

# CITY-COUNTY COMMON

County-City Building • 555 S. 10th Street • Lincoln, NE 68508

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## **AGENDA**

### **MONDAY, APRIL 2, 2007**

### **COUNTY-CITY BUILDING**

### **555 SOUTH 10<sup>TH</sup> STREET**

### **CITY COUNCIL/COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

### **HEARING ROOM, ROOM 112 \*\***

### **8:30 A.M.**

1. **APPROVAL OF COMMON MEETING MINUTES OF TUESDAY, MARCH 6, 2007.**

2. **PRESENTATIONS**

**8:30 a.m. MOTORSPORTS TASK FORCE REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS** - Kerry Eagan, Chief Administrative Officer; Russell Bayer, Motorsports Task Force Chairman

**9:00 a.m. MOTOCROSS TRACK AT ABBOTT FIELD** - Kerry Eagan, Chief Administrative Officer; Jon Camp, City Council

**9:15 a.m. JAIL DISCUSSION (Time Permitting)** - Jon Camp, City Council

**9:25 a.m. COUNTY DEVELOPMENT; ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT; COMPETITION INTRA-COUNTY (Time Permitting)**- Jon Camp, City Council

\*\*Due to projected attendance the meeting will be held in the City Council - County Commissioners Hearing Room, Room 112

**CITY-COUNTY COMMON  
MEETING MINUTES  
APRIL 2, 2007**

**Common Members Present:** Dan Marvin, Chair; Ray Stevens, Vice-Chair; Jon Camp; Jonathan Cook (8:35); Robin Eschliman; Larry Hudkins; Annette McRoy; Patte Newman; Deb Schorr; Ken Svoboda; Bob Workman and Mayor Coleen Seng.

**Common Members Absent:** Bernie Heier

**Others Present:** Russ Bayer, Motorsports Task Force; Glenn Johnson, LPSNRD; Wendy Birdsall and Trish Owen, Lincoln Chamber of Commerce; Gwen Thorpe, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer; Karl Fredrickson, Public Works & Utilities Director; Darl Naumann, Economic Development Coordinator; Dr. David Samani; Mike DeKalb, Planner; Karen Kurbis, Task Force Member; Carol Brown, Task Force Member; Mark Hunzeker; Mary Meyer, County Commissioners/City Council Clerk and other interested parties.

Chairman Marvin opened the meeting at 8:30 a.m. and announced the Nebraska Open Meeting Act is posted on the rear wall of the Hearing Room.

**Common Meeting Minutes of Tuesday, March 6, 2007**

Workman moved approval and Stevens seconded. Marvin, Stevens, Schorr, Hudkins, Workman, Camp, McRoy, Svoboda and Mayor Seng voted aye. Newman and Eschliman abstained and Heier was absent. Motion carried.

**Motorsports Task Force Report and Recommendations: Russell Bayer**

Bayer thanked all Task Force regular/voting and ex-officio/non voting members for their dedication and hard work, and stated he would summarize the Motorsports Task Force report and recommendations, which the Task Force comprised in 60 days. The County Board had asked for evaluation of 5 different items with respect to motorsports which the Task Force didn't have time to complete all 5 and therefore prioritized.

For informational purposes the five items were:

- (1) Evaluate the demand for a motorsports facility;
- (2) Determine types of impact from a motorsports facility, whether economic, social, or environmental;
- (3) Pros and cons of having a motorsports facility in one location with multiple type events or having events spread out in a number of locations;
- (4) Determine existence of location in Lancaster County including the City of Lincoln; and
- (5) Evaluate and make recommendations on appropriate business model, whether public, private, private/public.

The Task Force was divided into subcommittees with each committee self-prioritizing. Determining location and impact were the two most important items, with importance given to investigating demand for a motorsports facility. Bayer stated not much time spent on co-locations and business models as they thought a developer would have ideas and evaluate.

Bayer stated they heard from experts saying Naumann gave a briefing on the success of the first motorsports evaluation. Also, pro-motorsporters, Rob Waters and Dave Holtzgrave, gave report on design, building and locating a motorsports facility. Dr. Cheeneé, Director of Acoustics, Audio and Arts at Columbia College in Chicago gave briefing on understanding the effects and impacts of noise and sound and Dr. Thompson gave report on economic impact of a motorsports facility.

Bayer summarized findings.

