

MEETING RECORD

NAME OF GROUP: PLANNING COMMISSION

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING: Wednesday, November 21, 2007, 11:45 p.m., Room 113, First Floor, County-City Building, 555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Gene Carroll, Michael Cornelius, Dick Esseks, Wendy Francis, Roger Larson, Robert Moline, Lynn Sunderman and Tommy Taylor (Leirion Gaylor-Baird absent).

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Marvin Krout, Ray Hill, David Cary and Teresa McKinstry of the Planning Department.

STATED PURPOSE OF MEETING: **College View Mobility**

David Cary stated that the College View Mobility Audit was just completed this month. The automobile is the overwhelming mode of transportation at this point. A number of years ago, there was a specific study initiative called the Multi-Modal Study which was completed in 2004. That report looked at alternative travel to see what we wanted to accomplish in our community. Downtown bike lanes are an outgrowth of that. That report said that something should be tried on a neighborhood scale. That was the starting point. College View neighborhood had a lot of different components: a transit route, a longstanding neighborhood and a lot of aspects that staff wanted to look at. A number of staff members were involved from Planning, Public Works, Parks and Recreation and consultant work from Schemmer. Staff worked with many stakeholders. Some of those were Union College, a number of business owners, property owners and residents. The boundaries are Calvert St. to Pioneers Blvd. and 54th St. to 44th St. There was a 13 member study committee. The key finding was getting this area organized on a neighborhood level. Many of the proposals in the final report will enhance the area when done.

There is a meeting scheduled for December 3, 2007, in the neighborhood to get a neighborhood organization established. Staff would like this to be a plan to work from over a period of time. Getting the neighborhood association established is key. A number of stakeholder interviews and committee meetings have been held. A mobility audit was conducted. A design charrette was held in July, 2007. There was a followup public workshop. The basic components of the mobility strategy are the community organization, the transit system, the bicycle system, the pedestrian system and the 48th St. corridor.

Community organization is extremely important. Working with Urban Development is appropriate. Once organized, a business improvement district could be established. It is a tool which allows you to do some things which currently can't be done.

The neighborhood will be served by the transit system with three weekday routes and two Saturday bus routes. There will be two way bus traffic on 48th St. along with bus stops on both sides.

Existing conditions were looked at with regard to the bicycle system. On-street bike routes continue on Calvert and 52nd St. Staff would like to establish new on-street bike routes on 44th St., 46th St. and Prescott. A formal bike route is identified with a sign. Those routes are usually lower traffic and more appropriate for riding in the street. There is a need for bike racks throughout the area at key locations. Bike racks on buses have been identified as a need. A longer range goal would be a neighborhood connector trail on Union College campus and up to Billy Wolff Trail.

The pedestrian system: the concept of 48th St. includes curb bulb-outs. These shorten the pedestrian crossing distance. A continuous sidewalk on one side of each street is needed. Some areas are lacking a sidewalk altogether. There is a need for a continuous sidewalks along the perimeter of Union College. Pedestrian countdown signals at 48th and Prescott intersection would be desired.

Moline wondered if the pedestrian bulb-outs impede traffic at all. Cary believes it makes it much safer for pedestrians and the operation of the street really doesn't change.

Francis would like to see sidewalks on both sides of the street. Cary replied that the reason this issue came up is that the city is not in the business of installing new sidewalks where they do not exist. It is up to the private property owner to install them. The City Council can order the sidewalks to be installed. There are still parts of streets that don't have sidewalks.

The appearance of the crosswalks will make them more pedestrian friendly. 48th St. will be expanded slightly, approximately 10 feet to the east. Existing right-of-way is adequate to do this.

Esseks stated that a lot of people complain that the city does not adequately serve older neighborhoods. He wondered how well the sidewalk repair plan was publicized. Cary is not certain how well publicized it is, but the CIP is on the city's website. Budget situations, year after year, can create problems. With that funding, there is a 25 year process to get to each area that needs attention. The vast majority of sidewalks are in the public way. Another concept is to have a "virtual median" at crosswalks.

Moline questioned the maintenance of a brick virtual median. Cary replied they can be problematic over time, but a lot of the special paving projects can come from private funding sources.

Esseks sees a lot of these ideas to help sustain the older communities. Cary agreed. This is just one piece of the puzzle.

Cornelius wondered what happens if the funding can't be found for a special paving project. Cary replied it could be the regular painted identification.

Cary stated that there was a strong consensus on what to do with the 48th St. corridor. A striped center turn lane would match up with what is talked about in the Comprehensive Plan. There should be dedicated turn lanes at Prescott and retain east and west side on-street parking as much as possible. The east curb would be widened out ten feet. It is not scheduled at this time, but pavement rehab and widening is recommended. There would be bus stops on both sides of the street along with crosswalks on the north side of Stockwell and Cooper. There are streetscaping possibilities. Benches, planters, banners and additional lighting are among the many things that could be done.

Moline questioned if parking needs were looked at. Cary replied that was discussed but it was not in the budget to expand the study to include that. It was identified by everyone involved that they wanted parking to be retained. It was acknowledged that more parking is also needed.

Esseks inquired if a parking lot was discussed. Cary replied that was an item that did not get brought up.

Cary stated there are certain times of day that the parallel parking spots are filled up. There are also other times of day that they aren't being utilized fully. The proposal is to not widen 48th St. from Lowell to Pioneers Blvd. The intersection of 48th St. and Pioneers is a good candidate for a roundabout. The signal will need to be replaced. The two streets have similar traffic flows. This will beautify the area. This could possibly be a part of the 48th St. rehab project. The accident levels drop with a roundabout. Staff did not come across anyone who opposed a roundabout for this intersection. They knew parking was an issue going into this process. New bus stops on the west side of 48th St. are needed. Another point is that LES has voiced interest in burying the power lines along 48th St. There is a lot of community support for this. Streetscapes are generally private efforts. This is why there needs to be a neighborhood association. Community organization is the key. South St. is a current example of streetscaping.

Moline questioned the cost of the streetscaping. Cary replied that it depends on what the neighborhood wants to do and when. A lot of things at once is around \$50,000 per block. Urban Development was involved in this process and provided guidance.

Cary stated that it is our hope that the neighborhood can take the final report and try to plan for their improvements. Staff normally does not get this detailed in the Comprehensive Plan.

Esseks wondered what the role is of Planning Commission in this. Carroll stated that he believes the Planning Commission would encourage these types of neighborhood audits. This audit included Union College as a major stakeholder.

Cary stated that this is different from a subarea study. A subarea gets more into land uses. This study is about mobility.

Moline noted that Cary stated the cost for this study was about \$21,000.00. He questioned where the money came from. Cary replied that the cost for this came out of federal transportation dollars. Staff would be interested in doing this study somewhere else. There hasn't been a discussion of a specific area yet.

The meeting concluded at 12:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Teresa McKinstry
Planning Department