MEETING RECORD

NAME OF GROUP:	PLANNING COMMISSION
DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING:	Wednesday, January 17, 2007,11:45 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, Lynn Sunderman and Tommy Taylor. Mary Strand absent.
OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:	Marvin Krout, Stephen Henrichsen, Mike DeKalb, Tom Cajka, Christy Eichorn and Michele Abendroth of the Planning Department; Ben Higgins of Public Works & Utilities; Glenn Johnson of the Lower Platte South NRD; Milan Wall of the Heartland Center.
STATED PURPOSE OF MEETING:	**Floodplain re-mapping and Zoning Ordinance changes**

The meeting was called to order at 11:47 a.m.

Ben Higgins stated that the purpose of the meeting is to inform the Commissioners of the floodplain re-mapping for Salt Creek and the zoning ordinance changes. This update is similar to updates that have been done with Stevens Creek, Beal Slough, and Cardwell Branch.

Glenn Johnson stated that a number of years ago the Mayor appointed a Floodplain Task Force which analyzed the status of floodplain ordinances and floodplain development. They made two recommendations, one for the existing built part of the City and the other for the growth area. Their recommendations for the growth area have already been adopted and put into place. The recommendation for inside the existing City stated that an update of the Salt Creek Floodplain Study must be done. This study has been in process for the past one-and-a half years. Draft maps are completed. As part of the master plan, there is an update of the floodplain to get the most current and accurate information. These maps are then submitted to FEMA. In the meantime, the City has adopted those maps and used them for administering floodplain regulations during the time of the FEMA review. The existing FEMA maps for the Salt Creek floodplain are over 20 years old. The goal was to use the best and latest information in terms of existing land use and produce the best maps possible.

Johnson then presented a simulation of how Salt Creek floods and the impacts of a 100-year flood on the area. The reasons for updating the Salt Creek floodplain map are to accurately reflect the flood hazards along Salt Creek, to provide information to assist in

protecting homes and businesses, to make flood hazard information available in user-friendly digital format, and to provide dependable information for floodplain management decisions and policies.

The Salt Creek levee extends from Calvert to Superior Streets. It provides flood protection during severe rainstorms, but the water overtops the levees into the flood storage areas during extreme rainstorms. There are twenty flood storage areas located on the landward side of the levee system.

The existing floodplain map shows the floodway staying within the levees along Calvert to Superior Street. They looked at two options for the flood storage. The first is the conventional method with a floodway that would cover huge areas of existing buildings and structures and would have much more severe restrictions and regulations. The alternative is to map the floodway within the levee, but regulate and restrict how much fill can take place. An ordinance change would be required in order to regulate it.

Higgins explained that an ordinance change is required to meet the minimum FEMA regulatory standards. Each flood storage area is assigned a percentage of allowable fill and is an alternate to a much wider traditional floodway. The higher the percentage of the allowable fill, the less efficient the area is.

In terms of the process, Higgins stated that there is a formal FEMA adoption process which is anticipated to begin during late 2007 and completed in 2008. Meanwhile, the updated floodplain map is proposed to be adopted for local regulation and is consistent with other map updates. The adoption will include the companion ordinance changes. The date of the Planning Commission public hearing is January 31, 2007. DeKalb noted that the Planning Commission will only be asked to approve the ordinance changes.

Flood insurance is likely to be required for buildings in the updated floodplain when FEMA maps are adopted. Local adoption of the map does not trigger mandatory purchase of flood insurance. Homes and businesses not shown in the floodplain on the current FEMA map, but within the floodplain on updated map, may be eligible for flood insurance at a lower rate if purchased prior to FEMA map adoption.

Wall stated that there has been an extensive public process from March 2005 through December 2006. There were three open houses, multiple mailings, a speakers bureau with 16 presentations, and technical information and flood insurance seminars. They also worked with over 40 landowners to reflect the recently updated fill information on the updated map. There is an extensive website with maps and information. They also offered to do surveys on homes and businesses on the fringe of the floodplain.

Krout asked about the alternatives to more restrictive regulations. Johnson stated that the Mayor's Floodplain Task Force looked at changing the one foot allowable rise in the floodway. They analyzed what impacts different restrictions in the fill would have on the elevation and structures. They have a model in place, but would have to run the numbers

on Salt Creek.

Larson asked how much land is being taken out of what is available for development. Higgins responded that 100% of everything from the levee to the edge of the floodplain could be filled and developed under today's ordinances. He doesn't think that a calculation has been done with the 30% or 40% fill because it is not land area, it is 'net'. Effectively, it will reduce the acres of land by some number; however, they do not know what that number is.

Esseks stated that if we enact the allowable one foot rise, we will have two different standards in the same community. It seems that public policy makers have to justify a more lenient standard. He asked if there is an argument for this. Johnson stated that there could possibly be two different standards, but one uniform standard for the existing urban area and a different standard for the growth area. The impact of the no net rise within the existing urban area is a much more severe economic impact than if it is an area of new growth where the land is yet to be developed.

Esseks asked about the consequences of the one foot rise. Higgins stated there will be a physical impact, but noted that this is a FEMA requirement.

The meeting concluded at 12:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele Abendroth
Planning Department

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