

# MAYOR'S NEIGHBORHOOD ROUNDTABLE

Via Zoom Monday, February 14, 2022, 5:30 p.m.

## Meeting Notes

### Welcome and Introductions; Volunteer to Take Notes

Mayor Gaylor Baird opened the meeting at 5:30. Thirteen residents and six City staff attended (three presenters):

Mayor Gaylor Baird  
Gloria Eddins – Clinton  
Karen Dienstbier-Eastridge  
Andy Gueck—Indian Village  
Pat Bracken—Irvingdale  
Bill Vocasek – West A  
Russell Miller—Witherbee

Tracy Corr – 40<sup>th</sup> & A  
Richard Piersol – Country Club  
Pat Steer—Hartley  
Geri Cotter—Irvingdale  
Dennis Hecht—Meadowlane  
Fred Freytag—Witherbee  
Cameron Collier – UNL Big Event

Miki Esposito – Mayor's Office  
Donna Garden – LTU/Utilities  
Wynn Hjermsstad—Urban Development

Tim Zach – LTU/Watershed  
Jon Carlson—Mayor's Office  
Sarah Mason - KLLCB

### Mayor Gaylor Baird Comments

Mayor Gaylor Baird began with an update on COVID-19 stating there has been an encouraging drop in cases which is taking some pressure off hospitals, but the situation is still serious. The number one tool is vaccination which is highly successful in reducing the spread. The Health Department continues to hold clinics. Pharmacies and other clinics also offer the vaccine. Other updates by Mayor Gaylor Baird included:

- Rent and utility assistance has seen an uptick in requests. Some delays in getting payments out have occurred due to the Omicron surges. The Urban Development Director and team are adding team members to deal with pressing needs. To apply for assistance, direct people to our website: [lincoln.ne.gov/rent](http://lincoln.ne.gov/rent).
- Crime stats - LPD, community organizations and others prioritize public safety. There has been a 6.2 % decrease overall in crimes. Drops in violent crime are also trending downward.
- Title 11: City Council is voting today to amend the non-discrimination code which has not been updated in over 20 years. Amendments reflect the Commission on Human Rights complaints and expands the classes of people protected. The U.S. Supreme Court already included sexual identity and we are bringing our local laws into compliance.
- Lincoln Littles Day was last week – Lincoln Littles supports early childhood development and care. A Challenge Grant in partnership with the Lincoln Community Foundation raised \$670,000 for high quality childcare. Thanks to everyone who participated.
- LTU water payments - on-line bill payment is being revised and will be announced soon. More information will be forthcoming.

Mayor opened it up for questions:

Q: How is the catalytic converter ordinance success being measured to determine its effectiveness?

A: A complex issue. LPD is doing more proactive measures including utilizing video, partnering with the community, and looking at timing of monitoring. LPD recommends carving an identifier into your own catalytic converter. Mayor will ask someone at LPD to follow up.

### **Flood Protections: Salt Creek Floodplain Resiliency Study Recommendations –**

Donna Garden, Assistant Director of LTU/Utilities; Tim Zach, Superintendent of Stormwater; and Miki Esposito, Senior Policy Advisor.

Tim Zach, Superintendent of Stormwater with LTU/Watershed Management, presented the Salt Creek Floodplain Resiliency Study. In his PowerPoint (**attached**) Tim reviewed floodplain terminology, why we study the Salt Creek Watershed, study tasks, and Study recommendations.

Terminology – some of the terms include:

- Floodplain management - community based efforts to prevent and reduce a flood plain. 16% of the city is affected by a flood plain.
- Non-structural floodplain management measures.
- Structural floodplain measures - modify the flooding source, ex: Antelope Valley; Salt Creek levies.
- Resiliency - meet challenges of today and safeguard uncertainties of future.

The Salt Creek watershed was discussed which has had 100 floods since 1900. A team of stakeholders was included in the Study to help educate and understand flood issues. For more information, see [saltcreekstudy.com](http://saltcreekstudy.com).

Why we study:

- The goal is to reduce adverse impacts from flooding to life and property from future flood events.

Study tasks – some of the tasks included:

- Review of current practice and standards, flood reduction measures, among others.
- Review national best management practices.
- Summarize past floods and reports.
- Review Case studies.
- Review floodplain models.
- Determine the actual risk. Current flood plain maps are outdated. What is the risk today and in the future.
- Recommend potential flood reduction measures and structural flood risk reduction measures.
- Summarize and recommend potential funding sources.
- Public education and dissemination of the Plan

Recommendations – some of the recommendations included:

- Continue active participation in the Community Rating System.
- Adopt higher floodplain regulatory standards.
- Initiate the development of new floodplain maps.
- Use national BMPs to guide planning objectives.

