



# Staff Report

Infill Housing Design Review Committee

File Number: 2-B-23-IH

**Meeting:** 2/15/2023  
**Applicant:** Nicholas Guess  
**Owner:** Nicholas Guess

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## Property Information

**Location:** 306 W. Churchwell Ave. **Parcel ID** 81 K L 001  
**Zoning:** RN-4 (General Residential Neighborhood)  
**District:** Oakwood/Lincoln Park Infill Housing Overlay District

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## Description of Work

Level III New Primary Structure

Two townhouse buildings, one containing three units and one containing four units. The two townhouses are oriented towards Worth Street, with rear surface and attached garage parking accessible via Churchwell Avenue. The townhouses are set 10' from the front (northeast) property line at the closest point and 3' from the left (northwest) side property line.

Two-story, Craftsman-style townhouses feature multiple projecting and recessed front-gable roof massings, with shed-roof porches and front gables on the first story. Townhouse massings are clad in alternating lap and board-and-batten siding, with roofs clad in asphalt shingles and foundations clad in brick veneer. Gable fields are clad in a shingle siding.

Primary entries on the façade feature metal shed roofs with engaged front-gable sections. Double-hung windows are relatively evenly spaced on the façade and side elevations. On the rear elevations, five units contain garage doors.

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## Applicable Design Guidelines

Heart of Knoxville Infill Housing Design Guidelines

### 1. Front Yards

- Consistent front yard space should be created along the street with the setback of a new house matching the older houses on the block.
- When several infill houses, porches and the habitable portion of each house should be about the same distance from the street as the original houses.
- A walkway should be provided from the sidewalk or street to the front door. Along grid streets, the walk should be perpendicular to the street.
- Healthy trees that are outside the building footprint should be preserved. The root area should be marked and protected during construction.

### 2. House Orientation and Side Yards

- New housing should be proportional to the dimensions of the lot and other houses on the block.
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- Side yard setbacks should be similar to older houses on the block, keeping the rhythm of spacing between houses consistent.

### 3. Alleys, Parking, and Services

- Parking should not be in front yards.
- Alley access should be used for garage or parking pad locations.
- On streets without alleys, garages or parking pads should be at least 20' behind the front façade of the infill house with access limited to one lane between the street and the front façade.
- On those streets which have alleys, driveways should not be permitted from the front of the house.
- Alley oriented parking pads, garbage collection points, and utility boxes should be screened with a combination of landscaping and fencing.

### 4. Scale, Mass, and Foundation Height

- The front elevation should be designed to be similar in scale to the other houses along the street.
- The front façade of new houses should be about the same width as original houses on the block.
- If extensions or bays were typically part of the neighborhood's historic house design, such elements should be incorporated into infill housing.
- New foundations should be about the same height as the original houses in the neighborhood.
- If greater height is to be created (with new construction or an addition), that portion of the house should be located toward the side or rear of the property.

### 5. Porches and Stoops

- Porches should be part of the housing design in those neighborhoods where porches were commonplace.
- Porches should be proportional to original porches on the block, extending about 8-12' toward the street from the habitable portion of the house.
- Porches should extend into the front yard setback, if necessary, to maintain consistency with similarly sited porches along the street.
- Porch posts and railings should be like those used in the historic era of the neighborhood's development.

### 6. Windows and Doors

- When constructing new houses, the windows and door styles should be similar to the original or historic houses on the block.
- To respect the privacy of adjacent properties, consider the placement of side windows and doors.
- The windows and doors on the front façade of an infill house should be located in similar proportion and position as the original houses on the block.
- Attention should be paid to window placement and the ratio of solid (the wall) to void (the window and door openings).
- Contemporary windows such as "picture windows" should not be used in pre-World War II neighborhoods.

### 7. Roof Shapes and Materials

- New roofs should be designed to have a similar pitch to original housing on the block.
- More complex roofs, such as hipped roofs and dormers, should be part of new housing designs when such forms were historically used on the block.
- Darker shades of shingle were often used and should be chosen in roofing houses in Infill neighborhoods.

### 8. Siding Materials

- Clapboard-like materials should be used in constructing new housing where painted wood siding was traditionally used.
- Faced stone, vertical siding, and other non-historic materials should not be used in building new houses.

