

FACTSHEET

TITLE: A Resolution requested by the Director of the Urban Development Department declaring the **South Capitol Redevelopment Area** as blighted and substandard, as determined by the *South Capitol Redevelopment Area Blight and Substandard Determination Study*.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: A finding of reasonable presence of substandard and blighted conditions (**Miscellaneous No. 08015**).

SPONSOR: Planning Department

BOARD/COMMITTEE: Planning Commission
Public Hearing: 01/14/09
Administrative Action: 01/14/09

RECOMMENDATION: A finding of reasonable presence of substandard and blighted conditions (7-0: Carroll, Larson, Esseks, Cornelius, Francis, Sunderman and Partington voting 'yes'; Taylor and Gaylor-Baird absent).

FINDINGS OF FACT:

1. This is a request to declare the **South Capitol Redevelopment Area** as blighted and substandard pursuant to Neb.Rev.Stat. § 18-2103(11). After an area is declared blighted and substandard, the City may proceed with the preparation and approval of a Redevelopment Plan. Redevelopment Plan activities may include utilizing Tax Increment Financing (TIF) from private development to pay for public infrastructure and improvements.
2. This study area consists of 287 acres, more or less, generally bounded by South 8th Street to South 18th Street, between Euclid Avenue and G Street. The *South Capitol Redevelopment Area Blight and Substandard Determination Study* was conducted by Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., which has determined that there is a reasonable presence of substandard and blighted conditions in the study area.
3. The staff recommendation to find the area to be blighted and substandard is based upon the "Analysis" as set forth on p.3-7, concluding that the **South Capitol Redevelopment Area** qualifies as substandard and blighted within the definition of the Nebraska Community Development Law, as determined by the *South Capitol Redevelopment Area Blight and Substandard Determination Study*. The Study is consistent with the redevelopment and revitalization activities identified in the Comprehensive Plan. The staff presentation is found on p.9.
4. Testimony in support is found on p.10 and the record consists of 14 letters in support (p.14-27).
5. Testimony in opposition is found on p.10-11, with concerns about property values and whether there will be any adverse impact upon properties in the blighted area.
6. The record also consists of a letter suggesting that the north end of the proposed blighted area should extend to H Street between 10th and 15th Street (p.28).
7. On January 14, 2009, the Planning Commission agreed with the staff recommendation and voted 7-0 (Taylor and Gaylor-Baird absent) to find that there is a reasonable presence of substandard and blighted conditions in the **South Capitol Redevelopment Area** and that the area should be declared blighted and substandard (**Miscellaneous No. 08015**).

FACTSHEET PREPARED BY: Jean L. Walker

DATE: January 29, 2009

REVIEWED BY: _____

DATE: January 29, 2009

REFERENCE NUMBER: FS\CC\2009\MISC.08015 Blight

LINCOLN/LANCASTER COUNTY PLANNING STAFF REPORT

for JANUARY 14, 2009 PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

- PROJECT #:** Miscellaneous No. 08015
South Capitol Redevelopment Area Blight and Substandard Determination Study
- PROPOSAL:** The Urban Development Department has forwarded a request to review the *South Capitol Redevelopment Area Blight and Substandard Determination Study* and to recommend the Area be declared substandard and blighted.
- LOCATION:** Generally from S. 8th Street to S. 18th Street, between Euclid Avenue and G Street.
- LAND AREA:** 287 acres, more or less
- CONCLUSION:** The South Capitol Redevelopment Area qualifies as substandard and blighted within the definition set forth in the Nebraska Community Development Law, NEB REV STAT § 18-2103, as determined by the *South Capitol Redevelopment Area Blight and Substandard Determination Study*. The Substandard and Blight Determination Study is consistent with the redevelopment and revitalization activities identified in Lincoln-Lancaster County 2030 Comprehensive Plan.

RECOMMENDATION:

Finding that there is a reasonable presence of substandard and blighted conditions in the South Capitol Redevelopment Area as per § 18-2103 (11) Nebraska Revised Statutes.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

- PURPOSE:** Nebraska Community Development Law, NEB REV STAT § 18-2109 requires the Planning Commission to review whether an area is substandard and blighted. A recommendation of the Planning Commission is required to be provided to the City Council prior to a redevelopment area being declared blighted and substandard.

- AREA DESCRIPTION:** Refer to Blight Study document.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN SPECIFICATIONS:

The Comprehensive Plan identifies a variety of future land uses within this study area. Future land use designations include Commercial, Urban Residential, Green Space, and Public and Semi-Public.
(Page 19)

Maximize the community's present infrastructure investment by planning for residential and commercial development in areas with available capacity. This can be accomplished in many ways including encouraging appropriate new development on unused land in older neighborhoods, and encouraging a greater amount of commercial space per acre

and more dwelling units per acre in new neighborhoods.
(Page 9)

Construction and renovation within the existing urban area should be compatible with the character of the surrounding neighborhood.

