website at [www.knoxvilletn.gov/yearinreview](http://www.knoxvilletn.gov/yearinreview).

A letter from Mayor Rogero outlines some of the year's highlights. Citing "some pretty impressive statistics," the Mayor says she is "amazed and grateful for the sheer volume of services our employees and contractors provide week in and week out. Our front-line workers are there every day ... ensuring public safety and enhancing the quality of life for all of us who live, work and play in Knoxville."

## **12. 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 [scCook@knoxvilletn.gov](mailto:scCook@knoxvilletn.gov) or 215-2034 no less than 72 hours prior to the meeting you wish to attend. For an English interpreter, contact Title VI Coordinator Tatia M. Harris at 215-2831.

### **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.