IN LIEU OF
DIRECTORS' MEETING
NOVEMBER 28, 2011

I. CITY CLERK

II. MAYOR

1. NEWS RELEASE. Save with StarTran Holiday Sale.

III. DIRECTORS

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

1. Administrative Amendments approved by the Planning Director from November 15, 2011 through November 21, 2011.

IV. COUNCIL MEMBERS

V. MISCELLANEOUS

VI. CORRESPONDENCE FROM CITIZENS

1. Email from Alan Hersch opposed to raising the minimum efficiency on gas furnaces to 90%, listing reasons why the rule should stay with 80% efficiency.
2. InterLinc correspondence from Tim Rinne regarding his testimony on LES's proposed budget for the Sustainable Energy Program, with suggestions.
3. Correspondence from Robert Converse, retired service manager for a plumbing and heating company, giving reasons opposing requiring 90% efficient furnaces in all homes, as the requirement to disallow a proven product such as the 80% efficient furnace will create a hardships in some instances.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

PUBLIC WORKS AND UTILITIES DEPARTMENT
StarTran, 710 "J" Street, Lincoln, NE 68508, 402-441-7185, fax 402-441-7055

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: November 23, 2011
FOR MORE INFORMATION: Larry Worth, Transit Manager, 402-441-7185

SAVE WITH STARTRAN HOLIDAY SALE

StarTran is having a holiday sale on its 31-consecutive-day passes for those who subscribe to StarTran alerts and complete a brief online survey at startran.lincoln.ne.gov. The $45 passes are on sale for only $20, and the $90 Handi-Van eligible pass is on sale or $40 through Friday, Dec. 9.

"StarTran passes make great gifts for family, friends and neighbors, and we also encourage residents to consider buying passes to donate to an agency that helps others," said Larry Worth, StarTran Transit Manager. "By signing up for StarTran alerts, patrons will also receive notices of future StarTran promotions."

For more information, visit the website or call 402-476-1234.

- 30 -

Memorandum

Date: ✦ November 22, 2011

To: ✦ City Clerk

From: ✦ Teresa McKinstry, Planning Dept.

Re: ✦ Administrative Amendment approvals

cc: ✦ Jean Preister

This is a list of the Administrative Amendments that were approved by the Planning Director from November 15, 2011 thru November 21, 2011:

Administrative Amendment No. 11044 to Use Permit No. 123E, Landmark Corporate Center, approved by the Director on November 15, 2011, requested by Olsson Associates, to revise the boundary of the use permit to remove land recently rezoned R-5 and H-3 from Landmark Corporate Center, on property generally located at N. 33rd St. and Folkways Blvd.

Administrative Amendment No. 11056 to Special Permit No. 05054, Rambling Rose Acres Community Unit Plan, approved by the Director on November 16, 2011, requested by ESP, Inc. on behalf of Goings Homes, to revise the internal "build-thru" building envelope on Lot 1, Block 2 on property generally located at Highway 77 and Bennet Rd.

Administrative Amendment No. 11061 to Special Permit No. 1992A, Edenton Woods Community Unit Plan, approved by the Director on November 18, 2011, requested by Olsson Associates, to include an adjustment of the setbacks for Lot 16, Block 2 by adjusting the rear setback to 10 feet for decks and adjusting the front setback to 10 feet for that portion of the front lot line adjacent to the curve of the cul-de-sac bulb, on property generally located at Ashbrook Dr. and Highway 2.

Administrative Amendment No. 11059 to Use Permit No. 29A, approved by the Director on November 21, 2011, requested by Olsson Associates, to add parking stalls and increase in total allowed from 70,010 to 72,000 square feet on property generally located northwest of S. 40th St. and Old Cheney Rd.

City/County Planning Department
555 S. 10th Street, Rm. 213
Lincoln NE 68508
(402) 441-7491

Mary M. Meyer

From: Hersch, Alan [Alan.Hersch@blackhillscorp.com]
Sent: Monday, November 21, 2011 4:33 PM
To: Council Packet
Subject: Furnace rules

Importance: High

City Council members,

I recommend you do not raise the minimum efficiency on gas furnaces to 90%.

The cost of the 90+% furnace will be a hardship on moderate and lower income people. The difference in annual operating cost is small and not worth the added purchase cost. The EIA and others project natural gas prices to remain quite low for several years, because of soft industrial demand and robust domestic supplies.

Also, if a customer decides to change to an electric resistance furnace because of the cost of the higher efficiency gas furnace, their operating costs will be much higher, and increase at a faster rate (ask LES about their future rate increases because of gov't regs on coal, emissions, renewables, etc.).

Again, stay with 80% efficiency as a minimum. Thanks for your consideration.

Alan Hersch

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Mary M. Meyer

From: WebForm [none@lincoln.ne.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, November 22, 2011 10:55 AM
To: Council Packet
Subject: InterLinc: Council Feedback

InterLinc: City Council Feedback for
General Council

Name: Tim Rinne
Address: 605 N. 26th Street
City: Lincoln, NE 68503

Phone: 402-475-7616
Fax:
Email: walterinne@gmail.com

Comment or Question:
Dear Councilman Camp,

I'm the person who testified last yesterday evening on LES's proposed budget for its Sustainable Energy Program.

As you may recall, I mentioned that I hadn't planned on testifying and, being less prepared than I would have liked to have been, wasn't able to fully answer your follow-up questions.

On my return home last night, I immediately consulted my wife (who has always handled our household bills) and got a more authoritative understanding of our utility costs, both before and after the installation of the geothermal heating and cooling system in our 106-year-old home.