### 10. Multi-unit Housing

- Multi-unit housing (where permitted by zoning) should have similar front yard space to that of the traditional single-family houses along the street.
- In zoning districts where multi-unit housing is permitted, the height of the new housing should be similar to the original houses along the street.
- Multi-unit housing should be designed to continue the architectural rhythm of the block. In addition to the same "build-to line," porches, bays, and breaks in the front façade should be created to mimic the look of older homes when looking down the block. This should be done by dividing the building into separate sections that are proportionally similar to original houses on the block.
- Parking should be provided behind apartments with access from the alley.
- Landscaping, including shade trees should be planted in both the front and back yards.

#### 11. Landscape and Other Considerations

- One native or naturalized shade tree should be planted in the front and rear yards of infill lots with 25 feet or more in depth to front of house

## Comments

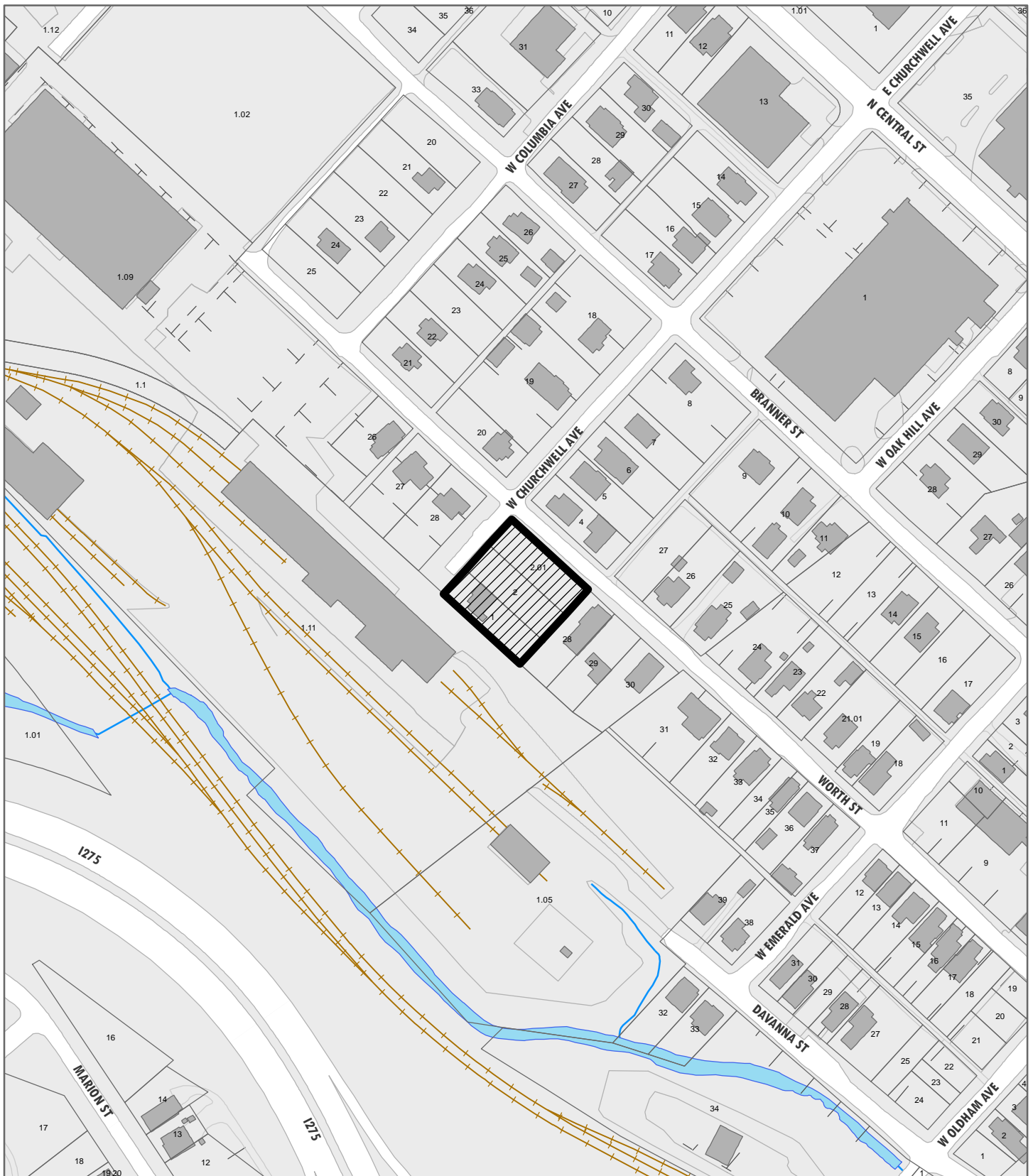
1. The new townhouses are proposed to be set 10' from the front property line at the closest point. The property meets the base zoning requirement for front setback as 10' or the average of the blockface (15.5'), whichever is less. The townhouses are proposed for a 3' side setback on Churchwell Ave; this reduction in the corner side setback can be approved by the DRB per 16.6.D.1. The reduced side setback allows the townhouses to be smaller in height (larger in width), and meet the guidelines of "on corner lots, side yard setbacks should be handled traditionally (that is, closer to the side street)."
2. The block is characterized by modified one-story Queen Anne cottages, Minimal Traditionals, and some infill construction. The parcels to receive new construction are located at the far west end of the Infill Housing overlay, adjacent to industrial development and the rail line. The proposed townhouses meet the stated purpose of the RN-4 zoning district; "applied to neighborhoods characterized by mixed residential development, or identified as areas where that development would be suitable in the future."
3. The guidelines for multi-unit housing note, "in places where multi-unit housing is permitted by zoning, it is essential to neighborhood stability that new apartment buildings be designed in scale and context with the early architectural features of the neighborhood." The proposed townhouses interpret the Craftsman style for seven units which are between 15' and 20' wide.
4. The proposed design uses "porches, bays, and breaks in the front façade" to "continue the architectural rhythm of the block." The individual townhouse units are "divided ... into separate sections that are proportionally similar to original houses on the block." Instead of W. Churchwell Ave, the townhouses will front Worth Street, continuing the pattern along the street.
5. The guidelines do recommend that "the height of new multi-unit housing should be similar to the original houses along the street." The block is characterized by one-story construction, though the lot would serve as a transition to industrial development to the west. The Board may choose to discuss the height.
6. The proposed parking meets Infill Housing design guidelines, located at the rear of the property and behind the new construction. The driveway is provided off the side street. City Engineering has noted multiple site plan items to address related to sidewalks and utility and drainage easements, which can be addressed during the platting process.
7. The front porches are generally compatible with front porches in Craftsman designs, though more shallow than the 8' front porches typically recommended for houses in the Infill Housing overlay.

