

## MAGNOLIA AVENUE STREETSCAPES PROJECT

MODEL BLOCK FINAL DESIGN- PUBLIC MEETING

Thursday, January 21, 2016 - 5:30 pm

John T. O'Conner Center

611 Winona Street, Knoxville, TN 37917



### COMMENTS:

Not at all a public forum.

This was a presentation, not a public forum where folks had a chance to discuss thier opinions or provide feedback.

Dissenting voices were silenced.

NAME Rachel Wanvoike

ADDRESS

E-MAIL

PHONE: WORK

HOME

CELL

Comments on the proposed improvements can also be mailed to Bryan Berry, Project Manager (see reverse side) or e-mailed to: [bberry@knoxvilletn.gov](mailto:bberry@knoxvilletn.gov). Please send written comments by February 4, 2016. If you have any questions regarding this project, please contact us at 865-215-2029.

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### COMMENTS:

The "Gateway" entrance monuments seem like a superfluous part of the plan that add little value. I think the money to construct them would be better spent on something else. How much is planned to spend on this "Gateway entrance?"



NAME

Michael Gill

ADDRESS

E-MAIL

PHONE: WORK

HOME

CELL

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### COMMENTS:

Some tough issues... how can a street improvement help the direct community around the street. I think great strides will help the safety of pedestrians, lots of people already walk in the area. I generally think that making the place more beautiful will attract more businesses and let the rest of Knoxville know how great Magnolia is.

NAME Josh Shaffer

ADDRESS [REDACTED]

E-MAIL [REDACTED]

PHONE: WORK \_\_\_\_\_ HOME [REDACTED]

CELL [REDACTED]

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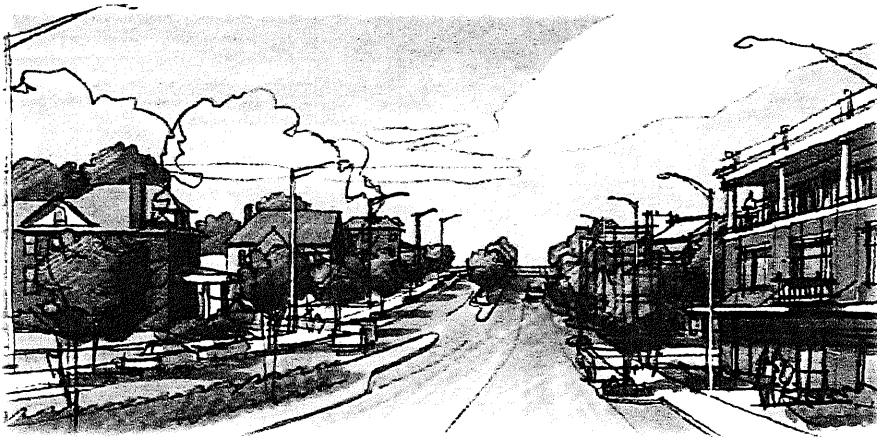
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611 Winona Street, Knoxville, TN 37917



**COMMENTS:**

You need to listen to the folks who live in East Knoxville. People are scared & outraged & tonight they were bulldozed & silenced. There are serious concerns that need to be addressed. The people of Knoxville will be heard.

NAME Corinne Swagerman

ADDRESS [REDACTED]

E-MAIL [REDACTED]

PHONE: WORK \_\_\_\_\_ HOME \_\_\_\_\_

CELL \_\_\_\_\_

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## COMMENTS:

SUGGEST A DIFFERENT SOLUTION THAN  
MEDIAN AS I CANNOT GET TO BUSINESS DRIVING  
ON OTHER SIDE OF STREET.



NAME JIM WURDIT

ADDRESS [REDACTED]

E-MAIL [REDACTED]

PHONE: WORK \_\_\_\_\_ HOME [REDACTED]

CELL \_\_\_\_\_

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# MAGNOLIA AVENUE STREETScape – PUBLIC COMMENTS

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|         |                                    |
|---------|------------------------------------|
| Subject | <b>FW: Magnolia streetscape</b>    |
| From    | Dawn Michelle Foster               |
| To      | Bryan Berry                        |
| Cc      | Kim Scarborough                    |
| Sent    | Thursday, January 21, 2016 2:05 PM |

**From:** Greg

**Sent:** Thursday, January 21, 2016 1:58 PM

**To:** Dawn Michelle Foster

**Subject:** Magnolia streetscape

One suggestion for the Magnolia Ave streetscape project:

Swap the position of the bike lanes and the parallel parking. The parked cars become a safety buffer between moving traffic and the bike lane. It's the standard for modern street design.

George Moore

# MAGNOLIA AVENUE STREETScape – PUBLIC COMMENTS

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|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| <b>Subject</b> | <b>Magnolia Corridor Project Followup Questions</b> |
| <b>From</b>    | Robert Buford                                       |
| <b>To</b>      | Bryan Berry   |
| <b>Sent</b>    | Friday, January 22, 2016 4:04 AM                    |

Hello Bryan!

Please allow me to introduce myself. My name is Robert Buford and I am a resident of the East Knoxville Parkridge Community. I would like to ask you a few questions and offer a few suggestions if you don't mind.

Questions:

1. What is the Total Cost of the Magnolia Corridor Project?
2. Where is the Money coming from? City, State, or Federal Financing?
3. Is there STILL Empowerment Money available for Minority Business Owners?
4. Where can Business Owners Apply for this Empowerment Money?
5. One of four goals of the City of Knoxville, for this Plan, was to create and retain JOBS for this Community. How will this Job creation manifest? Will Community Residents be employed by the City or Contractors (through Labor Ready or Unemployment Office) to assist in constructing the Magnolia Corridor or any Corridor Project?
6. For any Minority Contractors who want to bid on jobs for this Project, what is the Process and Deadline to Apply for an opportunity?
7. Can this Project Plan be Amended, if so, how and when?

Suggestions:

1. For the Winona Park Planning, could there please be a consideration for installing a Fenced in Pet Run/Park for the Community similar to the Pet Run/Park at Victor Ash Park.
2. Could there also be a consideration for an Ice or Roller Skating Ring for the Magnolia Community to promote Health and Fitness?
3. Finally, could there also be a consideration for an Incubation (Small Business) Center for Small start-ups to explore Entrepreneurship with Co-op/Internship opportunities for High School Students?

Thanks,  
Robert Buford  
Parkridge Community Resident

## MAGNOLIA AVENUE STREETScape – PUBLIC COMMENTS

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|         |   |
|---------|---|
| Subject | <b>Comment on Magnolia Corridor development plans</b> |
| From    | <a href="#">Geoffrey Trowbridge</a>                   |
| To      | Bryan Berry   |
| Sent    | Friday, January 22, 2016 4:18 PM                      |

Hello, my name is Geoff Trowbridge and I'm writing about the Magnolia Avenue Streetscapes Project that is currently beginning to take off with the City of Knoxville. I am a resident of East Knoxville, specifically on 5th Avenue in the Parkridge neighborhood, and though unfortunately I was not able to go to the Public Meeting about the Streetscapes project that just happened, I'd still like to make some comments on it.

I've looked over the PDF presentation about the Streetscapes project, and overall I believe it could potentially be a very positive and even transformative step for Magnolia Avenue and for the East Knoxville area. But I say "potentially" because I strongly feel there are still some serious risks and challenges that could arise with a development like this. I say that partially because I've seen various redevelopment projects in Knoxville over the years, led by either the city or by private entities or both, and I know that they don't always take the needs and interests of the majority of stakeholders into account. I don't really think anybody has done that intentionally with this project, but I recognize that that pattern is easy to fall into, and that unless directly addressed similar problems could arise with this as well.

