

City Council Introduction: **Monday**, July 16, 2001
Public Hearing: **Monday**, July 23, 2001, at **1:30 p.m.**

Bill No. 01R-185

FACTSHEET

TITLE: **SPECIAL PERMIT NO. 286-I, an amendment to the SAINT ELIZABETH REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER**, requested by Kent Seacrest, to expand the hospital facility by renovating and remodeling the existing hospital facility; constructing a new medical office building and parking structure; and reconfiguring the surface parking lots, driveways and landscape materials, with request to modify the signage requirements, on property generally located at 70th & "L" Street.

SPONSOR: Planning Department

BOARD/COMMITTEE: Planning Commission
Public Hearing: 06/13/01
Administrative Action: 06/13/01

RECOMMENDATION: Conditional Approval, as revised by staff on 6/13/01 (6-0: Newman, Duvall, Carlson, Krieser, Taylor and Schwinn voting 'yes'; Hunter Bayer and Steward absent).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Conditional Approval, as revised on 6/13/01.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

1. The Planning staff recommendation of conditional approval is based upon the "Analysis" as set forth on p.4-6, concluding that the proposed expansion and addition to the Saint Elizabeth Hospital comply with the requirements in Section 27.63.080 of the Zoning Ordinance for health care facilities. Section 27.69.260 regulates all applications concerning signage in health care facilities in Lincoln. The applicant did not provide reasons for modifying the regulations. While the addition of the building signage is justified as identification for the new structures, there are no special circumstances for the main entry sign and the primary directional signs to exceed the maximum area and height requirement. Thus, the Planning staff recommends approval of the additional building signage, but denial of the increase in the size and height of the main entry identification sign and the primary directional signs. (See staff recommendation on p.6-7).
2. The applicant's testimony is found on p.10-11. The applicant submitted a motion to amend Condition No. 2.5 to allow the increase in the size and height of the primary directional signs and main entry identification sign (See p. 29; also see Minutes, p.11).
3. There was no testimony in opposition.
4. The Planning Commission discussion is found on p.12-13. The Planning Commission sought clarification that Public Works was satisfied with the traffic study and road improvements.
5. On June 13, 2001, the Planning Commission voted 6-0 to agree with the staff recommendation of conditional approval, as revised on June 13, 2001. A motion to amend approving the applicant's proposed amendment to Condition #2.5 (p.029) failed 3-3 (Duvall, Krieser and Taylor voting 'yes'; Newman, Carlson and Schwinn voting 'no').
6. The Site Specific conditions of approval required to be completed prior to scheduling this application on the Council agenda have been submitted by the applicant and approved by the reviewing departments.

FACTSHEET PREPARED BY: Jean L. Walker

DATE: July 9, 2001

REVIEWED BY: _____

DATE: July 9, 2001

REFERENCE NUMBER: FS\CC\FSSP286I

LINCOLN CITY/LANCASTER COUNTY PLANNING STAFF REPORT

P.A.S.#: Special Permit No. 286-I, Saint Elizabeth Regional Medical Center

DATE: June 1, 2001

****As Revised by Staff and Approved by Planning Commission, 6/13/01****

PROPOSAL: Kent Seacrest, on behalf of Saint Elizabeth Regional Medical Center, is applying for a special permit for the expansion of hospital facility, renovation and remodeling of present hospital facility, construction of new medical office building, parking structure, and reconfiguration of surface parking lots, driveways, and Landscape materials with modifications on the signage requirements on property generally located at 70th and L Street.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

CONTACT: Kent Seacrest
1111 Lincoln Mall, Suite 350
Lincoln, NE 68508
435-6000

APPLICANT: Saint Elizabeth Regional Medical Center
555 S. 70th Street
Lincoln, NE 68510
489-7191

LOCATION: West of South 70th Street between "L" Street and North of South Wedgewood Drive.

