

NEBRASKA PLANNING & ZONING ASSOCIATION



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Newsletter Pre-Conference 2016



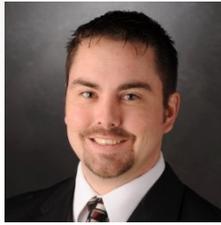
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From the President...

It's been a busy summer and fall of for the members of the NPZA Board. This past September, NPZA co-sponsored a Fall Workshop with the Nebraska Chapter of the American Planning Association that was geared towards land use decision makers from multiple levels of government. It was truly an enlightening look at the land use decision making process. There was good discussion and overall involvement from administrators, local officials, and state representatives.



The annual NPZA Executive Board retreat was held on November 6th in Ord. The retreat was an effective activity resulting in an NPZA Strategic Plan that outlines a bright future for the association.

We have been working hard with the Nebraska Chapter of the American Planning Association on planning the 2016 Nebraska Planning conference. This year's conference will be held in the Younes Conference Center in Kearney and will cover a wide range of topics for those interested in attending.

At the 2016 conference, NPZA will be celebrating 50 years of as an association in support of planning and zoning in Nebraska. The conference committee and the NPZA board as a whole have been working on making this conference the best one yet. We will celebrate our history and honor those who were important to the success of the association. If you know of someone who hasn't attended in a while, please bring them, this year's conference will be one to remember.

--Christopher Solberg
President-NPZA

Mark Your Calendars

March 9-11, 2016: Nebraska Planning Conference
Younes Center, Kearney, NE
Preview on page 6

April 2-5, 2016: APA National Conference
Phoenix, AZ

Pilger Rebuilds with Help from Planning Advisory Team

By Brenda Jenson, AICP; Miller and Associates and Derek Miller, AICP; City of Omaha; Keith Marvin, AICP; Marvin Planning Consultants

Pilger, is a community in northeast Nebraska, it is a town full of pride, spirit, and togetherness. The Village adjacent to Highway 15, and approximately one-half mile south of Highway 275 is geographically located in the center of Norfolk, Wayne, Wisner, West Point, and Stanton providing many necessities and amenities within a short driving distance for Pilger's residents.

Pilger was struck by twin tornadoes on June 16th, 2014 destroying three-fourths of the community including their Downtown District, Wisner-Pilger Middle School, St. John's Lutheran Church, and 60 homes. Two residents tragically lost their lives. As a result of the devastation of the tornadoes the Village saw a decrease in population

See 'Pilger CPAT' page 3....





Downtown Arapahoe, NE

in a safe environment and with a really solid school system, but what makes Arapahoe unique is that you are never a number. You will get to know everyone and everyone will get to know you. So I am confident that my five children in the Arapahoe schools are getting a quality education where the faculty care about each and every one of them...and then I can feel safe that my children can walk down the streets and not be subject to crime."

What positive impact have you seen planning help bring about in the community?

"I have been involved and partnered with our counterpart from the South Central Economic Development District with the reworking of the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinances. I have learned a lot in this process and I have come to know the benefits to the community. Some people see the added regulation as a necessary tool for the community; others say that more regulation in a small Nebraskan town is not necessary. In fact, the planning rework has had appeal to both parties. By reworking the planning regulations in Arapahoe, we have been able to trim the old regulations by more than half- letting go of more rules and bureaucracy and layer upon layer of unnecessary codes that muddied the waters so badly, no one knew where they fell in the rules. Overall, the residents benefit because their town is safer, looks better, and has the money to address critical needs and infrastructure that smaller villages and towns cannot tackle. I have personally received feedback from residents that they appreciate that the town is looking nicer, and with rules to reign in neighbors, contractors and the fact that we now have a solid plan for the future, we can begin looking to the next steps of economic development and addressing new housing for future home owners- all exciting things for a town to be looking at just over the horizon."

Learn more about Arapahoe:

[Arapahoe Chamber of Commerce](#)

[Arapahoe Profile: Nebraska Rural Living](#)

Spotlight Community: ARAPAHOE

Erick Lee serves as the Chairperson for the Arapahoe Planning Commission and also serves on the Airport Authority.

Community description:

Lee: "Arapahoe is positioned perfectly as a crossroads community in Furnas County to several other major communities. Arapahoe is approximately 40 minutes south of Lexington, NE and the I-80 corridor and McCook, NE is 45 minutes to our west. Industries that would characterize the town include cattle feed, farm implementation, livestock feeding supply, vineyards, medical and chiropractic specialties, and locally owned specialty businesses."