First of all, I'd like to say that there's an awful lot in the plan that I like and very much appreciate, especially the focus on pedestrian and bike-friendly streets and corridors. As somebody who bikes in Knoxville and who very much enjoys walking whenever I can, I think that's incredibly valuable, and I think that any money the City spends on this shift in how our neighborhoods and streets look is worth every penny- it makes a difference on an Economic and Environmental level as well as a Social one. Especially with cycling, safety and accessibility are huge concerns, and I know there's many people out there who would be glad to incorporate more bike-riding into their lives if they felt they had a modicum of safety when they got on their bikes and went through the city, which unfortunately for too much of Knoxville is not the case, at least not yet.

Secondly, I applaud the desire to "form a gateway from downtown Knoxville to Magnolia Avenue", and generally make the route to and from East Knoxville pleasant, welcoming and accessible- both for residents and for visitors to the area. I haven't lived on the East for a terribly long time, but I went to high school here for a year and have spent an increasing amount of time on this side of town in recent years, and it always seems like East Knoxville is still the "red-headed stepchild" of the city- generally forgotten, ignored, or dismissed. For all the hubbub and revitalization of downtown, including Market Square, Gay Street, and the Old City, if you go very directly east of the generally bustling and thriving center city, on Summit Hill, Jackson Avenue, or other routes, it immediately becomes apparent things are not so thriving. Too many places look depressed, run-down, and poorly kept up, including sidewalks and sections of city streets. If East Knoxville is to truly thrive, it and the people who live here have to feel they are intrinsically connected- and intrinsically valued- to the rest of the City. I believe this Streetscapes plan makes some strong efforts toward that re-connection.



## MAGNOLIA AVENUE STREETScape – PUBLIC COMMENTS

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Now to my concerns. Basically, it boils down to being worried that this plan- again, not in its intentions but in its results- ends up benefiting some already well-heeled property owners, a few lucky entrepreneurs, and more well to do homeowners who may increasingly choose the Eastside as a place to build or renovate a house, because it's attractive and "hip". Some of that is already happening, and it's not necessarily bad or negative- I want to be careful not to throw the baby out with the bathwater here. There are some real and severe problems in East Knoxville with economic deprivation, lack of job opportunities (especially for young people without college degrees), and crime, which I believe is ultimately connected to that very lack of positive economic opportunities. Attracting businesses, developers, organizations and residents who care about this community and want to create things that all of us can benefit from is sorely needed, and I'm always keen to see more of that.

The potentially negative or "shadow" side of a revitalization program like this is that it never really engages large groups of people within the community, and it never really acts as a "Transformational Moment", by which I mean a chance for a community to put its energy full force into making a better future for itself. If a plan like this does say, attract a number of developers (such as some of those who've been very successful downtown) and property owners, who create a swath of new businesses, and maybe ultimately residential spaces as well- but it DOESN'T have an active and ongoing conversation with community groups and citizens who've been here a long time, and the very communities that would stand to benefit from a true revitalization don't see serious changes in their own role in the economy or in opportunities for their young people, and crime statistics don't change, then I definitely worry that's just pushing the problems aside, and that isn't a solution, nor I believe what the honest desires of the City of Knoxville government are.

No plan can be met with agreement by everybody, and I realize it can be extremely difficult to take everyone's needs and wishes into account- and sometimes yes, some of those wishes are in contradiction to each other and governments and city officials have to take sides. All I am saying is that for the duration of this Streetscapes plan, and for the period after its completion, a more fundamental and deeper conversation with a larger swath of the community, namely those in East Knoxville who it would most affect, needs to happen. Whether it's making sure that business owners who already are active in East Knoxville, or possible young entrepreneurs who may have skills and enthusiasm but not immediate access to capital, can have seats at the table when the city begins laying out plans for Mixed Used Zoning. Whether it's ensuring that residents of public housing projects or different neighborhood associations and groups, or residents who'd like to think creatively about co-op housing and integrating at-risk populations into the community, can also have seats at that table. Or whether churches and advocates for parks and urban farming (going from the City's recently passed ordinances about Urban Agriculture) can offer suggestions and help create plans for open space corridors. These are all voices I would want to make sure be included.

So those are my comments about the plan- thanks so much for reading. If I could, I do think that more Public Meetings in the future would be a great idea- just having one, and immediately after a major snowfall, doesn't feel like quite enough. (Although I recognize there may have been other meetings in the past, I'm not sure how many people were aware of them). If you guys have more in the future, even after certain sections of the Plan have been implemented, I will do my darndest to attend, and to make sure that my other friends in East Knoxville also do.

Sincerely,  
Geoff Trowbridge

# MAGNOLIA AVENUE STREETScape – PUBLIC COMMENTS

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|         |                                    |
|---------|------------------------------------|
| Subject | <b>MAGNOLIA</b>                    |
| From    | <a href="#">DAVID NIX</a>          |
| To      | Bryan Berry                        |
| Sent    | Saturday, January 23, 2016 8:23 AM |

Please include trash reciprocals in your plans.

## MAGNOLIA AVENUE STREETScape – PUBLIC COMMENTS

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|         |                                     |
|---------|-------------------------------------|
| Subject | <b>Magnolia Avenue streetscapes</b> |
| From    | <a href="#">Kelsey Finch</a>        |
| To      | Bryan Berry                         |
| Sent    | Monday, January 25, 2016 10:04 AM   |

Bryan, I am contacting you to give you my personal comments on the Magnolia Avenue streetscape. I am on the Board of Homesource East TN located at 109 Winnona Street. I have a copy of the 2007 Magnolia study in front of me. I also have the 2016 plan you presented 1/21/16. Please move forward with this project. This project is vital to the survival of the East Knoxville community. Please start and finish it before the corridor deteriorates further. Thanks

**Kelsey Finch**

## MAGNOLIA AVENUE STREETScape – PUBLIC COMMENTS

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|         |  |
|---------|--|
| Subject | <b>Magnolia Streetscape Meeting Feedback</b> |
| From    | <a href="#">Jennifer Mezick</a>              |
| To      | Bryan Berry                                  |
| Sent    | Wednesday, January 27, 2016 10:38 AM         |

Mr. Berry,

I think the streetscape plan is much needed in the area. It is beautiful and well thought out. If it brings about half of the facade and economic improvements that have been seen on Broadway and Central with facade programs, then it will be worth the effort and money. I was disappointed in the backlash from some residents. I believe their concerns are all valid, but come from a place of fear and not open mindedness. As one of the white people in the room, I left feeling as though my family should pick up and move because my black neighbors don't want us living together. The area actually has a rich history of diversity. It occurs to me that many residents may be unaware of that history. Or only aware of the bad parts of that history. I should have left feeling enthusiastic about the coming changes, not ostracized. I hope there will be a mediator for any future meetings and that the mediator will be educated in the history of east Knoxville.

Thank you,  
Jennifer Mezick

## MAGNOLIA AVENUE STREETScape – PUBLIC COMMENTS

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|         |                                     |
|---------|-------------------------------------|
| Subject | <b>Magnolia Corridor Plan</b>       |
| From    | <a href="#">Elizabeth Wright</a>    |
| To      | Bryan Berry                         |
| Sent    | Wednesday, January 27, 2016 2:58 PM |

Hello,

I am writing to provide feedback for the public input process on the Magnolia Corridor Plan. I think East Knoxville and Magnolia Avenue hold some of our best and most vibrant local businesses, neighborhood organizations, and community groups. I appreciate efforts to improve pedestrian safety, increase transportation opportunities, eliminate food deserts, and beautify natural areas along Magnolia Avenue. I am writing primarily to voice concern that the area's current residents are not left behind or pushed out in this process. Knoxville has a sordid history with "urban renewal" and its impact on black communities and I deeply hope that this history is kept in mind and not repeated with the city's plans for "improvement." Redevelopment, recruitment of new businesses, new residential construction, and other efforts can actually undermine the health and wealth of communities when long-established local business owners and affordable housing are not valued and heard in the planning process. I would love to see a city ordinance requiring any new residential construction in the area to include a high percentage of affordable housing, with grants and funding made available to any existing residents and business owners to have the ability to compete with new residents and businesses and maintain the integrity of their communities.