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: Lot 1, Saint Elizabeth Regional Medical Center

EXISTING ZONING: R-1 Residential and R-3 Residential

SIZE: Approximately 27.55 acres

EXISTING LAND USE: Health care facility

SURROUNDING LAND USE AND ZONING:

To the north across "L" Street is commercial zoned B-1, O-2, & O-3; to the east across South 70th Street is the Veteran's Hospital zoned P and single family zoned R-1; to the south residential zoned R-3; to the west residential and special permit of elderly housing, zoned R-1, R-3, and P.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN SPECIFICATIONS: The Land Use Plan shows the area as Public and Semi-Public and including Wetland and Water Bodies, and Natural/Environmentally Sensitive areas.

The following are quotes from pages 167 and 171:

D. Public Safety and Health Services

Goals

! *Provide and advocate for quality, affordable and accessible public safety, health and human services for every person in the entire community, and recognize that these services must be a high priority to enhance our quality of life.*

Public safety and health services are critical to the well-being of the community. Facilities to house these services must be properly located, distributed and equipped.

3. Health Services

Goals

! *Actively encourage the prevention of disease, disability, premature death, property loss, and social dysfunctions in order to enhance the quality of life.*

! *Develop Lincoln as the center for a network of regional health care services.*

Lincoln and Lancaster County are served by three hospitals and the Veteran's Administration Medical Center. Minor emergency medical services are also provided at several private facilities dispersed through the community. Emergency medical transportation services are provided through a combination of private and public providers. There are also a number of other specialized health care facilities, such as nursing homes, rehabilitation centers, and retirement centers.

The Health Care Industry is very important to the economy and well-being of the community. The expansion of the industry can be anticipated during the planning period. However, the expansion of major health care institutions in the developed areas of the community will have an impact upon abutting neighbors of the property. Health care institutions are encouraged to reduce the impacts of planned expansion on the neighborhood and the community as a whole; to notify neighbors and the community about long range institutional plans; and to coordinate long range institutional plans with the long range land use and capital improvement plans of the city.

HISTORY:

On **July 20, 1964**, Special Permit 286 approved the construction of the hospital.

On **July of 1975**, Special Permit #286-A was approved to amended the plan.

On **October 6, 1986**, Special Permit #286-B approved an addition including one-day surgery, outpatient, emergency unit, burn unit, additional parking and relocation of heliport.

On **July 20, 1987**, Special Permit #286-C approved an increase of the outpatient area, storage, and parking.

On **June 13, 1990**, Special Permit #286-D approved an increase in the number of parking spaces by 180.

On **October 3, 1990**, Special Permit #286-E approved an increase in intensive care patient

rooms and nursing support areas.

On **January 9, 1991**, Special Permit #286-F approved 5,300 square feet of storage.

On **September 9, 1999**, Special Permit #286-G approved a 19,558 sq. ft. medical clinic.

In **June, 1999**, Special Permit #286-H amending the campus signage was approved by the Planning Commission. The site specific conditions are not completed to be scheduled on the City Council agenda.

ANALYSIS:

1. This is a request for a special permit to expand the existing Saint Elizabeth Hospital complex, including hospital building with an increase of 81 beds, medical office building, parking structures, and the power plant.
2. The applicant requests the following modifications on Section 27.69.260 of the Zoning Ordinance relating to signs:
 - a. An increase in the size and height of the main entry identification sign (illuminated monument) from 80 square feet to 120 square feet and a maximum height of up to 10 feet above the curb line;
 - b. An increase in size and height of the primary directional sign (illuminated monument) on the northwest and northeast corner of the campus from 50 square feet to 80 square feet and a maximum height of up to 10 feet above the curb line.
 - c. The addition of a new primary directional sign (illuminated monument) on the southeast corner of the campus for 80 square feet and a maximum height of up to 10 feet above the curb line.
 - d. Additional building signage (illuminated) on six building sites: 3 on the parking garage, 1 on the medical office building, and 2 on the hospital building. Each will be a maximum of 22.5 square feet.
3. According to Section 27.69.260 of the Zoning Ordinance:
 - a. The sign plan shall be designed to minimize adverse impact on surrounding properties.
 - b. Any signs proposed in the required yards shall be approved as part of the landscape plan.
 - c. No pole signs are allowed.
 - d. No ground sign shall exceed 8 feet in height or 50 square feet in area if on a major street 6 feet in height and 32 sq. ft. on any other street.

