

Directors Meeting Agenda

Monday, March 11, 2024, 2:00 p.m.

555 S 10th Street – City Chambers

- I. Open Meetings Law Announcement**
- II. Approval of Directors Meeting Minutes from March 4, 2024**
- III. City Clerk Advisories**
- IV. Mayor's Advisories**
- V. Director's Advisories**
- VI. City Council: Commissions, Committees, and Event Updates**
- VII. Post-Meeting Council Members Calls to City Directors**
- VIII. Adjournment**

Next Directors Meeting – March 18, 2024, 2:00 p.m.

City Correspondence

Kristi Merfeld – Urban Design Standard Letter

Jennifer T. McDonald – BP240305 – 1 Administrative Approval

Kristine A. Egan – Mayor's Neighborhood Roundtable 03.11.2024 is cancelled

Kristine A. Egan – Day of Happiness 03/23/2024 | Havelock NA | Positivity Matter

Constituent Correspondence

John Stefovich – Woods Park Testimony

Aaron Achen – Wood Park

Carolyn Nolte – The Proposed Tennis Expansion Woods Park

Martha Morton – Woods park project

Barbara Ridder – Woods Park

Rose Holz – Woods Park Proposal

Grace Langdon – Please keep Woods Park green

Erin Makinson – My thoughts on the new Woods Park proposal

Andrew Neville – Oppose Woods Tennis Expansion

Linell Connolly – Fw: Woods Park testimony

Russ Free – Woods Park Tennis Center Development

Charina Walker – Claim

Wayne & Laura – Woods Park

Peter Morin – Woods Park Testimony

Lori Morin – Woods Park testimony

Shelley Longsine – Woods Park tennis expansion proposal

Marty Longsine – proposed woods park tennis expansion

Bruce Sandhorst – Woods Park Proposal for tennis expansion

The Directors Meeting Agendas and Minutes may be accessed at:
<https://www.lincoln.ne.gov/City/City-Council/Directors-Minutes-Agendas>

Tom J. Beckius

From: Kristi L. Merfeld
Sent: Thursday, February 29, 2024 9:04 AM
Subject: Urban Design Standard Letter
Attachments: DIRECTOR LETTER.pdf

Please see the attached Director's Approval Letter to grant waiver of the Neighborhood Design Standards for 1625 Grace Avenue

Thank you

Kristi Merfeld
Lincoln-Lancaster County Planning Department
555 S 10th Street Ste 213
Lincoln NE 68508
402-441-7491

February 28, 2024

Dear Mr. Bridger,

You are receiving this notice regarding the requested waiver to the Neighborhood Design Standards for the construction of a single-family residence with a detached garage at 1625 Grace Avenue. The design standards apply to new construction of principal buildings on land located within the R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4, R-5, R-6, R-7, and R-8 districts, and subsequent modifications to those buildings provided such land was within the corporate limits of the City on December 31, 1949.

The purpose of the Neighborhood Design Standards is to encourage the rehabilitation of existing housing in Lincoln's well-established neighborhoods while allowing necessary new construction compatible with the surrounding development. The standards focus on a limited number of basic design elements that have a significant effect on compatibility, such as the orientation of windows and entrances toward the street, height and massing, and location of parking.

As per the Neighborhood Design Standards, section 4.1 Building Elements, (point no.1)

- 1. New buildings shall utilize a roof type and pitch commonly found within the same and facing block front. Hipped or gable roofs with a pitch of at least 22.5 degrees (5/12 pitch) are acceptable for any project regulated by the Neighborhood Design Standards. Roofs of lower pitch and other types may be compatible in specific districts and can be proposed and approved on an individual basis. In such cases, the applicant should cite specific examples within a block of the project location comparable to the proposed building in height and to the proposed roof in type and pitch.**

In our analysis, the proposed house has a 3/12 pitch, i.e. around 14.04°, which is lower than most houses on the same and facing block and does not meet the Neighborhood Design Standards.

When a design does not meet the Neighborhood Design Standards, the Planning Director has the authority to approve or deny a waiver based on his decision as to whether the proposed design meets the intent and spirit of the Standards.

The Planning Director has reviewed the materials and granted a waiver of the standards. After careful consideration, he has approved the deviation request to allow the roof pitch of 3/12.

The Neighborhood Design Standards are online at: <https://online.encodeplus.com/regs/lincoln-ne-ds/doc-viewer.aspx#secid-828>

Please do not hesitate to contact our office at 402-441-6361 or agopalakrishnan@lincoln.ne.gov if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



David Cary, Director
Lincoln-Lancaster County Planning Department

Tom J. Beckius

From: Jennifer T. McDonald
Sent: Tuesday, March 5, 2024 4:16 PM
To: Council Packet
Cc: David R. Cary
Subject: BP240305 - 1 Administrative Approval
Attachments: BP240305 - 1 Administrative Approval.pdf

Please see the attached Administrative Approvals for February 26, 2024, through March 4, 2024.

Thank you,

Jennifer McDonald
Administrative Aide II
Lincoln-Lancaster County Planning Department
555 S 10th St, Ste 213
Lincoln, NE 68508
402-441-6365



Memorandum

Date: March 5, 2024
To: City Clerk
From: Clara McCully, Planning Dept.
Re: Administrative Approvals
cc: Shelli Reid, Planning Dept.

This is a list of City administrative approvals by the Planning Director from February 26, 2024, through March 4, 2024:

Administrative Amendment 24009 to Special Permit 1995B, Hub Hall Heights, was approved by the Planning Director on February 28, 2024, to amend General Site Notes and add a waiver, generally located at West Holdrege Street and Woodside Village Drive.