What is your history with Arapahoe?

"My wife is actually from this area and we decided to leave a town close to Kansas City and buy a house in Arapahoe back in 2012. I've loved this town ever since the first step I took in it 20 years ago. [Arapahoe] has all the modern trappings of a KC suburb, and I already knew so many people- plus it offered a safe and engaging place I could raise my kids."

What makes Arapahoe unique?

"Arapahoe is unique because it is a prototypical community on the verge of becoming something bigger, better and more inviting to residents regardless of if they are past, present or future citizens. Of course Arapahoe is a great place to live, where you can raise your children



Pilger residents participate in the first CPAT town hall meeting

help with scheduling. The CPAT members broke into smaller teams -Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Regulations, and the Strategic Plan team. Two nights of town-hall meetings were planned to help gather public input and tour the community along with their rebuilding efforts a year after the tornadoes. The town-hall meetings were held on September 21st and 22nd of 2015. On the first day, nine planners discussed with the residents the strengths, weaknesses, and goals of the community. On the second day, five planners attended the meeting and used the findings from the meeting on the first night to break into different groups based on topics, such as housing, economic development, zoning, and community development. During these small group discussions, residents prioritized their goals and discussed implementation ideas.

After the town-hall meetings, each team has been preparing the planning documents for the Village. Over the next 4-6 weeks, the Pilger Planning Commission, Village Board members, and Village Staff will be reviewing the documents and providing their input. These planning documents will be crucial for Pilger moving forward. The updated Zoning Regulations will help guide future growth and development and the Comprehensive and Strategic Plans provide an overview of goals and priorities so Village stakeholders can continue to move forward.

This is the first CPAT project effort in Nebraska and it has been a learning experience. Much has been gained from this experience that will help us improve for the possible 'next time' that a municipality is affected by catastrophic events either natural or manmade. It takes a lot of hard work and dedication from all volunteers to come together. Through this process, a list of "things learned" will be created to help prepare for future CPAT needs in Nebraska. This process would not be feasible without the time and efforts from the volunteer planners and Village staff and residents. The goal is to present the final planning documents to the Village this spring.

Pilger CPAT *(continued from page 1)*

by almost one-third, from 352 residents to 200. However, slowly but surely, the town is bouncing back with a current population of 212. This is due to help received from several organizations and many resilient and selfless community members.

One of the groups providing assistance to the Village is the Pilger Community Planning Advisory Team (CPAT). The Pilger CPAT is comprised of approximately 15 planners from across the State. The Pilger CPAT was formed by a connection between the Village Clerk and members of the Nebraska Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA) Board. In March of 2015, Derek Miller, Nebraska APA President, sent an e-mail to all APA members asking for volunteers to assist with completing a Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Regulation Updates, and a Strategic Plan for the Village of Pilger. From there, responding members formed the Pilger CPAT and embarked upon a journey that has never holistically been completed in Nebraska before. Brenda Jensen, AICP from Miller & Associates volunteered to serve as the Project Manager. Miller & Associates has served as the Village's Engineer for many years and they wanted to continue helping the Village.

To kick-off the process, CPAT members communicated through e-mail, conference calls, and used Doodle polls to



Providing for Translation Needs through Limited English Proficiency Plans

by Lowell Schroeder, Planner, North East Nebraska Economic Development District (NENEDD)

As community characteristics and demographics continue to evolve, community leaders and planners must develop affective ways of reaching and involving all members of a community. As such, the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) access requirements required by federal programs, is a means of enforcement we all should be striving for.

The Nebraska Department of Economic Development's policy for Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) is to ensure that staff and grantees will communicate effectively with LEP individuals, and LEP individuals will have free and meaningful access to important activities, programs and information.

The CDBG Grantee must complete a Four Factor Analysis to determine what language assistance services are appropriate. Although there is no safe harbor for oral interpretation, HUD has adopted a "safe harbor" for the translation of written materials.

The table below sets forth safe harbors for written translations	
Size of the Language Group	Recommended Provision
1,000 or more in the eligible population in the service area or among current beneficiaries	➡ Translate vital documents
More than 5% of the eligible population or beneficiaries and more the 50 in number	➡ Translate vital documents
More than 5% of the eligible population or beneficiaries and 50 or less in number	➡ Translate written notice of right to receive free oral interpretation of documents
5% or less of the eligible population or beneficiaries and less than 1,000 in number	➡ No written translation is required

The self-assessment involved in the Four Factor Analysis is largely based off anecdotal experiences of the city. The more objective criteria of the analysis are readily accessible from American Community Survey (ACS) estimates. The use of ACS topic code B16001 (language spoken at home by ability to speak English for the

population 5 years and over) will be useful in determining the need.