- e. Signs shall have no exposed illumination, except one “emergency” sign may have direct lighting.
- f. All wall signs over 50 sq. ft. shall be approved in the permit.

The City Council may modify c, d, e, and f.

- 4. The applicant did not provide explanations for the request of modifications.
- 5. S. 70th Street is a major street. Wedgewood Drive and ‘L’ Street are not.
- 6. The proposed six building signs are located near the proposed new structures, and are at least 100' away from the property line.
- 7. Parking:

Based on the number of employees, beds, and floor area of the medical offices, the minimum number of parking spaces required by the Zoning Ordinances is 1,419 stalls. The plan shows 1,709 parking stalls. A consultant hired by the applicant recommends that there be at least 1,703 parking spaces provided.

- 8. Building Heights:

The building must setback from the yard line one foot per one foot above 20' in height. The elevation drawing indicates that the setback requirement is met. The parking structure is 47.5' in height and is setback 99.6' from the west property line. The proposed new medical office building is 78.3' in height and is setback 420' from the west property line. The hospital addition is 105.3' in height and is setback 515' from S. 70th Street.

- 9. Building Coverage:

The Zoning Ordinance restrict the building coverage to 35% of the land areas. The building coverage is 24.8%.

- 10. Location:

The Zoning Ordinance indicates that hospitals shall be located next to a major street. The new parking structure and new tower are adjacent to S. 70th Street and L Street. S. 70th Street is classified as a urban/rural minor arterial.

- 11. Off-site parking during construction:

The applicant will provide information on off-site parking arrangement prior to the Planning Commission meeting.

12. Landscaping:

Additional information is required to evaluate whether the proposed landscape plan meets the City of Lincoln Design Standards.

13. Comments from Public Works and Utilities Department and Parks and Recreation Department have not been received at this time.

14. The number of employee provided in the parking study does not match the number provided on the drawing. The number shall be updated.

15. Scotch Pine is susceptible to Pine Wilt disease and shall be removed from the proposed plant material. Contact Parks and Recreation Department for a suitable substitute.

CONCLUSION:

The proposed expansion and addition to the Saint Elizabeth Hospital comply with the requirements in Section 27.63.080 of the Zoning Ordinance for health care facilities.

Section 27.69.260 regulates all applications concerning signage in health care facilities in Lincoln. The applicant did not provide reasons for modifying the regulations. While the addition of the building signage are justified as identification for the new structures, there are no special circumstances for the main entry sign and the primary directional signs to exceed the maximum area and height requirement.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Conditional approval

Approval of the following modification:

Additional building signage (illuminated) on six building sites: 3 on the parking garage, 1 on the medical office building, and 2 on the hospital building, with a maximum of 22.5 square feet in area;

The addition of a new primary directional sign on the southeast corner of the campus. The area and height shall be as permitted in Section 27.69.260 of the Zoning Ordinance.

Denial on the following request for modifications:

An increase in the size and height of the main entry identification sign (illuminated monument) from 80 square feet to 120 square feet and a maximum height of up to 10 feet above the curb line;

An increase in size and height of the primary directional sign (illuminated monument) on the northwest and northeast corner of the campus from 50 square feet to 80 square feet and a maximum height of up to 10 feet above the curb line;

The addition of a new primary directional sign (illuminated monument) on the southeast corner of the campus for 80 square feet and a maximum height of up to 10 feet above the curb line.

