

MEETING RECORD

NAME OF GROUP: PLANNING COMMISSION

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING: Wednesday, June 20, 2007, 12:00 noon, Rm. 113, First Floor, County-City Building, 555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Jon Carlson, Gene Carroll, Michael Cornelius, Gerry Krieser, Roger Larson, Lynn Sunderman and Tommy Taylor; (Dick Esseks and Mary Strand absent).

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Marvin Krout, Ray Hill and Teresa McKinstry of the Planning Department; Jon Camp, City Council; and other interested parties.

STATED PURPOSE OF MEETING: **Street Names**

Marvin Krout stated that issues arose with a couple of street renamings. The Planning Commission is responsible for establishing new street names through the subdivision process. There is no written procedure for renaming a street. There is a Street Name Committee which reviews those requests. Rosa Parks Way and Goodhue Blvd. raised some questions. There is a ripple effect when you rename a street and changing a street name is generally discouraged. Centennial Mall and Lincoln Mall were previously numbered streets. There are immediate impacts for property owners and all kinds of administrative impacts; tax records, insurance records, utilities, Post Office and criminal records to name a few. Perhaps we should be developing a criteria for initially naming streets and renaming streets.

Jon Camp stated that City Council is looking for some guidance on street names. They would like to have some practical advice. Another alternative on Goodhue could have been a second tier commemorative name. He would like to see some concrete policies. Perhaps the City could sell street names. There could be an annual commemoration process for renaming a street for a significant figure in Lincoln.

Larson questioned who is on the Street Name Committee. Krout replied that staff reviews possible street name changes. The Street Name Change Committee consists of representatives from the Planning Dept., Public Works, Building and Safety, 911 Communications, Lincoln Police Dept., Lancaster County Sheriff, County Engineer, Fire Dept., Post Office and Windstream Communications.

Camp does not believe there has been a lot of controversial street name changes. Krout states that staff does about 10-12 street name changes per year. Usually they are technical changes and are caught before something is built. Ray Hill is working with the unincorporated villages in the county that have inconsistent street names.

Ray Hill stated that this will primarily benefit 911 and other emergency services so there is a consistency to street naming across Lancaster County.

Krout noted that staff looked at Title 26 of the Subdivision regulations. It states there should be a north/south numbering system. We encourage east/west streets to have the same name, but we have no jurisdiction over incorporated villages.

Krout stated that some suggestions came from the Street Name Committee. They would like to avoid names that have been overused or names that are too long to fit on a street sign. The Committee also suggested that while we have private streets, we should have a uniform policy about the standards for the size of the signs. The Street Name Committee did not care for the idea of commemorative names. They believe it could create confusion for emergency services. Krout believes it would create more work than it is worth. The Street Name Committee stated if there were to be a commemorative street name, the signs should be completely different in look and have a limited time period. There are some communities that have policies about commemorative names. We have an informal policy about not naming a street after an active business. Kmart Drive is one example. There are exceptions, obviously. But you are creating a potential for having to change the name again someday if the business leaves. Staff looked to see if street names have been sold. State Fair Park has several business names. He believes businesses probably paid for those. He did come across one community who had vanity street names, but there was a high cost involved to the person who wanted the change. We welcome any suggestions.

Carroll would assume street name changes should fall under Planning Commission since they already approve new names for subdivisions.

Cornelius does not think that is a good idea. Camp was surprised there were two controversial street name changes so close together. We don't receive very many applications.

Hill says that the cost of a street sign is \$175.00. There is an application fee of \$250.00 for a street name change. The applicant pays for sign replacements.

Carlson does not like renaming streets. He is not a huge fan of commemorative streets either. Perhaps you could name a neighborhood.

Cornelius would like to see numbered streets and alphabetical streets. Hill noted that a lot of new neighborhoods have curvilinear streets. The grid system doesn't always work. Camp believes he is hearing that renaming for special purposes should be discouraged. The Commission nodded and agreed.

Cornelius believes a yearly commemorative renaming could work for one street per year as a fundraising vehicle.

Camp stated that the east and south Beltways are coming up. That could be a revenue generator.

Larson inquired who would have the authority to name the Beltways. Krout replied the State will have the authority over the South Beltway. The County will have the authority over the East Beltway, unless it is a State Highway. Then the State would have authority over the East Beltway.

Krout stated that if the Planning Commission would like to take some responsibility on street renaming, perhaps some guidelines could be created and adopted.

Camp understands the argument for not renaming streets after a business, but he does see some value for attracting businesses. He would like to keep the possibility for a significant business.

The meeting concluded at 12:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Teresa McKinstry
Planning Department