Encourage mixed-use redevelopment, adaptive reuse, and in-fill development including residential, commercial and retail uses. These uses may develop along transit routes and provide residential opportunities for persons who do not want to or cannot drive an automobile.
(Page 10)

Encourage renovation and reuse of existing commercial centers. Infill commercial development should be compatible with the character of the area and pedestrian oriented.
(Page 36)

Promote the preservation, maintenance and renovation of existing housing and neighborhoods throughout the city, with special emphasis on low and moderate income neighborhoods.

Maintain and enhance infrastructure and services in existing neighborhoods. While acknowledging the need for affordable housing, recognize that broad economic diversity within existing neighborhoods encourages reinvestment and improves quality of life for all residents.

Preserve, protect, and promote city and county historic resources. Preserve, protect and promote the character and unique features of rural and urban neighborhoods, including their historical and architectural elements.
(Page 67)

For existing neighborhoods, the diversity is often already in place, but efforts must focus on maintaining this balance and variety. The diversity of architecture, housing types and sizes are central to what makes older neighborhoods great places to live. New construction should continue the architectural variety, but in a manner that is sympathetic with the existing neighborhoods.

Infill development also needs to respect the street pattern, block sizes and development standards of the area, such as having parking at the rear and front porches, windows and doors on the front street side. The diversity of land uses, including commercial and congregate living facilities are important to the diversity of any area, provided they fit within the character of the block and neighborhood.

Single family homes, in particular, add opportunities for owner-occupants in older neighborhoods and should be preserved.

The rich stock of existing, smaller homes found throughout established areas, provides an essential opportunity for many first-time home buyers.

Encourage public/private partnerships with housing entities including Lincoln Housing Authority, Nebraska Housing Resource, and NeighborWorks.
(Pages 71-72)

ANALYSIS:

1. This is a request to determine whether the South Capitol Redevelopment Area should or should not be declared substandard and blighted per § 18-2103 (11) Nebraska Revised Statutes. After an area is declared substandard and blighted, the City may proceed with the preparation and approval of a Redevelopment Plan. Redevelopment activities may include utilizing Tax Increment Financing (TIF) from private development to pay for public infrastructure and improvements.

2. The Urban Development Department hired a consultant who conducted the study to determine whether or not there was a presence of substandard or blighting conditions in the study area per § 18-2103 (11) Nebraska Revised Statutes.
3. The area comprises 287 acres. According to the land use categories identified in the Blight Study, approximately 29.2% of the land is dedicated to streets and alleys, 0.9% is industrial, 0.1% is parks and recreation, 2.4% is vacant land, 1.5% is in public/quasi-public use, 62.9% is residential, and 2.9% is commercial.
4. All of the land within the study area is within the City of Lincoln corporate limits.
5. The Urban Development Department requests the determination study be reviewed by the Planning Commission for conformance with the Comprehensive Plan.
6. A **substandard** area is defined in the Nebraska Revised Statutes as containing a predominance of buildings or improvements with at least one of four conditions present:
 1. Dilapidation/deterioration
 2. Age or obsolescence
 3. Inadequate provision for ventilation, light, air, sanitation or open spaces
 4. a) High density of population and overcrowding; or
b) The existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire and other causes; or
c) Any combination of such factors, is conducive to ill health, transmission of disease, infant mortality, juvenile delinquency, and crime, and is detrimental to the public health, safety, morals or welfare.
7. According to the Blight Study which randomly sampled 117 of 990 structures, the area qualifies as **substandard** because three factors were found to be present to a strong extent and the remaining factor was present to a reasonable, but less significant extent in the study area.
 1. Strong Presence of Factor:
Dilapidation, deterioration, age or obsolescence of structures is evident in that half of commercial/industrial and almost 43% of residential structures are in deteriorated or deteriorating condition (Page 23).
 2. Strong Presence of Factor:
Approximately 94 (80%) of the 117 structures in the sample were 40+ years of age (Page 7). 50% of commercial/industrial structures are over 40 years old and 81% of residential structures are over 40 years old (Page 51).

3. Reasonable Presence of Factor:
Inadequate provision for sanitation is evident in the study area with respect to the conditions of the buildings in the study area. 42.7% of the 117 structures sampled by the consultant were identified as deteriorating or dilapidated. When not upgraded or maintained, these types of structures pose a sanitation and safety risk (Page 24).
4. Strong Presence of Factor:
Conditions which endanger life or property by fire and other causes are strongly present throughout the redevelopment area and evidenced by 80% of the randomly sampled structures over 40 years of age, buildings in need of repair for masonry and wooden structural elements—this can be a fire hazard, and the presence of 3.4% of sampled properties containing debris piles which could harbor pests or catch fire (Page 26).