CONDITIONS:

Site Specific:

1. After the applicant completes the following instructions and submits the documents and plans to the Planning Department office and the plans are found to be acceptable, the application will be scheduled on the City Council's agenda:
 - 1.1 Revise the site plan to show:
 - 1.1.1 The number of employee at the largest shift on the site plan.
 - 1.1.2 The square footage of the proposed power plant expansion in the Building Coverage calculation.
 - 1.1.3 The updated Building Coverage table.
 - 1.1.4 Existing Zoning as R-1 and R-3 in Note No. 5.
 - 1.1.5 "South" 70th Street instead of "West."
 - 1.1.6 30' building setback along 'L' Street.
 - 1.1.7 A note stating "Any relocation of existing facility will be at the owner/developer's expense," and indicate the number of parking spaces in each parking lot.
 - 1.1.8 The area south of 'L' Street, north of the existing hospital, and west of the power plant as "existing parking."
 - 1.1.9 Updated number of employee on the site plan.
 - 1.1.10 Revisions to the satisfaction of Public Works and Utilities Department.
 - 1.1.11 Locate the helicopter pad.
 - 1.1.12 Remove the Planning Commission Approval Block.
 - 1.1.13 Remove Note 12.
 - 1.1.14 All signs including sign area and height and the distance to the property lines.
 - 1.1.15 Indicate the method of illuminating the signs.
 - 1.2 Revise the landscape plan to show:

- 1.2.1 A plant material list including the common name, botanical name, quantity, size, design spread, and the method of handling of both existing and new plants.
- 1.2.2 An approved substitute species for Scotch Pine on the Landscape Plan.
- 1.2.3 Revisions to the satisfaction of Parks and Recreation Department.
- 1.2.4 Distinction between the existing and proposed signs.
- 1.2.5 Dimensions and setback distances of the signs along the frontage.
- 1.2.6 Foundation planting around the ground signs.

1.3 Provide sufficient drainage information to the Public Works and Utilities Department showing that this project does not cause potential flood problems for the apartments. (**As revised by staff on 6/13/01**)

2. This approval permits:

- 2.1 A expansion of the facility to a total of 252 beds.
- 2.2 A new medical office building with a total of 110,000 square feet in floor area.
- 2.3 A new parking structure.
- 2.4 A 5,000 square-foot expansion of the power plant.
- 2.5 Modifications to allow:

The addition of a new primary directional sign on the southeast corner of the campus. The area and height shall be as permitted in Section 27.69.260 of the Zoning Ordinance.

Additional building signage (illuminated) on six building sites: 3 on the parking garage, 1 on the medical office building, and 2 on the hospital building. Each will be a maximum of 22.5 square feet.

General:

3. Before receiving building permits:

- 3.1 The permittee shall have submitted a revised final plan including 5 copies and the plans are acceptable.
- 3.2 The construction plans shall comply with the approved plans.
- 3.3 The applicant has received an Executive Order guaranteeing the required improvements. (**As revised by staff on 6/13/01**)

STANDARD CONDITIONS:

4. The following conditions are applicable to all requests:
 - 4.1 All development and construction is to comply with the approved plans.
 - 4.2 All privately-owned improvements, including landscaping are to be permanently maintained by the owner.
 - 4.3 The site plan accompanying this permit shall be the basis for all interpretations of setbacks, yards, locations of buildings, location of parking and circulation elements, and similar matters.
 - 4.4 This resolution's terms, conditions, and requirements bind and obligate the permittee, its successors and assigns.
 - 4.5 The City Clerk is to file a copy of the resolution approving the permit and the letter of acceptance with the Register of Deeds. The Permittee is to pay the recording fee.
 - 4.6 The site plan as approved with this resolution voids and supersedes all previously approved sign plans, however all resolutions approving previous permits remain in force unless specifically amended by this resolution.

Prepared by

Ching-Yun Liang
Planner

Jason Reynolds
Planner

SPECIAL PERMIT NO. 286I, TO EXPAND THE SAINT ELIZABETH REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE PLANNING COMMISSION:

June 13, 2001

Members present: Newman, Duvall, Carlson, Krieser, Taylor and Schwinn; Bayer, Hunter and Steward absent.

Planning staff recommendation: Conditional approval.

Kay Liang of Planning staff submitted comments received from the Public Works, Health and Parks Departments. She also revised the staff recommendation to add Condition #1.3 and #3.3 in response to the additional staff comments.

Proponents

1. Bob Lanik, President of **St. Elizabeth Regional Medical Center**, presented the application. St. Elizabeth was Lincoln's first hospital and has been at this current site for 30 years. Lanik has been with the hospital for 26 years and has seen and experienced the changes in the community, neighborhood and hospital.