After completing the four factor analysis and deciding what language assistance services are appropriate, the grantee and planning consultant have a commitment to develop a plan to address the identified needs of the LEP population they serve. This plan is referred to as a Language Assistance Plan (LAP). This is a plan and a policy that will likely be the most appropriate and cost effective means of documenting compliance and providing a framework for the provision of timely and reasonable language assistance. Some of the efforts to reach out to LEP residents could include; translation of documents associated with Comprehensive Plans, oral translation services during public meetings, translated surveys and LEP population specific public meetings/focus groups to insure public participation from the LEP population.

As with any federal guidance, the ambiguity of the guidance for LAP accessibility requirements is both a blessing and a curse. Communities have the flexibility to establish their own Language Assistance Plan while simultaneously hoping they're doing enough to meet federal standards.

NPZA Board Update

The NPZA board has been meeting with a focus on 2016 and beyond. The board held its annual retreat on Nov. 6th to update the Association's strategic plan. The plan outlines the strategy for improving reach, communication, and education for planning in the state and ensuring sustainability as an association.

The nominating committee met and decided to nominate the current board for another two year term. The membership will vote on the following candidates at the state conference:

- President- Chris Solberg- City of La Vista
- Vice- President- Judy Clark, City of North Platte
- 2nd Vice-President- Dan Gittinger, City of Nebraska City





South Haymarket Neighborhood Plan

by Stacey Groshong Hageman; Lincoln Planning Dept

The City of Lincoln has adopted a plan for the South Haymarket Neighborhood to encourage and guide redevelopment over the next 25 years. The plan was unanimously approved by Lincoln's City Council on December 21, 2015 as an amendment to the 2005 Downtown Master Plan.

South Haymarket is a 38-block area located south of the Historic Haymarket District. Lincoln's 2005 Downtown Master Plan first acknowledged this area as an emerging district in Greater Downtown and recommended further study be conducted. It suggested future land uses, redevelopment projects, and transportation improvements that established a vision for an urban neighborhood. By stating that areas within Greater Downtown should accommodate up to 3,000 new dwelling units by 2040, the Lincoln/Lancaster County Comprehensive Plan further supported a residential focus in South Haymarket.

In the past decade, South Haymarket has already seen successful redevelopment projects such as the Color Court Project, Dairy House Project, N Street Protected Bikeway, Schwarz Paper Building, Lumberworks garage, 8|N Lofts, and Structural Design Group redevelopment.



N Street Today (right)
N Street Redevelopment (below)



Future Buildout, Looking Southeast

The South Haymarket Neighborhood is an intriguing area of Lincoln, given its history of development with industrial properties, commercial buildings, and residences along 9th and 10th Streets. This pattern of development, coupled with its desirable location, provides the foundation for substantial development and redevelopment opportunity.

The South Haymarket Neighborhood Plan is a future vision based on consultation with and input from property owners, community representatives, and elected officials. The plan recommends significant residential and mixed use development, presenting a strategy to create an urban neighborhood for 1,000-2,000 additional residential units, well-defined streetscapes that connect to trails, an urban plaza, open spaces, expanded commercial and office space, and adequate parking for the new uses and other amenities within Greater Downtown. The many government and industrial properties in South Haymarket today are recommended to transition over time to uses more compatible with an urban neighborhood.

Plan implementation will include rezoning properties as projects come forward to encourage appropriate use of land and consider existing character of the neighborhood. New design standards tailored to the area will be developed to foster thoughtful redevelopment.

For more information or to view the plan document, visit www.lincoln.ne.gov, keyword "South Haymarket".



2016 Nebraska Annual Planning Conference Preview

March 9th-11th • Younes Conference Center • Kearney, NE



2.5 days
30+ Presenters
Celebrating 50 Years

Full Conference.....\$180
Wednesday Only.....\$ 95
Thursday & Friday Only\$ 95

This year's conference promises to be special with 30+ presenters, generous sponsors, great networking opportunities, annual awards banquet, and a celebration of 50 years of NPZA. Conference Accredited for 14.0 MCLE credits. Conference registration, scholarship, sponsor, and membership forms available at npza.org.

