

**DOUGLAS COUNTY  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
3015 MENKE CIRCLE  
OMAHA, NEBRASKA 68134  
June 13, 2012 6:00 P.M.**

Mr. Monboquette made the following statement: It is 6:00 p.m. on June 13, 2012 and we are assembled for our monthly Planning Commission meeting and we have two members present.

Members Present: Anne Houlihan and Bill Julien.

Members Absent: Dave Lanoha, Bob Bruhn, Luke Janke, Murray McArdle, and Milo P. Vacanti.

Mr. Monbouquette continued his comments: We are lacking a quorum so we cannot conduct official business but we do have the County Engineer's office represented by Dan Kutilek who would like to present the Douglas County Six Year Improvement Plan F.Y. 2012 to F.Y. 2018 and beyond.

Mr. Kutilek made the following comments:

1. It is a six year plan which includes a one year somewhat certain plan and a five year maybe plan.
2. It is important that we make as much as possible an opportunity for the public to comment on the six year plan. It is important that we make available as much as possible the opportunity for the public to comment on our six year plan.
3. It is somewhat interesting and maybe it is good and maybe it is bad that we have not received a lot of comments over all of the years I have been presenting this plan to this Commission so maybe people think we are doing a good job.
4. Even with development being slower obviously because of the economy, road projects are continuing to be aggressive.
5. We have opportunities to spend some of the Federal Highway Department's money and we are going to do that on Military Road. Actual construction will start next year. It is one of our highest priority projects right now and we are buying the right-of-way as we speak. I was told this week that all of the right-of-way has been signed up and has to be reviewed by the State and Federal Highway people to concur that they don't foresee any problems. We are talking about Military Road between 126<sup>th</sup> Street and 142<sup>nd</sup> Street where it merges into Ida Street at about 140<sup>th</sup> Street, an awkward intersection. We have closed the north leg of that intersection permanently and it will be converted to a bike trail as time goes on and will take care of the alignment of Military at that intersection and make it much safer. It will start next year and take two construction seasons to complete. It will pretty much clean up that corridor from I-680 which is about 103<sup>rd</sup> Street all the way out to 156<sup>th</sup> Street making it a three land urban section.
6. We also continue to work on the environmental phase of our 180<sup>th</sup> Street project between Dodge and Maple. We have been working on it for four or five years. The consultant has advised that according to the plan, they should have it done by next year, March 2013. That is important because once you have the environmental study done, you are authorized to go forward and buy the right-of-

- way, finish up the final design plans, and then schedule and budget for the construction phase. It is 28 million dollar project so it is very likely be done in phases. It is an important project for the transportation network in the suburban area of Omaha and Douglas County.
7. I am sure you are aware that 144<sup>th</sup> Street in under construction between Dodge and Blondo Streets. The County still has a portion of that. The City of Omaha is the lead agent for that project but we are a financial contributor to that project. This is the first phase that is being done this year. It is a two phase project. The second phase will be 144<sup>th</sup> Street from Blondo up to Eagle Run Drive. Also Blondo Street from 135<sup>th</sup> Street where the four lane improvement ends out to Nelson's Creek Drive. It is a three year project so it will finish about 2014.
  8. We continue working in that part of the County for numerous years. The plan is to continue improving Blondo Street from where this project leaves off at Nelson's Creek Drive and take it out to 156<sup>th</sup> Street sometime in the 2014 time frame and 156<sup>th</sup> Street will follow from Pepperwood Drive, Dodge Street and up to Corby Street which is about 1/2 mile south of Maple Street. That will take another couple of years so you can see there is going to be a lot of activity 144<sup>th</sup> Street Dodge to Maple, 156<sup>th</sup> Street Dodge to Maple, and connecting it up on Blondo Street. Very large projects that we will partner in.

Mr. Monbouquette asked what the nature of the Blondo Street work, is it going to be widened. I know it is two lanes.

Mr. Kutilek stated that it will be a five lane curb and gutter, trails, some sidewalks, and overhead lighting. It will be very nice when it is completed.

Mr. Monbouquette asked if they needed any right-of-way acquisition.

Mr. Kutilek responded that we do mostly along Blondo Street but it is interesting that the City just sent us a bill, the County's share, on the right-of-way for \$700,000. They also were involved for \$700,000 or \$800,000 so the right-of-way is pretty substantial. These modern roads and highways we are building are gobbling up more right-of-way than was perceived years ago when these areas were platted. Some of that area is commercial, very expensive property in the City, and it adds up quickly. We are dealing with that phase right now, right-of-way.