8. The townhouses feature sufficient transparency via windows and doors on street-facing elevations. The applicant should select 1/1 double-hung or full 3/1 double-hung windows to be "similar to original houses on the block" in the Craftsman style.
  9. The townhouse roofs have comparable pitches to original houses on the block, and incorporate sufficient complexity. Minor modifications (such as shifting the first-story gable fields to better align with the massings below) may be necessary.
  10. The proposed materials meet the design guidelines. Lap siding with an overlap should be used instead of Dutch lap or flush panel siding on the horizontal-sided sections.
  11. Additional design review is required associated with the RN-4 zoning and the townhouse form, which will occur separately from the Infill Housing review. The applicant will be required to meet the base zoning for RN-4 and multi-family (townhouse) dwellings.
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## **Recommendation**

Staff recommends approval of Certificate 2-B-23-IH, subject to the following conditions:

- 1) Subdivision plat and final site plan to meet City Engineering standards, minor modifications which do not affect overall townhouse design could be approved by staff;
- 2) The use of 1/1 or 3/1 double-hung windows to better fit the historic context, and horizontal lap siding with an overlap instead of Dutch lap or flush panel siding;
- 3) Minor modifications to the façade roof massings as necessary, with approval by staff;
- 4) Final elevations and site plan to meet relevant standards of RN-4 zoning and townhouse use.