St. Elizabeth is now at a critical juncture where a major reinvestment and creation of facilities is needed for the health care organization to be successful and to successfully meet the community's needs. The Lincoln community is growing and the population is aging. In addition, there has been a lot of change in technology and service in the delivery of health care. In the three-year period between 1997-2000, St. Elizabeth has experienced significant changes and demands for increased capacity. Adult and pediatric admissions went up 28%; births have gone up 22%; radiology exams increased 94%; and emergency visits are up 16%. St. Elizabeth is constantly short of emergency rooms, beds and examination and treatment rooms. They are currently rotating the emergency beds with BryanLGH. For St. Elizabeth to continue to be successful and serve the community, they do need to expand and renovate. This is important for recruiting doctors and maintaining technology.

Lanik went on to state that St. Elizabeth has been involved in an extensive planning process for the last two years. This is a very significant undertaking and they want to take full advantage and make the most of opportunities. St. Elizabeth conducted a national search for consultants, advisors and architects to help with this project. The goal is to have a very functional hospital that meets the needs of the community in terms of efficiency and capacity. But beyond that, St. Elizabeth wants a great looking project.

Lanik advised that with regard to temporary parking during construction, the plan is to relocate employees off the campus and shuttle them back and forth, leaving what parking is available on the site for patients, visitors and physicians. They also have a contract with the Veterans Hospital

to lease 150 spaces. They are also in final discussions with LPS to potentially pave a parking lot on the Lincoln East campus west of Seacrest Field. Another contingency plan is potential leased spaces from a nearby church.

2. Kent Seacrest explained the specifics of the proposal: A new six-story tower; extensive renovation and remodeling of the present hospital; 110,000 sq. ft. medical office building; 1200 stall parking garage; expansion of the energy plant; and reconfiguration of the driveway patterns.

St. Elizabeth had a series of neighborhood meetings in January with 25 (out of 600 invited) attending. They met again in May with 5 in attendance. Basically, the two significant issues raised by the neighbors were traffic and the parking garage location. Schemmer and Associates did a traffic study and recommended approval, and Seacrest believes that Public Works has accepted those off-site road improvements. The neighbors would like to see the parking garage moved to the north side. This option was evaluated and it was concluded that it was not feasible because the parking garage needs to be at the front door of the hospital and the office building. Putting it to the north would cause the need to reorient the hospital. They were also afraid there would be too many cars going out onto "L" Street if the parking garage were on the north side.

Seacrest submitted proposed amendments to Condition #2.5 regarding signage. This is the only disagreement the applicant has with the staff. The applicant has proposed additional and larger signs at the southeast corner, the front door, the northeast corner and in the northwest corner. This is not a grocery store or gas and convenience facility—this is a hospital. Emergency issues can be stressful and trying to find a hospital entrance and emergency room is important. Seacrest contends that the signage is a public-health-safety issue. 70th Street is a fast street and under ADA standards, studies have shown that the lettering on the signs needs to be 5" to see it going at that rate of speed. This signage has to be seen by every age group. A lot of our patients aren't necessarily young anymore and the vision is not as good as it used to be. In general, the proposed amendment seeks an increase in the signage from 50' to 80' and in one case from 50' to 120'. We want to do something more special to identify the sign architecturally.

Newman inquired whether the entire name of the hospital will be written on the signs as opposed to "Hospital". Seacrest believes it will be the name of the organization and the parent company's name. They also envision using the street address. There is no intent to advertise any specialties, but purely for information and routes to the emergency room.

Seacrest did not have a picture of the proposed sign. Carlson asked if the signs would flash, rotate or blink. The architect explained that the sign is not connective and has no moving parts. Illumination establishes the location of the sign. The signage is conceptual at this point and he did not know whether the illumination would be internal or external.

Carlson asked how increasing the square footage but keeping the message constant makes the lettering bigger. Seacrest explained that if they are required to stay within the allowed sign size, they would have to shrink the message to allow the architectural treatment. Carlson would prefer to see a mock-up of the sign.

