

MAYOR'S NEIGHBORHOOD ROUNDTABLE SUMMARY

October 13, 2014

Tracy Corr opened the meeting on Monday, October 8, 2014 at 5:30 p.m. in the Mayor's Conference Room, City/County/Building, in Lincoln, NE.

Attendance

Thirteen citizens and three staff attended:

Tracy Corr – 40th & A NA	Jeff Schwebke -- Arnold Heights NA
Russ Irwin – Clinton NO	Anna Eickholt – Country Club
Karen Dienstbier – Eastridge NA	Paula Rhian – Everett NA
Curt Donaldson – Hartley NA	Scott Richert – Indian Village NA
Amy Karabel – Irvingdale NA	Dennis Hecht – Meadowlane Area RA
William Carver – Near South NA	Mike DeKalb – University Place CO
Bill Vocasek – West A NA	Jon Carlson – Mayor's Office
Wynn Hjermstad – Urban Development Dept.	Adam Rhoads – Health Dept (KLLCB)
Mayor Beutler	

Welcome & Introductions, Volunteer to Take Notes

Meeting was called to order at 5:35 by Chairwoman Corr. Everyone introduced themselves.

Mayor's Comments

The Mayor reported that there will soon be competition in the cable TV business. Also, the city was awarded the COPS grant they applied for. Crime has been down 7.8% but there has been continued gang activity. This grant will allow the Lincoln Police Department to hire two more officers to focus on gang activity.

Planning Department Updates

Pedestrian Easements:

Planning Department director Marvin Kraut introduced Tom Cajka. Mr. Cajka presented the proposed changes to pedestrian easements. **See Attachment 1.** He reported that questions had arisen after a west Lincoln neighborhood asked to be released from an easement for a poorly planned walkway design. The design in question was very narrow (5') and fenced on both sides so there was nowhere to put snow. They were released from the easement but the department realized they needed to look at the regulations. The city would like blocks to be smaller for easier foot traffic. In the older neighborhoods and downtown area, blocks are 300 feet long. By zoning code they can be up to a quarter of a mile long, but -- if a block is over 1000' long -- there must be a pedestrian walkway through the block. Initially the City wanted to require all new blocks be less than the current limit but there was push back from the public development community. They have decided instead to propose that the walkway easements be slightly wider with a preference to have a homeowners association maintain the walkways.

Parking Requirements in Capitol Environs District:

Marvin Kraut presented proposed changes to parking requirements in the Capitol Environs District -- see **Attachment 2.** He explained that the District is a cross-shaped section radiating out from the State Capitol Building. Recently, Century House came in with a request to convert their first floor office space to residential units. It was discovered that the 1996 parking provisions were very different for the Capitol Environs District than anywhere else in the city, including the rest of the Downtown area. The 1996 provisions would have required twice the number of parking spaces for residential as for office. This is completely opposite of every other parking district in the city. Typically, office

requires more parking than residential. It has been proposed to amend the parking requirements for the Capitol Environs District to mirror the requirements for the rest of the Downtown area.

Public Safety Proposal: Emergency Radio System/Fire Stations

Public Safety Director Tom Casady explained the need for the emergency radio system replacement and fire station redeployment. The current emergency radio system was installed in 1987 and has been listed in the Capital Needs Plan to be replaced for the last 10 years. The system is used by the police, fire and rescue, Star Tran and schools. The current technology is obsolete. All vendor support for the system will end in 2017 and many of the components are no longer being manufactured. As a result, if certain parts break, replacement parts will no longer be available.

The city currently has 14 fire stations, the last of which was built in 1997. Since 1997 the city has grown 22 square miles. The size and population growth is equal to the size of Manhattan, Kansas. A fire station typically costs \$2.5 million to build and has a staff of 14 people which usually costs about \$1 million a year in payroll. The proposal is to build a few new stations and redeploy staff to the new areas. This will provide better coverage and response times to the citizens without increasing the payroll.

A committee has studied the data base of emergency calls and used GIS mapping to make recommendations of where to locate stations. The goal is to have all city areas within a 4 minute drive time from a fire station. Building 4 new stations would get 66% of the homes currently outside of that drive time within it. One station would be proposed to be a joint fire and police station.

