

MEETING RECORD

Advanced public notice of the Planning Commission meeting was posted on the County-City bulletin board and the Planning Department's website. In addition, a public notice was emailed to the Lincoln Journal Star for publication on Tuesday, May 06, 2025.

NAME OF GROUP: PLANNING COMMISSION

DATE, TIME, AND PLACE OF MEETING: Wednesday, May 14, 2025, 1:00 p.m., Hearing Room 112, on the first floor of the County-City Building, 555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska.

MEMBERS AND OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Lorenzo Ball, Dick Campbell, Maribel Cruz, Brett Ebert, Gloria Eddins, Bailey Feit, Cristy Joy, Rich Rodenburg, and Cindy Ryman Yost; David Cary, Steve Dush, Steve Henrichsen, Ayden Johnson, Shelli Reid, Andrew Thierolf, Laura Tinnerstet of the Planning Department, media, and other interested citizens.

STATED PURPOSE OF MEETING: Regular Planning Commission Hearing

Chair Ryman Yost called the meeting to order and acknowledged the posting of the Open Meetings Act in the room.

Chair Ryman Yost requested a motion approving the minutes for the regular meeting held April 16, 2025.

Motion for approval of the minutes made by Campbell, seconded Joy.

Campbell Minutes approved 8-0: Ball, Campbell, Cruz, Eddins, Feit, Joy, Rodenburg, and Ryman Yost voting "yes". Ebert absent

Chair Ryman Yost asked the Clerk to call for the Consent Agenda Items.

CONSENT AGENDA
PUBLIC HEARING & ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION
BEFORE PLANNING COMMISSION:

May 14, 2025

Members present: Ball, Campbell, Cruz, Ebert, Eddins, Feit, Joy, Rodenburg, and Ryman Yost.

The Consent Agenda consisted of the following items: Comprehensive Plan Conformance 25002, Annexation 25003, Change of Zone 25010, and Special Permit 25010.

There were no ex parte communications disclosed.

There were no ex parte communications disclosed relating to site visit.

Clerk noted that there was a request to move items 1.4a, Miscellaneous, and 1.4b, Miscellaneous, from the Consent Agenda to a separate public hearing.

Campbell made a motion for approval of the Consent Agenda; seconded by Joy.

Consent Agenda approved 9-0: Ball, Campbell, Cruz, Ebert, Eddins, Feit, Joy, Rodenburg, and Ryman Yost voting “yes”.

Note: This is **Final Action** on the following item **Special Permit 25010 unless** appealed by filing a Notice of Appeal with the **City Council** or the **County Board within 14 days**.

MISCELLANEOUS 25004 TO REVIEW THE PROPOSED DETERMINATION THAT THE LINCOLN CORNHUSKER REDEVELOPMENT AREA BE DECLARED BLIGHTED AND SUBSTANDARD AS DEFINED IN THE NEBRASKA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT LAW. THE STUDY AREA IS APPROXIMATELY 2,065 ACRES, GENERALLY LOCATED BETWEEN N 56TH STREET ON THE EAST, COLFAX AVENUE ON THE NORTH, N 27TH STREET ON THE WEST, AND HOLDREGE STREET ON THE SOUTH.

AND

MISCELLANEOUS 25005, TO REVIEW THE PROPOSED DETERMINATION THAT THE LINCOLN CORNHUSKER BLIGHT AREA MEETS THE STATUTORY DEFINITION OF EXTREMELY BLIGHTED AS DEFINED IN THE NEBRASKA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT LAW. THE STUDY AREA IS APPROXIMATELY 2,065 ACRES, GENERALLY LOCATED BETWEEN N. 56TH STREET ON THE EAST, COLFAX AVENUE ON THE NORTH, N 27TH STREET ON THE WEST, AND HOLDREGE STREET ON THE SOUTH.

PUBLIC HEARING:

MAY 14, 2025

Staff Recommendation: On hold until further notice

Members present: Ball, Campbell, Cruz, Ebert, Eddins, Feit, Joy, Rodenburg, and Ryman Yost

An ex parte communication was disclosed.

Eddins stated that during a neighborhood meeting, a resident raised concerns about blighting in a certain area. The same issue was also discussed at the Clinton neighborhood meeting. Initially, it was believed to be related to the current application, but it was later determined that the area discussed was outside the scope of this application. Eddins noted that the topic was discussed in detail during the neighborhood organization meeting.