- (1) Location: Headed by Mike DeKalb.
  - (a) Potential locations exist in Lancaster County. Criteria used included being near or having access to a major paved road. The ingress/egress into a facility needs to be well controlled, taking care of traffic congestion. Also the traffic from a major paved road, I-80 or a 4 lane highway, would help mitigate the sound.
  - (b) The impact on residential areas and uses. The findings stated there are 7 to 12 County locations, some in and some out of the 3 mile jurisdiction. Need 160 acres for a drag strip, 280 acres for a multi-use facility and when looking at an 8 to 10 sq. mile area can narrow down to 8 and up to 15 possible locations within the general area. More than one specific spot in general location as indicated on the map in the report.
  - (c) The economic impact showed when this type of facility is built people come, and conservatively will bring in an estimated \$10 million a year. The amount does not include industries which may develop, plus the facility should be within 5 miles of a community to have major positive economic impact.
  - (d) The environmental committee concentrated on noise, realizing there will be noise, litter, traffic control, and questions on quality of life. Significantly looked at noise and options to mitigate, but not completely eliminate. One suggestion was to build berms, but the reality is with our weather we have high humidity in the racing months and low noises go up, bounce off the diversion and come down. Trees and grass help for high pitch noise types and an oval track may have more high pitched noise with a drag race being low noise. Some noise can be mitigated but the need is to acknowledge the fact that distance will help as well.
- (2) There is a demand. The # 1 spectator sport in U.S. today deals with motorsports. Could spend \$8 to \$10 thousand for a formal survey. Also, there are people who don't want the facility in their neighborhood.
- (3) Recommendations: Committee unanimously accepted the Task Force Report.
  - (a) Do recommend having experts. We could require a developer to have experts identify the feasibility from an acquisition and/or building views, and have an understanding if the location will work. The committee does believe there are potential locations for a facility.
    1. Identified potential general sites throughout the county, but did not do a feasibility study on sites. Do not know if land is for sale, or if able to build. Example of other potential problems is the need of a tower for national events, but can't have a 50 foot tower near an airport runway.
  - (b) Environmental Impact. Noise is unwanted sound. One person's sound may be unwanted noise to some but not to others. Need well designed facility in the right location. After identification of location conduct tests on comparable noise sources and determine impact on neighbors and community. Do additional studies for other environmental impacts, such as property value, litter, traffic, etc. There are facilities in the U.S. where housing and development has sprung up around motorsports facilities.
  - (c) Economic Potential. The committee clearly believes there is economic potential. It is critical the City and County work together. The committee asked for open minds to cooperatively create an environment to succeed with the potential of bringing \$10 million to Lincoln and Lancaster County every year. Advise not to get caught up on one, or another location, until everyone is committed to a willingness to look at a motorsports location. And listen to the professionals.

Bayer said the committee has asked the County to do something in the next 30 days, and now asking the same of the City. Do not leave a developer hanging, it is imperative to make a decision.

Camp thanked Bayer and asked on a co-location, having a variety of motor related sports activities, if desirable to have one location? Bayer replied first to define motorsports, which is motor and racing, ground use. From multi motorsports activities it makes sense for a shared use facility. The committee discussed size, and what type of size needed. Topeka has a multi use facility, all in one location.

Eschliman asked what infrastructures would be required from the City and County? Bayer replied a partnership discussion, with the location appropriately near a highway. Wouldn't need a lot as we would put on the developer. Do acknowledge some investment from the community but not a lot of time. Eschliman wondered about sewers, etc? Bayer answered to put on the developer to bring forward.

Hudkins also thanked Bayer and stated if the site was within Lincoln's 3 mile jurisdiction would need harmonization with regard to noise and City ordinance rules versus County. Bayer said the criteria is for most locations and thinks significant action from the City would be forthcoming within 3 miles with probably a new ordinance or resolution. The County and City have to work together as the developer doesn't have two sets of rules.

Svoboda reiterated thanks and stated early on he was in favor of a facility, and asked what was looked at regarding similar sites for the importance of access to a major road or an interstate? How important? Bayer replied different subcommittees did work on site location. Not necessarily needing an interstate but to be near a major highway with appropriate access. Do not want right on an Interstate exit but need easy access to a major highway. It is very critical for traffic and noise mitigation. Svoboda questioned a site within proximity to homes and businesses, asking if Topeka had problems. Kurbis replied Topeka has businesses and an airport close to their site. Also, they have housing within one mile and some acreages approximately two miles away. Svoboda asked how are these mitigated in Topeka, with the airport and housing? Kurbis said looking at Topeka's history they had conditions, or waivers, allowing. Bayer added Topeka did have failure until they secured the right operator. One objective is to thoroughly evaluate the site operator.

