



## METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY

Karl F. Dean  
Mayor

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
METROPOLITAN COURTHOUSE  
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37201

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### **Mayor Proposes Purchase of Ancient Native American Village Site** *Metro Plans to Turn Kellytown Land Into City Park*

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – Mayor Karl Dean’s administration has filed legislation to buy 6.72 acres of land at Hillsboro Road and Old Hickory Boulevard that once held a Native American settlement dating to the 1400s.

The site on the intersection’s southeast corner, known as “Kellytown” after a family that once owned the land, is now owned by Regency Realty Group Inc., a real estate investment trust. Friends of Kellytown, a nonprofit organization that has been working to save the property for more than a year, has raised \$400,000 in private funds, including \$100,000 from the City of Forest Hills.

“Not many people know that this corner of a very busy intersection was busy for a much different reason long before Christopher Columbus discovered America,” Mayor Dean said. “This site is a historical treasure, and it’s important that we save it. I am proud that we have a chance to turn this property into a city park. I want to say a special word of thanks to former Forest Hills Mayor Bill Coke and the Friends of Kellytown for their partnership in protecting such historically significant land.”

Under legislation filed with the Metro Council office late last week, the city would buy the land for \$740,000, using money set aside in Metro’s Open Space Fund for acquiring green space and protecting it from development. If the legislation is approved by the Metro Council on Dec. 16, the city will accept the \$400,000 raised by Friends of Kellytown as a contribution to help in the development of the park. Friends of Kellytown has agreed to continue raising money to help pay for park maintenance.

In the late 1990s, state archaeologists found the remains of 12 structures in one roughly 3,000-square-foot area alone. They also found a wood palisade with fortifications, the graves of seven indigenous people and dozens of artifacts, including cookware, earrings, tools and remains of food. The settlement was established and the artifacts were created between 1400 and 1450, radiocarbon dating indicated.

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“This is an exciting partnership between the city of Forest Hills, private donors and Metro Government to preserve a unique and historic site,” said former Forest Hills Mayor Bill Coke, who helped organize Friends of Kellytown and remains very active in its work. “We hope we can work with Metro Parks and others to develop the site as an educational place for people to learn about the Mississippian culture of the people who once lived on this land.”

The settlement was first discovered by the late state archaeologist Gary Barker when the Tennessee Department of Transportation started looking at building a turn lane at the intersection in the late 1990s. Regency Realty Group Inc. bought the land in 2002 with thoughts of developing it.

The site is within Davidson County’s boundaries, although it is close to Forest Hills, a satellite city inside the county. The property sits near the Little Harpeth River, close to the Williamson County border.

**Upcoming Event**

Mayor Dean, Mayor Coke, Friends of Kellytown and Metro Parks are planning a community celebration at the site on Monday, December 15, at 2 p.m. Parking will be available at Forest Hills Baptist Church, which is across Hillsboro Road from the site. The event is free and open to the public.

**B-Roll Opportunity**

Photographers or videographers who want to get B-roll footage of some of the artifacts that have been found at the site can go to Forest Hills City Hall, which has a permanent display of many items. The facility, located at 6400 Hillsboro Pike, is open between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. on weekdays.

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