Furthermore, I have always felt that the Hall of Fame construction left Magnolia and East Knoxville feeling like afterthoughts and isolated from the rest of town. I've never understood why drivers taking James White Parkway from South Knoxville can't connect to East Knoxville before the Cherry Street exit, even to access Hall of Fame. I once took the Cherry Street exit around 11 p.m. on a Saturday night and was pulled over by a police officer who told me it was for my safety because I was a white woman "driving in the gun zone." This is concerning and reinforced my perception that traffic design intentionally created an obstacle between East Knoxville and the rest of the city. I am also curious to learn more about what "balanced police presence" means in the plan. For many in this community, and from my experience being pulled over that night, police presence can actually feel more unsafe and dividing than helpful.

I know a lot of current residents and business owners expressed concerns with this plan and skepticism that the city isn't trying to gentrify this area. Their concerns are valid and I sincerely hope they are not washed over in this process. I urge the city to take a progressive and pro-active stance to ensure the well-being of the area's current residents and business owners - there are many models of community-based decision making and participatory research that could really empower East Knoxville's along the Magnolia corridor to have ownership of the future of their neighborhoods. It would be beautiful for a city like Knoxville, with so many wonderful things happening under Mayor Rogero's leadership, to lead by example and demonstrate how a Southern community can learn from its mistakes and take steps to grow together in shared power.

Thank you!  
Elizabeth Wright  
Knoxville, Tennessee

## MAGNOLIA AVENUE STREETScape – PUBLIC COMMENTS

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|         |  |
|---------|--|
| Subject | <b>Re: Magnolia Ave Streetscapes project</b> |
| From    | <a href="#">C Cooley</a>                     |
| To      | Bryan Berry                                  |
| Sent    | Thursday, January 28, 2016 2:26 PM           |

**From:** C Cooley  
**Sent:** Monday, January 25, 2016 12:13 PM  
**To:** Bryan Berry  
**Cc:** Jon Livengood  
**Subject:** Magnolia Ave Streetscapes project

Hello Bryan,

I was unable to attend the Magnolia Ave. public meeting last week. I have reviewed the PDF of the presentation. I see that there are bike lanes but no cross section or other legible diagram provides specific dimensions of the bike lanes. Could you please give me the details on vehicle and bike lanes along with gutter/curb? Are any of the bike lanes buffered? Will there be no parallel parking- only bus pullouts?

Thank you,  
Caroline Cooley  
Bike Walk Knoxville



## MAGNOLIA AVENUE STREETScape – PUBLIC COMMENTS

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|                |                                     |
|----------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Subject</b> | <b>RE: Magnolia Ave Plan</b>        |
| <b>From</b>    | Madeline Rogero                     |
| <b>To</b>      | Kasey Krouse; Bryan Berry           |
| <b>Cc</b>      | Chad Weth; Sheryl Ely               |
| <b>Sent</b>    | Wednesday, January 27, 2016 5:11 PM |

**From:** Hellwinckel, Chad M  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 27, 2016 12:54 PM  
**To:** Bryan Berry  
**Cc:** Kasey Krouse; Fiona McAnally; Madeline Rogero  
**Subject:** Magnolia Ave Plan

Dear Mr Berry,

I have looked over the Magnolia Corridor plan. It looks great except I, and other neighbours, would like to see some edibles planted. Edibles were suggested at earlier public input meetings as well.

I am aware of the 'messiness' problem of fruit/nut production on public roads, but the suggestions below are all edible bushes/small trees that do not create a mess. Their fruits are small and if not picked by humans, birds usually clean them up just fine. Please consider working a few of these into the planting scheme.

Serviceberry (10 to 20 foot...kind of bushy)  
Bush Cherry (10 to 15 foot)  
Blueberry (bush)  
Currants (bush)  
Hazelnuts (bush)  
Gooseberry (bush)  
Goumiberry (nitrogen fixing bush)

Thank you for you work on the plan. I live in the neighborhood and look forward to its implementation.

Best Regards,

Chad Hellwinckel

## MAGNOLIA AVENUE STREETScape – PUBLIC COMMENTS

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|         |                                    |
|---------|------------------------------------|
| Subject | <b>FW: Street Design</b>           |
| From    | Dawn Michelle Foster               |
| To      | Bryan Berry                        |
| Sent    | Thursday, January 28, 2016 3:45 PM |

**From:** GiGi Sanders  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 28, 2016 3:14 PM  
**To:** Dawn Michelle Foster  
**Subject:** Street Design

Hi Dawn Michelle, this is GiGi at Peace By Piece. I hope all is well. First, again congrats on your new position...well deserved. Secondly, I understand that you have plans to plant trees along Magnolia. I hope that the trees will be whimsical in design with tons of wildflowers to offset the trees...I can see the beautiful additions, now. Thirdly, please do not forget the business district located along Washington Avenue. We still need garbage disposals; pedestrian crossing; parking and a 911 Emergency phone. Note: The old poles have not all been replaced...hopefully, will happen. Finally, thank you so very much for everything, so far...you are appreciated.

Best regards,  
GiGi@Peace By Piece



## MAGNOLIA AVENUE STREETScape – PUBLIC COMMENTS

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|         |  |
|---------|--|
| Subject | <b>Comments on Magnolia Ave Improvements</b> |
| From    | <a href="#">Shaffer, Joshua Daniel</a>       |
| To      | Bryan Berry                                  |
| Sent    | Friday, January 29, 2016 11:37 AM            |

Magnolia Ave is truly a gem of Knoxville. The roadway is wide, driving lanes are narrow, power lines are moved to the alleys, street lights are consistent and regular, and there's a pedestrian and transit presence already in place. Magnolia has independent shops and businesses to be proud of too: Chandler's, Smoke Box, Red Fez, Pizza Palace, Philippine Connection, Jarmon's BBQ, Wok n Roll, Petty Welding, R.T. Clapp Repair Shop, and many salons and barbers. I hope this project can build on what Magnolia already has to be proud of.

There's validity to the fears of gentrification, but that's not a deal breaker. I think the project absolutely needs to happen simply for the sake of pedestrian safety. However, I think the city can proactively help the community by having a direct plan for meeting their needs. This infrastructure plan could be repackaged as small piece in an overall bigger plan to help the community, rather than being the big project that ultimately attracts outside investors. A good example can be found in Greensboro, NC. When a streetscape project came through a primarily low-income black community, it was tied with a mixed use redevelopment plan. Instead of leaving the community to the threats of outside investment Greensboro made sure that people there had a safe, affordable, and walkable place to live and shop. Much like Knoxville's Five Points Redevelopment, this plan needs to be equally as thoughtful but with more emphasis on mixed use so community members can become business owners. Greensboro also put money into starting a food coop for that community, tied with donations from the community and outside investors who saw the need for access to healthy food.

There are also design problems I see with the plan. Mainly, I think parallel parking on the road is always a good option (and it currently happens on Magnolia) but I have concerns that it's not a good fit in this design. With four lanes of traffic at a 45 mph speed limit, I think it's unsafe to stop and reverse in order to parallel park. It may not be a problem now because the shoulders of Magnolia are so wide and traffic counts are low, but as the corridor grows this will present a real problem. Secondly, there's no mention of moving the power lines to back of properties to match the rest of Magnolia and I hope that is the considered.