Brown stated the Brainard raceway has housing and developments. Also, there is housing, homes going up close to the Eagle raceway. She added people travel a lot and come from out of state and like to have a condo on site.

McRoy asked on the economic side if the \$10 million mentioned would be seen in the first year? Bayer answered it would be based on the spectator volume and this amount should be realized within a couple of years, which would be quick, and is a conservative number. Bayer stated there are different types of events with different participation levels. Also, the types of facilities in an area would be part of the evaluation a developer has to make.

Schorr asked with the text amendment, how does it compare to what the City has? We have merged two different codes so the developer would have different rules. DeKalb replied we are probably at 90% at the moment, and have added three to four items unique to the County with an ongoing noise discussion. Does have the City noise standard and co-modified and are working on updating.

Camp stated the site operation is very important and asked if anyone had contracted governmental operators? Bayer replied he couldn't answer this question. Workman asked as Topeka was unsuccessful and then successful, do we know how much money was spent on infrastructure in the beginning and then the additional money spent? Bayer couldn't answer at this time, but would find, and forward, the number. Marvin asked if we could have a successful drag strip without a circle track? Bayer said not specifically but there are stand alone facilities in the U.S. and it depends on the operator and support of the community.

Stevens commented that some recommendations from the Task Force were specific to the County Board. The short time frame for the report and for the County to respond. The Board has a draft resolution to look at motorsports facilities in general, which should be supported for the reasons heard. We will proceed with the text amendment to zoning regulations, and have a proposed amendment, but could provide room for terms to negotiate on the conditions.

### **Motocross Track at Abbott Field** Glenn Johnson, Lower Platte South Natural Resource District

(Attachment) Johnson said the proposed motocross ATV facility has a specific site, which is The Abbott Sports Complex, on North 70<sup>th</sup>, with Arbor Road on the north edge. Two owners are involved, with one parcel owned by the E. S. Abbott Charitable Foundation and the other by the Lincoln Sports Foundation. They adjoin and the proposed project overlays both. The facility operator would be the Lincoln Sports Foundation. The Natural Resource District and the County were approached by Del Lienemann Jr., representing the Abbott Foundation and Dr. David Samani, about being willing to be public sponsors for a federal grant for a motorized motocross facility. Ultimately the County and the Natural Resource District agreed to be co-sponsors for a federal grant to the Recreation Trails Program,

administered by the Games and Parks Commission, and entered into an agreement with the Lincoln Sports Foundation and the E. S. Abbot Charitable Foundation.

The facility shown, (overhead used) is the basic area of the motocross with the track interior shown in orange/sand color. A berm, or boundary, around is shown in green yellow with the project being two phased. The total cost for full development, which is ultimate development and being able to do regional and potentially national type of competitive motocross events, with all support facilities is approximately \$3.5 million estimated. The estimated cost for phase 1 development is \$913,000, which is site development, doing the site reading, bringing in the road from Arbor Road, and having initial parking facilities available and ready for use. Basically proposed is that the track be available essentially all year long for motocross, or ATV, and probably operating 200 days out of the year. Did consider 7 or 8 weekend type of major events at the facility, with the rest of the time being open for general public use. The grant funds secured from the Recreation Trails Program, which is 80% federal and 20% non-federal, have been approved for a little over \$400,000 at this time. The RTP Committee has indicated they would approve, in the next two cycles of grants, a minimum of \$150,000 each cycle, for another \$300,000. This would bring the amount to approximately \$700,000 of grant funds. Part of the matching would be made by the value of the easement over the particular property and part would need to be cash match. Lancaster County has agreed to put in \$50,000. Additionally the County is developing Arbor Road from 70<sup>th</sup> Street to the site at a cost of an estimated \$230,000. There are opportunities to look for other potential funds and know the County has made inquiries looking at a variety of different funds from the State, City, Department of Economic Development, Chamber of Commerce, private, to help provide support.