There were no ex-parte communications disclosed relating to site visit.

Staff/ Applicant Presentation-

Peter Hind, Director of Urban Development, 555 South Street, Lincoln, NE, appeared before the Commission to request a postponement of these items to the June 11th Planning Commission meeting. He explained that the delay was necessary due to scheduling issues with

their consultant, who is currently dealing with a personal family matter and is unavailable to meet.

Hind noted that the additional time would allow the department to work more effectively with the consultant and address ongoing project concerns.

In addition, Hind addressed public feedback regarding legal notice requirements. He stated, for the record, that after reviewing the matter internally, the department confirmed that all required legal notice periods had been met.

Hind concluded his remarks by offering to answer any questions from the Commission.

Staff Questions

Campbell asked whether any neighborhood outreach or open house meetings were planned in response to community concerns.

Hind stated that outreach would be conducted with the Clinton neighborhood, which had been identified as a key stakeholder. Hind noted that the topic had previously been included in the University Place Subarea Plan process led by the Planning Department and had been presented at several public open houses. However, he acknowledged the need to re-engage the community and stated that while the specific format of the upcoming outreach had not yet been finalized, the team intended to "restart the clock" and begin the process again. Hind added that Planning staff had requested a formal resubmittal, and the project team would proceed accordingly over the next month.

Hind responded by asking Commissioner Feit if she had a question, to which Commissioner Feit replied that her question had already been asked. Hind acknowledged this and proceeded accordingly.

Yost confirmed the request for a deferral until June 11th, which was acknowledged by Hind. Chair Ryman Yost thanked Hind for his time, and Hind expressed his gratitude to the Commission for their consideration.

Proponents:

No one approached in support

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Neutral:

No one approached in a neutral capacity.

Opposition:

No one approached in opposition.

MISCELLANEOUS 25004 AND MISCELLANEOUS 25005 **ACTION BY PLANNING COMMISSION**

May 14, 2025

Campbell made a motion to delay the items until June 11, 2025. The motion was seconded by Eddins.

Motion approved 9-0: Ball, Campbell, Cruz, Ebert, Eddins, Feit, Joy, Rodenburg, and Ryman Yost voting "yes".

Joy commented that a lot of the discussion had already taken place during the University Place Sub Area Plan discussions. She noted that it was helpful for those who participated in the sub-area plan but acknowledged the importance of continuing the conversation throughout the community.

Eddins responded that the North 48th Street boundary originally ended at 33rd, but when the blighted area was expanded, it was moved to 27th, which included a significant portion of another neighborhood. Eddins explained that while issues were happening on 48th, they did not directly affect the other neighborhood. This, she noted, contributed to the disconnect in the public meetings, which now made more sense in hindsight.

Joy stated that the explanation made a lot of sense. She mentioned that it was very appropriate and appreciated the staff considering the area to the west of 33rd. She recalled that the staff did a great job of highlighting this area, and she expressed gratitude for the attention given to it.

Chair Ryman Yost asked if there was any further discussion.

CHANGE OF ZONE 25007: DISTRICT 33 PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT, FOR A CHANGE OF ZONE ON APPROXIMATELY 12.27 ACRES FROM B-3 (COMMERCIAL DISTRICT) TO B-3 (COMMERCIAL DISTRICT) PUD (PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT); A CHANGE OF ZONE FROM O-2 (OFFICE DISTRICT) TO B-3 (COMMERCIAL DISTRICT) PUD (PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT); A CHANGE OF ZONE FROM R-2 (RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT) TO B-3 (COMMERCIAL DISTRICT) PUD (PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT); AND A CHANGE OF ZONE FROM R-2 (RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT) TO R-4 (RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT) PUD (PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT); AND A CHANGE OF ZONE FROM R-2 (RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT) TO R-2 (RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT) PUD (PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT) ON PROPERTY GENERALLY LOCATED ALONG S 33RD STREET, NORTH AND SOUTH OF A STREET AND ALONG A STREET FROM NORMAL BLVD TO WEST OF S 35TH STREET.
PUBLIC HEARING: **May 14, 2025**

Members present: Ball, Campbell, Cruz, Ebert, Eddins, Feit, Joy, Rodenburg, and Ryman Yost.

