



The Knoxville Focus

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March 4, 2019

City may increase funds for affordable housing

By Mike Steely
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Plans for two apartment complexes, one at Pond Gap and the other on Young High Pike, were approved to receive development funding by the Knoxville City Council Tuesday. The proposed apartments at Pond

Gap are strongly opposed by residents there, especially along Hollywood Drive, but the approval passed despite pleas from David Williams, president of the neighborhood association there. The city will award \$555,000 in grant money

to ECG Pond Gap, LP for the development of 19 affordable housing units in Pond Gap. Williams told the council that the apartment development, eventually to have 102 apartments, "doesn't fit" the neighborhood. Williams also asked

the city to repair a retaining wall along Hollywood Drive. That damaged wall is being disputed by the local property owner who says the city built and has been maintaining the wall. The city claims the property owner is responsible. Becky Wade, community

development director, told the council that the money will be forgiven after 20 years. Commissioner Andrew Roberto called the funding a "gap-filling measure" to provide low-rent units. Mayor Madeline Roggio, speaking on the matter,

said the city is investing in affordable housing and announced plans to add an additional \$1 million to the current \$2.5 million earmarked for future city aid to similar projects. "There is such a demand for affordable housing,"

Cont. on page 3

County's new growth plan delayed until July

By Mike Steely
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After hours of debate and several motions the Knox County Commission voted last week to postpone any action on revising its Knox County growth plan until July. The divided commission asked that the Knoxville-Knox County Planning Staff should be looking into what it will take to rework the plan, how much it would cost, how long it would take and if an outside consultant should be hired. The meeting went well over four hours and much of that was taken up with a back and forth disagreement on when revising the growth plan should be taken. The debate centered on a motion by Commissioner Brad Anders to postpone any action until this summer, giving the legislature time to decide if the state-required Urban Growth Plan will be renewed. The commission had discussed asking state legislature to exempt Knox County from this plan. If freed from the state's Urban Growth Plan requirements, the idea would be to work on the county's own plan. Several citizens addressed the issue including developer Scott Davis and community activist Kevin Murphy. Davis said the Urban Growth Plan is "no longer relevant" and Murphy called for updating the county's growth plan and holding educational workshops on the plan.

Anders said moving now on revising a growth plan is "putting the cart before the horse" and urged his fellow commissioners to delay any action until the legislature recesses.

Commissioner Charles Busler said that today's population in Knox County likes to "live in little pods" and wants their ideas expressed.

Commissioner Evelyn Gill, who represents much of Knoxville in her district, responded to Busler by saying, "We no longer live in isolated communities, we are all interrelated."

During the commission's work session recently the cost of revising the county's growth plan, a separate plan from the Urban Growth Plan, was estimated at \$350,000 and could take four months or more. Commissioner Larsen Jay said during the regular meeting it was disconnected to pick a dollar amount on something not on the floor.

This estimate was disparaged as Jeff Archer spoke on behalf of the planning staff and said that revising the county growth plan could take "hundreds of meetings" adding that the staff doesn't have the manpower. He estimated that changing the plan could take "a year to 18 months."

Commissioner Randy Smith urged the commission to wait for the mayor's report on the replies

Continued on page 2

Mission Accomplished



PHOTO BY KATRINA WENDT/K. WENDT PHOTOGRAPHY

Webb School's Emory Lanier raises his arms in victory after the Spartans rolled past Tipton-Rosemark 75-40 for their first state basketball championship in school history Saturday night in Nashville. Please see more Division II Class A state coverage on Webb and the CAK girls plus stories on Division I region tournament play in Sports & Recreation, Section C.

Spartans win first state title; CAK girls fall in finals



PHOTO BY KATRINA WENDT/K. WENDT PHOTOGRAPHY

CAK Head Coach Abby Williams consoles and talks to her players moments after the Lady Warriors' state title run fell short with a 41-29 loss Saturday.

There was nothing unlucky about Webb School's 13th appearance in the TSSAA state boys' basketball tournament. Coach Ricky Norris' Spartans captured the school's first state title with a 75-40 win over Tipton-Rosemark Saturday night in the Division IIA finals at Lipscomb University in Nashville.

Webb built a 29-18 lead in the first period and coasted to its 17th straight win against the Shelby County

team from Millington. The Spartans were state runners-up last year, and Coach Norris said the team

Continued on page 2



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