Thank you,

Josh Shaffer

## MAGNOLIA AVENUE STREETScape – PUBLIC COMMENTS

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|         |                                      |
|---------|--------------------------------------|
| Subject | <b>Magnolia Streetscape Feedback</b> |
| From    | <a href="#">Christopher Salmons</a>  |
| To      | Bryan Berry                          |
| Sent    | Friday, January 29, 2016 9:46 PM     |

Greetings Mr. Berry,

The neighborhoods that make up the Magnolia Corridor have great charm and history and simply need a freshening up to help encourage redevelopment and investment. With that being said, I hope that the city is willing to spend a little extra money on some pointers to ensure that this project is done correctly and becomes a shining example to other municipalities on how to reinvigorate a neighborhood.

I have been in attendance of several meetings regarding the Magnolia Ave Streetscape project including the most recent presentation at the O'Conner Center. . I am very excited that the city is moving forward with this project, it can't come soon enough, however I would like to make some recommendations. I have attached pictures for reference of my suggestions including a doodle for the pillar, please forgive my lack of art ability.

I would like to first praise the ideas of pursuing underground utilities and KAT bus pull offs. Overhead utilities are an eye sore that many municipalities nationwide have begun moving underground, glad Knoxville is finally on the band wagon. The KAT pull offs should have already been implemented city wide, as no one likes getting stuck behind the bus while it obstructs a full lane of traffic loading and unloading.. This is a no brainer.

While on the subject of KAT, I would like to address that there should be shelters at each stop for waiting passengers. It was highlighted in the meeting that the Magnolia corridor is the highest volume KAT line, let it be the example for the rest of the city. The shelters should not be the boring, they should offer a little decoration to continue with the idea of accentuating the neighborhood history and charm. They should also be lit. It is no secret that our area has some issues with a homeless transient population and some crime. Let's help make riders feel safe and shake this personification.

Regarding the surface parking lot for the KAT offices, this needs to be cut out of the plan altogether. This is a complete waste of money. I live on 5th Ave and keep an odd schedule, passing the KAT offices all times of the morning, day, and night and I have NEVER seen the existing facilities at capacity. Never mind the fact that street level parking exists on Jessamine north of 5th with enough space to accommodate all slots shown in the proposed parking lot design, and the Magnolia plan incorporates street level parking in that area. I think it is poor planning for any surface lot to be approved in an inner city setting; such things should be forbidden by zoning. We also keep saying we want to green up Magnolia and get away from the concrete runway it has become, but then the plan includes a surface parking lot immediately behind the gateway pillar. Seems like a contradiction of plans?

The next thing I would like to go over is the selection of street lights for the plan. I believe this is one of those items that can make this project great or mediocre. The original drawings presented over the last few years show decorative street lights reminiscent of old Americana, not these soul less, industrial, cobra head lights currently used, and slated to be re installed. Bravo for selecting LED fixtures, this is a step in the right direction and will cut down on city maintenance costs regarding the lights. It will also save power, but I believe the city has a contract to pay a flat rate per light to KUB so I doubt that will make much of an impact. I have included pictures of some lights found in Nashville and Atlanta. They are called Raindrop lights. The decorative shepard's hook poles accentuate the charm of the

## MAGNOLIA AVENUE STREETScape – PUBLIC COMMENTS

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neighborhood and are period appropriate for the area. The lights also point downward so they should comply with any TDOT standards and will cut down on light pollution. Upon researching I discovered several manufacturers of city street lights that include this design and almost all of them are able to be made with LEDs. (please see attached photos)

Foliage for the project looks good. I do wonder however if the city arborist was consulted? My only concerns with the plants (as badly as they are needed) is that Knoxville has a history of not maintaining things, especially greenery. The Broadway / Hall of Fame redo is a great example. The shrubs around the bridge over the interstate and the trees/shrubs on the corners of the intersection of Magnolia and Hall of Fame are not maintained and some are half dead because city worker's answer to all things organic is to douse it in weed killer. So I guess the point here is landscape is good, but can we talk about a plan to keep it looking great, not dead and overgrown, as that will just be counterproductive to what we are trying to achieve here.

Decorative Planters? I didn't see anywhere in the plans for decorative planters. Simple planters like the concrete ones used downtown would be a cheap thrill. It would be great to encourage the surrounding neighborhood organizations, civic clubs, and business groups to participate in beautifying this strip by updating the planters seasonally. It could also be a great way to bring various groups together for a mutual task to get to know one another, take pride in their area, and maybe even begin to bridge any social gaps this area faces.

Lastly is to address the Gateway pillars. The consultants seemed like they were excited about input on their design. It isn't all bad, but I would recommend some changes. The overall physical design and proportions are excellent; they are stately and make a statement. I hate the materials that have been selected. With the multicolor brick it is apparent that we simply copied the Chilhowee Pillars. This is an awful idea, the multicolored brick, nautical looking light at the top, and tattered flags make them look more like they belong in a cheap theme park.

Scrap the Brick! I have attached picture examples of other pillars around town, and they are all made of stone or cast concrete. The pillars should give the appearance of timelessness. I would suggest cast concrete similar to the pillar on the Broadway/Hall of Fame Bridge over the interstate. Cast concrete is easy to build, it is cheap, and you can even go the extra mile and put flakes of some stone such as marble to give it the appearance of actual stone. I attached a doodle of my design for this. I am sure it can be improved upon. The pillars need a light of some kind at the top, (another reoccurring theme with other well done monuments), it should also compliment the street lights chosen to ensure the theme matches. The precast Medallions of the Magnolia Flower and the Chilhowee Arches are great! Leave those.

I would also like to see some kind of modern element included to show we aren't stuck in the past. I changed the plan of the original Pillar to include a side fin or bump out that would be made of frosted glass and be back lit by color changing LED lighting. The city could plan a lighting scheme for holidays, special events, etc that would coordinate with the other pillars once constructed in the same way we do the lighting for the newly renovated Henley Street Bridge, and Pedestrian Bridge. Something like this would add a real WOW factor that is relatively inexpensive. It seems color changing LEDs are now frequently incorporated into public works projects nationwide, including the newly lit Korean Veterans Bridge in Nashville, or the new Romare Bearden Park in Charlotte, NC. Color changing pillars, bridges, and monuments are popping up in architecture blogs from cities all over the country... Don't get left behind Knoxville! Magnolia Ave possess a history and old charm that no other artery in town has, and this is worth doing right. I guess in closing, don't cut corners. When making final choices please think Historic, Charming, Timeless, and we could see a great return with redevelopment of the area.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely, Christopher Salmons

## MAGNOLIA AVENUE STREETScape – PUBLIC COMMENTS

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|         |   |
|---------|---|
| Subject | <b>Magnolia Corridor historic section</b> |
| From    | <a href="#">Kaye Graybeal</a>             |
| To      | Bryan Berry                               |
| Sent    | Tuesday, February 02, 2016 4:34 PM        |

Thanks for the opportunity to comment on the Magnolia Avenue Corridor improvements. The presentation looks good --lots of interesting stuff to potentially occur. I wanted to suggest that under the vision to strengthen the Area's Business and Neighborhood Environment that a National Register of Historic Places nomination be considered. Mike Carberry and I did a preliminary survey to determine that the streetscape between Harrison and Hembree be considered. A nomination would mean that the contributing structures would be eligible for Federal income tax credits for rehabilitation, plus some signage could be designed to enhance and designate the area as historic.