9. Interestingly in this one year plan, there are three school districts that will be building schools. One will open this fall in the Bennington school district. It is planned to open on Rainwood Road from 156<sup>th</sup> Street into the Heritage Addition where the school is currently being built.
10. Omaha public school district is building a school on 132<sup>nd</sup> and State. We have a project that will include paving 132<sup>nd</sup> Street south of State which doesn't exist today. It is an unimproved section line road that has never been opened that will be another access into the Deer Creek Highland addition. It will provide two accesses into that school which is scheduled to open fall 2013.
11. Elkhorn school district is building a school on 180<sup>th</sup> and Grand Avenue which is between Maple and Fort streets. There is some road work necessitated by the anticipated traffic with that elementary and middle school. The elementary school will open in 2013 and the middle school the following year. We are working with them to do some pretty significant road work to handle those schools.

12. We continue to replace and rehab bridges. The first of July we are closing the 230<sup>th</sup> Street north of Maple for a number of weeks. There is a little bridge about 1/2 mile north of Maple that is in pretty dire need of replacement. We are going to replace it with a culvert and we have awarded that contract. We are rehabbing a bridge on State Street that is closed at about 138<sup>th</sup> Street. Repairing salt delamination and some substructure rusting on the bearing plates, tension joints and things of that nature that takes time to do and they have to actually lift the bridge up and get underneath there so it is pretty substantial project. It is important to take care of bridges as we can because they are very expensive and we don't want to ignore them and have a whole list of bridges problems at the same time. It would be uneconomical to keep up with that so we try to do a couple of bridges every year at least if not more.
13. We have ten miles of overlay which is important and seal coats which are important because they rejuvenate the road. Those kinds of projects are not as glamorous as others but they are very important because they keep our roads up to an excellent level of service. Interestingly, this year we are working with two residential neighborhoods that are non-incorporated, not SID's, that are responsible to keep their roads up to a certain standard. We notify them that their roads are deteriorated to the point where the County will no longer do routine maintenance which is always a pleasant surprise to some of the residents. They are Golden Meadows replat at 184<sup>th</sup> and F and County Squire Estates on 72<sup>nd</sup> north of Northern Hills Drive. What we are going to do for them is that they will pay the County the estimate for overlaying the road and the money will be put in an escrow account that we can draw on and then we include that in our overlay contract so we get a good competitive bid for them and we do all the engineering, testing as a service to them because we have some responsibility on those public roads. It is a procedure that has developed over the years and seems to work but it is never easy to notify people that we are pulling out of the maintenance on their public street. Sometimes that message does not get transferred down to every resident unfortunately. Mr. Monbouquette and I are working on that, trying to figure out a better way of communication.
14. These projects are all important to the areas of the County where we are doing them and there are a lot of other projects that I know people would like to see us do. We try prioritize and spend our money as efficiently and wisely as we can but we just can't satisfy everybody obviously.
15. We work closely with Omaha. People don't realize how much coordination there is between City Public Works, City Planning and our office. We get along very well with them. That is how we get involved with these big urban projects. We program our budgets to accommodate large expensive projects. It takes a lot of planning and years of prudent thinking to be able to fit this altogether.
16. I understand you cannot approve our plan this year like we would normally conceive but I have been informed by the County Attorney that I can mention that we were here. Actually, we did some research on the Statutes and Mr. Monbouquette can explain that.

Mr. Monbouquette stated it has been a custom or practice for the County Engineer to present the Six Year Plan to the Planning Commission every year which then makes a recommendation to the County Board that we like this. Actually we could not find anything in the Statute that requires that. In the past it has been recommended by the State Department of Roads that the Planning Commission make a recommendation.

There is a requirement that the County Board have a public hearing to hear the annual plan but we couldn't find any reference to the Planning Commission doing so.

Ms. Frohlich asked if it was more of a courtesy thing that we have done for years.

Mr. Monbouquette said that was correct and also to let the Planning Commission know what is happening with regard to the roads because of its importance with subdivision, development, and safety.

Mr. Monbouquette asked Mr. Kutilek what percentage of the money that is being spent on these projects is hopefully going to be reimbursed by some other entity.