**2-B-23-IH**

**APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS**

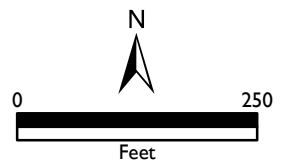
Applicant: Nicholas Guss

**INFILL  
HOUSING  
REVIEW  
BOARD**



306 W. Churchwell Ave.  
Oakwood/Lincoln Park Infill Housing Overlay  
District

Original Print Date: 1/31/2023  
Revised:  
Knoxville/Knox County Planning - Infill Housing Design Review Committee





# DESIGN REVIEW REQUEST

- DOWNTOWN DESIGN (DK)
- HISTORIC ZONING (H)
- INFILL HOUSING (IH)

*Nicholas Guess*  
Applicant

*1/19/2023*  
Date Filed

*2/15/2023*  
Meeting Date (if applicable)

*2-B-23-IH*  
File Number(s)

## CORRESPONDENCE

All correspondence related to this application should be directed to the approved contact listed below.

- Owner
- Contractor
- Engineer
- Architect/Landscape Architect

*Nicholas Guess*  
Name

Company

*410 Stone Villa Ln.*  
Address

*Knoxville*  
City

*TN*  
State

*37934*  
Zip

*865-566-3900*  
Phone

*nicholas.guess88@gmail.com*  
Email

## CURRENT PROPERTY INFO

Owner Name (if different from applicant)

Owner Address

Owner Phone

*0/304/306 W. Churchwell Ave / Worth St*

*081KL001, 081KL002, 081KL00201*

Property Address

Parcel ID

*RN4/IH*

Neighborhood

Zoning

## AUTHORIZATION

*Lindsay Crockett*  
Staff Signature

Lindsay Crockett  
Please Print

*1.19.23*  
Date

*Nicholas Guess*  
Applicant Signature

*Nicholas Guess*  
Please Print

*1/19/2023*  
Date

# REQUEST

DOWNTOWN DESIGN

**Level 1:**

- Signs     Alteration of an existing building/structure

**Level 2:**

- Addition to an existing building/structure

**Level 3:**

- Construction of new building/structure     Site design, parking, plazas, landscape

*See required Downtown Design attachment for more details.*

Brief description of work: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

HISTORIC ZONING

**Level 1:**

- Signs     Routine repair of siding, windows, roof, or other features, in-kind; Installation of gutters, storm windows/doors

**Level 2:**

- Major repair, removal, or replacement of architectural elements or materials     Additions and accessory structures

**Level 3:**

- Construction of a new primary building

**Level 4:**

- Relocation of a contributing structure     Demolition of a contributing structure

*See required Historic Zoning attachment for more details.*

Brief description of work: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

INFILL HOUSING

**Level 1:**

- Driveways, parking pads, access point, garages or similar facilities     Subdivisions

**Level 2:**

- Additions visible from the primary street     Changes to porches visible from the primary street

**Level 3:**

- New primary structure  
      Site built     Modular     Multi-Sectional

*See required Infill Housing attachment for more details.*

Brief description of work: Seven townhomes = One quadruplet. One triplex.  
Craftsman style. Built on slab w/ stem wall raising foundation to match  
existing homes in neighborhood

STAFF USE ONLY

**ATTACHMENTS**

- Downtown Design Checklist  
 Historic Zoning Design Checklist  
 Infill Housing Design Checklist

**ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

- Property Owners / Option Holders

**Level 1:** \$50 • **Level 2:** \$100 • **Level 3:** \$250 • **Level 4:** \$500

<b>FEE 1:</b>	500.00	<b>TOTAL:</b>  500.00
<b>FEE 2:</b>		
<b>FEE 3:</b>		

**Roof Shapes and Materials***Section 7, page 12*

- Proposed infill specifies similar pitch to existing houses on block.
- Proposed infill respects complex roof forms of historic blocks (refer to appendix).
- Proposed infill for a pre-1940 neighborhood specifies darker shades of shingle roofing.

**Siding Materials***Section 8, page 13*

- In a neighborhood dominated by painted wood siding, the proposed infill specifies clapboard or similar substitutes.
- In a neighborhood with mixed architectural styles, the proposed infill specifies appropriate material and detail.
- The proposed infill excludes faced stone, vertical siding, and other non-historic materials.

**Additions***Section 9, page 14*

- Proposed additions to existing houses respect siding and roof materials, as well as door and window styles original to the house.
- Proposed window or door replacements should respect original style (refer to Appendix C).
- Proposed additions are located to the side or rear of original house.
- Proposed additions which require additional height are located to the rear of the house.
- Specified roof line and roofing materials for proposed addition respect original house.
- Proposed addition does not violate openness or character of front porch.

