

MEETING RECORD

NAME OF GROUP: PLANNING COMMISSION

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING: Wednesday, November 22, 2006, 11:45 a.m., Rm. 113, First Floor, County-City Building, 555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Jon Carlson, Gene Carroll, Michael Cornelius, Dick Esseks, Gerry Krieser, Roger Larson, Mary Strand and Lynn Sunderman; Tommy Taylor absent

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Mayor Seng; Marvin Krout, Kent Morgan, Ray Hill, Mike DeKalb, David Cary, Sara Hartzell, Christy Eichorn, Brandon Garrett and Michele Abendroth of the Planning Department; Chris Beutler; other interested parties.

STATED PURPOSE OF MEETING: **Sustainable and Green Development**

The meeting was called to order at 11:49 a.m.

Cecil Steward began with a PowerPoint presentation on green and sustainable development. He provided a brief history of zoning ordinances. He believes that we must deal effectively with change and live in harmony with nature without sacrificing the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

There are five domains of sustainable development, which include economic, socio-cultural, environmental, technological and public policy. A precautionary principle states that “When an activity raises threats of harm to the environment or human health, precautionary measures should be taken, even if some cause and effect relationships are not fully established scientifically.” To answer the question of how to sustain communities, it is important to note that buildings are the biggest share of the problem. Steward believes that this is not a matter of aesthetics or design; rather, this is a matter of survival and sustainability.

Joslyn Castle Institute (JCI) has drafted two proposals for sustaining our environment. The first is to the Department of Environmental Quality and would work with public entities to have all public buildings meet a degree of greenness. The second is a more broad and encompassing proposal as a city-wide plan. They are calling it Lincoln by Design. JCI would serve as facilitator for the planning and design.

Steward noted there are five resources to sustain, including land, water, materials, food, and energy. Criteria for a green environment include several characteristics as follows:

plan/design to fit the site, respect the context, foster community, resource efficiency, minimize waste, adaptability, a healthful indoor environment, economic viability, and recycling.

Steward concluded by stating he is appealing for planning and designing within an ethic of the professional principles and using the interdependency of the five domains of sustainability at any and every opportunity.

Larson asked if a homebuilder can build a green home and be competitive. Steward responded that typically a green home will cost 10-15% more, but over time, the cost will be recuperated.

Esseks asked if there is any evidence which shows that highly skilled individuals may be attracted to a green community. Steward stated there is evidence of many benefits, although he does not know of a study being put together that way.

Larson asked how to amend the Comprehensive Plan to move in this direction. Steward stated that he would start with the five domains and see how they relate interdependently.

Esseks urged Steward to look at keeping housing costs relatively low comparatively. Steward stated that there are several factors which cause the price differentials. It is important to look at how one factor affects all the others.

The meeting concluded at 12:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele Abendroth
Planning Department