

BRIEFING NOTES

NAME OF GROUP: PLANNING COMMISSION

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING: Wednesday, April 26, 2017, 12:00 noon, Bill Luxford Studio, Room 113, County-City Building, 555 South 10th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Tom Beckius, Tracy Edgerton, Deane Finnegan, Maja Harris, Chris Hove, Dennis Scheer and Sändra Washington; (Tracy Corr and Ken Weber absent).

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: David Cary, Steve Henrichsen, Paul Barnes, Kellee Van Bruggen Rachel Jones and Teresa McKinstry of the Planning Dept.

STATED PURPOSE: Briefing on “**Staff Reports**” and “**2017 Community Indicators**” by Planning staff.

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

Steve Henrichsen welcomed everyone and reviewed the agenda for the briefing.

Staff Reports

Henrichsen stated that this is the first time he can remember that staff is changing the format of the staff report. We are moving from Word Perfect into Microsoft Word. We are also trying to organize the information into a better format.

Rachel Jones showed the new layout. The biggest change is page one of the staff report. It will now be more like a cover page. It is organized in a way that should be visually more efficient. A vicinity map will be shown, along with the more pertinent information. There will be a section for Justification for Recommendation. This will be a little more descriptive than just a staff recommendation. There will also be a section for Compatibility with the Comprehensive Plan. For the rest of the staff report, it will still contain an analysis. The conditions of approval will now be a separate document that will be attached to the staff report. Application History will also be moved to a separate attachment if it is especially long. Staff hopes this will be more user friendly.

Hove questioned if there will be links to the attachments. Henrichsen stated that the attachments will most likely be placed directly after the staff report pages in one long document, like it is now.

Washington appreciates the changes. It is more informative and graphically easier to use.

Henrichsen stated that the key items will continue to be in the analysis. The attachments will still be the same. Often times, there are numerous pages to the site plan. We will eliminate the technical information such as elevations and street profiles that may not be pertinent to the discussion. He thinks this is a nice cleanup of the staff report.

Beckius and Edgerton expressed their appreciation. They both agreed that the new format looks very nice.

2017 Community Indicators

Paul Barnes stated that the 2017 Community Indicators Report has been released. This report goes back to 2003. A variety of indicators and benchmarks are reported on. This looks at items that have happened over the last year and the assumptions into the future. We try to provide as much as possible, the latest data that is available. It depends on the source. This is part of the open data initiative that the City is undertaking. We wanted to make this data more informative.

As of July, 2016, there were 309,637 people in Lancaster County. We have seen a steady population increase of 3,000+ or more since 2001. We have determined and continue to monitor the supply of lots and Tier 1 land for future dwelling units. We continue to have increased employment opportunity.

Hove consistently hears that there are not enough lots for development. Barnes stated that there are numerous lots that haven't been developed yet. We have heard from the County Assessor that 93% of the final platted lots are buildable. About 16,000 lots are preliminarily platted or final platted. There is a process to work through with the Planning Dept. to final plat and bond for streets and sewers.

Barnes continued that the growth rate is a little higher than what the Comprehensive Plan projects. We will continue to monitor the growth rate. We assume in the plan that 90 percent of the residents will live in Lincoln, and the rest in the county and unincorporated villages and towns. 53.4 percent of the population increase since 2010 is due to natural change. 46.6 percent increase is due to net migration. Lancaster County is becoming more diverse over time.

For housing trends, 2016 showed some increased building activity. 1,267 units were permitted in Lincoln versus 604 in 2009. There is increased building activity in the rural county as well.

The plan assumes that over time, 60 percent of those units built will be single-family and 40 percent multi-family. So far it is 55.8 single-family and 44.2 percent multi-family units. We will continue to watch this. There are currently 16,252 lots in Tier I that are already approved or platted.

Finnegan wondered who is stating that there aren't enough lots. Barnes thinks it may be from the builders. David Cary believes another thing to consider is that there has been a high number of infill, outside of new growth. He thinks there is a little reaction to where the building is happening. Finnegan doesn't believe this has changed in 20 years. Barnes believes what has changed is the amount of units built. We have a greater supply now based on the number of units we are building, than before the recession.