Administrative Amendment 24008, to Special Permit 2304, Central Park Offices and Apartments Planned Unit Development (PUD), was approved by the Planning Director on February 28, 2024, to show the existing multifamily complex and office building on separate lots within the PUD, generally located at the southeast corner of South 40th Street and Normal Boulevard.

Tom J. Beckius

From: Kristine A. Egan
Sent: Wednesday, March 6, 2024 8:09 AM
To: Kristine A. Egan
Subject: Mayor's Neighborhood Roundtable 03.11.2024 is cancelled

Good Morning Neighborhood Leaders and Representatives,

The March meeting of the Mayor's Neighborhood Roundtable is cancelled. Please watch for a message from us with a survey about future meeting formats.

PLEASE NOTE: Mayor's Neighborhood Roundtable is for Neighborhood Presidents or their designees.

Thank you,

Kristine Egan

Office Specialist
Urban Development Department
555 S. 10th Street, Ste 205 | Lincoln, NE 68508
Ph: 402.441.7569 | F: 402.441.8711
kegan@lincoln.ne.gov
www.lincoln.ne.gov

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Tom J. Beckius

From: Kristine A. Egan
Sent: Wednesday, March 6, 2024 11:09 AM
To: Kristine A. Egan
Subject: Day of Happiness 03/23/2024 | Havelock NA | Positivity Matters

Hello Neighborhood Leaders and Representatives,

The Havelock Neighborhood Association would like to invite you to a free event on 3/23/2024 that should be of interest to everyone in Lincoln involved in neighborhood associations: www.positivitymatters.org/dayofhappiness.

If you have any questions, please reach out to Nick Hernandez (402) 909-5203.
Community Builder, www.positivitymatters.org
President, Havelock Neighborhood Association

Thank you,

Kristine Egan

Office Specialist
Urban Development Department
555 S. 10th Street, Ste 205 | Lincoln, NE 68508
Ph: 402.441.7569 | F: 402.441.8711
kegan@lincoln.ne.gov
www.lincoln.ne.gov

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Tom J. Beckius

From: John Stefkovich <jstefkovich2@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 29, 2024 10:14 AM
To: Parks Counter Registrations; Council Packet; Mayor
Subject: Woods Park Testimony

Writing to oppose tennis expansion at Woods Park. We have lived across the street from the park for 40+ years and have seen the park diminished by small cuts over the years. The tennis expansion is just one more of these small cuts that will negatively affect the surrounding neighborhoods. We already deal with the adverse effects related to the pool (especially during the swim meets) such as traffic congestion on J St., noise (no one needs to hear the PA announcer 4 blocks away) and overflow parking affecting the neighborhood. Tennis expansion would only exacerbate these effects. Although FWT presents themselves as altruistic in bringing tennis to the community, I suspect that another of their goals is to be able to host larger tennis tournaments.

I am not optimistic that Keep It Green will prevent expansion but I think that the 2nd iteration of the proposed expansion is much worse than the first. Essentially it would pave the entire southern border of the park, along J St., from 33rd to the western boundary. Truly an ugly facade presented to the neighborhood that no amount of landscaping will improve. In my opinion the first proposal would be more suitable. We have already opposed, and prevented, expansion of the tennis courts to the SE corner 20 years ago.

Another option, apparently not explored, is utilization of the Kiwanis ballfield once Wesleyan vacates. This area has not been utilized by the neighborhood for years and already has a large parking lot available.

The intense recreational development of the J St. boundary of the park has had a negative impact on the neighborhood for years and this will only make it worse.

Thank you,
John and Chris Stefkovich
601 Elmwood Ave.

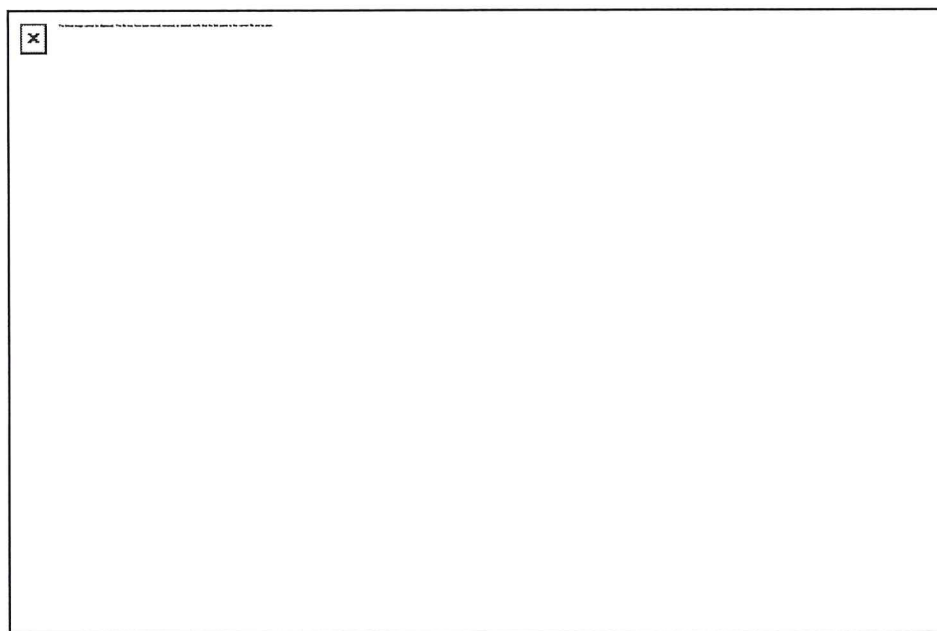
Tom J. Beckius

From: Aaron Achen <aaron.lincoln.nebraska@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 1, 2024 2:41 PM
To: Council Packet
Subject: Woods Park