8. A **blighted** area is defined in the Nebraska Revised Statutes as having the presence of one or more of twelve of the following conditions:

1. A substantial number of deteriorated or deteriorating structures;
2. Existence of defective or inadequate street layout;
3. Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility or usefulness;
4. Insanitary or unsafe conditions;
5. Deterioration of site or other improvements;
6. Diversity of ownership;
7. Tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land;
8. Defective or unusual conditions of title;
9. Improper subdivision or obsolete platting;
10. The existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire or other causes;
11. Any combination of such factors, substantially impairs or arrests the sound growth of the community, retards the provision of housing accommodations or constitutes an economic or social liability;
12. Is detrimental to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare in its present condition and use; and in which there is at least one of the following conditions:
 - a) Unemployment in the designated blighted area is at least one hundred twenty percent of the state or national average;

- b) The average age of the residential or commercial units in the area is at least 40 years;
- c) More than half of the plotted and subdivided property in the area is unimproved land that has been within the City for 40 years and has remained unimproved during that time;
- d) The per capita income of the designated blighted area is lower than the average per capita income of the city or City in which the area is designated; or
- e) The area has had either stable or decreasing population based on the last two decennial censuses.

9. The study found the following 10 **blighting** factors to be present in the study area:

1. **Strong Presence of Factor:**
A substantial number of deteriorated or deteriorating structures. 42.7% of structures sampled were determined to be deteriorating or dilapidated (Page 31).
2. **Reasonable Presence of Factor:**
Defective or inadequate street layout. Pedestrian flow is interrupted by the high traffic volumes traveling generally at excessive speeds on the one-way pairs of S. 9th/S. 10th and S. 16th/S. 17th (Page 32).
3. **Strong Presence of Factor:**
Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility or usefulness (Pages 33-34).
4. **Strong Presence of Factor:**
Insanitary or unsafe conditions. 80% of the randomly sampled structures were over 40 years of age; buildings potentially in need of repair for masonry and wooden structural elements. Underground utilities are approximately 75 to 90 years of age. There was a presence of 3.4% of sampled properties containing debris piles which could harbor pests or catch fire (Pages 35-36).
5. **Strong Presence of Factor:**
Deterioration of site improvements. 18 of 1,014 parcels had no sidewalks while 36 received a rating of "fair" or "poor" sidewalk condition rating. 127 of 1,014 parcels received a rating of "fair" for overall site condition while eight received a rating of "poor". Gravel parking conditions were noted for residential uses (Page 37).
6. **Strong Presence of Factor:**
Diversity of ownership. The total number of owners within the redevelopment area is estimated at 1,041, with a range of one to 22 owners per block (Page 38).
7. The factor of tax or special assessment exceeding the fair value of land was determined not to be a factor (Page 8).

8. Defective or unusual conditions of title was not reviewed by the consultant for this study (Page 8).
9. Strong Presence of Factor:
Improper subdivision or obsolete platting. Lots in residential neighborhoods throughout the redevelopment area contain a substantial amount of individual parcels that are undersized or inappropriately platted based on today's subdivision ordinance (Page 43).
10. Strong Presence of Factor:
Conditions which endanger life or property by fire and other causes are strongly present throughout the redevelopment area and evidenced by 80% of the randomly sampled structures over 40 years of age, buildings in need of repair for masonry and wooden structural elements—this can be a fire hazard, and the presence of 3.4% of sampled properties containing debris piles which could harbor pests or catch fire. Aging infrastructure is another factor when considering fire protection. Portions of D Street, Garfield Street, and Washington Street have 4" water mains; the minimum today is 6-8" to maintain flow and pressure to fight fires (Pages 44-45).
11. Strong Presence of Factor:
Incompatible mixed land uses. Single-family detached dwellings are directly adjacent to and between multiple-family dwellings on almost every block. Functional and economic obsolescence is prevalent in the area among houses with small rooms and few bedrooms (Page 46).
12. Strong Presence of Factor:
The average age of the residential or commercial units in the area is at least forty years (Page 47).
10. The study finds there is at least a reasonable distribution of all four factors that constitute an area as substandard within the study area, and out of 12 possible factors that constitute an area blighted, nine are strongly present in the area and one is reasonably present. Therefore it is the conclusion of the study that sufficient conditions and factors meet the criteria of substandard and blight as evidenced in the Blight Study. These factors present a serious barrier to the planned and coordinated development of the area, have created an environment that negatively impacts private sector investment in the area, and serve as a detriment to the overall healthy economic growth and physical development of the community.
11. The Blight Study is on file with the Urban Development Department and the Planning Department.