Mr. Kutilek stated that if every project in the one year plan was done it would cost about 19 million dollars, of that Douglas County's share would be 7 million, so it would be less than 50% of the cost. The rest of the money comes from other sources and those sources are primarily Federal Highway Administration, SID's, and schools. That is one of the ways we can leverage our monies is to enter into agreements with anybody and everybody who has an interest in it to get the maximum for our dollars. That is what interlocal agreements are primarily for, is to make efficient and maximize our authorities with SID's and school districts to get more and more road production. We do that all the time, we count on it actually. The Federal share is always about 80% with County 20%. One other thing that is maybe of interest to you is that we are slowly withdrawing our relationship with the Rural Federal System which has been in effect for as long as I have been working at the County. Coming forward last year the County signed an agreement along with I believe every other County in Nebraska, it was called a General Buyback Program. What that means is that the State of Nebraska is going to buy all of the County's Federal dollars across the State with the money they generate with local gasoline taxes and that money will then come to us \$.80 on the dollar, we have to give \$.20 of that dollar to the State for their administrative costs, goodness of their heart or generosity to allow us to do this. The plus side is we will be able to get projects through the system much quicker. Instead of taking five or six years to get through the environmental process, right-of-way process, and all the other processes, we are hoping that five or six years can be consolidated into two or three years and get the projects built faster. This is for what they call the Rural Federal monies versus the Urban Federal monies which is spent in the metropolitan area. 144<sup>th</sup> Street is Urban Federal dollars, the Military Road project would be the Rural Federal dollars. That system is based on the classification of roads with urban boundary. Cities of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> class are also signing up. We will see how it goes and report back to you later.

Ms. Houlihan asked about the project on 144<sup>th</sup> and Blondo because she lives in Nelson's Creek. She wanted to know if the City held off annexation of that area so the County has to put more money into the project. Mr. Kutilek stated the City would not admit to that but being what it is, no doubt it is a factor. Historically it is kind of interesting, 72<sup>nd</sup> Street in the Ralston area, Harrison Street, often the City will annex those areas after the projects are completed. It is pretty obvious but if you ask them point blank, they say they are looking at the bottom line of these neighborhoods, the debt ratios, so that is part of it but it is complicated because they have other reasons why they want to annex residences but no doubt I think you are right, they know the County may be available to participate in a project that is not annexed and let's let the County help us out to get it done and then we will annex. On occasion the City would call me and ask questions about something and I would ask are you thinking about annexing something and the

answer would be no, surely no. It is what it is. We are all in it together, basically it is all public money so let's help get road projects done.

Our ASIP money which is generated by new housing developments in the new SID's starting in 2005. Since 2005 we have collected \$14 or \$15 million dollars from that fund and we improved Q Street from 168<sup>th</sup> to 180<sup>th</sup> totally with that money and we have done some other smaller projects with it. We met with the City recently to discuss it and they are looking into the way the ordinance is written, the City has an ordinance and the County Board approved it which not only when a new home is being built in an SID there is a fee collected right up front based on the value of the home and it is 1.25%. The mill levy of the SID's start out at 1.03, when it drops down below .88, they would kick in a mill levy contribution to the ASIP fund of .5 so it would stay .5 higher than it would have been before the ASIP fund was authorized forever until it is annexed and the fiscal guy from the City is checking his records to make sure they have been collecting that for the last five years and I have not heard the report on that yet. The city financial guy said he was not aware of that so this could be an interesting financial predicament. I am not sure what you do if they have not been collecting it, it is in the law. That could generate some additional money for road construction of course and we will see what they report back to us but they are the ones that keep the money and then we draw on it. It is an interesting method to try to as fairly determine a fair way of collecting money because the houses are being built out west generally end up causing the traffic that cause the roads to need to be widened. That is the logic behind it.

Mr. Monbouquette asked Mr. Kutilek if he had anything in writing or digital recording that we could communicate to other members of the Commission.

Ms. Frohlich stated the link was on the agenda information for the Planning Commission that was on our website.

Mr. Holm stated there was not information available as anticipated for discussion of the Integrated Solid Waste Management Plan. He wanted to update the Commission that the County in partnership with the City of Omaha, Sarpy County and MAPA is updating the original Integrated Solid Waste Management Plan that was originally adopted in 1994 and that addresses everything related to Solid Waste Management in the Metro area. The draft of the plan will be presented to the Planning Commission formally at the August 8, 2012 Planning Commission meeting.

The session ended at 6:28 p.m.

Meeting notes reviewed at the August 8, 2012 meeting.