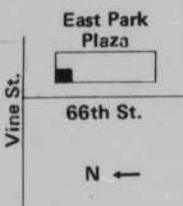


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City buys, condemns properties as part of redevelopment plan

By James Lillis
Senior Reporter

The city of Lincoln has bought two pieces of property and condemned two others on Block 35 as part of the city's downtown redevelopment plan, a mayoral aide said.

Businesses in Block 35 — surrounded by 10th, 11th, P and Q streets — have been chosen for relocation by the former Mayor Roland Luedtke and the Lincoln City Council.

Fred Briggs, supervisor of real estate and relocation for the city, said negotiations to buy a third piece of property are underway.

Briggs said some of these properties may be considered for demolition to build a parking lot for the remaining businesses. He said that if the City Council decides to demolish the property, the lots could be filled with parked cars within six to eight months.

The owners of Block 35 businesses may stay where they are until at least Nov. 1, 1988, Briggs said.

After that, the city may or may not legally condemn the other Block 35 businesses under the laws of eminent domain, Briggs said. If that happens, payments for those properties will be set by the courts.

Until that time, Block 35 businesses who have neither settled with the city on a price for their property nor requested that their property be condemned will be in a state of limbo.

Dan Longoria, co-owner of Arturo's on 11th and Q Streets, said he is frustrated because he doesn't know how long he can stay at his present location.

"I don't know what we're doing yet," Longoria said. "We're still debating whether to add a new restaurant at the east end of Lincoln."



Eric Gregory/Daily Nebraskan
Cindi Lewandowski walks by the boarded-up buildings that line the north side of Block 35 on her way to work at Arturo's Restaurant.

Longoria said he doesn't want to move because he would lose college patrons.

"Our main clientele used to be students and faculty from the music and art departments," he said.

Longoria said there's another reason: the city's offer for his property.

"We would like to settle with the city, but the price they offered would only pay for the new equipment," Longoria said.

He said the original offer the city made would not begin to help buy or lease the new property. Longoria requested that the city's offer not be made public.

Briggs said that the businesses outside of Block 35 are being appraised to find out how much the property is worth as part of the retail revitalization project. He said these appraisals will be completed by Dec. 1.

"We're not going to march in to take their property," Briggs said.

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