

STAFF CASE REPORT TO PLANNING COMMISSION

Case Number:	MR-2014-098	PC Meeting Date: 09-08-14
Applicant Request:	Mandatory Referral closure/abandonment of three (3) street right-of-ways	
Property Location:	200 blocks McConnell Lane, McConnell Street and Watkins Street	
Property Owner:	Parkridge Health System	
Applicant:	Brad Slayden/Ragan Smith Associates	
Staff Recommendation:	APPROVE	

PROJECT ANALYSIS

RPA Land Use & Transportation Comments

Project Description

The applicant is requesting to abandon these right-of-ways so that the adjacent properties, owned by Parkridge Health System, can be consolidated.

Site Description

The street right-of-ways vary in width of 20 to 30 feet and all are approximately 280 feet in length. All three begin at Ivy Street and end at East 5th Street.

Zoning History

All three street right-of-ways are shown in numerous recorded subdivision plats (book 2, page 14, book 4, page 25 and book 12, page 20). A rezoning and closure request was filed in 2005 (cases 2005-141 and 2005-142) for the same area but was withdrawn before any action was considered.

Plans/Policies

This site is within the 2002 Glenwood/Churchville/Orchard Knob Neighborhood Land Use Plan.

Right-of-way (ROW) Abandonment and Closure requests are reviewed using the Right-of-Way Closure and Abandonment Policy adopted by the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission in January 1997 and the City of Chattanooga (Resolution #24532) in August 2005.

Review of rights-of-way for closure is based on a tiered classification. These right-of-ways are Tier 1, right-of-ways currently open and in use by the public and which include any elements of a normal road including road pavement, sidewalks, curbs, storm drainage systems, sanitary drainage systems, water distribution systems, fire hydrants, utilities (electric, telephone, cable television, gas), provision for future utilities, streetlights, and trees. These right-of-ways will not be closed unless a suitable replacement is provided. Applications for closure and abandonment on Tier 1 right-of-ways are reviewed using the adopted review factors and according to the tenets of this policy.

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The staff recommendation for this request was based on an evaluation of the following review factors. Each factor is followed by staff's comments:

FACTOR	STAFF COMMENTS
1. Width of the ROW	Width of the ROWs is 30' +/- for McConnell Lane, 20' +/- for McConnell Street, and 30' +/- for Watkins Street
2. Presence of or potential for the location of utilities	As part of the closure review process, this will be reviewed by the Transportation Department following Planning Commission action
3. Currently open to traffic	Currently open to traffic; however, a gate prohibits access to Watkins Street from East 5 th Street
4. Potential for future use or which provide future connections to the existing street pattern or could provide needed services, and which are integral to the community's future development (i.e., access to abutting property, bypass for other streets, parking, etc.).	Potential to improve connectivity between the residential properties to the north of the proposed closure and Parkridge Medical Center to the south of the proposed closure for pedestrians and cyclists.
5. Type/condition of surface	ROWs are paved and in good condition.
6. Topography/grade – can it be built?	The existing topography does not preclude further improvement of these right-of-ways.
7. Will the closure and abandonment land-lock any property? If so, has a subdivision plat been submitted which eliminates this situation?	Adjacent properties will retain access off of East 5 th Street and Ivy Street.
8. Extenuating circumstances as specified by the applicant, e.g. necessary for expansion of a business or industry.	The applicant intends to consolidate various parcels.

City Departmental Infrastructure & Operational Comments

All land development projects are reviewed by City Engineering & Water Quality staff, Transportation Department staff, and the Land Development Office staff. In addition to the requirements of the City of Chattanooga Zoning Ordinance, all land development is further required to comply with current City of Chattanooga traffic regulations, building and development codes, storm water/water quality regulations, and the landscape ordinance.

RPA Summary

The Regional Planning Agency recommends approval of the proposed closure because adjacent properties will retain access off of East 5th Street and Ivy Street. North Lyerly Street and Derby Street can serve as suitable replacements for north-south auto circulation in the area. Although the Regional Planning Agency cannot recommend conditions to be placed on a mandatory referral case, staff recommends that the applicant maintain north-south connectivity for bicyclists and pedestrians in the block of the proposed closures.