Johnson stated there are things to complete. One is having the property appraisal done, and to establish the value of the 20 year easement used for matching purposes. The need is to finalize the actual mapping of the site wetlands, and turn over to the federal operation where they will make the ultimate approval for the projects' federal funds. There has been two initial rounds of grant approvals, but they still need to be signed off by the Federal Highway Administration. Once this is completed we can develop the final design, plans and specs, and get ready for construction. There will be a wetlands migration plan if necessary based upon the design. Also will get the necessary permits as it is in the flood plain and will require a flood plain permit and probably a section 404 Wetland Impact Permit. Will be submitting the next RTP grant request this year for the next two years, and hopefully construction will begin this fall or early next spring. Marvin asked for clarification on the RTP grant request. Johnson said it stands for Recreation Trails Program and is out of the Federal Highway Program but a separate section that is funded, and does allow for motorized.

Workman thanked Johnson, and stated the County Board made a commitment approximately a year ago for \$270,000 to extend Arbor Road into the facility. The Board approved another \$50,000 to pay for engineering already performed. Workman stated the Board is asking for a Community Block Grant in the amount of \$200,000, which would be State money and added to the project. He stated this could really be great for the City and County, not benefitting the County's revenue stream but the Board realizes the facility's importance. The Board has written letters, one to the Chamber of Commerce, who is here today, asking if they would like to contribute. Workman then asked Dr. Samani, who has worked diligently on the project for over 3 years, to illustrate the kind of economic benefit this could represent.

Dr. Samani stated he has raced in California and across the U. S. and with this project we will end up with a track second to none in the U.S. Dr. Samani said he could speak of the impact on Ponca City, probably one-fourth the size of Lincoln, that has a motocross track within their City limits, basically on the County fair grounds. That track sponsors a Grand National Race bringing into Ponca City \$14 million in one week. On average between 3,500 and 4,000 racers from across the country participate in a week of racing, and conservatively bring in around 100,000 to 140,000 spectators during that period of time.

Dr. Samani stated hopefully this track will be operational throughout the day from 8am until later with lights in the evening. It is an appropriate location and will be open to the public, not only from Lancaster County, but from surrounding areas and states with families bringing their kids to practice and participate. Hopefully we will have local races which will generate additional revenue for the City of Lincoln. The economic impact could be much higher,

possibly \$20 or \$30 million a year. Dr. Samani stated most importantly from his standpoint of being a trauma surgeon is the fact they see kids who buy off road vehicles but have no place to ride, and they ride these vehicles on county roads, ditches, etc. Some kids ride in traffic, and there have been multiple fatalities, and numerous serious injuries from being hit by cars. He stated they went through this with the project in Denton, and now there are a lot of private tracks being built, some with permits and some without, across Lancaster County. There are a few smaller tracks in the area, but none the caliber of what this facility could be in the future. Again, there are a lot of kids who don't participate in football and other sports but do participate in this motorized sport. Currently these families travel long distances in order to participate. Samani believes it would be very beneficial economically, and also provide another sports activity for the kids in the community.

Hudkins stated Dr. Samani very diligently provided a place for people to ride on his property in Denton and often times people who have had accidents, or even amputees, still participate. He reiterated Dr. Samani is a surgeon, adding he is a very talented surgeon, particularly in motorcycle injuries. Appreciate Dr. Samani staying and saying there should be some place in Lancaster County where you can find a safe place for people to participate.

Samani commented he talked with National Association for Motocross organizers who stated once this track is completed they will bring in a national race. They want the track centrally located so people from different areas will attend. They currently have a race in Ponca City and they said they would have their second national event here in Lincoln if we are able to complete the track.

Hudkins said as a follow up, on the map there is an eight foot high earthen berm, basically around the perimeter, and asked why this is an important feature? Johnson said this a preliminary design. There are two aspects, one involves the actual site grading, the floodplain, and basically the compliance of no net rise compensatory storage. Whatever is excavated will have to be left on site and moved around and probably some berming would take place from the site development. The other aspects are it would be needed for sound and also a place for spectators.

Camp asked with the spectator viewing area, and talking about a \$20 or \$30 million impact on the City, how many spectators could be anticipated and are they going to be dispersed around the berms, having that as extra seating? Dr. Samani responded in an event you don't have that many spectators at one time. Basically they bring a chair, and you don't need that many bleachers. They will sit on the berm, and walk to the area. For example, in one race there will be 41 racers, at the most, participating, and there maybe approximately 200 or 300 fans watching. The others would be in their campers, rigs, the pit area, and would come when their child, or family member, races. The berm will serve two purposes, one being sound mitigation and secondly spectator viewing.