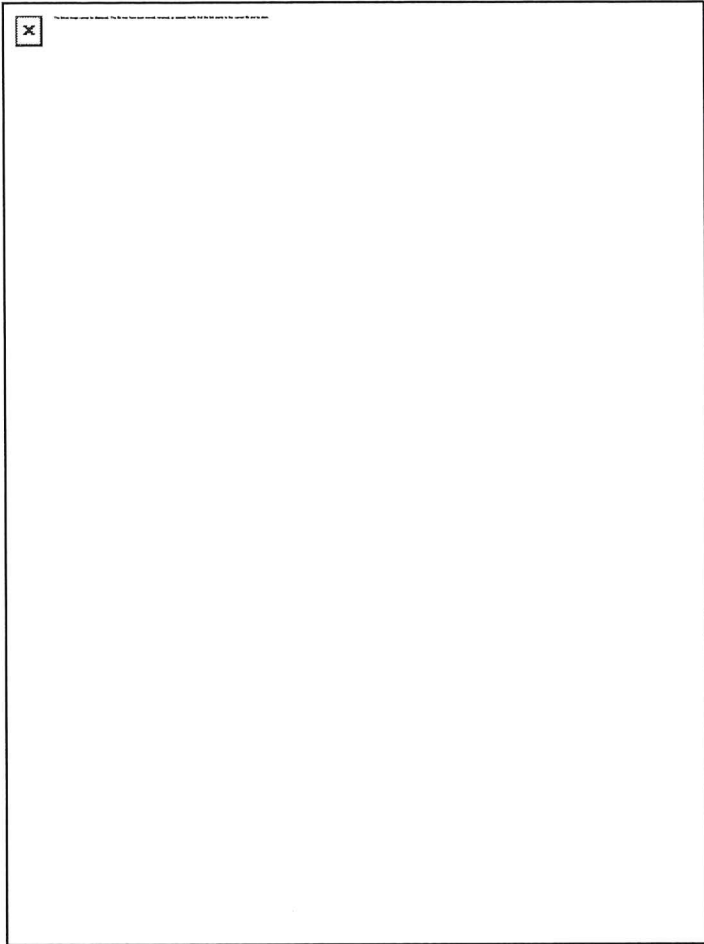
Distinguished Members of the Advisory Board,

I am writing in opposition to the further expansion of tennis facilities in Woods Park.

I believe that green parkland promotes a high quality of life that is a core city value. I do not believe that the proposed construction is an improvement. Below is a picture of an area that would be turned into tennis courts. (Picture from <https://www.lincoln.ne.gov/City/Departments/Parks-and-Recreation/Parks-Facilities/Parks-A-to-Z/Woods-Park>)



The scope of the proposed expansion is neither small nor unimportant. Below is a picture of an area that would be turned into a parking lot (all the way back).



Please oppose any changes to the Woods Park master plan that would reduce the amount of green space.

Sincerely,

David Aaron Achen

Resident, Woods Park Neighborhood

Tom J. Beckius

From: Carolyn Nolte <profcnolte@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 2, 2024 9:14 AM
To: Council Packet
Subject: The Proposed Tennis Expansion Woods Park

City Council,

Vote NO on the proposed Tennis Center Expansion. The oak trees, strip of prairie grasses, walking path, and open space should not be destroyed for a tennis facility.

Convenience is not a reason for approval. The Woods Tennis Center should look elsewhere for their expansion. Their desire to expand their program should not be at the expense of Woods Park and Harley Neighborhood area citizens who use Woods Park, and others like me who wander over from other neighborhoods on long evenings and cool mornings.

From aesthetic, ecological, and mental health perspectives, voting NO is a no brainer. Destroying the already established park area is not in the best interest of a majority of Lincoln citizens. Established park spaces should be protected. Do not pave every corner of Lincoln's future.

Thank you,

Carolyn Nolte
940 South 20 68510

Tom J. Beckius

From: Martha Morton <marthadmorton@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 2, 2024 10:11 AM
Subject: Woods park project

Dear council member,

I would like to weigh in on the Woods Park project proposal. This proposal would increase the number of parking places needed for swim meets and revamp the tennis courts to make more of them indoor. Organizers of these events should coordinate with the church across the street and with the health department. They should designate drop off areas for families to drop the paraphernalia needed for a meet and park remotely.

This proposal would increase the run off of water by increasing the amount of cement in the area. It would reduce the amount of green space that people use for playing tennis, walking dogs and running at all times of the day. Though putting tennis courts under roof allows people to play in the heat and cold, it restricts times when people can play outside. Parks are green spaces for ALL! We all need to get outside to meet our neighbors.

Best regards,
Dr. Martha Morton
326 S 26th Street.

Tom J. Beckius

From: Barbara Ridder <bridder@myyahoo.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 2, 2024 1:22 PM
To: Council Packet
Subject: Woods Park

I live at 3343 N St and am 81 years old with adult grandchildren that grew up playing in Woods Park. I walk the park nearly all days that the weather allows; thus I view the tennis courts frequently. I hope when considering the expansion, you have information about how many hours a day the courts stand empty. I often am struck by the lack of use of the exterior courts. Tournament times fill them, but that seems to me not enough to justify less grass and the destruction of 41 trees. Surely the tennis needs can be met elsewhere in Lincoln where perhaps children of another neighborhood could enjoy them.

Barb Ridder

Tom J. Beckius

From: Rose Holz <holzrose02@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 2, 2024 1:42 PM
To: Council Packet
Subject: Woods Park Proposal

Dear Lincoln City Council Members,

My name is Rose Holz and my husband and I live at 633 South 30th Street just around the corner from Woods Park.

