

City to Host Public Meeting Regarding Cumberland Ave. Corridor Project on Nov. 9

The City of Knoxville will host a public meeting on Tuesday, November 9, to present the current detailed design work on the Cumberland Avenue Corridor Project.

The meeting is set for 6 p.m. at the University of Tennessee Visitors' Center which is located at 2704 Kingston Pike and parking is available on site.

The presentation will focus on updating the public on the proposed streetscape section designs, landscaping and the different possibilities when it comes to moving or burying utilities along Cumberland Avenue.

The presentation, by the city's consultant on the project, Vaughan & Melton and landscape architecture firm, Carol R. Johnson Associates, Inc., will include renderings of what Cumberland could look like after the project is completed.

"One of the major issues we'll be talking about is the overhead electrical lines and the different options concerning where they will be placed," said Anne Wallace, the city's Cumberland Avenue Project manager. "This is a good opportunity for people to see the work that has been done to date and comment on it, which helps the city in terms of potential adjustments to the designs."

There will also be a brief discussion about the status of the proposed form-based code for the corridor.

The detailed design work stems from a concept design — a three-lane cross section of traffic including a two-way left turn lane and wider sidewalks among other features — that was proposed in the plan document adopted by MPC and City Council in 2007. Since that time there have been numerous meetings between city officials and Fort Sanders-area business and property owners and with representatives of Fort Sanders Regional Medical Center, Children's Hospital and the University of Tennessee.

This specific concept was decided on after a well-attended public meeting in April 2010 where Cumberland Avenue and Fort Sanders' stakeholders had an opportunity to express their opinions on three possible concept plans for the corridor that runs between the UT campus and the Fort Sanders neighborhood toward downtown in one direction and toward West Knoxville in the other.

The Cumberland Avenue Project is designed to guide the city's effort to work with business and property owners, the hospitals and UT, to transform Cumberland into an attractive, thriving pedestrian-friendly corridor featuring a mix of retail, residential and business establishments — often located in the same buildings.

"Our goal is to see Cumberland Avenue become more of a destination rather than just a place most people pass through on their way to someplace else," Wallace said. "It can be a street featuring businesses and residential elements that thrive year-round, not just when students are there."

Federal funds for the construction have been allocated and the city expects to start work in 2012.

More information about the Cumberland Avenue Corridor Project is available at www.cityofknoxville.org/cumberland or <http://cumberlandconnections.blogspot.com>.