Prepared by:

Brandon M. Garrett, AICP
Planner

DATE: January 8, 2008

**APPLICANT
/CONTACT:**

Wynn Hjermsstad
Urban Development Department
808 P Street
Suite 400
Lincoln, NE 68508
(402) 441-7606

MISCELLANEOUS NO. 08015, SOUTH CAPITOL REDEVELOPMENT AREA BLIGHT AND SUBSTANDARD DETERMINATION STUDY,

PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE PLANNING COMMISSION:

January 14, 2009

Members present: Cornelius, Francis, Partington, Larson, Esseks, Sunderman and Carroll; Taylor and Gaylor Baird absent.

Ex Parte Communications: None.

Staff recommendation: A finding that there is a reasonable presence of substandard and blighted conditions.

Staff presentation: **Brandon Garrett of Planning staff** noted that there were 14 e-mails in support and one additional e-mail submitted just prior to this meeting suggesting that the projected blighted area should have been larger.

The South Capitol Redevelopment Area Blight and Substandard Determination Study covers 287 acres located in the central part of Lincoln just south of the Capitol. The staff recommendation is a finding that there is a reasonable presence of substandard and blighted conditions, based upon the report by the consult hired by the Urban Development Department.

Proponents

1. Wynn Hjermstad of Urban Development stated that the determination study is a very technical and objective document. It is not subject to public involvement. There is a standard list of criteria mandated by state statute that must be investigated and the final determination is based on that criteria. The study did find that the area does meet the criteria in order to be declared blighted and substandard.

Why did we do this? This is a very fragile neighborhood – low home ownership and a lot of crime, but it is also a gem of a neighborhood with the State Capitol, historic districts, grand houses, schools, near downtown, walkable. We did this blight study because there are efforts going on with Stronger and Safer Neighborhoods. The Everett and Near South Neighborhood Associations are working to make improvements. We see this as just one more tool to help continue to improve the neighborhoods.

The next step is a redevelopment plan. Urban Development has started that effort and it is a little bit different than some of the others and goes a little further than the statutory requirements to take into consideration that the neighborhoods have had focus areas in this area.

Francis inquired as to why H Street was not included. Hjermstad advised that H Street is already included in the Downtown Redevelopment Area.

2. Jon Carlson, who is managing the **City Stronger Safer Neighborhoods Program**, testified in support. One of the main areas of focus is this area south of the State Capitol. It is identified as a high need area with low home ownership, but there is a lot going on. The community residents are energized. There were 350 people at the neighborhood meeting, with 125 people volunteering for action teams. There are property owners that are engaged. Ninety-three letters have been mailed to property owners where there have been police calls for service. The landowners are stepping up and taking ownership. The fines for housing code violations have been increased. Loans and grant programs are being created for rehabilitation. Safety is up in the area. Police officers on the Southwest Team have adopted blocks in the area – they walk the area and they knock on doors because our intent is to get citizens to reconnect and not put up with the illegal and disturbing activity. Inspectors from Health and Building & Safety are doing the same – walking the area, looking for violations. The Americorp project assistant has done a house-by-house property-by-property condition survey looking for junk cars, trash, broken windows, etc. Our community organizers talk to residents and identify needs and create community building activities – cleanup activities, school activities, etc. We are creating stability, code enforcement and human connection in the area. This blight study will provide tools and resources to come into this area and tip the home ownership.

3. Michael Snodgrass, Executive Director of **NeighborWorks Lincoln**, testified in support. NeighborWorks is pleased to be working in these neighborhoods on this project. We do need the tools in place both for the city and private developers to want to work in this neighborhood. The status of home ownership is very low in this area. If we want our downtown to be healthy we need to be working on the neighborhoods that surround it.

4. Pat Anderson-Sifuentez testified in support. She works for NeighborWorks Lincoln and has lived in the neighborhood for many years. The blight study is a tool for redevelopment and it is a much needed tool. There are a lot of challenges in this neighborhood, such as slip-ins, very old houses with crumbling foundations. The crime stats are higher in this area.

Opposition

1. Jason Krause, 921 Garfield Street, purchased his house through the NeighborWorks program in 2005, and since that time he has had no contact with NeighborWorks. He has not received any mailings on this project. His valuation will drop \$30,000 and he will be in a blighted area. He is concerned about the amount of money he has put into his house and now have the value drop. He has six children and wants a nice area to live but he is very concerned. What does this mean to me? He has not been invited to any of the meetings. He does not know who to talk to. He has been told to speak to Housing and Urban Development. He is concerned about the idea of zoning changes to commercial more than residential. What does this mean for the future if I decide to sell my property?

