

**BOUNDARY COMMISSION
ST. LOUIS COUNTY, MISSOURI**

**MINUTES OF MAP PLAN PUBLIC HEARING
ST. LOUIS COUNTY, CITY OF BELLA VILLA, CITY OF CRESTWOOD,
CITY OF SHREWSBURY AND CITY OF SUNSET HILLS
October 18, 2000**

COMMISSION ATTENDANCE:

Commissioners	Present (P)/Absent (A)
MATT ARMSTRONG	A
TED ARMSTRONG	P
JANE ARNOLD	A
BOB FORD	P
AGNES GARINO	P
TOM HAYEK	P
DEE JOYNER	A
GREG KLOEPEL	P
ILENE ORDOWER	P
JOHNNIE SPEARS	P
DON WOJTKOWSKI	P

OTHERS PRESENT:

Daniel Krasnoff - Executive Director
David Hamilton - Legal Counsel

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Wojtkowski called to order the meeting of the Boundary Commission at 7:00 p.m. on October 18, 2000. The meeting took place at Lindbergh High School, 4900 South Lindbergh Boulevard, St. Louis, Missouri. The purpose of the meeting was to conduct a public hearing regarding the following map plan submissions: St. Louis County, the City of Bella Villa, the City of Crestwood, the City of Shrewsbury and the City of Sunset Hills.

1. *Opening Remarks by Chairman:*

Mr. Wojtkowski began by introducing the commissioners in attendance: Ms. Garino, Mr. Kloeppel, Ms. Ordower, Mr. Ford, Mr. Hayek and Mr. Ted Armstrong. He also noted the presence of Executive Director, Dan Krasnoff and Legal Counsel, David Hamilton. Members of the public who wished to address the Commission were instructed to fill-out speaker cards and return them to Mr. Krasnoff. Mr. Wojtkowski said speaker cards would be accepted through the final presentation, that of Sunset Hills. Individuals were given three minutes to speak while representatives of organizations were allowed five minutes to speak.

Mr. Wojtkowski said the Commission was established by House Bill 1967 that was passed on June 27, 2000. The map plans designated areas where municipalities reserved the right to pursue annexations. The law required the Commission to hold hearings on the map plans after which the Commission could comment on those map plans or encourage negotiations between submitting parties. Beginning on April 15, 2001, municipalities could submit actual annexation proposals so long as they were within the boundaries of the previously submitted map plans. The Commission would then conduct a separate review of proposals with new public hearings. The Commission would have to make a decision regarding proposals within nine months. The purpose of the hearing that night, therefore, was not to discuss proposals, but instead, to discuss map plans. A document with a brief description of the Commission's process and questions the Commission requested cities and the County respond to, were available at the table to the side of the room.

2. Presentation of St. Louis County

The Planning Director, Mr. Glenn Powers, presented St. Louis County's map plan. Mr. Powers began his presentation saying the County's submission included all of unincorporated St. Louis County that was permissible under the statute. He said the County provided general services to the whole County and municipal-type services to unincorporated areas. He said the County provided those municipal-type services to a population of 330,000 people and 8,700 businesses, equivalent to the third largest city in Missouri. The County offered effective, professional, cost-efficient government services. Mr. Powers said the County's size allowed for an economy of scale in providing government services. The County was fiscally healthy, being one of only eighteen counties in the U.S. with a AAA bond rating. The map plan was submitted with a desire to allow all residents of the unincorporated areas an opportunity to remain unincorporated if they so choose. Areas with an excess of 2,500 residents could be included in a proposal to remain unincorporated.

Mr. Powers said unincorporated areas of South County had strong community identities: Affton, Lemay, Mehlville, Oakville, Sappington and Concord Village. The population of unincorporated South County was 150,000. He said there was considerable input from South County residents in the previous five years to remain unincorporated. Support for remaining unincorporated was demonstrated in 1995 when the South Pointe incorporation was rejected with 71% of voters against incorporation. Also, in 1995, 94% of voters rejected annexation of Lemay by Bella Villa. In 1999 Lemay residents collected enough signatures to create an Unincorporated Zone proposal that was not acted upon because the Boundary Commission was disbanded. The County Executive had received many calls from the public asking that South County remain

unincorporated.

