



Hall County Regional Planning Commission

**Wednesday, May 3, 2017
Regular Meeting**

Item 2

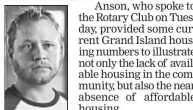
R5 Zoning Presentation

Staff Contact: Chad Nabity

Anson: G.I. facing 'lack of affordable housing'

By Robert Pore
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Grand Island developer, builder and contractor Amos Anson is proposing the creation of an R5 zone in Grand Island, which would allow for affordable and sustainable housing to foster future economic development.



Amos Anson

Anson, who spoke to the Rotary Club on Tuesday, provided some current Grand Island housing numbers to illustrate not only the lack of available housing in the community, but also the near absence of affordable housing.

According to Anson's figures, there are currently 82 houses on the market in Grand Island, of which 22 are under \$150,000. Of the remaining 60 houses, 30 are more than \$200,000.

To Anson, that's a problem. He said it stifles the ability of local businesses to recruit employees, and it provides families just starting out few options other than renting.

Anson is proposing what he calls the "missing middle" — homes that fall between renting, or buying a home that costs more than \$150,000.

Currently, he said, there are no R5 residential housing zones. "I've been working with the city to create R5 zones," he said.

"As a builder, I want to build a 24-foot-by-24-foot house and sell it to someone just starting out in their career to get them to move to Grand Island without having to spend a lot of money on utilities, upkeep and repairs on an older house," he said.

"But to build a smaller house, not tiny homes, nowadays, you have to have a lot, and to be able to buy a lot, it has to be, according to city code, a certain size," Anson said. "By forcing a lot to be a certain size, it makes it more expensive."

"You may, sometimes, find an affordable lot, but, generally speaking, you can't find a lot in an old neighborhood or a brand new neighborhood for less than \$35,000. You can't build a smaller house on a \$35,000 lot."

To be able to have smaller lots to build smaller houses, Anson said, "you have to change city code."

Anson gave as an example a piece of property he's currently interested in. He would only be able to fit 17 houses on that property under current city zoning, but with R5 houses, the lots would be smaller so more homes could be constructed.

Under Anson's scenario, lot prices could fall by nearly 40 percent, making it affordable to build smaller houses.

"I can go from 17 homes to 22 homes by just changing two little things in city code," he said.

Anson said there are already many smaller homes in Grand Island that were built before World War II. These smaller homes could cost a little more than \$100,000, which would allow families just starting out to move to Grand Island without taking on the cost of a more expensive house or renting.

While smaller houses have been slow to come to Nebraska since the nationwide housing collapse 10 years ago, many Americans have been questioning the need for large, expensive homes.

According to the U.S. Census, the average size of an American home was 983 square feet in 1950 and 1,680 square feet in 1975. In 2010 the average had climbed to almost 2,400 square feet. Under Anson's scenario, the minimum size of a smaller house would be only 576 square feet.

Smaller houses would also be more energy-efficient and require less cleaning and maintenance. They would be more cozy and intimate, Anson said, and would create less of a "cookie cutter" appearance than neighborhoods of bigger homes.

Anson said he's working with Grand Island Area Habitat for Humanity on purchasing a piece of land to construct an R5 neighborhood once the zoning is approved by the city.

He added that the creation of an R5 zone would "diversify housing in Grand Island."

"It is not for low-income people or retired people, but for everybody," Anson said. "It is for anybody who wants the lifestyle of a smaller footprint house."

St. Libory, St. Paul outlets fail compliance checks

Two businesses selling alcohol were found to be noncompliant on Friday in a check of retail outlets in Howard County, according to the Nebraska State Patrol.

The Beer Barrel in St. Libory and the American Legion in St. Paul both sold alcohol to a minor.

Law enforcement performs compliance checks to ensure businesses are complying with the state's alcohol laws and to decrease youth access to alcohol. The compliance checks were conducted thanks in part to a grant from the Nebraska Department of Roads Highway Safety Office.

Law enforcement officers checked 88 outlets on Friday in Hall and Howard counties, finding seven noncompliant. The retail outlets checked included convenience stores, liquor stores, restaurants and bars.

Individuals become a team



For The Independent/Roger Holsinger

Mandy Berry (center) performs as Truman Cheer Squad Captain Skylar during the first act of this year's GISH spring musical, "Bring It On, The Musical." The musical takes the stage next Friday, April 7, and continues Saturday and Sunday.

At the end of GISH spring musical, everyone will come together

By Jeff Bahr
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Some of the characters in Grand Island Senior High's spring musical, "Bring It On," are downright devious.

A character named Eva, for instance, is very manipulative, says the student who plays her.

"I'm very nice to people but very evil," Abbey Kneale says. "So don't be fooled."

Skylar is another conniving character in the show, which focuses on high school cheerleaders. To play Skylar, Mandy Berry says she has to channel "my inner mean girl."

But even with duplicitous characters scattered about, the show has a happy ending.

In spite of the backstabbing, people stick up for each other and come together in the end, says senior James Mankle.

Co-director Christine Kier says "Bring It On" has a great message about being true to yourself, staying loyal to friends and appreciating what you have.