Staff Recommendation: Approval

There were no ex parte communications disclosed.

There were no ex parte communications disclosed relating to site visits.

Staff Presentation-

Ayden Johnson, Planning Department, 555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln, NE, came forward and stated that the proposal seeks to rezone approximately 12.78 acres near South 33rd and A Street. He explained that the proposal aims to change the existing B3, R2, and O2 zoning to a Planned Unit Development (PUD) Overlay. This overlay would create new B3 PUD, R2 PUD, and R4 PUD districts, allowing for a more flexible and community-oriented development approach.

Johnson added that the proposed layout includes 44 lots of B3 PUD for a mixed commercial node, 16 lots of R4 PUD for higher-density housing, and two lots for R2 PUD for lower-density housing. The PUD also requested waivers for modified zoning standards, such as reduced parking requirements, increased residential density, alcohol sales, and modified setbacks.

Johnson further stated that the District 33 PUD originated from the efforts of local business owner Terry Lage, who reached out to neighboring business owners like Moran's Liquor and A Street Market, who were facing zoning challenges. Johnson noted that many of these business owners, now referred to as champions of the project, became vocal advocates for a more flexible zoning approach that could support revitalization within the corridor.

In March 2025, Johnson mentioned that a pre-application meeting was held to explore transforming the 33rd and A Street area into a more vibrant commercial center. Shortly after, the City of Lincoln hosted a neighborhood meeting at Randolph Elementary on March 27th, inviting stakeholders within the proposed PUD boundary and property owners within 200 feet. He said that at this meeting, the champions presented a vision for a walkable, community-focused district blending neighborhood-serving commercial uses with additional housing options.

Following feedback from the public, Johnson noted that the proposal was revised to address concerns and find a thoughtful balance between business needs and neighborhood character. He explained that the application includes a zoning change request to establish a PUD that accommodates both commercial and residential development. A key goal of the proposal, Johnson added, is to support missing middle housing like duplexes, triplexes, and small-scale multifamily units, while also establishing a functional and attractive commercial core.

Johnson stated that District 33 is well-suited for this transformation, given its mix of existing buildings and vacant parcels, as well as its location near major roads and pedestrian bike trails, which enhance accessibility and connectivity. He explained that the PUD would activate underutilized land and support growth in both housing and business sectors.

If approved, Johnson added, the proposed change in zoning would include updates and waivers to several sections of the Lincoln Municipal Code to better serve the neighborhood. He explained that these updates would modify land use, parking, signage, setbacks, and building height. Johnson noted that the changes would allow both on-sale and off-sale alcohol sales, expand permitted uses (many of which previously required special or conditional permits), and prohibit less compatible uses like motor vehicle sales and fireworks sales in specific areas to maintain alignment with neighborhood goals. He further explained that the proposal would reduce front yard setbacks, lower residential parking requirements, eliminate non-residential parking minimums, and allow for minor signage changes to be approved administratively.

These updates, Johnson stated, would provide development flexibility while maintaining compatibility with the neighborhood's character and goals. He emphasized that the District 33 PUD strongly supports the City of Lincoln's 2050 Comprehensive Plan and aligns with the city's long-term vision by encouraging walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods and promoting greater housing diversity. Johnson added that the PUD supports the development of complete neighborhoods where housing, retail, services, and amenities are accessible within a 15-minute walk. It also encourages infill and redevelopment in underutilized spaces, promotes a variety of housing types (including missing middle options), and preserves neighborhood character while leveraging existing infrastructure.

Additionally, Johnson stated, the proposal fosters economic opportunity by thoughtfully integrating commercial uses and reinforcing the city's vision for vibrant, inclusive nodes and corridors serving diverse incomes, ages, and lifestyles. He concluded that because of the strong alignment with the city's planning goals, the Planning Department recommends approval for all proposed zoning and code modifications under the District 33 PUD.

In conclusion, Johnson added, District 33 PUD is a community-driven, forward-thinking proposal that addresses long-standing zoning limitations while creating new opportunities for both residential and commercial development. He stated that it promotes walkability, housing diversity, and local economic growth, all while respecting the surrounding neighborhood's characteristics. Backed by strong community support, Johnson noted, the proposal is designed to meet the needs of current and future residents and has the potential to become a model for sustainable and inclusive urban development in Lincoln. He then asked if there were any questions.

