

# MAYOR'S NEIGHBORHOOD ROUNDTABLE SUMMARY

December 9, 2019

Tracy Corr opened the meeting on Monday, December 9, 2019 at 5:30 p.m. in the Mayor's Conference Room, City/County Building, Lincoln, NE.

## Attendance

Fifteen residents and four City staff attended:

Tracy Corr – 40 <sup>th</sup> & A NA	Gloria Eddins – Clinton NO
Jennifer Powell – Country Club NA	Paul Johnson – East Campus CO
Karen Dienstbier – Eastridge NA	Paula Rhian – Everett & IHC
Sue Burkey – Hartley NA	Pat Stear – Hartley NA
Myrna Coleman – Highlands NA	Andy Gueck – Indian Village NA
Mike DeKalb – University Place CO	Bill Vocasek – West A NA
Russell Miller – Witherbee NA	Randy Smith – Woods Park NA
Marti Lee – NeighborWorks-Lincoln	Chad Blahak – Building & Safety
Sean Stewart – Building & Safety	Jon Carlson – Mayor's Office
Mayor Gaylor Baird	

## Welcome & Introductions

Tracy Corr welcomed everyone and asked for introductions. Paul Johnson volunteered to take notes until he must leave at 6:00. Paula Rhian volunteered to finish the meeting notes.

## Mayor Gaylor Baird Comments

The City is prepared for winter operations. Check the website at [snow.lincoln.ne.gov](http://snow.lincoln.ne.gov) for continuous snow-related updates. City ordinance requires sidewalks to be cleared by 9:00 a.m. after snowfall. To expedite snow removal, it's helpful for residents to travel as little as possible. Residents can report issues with snow removal via UPLNK or by calling 402-441-7541. As always, Lincoln residents will watch out for each other and help their neighbors as needed.

A Roundtable attendee suggested that neighborhood associations help distribute information about the snow update website via neighborhood communications.

Interviews for the Health Director position start tomorrow, so the Mayor will need to leave the Roundtable meeting early today.

Question: How long has the Open Data portal been available on the City website?

Answer: City staff are currently revamping the portal & website to improve ease of use.

## Neglected Building Registry Update

*Chad Blahak, Director of Building & Safety: 402-441-7049; [cblahak@lincoln.ne.gov](mailto:cblahak@lincoln.ne.gov)*

*Sean Stewart, Chief Housing Inspector: 402-441-6525; [sstewart@lincoln.ne.gov](mailto:sstewart@lincoln.ne.gov)*

Chad and Sean updated the group on the **Neglected Building Registry**, which was begun in 2014. Currently, there have been a total of 67 properties on the registry; 30 were added due to complaints and 37 were added as a result of being placarded. Of that total, eight properties have been sold to new owners but not yet in compliance with codes, ten have been demolished by the City, eight have been brought into code compliance by the original owner, sixteen have been brought into compliance by a new owner, twenty-three are being assessed registration fees, and one is in legal process.

To be added to the Registry, a property must be vacant, have been on the Red Tag list for at least 2 years, and/or be the focus of significant complaints. Often these properties have become burdens on the community — eyesores leading to increased crime and declining property values. Registration of a neglected building includes a plan that addresses the neglect. If the plan is followed and completed, the building no longer needs to be registered. If the plan is not implemented, fines and further fees will be assessed on the property every 90

days. If not paid by the owner, these then become liens that can — in extreme circumstances — lead to the City foreclosing on the property. However, this really isn't the best result.

Preferably, the property is brought into compliance and becomes available as a safe, sanitary place to live. To accomplish that ideal, the Director of Building & Safety has authority to work with owners who are making good efforts to address neglect issues. When a property has new owners, the property remains on the list until significant progress has been made.

The ordinance has been an effective tool in dealing with neglected properties. Most of the properties get sold to new owners who are motivated to improve the property. Some properties have gone to court in an attempt to make the owner move more quickly.

The public information website lists the properties on the Neglected Building Registry. Use the keyword "Citizen" on the City website (lincoln.ne.gov) to go to the public information login site.

A Roundtable attendee suggested the City put a sign up on listed neglected properties so that the neighborhood is aware that "something is being done."

Another Roundtable attendee asked whether a building can be inspected, even if the outside looks fine.

Chad and Sean also explained that the **Problem Resolution Team** program is separate from the Neglected Building Registration program, but houses can end up on both lists if they are vacant. It was explained that if a property owner lists their own building on the Neglected Building Registry, the cost is \$500 every 90 days until the problem is resolved. If the city has to list it for them, the cost is \$1,000 every 90 days until the problem is resolved. Liens are filed quarterly.

If you register as a user on the Citizen Access Portal, you can search for the registry list. Go to the City home page and use "Citizen" in the keyword field. If you do not register as a user, you will not be able to view the list.

### **Announcements**

- Final reminder: If you haven't already done so, please take the **Lincoln Housing Survey**. Please tell your friends, neighbors, and neighborhood association contacts about the survey as well. Here's the link: <https://surveymonkey.com/r/LincolnHousingSurvey>
- The **2020 Neighborhood Forum** will be January 25, 2020, from 9:00 am to Noon, 2640 R Street, the Sower Church, also known as Candlewood Church.
- Flyer handed out: Lower Platte South Natural Resource District – **Community Assistance Program** – **See Attachment 1.**

### **Next Meeting/Agenda**

Next meeting will be January 13th, topic to be determined.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted, Paul Johnson & Paula Rhian*