The emergency radio system will cost \$20 million and the fire stations would be \$14.5 million.

The City Council did not pass the proposal to put this on the ballot for the citizens to vote on in November. The Mayor has appointed a committee to study alternatives for funding and will be making recommendations to the Mayor by the end of the year for possible funding solutions. The earliest we could see this on the ballot would be the spring elections. For a project to be paid for by public bonds or a sales tax increase, it has to be voted on by the citizens.

Announcements

- Dennis Hecht thanked Tracy Corr for her participation in the Big Brothers/Big Sisters fund raiser last month where she repelled down the Holiday Inn building. They raised about \$80,000.
- Russ Irwin thanked the Mayor and City for the improvements that have been made along North 33rd Street.
- Amy Karabel reported that the Irvingdale Neighborhood Association "Dog Days" event raised \$10,000 to put a fountain in Rudge Park. The park is at 15th and Harrison Streets.
- Jeff Schwebke reported that the Arnold Heights Neighborhood Association partnered with the Village of Emerald for a tire clean up. They had over 600 people drop off tires weighing a total of around 500 tons.

Next Meeting/Agenda

Next meeting will be November 10, 2014. Tracy will work on the agenda.

Meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Notes submitted by Paula Rhian

Pedestrian Circulation and Block Length Project

Current Subdivision & Zoning Requirements
Relating to Pedestrian Easements & Block Length

26.23.040 Street and Other Public Way Widths.

(b) The minimum right-of-way widths shall be as follows:

Classification	Width
Local streets: Residential	60 feet
Pedestrian ways	5-foot easement for the sidewalk

26.23.080 Dead-end Streets.

All permanent dead-end streets shall have a sixty foot minimum radius turnaround, except the turnaround may be modified when the dead-end street is a continuation of a temporary dead-end street and access to the street is not desirable and is not required for the lots in the proposed subdivision. Dead-end streets shall not have more than a potential of forty dwelling units nor be longer than 1,000 feet as measured from the centerline of the intersected street on a direct line to the farthest point of the cul-de-sac. (Ord. 13956 §18; September 17, 1984; prior Ord. 13157 §48; June 29, 1981; Ord. 11370 §1; May 19, 1975).

26.23.125 Pedestrian Way.

A pedestrian way shall be required when a block exceeds 1,000 feet in length and where needed for pedestrian traffic. (Ord. 11370 §1; May 19, 1975).

26.23.130 Block Sizes.

(a) Block lengths shall not exceed 1,320 feet between cross-streets except where a major street, other man-made barrier, lake, or other natural barrier forms one boundary of a block.

(b) At the sole determination of the city, the 1,320 feet maximum block length may be increased if substantially different zoning or land use forms one boundary of the block. (Ord. 13157 §54; June 29, 1981; prior Ord. 11370 §1; May 19, 1975).

26.23.140 Lot.

(h) Residential lots proposed to be made servient to pedestrian way easements and adjacent residential lots shall be of sufficient width to provide the additional required setback between the residence and the pedestrian way, plus the five foot wide pedestrian way easement.

27.72.180 Additional Exceptions to the General Requirements.

(c) **Minimum Separation Between Buildings and Pedestrian Way Easement.** The minimum separation between a building and a pedestrian way easement shall be ten feet.

PROPOSED REVISIONS

1. Increase the “effective area” of a pedestrian easement from 5 feet to 15 feet to provide more space between the sidewalk and any fence or building.
 - a. The sidewalk will remain at 4 feet wide, but the easement required in Section **26.23.040** (b) is increased from 5 to 15 feet.

PROPOSED TEXT

26.23.040 Street and Other Public Way Widths.

(b) The minimum right-of-way widths shall be as follows:

Classification	Width
Pedestrian ways	15 5-foot easement for the sidewalk

- b. Since the easement is 5 feet wider on either side of the sidewalk, then the setback to any building in Section **27.72.180** (c) may be reduced from 10 to 5 feet.
- c. Add to Section **27.72.180** (c) a prohibition against fences within a 15 foot wide pedestrian easement.