Staff Questions

Feit asked how the boundary for the District 33 PUD was determined, noting that the shape of the boundary was interesting and expressing curiosity about the process behind it.

Johnson explained that this was the second version of the boundary. He mentioned that the original proposed boundary had a more clean-cut triangular and rectangular shape, which was presented at the neighborhood meeting on March 27th. Johnson noted that during that meeting, a few neighbors, both within and outside the 200-foot boundary, raised concerns about whether their properties were included or if they were too close to the boundary. Some people also inquired whether the boundary could be extended to include their properties. Johnson stated that, because of these concerns and requests, the boundary was adjusted and took on the current "zigzag" shape to better meet the needs of the neighborhood and address comments or alternative suggestions made by the community in support of the PUD.

Feit asked what concerns some individuals had about being included within the proposed boundary.

Johnson stated that many people were not necessarily concerned about their property being included in the boundary, but rather about the potential for high-rise apartment buildings or multi-level apartments above commercial uses, such as restaurants, coming into the area. He explained that some residents were worried about the possibility of being bought out or the change in land limitations that could result from the rezoning. Johnson added that the primary concern was the fear of increased density, particularly the potential for large apartment complexes or buildings to be constructed in the neighborhood, which some residents were uncomfortable with.

Feit indicated appreciation for the explanation.

Chair Ryman Yost asked if there were any further questions from the Commission.

Applicant-

Terry Lage, 3800 Loveland Drive, Lincoln, NE, appeared before the Commission and described the proposal as an exciting milestone, representing approximately 18 months of engagement with both the community and the city.

Lage shared that the project developed organically through daily interactions with the local neighborhood, particularly at places like Moran's. He and his wife own commercial property along 33rd Street, and through their involvement, they had numerous one-on-one discussions with neighbors. Lage explained that many of the elements included in the PUD proposal were shaped by those conversations and by feedback received at the public open house, as mentioned earlier by Johnson.

Lage emphasized that the effort stemmed from a genuine interest in benefiting the community through the flexibility offered by the PUD. In addition to their property investment, he noted their ties to the area. His wife grew up in the neighborhood and lived there for 15 years, and he himself lived nearby and frequently shopped at A Street Market. Their deep connection to the area guided their approach, which Lage said was evident through their participation in the public process.

Lage clarified that they were not developers with large private interests, but instead local stakeholders with grassroots involvement. The focus, he stated, was on supporting the small business community and expanding opportunities within the neighborhood. He shared that some businesses had expressed interest in leasing space from them, but ultimately chose not to because of zoning constraints that the PUD seeks to resolve.

Lage stated that the project intends to enhance the walkability and livability of the area by introducing additional services and amenities that residents could access without needing to drive. He added that nearby neighborhoods, including 40th and A Streets and the Woods Boulevard area, could also benefit from the expanded possibilities offered by the PUD.

In closing, Lage said he was eager to hear the perspectives and opinions of the Commission as they worked together to shape the community and realize the opportunities the PUD could provide. He then invited some questions from the Commission.

Proponents:

No one approached in support.

Neutral:

No one approached in a neutral capacity.

Opposition:

Linda Barna, 3336 Washington Street, Lincoln, NE, came forward and stated that she has lived in her home for 24 years, having purchased it on April 1, 2001. Barna explained that she chose her home specifically because it is in a walkable neighborhood and expressed appreciation for that concept being a part of the proposal.

Barna voiced strong support for local businesses in the area, including Moran's, the new ownership at Lincoln Pharmacy, and A Street Market. However, she raised two main concerns: traffic safety and neighborhood inclusion.

First, Barna highlighted existing traffic issues at 33rd and Normal, stating that accidents occur frequently at that intersection. She pointed out that while there is a nearby park, there is no safe or direct pathway for pedestrians to travel from the park to the proposed walkable commercial area. Barna expressed concern for citizen safety, especially considering the proximity of the zoo and Antelope Park, both of which attract significant traffic volumes. She emphasized that the 33rd and Normal intersection already presents problems and needs to be addressed regardless of the new development.