We moved to Lincoln in 2002 (over 20 years ago) and immediately bought a house in this neighborhood precisely because of Woods Park. And the first thing we noticed upon moving in was how much this park is used by the people who live in this neighborhood -- from pick-up soccer games to families picnicking by and having friendly matches at the volleyball pit to people flying kites, walking their dogs, or just plain laying in the grass watching the clouds go by. We were delighted by this and knew we had found our home and our community here in Lincoln.

But in the last 20+ years, we have also watched in horror and dismay a repeated pattern of expansion that has systematically taken away this precious green space and open sky with cement, parking lots, chain-link fences, and massive windowless buildings.

This has to stop, and the time has come for the city to say -- no more.

Yes, there is demand for tennis and it's clear it serves a vital role in Lincoln. However, the city needs to come up with a better solution to this situation by finding a location that can meet the current demand, with room to grow in the future.

Because, yes, there is also a demand for nature and open green spaces.

I therefore respectfully ask the city to unequivocally reject this proposed expansion and preserve for us the green space that is not only the glue that holds the wonderfully diverse Wood Park community together but is also a green jewel of nature in the center of Lincoln for all its citizens to enjoy.

Thank you for your consideration.

Rose Holz
633 South 30th Street
Lincoln, NE 68510

Tom J. Beckius

From: Grace L <gracelangdon3@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 2, 2024 4:40 PM
To: Council Packet
Subject: Please keep Woods Park green

Lincoln's City Council,

I hope you are all doing well and enjoying the early spring weather we have been having. My name is Grace Langdon, and I am 17 years old. I am addressing you in regards to the recent consideration of building more tennis courts in Woods Park, and I would like to provide you with my perspective of why we should keep Woods Park green.

I realize I am young, but I hope that this does not cause my voice to lose validity. As a child, Woods Park provided me with a place to encounter nature and explore the outside world. In more recent years, it has been a place to spend hours in quiet contemplation of the beauty of the outdoors. The park's serene nature proudly stands like a lighthouse amid the stormy sea of the city, never failing to guide my heart to safety as it eases my every worry. So although I may inevitably lack much experience due to my age, my love for Woods Park is rivaled by none.

The land of Woods Park was only obtained by the city thanks to the donation of Frank Woods in 1947, whom the park was named for. Woods said that he made the donation in memory of his parents because of their love of agriculture, which, in his own words, "made Lincoln the city it is today." (source: The Lincoln Star Newspaper on December 31, 1947). To take away from the lush grass and cool shade of the trees and replace them with drab, cold concrete would not only be a devastating loss to the beauty of the city, but it would be disrespectful to the namesake of the park himself. The tennis courts that would be built in Frank Woods' name would take away from the beauty and elegance of the park he donated so much money to.

The tennis courts of Woods Park are a vital piece of the park, but they are not the only piece. The park is a sanctuary for dog walkers, bikers, painters, writers, runners, couples, photographers, and friends who come together to create memories that will last their entire lifetimes. Tennis courts can be built anywhere. Some would argue it is the same for the park, but to say so would discredit the beauty and history that are unique to Woods Park.

I greatly appreciate the work you put into keeping our city of Lincoln a safe and beautiful place for all. I know this is a decision you will take very seriously and you will choose the best possible outcome for Woods Park. I do encourage you, however, to visit one small place in the park that I believe demonstrates the value of Woods Park better than any other. On the north side of the park, there is a bench that overlooks O street. While sitting in this bench, one can simultaneously experience the beauty of nature and connect with the earth while gazing at the modern landscape of the world as society is now. Unifying the past and the present, this bench is a bubble between the calm of the earth and the connectedness of the world. The beauty of Woods Park comes from the balance of these two forces. We must preserve this balance to protect the city's beauty, and to do so, we must keep Woods Park green.

Sincerely,

Grace Langdon
Proud Lincolnite and lover of Woods Park

Tom J. Beckius

From: Erin Makinson <erinjmak@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 2, 2024 11:07 PM
Subject: My thoughts on the new Woods Park proposal

Good evening,

I am writing to you this evening to express my upmost concern about one of Lincoln's most beautiful and central parks, Woods Park. I understand that more tennis courts and parking lots may be built. Keeping Wood's Park green is important to the people of Lincoln and for wildlife, particularly pollinators. I urge you to protect this important green space.

Currently, Wood's park serves as a wonderful place to walk, sit, rest, think, and play. Green spaces are *valuable*. I really urge you to preserve Wood's Park and keep it welcoming to the surrounding community. While I understand that certain parts of this park will be untouched, I want a precedent to be set so that Wood's Park isn't bulldozed over in the future. Again, green spaces are important. Let's preserve the ones that we have.

Many people have fond memories of Woods park. I'll share you one of mine to further illustrate this park's importance. My memory of Wood's Park is more of a routine. My partner and I like to go on walks. We usually walk to Woods, find our favorite bench, and play the daily Wordle and talk about our days. This park is important to me, and the Lincoln community. I look forward to walking there several times a week.

I truly believe Wood's Park is best just how it is now. A parking lot or tennis court cannot compete with the importance of one of Lincoln's most central green spaces. I love Wood's Park and hope that our efforts keep it green. ❤️

I appreciate your time and consideration.

Thank you,

Erin Makinson
Resident of the 40th and A neighborhood

Tom J. Beckius

From: Andrew Neville <neville.andrew1@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 3, 2024 12:02 PM
To: Council Packet
Subject: Oppose Woods Tennis Expansion

I'm writing to voice my opposition to the expansion of Woods Tennis.

