**MEETING RECORD**

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| **NAME OF GROUP:** | PLANNING COMMISSION |
| **DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING:** | Wednesday, August 2, 2006, 11:30 a.m., Rm. 113, County/City Building, 555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska |
| **MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:** | Gene Carroll, Jon Carlson, Dick Esseks, Roger Larson, Mary Strand, Lynn Sunderman and Tommy Taylor. Gerry Krieser and Michael Cornelius absent. |
| **OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:** | Karl Fredrickson, Roger Figard, Steve Masters of Public Works & Utilities; Marvin Krout, Kent Morgan, Steve Henrichsen, Mike DeKalb, David Cary, Sara Hartzell and Michele Abendroth of the Planning Department. |
| **STATED PURPOSE OF MEETING:** | **County Acreage Report and Comp Plan Text Workshop** |

The meeting was called to order at 11:40 a.m.

Mike DeKalb began with an update of the County Acreage report. He provided some excerpts from the Comprehensive Plan with reference to acreages. The Comp Plan currently states that 90% of the county's population will be in Lincoln. They expect incorporated towns to be at 3% and farms to be at 1%.

Larson asked how acreage and farm growth can continue at the same rate as it would seem that the more acreages there are, the less farms there would be. DeKalb responded that as the city grows, acreages can also grow. Lancaster County has more farms than any county in the state.

DeKalb noted several statistics regarding acreage development. From 2000 to 2005, there were 6,437 single family residential units built in Lincoln and 876 single family residential units in the balance of the unincorporated county. For single family construction, that represents a five year average of about 12% in the county and 88% in the city. The annual rural/acreage single family development ranged from 10-14% of the city/county total over that period.

On average, 73% of the single family residential units are located in the AG district and 27% are located in the AGR district.

About 88% of all single family permits have occurred in Lincoln during the last five years and about 12% have occurred outside the City.

Approximately 92% of all dwelling units were constructed in Lincoln.

On average, 81-90% of the single family building permits are in Lincoln; 3-5% are in the other incorporated towns; and 6-12% are in the rural unincorporated area. An interesting point is that of the rural county permits, about 29% were in the Lincoln 3 mile, 12% were in the other town one mile jurisdictions and 58% were in the Lancaster County jurisdiction.

DeKalb continued with discussion regarding the distributed maps. The combined AG/AGR zoning map shows the development pattern being generally across the county, with the exception of the northeast quadrant. The bulk of the activity seems to be south of O Street and generally follows the main paved roads. This pattern of development may relate to the existence of the rural water district in the south, generally more ground water opportunity to the south and a finer system of infrastructure and support in the southern portion of the county.

Larson stated that he believes they are underestimating the growth in Stevens Creek. DeKalb stated that as the sewer goes south, that will be urban development, not acreages.

Esseks stated that he is shocked by the lack of development in the northeast. DeKalb stated that there are several reasons, including spotty ground water, no rural water district, no fine grained system of paved roads, no state lakes, but there is good farmland. So the farmers aren't willing to sell, and there is no big draw for acreages to occur.

Henrichsen then began discussion on the Business and Commerce chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. He noted that staff has revised the text on Neighborhood Centers to state, "In general, an anchor store should occupy about a third to half of the total space. In centers meeting the incentive criteria, anchor stores may have up to two-thirds of the total space."

Esseks noted that he researched literature for justification on an anchor ratio, but he could not find any evidence. Henrichsen stated that most of the existing neighborhood centers are not dominated by a single large box, but are made up of a series of smaller stores. Esseks commented that the SuperTarget recently approved is 78% of the space, and he feels the lower percentage could be unfair and could discourage a desirable development.

Carlson stated that he supports the revised statement.

Carroll agreed with Esseks, as he feels the ratio could be too limiting. He recommended revising the text to state that historically anchor stores have had up to two-thirds of the total space. Esseks stated that in the absence of good empirical evidence, he believes we should err on the side of being more permissive.

Carlson stated that he believes the numbers were chosen based on the historical evidence and the current trends.

Strand suggested the following language, "In centers meeting the incentive criteria, anchor stores may be larger noting that the goal of neighborhood centers is to be diverse and not simply one store/anchor." Commissioners agreed with this change.

Henrichsen then reviewed the priority and land use maps. Tier 1 has been separated into Priority A and B. Priority A is about 35 square miles and the area they anticipate to be served in the six-year Capital Improvements Program. They have identified areas of interest on the map.

Masters stated that the developer interest exceeds the land mass identified by a 1.5% annual population growth. So there is a concern about being overextended, but they also do not want to drive anyone away. The financial resources need to be constrained. The City has committed to increasing user fees for 6 years. The top priority area is the existing city and will require continued investments for the facilities in place and further capital construction. Priority A does not help prioritize all the desirable areas into a designation that is financially constrained.

Henrichsen stated there are two options for the priority area. One is the July 26 draft where Priority A is very large, but it would require much bigger increases in water and sewer rates and the road program in unattainable without significant increases. Another option is to have the Priority A area similar to the current Comp Plan with approximately 20 square miles, but it will be more financially attainable.

Esseks stated that the advantage of the first choice is that it offers more options. Larson stated that he agrees, but there needs to be a method of providing the financial resources.

Henrichsen noted that the Priority Map is adopted and approved every year by the City Council, and it is used by Public Works as a guide for development.

Figard stated that staff needs some guidance as to the higher priority areas. They need some benchmarks as to what areas should be given higher priority. The resources are not available to serve the entire Priority A area.

Krout stated that one of the factors to look at is how costly it is to provide services to one part of Priority A versus another part of Priority A. There are areas where it is more or less costly to provide services. Another criteria is that there needs to be a balance of land use. Another idea that he has seen used is a so-called "beauty contest". The current system is basically first come, first served. In this concept, we would identify what funds are available for specific services and a list of criteria, and developers would compete with each other. This would be a more transparent process. It is also a way to identify priorities.

Henrichsen stated that discussion on this topic will continue at the August 30th meeting. Staff will develop more options for the Commissioners' review.

Commissioners agreed on the time for the special hearing on October 18th from 3:00-5:30 p.m. with additional time from 6:00-10:00 p.m. if needed.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele Abendroth
Planning Department

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