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MEETING RECORD

NAME OF GROUP: PLANNING COMMISSION

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING: Wednesday, May 15, 2013, 1:00 p.m., Hearing Room 112 on the first floor of the County-City Building, 555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Leirion Gaylor Baird, Michael Cornelius, Tracy Corr, Chris Hove, Jeanelle Lust, Dennis Scheer and Ken Weber (Lynn Sunderman absent); Marvin Krout, Steve Henrichsen, Brian Will, Tom Cajka, Sara Hartzell, Mike Brienzo, Christy Eichorn, Paul Barnes, Dave Cary, Brandon Garrett, Ed Zimmer, Stacey Groshong Hageman, Teresa McKinstry and Michele Abendroth of the Planning Department; media and other interested citizens.

STATED PURPOSE OF MEETING: Regular Planning Commission Meeting

Chair Michael Cornelius called the meeting to order and acknowledged the posting of the Open Meetings Act in the back of the room.

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CONFORMANCE NO. 13002
TO REVIEW THE DRAFT FY2014-2017 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT
PROGRAM (TIP) FOR THE LINCOLN METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
(MPO) AS TO CONFORMANCE WITH THE MPO LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION
PLAN**

PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE PLANNING COMMISSION: **May 15, 2013**

Members present: Gaylor Baird, Cornelius, Corr, Hove, Lust, Scheer and Weber; Sunderman absent.

Staff recommendation: Conformance with the Comprehensive Plan.

There were no ex parte communications disclosed.

Staff presentation: **Mike Brienzo of Planning staff** explained that he is asking for comments and a recommendation to take to the Technical and Officials Committee. The projects are supported with federal funds. The document is financially constrained. Funding has been identified. Federal funding is attached at this time. Every project that takes federal funding will be referred to the Transportation Improvement Program. This is an implementation program. He is asking for review as to conformance. He received three public comments. All comments taken will become part of the document.

Lust was interested with page C2 that talks about sidewalk maintenance and repair. There was no specific analysis about funding. Brienzo answered that this is a reflection of the capital improvements for the City. Actual identification of repairs is taken up on a year to year basis. This is an ongoing program.

Lust stated that going through the Comprehensive Plan process, they were given a lot of information. She would like more information on how this is generally in conformance at that funding level. Brienzo replied this is a specific program for sidewalk maintenance. This doesn't reflect all the funds.

Lust stated as she understands it, only the current year is budgeted. Brienzo stated that it is not necessarily funded after the current year. This reflects the City Capital Improvement Program. The document assumes these programs will be maintained every year. It is fiscally restrained. You can't add funds that aren't available.

Pat Stear, 2812 T Street, would like to know if there are plans for more bus shelters in this program. On Vine St. in the Hartley neighborhood, she is sad to see students wait with no bench or shelter. She wants the City to be aware of this.

There was no testimony in opposition.

Staff questions

Cornelius questioned if there is anything that can be done about bus shelters. Brienzo replied that \$40,000.00 is noted under traffic enhancements for improvements. Eighty percent comes from federal funds. This money is for a number of items, shelters is one of those. Items can be added as needed. The need for a bus shelter would be determined by a site inspection by StarTran.

Cornelius wondered if there is a trigger for requesting a shelter. Brienzo replied that this coming year, staff is going to initiate an updated Transportation Development Plan. The current plan is three to four years old. At the time the plan is updated will be a good time to identify needs. There will be public meetings and announcements.

ACTION BY PLANNING COMMISSION:

May 15, 2013

Motion for general conformance made by Gaylor Baird, seconded by Scheer.

Lust stated that it is concerning to her that we have adopted a Comprehensive Plan that calls for compact growth, but we continue to underfund sidewalk needs in the City. She is happy to see there is more funding in future years, but wants to remind the City Council.

Cornelius agreed with Lust .

Motion for a finding of general conformance with the 2040 Lincoln MPO Long Range Transportation Plan carried 7-0: Gaylor Baird, Cornelius, Corr, Hove, Lust, Scheer and Weber voting 'yes'; Sunderman absent.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:05 p.m.

This presentation to the Planning Commission was videotaped and can be viewed on the City's webpage, under "video on demand", at <http://lincoln.ne.gov/city/mayor/cic/5citytv/vod/vod-current.htm#plan>. A written report describing these proposals in more detail, titled "Zoning reFORMs for a New Chapter of City Building", is posted on the Planning Department's web page, at <http://lincoln.ne.gov/city/plan/long/reform/reform.htm>.

Please note: These minutes will not be formally approved until the next regular meeting of the Planning Commission on May 29, 2013.