Camp said in the previous Motorsports Facility presentation we talked about co-location, and you're co-locating with the E. S. Abbott Sports Complex. With the number of people this would bring to town, do you have any observation on co-location of motorsports? Dr. Samani said he knows of tracks in California having co-located motorcycle racing with NASCAR, as well as motorsports, drag racing. Also, when talking about land values, some of the most expensive land in California is located right next to a track. They have been able to work with sound mitigation and are tracks that did co-locate events. Samani added for national motocross tracks the best ones in the country, at this point, are not co-located with asphalt and motorized sports. Camp asked if Samani saw duplication? Samani replied he didn't believe so and that this would be unique. Camp stated in this area really don't have lodging facilities. Samani said it is close enough and wouldn't be a problem. People do bring campers, etc., but this would be unique as it would be one of the only tracks in the United States being within three to four miles of hotels, eating establishments. A lot of tracks don't have this, except for Ponca City, which the track is within city limits and people use restaurants and hotels within the city limits.

Svoboda thanked Samani and also thanked the County Board, stating too often we hear government continues to throw up obstacles and every time a hurdle is met, up comes another hurdle, and another immediately following. A thank you to the County Board for trying to find a solution, and he thinks this is going to be a great economic boom to the City.

Svoboda asked in regards to the racing season, is it every weekend, or every other weekend? What is the season length? Samani said season length has already kicked off, as he just got back from his first race. The season usually runs from early March through October or November. Sometimes into December, depending on the weather. He added even in winter if we do have a good enough snow possibly will be used for snowmobiling. But with the track do envision it being open full time. Daily, possibly from 8 am to 9 pm if able to build lights, having people come and practicing.

Mayor Seng asked Johnson what are the City permits which would be needed? Johnson said we would refer to Mike DeKalb but understood DeKalb indicated there is no special permit needed. Mayor Seng inquired what else would be needed?

Workman replied to the Mayor saying it was more hearsay but he had been told there's nothing that will be asked of the City since this is Abbott property. The Federal Government is involved but his understanding is that the City really does not have to issue any permits at this time. Workman added a couple of years ago Dr. Samani was frustrated as we had a hearing on his first proposal for a motocross track and this room was full with opposition on both sides. We, the Board, did not do any favors for Dr. Samani but he stuck with it and when he found this site we did not have one person come forward opposing. Workman stated it's an example of giving extra effort, and when the site was found the County Board knew it was the right site, followed through, and now we are giving all the support we can. Birdsall said she is observing, very happy to attend, and will support any economic opportunity for the community. Workman thanked Birdsall and Dr. Samani.

Marvin asked Dr. Samani in regard to the track in Denton, some people like to ride trails and go over jumps, but trail riding is not a component of this particular track which we are proposing? Samani replied that is correct. Marvin asked if there was any thought of the number of people interested? Samani said there still would be a lot of interest with motocross racing.

Marvin thanked everyone for attending. Schorr made motion to adjourn, Stevens seconded motion. Roll called. Marvin, Stevens, Schorr, Hudkins, Workman, Camp, Cook, Eschliman, McRoy, Newman, Svoboda and Mayor Seng voted aye. Heier absent. Motion passed and meeting adjourned at 9:28 a.m.

Mary Meyer  
Clerk

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# LINCOLN MOTOCROSS/ATV FACILITY

Location: Abbott Sport Complex, North 70<sup>th</sup> Street, Lincoln

Owners: Ethel S. Abbott Charitable Foundation  
Lincoln Sports Foundation

Grant Partners: Lower Platte South Natural Resources District  
County of Lancaster, Nebraska

Operator: Lincoln Sports Foundation

|                                 |             |
|---------------------------------|-------------|
| Total Cost for Full Development | \$3,528,000 |
| Cost for Phase I Development    | \$ 913,000  |

## Grant Funds

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| Recreation Trails Program (80% federal/20% nonfederal) |            |
| Approved   | \$ 405,100 |
| Anticipated  | \$ 300,000 |
| Lancaster County                                       | \$ 50,000  |
| Other???   | ?          |

Cooperative Agreement was entered into in September 2006 between the County, the NRD, and the two Foundations which sets out the goals and the responsibilities of each party for this project.

## Status:

- Need to complete appraisal of 20-year easement to the NRD
- Need to finalize wetlands mapping.
- Turn over to Federal Highway Administration for RTP Grant Approval

## Next Steps:

- Develop final design, plans and specifications for construction
- Develop a wetland mitigation plan
- Secure all permits (wetlands, flood plain, etc.)
- Obtain City approvals
- Submit next RTP grant request for FY 2008
- Begin Construction fall 2007 or spring 2008.