PROPOSED TEXT

27.72.180 Additional Exceptions to the General Requirements.

(c) **Minimum Separation Between Buildings, and Pedestrian Way Easement.** The minimum separation between a building and a pedestrian way easement shall be ~~ten feet~~ twelve and one-half feet (12.5') from the centerline of the easement.

- d. Revise Section 26.23.140 (h) on lot width to delete the entire statement since it is unnecessary. The easement will be in an outlot in most circumstances. In the case when it is on private property developers routinely make the lot wider.

PROPOSED TEXT

26.23.140 Lot.

~~(h) Residential lots proposed to be made servient to pedestrian way easements and adjacent residential lots shall be of sufficient width to provide the additional required setback between the residence and the pedestrian way, plus the five foot wide pedestrian way easement.~~

2. Revise how the block length is measured.

a. Currently the block length is measured from the intersection of two cross streets to the other intersection of the two cross streets that form the block. Thus, in the example below measuring from the intersection of 37th and D Street to the intersection of 38th and C Street gives a block length of approximately 900 feet.

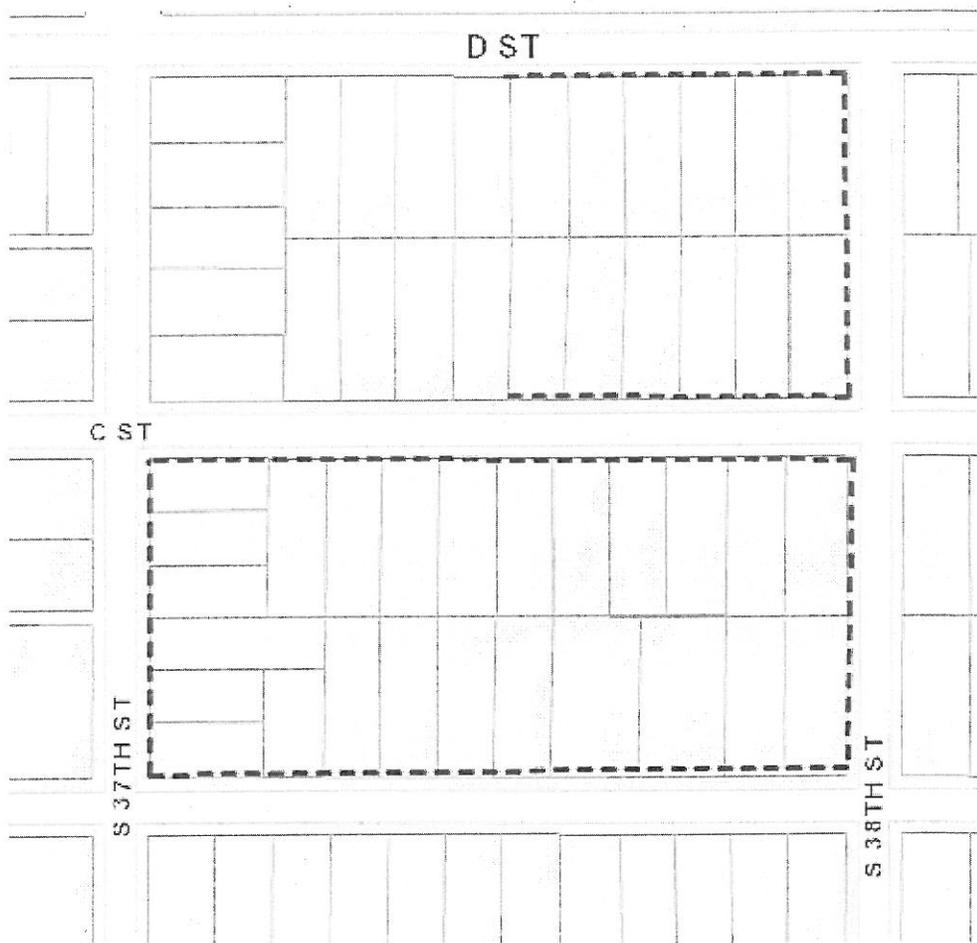
However, the text in the subdivision ordinance isn't clear on how to measure the block length. So many years ago the block length was measured simply along the face of one side of the block. In this example measuring from 37th and C to 38th and C is a block of approximately 600 feet.



