
MEMORANDUM

TO: Lincoln City Council

FROM: Jean Preister, Planning

SUBJECT: Proposed Amendment to the Lincoln Center Redevelopment Plan
(Bill #12R-89 - Introduced on May 7, 2012)

DATE: May 7, 2012

CC: Mayor Beutler
David Landis, Urban Development
Hallie Salem, Urban Development
Brandon Garrett, Planning

The above-referenced amendment to the Lincoln Center Redevelopment Plan was heard by the Planning Commission on May 2, 2012, which was subsequent to the drafting and submittal of the Factsheet for Bill #12R-89, which had First Reading on the Council agenda on May 7, 2012. On May 2, 2012, the Planning Commission voted 7-0 to find the proposed amendment to the Lincoln Center Redevelopment Plan to be in conformance with the 2040 Lincoln-Lancaster County Comprehensive Plan (Comprehensive Plan Conformance No. 12003). The minutes are attached for your information and to supplement the Factsheet previously submitted.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions at 402-441-6365 or plan@lincoln.ne.gov.

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COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CONFORMANCE NO. 12003,
AMENDMENT TO THE LINCOLN CENTER REDEVELOPMENT
PLAN RELATING TO THE ENTERTAINMENT CENTER/OLD FEDERAL
BUILDING REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT.

PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE PLANNING COMMISSION:

May 2, 2012

Members present: Esseks, Hove, Lust, Sunderman, Butcher, Gaylor Baird and Francis; Cornelius and Weber absent.

Staff recommendation: A finding of conformance with the Comprehensive Plan.

There were no ex parte communications disclosed.

Staff presentation: **David Landis, Director of Urban Development**, presented the proposal. The Lincoln Center Redevelopment Plan was created in 1985, and was essentially a box from 7th Street to 17th Street and R Street to Q Street. 10 years later, the plan was amended to include a retail marketplace strategy as part of the City. In 2000, the Entertainment District and Old Federal Building Project, one of a number of areas inside this larger redevelopment plan area, was created. The area was also changed in 2007.

This project was originally done in 2000 and will come to an end in 2016. In 2005, the Downtown Master Plan was adopted, in which a specific area of the city was listed for a primary retail corridor and a secondary corridor. In 2005, the Downtown Master Plan identified again this retail strategy that has gotten more and more specific. The Downtown Master Plan was amended into the Comprehensive Plan as a subarea. In 2007, the Downtown Master Plan was incorporated into the Lincoln Center Redevelopment Plan, so all the work that we did in 2005, 2006 and 2007 was added to this 1985 Plan. In every step, we talk about retail. We have come today to suggest that in the event we can change the boundaries to include essentially the primary retail corridor as identified in the Downtown Master Plan, we will be able to do the kind of work in the city's right-of-way that will be consistent with that strategy. We would try to make the street more attractive as a retail center.

Landis showed pictures of "good" retail streets – sensitive about how you cross the streets; curbside streets with shorter walk; areas that are easy to shop and easy to walk. It would have a place for pedestrians, biking in the street, consistent lighting, and some green. Those would be the kinds of things we would like to get to, but we're not there. We need resources to make that kind of a change. This amendment will allow us to do that. Is there opportunity for retail success along this street? In the last two years, 25 businesses have opened up in the retail area along this primary corridor. Out of the 25 businesses that opened up, only seven of them are replacing a similar business that was there before, i.e. restaurants. 18 of them are not replacing pre-existing retail but are moving into new areas of opportunity.

Support

1. Terry Uland, President of the Downtown Lincoln Association, testified in support. The DLA board voted unanimously in support on April 25th. This amendment fits the Downtown Master Plan and the separate retail strategy that was put in place in 2007. The DLA is very enthusiastic that this could help move the retail and further that corridor.

2. Todd Ogden, Marketing Director for Downtown Lincoln Association, also testified in support. This fits in with the efforts to make everything more pedestrian and retail friendly. We want to enhance that area.

There was no testimony in opposition.

ACTION BY PLANNING COMMISSION:

May 2, 2012

Lust moved a finding of conformance with the Comprehensive Plan, seconded by Gaylor Baird.

Francis believes this is a great opportunity to keep building retail in the City of Lincoln.

Gaylor Baird explained that the Planning Commission did have a separate briefing on this proposal which might explain the minimal amount of question and answer. She suggested that some of the proposed design principles potentially allow for saving city resources during the winter, such as the low maintenance corners. It also cuts down on the number of curbs that become damaged that require city funds to repair. This is providing identity for the City and improves some of the landscaping, which is all consistent with the Downtown Master Plan. These are exciting changes.

Motion for finding of conformance carried 7-0: Esseks, Hove, Lust, Sunderman, Butcher, Gaylor Baird and Francis voting 'yes'; Cornelius and Weber absent.

This is a recommendation to the City Council.