Her second concern was related to congestion near 33rd and A Streets and 33rd and Normal during business hours. Barna stated that these intersections are already heavily congested and limited to one lane in each direction. She noted that she has witnessed reckless driving and frequent accidents in the area as drivers attempt to navigate the congestion.

Barna expressed worry about the traffic situation, particularly if the neighborhood is intended to become more walkable. She emphasized that for it to be truly walkable, safety must be a top priority.

Lastly, Barna mentioned seeing several different boundary maps, not just two, and noted that the map presented in the meeting did not include her property.

Campbell asked Barna to point out her house on the map.

Barna explained that she had lived at her home for 21 years and had cultivated an organic garden up to her back fence. She found her house on the map and noted that there was no alley behind her house, and the zoning map did not show any changes to that area. Barna raised concerns about the possibility of parking being allowed near her fence, worrying about runoff, oil, and potential damage from vehicles. She shared that years ago, a neighbor had tried to run a temporary employment agency without proper permits, causing parking issues, which had led to support from local businesses such as A Street Market and Moran's.

Barna expressed concerns about the proposed reduction in parking and whether it would be effective. She also questioned whether businesses, like those at A Street Market, would ensure their parking lots were used only by their customers, as parking overflow was already an issue. While expressing her support for walkable cities, Barna emphasized that there was more to consider, particularly regarding existing congestion and whether new developments would offer affordable housing options. She pointed out that despite the construction of new apartments around the city, many people in her neighborhood could not afford to live in them. Barna concluded by requesting a 15- to 20-foot buffer if a business were built near her backyard and emphasized that the safety of people crossing Normal Street needed to be considered in any future development.

Seth Witfoth, 3336 Washington Street, Lincoln, NE, came forward and stated that he has grown up in the neighborhood. Witfoth mentioned the existing businesses in the area, including Fast Mart, a credit union, a pharmacy, yoga and workout facilities, a barber, and Moran's. He expressed concerns about the potential impact of a proposed four-story apartment complex, particularly regarding parking. Witfoth noted that traffic at the intersection of 33rd and A is problematic, with cars frequently blocking the intersection due to long light cycles. He is worried that this development could exacerbate parking issues, with people parking in the neighborhood without being residents. Witfoth also expressed privacy concerns, as the taller buildings could overlook people's backyards, and a potential for increased noise and activity in the area. Witfoth concluded by stating his concern about how the development might affect the peaceful living environment he has enjoyed in the neighborhood.

Staff Questions:

Campbell asked what the setback requirements for B3 zoning would be if the development were to expand in the future to run behind Barna's property.

Johnson clarified that the setback requirements being discussed pertain to the existing zoning, not the proposed PUD. He mentioned that the PUD only changes the front yard setback and does not affect the setbacks in the B3 PUD. Johnson added that Steve Henrichsen might be able to provide more details on this matter.

Steve Henrichsen, Planning Department, 555 S 10th Street, Lincoln, NE, came forward and clarified that the rear yard setback for B3 zoning adjacent to residential zoning is 30 feet. Henrichsen also provided additional context, noting that the previous proposal from 2008 for 3333 A Street had been defeated and is not included in the current PUD. Therefore, the property behind Barna's house is not part of the PUD and is not subject to any changes currently.

Campbell asked if someone were to build a large apartment building, would they be required to show adequate space for parking? Henrichsen stated that it was correct.

Eddins asked if traffic flow is considered within a PUD and whether it could help improve traffic in the area. She mentioned that she often drives through the area, noting that at non-busy times, it's the best way to head south, but during peak times, particularly when people are either coming downtown or leaving, it becomes tricky to get out onto Normal. Eddins expressed concern about crossing five lanes of traffic to reach the park and wanted to know how traffic flow is addressed in a PUD.

Johnson responded that the PUD itself is specifically focused on zoning, not necessarily on circulation or traffic. While traffic is something that should be considered, it is more of a city issue and is unrelated to the PUD. If traffic becomes a concern, it will need to be addressed separately from the PUD.

Feit asked, as a follow-up, if the approval of the PUD could initiate conversations with other city departments to study the area further, specifically regarding walkability, the potential for improved trail connections, and safer ways to cross Normal Boulevard. She asked whether such conversations could potentially take place because of PUD's approval.