Schedule at a Glance

Wednesday, March 09

7:15 AM Registration
8:00 AM Welcome at sessions
8:00 AM-4:30 Institutes & Sessions
4:30 PM-6:30 Ethics on Tap

Thursday, March 10

7:15 AM Registration
8:00-10:45 General Sessions
11:00-5:00PM District Mtg/ Sessions
6:30 Awards Banquet

Friday, March 11

7:30AM Registration
8:00-12:15 PM Institutes & Sessions
12:15-12:30PM Closing
12:45 PM NPZA Board Meeting

Lodging is the registrant's responsibility

Preview with Key Note Speaker Ed McMahon



Ed McMahon is one of this year's key note speakers. He is nationally known as an inspiring and thought provoking speaker and a leading authority on topics such as the links between health and the built environment, sustainable

development, land conservation, smart growth, and historic preservation.

(Excerpt and photo provided by the Urban Land Institute)

NPZA*: Your talk at the Nebraska Planning and Zoning state conference will be about the "Secrets of Successful Communities". Could you tell us how you arrived at these characteristics and what motivates you share your conclusions with citizens across the country?

McMahon: "Over the last 40 years I have worked in hundreds of communities in all 50 states. As a result of this, I have arrived at some conclusions about why some communities prosper and many others do not. First and foremost, successful communities have a vision for the

See 'McMahon' page 7...



McMahon (continued from page 6)

future. These visions almost always begin by carefully analyzing a community's assets (human, economic, educational, natural, cultural, architectural, etc.) and then planning a future around the preservation and enhancement of a community's existing assets. I have also learned that successful economic development is rarely about "the one big thing". Much more frequently it is about a lot of smaller things working synergistically together off of a plan that makes sense.

What motivates me to spread the message of good planning is the belief that we spend way too much time in America fighting about what we disagree about and not nearly enough time sitting down together to talk about what we do agree about. In my experience, most Americans care more about the place they live than the political party that they belong to, which means that successful communities are able to reach a consensus about the future."

NPZA: You mention that understanding a community's assets is an important component of successful communities. In your visit to Lancaster County, NE communities this past year, what do you see as some of most valuable assets of those communities that may be evident in other Nebraskan communities as well?

McMahon: "My visit To Lancaster County, Nebraska was an eye opener. First of all, Lincoln is one of the most dynamic and successful small cities in the nation. Its downtown is thriving and its economy is strong. I was also impressed by the beauty of the surrounding landscape and the diversity of the many small towns in the county. I think perhaps the biggest asset that I observed was the "can do" attitude of the people of Lancaster County. I was also struck by the impact of private philanthropy, not just in Lancaster County, but in Nebraska more generally."

NPZA: One sentiment that seems often implied by 'naysayers' is that planning is not as effective at bringing benefit to residents as making it easy for property owners to act on their own self-interests. What value can our collective efforts to become a "successful community" bring to residents where our fragmented self-interests may fall short?

McMahon: "Every community has naysayers. These are the people who always say "we can't do it. It won't work. We tried it already. It costs too much, etc." "No" is a powerful word in America, but at the community level a more powerful word is "yes". Yes we can make this community a better place to live-in, to work in, to look at, to visit. Communities that set no standards simply compete to the bottom. Communities that set high standards compete to the top, because, successful communities know that if they say no to bad development, they will always get better development in its place."

NPZA: As a senior staff advisor for the Urban Land Institute's Building Healthy Places Initiative, how have you seen a community's commitment to building healthy places influence the success that community achieves?

McMahon: "Our Healthy Places Initiative is about building awareness about the impact of the built environment on Americans health and well-being. For example, if we design a community around cars and traffic, we will get more cars and traffic, but if we design a community around people and places, we will get more people and better places. Healthy places are simply places where the healthy choice is the easy choice. For example, in most new multi-story office buildings, the first thing you usually see when you walk in the lobby will be the elevator. The stairway is usually out of sight, hidden behind a door. When developers make stairways more prominent and visible, more people choose to walk up the steps. Another example: when I was a kid, most Americans walked to school. Today, most American school children are driven to school. This is because we now build schools on the edge of our communities rather than in neighborhoods. In many places we have designed walking out of our environment. When we design places where people are able to walk, they do."

**Daniel Bennett interviewing.*

Please submit any questions, comments, concerns, or ideas regarding the newsletter to Daniel Bennett at danielb@nepadd.com