I have lived in the Woods Park neighborhood since July of 2010, and also lived here for several years growing up. I walk my dog in Woods Park all the time, and I enjoy the green space. Once cities give these up, they never come back. Lincoln is an ever expanding city, and new areas are being developed all the time on the edges of the city. Woods Tennis should look at buying land on the edge of the city, and should not be allowed to purchase this green space that belongs to tax paying citizens.

I would also note that I vote in every single election, general and primary, and I would never cast a vote for anyone who supports the removal of this green space.

Thanks,
Andrew Neville

Tom J. Beckius

From: Linell Connolly <linells@hotmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 3, 2024 2:03 PM
To: Council Packet
Subject: Fw: Woods Park testimony

From: Linell Connolly <linells@hotmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 3, 2024 1:26 PM
To: City Parks <park@lincoln.ne.gov>; Mayor1 Beutler <mayor@lincoln.ne.gov>
Subject: Woods Park testimony

Richard Louv's book, "Last Child in the Woods ... Saving our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder" is a seminal work. It's been widely read, discussed in our schools, and described as "The book that changed the way we think about our children's connection with the natural world."

Douglas Tallamy's "Bringing Nature Home", another good work, discusses effects of Nature and humans on plants and beneficial insects/wildlife, and the distinct need/importance of keeping a viable balance between all of them and us. Keeping Woods Park green helps achieve those balances. Concrete and steel inhibit same, sadly. Anytime spaces like these in Woods Park are taken away, they never can return to what Mother Nature made and intended. Keeping Woods Park green also follows more closely the ideas our mayor has put forth in the climate change mitigation plans for our city. The tennis group's ideas simply do not, not at all.

Green spaces are seriously needed by all, especially by our children. They need Nature to enhance their development for both physical and emotional health. So do we adults. Our world has become quite insular for many; we have yet miles to go to counter the effect that 'screens' have had on our daily lives, not always for our 'good'. Keeping Woods Park green goes a LONG way to enhancing health and development for us all. Imagination and play and wonder are necessary to growth for all of us. While some structured 'play' or sports may be adjunctive to these needs, research shows clearly that free-thinking and play, even for adults, is much needed in our harried daily lives.

We are near an excellent example of what happens when a green space is taken away, changing an entire area in its 'look' and 'feel' for adjoining neighborhoods, its inability now to sequester carbon, its change from green space to a heat sink with NO vegetation at all to help mitigate climate change, and most of all, a space no longer amenable to a walk, for play, for relaxation, for imagination and so much more, as it used to be. I'm describing the NE corner of 27th and 'A' Streets and eastward. The large concrete/asphalt parking area that was built after removing that park-like serene area in the midst of two heavily traveled streets is not an oasis of 'peace', nor does it fit what our city is planning for our future. I miss it. As with Woods Park, I've spent time in that area most of my long life; my grandparents lived at 34th and C Sts and I've lived nearby in various apts and residences for the past 46 yrs now in my adult years. We also visited the Sunken Gardens and park area outside the old zoo many times in my lifetime, and those areas remain in my own area outdoors. I have never passed by more recently on my walks/rides and seen that parking lot full (except at more special events). Most of the time, it is empty or nearly so, making it the very same kind of issue that we'd experience with Woods Park, it seems, if 'tennis' were to take over similar spaces.

This park was made for EVERYONE. Tennis, no matter who/how many may love it, is quite small in its participation in an overall area population and for the time the park is 'open', tennis cannot be useful or played much of that time. 'Play'/general exercise/peaceful musing are not available on a tennis court, which requires rules and certain kinds of 'surface' for same, making it clearly a 'single-use', specialized kind of entity serving only a few in our large population, whereas the park serves EVERYONE. Long ago, a good friend who attended a different high school here commented that at his school, the population was not generally considered from the "wealthier" part of town, so the kids played sports that needed little in the way of equipment/courts/fields. Basketball, football, baseball, soccer ... all could be played even w/o special equipment, as kids have done for-about-ever. They can be played w/o special courts/buildings and be wonderful fun, competitive and provide room for personal/emotional/physical growth.

Tennis is wrong in expecting taxpayers to foot a large part of 'their' bill for a HUGELY expensive expansion by giving over 'our' land, for which we are taxed, for something that truly benefits far fewer people than do the other activities mentioned. Many have noted that the tennis is not w/o cost to players. That hasn't been discussed as openly as it should be. IMO, there should be (for us all to peruse) a flyer/pamphlet from the 'tennis people' with all the times open and available including costs for play/membership, etc. All times that it will be open to the PUBLIC and at NO CHARGE should also be shared since it would be in a community park area that is used by all. I prefer accurate and honest info when discussing any plans.

That all said, I am standing for the park as it is now. We have so little open public land in our city anymore that it's concerning. We neeeeeed this park, and all our parks, as they are. The very idea of a park is an open space for various forms of enjoyment over time, not so much for indoor events, which could be held elsewhere. Some thoughts from 'Britannica' ...

"An area devoted simply to green landscape, a salubrious and attractive breathing space as a relief from the densely populated and industrialized city of the mid-19th century, became important."

"There is always the danger that the original reason for creating the park—i.e., to bring a part of nature within reach of the city dweller—will be sacrificed to its specific recreational functions. It is difficult to keep the balance, because the tempo of urban life has mounted and with it the requirements for intensive use." [Woods Park, its users and the surrounding areas have already sacrificed enough by now.]