There was no testimony in opposition.

Staff questions

Ray Hill of Planning staff clarified that the sign code allows a maximum square footage of 50' along major streets with a maximum height of 8'. The request is from 50' to 120'.

Carlson inquired whether the Public Works comments are incorporated into the conditions of approval and whether Public Works has comments on the applicant's traffic study. Dennis Bartels of Public Works stated that the applicant is making improvements to offset the additional trips on 70th. The main traffic handling entrance would be moved to line up with Edgewood Drive and then that intersection would be signalized. The neighbors east of 70th have asked for this signalization previously. One lane on the east side of 70th Street in Wedgewood will be widened. The existing Wedgewood Drive is 27' wide. The traffic study acknowledged impacts at the 70th & A intersection and the improvements proposed would be an additional right turn lane for south bound 70th Street, west bound to "A" Street; a right turn lane is identified westbound on "A" Street at the intersection with 70th. There might be some minor right-of-way impacts. Bartels is requiring the applicant to identify specifically what improvements it might make at 70th and Wedgewood. The nature of the design of the campus with the parking garage and improvements focuses most of the additional traffic on 70th Street.

Schwinn asked whether Public Works foresees deceleration or acceleration lanes on the east side of 70th, or will most of the impact be on the west side? Bartels concurred that most of the traffic impact will be on the west side. There may be a right turn lane identified at Wedgewood. The impact study did not show anything on the east side of 70th Street.

Carlson asked Bartels whether he is satisfied that those improvements will be sufficient to maintain the current level of service. Bartels responded, "yes".

Public hearing was closed.

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION:

June 13, 2001

Carlson moved to approve the Planning staff recommendation of conditional approval, as revised adding Conditions #1.3 and #3.3, seconded by Newman.

Duvall moved to amend to revise Condition #2.5 as requested by the applicant regarding the signage, seconded by Krieser.

Newman thinks this would result in a massive increase in signage. She would not have a problem with one larger sign at the main entrance but she does not think they need to increase the size at all four corners. She would prefer to allow one sign to be increased to 120' at the main entrance.