2. Lucas Peterson, 1512 S. 7th Street, in the Everett Neighborhood, testified in opposition. He used to live at 14th & C. It is his understanding that a blight study refocuses the tax structure. He is opposed to the amount of blight studies that this community has. Why can't we finish the blighted areas before we do any more? He is a recent Lincoln resident and when he came here he was looking for an area where he can walk to downtown or take the bus, and he found that the Near South and Everett neighborhoods are convenient. He can walk anywhere in his neighborhood and

feel safe. The public pressure behind this agency is a smokescreen to big business. He takes issue with how this was presented and how it was done. He is not against blight but there is common courtesy that should have occurred before this was done.

3. Danny Walker, 427 E Street, has lived in the area for 50 years. He does not like the word “blight”. It has been totally carried away in this city. My neighborhood has been drug into this mess and he does not believe his neighborhood qualifies for blight. 8th Street across from Cooper Park has beautiful two-story homes. There is a historical structure there. You are messing around in a historic area. He wants to know how many of these residents were notified in writing of this blight study involving their property. We had a very heated discussion in our neighborhood meeting and we had very little notification. 8th Street, Washington and Garfield should not be included. Blighting puts a black eye on the neighborhood. The Police Department wants to expand their garage and take down a whole block of homes. He hopes this is not one of the underlying factors in this blight study. Where is the return to the taxpayers on the money Urban Development has spent?

Response by the Applicant

Hjermstad offered that generally, Lincoln does a very good job of getting public involvement up-front. In terms of getting people involved, during the Antelope Valley development, over 1,000 meetings were held with people that were interested, including residents. Our goal is to make the area better for those that live there already. It is economic diversity that is the key to a successful neighborhood.

As far as what it means to be in a blighted area, it does not mean anything to the resident. There is no implication to property taxes, no zoning change. The designation just legally gives Urban Development the authority to go the next step, which is the redevelopment plan. This is an effort toward revitalization. We were starting to see a fragile neighborhood that needed some assistance. There will be much more public outreach during the redevelopment plan stage.

In terms of the boundaries, Hjermstad stated that they do try to make them logical and stick to the major streets. We wanted to include both sides of 9th, so we had to include 8th Street. It was the zoning lines, major arterials, and existing redevelopment areas that played into the boundaries.

Sunderman inquired whether the revitalization efforts are strictly for commercial concerns. Hjermstad stated, “no”. They are looking into using TIF on residential properties for rehab.

ACTION BY PLANNING COMMISSION:

January 14, 2009

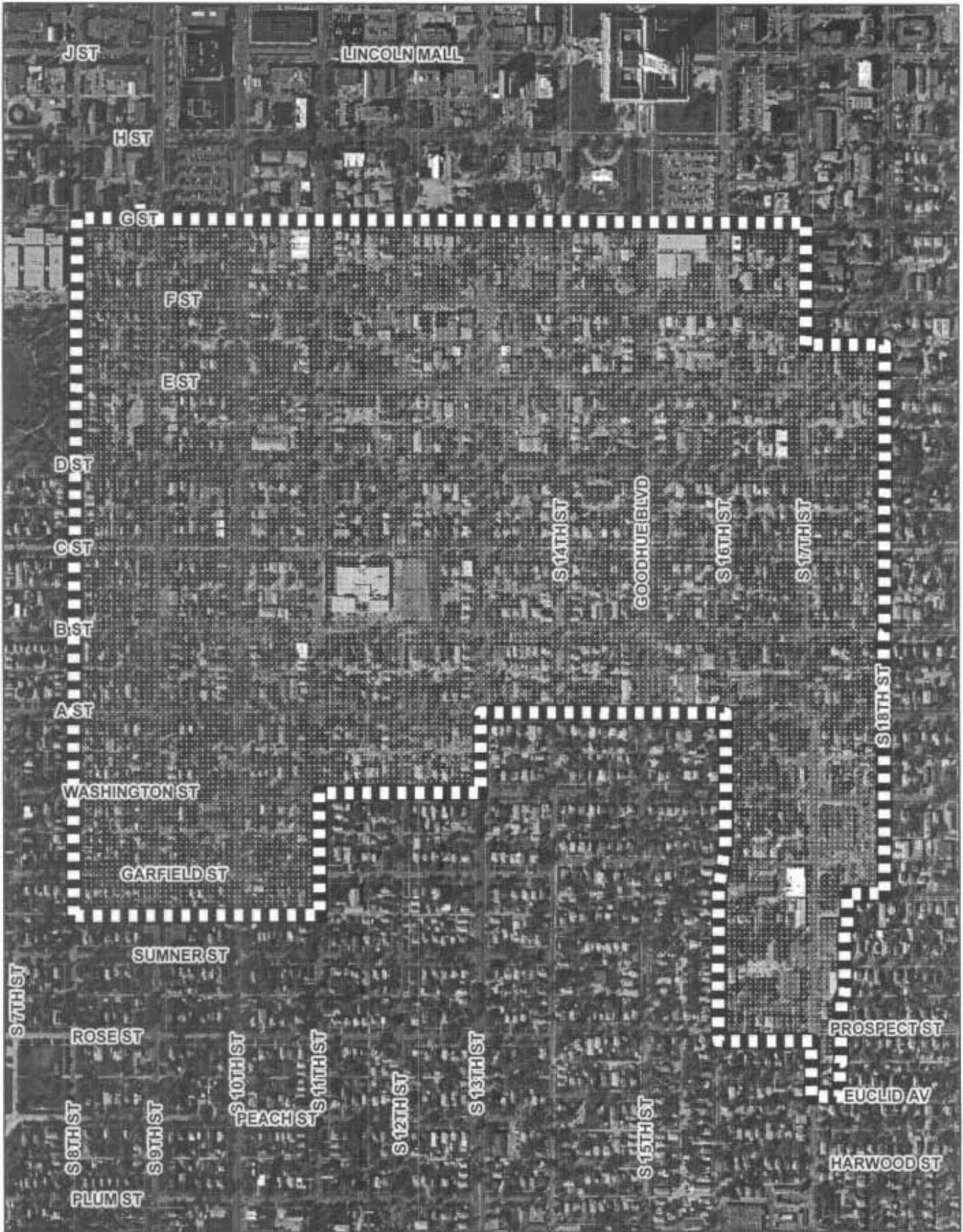
Francis moved to find a reasonable presence of substandard and blighted conditions, seconded by Larson.