Johnson confirmed that once the PUD is in place, it must still go through the standard review process involving other city departments. He stated that in this case, the proposal went through one review, and every department—including LTU, Engineering Services, Watershed Management, and Health—recommended approval. He added that these departments had been involved early in the process, including during the pre-application meeting, to identify and address any concerns.

Cruz asked whether the traffic density in the area is sufficient to trigger a traffic study.

Johnson responded that the question regarding traffic density might be better addressed by Henrichsen and deferred to him for further clarification.

Henrichsen explained that at any time, Lincoln Transportation and Utilities (LTU) may determine that traffic conditions warrant further study, particularly in cases involving a certain number of car accidents or pedestrian concerns, which are assessed using federal criteria. He acknowledged the challenge of encouraging business growth while managing the increase in traffic that comes with it. Henrichsen noted that local businesses want to avoid lane expansion due to space limitations, so alternatives must be considered.

Henrichsen emphasized that while current repairs are ongoing along Normal Boulevard, the city has long recognized the intersection at 40th and Normal as an area needing a long-term solution due to its complex layout involving multiple streets. The city has evaluated options for this intersection in the past and continues to do so.

Henrichsen acknowledged that traffic in the area can be difficult at certain times of day but maintained that revitalization efforts are important. He pointed out that many local businesses have already invested in the area and expressed hope that the proposed changes would encourage further investment. He concluded by highlighting that this initiative is being led by local business owners rather than national chains, reflecting strong grassroots support for the project.

Cruz inquired about the potential location of a proposed four-level building, asking whether a specific site for the structure had been determined. Cruz expressed a need for clarification regarding its placement within the overall project layout.

Johnson explained that the site has been divided into several planning areas, as illustrated in the project map. Johnson noted that one of the waivers was modified specifically for Planning Area 4 within the PUD, which is identified as the main commercial hub. Planning Area 4 is the only area where an increased building height of up to 45 feet has been permitted.

Johnson stated that earlier versions of the plan had allowed greater height and density in other planning areas, including areas currently designated for residential use. In response to concerns raised during the initial round of reviews and a neighborhood meeting, those allowances were reduced. Johnson clarified that areas previously proposed as R5 or R6 were adjusted to R4 zoning, with density now limited to allow for development types such as triplexes. Johnson emphasized that Planning Area 4 remains the sole location where the increased height is authorized.

Cruz sought clarification regarding the surrounding context of the proposed building site, noting that at least one of the existing buildings in the area is now used as a community space—potentially a city hall or similar facility—but does not appear to be used frequently. Cruz also observed that the opposite side of the street consists of commercial businesses. Based on that context, Cruz expressed that concerns about a potential high-rise overlooking nearby

residential properties may be mitigated, as the area in question is currently commercial and may not directly impact nearby homes.

Henrichsen noted that just outside the boundary of the PUD, on the west side of 33rd Street, is the Latvian Church's social hall and, to the northeast of it, the Latvian Church itself. He clarified that both properties are outside the PUD, meaning any redevelopment or change in use for those properties would be independent of the PUD. Henrichsen further explained that a key topic discussed during the meeting was the potential for apartment development along Normal Boulevard, which would still be on a relatively small scale. This area contains a stretch of houses located between the four lanes of Normal Boulevard and the nearby commercial properties. However, at that time, there was limited support for rezoning this area to allow for higher-density development. The area is currently zoned R4, which would allow for duplexes. Henrichsen noted that if anyone were to propose apartments along this stretch, such a proposal would have to go through the formal review process.

Applicant Rebuttal-

Lage expressed appreciation for the input provided and acknowledged the importance of the concerns raised. He emphasized the desire to create a connection between the park and the surrounding business area, which would enhance walkability — a key goal of the project. Lage stated that while this type of connection would be ideal, it is not part of the current project's scope.

Lage reassured the commission that the project is being developed responsibly and with careful consideration of the public's opinions. Regarding concerns about traffic, Lage recognized that traffic perceptions often arise when changes to an area are proposed. However, he noted that perceptions of increased traffic are not always reflective of the actual impact, and the reality of traffic conditions may differ from public concerns. Lage concluded by noting that the potential effects of the PUD should be assessed based on factual outcomes rather than perceptions.