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Kaye Graybeal, AICP

## MAGNOLIA AVENUE STREETScape – PUBLIC COMMENTS

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|         |                                    |
|---------|------------------------------------|
| Subject | <b>Magnolia Streetscape</b>        |
| From    | <a href="#">Patience Melnik</a>    |
| To      | Bryan Berry                        |
| Sent    | Tuesday, February 02, 2016 8:25 PM |

Dear Mr. Berry,

I am so very pleased to see that the city is finally turning its attention to Magnolia. I like many features of the plan; however, I do have a comment regarding the streetlights.

Right now they are rusting, but the fluted shape is unique and--if they were restored--might be more elegant than the generic and monolithic streetlights seen elsewhere in Knoxville. Not sure if restoring them would be more or less expensive, but it would be a more environmentally sound solution, as well.

Thanks for your work and for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,  
Patience

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Patience Melnik

## MAGNOLIA AVENUE STREETScape – PUBLIC COMMENTS

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|         |  |
|---------|--|
| Subject | <b>Magnolia Corridor Redevelopment</b> |
| From    | <a href="#">Jerry Caldwell</a>         |
| To      | Bryan Berry                            |
| Sent    | Wednesday, February 03, 2016 1:26 PM   |

Bryan,

I'd like to voice my support for the Magnolia Corridor Redevelopment 6 Block Streetscape Proposal. East Knoxville has some of the most fertile opportunities for improvement in the city. I like what I see in the proposal.

In the 1960s I recall the urban renewal projects, that were thinly disguised efforts to resist racial integration and to gouge and displace the African American community in Knoxville. So I am not surprised that the African American community feels threatened. The actions by the city in 1960 were disgraceful.

The city destroyed a vibrant community by taking land from residents to build the Knoxville Civic Auditorium and Coliseum, the police building, the Hyatt now Marriott, and new apartments. The TDOT scars - James White Parkway and Hall of Fame Drive created barriers that separate East Knoxville communities from the Central Business District. The African American community needs reassurance that the city will not be using eminent domain and will not be displacing residents nor businesses. I don't believe John Duncan or the City ever acknowledged the pain and hardship imposed on the minority community, so that community is necessarily suspicious of city efforts for redevelopment.

So I encourage sensitivity to the concerns of East Knoxville citizens who are skeptical this project will benefit them, and fear it will cause them hardship. But I really would not like this project to be delayed. East Knoxville has languished and been neglected for too long.

Best,

Jerry Caldwell

Parkridge Community Organization, President 2013 & 2014

## MAGNOLIA AVENUE STREETScape – PUBLIC COMMENTS

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On Feb 3, 2016, at 10:53 AM,

Good Morning Mayor and City Council,

I am writing today regarding the recent unwarranted outrage at the Magnolia Avenue Streetscape project that appeared at City Council last night.

As a resident of Parkridge and East Knoxville since 2010 I have watched this project inch along with great patience. In 2010 I was just out of college with my Urban Planning degree. I was a die-hard bicycle commuter, anti-sprawler, localvore, and completely entranced with the potential, progressiveness, and all around greatness of my new home in East Knoxville. I attended public meetings about both the bicycle/pedestrian plan, the Magnolia Corridor, the Warehouse District at the Y and at Pellissippi State Magnolia. At that time the feedback from the public was nothing but slight tweaks. I recommended a more direct and safe bicycle corridor into downtown and was told it was planned to change Jessamine St to Willow Ave all the way into downtown. Even this small improvement hasn't happened yet.

Over those 5 years I have seen streetscapes from Cumberland, to Gay, to Central, and even ad hoc municipal investment in streetscapes around the new developments downtown. I get a little jealous to see streetscape projects pop up (Marble Alley, White Lilly, etc) and be completed when ours has been sitting in the wings waiting to get funded for many years.

It appears our time has finally come but alas a small and vocal minority has come out of the woodwork to complain about this well vetted municipal investment. These people have ignored public meetings for years just to pop up and scream about the final product after the ink has already dried. Their arguments have no logic to them: "invest in magnolia and it will get better but we don't want it to get better", "we want the city to do something to make East Knoxville better" "we don't want the city to do something to make East Knoxville better." "East Knoxville is for Black People ONLY!" It makes no sense and has no place in a constructive dialogue.

This area has suffered from dis-investment for decades. Magnolia Avenue is a bleak thoroughfare. The road is much too big for any kind of pedestrian focus to occur, and subsequently the traffic flow is extremely light at all times of the day. Believe me, I can see it from my window as I type! When I first moved here my friends and family told me, this neighborhood will always be held back by the quality and aesthetics of the adjacent thoroughfare/commercial corridor.

Now is our time to continue the quality improvements and re-development radiating out from downtown Knoxville. We need a better pedestrian atmosphere. We need more plantings and shade trees. We need signs proudly delineating our home in East Knoxville, and most importantly we need re-investment. Letting this project pass by will condemn this area to many more decades of neglect, hollowing out of local businesses, reduction in residents, and decline in aesthetic quality.

City Councilmembers, I urge you to support the Magnolia Avenue Streetscape in its current form!

Sincerely,  
Calvin Cassady

## MAGNOLIA AVENUE STREETScape – PUBLIC COMMENTS

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|         |  |
|---------|--|
| Subject | <b>So...the Magnolia Corridor Plan, starting with the Streetscape</b>  |
| From    | <a href="#">Seanna</a>   |
| To      | Daniel Brown; Nick DellaVolpe; Finbarr Saunders; Marshall Stair; George Wallace; Mark Campen; Brenda Palmer; Nick Pavlis; Duane Grieve; Terry Alexander; William Lyons; Christi Branscom; Thomas Strickland; Dawn Michelle Foster; Anne Wallace; Bryan Berry; Rick Emmett; Kim Scarborough |
| Sent    | Wednesday, February 03, 2016 7:49 PM   |

My name is Seanna Rupe. I'm also on the board of the Parkridge Community Organization. Here's a brief background on me: I grew up in suburban Philadelphia, was forced to move at age 14 along with my parents to Florida as they pursued their retirement dreams, finished growing up in Florida, and stayed trapped there until I was almost 40. Then in 2005, I escaped to the state I had wanted to live in since I was 17 years old and brought to Knoxville the first time by my future husband. We finally moved to Tennessee, albeit Cookeville, and then I was able to fulfill my pretty-much-lifelong dream of moving to Knoxville in December 2013. The only Knoxville I had ever known was West Knoxville. My husband was born and raised there, graduated from Farragut High School, and Kingston Pike was my playground when we would come up here to visit. Then Turkey Creek happened. Not that it's not great, and who doesn't love Costco, but the West Knox I fell in love with in 1984 was not the West Knox I would be calling home when we finally moved to Knoxville. So I started looking around, and I found, among other fantastic places, Parkridge.

I researched Parkridge as much as is possible on the internet. As a product of the suburbs my entire life, I wanted to make sure I had an idea what I was getting into. I also needed to talk my husband into it. This took over a year. Do you want to know one of the tools I used to convince not only myself, but my West-Knox-raised-in-the-70s husband? The Magnolia Corridor Plan. The one dated 2009 that can be found on the [knoxmpc.org](http://knoxmpc.org) site. I read that whole thing, including the "Vision." I told my husband about it. He looked at it, too.

Your plan is solid. Your plan is good. Your plan is NEEDED. It's needed by folks of every stripe who live here, whether they realize it or not. It's needed by the city. It's needed by that university located fairly close by. It's even needed by the West Knoxvillians. We ALL need your plan. I feel certain you guys know this. I want you to know that I live here now, right in the thick of this, and it will directly affect me. I AM STRONGLY IN FAVOR OF YOUR PLAN. As I mentioned above, your plan was used by me as a tool to help sell the move to Parkridge to my husband.