Francis believes this is an excellent tool to help this area overcome the lack of home ownership. She is excited to see this first step.

Cornelius noted that this is by and large a technical decision. The Planning Commission was provided with a fairly structured objective list of criteria where the boxes are checked and you vote.

Larson believes the evidence of urban renewal efforts are eminent all over town. He believes that Urban Development has been a very effective department and he believes that it does the job of trying to keep these transitional neighborhoods in step with the rest of the community.

Motion carried 7-0: Cornelius, Francis, Partington, Larson, Esseks, Sunderman and Carroll voting 'yes'; Taylor and Gaylor Baird absent. This is a recommendation to the City Council.



Miscellaneous #08015
South Capitol Redevelopment Area Blight Study

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2007 aerial

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SUPPORT

ITEM NO. 4.4: MISCELLANEOUS NO. 08015
(p.195 - Public Hearing - 01/14/09)



Cheryl <ccf@neb.rr.com>

01/13/2009 02:15 PM

To <plan@lincoln.ne.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject south capitol blight study

I am asking for your support of the South Capitol Blight Study, for the city's focus and resources to the area between 8th and 18th streets and A to G streets. Thank you

Cheryl Frederick



"Robert (Bud) and Phyllis
Narveson"
<woodlawn@woodlawnresort.
com>

01/13/2009 10:46 AM

To <plan@lincoln.ne.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject South Capitol Blight Study

To the Planning Commission.

We own and live in the house at 1729 C St., so that our house is included in the area covered by the South Capitol blight study. While we do not consider our block or the blocks in our immediate vicinity seriously blighted, we support the study. We do so with some apprehension, for the mere naming of our area as blighted will have an adverse effect on persons seeking housing and considering our area. But problem housing in the area must be dealt with, or else as history shows, the problems will spread. So we emphatically do support the conclusions of the study, and urge that the proposed actions be undertaken.

Robert and Phyllis Narveson



Scott
<celticsallor@neb.rr.com>
01/13/2009 10:48 AM

To <plan@lincoln.ne.gov>
cc
bcc

Subject Planning Department Misc #08015

Our State Capitol is one of this nation's architectural gems. We are in the process of expending considerable time and resources in its maintenance and preservation, which we believe is time and money well spent. Yet, right within the shadow of the Capitol tower is a blighted neighborhood that detracts from the whole city, and reflects poorly on the image of the Capitol itself. Revitalization of the South Capitol area is important not just to the City of Lincoln, but contributes to the image, and through that, to the quality of life of the entire State of Nebraska. As residents of the Lincoln's Near South Neighborhood, we support the South Capitol Blight Study and hope that you will give it favorable consideration.