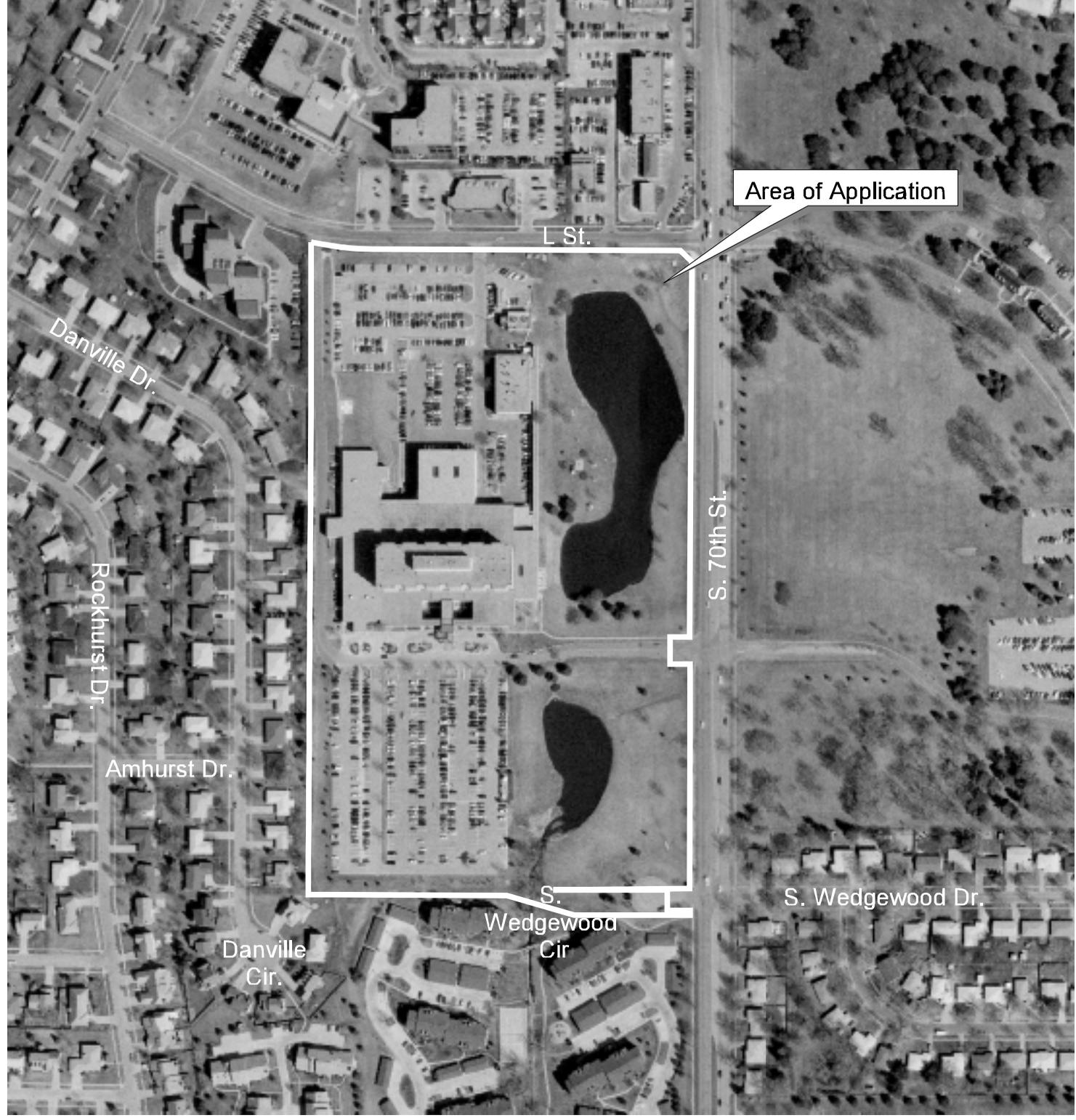
Carlson stated that he understands the argument for the signage but he would like to have seen it. The decision making process for him is whether the increase is necessary to get the trade-off. Motion to amend failed 3-3: Duvall, Krieser and Taylor voting 'yes'; Newman, Carlson and Schwinn voting 'no'.

Newman agreed that it would have been nice to have a visual. She is happy to leave it as is and let the City Council make the decision.

Further discussion on the main motion. Carlson applauded the applicant and Public Works for their work on the traffic studies and he is pleased with the information that was presented. It was clear what the impacts were and what improvements are necessary to mitigate those impacts. Carlson believes that the signage proposed could work, but he needs to see it in order to make that decision.

Newman thinks this is a wonderful testimony of working with the neighbors in that there is no opposition at this hearing.

Motion for conditional approval, as revised by staff, carried 6-0: Newman, Duvall, Carlson, Krieser, Taylor and Schwinn voting 'yes'; Hunter, Bayer and Steward absent.



Area of Application

L St.

Danville Dr.

Rockhurst Dr.

Amhurst Dr.

Danville Cir.

