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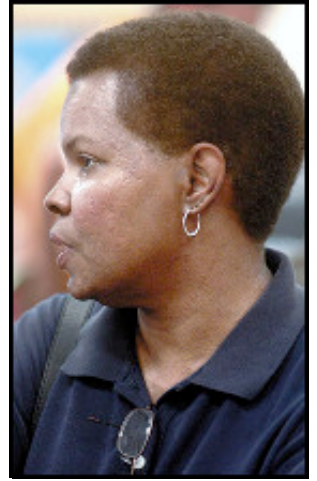
Last Parkway meet held

Residents coming to terms with possible destruction of dream homes as road is built

By **DON JACOBS**, jacobs@knews.com
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Kathy Beatty got her plans off the Internet and had her 1,500-square-foot dream home built in a quiet subdivision off Emory Road.

"I loved the area and the country feel," said the 52-year-old woman who works at the Y-12 nuclear weapons plant in Oak Ridge.



Beatty

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The brick, rancher-style home seemed perfect for Beatty and her 100-pound Rottweiler, Shukur. She closed on all the financing last September. Then she learned about the proposed Knoxville Parkway, formally called the Orange Route.

"If I had known about the Orange beltway, I would have looked somewhere else," Beatty said. "My real estate agent and my builder did not mention this road.

"It's really discouraging and frustrating. I thought I was getting my dream house."

Instead, Beatty's house in Emory Vista subdivision is located right alongside the 1,000-foot-wide corridor that eventually will contain a four-lane highway.

Beatty's story was repeated with slight variations Tuesday night as 317 people gathered at Karns Primary School to review maps of the proposed parkway corridor.

It was the last of four public input meetings before the 19-member Regional Parkway Design Resource Team begins assimilating people's comments. The design team is tasked with arriving at a final alignment for the 36.5-mile long state Route 475 by October 2005.

The parkway is designed to alleviate congestion along the co-mingled Interstate 75/40 that leads to downtown Knoxville. The parkway will begin at I-75 in Lenoir City and conclude at I-75 near Norris in Anderson County.

Tom and Angela Tallent are in even worse shape than Beatty. Thirty years ago Tom Tallent bought 14.2 acres off West Emory Road with hopes he one day would build his retirement home there. Six years ago he moved from Farragut after designing his 4,200-square-foot dream home.

"I put everything I wanted in it," the 60-year-old man said proudly.

Now the rancher-style home with two two-car garages, three decks and a man-made pond nearby are smack in the middle of the parkway corridor.

Jeanette Hamm moved to McHaffey Road in Anderson County in March from Arizona. She and her husband, Carl, have been renovating a doublewide trailer on 1.5 acres they bought last fall.

"The Realtor never let us know, and I think that's a shame," she said of the proposed parkway that will consume her property.

"But our mind has been put to ease that it's being handled very professionally," Hamm said after meeting with TDOT and design team representatives. "The road is needed. It's progress.

"What are you going to do, die from a stroke fighting it? If it happens, it happens."

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