Scott & Susan Bulfinch
2128 B Street
Lincoln, NE

SUPPORT

ITEM NO. 4.4: MISCELLANEOUS NO. 08015
(p.195 - Public Hearing - 1/14/09)



Clark E deVries
<cdevries@unlnotes.unl.edu>

01/13/2009 08:25 AM

To <plan@lincoln.ne.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject Blight Study Misc # 08015

I live in the Near South area and support misc # 08015.
This will benefit the older core neighborhoods. And give us the tools to improve the areas involved.

Thanks.

Clark deVries

SUPPORT

ITEM NO. 4.4: MISCELLANEOUS NO. 08015
(p.195 - Public Hearing - 1/14/09)



John Heineman
<jheine@lps.org>
01/12/2009 08:55 PM

To <Plan@lincoln.ne.gov>
cc
bcc
Subject Misc #08015

Dear Planning Commission,

As a home owner at 1412 E Street, I strongly encourage you to support Misc. #08015. I believe this measure will greatly improve the neighborhoods outlined in this report. Strong neighborhoods are vital to the city, especially those historic neighborhoods so close to downtown.

Sincerely,

John Heineman
402/416-2326



jheine.vcf



Scott Baird
<scottbaird2@gmail.com>

01/13/2009 11:01 PM

Please respond to
<scottbaird@aya.yale.edu>

To <plan@lincoln.ne.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject Planning Department Misc # 08015

I am writing to support the recommendations of the South Capitol Redevelopment Area Blight and Substandard Determination.

No one visits Lincoln, whether from other parts of Nebraska or other part of the country, without driving by the State Capitol. It is the most prominent, interesting and significant building in town. When they do drive by, they see run down properties. Anyone who reads the paper is even more aware of the problems occurring in and near these buildings.

The substandard and blighted designation will help to strengthen this visible and important part of Lincoln. The Near South Neighborhood Association is committed to helping improve the quality of life for neighbors here. We are not just asking for the city to do something, we are willing to contribute too. Volunteers from the Near South helped to create the 2006 Focus Area Plan which recommended a blight study for this area. Today we have volunteers who are ready to help with the next steps – organizing community meetings, drafting development plans and encouraging private investors and developers to take advantage of the business opportunities that will also help to lift this neighborhood.

The designation recommended by this study will help to attract these investors by allowing the city to consider useful financing tools. It is an important part of this effort, which is why I hope that you will support the recommendations of this determination.

Scott Baird, President
Near South Neighborhood Association

--

Scott Baird
scottbaird@aya.yale.edu



June Griffin
<june.griffin@gmail.com>
01/13/2009 09:30 PM

To <plan@lincoln.ne.gov>
cc
bcc
Subject Misc. #08015

I urge you to support miscellaneous # 08015. As a resident of the Near South Neighborhood, I have been working with other residents to help improve this core neighborhood, but we need the support of the city. Declaring this portion of the city blighted will help to bring about necessary improvements.

Sincerely,
June Griffin

--

June Griffin
Faculty Coordinator, WHT Scholars Learning Community
Assistant Professor of Practice, English Department
University of Nebraska-Lincoln
june.griffin@gmail.com
402.472.1886



Casey Griffith
<caseylen@gmail.com>
01/13/2009 07:17 PM

To <plan@lincoln.ne.gov>
cc
bcc
Subject South Capitol Blight Study

I am writing in support of the South Capitol Blight Study. I believe this neighborhood is important both in regards to Lincoln's city history and as an area close to downtown and the UNL campus. I believe more focused attention from the city will mean a great deal in the daily lives of those who inhabit the South Capitol area.

Thank you,

Casey Griffith



J12313
<J12313@ALLTEL.net>
01/27/2009 05:12 PM

To <plan@lincoln.ne.gov>
cc Jeff Tangeman <jtangeman@navix.net>
bcc
Subject Misc #08015 : S. Capitol redevelopment study

Honorable commissioners,

I am writing you today to urge your acceptance of the South Capitol Redevelopment study. Part of the area in the study is the northern half of my neighborhood, Everett, and part of the near south neighborhoods. Over the neighborhood's history, from its platting in the 1870s to today, the area has transitioned from prairie fields to home area of Lincoln's elite, William Jennings Bryan and Charles Dawes both lived on D street in Lincoln's infancy. Now the South Capitol area is an area that is 90% rental with a reputation for petty crime and decay.

Adoption of this study will begin the process to revive large portions of both Everett and Near South, with plans in the works for redevelopment of the State Fair Grounds and the Antelope Valley. There will be a need for innovative business and residential development, the workers that will inhabit these developments hopefully will want to live close to their place of employment in these days of energy uncertainty. There will be an opportunity to reduce and reorder the density of the S. Capitol area to allow more green space, create new housing options and make the inner core of the city more pedestrian friendly, there will be an opportunity to promote deconversion of historic housing to single family residential.