I also explained the development plan to my older sister and her husband when they were deciding where to retire in Tennessee and I urged them to take a look at Holston Hills. They bought a home on Crestwood Drive last year and we often travel "The Corridor" going back and forth to each other's homes. Having lived in inner city Baltimore and DC for many years, they could not understand that there might be opposition to your plan that didn't involve budgets and funding. My sister is a physician and is currently closing her practice in Nevada before moving here full time, but I think I can speak for both her and her husband when I say they are also strongly in favor of your plan.

What's that saying? The only thing that is certain is change. I think we can all agree that change is needed, just as it was needed in downtown Knoxville when a bunch of people, probably some of the very people to whom I am addressing this email, harnessed what many thought was a "tilting at windmills" vision and helped turn it into the absolute pleasure and joy it is today. Even the people who, bafflingly, are against the streetscape proposal agree a change is needed. The question is, what kind of change are we going to be looking at in the "2020" vision of the Magnolia Corridor? I'm told it used to be "a lot worse" than it is now. Although it's home for me now and I'm growing strangely fond even of



## MAGNOLIA AVENUE STREETScape – PUBLIC COMMENTS

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some of the "uglier" parts of the current streetscape, all I can see when I look at the "Magnolia Corridor" is how much better it can be than it is now.

My vision of your plan is that every single person who lives here now, of every color, size, shape, and age, lives here when your plan is executed, unless they are doing something illegal (might as well dream big, even though we all know wherever there are people--ANY kind of people--there will be illegal stuff). Then, as your plan and vision is realized over time, and we ultimately look back and talk about this little bump in the road we traveled to get to your vision, we laugh about how silly all the "fear of change" was--even the people who expressed said fear.

Please do what you know is the right thing for our city and its residents and support the Magnolia Corridor Development Plan. Let's get this started.

Thanks for your attention and also for working through this process. It's appreciated.

Seanna Rupe

## MAGNOLIA AVENUE STREETScape – PUBLIC COMMENTS

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Mr. Berry,

I would like to thank the City, yourself, and the consultants for tackling the issue of Magnolia Avenue. The last public meeting seemed to be filled with a depressing amount of negativity. I assure you that the entire area does not carry the hate-filled sentiment present in the meeting. I wished to speak with you and the BWS&C consultants after the meeting but I was so disgusted with the tone of the meeting I had to leave. Thank you again for bearing through that.

This is a lengthy letter and I realize you are quite busy so I have provided a bulleted summary at the beginning.

- Magnolia is over-built and needs taming such as this project
- Underground or relocated utilities from the street side are necessary and should be a firm tenet of the project
- Light fixtures, street furniture, etc should be unique, particular, and easily identifiable to this project and only this project
- Public art accommodation should be allowed for, even if only prepared for with incorporation being in Phase 2 or later
- Crosswalks should be uniquely textured and colored for each intersection
- Plantings should include as many flowering trees as possible with median landscapes designed for minimal or no maintenance and inclusion of as many flowering plants as possible
- All landscaping should consider the removal of litter as the highest priority
- The monument should be made of stone or artistic concrete, not brick, and include color changing architectural lighting
- Registered neighborhood groups should be queried for suggestions and "buy-in" inclusion

Magnolia needs to be returned to its original state during the development of Park City. If one looks through the pictures of Magnolia in the McClung collection and in the Thompson collection, the streetscape looks surprisingly similar to the proposed improvements--albeit a bit narrower and with trolley tracks. The proposed plan is a step in the right direction to return Magnolia to a more useful state now that the "Happy Motoring" era has passed and Magnolia is no longer needed to carry the traffic load displaced by I-40. A lot of effort and thought is evident in the streetscapes presented; I would like to offer a few suggestions, mostly in details that might seem trivial but are important to the neighborhood, that perhaps were overlooked or were left open purposefully for suggestions. I do appreciate that there was a request for suggestions that seemed genuine.

I was pleasantly surprised by the willingness to underground or relocate the utilities. I hope that this willingness is not sacrificed as a compromise later. The current streetlights are fed via underground service but are an eclectic mixture of poles from the '30s to present day. The 2014 draft report and the 2011 report emphasize the importance of unique and indentifying street lights and public furniture. I am sure you are familiar with the 2014 report, but I will quote it.

**Streetscape improvements can be an avenue for creating a brand and identity along Magnolia Avenue. This is accomplished through uniqueness and consistency. Uniqueness means planning for elements that set Magnolia Avenue apart from other corridors. Consistency is necessary to reinforce the brand and identity throughout.**

I believe a more decorative fixture than the flat cobra-style LED shown in the renderings would be best for the project. A style light fixture that is unique from the other fixtures in town will allow one to identify themselves as being on Magnolia Ave. I would be glad to suggest specific styles or general

## MAGNOLIA AVENUE STREETScape – PUBLIC COMMENTS

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features in more detail if desired. If cost concerns appear, it might be possible to place more elaborate/decorative fixtures near the corners and place lesser fixtures in between. The public furniture--planters, benches, trash receptacles, etc should also be unique to this project. I understand that for cost control and ease of maintenance that the KAT shelters will be of standard design, and those could be replaced later with more specific unique designs upon success of the project. The planters and other larger furniture could be a random mixture of different shapes, colors, and materials. Cast concrete with designs varying from Victorian to Craftsman to modern geometric would help tie the streetscape into the surrounding architecture better than a plain cookie-cutter rectangular box. Again, I would be glad to offer more detailed suggestions if desired.

The 2014 report includes a desire to have locations for public art but I did not see particular mention of this in the presentation. In order to save costs for phase one, perhaps this can be pushed to phase two for more detailed incorporation. A flat concrete pad in a turn-out or cross walk might suffice for future preparation of public art.

An opportunity to develop a unique feature for helping brand the Magnolia Corridor presents itself in using color for the crosswalks along with patterning the outside edges of the crosswalk. I noticed the crosswalks were colored in the renderings, but all the crosswalks were the same color. A unique color for each block/street's crosswalk would create the ability to provide a unique feature found nowhere else in town with very minimal effort and cost. Imagine how easy giving directions would be if one could say, "Go down to the green crosswalk and turn left!" A textured pattern such as cobblestone or brick stamped into the concrete on the edges of the crosswalk would allow for a tactile response for motorists to realize the crosswalk is there and perhaps slow down for the next one while providing a smooth interior surface for pedestrians to cross. The many blind and visually impaired people in this community could also benefit from crosswalks with uniquely textured edges to aid in navigation.

The vegetation listed in the presentation are good choices for most projects, but perhaps it would be possible to choose smaller flowering trees for the area between the larger trees. If the street were planted with spring flowering trees such as dogwoods, cherry, pear, plum, etc. it would be possible to support future cultural spring programs, such as the Dogwood Arts festival or other new traditions. A large amount of naturalizing bulbs, irises, and daylilies would also further the spring (and other seasons) flowering festivals. There is a movement in Parkridge towards planting of irises, daylilies, and naturalizing bulbs in the parking strip between the sidewalk and street. The continuance of this on Magnolia will offer a large opportunity to allow Magnolia to be included in the Parkridge community rather than being "the next street south of Fifth Ave". The design of a maintenance-free or minimal maintenance landscape for the median that included a minimal amount of grass would be ideal. Large ornamental grasses require annual trimmings; bushes and shrubs are notoriously neglected and then hacked down en-masse by landscape workers. A visit to all the parks off Magnolia, a jaunt down Cherry St. between I-40 and Magnolia, or even the intersection of Magnolia with Hall of Fame (how ghastly overgrown and litter filled has that become!) will attest to the lack of horticultural attention to this area for bushes and shrubs. An approach with absolute minimal maintenance requirements in the design will allow for sustainable success of the project. Consideration for the removal of large amounts of litter and debris should also be considered. Magnolia has a significant litter problem. Ask the street sweeper how much garbage they collect from Magnolia and you'll probably get an eye-roll or curse word.