It turns out that the percentage of savings I cited in my testimony was accurate, but the utility cost totals (as you undoubtedly guessed) were mistaken.

Prior to installing our $25,000 geothermal system (which included drilling the wells, equipment and unit costs and labor), our household had been paying an average of $284 monthly for gas from Black Hills Energy and $56 per month for electricity from LES -- for a total of $340 (about half of what I think I told you last night at the hearing).

After the installation and conversion to an all-electric system, our utility costs dropped to $144 -- about a 58 percent reduction.

(My apologies for the erroneous totals I gave in response to your question, but the percentage -- and the point I was trying to make in terms of savings -- were, I believe, sound.)

You can't find a more conservative, fiscally prudent investment than energy efficiency. It reduces overall demand, both for businesses and homeowners, which in turn works to keep rates low for everybody. As the old saw goes, the cheapest kilowatt is the one you don't use.

An aggressive campaign to insulate and upgrade all the homes and businesses in the LES service area would work to the benefit of everyone, low-income people particularly. Across the country, there are programs currently in place that are working on achieving that very goal.

It would be my hope that LES starts seriously investigating these programs -- some of which are purely private (such as Energy Pioneer Solutions in Hastings, Nebraska). Retrofitting an entire service area is admittedly a massive financial undertaking, but there are financing tools and mechanisms out there that we in Lincoln could utilize to begin such an endeavor. And retrofitting homes and businesses is a huge job creator that employs a local workforce.

As I said last night, the option of 'going green' should not be limited to people with means. Low-income people and those on fixed incomes need sustainable energy even more than people like my wife and I, because they have difficulty paying their monthly utility bills.

Thank you... And again, my apologies for any confusion I created. (Fifty-six-year-old people, I thinking, really shouldn't speak in public without notes.)

Tim Rinne (and Katherine Walter)
605 N. 26th Street
Lincoln, NE 68503
402-475-7616 home
402-730-6675 cell for Tim

Mary M. Meyer

From: Rgconverse@aol.com
Sent: Tuesday, November 22, 2011 2:49 PM
To: Council Packet
Subject: HVAC code changes

Dear Council members,

My name is Robert Converse and I am a retired service manager for a Lincoln plumbing and heating company. I have been a lifelong resident of Lincoln and I listened with interest to the testimony presented at last nights city council meeting to limit all new furnaces to a minimum 90% efficiency. Several points that were briefly touched on or were not even mention need to be considered:

1. I noted that the task force recommending the change in code consisted of City inspection personnel, several heating contractors, and a Mechanical Engineer. What is missing from this task force was anyone representing the consumer or the one that has to pay for the added costs? In 2004, I sat on a Title 17 implementation committee representing consumers of back-flow prevention devices, and can attest how difficult it is for contractors to disagree with City inspection personnel as well as the water department. Since there is a great deal of money to be made with this code change, (Total cost times a markup percentage equals profit,) why not just take the added costs and agree to recommend this code change in the guise of public safety?
2. There was little discussion last night about the water heater? Most homes have a gas fired water heater and the flue gas from that water heater is connected into the larger flue pipe from the furnaces. If an existing 80% efficient furnace is converted to a 90% efficient furnace for safety reasons as explained by Merle Scott, the unsealed combustion chamber in the water heater will still exist. Unless all water heaters have a sealed combustion chamber, safety cannot be the primary reason for requiring the 90% efficient furnace.
3. If an existing home has a furnace room with an easy route to an outside wall, the plastic flue pipes can be installed fairly easy. But what if there is no easy access to a place on an outside wall that doesn't have a window within the minimum limits? Such as; town homes with no side walls, homes with the furnace room located by front porches? Many homes have limited access points because of electrical services, windows above, fireplaces and other utilities using all the available flue pipe penetration areas. The next option is to run the plastic pipes through the vertical pipe chase that contains the existing flue pipes. But with a gas fired water heater, the existing flue pipe must be maintained, and it suddenly becomes evident how expenses for a replacement furnace will mount.

   The next choice is to try to find room in a pipe shaft above the furnace for the two plastic pipes (3-1/2" diameter each, not including fittings.) Then if you are able to find a route to the attic, the flue pipe must be insulated and sealed as they pass through the attic space to above the roof. The purpose of the insulation is to prevent frost and ice buildup inside the pipe in the winter. My point is all installations are not simple and costs could be prohibitive.

The earth has limited resources and I believe each of us should do all we can to conserve as much as possible. The 90% efficient furnace can help in that aspect, but to disallow a proven product such as the 80% efficient furnace will create a hardship in some instances that have not been well thought out. Remember when the 1-1/2 gallon flush toilet was mandated? Seemed like a good idea at the time, but now most people just flush twice to make sure it works and keeps the sewer mains clear. Sometimes one size doesn't fit all.

Maybe the code can be written to require 90% efficient furnaces in all new construction but allow for a waiver to 80% efficient when costs exceed a certain point? In my opinion totally banning 80% efficient furnaces will cause an outcry from the public. There must be some middle ground?

I do not know the name of the young man that spoke in opposition to the 80% furnace ban, but it took a lot of courage to go against the wishes of the chief heating inspector and other people in his group of contractors. If I have a chance I will surely tell him so.

Please consider these points and listen to people that do not have a horse in this race. I am retired and have a perfectly good 10 year old 80% efficient furnace that I maintain to peak efficiency.

Sincerely,

Robert (Bob) Converse 402-890-7121 if you have any questions.
4729 S 85th Circle Lincoln, Nebraska 68526

Retired manager of Wentz Plumbing and Heating HVAC service department. 1990 to 2000 with many previous years in the construction industry.

P. S. I personally know Merle Scott and Jon Jackson and consider them friends.