Michael D. Brienzo

From: Hodges Christine [purplebird7@yahoo.com]
Sent: Saturday, April 27, 2013 10:36 AM
To: Metropolitan Planning Organization
Subject: Here is my public comment - Transportation Improvement Plan

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

This e-mail provides public comment of the Transportation Improvement Plan. Please consider my input on two areas:

Biking Trails - One of the best things about living in Lincoln is the system of hiking-biking trails. I've never seen a longer, more beautiful, more easy-to-use system. Visitors to Lincoln are impressed by our trails. They give us a safe, non-car transportation route and a healthful, peaceful venue for exercise. Not only the trails need to be preserved and expanded, but the green space around them. These buffer zones should be deep enough to provide a visual barrier between houses and trails and a physical barrier between cars and trail users. It should be protected from mis-use by a fence along the side adjoining back yards or by enforcing trespassing and vandalism laws. The trees, shrubs, and plants provide oxygen, habitat for nature, control of erosion, and absorption of water runoff. The concept of "urban wilds" is growing in popularity across America. Let's not get left behind. Even old cities, like Boston, have an Open Space Plan which includes not only parks but urban wilds, community gardens, cemeteries, wetlands, and publicly-owned land and connects them with trails because (planners say) the sum of the parts is more accessible and valuable than any of the single pieces. Lincoln is well set-up to take a similar approach. As our city grows, even the rural areas will become more urban. It would be wise to plan green spaces, especially around trails.

Your plan states, "Since the public acquisition of Lincoln City Lines in 1971, Star Tran has been providing efficient, convenient and economical public transportation services." This is simply untrue for many of your buses. The customer base for Star Tran consists of two main types of users, rush-hour commuters and low-income people. The commuters are comprised of workers and students, and their routes are fixed and predictable in time and place. The commuter buses run, full of passengers, in the mornings and the evenings. When Lincoln becomes large enough, the addition of commuter lots could encourage more people from outlying areas to drive in, park, and take the buses into town. The rest of the day, most people use their cars, except if they cannot afford to drive. The buses run empty. Everyone sees that! It would be better to use min-vans for the day routes. These could be run frequently along straight, north-south or east-west routes. Customers could take a van in one direction as far as they need to go, get a transfer, and take another van in the next direction until they reach their destinations. On main streets, they would benefit from cut-outs or parking lots to pull over. On non-main streets, they could pull over more safely. The north-south/east-west pattern would be quick and easy. The current routes are confusing and circuitous; people cannot figure out when and where to catch a bus without interpreting multiple, complex route maps. All routes meet downtown, which literally adds hours to a round trip with a transfer. If Star Tran wants to expand its customer base, having frequent, quick, easy-to-figure-out routes would be its only hope of luring people away from their cars. At rush-hours, the big buses could drop off riders at commuter lots, and the mini-vans could ferry workers and students closer to their individual locations. Small-vehicle transportation is the missing link that could make Star Tran efficient all day.

Michael D. Brienzo

From: Pat Anderson [panderson@nwlincoln.org]
Sent: Thursday, May 02, 2013 11:36 AM
To: Metropolitan Planning Organization
Subject: transportation

To whom it may concern,

I attended a meeting on transportation planning last February. Other citizens included representatives from the suburbs, large employers and a biking advocate. What became evident during our discussion was that large employers downtown may need to be asked to consider alternative transportation modes. Some were already offering more convenient parking to those who car pool and bike racks. But as the discussion progressed it was evident that more could be done, employers may need some nudging. Maybe LJS should do a focus on employers who have taken it upon themselves to address alternative transportation modes.

I think bus service is expensive and works best where the population is more dense and actually uses the service. I would like to see expanded (night) service in the more densely populated areas. I would also like to see smaller, more efficient buses.

There was some discussion of having cars available for short term rent as the University has done. This would be very useful in the downtown area to encourage bus transportation, or biking, but if you have an emergency you know you can have use of a car.

If the city wants to encourage more walking then sidewalks need to be addressed. Many people in the neighborhoods close to downtown walk to shopping and work but the sidewalks are in poor condition in all of our 100 yr. old neighborhoods.

There were a lot of good ideas, just need to implement some of them.

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Pat Anderson-Sifuentez
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Michael D. Brienzo

From: Kent Thompson [kthompson@cbcthompson.com]
Sent: Wednesday, May 08, 2013 3:28 AM
To: Metropolitan Planning Organization
Cc: Davis Brent
Subject: MPT plan

I would like to see funds applied for for shoulder expansions on all roadways constructed around Lincoln to encourage biking to help our citizens to exercises. Shoulders allow bikers a safe way to out of the direct path of cars - especially on rural paved roads

Have a great day! Kent