"Another danger to the public park is the automobile. With the tremendous growth in automobile traffic and, consequently, increasing pressure from traffic authorities for more land, there has been hardly a major city that has not lost sections of its parks to highways." [The increase in traffic safety issues with more traffic on the park land and more and larger parking lot areas will create safety issues for all having to pass thru and near them.]

I think we, the People of Lincoln, deserve more, and more Nature will always trump concrete and steel when it comes to our, and our city's, long-term well-being. It is indeed true that once this is gone, it will never return to the current state.

Let's keep Woods Park green; it is a jewel in the midst of our city.

Thank you.

Linell Connolly, Lincoln, NE



Virus-free. www.avast.com

Tom J. Beckius

From: Russ Free <syncwruss@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 4, 2024 11:19 AM
To: Council Packet; Mayor; Parks Counter Registrations
Subject: Woods Park Tennis Center Development

Woods Park Hearing Testimony March 2, 2024. Hello, my name is Russ Free. I have been a Woods Park Neighborhood resident since 1985, My spouse, Terri Marti, has residency since 1981—we're native Lincolniters.

Extensive traffic, asphalt parking lots, multiple tennis courts—open and enclosed, bright lot lighting and event parking in adjoining neighborhoods does not make for a good community park. Before the development of the Woods Park Pool, baseball diamonds, playground structures, Tennis Center and tall chain-link fencing, Woods Park was a wide-open park providing vistas in all directions, I had the opportunity as a Scout to experience an undeveloped park. Overnighting under a night time starlite sky without street or park lighting brought a bit of “country” into the city. The open park was a great place to observe the recent solar eclipse.

At the time of this camping event, I never would have imagined the brick-and-mortar development of the park. Woods Park is a lot less of a “stroll in the park”. The commercial tennis facility development in the park has taken away a considerable amount and measure of the health benefit of a wide-open green space. (See “Why Green Spaces Are Good for You” – WebMD). A green space that can provide respite from commercial enterprise and the three heavily traveled major arterials of O, 33rd and J streets which are often a downtown “short-cut” of busy traffic to and from neighborhoods to the east, west and south of the park.

The proposal to further develop a regional tennis facility by the Lincoln Parks and Recreation and Friends of Woods Tennis is a big take away from what the Woods family envisioned with their donation to purchase the park. The goal of developing a regional tennis center shouldn't come at the expense of depleting neighborhood green space and its benefits. It's frightening to experience fans ripping through the adjoining neighborhoods on event days looking for a place to park. These neighborhoods are full of families with children, two elementary schools and churches. Surley, a location better suited for the long-term goals of the city and tennis developers is available in Lincoln, Nebraska. If success warrants greater development, locate development better suited for long-term growth. With facility development, what does the future hold for the Woods *Neighborhood* Park? Proponents testifying March 2, 2024 noted residency outside of the Woods Park---it seemed that their skin in the game is the Tennis Center, not for neighborhood residents. Please consider these concerns in your decision-making process for the future of Woods Park.

Tom J. Beckius

From: Charina Walker <charinawalker@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, March 4, 2024 12:45 PM
To: Council Packet
Subject: Claim

Good afternoon,

I just received notification that it has been suggested to deny our mailbox damage claim due to the city not being liable or responsible for damage during snow removal. I will not be available to appear in person to discuss this as I have to work but I would like to know how city damage to my property is not their responsibility.

If the city supplied the mailboxes, I could maybe understand that but they do not. This is the second one we have had to replace due to snow removal crews destroying them and at \$70 each it's not a small expense for those of us that live paycheck to paycheck.

Even if you still deny our claim, please don't tell us to submit one, when we ask for help, knowing your going to deny it anyway. It's a waste of everyone's time and another way for the city to be unkind to it's residence.

Have a great day.
Charina Walker

Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android

Tom J. Beckius

From: Wayne & Laura <wwlj234@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 4, 2024 10:32 PM
To: Council Packet
Subject: Woods Park

Please protect our Lincoln city parks from special interest groups.
Wayne Anderson

Tom J. Beckius

From: Peter Morin <petermmorinmd@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 5, 2024 1:04 PM
To: Council Packet; Mayor
Subject: Woods Park Testimony
Attachments: Keep It Green.docx; IMG_0931 (2).jpg; IMG_0933.jpg; IMG_0934.jpg; 0.jpg

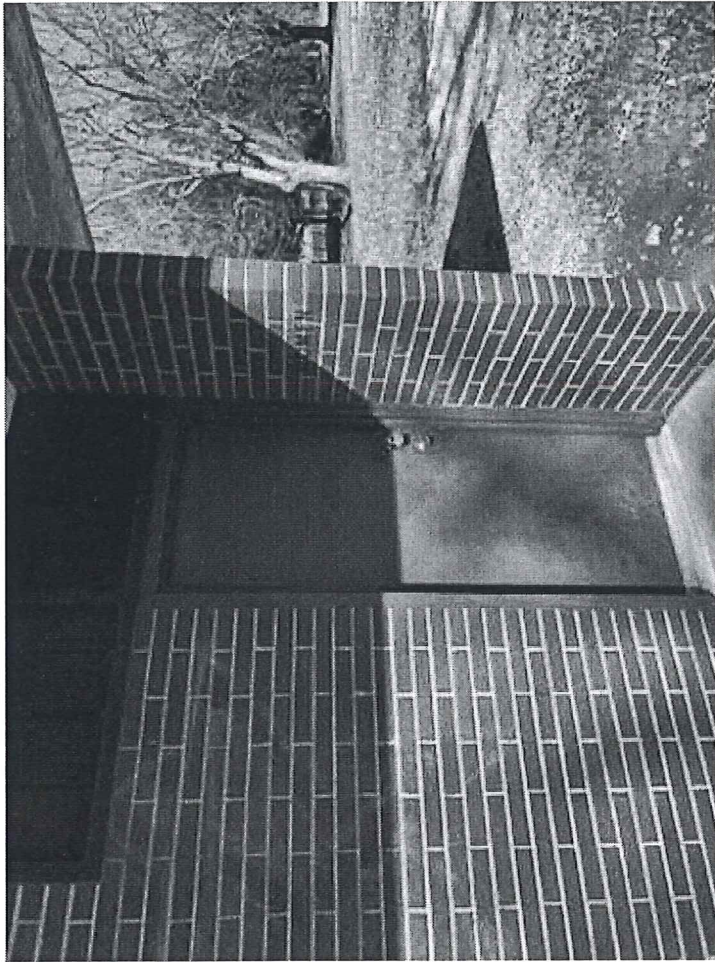
To the Mayor and Council Members:
See attached testimony and pictures.
Respectfully,
Peter M. Morin
703 S. 37th Street
Witherbee Neighborhood for 31 years.