I am pleased the design for the monument is still open. While I understand the desire to match the monuments at Chilhowee Park, the monuments at Chilhowee are much more modern in design to match a much more modern Chilhowee Park. The use of modern commercial brick, especially in red and blonde colors, is not befitting of the grand historical materials used in the construction of the

## MAGNOLIA AVENUE STREETScape – PUBLIC COMMENTS

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neighborhoods surrounding Magnolia. The materials used should be stone or at least stone veneer or poured concrete with a faux stone finish. A quick drive around the area will reveal a large amount of stone fences, retaining walls, foundations, steps, and even curbs. The monuments in other stately historical areas of the City are all made of stone or fancy concrete. Perhaps a blend of stone and glass or metal in the shape of proposed alternative would help tie the regal historic with the modern (glass replacing the blond brick and two shades of stone replacing the two red brick colors would like quite stunning). Lighting for the monument should be well planned and preferably color-changing. Nothing grabs attention and creates energy as well as color-changing architectural lighting. The success of the Henley Street bridge lighting can attest to that.

I am a member of the Parkridge Community Organization and during the latest meeting the Magnolia Streetscape project was discussed. The project as a whole was enthusiastically accepted as long overdue. Many great ideas and suggestions were discussed. Hopefully those ideas and suggestions will make it your way. I have encouraged the PCO as a group to approach the City to demonstrate support for this project and offer suggestions. Perhaps the City should reach out the groups in the area around Magnolia Ave that are registered with the Office of Neighborhoods for further suggestions and refinement to increase "buy-in" and a sustainable amount of pride with area citizens. It will most likely be the community organizations who ultimately pick up litter, clean the sidewalks, report nonfunctional lights, maintain the planters, and generally sustain the project; the more "buy-in" that can be had the better.

Once again I commend the City for tackling this long overdue problem and the willingness to accept suggestions. I would be glad to offer sketches, clarifications, or any other help that could be needed. I look forward to seeing this project as it moves forward.

Sincerely,

James Waldrup

## MAGNOLIA AVENUE STREETScape – PUBLIC COMMENTS

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|         |   |
|---------|---|
| Subject | <b>Feedback for Magnolia Streetscapes Project</b> |
| From    | <a href="#">Alexander Parks</a>                   |
| To      | Bryan Berry                                       |
| Sent    | Thursday, February 04, 2016 3:15 PM               |

The East side of Knoxville, TN is long overdue for strategic, visionary investment from the city. The support needed extends beyond financial investments, but also needs to include understanding the communities that live in East Knoxville, tapping into their sources of knowledge, and making the preservation and integrity of East Knoxville communities a priority.

East Knoxville desperately needs infrastructure upgrades, but also needs strategic investments by the city to ensure that residents will not be pushed out of their community, be forced to find additional financial security to stay in their community, and desperately needs more than policing from the city. It is outrageous that Knoxville responds to violence by investing in policing of citizens as opposed to support structures that would directly address the problems that many in our community face on a daily basis. This is the pattern I have seen from the city toward East Knoxville over my past 20 years living in this city.

All families want the best for their children and future generations. Therefore, the educational infrastructure of East Knoxville also needs reevaluation while discussions about streetscapes are happening. Why have no schools been built in East Knoxville since the early 1970's? Why do afterschool programs for youth on the East side struggle to secure funds and support from the city of Knoxville (and the greater Knoxville communities)? Why is it easier to find liquor stores, used clothing stores, and quick-loan providers on the East side of Knoxville than it is to find grocery stores, parks, spaces for youth, educational opportunities (for youth and adults), and enrichment activities?

The city of Knoxville now has a great opportunity to be a leader in the U.S. about how to go about upgrading, invigorating, and supporting its communities. The time is now to strategically invest in East Knoxville with visionary ideas and initiatives from the taxpaying citizens who live in East Knoxville—NOT blindly following a plan developed by the city that targets outside investors and paves the way for gentrification of this area (as has been the result of other city projects extending from the downtown area).

As elected officials using taxpayer funds, you are obliged to listen and respond to the voices and needs of your community and you are charged with meeting the needs of ALL those you serve in Knoxville (not simply business leaders who want a "cheap" place to invest in order to gain a larger return).

Thank you,  
Alexander F. Parks

## MAGNOLIA AVENUE STREETScape – PUBLIC COMMENTS

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|---------|--|
| Subject | <b>RE: Magnolia Avenue Corridor comments</b> |
| From    | <a href="#">Richard Nelson</a>               |
| To      | Bryan Berry                                  |
| Sent    | Thursday, February 04, 2016 10:40 PM         |

Regarding the Magnolia Avenue Corridor Plan:

There had been some criticism that the design does not reflect the black culture of this segment of Magnolia Avenue. Can the design be modified through a targeted public process to identify design features specific to the neighborhood? Magnolia Steering Committee, churches and other social organizations might address neighborhood design by recommending tile art, sculpture, banner flags, providing pedestrian nodes for sitting and visiting, specific landscaping, and other ideas. It is important for every neighborhood to have its own character echoed (or sometimes created) through the corridor design.

Concern had been raised that the corridor improvements might spur commercial redevelopment which could drive up rents and drive out small businesses. This may indeed occur though it would take quite a while to happen. How should this concern be addressed? I am sure this community is equally concerned about crime, gangs, graffiti, and vacant houses.

Please add my contact information to your list of interested persons and keep me informed of upcoming meetings and new information.

Thank you Bryan

Sandra Korbek

## MAGNOLIA AVENUE STREETScape – PUBLIC COMMENTS

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|--------------------|--|
| <b>Subject</b>     | <b>FW: Support for Magnolia Avenue Upgrade project</b>   |
| <b>From</b>        | William Lyons  |
| <b>To</b>          | Madeline Rogero; Christi Branscom; Dawn Michelle Foster  |
| <b>Cc</b>          | Jesse Mayshark; Eric Vreeland; Bryan Berry; Anne Wallace |
| <b>Sent</b>        | Friday, February 05, 2016 4:13 PM                        |
| <b>Attachments</b> |  |

Dear Mr. Lyons:

The officers and board of directors of the Parkridge Community Organization would like to go on record in support of the Magnolia Avenue Upgrade project. The project has been a regular item on our monthly agenda for the past year, and from time to time for years before that, as a way of keeping our members informed about what was happening. The sense of the membership has always been in strong support of the effort, most recently by this letter receiving a unanimous vote by our officers and board, all of whom live in Parkridge.

The Parkridge Community Organization is a non-profit group committed to the well-being of the Parkridge neighborhood in Knoxville, Tennessee. Our membership includes ca. 35-50 residents who are proud of the historic character and diversified population of our neighborhood, and want to see it become an even better place to live. Our organization holds an annual historic home tour, has supported the 6th Avenue Mural project and the design study for the 1500 block of Washington Avenue, recently placed historic street signs in the neighborhood, and regularly hosts a water stop for the Knoxville Marathon at Caswell Park as well as a summer street festival. We maintain a strong interest in reducing neighborhood blight and crime, facilitating traffic calming, historic preservation, and supporting the establishment of local shopping for our residents. Our meetings are open to the public and are held the first Monday evening of each month at 630 at the Cansler Family YMCA.