S. Wedgewood Cir

S. 70th St.

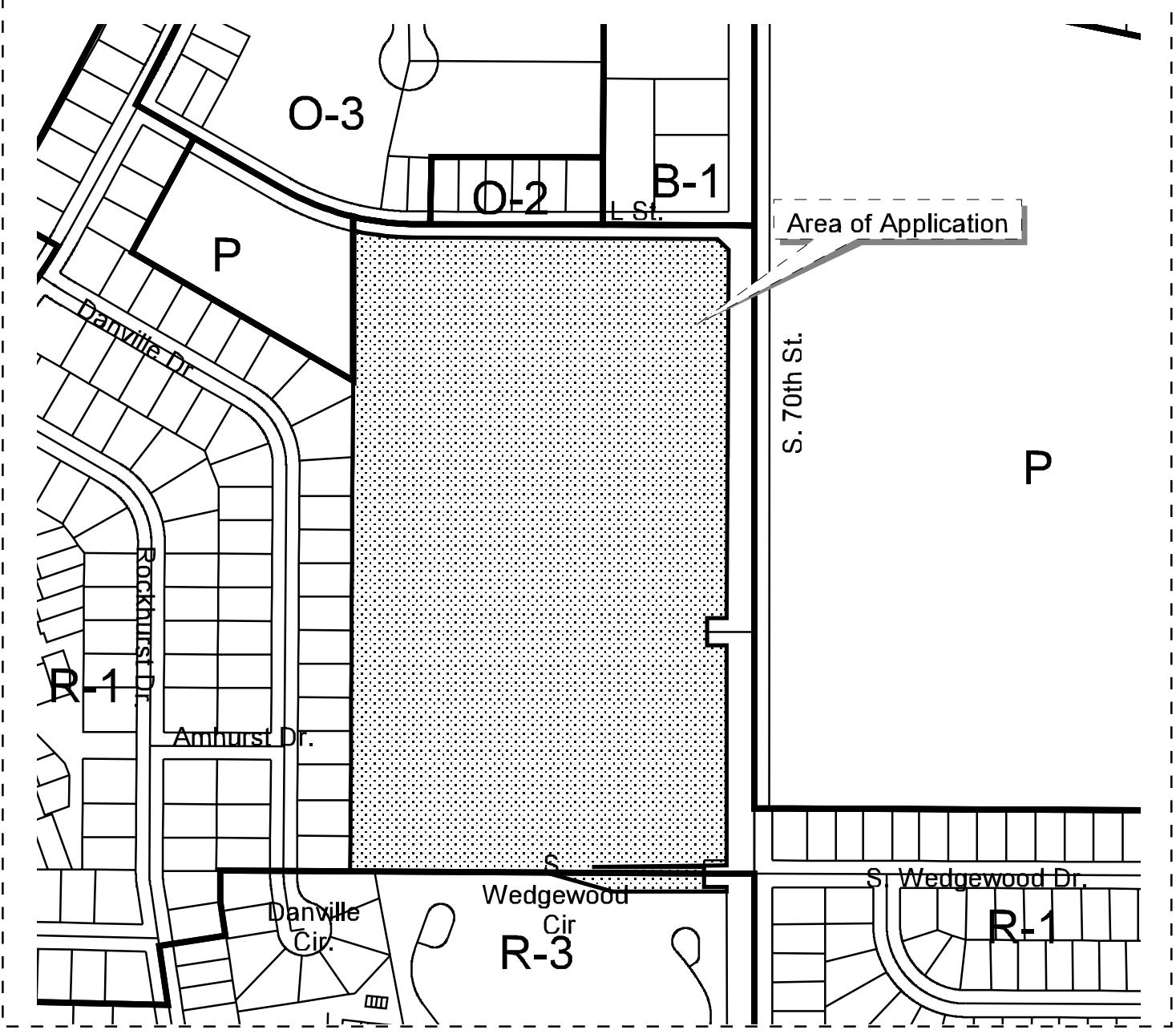
S. Wedgewood Dr.

Special Permit #2861
S. 70th & 'L' St.



Photograph Date: 1997

Lincoln City - Lancaster County Planning Dept.



Special Permit #2861
S. 70th & 'L' St.

Zoning:

- | | |
|------------|--|
| R-1 to R-8 | Residential District |
| AG | Agricultural District |
| AGR | Agricultural Residential District |
| R-C | Residential Conservation District |
| O-1 | Office District |
| O-2 | Suburban Office District |
| O-3 | Office Park District |
| R-T | Residential Transition District |
| B-1 | Local Business District |
| B-2 | Planned Neighborhood Business District |
| B-3 | Commercial District |
| B-4 | Lincoln Center Business District |
| B-5 | Planned Regional Business District |
| H-1 | Interstate Commercial District |
| H-2 | Highway Business District |
| H-3 | Highway Commercial District |
| H-4 | General Commercial District |
| I-1 | Industrial District |
| I-2 | Industrial Park District |
| I-3 | Employment Center District |
| P | Public Use District |

One Square Mile
 Sec. 28 T10N R7E