- Consider implementation of non-structural resiliency strategies.
- Continue with the development of a resiliency strategy for Salt Creek.

Look at what costs and benefits are borne by different parties. Costs to repair flood damage and for flood insurance are higher than the costs of regulations, saving the community and individuals in the long run. Economic benefits also have cost implications; there is a positive impact of money spent today in the future.

The Study is available at [Salt Creek Floodplain Resiliency Study – City of Lincoln, NE](#) .

Questions:

Q: What is the status of the Deadman’s Run project? How does it impact Salt Creek?

A: The project has been delayed due to COVID-19 and flooding on the Platter River. The project is still in design with construction anticipated next year. Future impacts are still being determined.

Q: When was Holmes Lake dredged, how long until it is done again?

A: It was built in the 1960s and dredged about 10 years ago. The Corp of Engineers owns and maintains it.

Q: Are there best practices for areas being redeveloped such as 27th and Highway 2?

A: That area is not in the flood plain but will have to comply with current regulations so it can’t increase runoff and meets water quality requirements.

Donna Garden, Assistant Director of LTU/Utilities, discussed next steps (see attached PowerPoint) including:

- Changes in polices and codes to enact some of the recommendations are being reviewed. This applies to new growth and redevelopment and includes steps to make us safer.
- The Drainage Criteria Manual is part of City Standards. It is being updated and included a large stakeholder working group initiated in October 2017 and engineering consultants. Additional information came from the Salt Creek Resiliency Study in August 2020 and the Climate Action Plan.
- Comments, feedback, and discussion from all sources are currently being assessed. Final revisions will then be made to the Drainage Criteria Manual. It will then go to Planning Commission and City Council although no date has been set.
- Implementation is a 3-legged stool: benefit/cost analysis; regulatory floodplain re-mapping; and the Drainage Criteria Manual. Remapping takes three to five year.

Questions:

Q: Are existing detention ponds inspected?

A: Yes – there are approximately 330 in the city and about 70 are inspected each year.

Q: Do retention ponds include some big grassy areas?

A: Yes, water ponds and drains in a few days.

Q: Are retention areas ever required to be deepened?

A: They stay as they are. There are newer requirements for new ones.

Q: Taylor Meadows Creek seems to have more silt and water is not draining as quickly. Will it be looked at or is it a natural area that will fill in?

A: A project was done there several years ago. No plans now to clean it out, but past projects are inspected and if issues are identified, they are tracked and prioritized by what needs the most work. This is the process for selecting projects.

Q: Edgewood Lake is privately owned. It was dredged a few years ago at their expense. It should have been dug deeper due to Dead Man's Run. Can that be changed?

A: It stores more water every day but not storm water when it rains. There could be issues there that affect property owners but flood control benefit is not likely.

Q: Tabatha along 48th St and L has stormwater retention, is that inspected? Was it required?

A: Not sure since it was built before water quality requirements. For projects in the middle of town, space is an issue so it could be underground treatment. There are a number of bio-retention facilities being built, including the new Tabitha project has one.

Miki Esposito, Senior Policy Advisor, reminded the group that this is a big part of the Climate Action Plan that has two provisions around Salt Creek resiliency. The Plan includes determining how to update standards for new precipitation data, benefit cost analysis regarding structural measures, and floodplain remapping which takes time and money. Currently, conversations are occurring with Federal officials about mapping and helping to pay for the cost benefit. Work continues with City Council members and the development community, so they continue to be involved in making informed decisions and recommendations. The purpose is to protect the core of the city and neighborhoods. A floodplain coalition is being established and we will be looking to include some of neighborhood residents involved in Roundtable. Its purpose will be advocacy for updating standards and participating in future dialogue about these changes.

## **Announcements**

The Big Event (UNL) - Cameron Collier, a senior at UNL, is a co-chair for the Big Event. It has not happened since spring 2019 due to COVID-19. Its purpose is for students to give back and show appreciation for what the community does for students and the support received during COVID-19. Students can do yard work, paint, general clean-up. The Big event website to request volunteers is [Bigevent.UNL.edu/request-volunteers](http://Bigevent.UNL.edu/request-volunteers). Requests should be in by March 4th. The Big Event day is April 23<sup>rd</sup> from 12:30 to 3:30. E-mail him at [camerondeancollier@gmail.com](mailto:camerondeancollier@gmail.com). Please help spread the word.

Q: Is it only private residences or public areas too?

A: It is also public areas. They will be working on trails. Student organizations and Greek houses are doing work together.

## **Next Meeting / Agenda**

Topics for the next meeting will be determined.

## **Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 6:36 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted, Wynn Hjermstad*