Measuring along the block face results in an incorrect and significantly lower number. The length of a block is important in terms of determining how long a pedestrian must travel. The longer the block the longer a pedestrian must travel out of their way to get from one point to another on a block. In the example below, walking from point A on D Street to point B on C Street along the edge of block is approximately 900 feet. This is the length a pedestrian must walk since there isn't a sidewalk directly from point A to B. So the block length is 900 feet which is the result of the current method of measuring block length.

The same result is also made by measuring around the entire block and dividing by two. So measuring along B, C, 37th and 38th Street as shown below results in a block of 1,800 feet

when divided by two is 900 feet. (All distances in this example have been rounded for purposes of this demonstration.) Since many blocks are very odd in shape and have more than four sides, staff proposes to measure along the entire block and dividing by two since it is a more accurate method.



- b. The proposal is also to reduce the block length allowed from 1,320 feet to 1,000 feet in “older neighborhoods.” In general this would mean neighborhoods originally platted prior to 1950, the same date used for the Neighborhood Design Standards. In older more established neighborhoods it is important to maintain the continuity of blocks and the higher level of pedestrian and vehicular access.
- c. The final part of this proposal would also eliminate the provision about block length and different zoning as the City is encouraging access from residential to commercial areas. Even though a residential and commercial area may be adjacent, that is not a reason for longer block length. It is desirable to have multiple connections to most commercial areas from a residential area.

- d. The measurement around the perimeter of the block would be measured at the lot line. The perimeter measurement would not include following the lot line within a cul-de-sac. (see example at right) Instead at a cul-de-sac the perimeter measurement will cross the street, in the same manner a person or vehicle going around the block would travel.



- e. Alleys or private lanes may reduce a block length depending upon their configuration. In the example at the right, the block on the left side is “T shaped” and so the private lane (a privately owned alley) between N. W. 7th and N. W. 8th Street shortens the travel distance for pedestrians and vehicles. In the block on the right hand side the private lane doesn’t reduce the distance from N. W. 6th to N. W. 7th Streets. So the proposed text notes that depending upon the circumstances an alley or private lane may reduce block length.



PROPOSED TEXT

26.23.130 Block Sizes.

(a) Block lengths shall not exceed 1,320 feet ~~between cross streets~~ except where a major street, school, park, or other man-made barrier; lake, or other natural barrier forms one boundary of a block. Block lengths shall not exceed 1,000 feet in neighborhoods originally platted prior to December 31, 1949)

(b) ~~At the sole determination of the city, the 1,320 feet maximum block length may be increased if substantially different zoning or land use forms one boundary of the block..~~ The block length shall be determined by measuring along the property line of any block and dividing by two. For blocks with a cul-de-sac street, the perimeter measurement may cross the street rather than proceeding along the property line of the cul-de-sac.

3. Require new pedestrian easements to be in an outlot when there will be an association to maintain it and other private common areas.

A pedestrian way is typically on private property along the lot line between two lots. However, in circumstances where there is an association maintaining common open space it would be better to have the association also maintain the sidewalk. The sidewalk is a benefit to everyone within the subdivision so it is more equitable to have a common association maintain the surface and shovel the sidewalk as needed. An outlot also avoids any problems caused by owners constructing fences or building in the pedestrian easement.

When there is not an association, then the 15 foot easement should be placed 10 feet on one lot and 5 feet on the adjoining lot. That way the entire sidewalk, centered in the easement, falls on one lot. This clarifies which owner is in charge of shoveling the walk and repairing the surface. Since the sidewalk on private property it falls to the private owner to maintain the surface.

PROPOSED TEXT

26.23.125 Pedestrian Way.

A pedestrian way shall be required when a block exceeds 1,000 feet in length and where needed for pedestrian traffic. In subdivisions which have outlots reserved for common open space or private roadways, the pedestrian way easement shall be located in an outlot. In subdivisions which do not have outlots reserved for common open space or private roadways, the 15 foot pedestrian way easement shall be placed ten feet on one lot and five feet on the adjoining lot.





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NW 8th View





Lancaster County/City of Lincoln GIS Map



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