I urge the commission to accept the study and its findings and set the stage for a great renaissance of two of the oldest neighborhoods in the city of Lincoln.

Thank you,

Jeffrey Tangeman
past president, Everett Neighborhood Association



Darbi Umholtz
<darbiu@earthlink.net>

01/14/2009 07:45 AM

Please respond to
Darbi Umholtz
<darbiu@earthlink.net>

To "plan@lincoln.ne.gov" <plan@lincoln.ne.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject: South Capitol Blight Study

Dear City Planning Department Members,

This email is to let you know that I am in support of the South Capitol Blight Study that you will be discussing at the Planning Commission meeting today. The blight study is another important step towards bringing additional focus and resources to the Near South area and will help to encourage the needed continued revitalization of homes and businesses in this area.

I am a new home owner in the Near South area. One of the things that drew me to this area was the rich history of the homes and neighborhoods. While my home is outside of the blight study area, I drive by the study area daily and the potential for restored greatness is evident. It is so important to our community to maintain our older neighborhoods and embrace their history. Doing this will better our city as a whole.

Thank you for your consideration on the South Capitol Blight Study and further revitalization efforts in the Near South Community.

Sincerely,
Darbi Umholtz
1535 S. 24th St
Lincoln, NE 68502



Carmen Maurer
<cmaurer@nebraska.edu>

01/14/2009 08:44 AM

To <plan@lincoln.ne.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject Misc # 08015

Please support Misc. item No. 08015 on today's Planning Commission Agenda and find that there is a reasonable presence of substandard and blighted conditions in the area south of the Capitol. Recently, I attempted to move onto Goodhue Boulevard, hoping to be part of a more serious revitalization to a street that should be a signature address in Lincoln. After more than a year of inquiries, I found landlords unwilling to sell or properties too far beyond repair for one woman to fix. Instead, I settled for moving into a lovely home a few blocks to the east, but it is still my hope to someday live on Goodhue.

I simply want you to know that there's a demand for owner occupied homes conveniently located our city's large government and university employers. Please take this step and continue to support revitalization on what could be the most desirable address in Lincoln. Thanks.

Carmen Maurer
1929 C St.
Lincoln, Nebraska



Yvonne Norton Leung
<yleung1887@aol.com>
01/13/2009 05:08 PM

To <plan@lincoln.ne.gov>
cc
bcc
Subject Near South Action Support

While the area affected is not immediate to my residence I know that we need appropriate focus on the needs of the Near South beyond just the Mt Emerald Historic District and definitely south of the Capitol. Please register my support for the South Capitol Blight Study.

*Yvonne Norton Leung, 1953 B Street, Lincoln, Nebraska, 68502 USA 402-476-6555
Destiny is not matter of chance. It is a matter of choice. It is not a thing to be waited for,
it is a thing to be achieved. William Jennings Bryan*



RANDY FLEMING
<auctioneer_32@mea.com>
01/14/2009 09:12 AM

To <plan@lincoln.ne.gov>
cc
bcc
Subject **Blight Study**

I would like to go on record of supporting the Blight Study but expanding it all the way to 27th Street. Thanks Randy Fleming Real Estate Broker ,Auctioneer and property owner



Erin Glenn-Hash
<eglennhash@yahoo.com>

01/14/2009 09:52 AM

Please respond to
<eglennhash@yahoo.com>

To <plan@lincoln.ne.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject support of blight study

Dear Members of the Planning Commission,

I am writing in strong support of the South Capitol Blight Study. It is a crucial step in a neighborhood central to the health and vibrancy of Lincoln.

I live at 19th and F Street. I see how the cumulative effects of substandard conditions affect families and create an atmosphere of neglect and despair. The blight study will show what residents and pedestrians already experience - this is an area that needs structured community support and reinforcement.

Support of the blight study will ultimately help more people in the heart of the city experience more of the quality of life that many other members of Lincoln already enjoy. Safety, order, community, health. I am grateful for the people and groups who are advancing this important mission. Please help.

Thank you for consideration, commitment and service.

Sincerely,
Erin Glenn-Hash



William Wood
<ww34243@attel.net>

01/14/2009 12:47 PM

Please respond to
<wmwood@attel.net>

To <plan@lincoln.ne.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject Blighted area south of the capitol

I believe that this district is incorrectly drawn in that the north end should extend to H Street, between 10th Street and 15th Street (now called by some Goodhue Ave.).

The character of the buildings along this street are no different than those on G Street and leaving this area out will cause an additional study to be conducted in the future. Having resided in the area for over 51 years and having walked, biked, driven through it on a daily basis, I believe I'm an expert on the character of the neighborhood.

William J. Wood
808 "D" Street
Lincoln, NE 68502