Campbell moved to close the public hearing; seconded by Joy.

CHANGE OF ZONE 25007

ACTION BY PLANNING COMMISSION:

May 14, 2025

Campbell moved to approve Change of Zone 25007; seconded by Joy. Motion carried 9-0: Ball, Campbell, Cruz, Ebert, Eddins, Feit, Joy, Rodenburg, and Ryman Yost voting 'yes'.

Campbell shared his connection to the area, noting that he grew up in the neighborhood and is familiar with it. He mentioned that the grocery store in the area has been a longstanding establishment. Campbell acknowledged that the area does need revitalization and expressed support for the proposed project, believing it would be beneficial for the neighborhood. He also stated that, in his view, the proposed development would not disturb the more distant residential areas.

Eddins expressed support for the proposed development, acknowledging that there are traffic concerns in the area. She shared her personal experience of using 33rd Street to avoid traffic on 40th Street, citing the congestion there. Eddins suggested that the revitalization of the area could draw more attention to the traffic issues and potentially lead to future traffic studies. She further noted that if people from outside the neighborhood begin to voice concerns about the traffic, it could serve as a catalyst to address the issue and push for improvements.

Feit expressed her support for the proposed development, emphasizing the importance of continued community engagement. She encouraged all the neighbors to stay involved, noting that this project is just the first step in revitalizing the area. Feit suggested that the community engage with LTU (Lincoln Transportation and Utilities) about traffic concerns and with Lincoln Parks and Recreation regarding potential trail development. She also shared an idea about growing and selling vegetables from the backyard, referencing the new food plan, and suggested the possibility of starting a small market. Feit highlighted the exciting opportunities for further engagement and development, making a comparison to the ongoing revitalization of University Place. Feit concluded by encouraging continued communication among community members to help make the area as beautiful as possible.

Joy agreed with her fellow commissioners and stated that she would also be supporting the proposed development.

Rodenburg shared that his first home after returning to Lincoln from Wisconsin was on Chautauqua Avenue, adjacent to the proposed rezoning area. He noted that four houses along 33rd Street were already zoned for business at the time, and he purchased two to operate Bike Pedalers for 25 years before selling the business to two employees, who renamed it Blue Sky.

Rodenburg recalled a developer who once purchased the homes between Culligan and Dental Design on the west side of 33rd Street, intending to build a strip mall, but the 2007 recession halted those plans. Businesses like Little Mountain T-Shirt Shop still operate from those homes today.

Rodenburg described the city's requirements to convert his property into a business, including installing a 30-foot turning radius, explosion-proof windows, and other upgrades. While acknowledging that future small businesses may face similar hurdles, he believes they serve the public good.

Rodenburg also recounted that the widening of 33rd Street led to the loss of street parking in front of his property. Though the city offered to reinstall it, he had to cover the cost and was assessed for two spaces.

Rodenburg stated that traffic within the PUD area is not currently a major concern, though improvements may be needed along Normal Boulevard. He expressed full support for the proposal and enthusiasm about the area's continued transformation into a thriving community business district.

Chair Ryman Yost joined her fellow commissioners in expressing support for the proposal. She acknowledged that, outside of the designation of the PUD, anyone who has driven through the neighborhood is aware of the traffic challenges in the area. Ryman Yost expressed hope that the development would help bring attention to these issues and improve safety by making the area more walkable and bikeable.

Ryman Yost also addressed concerns raised about the affordability of rent for potential apartments, duplexes, and townhouses, recognizing that affordability is a significant issue in the community. She noted that this is a focus for the city, and the proposed development could offer an incredible opportunity for young adults and new professionals to find affordable housing close to businesses and public transportation, with easy access to walkable amenities. Ryman Yost concluded by expressing her intention to vote in favor of the proposal and echoing the call for continued neighborhood involvement as the development progresses. Ryman Yost also thanked the community members who have come together to shape the project, calling it a great opportunity for the city to grow from the ground up.

Campbell moved to adjourn the Planning Commission meeting of May 14, 2025; seconded Joy.

Motion carried 9-0: Ball, Campbell, Cruz, Ebert, Eddins, Feit, Joy, Rodenburg and Ryman Yost voted "yes"

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:50 pm.