**Multi-unit Housing***Section 10, page 15*

- Proposed multi-unit housing respects traditional front yard setbacks of neighborhood.
- Proposed multi-unit housing respects height of original houses in the neighborhood.
- Proposed multi-unit housing respects rhythm and proportion of historic homes on the block.
- Proposed parking for multi-unit housing accesses existing alleys.
- Proposed housing specifies landscaping to include shade trees, in front and back yards.

**Landscape and Other Considerations***Section 11, page 16*

- For proposed infill with 25 feet or greater front yard depth, at least one shade tree is specified for planting.
- Specified fencing and/or hedges will not exceed 42 inches in height in front yard.
- Front yard fences avoid chain link and specify appropriate historic material.

**Small Lot 1930-1950 Era Houses***Section 12, page 17*

- Off-street parking is located in the side or rear yard or parallel to the street.
- Multi-unit housing is in scale with other houses on the block and across the street.
- A porch or stoop is part of the design.
- Decks or patios are located behind the house.



## DESIGN GUIDELINES CHECK LIST

Use the following check list to determine the appropriateness of proposed infill housing design for the Heart of Knoxville. For each unchecked item, please refer to the appropriate Heart of Knoxville Infill Housing Design Guidelines section.

### Front Yards

#### Section 1, page 5

- Setback and front door are in line and consistent with original houses on the block.
- Porch and habitable portion of house is offset from street equal to neighboring houses.
- Walkway is proposed from sidewalk (when available) to front door, perpendicular to street.
- Fencing is constructed of traditional materials and excludes chain link, masonry, wide boards, and other contemporary materials.
- Healthy trees are marked for preservation.

### House Orientation and Side Yards

#### Section 2, page 6

- Proposed infill is proportional to dimensions of lot and original houses on the block.
- Proposed infill on corner lots has applied for any necessary zoning variance to locate closer to side street.
- Proposed infill keeps the spacing between houses consistent with original houses on the block.

### Alleys, Parking, and Services

#### Section 3, page 7

- Proposed parking avoids the front yard.
- Proposed infill house has access from alley only (where available) for garage or parking pad. (If no alley access exists, proposed garage or parking pad extends 20 feet beyond the front façade of proposed infill house.)
- Proposed garages accessed by alley are setback at least 18 feet from centerline of alley pavement.
- Proposed parking pads, utility boxes, and waste collection points are visually screened by landscaping and/or fencing.

### Scale, Mass, and Foundation Height

#### Section 4, page 8

- Proposed infill elevation is proportional in scale to the original houses on the block.
- Proposed infill façade respects width of older houses on the block.
- Proposed infill attempts to incorporate historic elements of the block into the design.
- Foundation height is consistent with original houses on the block.
- Additions that cannot conform to scale and height of streetscape are located to the side or rear of infill lot.