"Bring It On," which runs Friday through Sunday, has a cast of 30.

The show is "very upbeat, lively and absolutely fun to watch," Kier says. "Bring It On" is filled with catchy tunes and funny lines and "some really great dance numbers," she said.

Kneale calls the show "action-packed."

The dance numbers were choreographed by senior Hannah Kier, who is Christine Kier's daughter.

Much of the movement comes in the form of cheerleading.

The music will be both recorded and live. Musicians will play synthesizer and drums.

Junior Kenzie Hansen plays Campbell in "Bring It On." Hansen is just like the happy, smiling character she plays, according to Kneale.

Hansen says "Bring It On" is a change from last fall's "In the Heights." Some theatergoers didn't know how to react to that show, senior Milton Castanon said.

"Bring It On" won't have the same effect. After seeing this show, "You're going to leave very happy," Hansen said.

What Castanon likes most about the show is interacting with the other actors.

Kneale, a sophomore, will be sad when this weekend is over.



For The Independent/Roger Holsinger

Truman Cheer Squad members Steven, played by Tyler Murphy and Campbell, played by Kenzie Hansen, share a moment before practice as part of this year's musical, "Bring It On, The Musical."

"I love the sense of family we have in the cast," she said. "It's not ever going to be a big deal to mess up a line. Nobody's going to scowl at you. It's going to be smiles all around."

At GISH, all students involved in theater are happy, she said. Students "light up when they get a chance to act and sing."

Playing her character, whom she calls Evil Eva, is fun because their personalities are very different. While Kneale says she's happy all the time, Eva is "a stereotypical musical villain."

Berry, a junior, feels guilty about playing a mean girl. Isn't being a villain hard? "It is, but it's hard, I don't want to hurt people's feelings."

Berry has always been intrigued by the idea of being a cheerleader but hasn't had time because of all of her other activities. "Bring It On" provides her with that opportunity.

Like Hannah Kier, Kira Oberschulte and Morgan White have been real cheerleaders. The two seniors have cheered all four years at GISH.

IF YOU GO

'Bring It On'

What: Grand Island Senior High's spring musical
Where: GISH Little Theatre
When: 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday

In addition to acting in the show, White and Oberschulte helped with choreography.

In "Bring It On," the cheerleaders are heavily involved in competition. They're never really seen cheering at games, Oberschulte said.

Oberschulte and White consider cheerleading just another sport at Grand Island Senior High.

While GISH cheerleaders do some competing, "our big thing" is mainly "cheering on other sports and being there for them," Oberschulte said.

Their cheerleading days at GISH are now done.

"Yes, sadly," Oberschulte said. "I'm missing it actually."

Local agencies aim to help sex trafficking victims



Independent/Barratt Stinson

Part of a panel, Nebraska State Patrol investigator Tony Kavan (left) speaks during a human trafficking education and awareness meeting held at the Home Federal Bank Stolley Park Road location in Grand Island on Tuesday.

By Harold Reutter
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A coalition began on Tuesday to put together what Sgt. Tony Kavan of the Nebraska State Patrol described as the "10,000-piece puzzle" of sex trafficking and labor trafficking in Nebraska, including right here in Grand Island.

The Heartland United Way invited representatives from homeless shelters, counseling services, education, law enforcement, the Hall County Attorney's Office and others to a meeting focusing on human trafficking education and awareness.

The get-together took place at Home Federal Bank, 3011 W. Stolley Park Road.

Kavan said not all agencies that want to fight sex trafficking in Central Nebraska are even aware of one another, much less in contact. It's also difficult for many agencies to know the full extent of the problem and how to deal with it.

The current situation, he said,

is like taking a 10,000-piece jigsaw puzzle and distributing a few pieces to people seated at each of the tables in the conference room, then asking them to solve the puzzle without collaborating with people at any other table.

Kavan said law enforcement is far behind where it should be in fighting sex trafficking. He has been involved with a task force to fight sex trafficking for only a relatively short period of time, while Theresa Arnett Nickolaus, a therapist with Sozo Family Services, has been dealing with victims for seven years.

Tuesday's meeting brought together Kavan, Nickolaus, Melissa Kometscher, human trafficking specialist for the Salvation Army, and officer Wendy Piercy of the Grand Island Police Department.

The meeting laid out the scope of sex trafficking in Central Nebraska. Although it was billed as an education session on human trafficking — which also includes labor trafficking — the discussion focused almost solely

on sex trafficking.

Research conducted by the Human Trafficking Initiative at the Heider College of Business at Creighton University revealed that 900 people are sold for sex every month in Nebraska. When those numbers are converted to per capita statistics, Grand Island had 200 individuals sold for sex per 100,000 people — higher than second-place Omaha, which had 182 sold for sex per 100,000.

Kometscher said sex trafficking involves using force, fraud or coercion against people for the purpose of commercial sex trade. Federal law states anyone under the age of 18 who engages in a commercial sex act is considered to be a victim of sex trafficking. One in five missing minors — who are often runaways — will become a victim of sex trafficking. One in three runaways will be approached within 72 hours with a proposition of commercial sex.

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