KEEP IT GREEN

1. One of the first tasks Witherbee Neighborhood Association tackled was the sale of the one acre of “O” street frontage to the LLCHD. Lynn Johnson promised the original administration of Witherbee that the \$1.7M would be used in part to purchase the land owned by Ken Rosburg at 41st and Randolph to create a neighborhood park, since the Community Park was being consumed. Instead, the money was used for ball fields at the edge of town.
2. Tennis bubbles that the Woods Tennis Association PROMISED would be taken down each spring- and never, not once, not ever, were taken down until they blew down from old age and Nebraska weather.
3. The public restrooms have been locked for years and abandoned so we have a decrepit brick building on the west end of the park with port-o-potties during warm months only.
4. The main ballfield was renovated, but in alliance with Wesleyan we now have a padlocked baseball diamond with fine grass that is off limits to our neighborhood children. Wesleyan is no longer coming back and yet the padlocks remain.
5. The pool has three or more weekend swim meets each summer with no visual warning, and now our families have to find pool recreation somewhere else in the city.

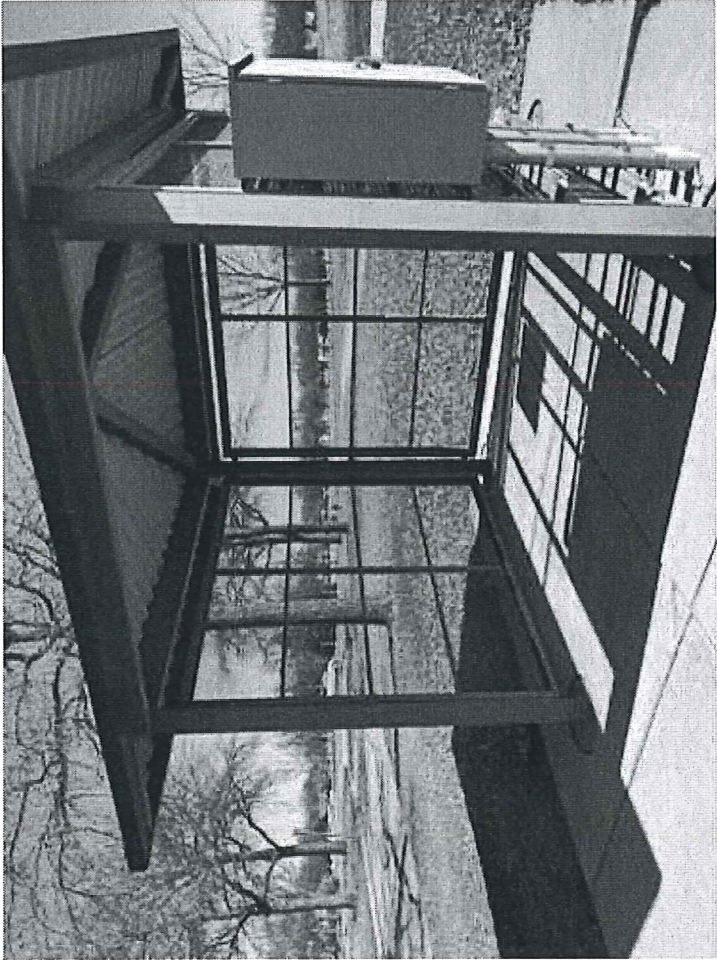
You tennis people: I challenge you to put up a sign above the outer doorway: “Public Restrooms Inside,” preferably in five languages.

You Keep It Green People: If Lincoln Parks and Rec walk all over you yet again, require, demand, insist on open access to the Tennis Indoor Restrooms, upgrade in the turf of all the open fields (where if it weren’t for the crabgrass, there would be no grass at all), open access to the Not-Weslyan Wesleyan Baseball field, formal announcement boards of swim meets at the pool BEFORE the summer begins, and rubber matting for the entire playground structure on the north.









Tom J. Beckius

From: Lori Morin <lorikmorin@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 5, 2024 2:02 PM
To: Council Packet; Mayor; Parks Counter Registrations
Cc: Lori Morin
Subject: Woods Park testimony

Thank you for your efforts to LISTEN to the community that surrounds Woods Park. I am in the "Keep It Green" camp. I don't know that I have anything to add that hasn't already been said, but I wanted to send a note in support of the "KIG" movement in case you are tallying numbers.

For me the question for Friends of Woods Tennis is: What is your endgame? I don't think they will ever say "enough is enough." That is worrisome. Our access to Woods Park has only diminished over the past decades and as everyone has pointed out, once we lose that green space, it is gone forever.