### Porches and Stoops

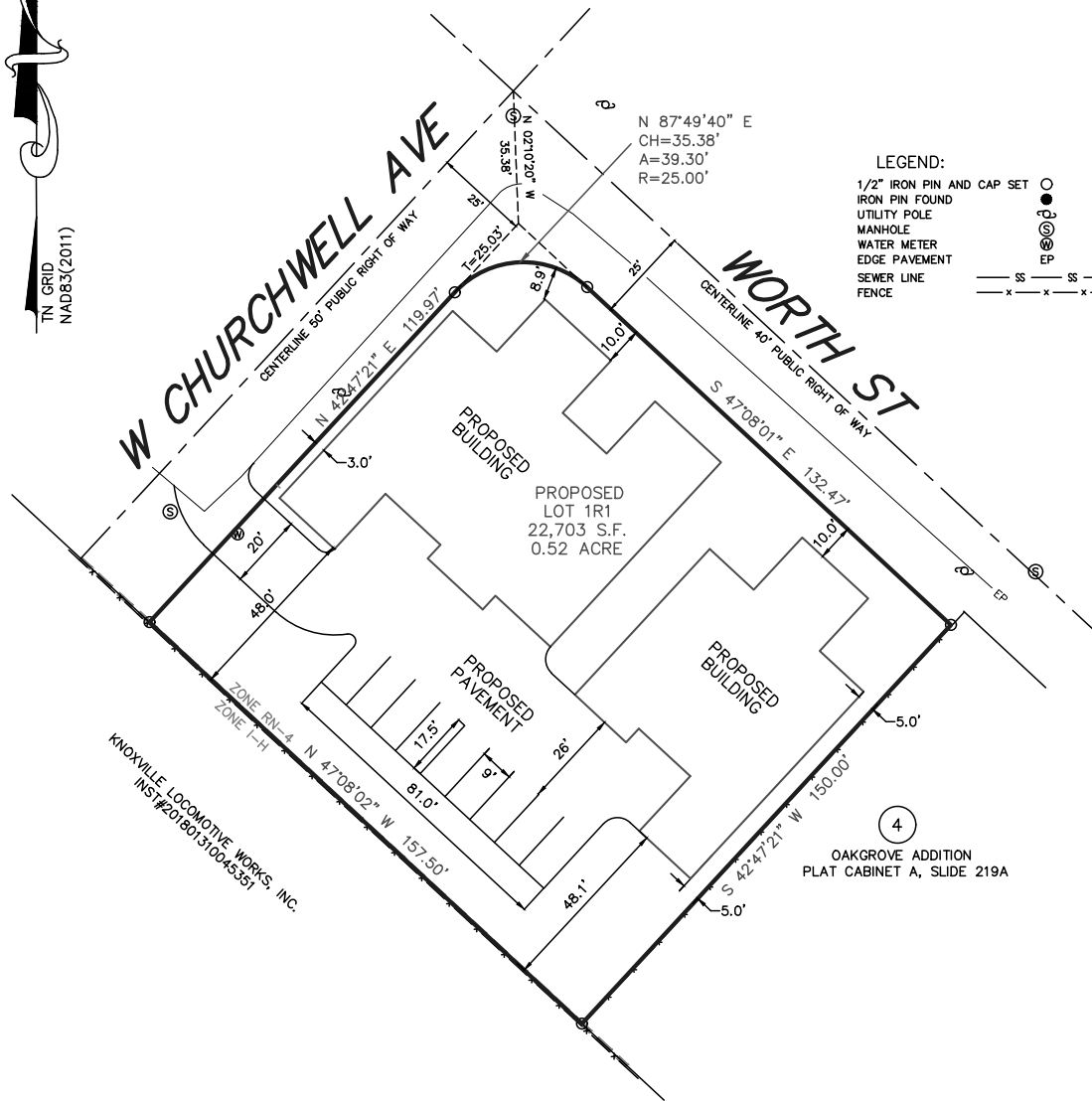
#### Section 5, page 9

- Proposed infill includes plans for a porch in a neighborhood where porches are dominant.
- Proposed porch is proportional to existing porches on block.
- Proposed porch maintains consistency with existing porches in setback along the street.
- Proposed porch materials and details complement the historic character and style of neighborhood (refer to Appendix C).

### Windows and Doors

#### Section 6, page 10

- Proposed window and door styles complement historic character and style of block (refer to appendix).
- Proposed window or door positioning does not violate the privacy of neighboring homes.
- Proposed infill excludes contemporary window styles in pre-1940 areas.
- Proposed infill respects window and door placement of older houses on the block.



- LEGEND:**
- 1/2" IRON PIN AND CAP SET ○
  - IRON PIN FOUND ●
  - UTILITY POLE Ⓟ
  - MANHOLE Ⓜ
  - WATER METER Ⓜ
  - EDGE PAVEMENT EP
  - SEWER LINE —S—S—
  - FENCE —x—x—x—



**PROPOSED SITE PLAN OF  
PROPOSED LOT 1R1  
RESUBDIVISION OF LOT 3, BLOCK H  
OAKGROVE ADDITION AND  
LOT 1R, RESUBDIVISION OF LOT 1 AND 2  
BLOCK H, OAKGROVE ADDITION**

OWNER: NICHOLAS GUESS  
TAX I.D. # 081 KL 001, 002 & 00201  
WARD 17, CITY BLOCK 17443  
CITY OF KNOXVILLE  
7TH CIVIL DISTRICT  
KNOX COUNTY, TENNESSEE

PLAT CABINET A, SLIDE 219A  
PLAT CABINET E, SLIDE 293D  
SCALE 1"=40'

**ACRE by ACRE SURVEYING**  
P.O. BOX 18435  
KNOXVILLE, TN. 37928-2435  
PHONE (865) 686-0696 DRAWING # 22173-SITE

