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Five ways workplaces can think pink in October

Every person knows someone who has been affected by breast cancer. According to the World Health Organization, breast cancer is the leading cancer killer worldwide among working aged women. As nearly 47 percent of the U.S. workforce is female, many companies are recognizing that promoting and offering strategies for early detection of breast cancer can generate savings not only in medical costs, but also in lost productivity. This October and moving forward, strive to make breast cancer awareness a priority at your workplace by partaking in these approaches to support breast cancer awareness:

Offer mammograms: Help encourage early detection by increasing awareness and urging women to take part in breast cancer screenings. Offering mobile mammograms at your workplace can act as an efficient approach for early detection, while serving as a morale booster by showing your employees that you care. If you are a smaller worksite, post information about the nearest mammography event or information about self-breast exams. Mammograms in the workplace are becoming increasingly popular as employers recognize the cost of treating earlier stages of breast cancer is significantly less than treating late-stage breast cancer. A 2016 study found that the average patient costs allowed by insurance companies in the year after diagnosis between stages I/II versus stage IV breast cancer differed by \$52,561. As a result, employer insurance premiums would likely be positively affected by early detection.

Facilitate team events: Uniting for a cause in work events may serve as a team building approach. Add breast cancer awareness to the mix, and team building can find a new purpose. Take a stand with your co-workers to back breast cancer awareness by assigning a day as “wear pink day.” Encourage your employees to wear pink clothing in exchange for a voluntary donation toward breast cancer research. Another team building activity that can spark the inner competitive employee is to partake in a 5K run or walk for

the cause.

Promote healthy behaviors: Preventive efforts are strategic ways for employers to generate savings in health-related costs. It is well known that obesity is a serious health concern, serving as a risk factor for the onset and severity of many chronic diseases that plague Americans. According to the National Cancer Institute, obese postmenopausal women have a 20 to 40 percent increased risk of developing breast cancer than those of a healthy weight. Workplaces can help encourage healthy behaviors by partaking in worksite wellness efforts such as offering healthy vending, developing a policy to purchase only healthy foods with company funds, providing physical activity equipment and allowing employees to take walking meetings.

Support breastfeeding mothers: The risk of breast cancer decreases by almost 4 percent for every 12 months a mother breastfeeds. Since a supportive workplace can increase a woman’s likelihood to breastfeed, why not take steps to support breastfeeding mothers? Ways to do this include developing a policy to allow breastfeeding mothers to express milk during a paid break and creating a comfortable and private lactation room with a sink and freezer/refrigerator.

Be supportive: Returning to work can be a challenge for those undergoing treatment and for cancer survivors. Energy levels, emotional stress and even physical changes may limit work capacity. Also, sharing a cancer diagnosis with co-workers can be difficult and emotional. Though it is the law to provide reasonable accommodations for employees in this situation, a workplace can support employees by showing compassion, allowing flexibility in the work schedule and restructuring a position.

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Recode Knoxville demands attention

Big potential changes to Knoxville’s zoning code are on the horizon. Knoxville is exploring overhauling its existing zoning code in a process dubbed “Recode Knoxville.” Recode Knoxville’s current project timeline roughly extends through October 2018, with a first draft of a new code expected to be available by year’s end. The Knoxville City Council could vote on whether to adopt Recode Knoxville’s finished product as early as a year from now. Should the City Council vote to adopt, it will be the most significant change to Knoxville’s zoning code in over 50 years. In short, if you are involved in Knoxville’s real estate industry, Recode Knoxville is worth your attention.

Recode Knoxville has the potential to considerably expand the scope of permissible uses within Knoxville’s commercial corridors. Part of this will entail allowing residential uses in certain commercial zones. Other expected changes will likely include building setback and orientation regulations designed to promote walkability. Such changes, in fact, are already imminent. The Metropolitan Planning Commission recently recommended amending Knoxville’s zoning code to allow residential uses, subject to some conditions, in C-3 and C-6 commercial zones to enable more walkable, mixed-use development before Recode Knoxville’s completion.

Recode Knoxville presents an unparalleled opportunity for industry participants and citizens alike to shape Knoxville’s zoning regulations to reflect current and anticipated market demands for Knoxville real estate. When zoning regulations do not permit a use on a particular parcel for which a demand exists, the available solutions are: (1) seek to have the parcel rezoned from its current zoning classification to another zoning classification that allows the desired use; or (2) seek to amend the zoning classification affecting such parcel to allow the use within that classifi-

cation. Those solutions, though, are parcel-by-parcel and classification-by-classification processes, respectively. In contrast, Recode Knoxville could update zoning regulations on both a city-wide and classification-wide level. This opportunity does not arise every day.

If a landowner has been contemplating making a future rezoning request but has so far declined to do so, such landowner should seriously consider actively engaging in the Recode Knoxville process. This not only gives the landowner a voice in the Recode Knoxville process, but it could also preempt potential objections to future rezoning requests on the basis that the landowner should have raised such requests during the Recode Knoxville process.

Recode Knoxville has already started, but there is still ample time to observe and comment on the process. A simple but productive effort for landowners would be reviewing how each updated code draft regulates their specific parcels and noting whether such regulations comport with known market demands for those specific parcels. That could help a landowner evaluate whether, and to what extent, to offer comments on Recode Knoxville. Developers would also be well-served by similar efforts. I suggest bookmarking <http://recodeknoxville.com/> for easy access to observe and comment on the process.

If adopted, Recode Knoxville’s final product will affect local land use decisions for the foreseeable future. Do not sleep on it.

Richard Graves is an attorney practicing at Frantz, McConnell & Seymour, LLP in areas including real estate and land use law. This column is provided through the Knoxville Bar Association, your trusted source for lawyer referrals. The KBA is a non-profit corporation that offers community service programs such as the Lawyer Referral & Information Service, speakers’ bureau and public education programs.