Hove wondered if it is true that there are only 200 single family homes for sale. Barnes believes that part of that will be absorbed in new construction. He can't explain fully why it is happening. Hove believes that as a banker, we are more conservative with new homes. Barnes stated we have seen household size increase, so that could have an impact as well.

Barnes continued that the existing home price versus the new home price was about \$60,211 in 2004 compared to \$107,104 in 2016. Rental affordability is a new indicator that was added. We had never looked at this in the past. A lot comes from Fact Finder, the Census and HUD's website. The rent that is paid, as well as utilities, in Lincoln is \$729. The U.S. median gross rent is \$928. Approximately 27 percent of rental households in Lancaster County are cost burdened, or households who pay more than 30 percent of their income towards rent. This is part of a larger discussion.

There are employment area indicators. Between 2000 and 2015, quite a few jobs were added. Unemployment in Lincoln is still less than Nebraska and the U.S. We look at different sectors. The business and commerce sectors added some jobs from 2010 to 2015. The industrial sector has increased 10.3 percent since 2010. We also look at the labor force. 93.5 percent of residents 18 and over have a high school diploma or higher. This is well above the U.S. and Lancaster County as a whole. In terms of economic indicators, sales and lodging tax have increased. In term of environment, 253 acres have been added to the protected area of floodplain areas. There has also been a steady reduction in municipal solid waste since 2006. Water consumption for residential usage has been declining. Consumption per customer is down. Another new indicator tracks electric consumption. Since 2010, customers increased by 6.8 percent, but consumption decreased by 0.88 percent. We don't have the data yet to split out consumption by the different energy sources, but we hope to in the future. For Environment and Recreation, as of 2016, there are more than 87,000 street trees and 38,000 additional trees on City owned land. 20 percent of trees on City owned property are ash trees.

Harris wondered what has been approved for the destruction of the ash trees due to the Emerald Ash Borer. Barnes believes Parks and Recreation has hired someone to review the Ash

Borer. Cary stated there is funding for some of the action items with regard to the Ash Borer. The full plan hasn't been implemented yet.

Barnes continued that one of the Transportation indicators is to decrease automobile usage. Bike racks have been added to buses. In 2016, 97.3 percent of all residences were within one mile of a trail. Since 2000, 43.5 miles of trails have been constructed. We have counters on the Rock Island Trail and hope to have more installed. We also look at alternative modes of travel. As of 2015, almost 20 percent of residents commute by other means. This was much higher in 1980 at 37.7 percent. Minutes to work has increased since 1980, but the size of Lincoln has increased as well. He believes the higher cost of gasoline in 1980 has a lot to do with the numbers. We look at daily vehicle miles traveled. Since 2000, the annual growth in vehicle miles traveled has been less than 1 percent, but the population has increased 1.33 percent annually. We also look at the crash rate. The crash rate was 10.59 per million vehicle miles traveled in 1985. It remains below 5 per million vehicle miles traveled since 2006.

There is a new website available for the 2016 Community Indicators at: <http://beta-lincolnne.opendata.arcgis.com/pages/community-indicators#ember1052>. It is more of a dashboard looking piece. It shows the different indicator areas and is more interactive. The printed document will have a lot more text. He believes this will also be linked off the open data website.

Finnegan stated this is really good information.

Beckius wondered if there is information sharing with LPED (Lincoln Partnership for Economic Development) or other agencies. Cary stated this information was sent out to our full mailing list. It is available to anyone who looks at our website. Beckius questioned if the report is used more internally than citywide. Barnes believes that is a fair assessment. He would hope that it would be more widely used now that it is a part of the Open Data effort.

Finnegan wondered who keeps track of hotel nights used. It seems that Lincoln has a lot of hotels and she questioned where these people come from. Cary believes that the Convention Visitors Bureau has a lot of information, along with the Chamber of Commerce. There has been a discussion about the number of hotels being built. The number he has seen is that more are needed.

Barnes thanked all the Commissioners for the time they give towards all the briefings. Staff appreciates it.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:50 p.m.