Regarding tree loss, Woods Park is surrounded by established neighborhoods that were hit HARD by the emerald ash borer pest and subsequent tree removal. I'd hate to lose another 41 trees to urbanization.

Even though we take great pride in this park, it DOES feel sometimes like Lincoln Parks & Rec doesn't take great pride in us. I know funds are limited, but it would be nice to at least have a bathroom that we could use somewhere in those 48 acres. Lack of a restroom does limit how long groups can gather there. The nearly-always-vacant baseball diamond takes up a large amount of "prime real estate." What will become of that once Wesleyan moves? And even though on paper it appears that this tennis expansion isn't cutting into the land very much, it IS cutting into land where I jog, bike, and cross country ski.

Lastly, at today's meeting, it seemed as if the proposal was considering it a POSITIVE that the shifted parking lot will not increase the number of stalls at all. While again, that sounds like they're trying to limit their expansion, I do wonder where all of the additional tennis players are supposed to park. If the demand for tennis is so high that this great expansion is needed (& I believe that it is), where are all of these extra players supposed to park? This is not a benefit to the surrounding streets.

I have nothing against tennis and it is evident from the Woods Tennis website and the speakers that they do a lot of good for our community and need to expand. That is great! I don't think this expansion is going to match the level that they actually NEED. Why not build elsewhere where they are *not* limited by their ability to expand further? Or are they NOT limited in their ability to expand further?

Please consider: what if it was your neighborhood park? What if you had already conceded acres and acres to concrete buildings and facilities that really aren't conducive to walking, biking, flying a kite, playing pick-up soccer or sand volleyball, etc? Please vote GREEN! Thank you for your consideration,

Lori Morin
Witherbee resident

Tom J. Beckius

From: Shelley Longsine <myabbey9@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 5, 2024 10:04 PM
To: Council Packet
Subject: Woods Park tennis expansion proposal

I would like to ask that this city council thoughtfully weigh the concerns we have of Woods park losing more greenspace to private organizations, and losing greenspace in general. The ball field, the health department, and tennis have all been given pieces of the park. The tennis center states that they want to grow tennis, they need more space for more players and spectators. This is unfair to the spirit of donated land by the Woods family and unfair to the citizens of our neighborhood and all who do enjoy this open greenspace. We need this greenspace that is centrally located for all of Lincoln to enjoy. The buildings are low maintenance but are industrial and massive and break the views. This proposed expansion would remove decades old trees and make runoff and traffic heavier. When tennis is focused on growth and staying in Woods park, it will only be a matter of time before they want more land again. We are to be good stewards and include all people in our decisions, not just the tennis organization that has funds to build and grow. They need to look at a new location for their growth and not public land that all citizens pay taxes to enjoy and use.

Thank you,

Shelley Longsine

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Shelley

Tom J. Beckius

From: Marty Longsine <myniko2004@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 5, 2024 11:34 PM
To: Council Packet
Subject: proposed woods park tennis expansion

I oppose any more expansion of the tennis courts. this community park has been turned into a park for special interest groups. the buildings are not pleasant to look at, you have to belong to a ball club to play ball on the large diamond and the swimming pool is closed to the public most weekends during the summer. all of the park should be accessible to ALL people in Lincoln. why can't we have the open green space we had. even Central Park in NY doesn't erode that green space. plant more native plants, more trees, add picnic tables with shelters. Also the neighborhoods are overflowing with traffic and parking, blocking some driveways. I don't want to see more concrete lots added to take more green space. this sports complex should have been built on a larger piece of property someplace else a long time ago. Every time the tennis group wants more space they tell us this is the last time. We have too many officials talking with forked tongues. I am tired of the lip service and the so called mediation. Enough is Enough build someplace else.

Tom J. Beckius

From: Bruce Sandhorst <bsandhorst@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 6, 2024 12:40 PM
To: Parks Counter Registrations; Council Packet; Mayor
Cc: Bruce Sandhorst
Subject: Woods Park Proposal for tennis expansion

I would like to thank Maggie, and Parks and Recreation for allowing and encouraging citizen input into the proposal for tennis expansion. It has been an educational and eye-opening experience. While I was initially against the tennis expansion because of the amount of park (green) space it would turn into concrete, I learned about the success of the tennis program, it's need to expand and it's collaboration with the parks and recreation department in addressing the tennis needs of Lincoln.

I have come to the conclusion that the modified expansion plan that Friends of Wood Tennis (FOWT) proposed as a compromise to their first expansion plan is not the best solution for them, nor what they had in mind to begin with. Nor does either plan address future expansion, which after hearing FOWT testimony will be needed. In effect, the modified plan becomes a lose lose proposition for both sides of the issue. FOWT does not get what it really wants (and needs) and Woods Park becomes more concrete and less green (less of a park and more of a tennis complex).

My hope is that FOWT and Parks and Recreation will pause long enough to consider a long-term strategy for the growing tennis needs of a growing city. A dedicated tennis and pickle ball sports complex that allows for growth and expansion should at least be considered. It could be that there are people in Lincoln that would be willing to contribute to such a complex (and possibly naming rights?) It might also make sense to include Lincoln Public Schools in the conversation, since they are also using the current facility. Pooling resources could be a win for everyone.

If the decision is to proceed with the proposed expansion at Woods Park, I would encourage you to adopt the original plan that FOWT proposed, and acknowledge that a third of Woods Park will become a tennis sports complex as expansion is needed in the future. This will at least be honest and give one side a win. As the city grows south and east, does it really make sense to make people drive further and further to play tennis at a complex that used to be part of a city park?

Respectfully submitted,
Bruce Sandhorst
bsandhorst@gmail.com