East Knoxville is a great place to live, and the Magnolia Avenue Upgrade project will make it better, by making the streetscape more attractive and pedestrian friendly, which would help bring investment into the area. We appreciate the fact that the city is considering devoting appreciable time and resources to our area, and look forward to having continued input into the process, which we strongly support. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

David G. Anderson  
President, Parkridge Community Organization

Jennifer Montgomery  
Vice President, Parkridge Community Organization

Seanna Rupe  
Secretary, Parkridge Community Organization

## MAGNOLIA AVENUE STREETScape – PUBLIC COMMENTS

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Lynne Sullivan  
Treasurer, Parkridge Community Organization

Tanner Jessel  
Board Member, Parkridge Community Organization

David Nix  
Board Member, Parkridge Community Organization

Jennie Mezick  
Board Member, Parkridge Community Organization

Christopher Salmons  
Board Member, Parkridge Community Organization

Zachary J. Smith  
Board Member, Parkridge Community Organization



## MAGNOLIA AVENUE STREETScape – PUBLIC COMMENTS

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|                |                                    |
|----------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>Subject</b> | <b>Magnolia Avenue Streetscape</b> |
| <b>From</b>    | Doug Toppenberg                    |
| <b>To</b>      | Bryan Berry                        |
| <b>Sent</b>    | Friday, February 05, 2016 6:32 PM  |

Mr. Berry,

I was present at the January 21 Magnolia Avenue Streetscape meeting, and I'm supportive of the effort the city is making in this regard. I think we need to be sensitive to the concerns of the residents of the communities along Magnolia, but I think those concerns can be reconciled, and think the project should proceed.

My one specific comment is about the bike lanes. I live in Holston Hills, and frequently ride my bike to and from work downtown, as well as to other places in the city. The one place I don't feel safe when riding is in bike lanes. The lanes are narrow, and the traffic coming from behind is often at a high rate of speed. I'm not sure what the posted speed is along Magnolia, but I know from experience that it averages between 40 and 50 mph per hour. It isn't infrequent that cars wander out of their lanes, and it's also difficult for a bicycle to stay within a 3 or 4 foot lane, particularly when the lanes become littered with debris (I can point out bike lanes in East Knoxville that are impassable because of rocks, sticks, trash, etc.). The effect of a 40 mile an hour car or truck striking a bicycle from behind is certain to be fatal or debilitating.

My suggestion would be to build a curb between the car lane and the bike lane which would keep cars and bicycles separated in traffic. Obviously, there would have to be breaks in the curb at intersections, property entrances, bus stops, etc. but I think it would provide a much wider margin of safety than merely hoping everyone will stay in their respective lanes. I don't think the expense of adding curbs would be substantial, particularly if it's done as the streets are being reworked.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this project.

Douglas J Toppenberg

## MAGNOLIA AVENUE STREETScape – PUBLIC COMMENTS

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|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| <b>Subject</b> | <b>Comments on Magnolia Upgrade Plan</b> |
| <b>From</b>    | Tanner Jessel                            |
| <b>To</b>      | Bryan Berry                              |
| <b>Sent</b>    | Saturday, February 06, 2016 12:56 AM     |

Hi Brian,

I did not see a lot of changes in the Magnolia Avenue plan from the April 2014 version. I didn't attend the January meeting, so perhaps I missed something.

I do have some comments based on reviewing the documents online on my own.

First I want to address some of the recently promoted ideas concerning the "historically black community."

The neighborhoods along Magnolia Avenue are in fact "historically integrated" and it's somewhat disparaging to see some promote the idea that my choice to live in East Knoxville is a threat to black livelihoods or black culture.

I've made a home on Chestnut Ridge in the Parkridge Community adjacent to Magnolia Avenue since 2007.

My home was built by a white man in 1935, who lived here with his wife Hazel and their adopted son. The 1940 census reveals many of his neighbors were of African American heritage when he built his home. Today, a few of my nearby neighbors include one Hispanic family, two black families, two older white gay men, one white old timer, a white family with kids, a devout Jewish guy, a devout Muslim guy, a family of four, and the guy with the booming sound system and rims.

You can see why I'm surprised to learn that my community is being "whitewashed" by the proposed public investment in the hitherto crumbling Magnolia Avenue corridor.

Black or white, gay or straight, sinner or saint, all residents benefit from an upgrade to our area's main transit route. Along with the "complete streets" concept that promotes physical activity, numerous studies have shown the benefits of street trees for reducing stormwater runoff - and I've read studies suggesting street trees not only clear the air, but improve people's mental well-being. I know I'm happier around trees.

That any stakeholder would refuse the addition of trees, bike lanes, and a more "livable" city is beyond my ability to understand.

I know there's a lot of frustration about levels of both public and private investment in East Knoxville. I personally have concerns about the number of greenway miles and public green spaces in East Knoxville, with respect to population density and weighed against amenities in other areas of the city. There are certainly issues of crime, blight, and economic opportunities to address.

However, I can't see how those important issues are addressed by opposing much needed "TLC" for Magnolia Avenue, one step of many towards reversing the trend of shuttering businesses on Magnolia. With that discussion out of the way, let me just list some concerns I have regarding what I see in the plans - please forgive if any of these items were addressed in the in-person meeting that I did not attend:

I would like to be sure we're protecting water quality in First Creek from both thermal and street chemical pollution.

I understand that Cumberland Avenue project has a large filter to handle stormwater and filter road pollution entering Third Creek. Is anything like that planned for First Creek?

Is there a "pedestrian refuge" in the media where the greenway will cross?

I'm a fan of reduced costs and energy efficiency, but in the artists' rendering it looks like LED lights.

## MAGNOLIA AVENUE STREETScape – PUBLIC COMMENTS

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The older 2009 plan had some historically appropriate lighting in the artist's rendering. What happened to that idea?

I'd like any lighting installed to reduce light pollution - and can you check out the "temperature" to go with a warmer light than a cooler light? Magnolia has a neat, amber glow to it now - putting in LED lights will completely change that to look more akin to "a strip mall in outer space."

Why are the traffic lights yellow in the artist's rendering?

Who is going to care for the flowering plants pictured?

What will prevent the median plantings from becoming toast? Can you design some rain garden features in the median, or on the sides, to capture and slowly release water?

The street trees at Hall of Fame Drive got replaced something like 3 or four times, really tragic given how much care goes into raising a good sized tree for planting. The trees that survived still seem to be struggling to take root in highly compacted, clay soil. What will prevent that from happening to the plantings on Magnolia Avenue?

Can you incorporate "green" features like pervious pavement, stormwater bump-outs, stormwater trench, more here: [http://www.phillywatersheds.org/what\\_were\\_doing/green\\_infrastructure/tools](http://www.phillywatersheds.org/what_were_doing/green_infrastructure/tools)

Can you try and incorporate "edible" plantings? For example, blueberries as shrub, service berry as a shrub / tree. I'm not a fan of ornamentals.

There is some interest in East Knoxville being the "arts and garden" district of the scruffy city. People who lived in the historic area gardened in backyards. They do today. The street should reflect "garden."

Right now it kind of looks like a generic streetscape. Try and add some character. See if you can put in some edible landscaping to address the food desert concern.

Maintaining those plantings and the green infrastructure could possibly create some of the job opportunities the more vocal activists are concerned about.

Make the street lamps solar powered and you have even more "green" infrastructure for skilled workers to tend.

Finally - if a streetscape upgrade is tough now - wait till you try your connector from Cherry to MLK which actually puts people out of a home. I commented back in 2014 that's a bad idea - you're just going to have people flying through a new thoroughfare. New streets don't build community.

Thanks for the opportunity to comment.

I do think there's room for improvement in the design details - but as the old saying goes - don't throw the baby out with the bathwater.

-Tanner

# MAGNOLIA AVENUE STREETScape – PUBLIC COMMENTS

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**Phone conversation with Lita**

**February 4, 2015**

Concerns were:

- Money could be better used elsewhere such as fixing Vine Middle School or potentially building another school in East Knoxville. Though providing additional public computers at locations in East Knoxville was another alternative.
- Gentrification