

BRIEFING NOTES

NAME OF GROUP: PLANNING COMMISSION

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING: Wednesday, January 11, 2012, 11:45 a.m., Room 113, County-City Building, 555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Greg Butcher, Michael Cornelius, Dick Esseks, Leirion Gaylor Baird, Chris Hove, Jeanelle Lust, Jim Partington, Lynn Sunderman and Ken Weber. Wendy Francis absent.

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Miki Esposito and Randy Hoskins of Public Works; Rick Hoppe of the Mayor's Office; Margaret Blatchford of the Law Department; Fred Hoke of Building & Safety; David Landis of Urban Development; Marvin Krout, Nicole Fleck-Tooze, David Cary and Michele Abendroth of the Planning Department.

STATED PURPOSE OF MEETING: Access Management/Design Standards Amendment

The meeting was called to order at 11:46 a.m. The Nebraska Open Meetings Act was acknowledged.

Hoppe began by stating that access management incorporates quality of life, adequate traffic control and safety. It needs to support the economic viability of our businesses. Mayor Beutler is very interested in access management. When he first took office, he came to find out that there is no single document or source of guidance regarding access management, so staff has been working on this document. Staff met with the private sector, and they support the standards.

Hoskins noted that the reasons we need access management are for sustainability/efficiency, safety and economic vitality. The reasons we need this new policy and process are because following the policy gets an automatic "yes". It also clarifies vague items from the existing design standards, and it spells out the needs for case-by-case review of situations in the built environment. There are several major categories of roads including freeways and expressways, major arterials, minor arterials, collectors and local streets.

The new things in the policy are the access spacing requirements, turn lane requirements, throat length requirements, on-site storage requirements, traffic impact study requirements and requests for deviation and appeal procedures.

There were several hurdles to clear in this process which included what should be done in the built environment, determining throat lengths, and how to handle deviations/appeals.

At the beginning of the process, the first step was to conduct a professional/ technical and legal review. Then a draft policy was posted on the City's website for public review. Next, the policy was presented to several groups, and a great deal of feedback was received. It was then presented to the Planning Commission and then to the Access Management Committee.

Many things changed during this process. In the end, all the groups supported the proposed policy.

There is a three part adoption plan. First, the design standard resolution will be acted on by the Planning Commission, and it includes the elimination of Chapter 4 and amending Chapter 1. Next is the adoption of the Access Management Policy resolution and the adoption of ordinance changes to chapter 14.75 by the City Council.

The timeline for adoption is the Planning Commission hearing on January 25, City Council introduction on January 30, City Council hearing on February 6 and City Council adoption on February 13.

Esseks noted a development on 84th and Pioneers that hasn't gone through and specifically regarding a turn lane. He asked how this policy will affect that type of development. Hoskins stated that they would have to determine if this is the built environment. This policy offers a lot of flexibility so they could work with the developer on the guidelines.

Gaylor Baird asked if any consideration was given to other modes of transportation during the development of this policy. Hoskins stated that there is not a lot of attention made to other modes in this document. Typically the issues are dealing with motor vehicles. There is language in the policy that notes other modes.

Esseks asked about site distances in residential areas at a curved intersection. Hoskins stated that the location needs to have appropriate site distances. Some of these issues are dealt with after the fact; for instance, if a fence is put in and it affects the site distances, then they will ask that the fence be moved. Esseks noted that part of this effort should be to inform the public about these requirements. He asked if Public Works will monitor these requirements or if it will only be dealt with on a complaint basis. Hoskins stated that unfortunately many of the cases are handled on a complaint basis. They also do an annual crash study so they will follow up if an intersection is an issue.

Butcher asked about the intended user for these documents and asked about providing definitions for some of the terms such as throat length. Esposito stated that they discussed having a glossary. She noted that there may be some users who are unfamiliar with the terms.

Esseks asked about the process for a development that does not meet the standards. Hoskins stated that if someone proposes a driveway that doesn't meet the standards, they will have to submit a request for deviation. They will have to justify why in this particular case the access policy doesn't make sense. Hopefully, in the end, by having greater documentation of why certain things were allowed or not allowed, that will provide greater control.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:25 p.m.