At that point Mr. Powers commenced an “overhead” presentation regarding services provided by St. Louis County. He discussed the highway, parks, public works, planning and police departments. Mr. Powers said the Highway and Streets Department oversaw 1,368 miles of streets with a staff of approximately 250. They provided a variety of services dealing with roads, bridges and concrete/asphalt materials testing. In South County alone there were 519 miles of roadway with two maintenance substations. These substations removed snow, replaced potholes, resurfaced roads, stripped roads and engaged in sign control. Over the following five years forty-one projects were scheduled at a cost of \$15.1 million.

Regarding the Parks Department, Mr. Powers said that seventy-two parks had 9,700 acres of land. In South County there were twenty-four County parks totaling 2,228 acres: Jefferson Barracks, Kennedy Recreation Complex, Suson Park Animal Farm and Grant’s Trail. In the future, the Meramec Greenway Trail, Rivers South area and two new miles of paved roads in Grant’s Trail were planned.

The Public Works Department included a staff of ninety-four architects, engineers and inspectors. In South County they issued permits, inspected new and existing structures and performed code enforcement. There were seven full-time inspectors dedicated to South County. Approximately \$1.5 million worth of Sewer Lateral repairs had been made in South County.

He said the Planning Department provided services to both incorporated and unincorporated areas. In South County the Planning Department administered both zoning and subdivision ordinances. At that point Mr. Wojtkowski told Mr. Powers the fifteen minutes allotted for St. Louis County’s presentation had expired.

Questions from the Commission

Ms. Garino said she assumed the County received the same questions that the municipalities had received. She asked Mr. Powers to outline the criteria the County used in including areas within its map plan. Mr. Powers said there was strong sentiment in South County for remaining unincorporated, though that was not universal. The Southpointe proposal was rejected by 71% of voters. The margin of that election and contact from South County residents led the County to include the South County area in its map plan.

Ms. Garino said issues regarding services were important. She asked what types of services would change if proposals were approved by the Commission and the voters. Mr. Powers replied that County roads would not change but that maintenance of lesser roads would be the responsibility of the annexing jurisdiction. Large County parks would remain the responsibility of the County although smaller neighborhood parks would become the responsibility of the annexing jurisdiction. Most municipalities contracted with the County Public Works Department, so, that would not likely change. Planning activities would become the responsibility of the annexing municipality as would police services, unless those services were contracted to the St. Louis County Police Department.

Mr. Kloepfel noted Mr. Powers had said there was a large amount of support in South County for remaining unincorporated. He asked Mr. Powers what number of people had shown such support. Mr. Powers said he had no specific number. Mr. Kloepfel asked those in attendance if they desired to remain unincorporated.

Most hands in the audience were raised.

Mr. Ford asked how many County police worked in South County and if it was anticipated that number would increase or decrease in the future. Mr. Powers replied that 170 officers worked in South County and that the area was divided into two precincts--east of I-55, with seventy-seven officers and the Affton precinct, west of I-55, with ninety officers. Mr. Powers said he did not know about future numbers. Chief Ronald Battelle said no decrease was planned. He also noted the figures Mr. Powers gave did not include other personnel, detectives, etc. Because of community oriented policing grants, it was thought the number of officers might increase.

Mr. Ford asked if crime was increasing or decreasing in South County. He said increases in crime might lead to a desire for annexation or incorporation. Chief Battelle said crime was down across the nation and in South County. He said auto larceny was the major crime problem in South County.

Mr. Hayek asked if changes in jurisdiction would affect access to parks in the County. Mr. Powers said the County park system was open to all residents.

Mr. Hayek asked how many County Council members represented the South County area. Mr. Powers said there were two, although the vast majority were in the Sixth Council District. Mr. Powers said nearly 150,000 lived in the Sixth District.

Mr. Ted Armstrong asked if the County intended to submit a proposal to have the area remain unincorporated. Mr. Powers responded that no final decisions had been made. However, it was likely they would come forward with a proposal. Mr. Ted Armstrong asked how the County would decide to proceed with a proposal. Mr. Powers said that decision would be influenced by what was said at the public hearings. He said there was strong sentiment to remain unincorporated but there might be pockets where people supported annexation. Mr. Ted Armstrong asked if a proposal would include all areas on the South County map plan. Mr. Powers said the Lemay area might be submitted before other areas. He said the actions of surrounding jurisdictions and the public's reaction to those entities' proposals would affect the County's course of action.

Mr. Wojtkowski stated that the current law allowed St. Louis County to file a proposal to create an Established Unincorporated Area. If such an area were designated, it would be off limits to annexation proposals for a five-year period. The role of the Commission was to determine if such a proposal should be placed on the ballot for a vote of the residents in the area.

Mr. Wojtkowski noted many hands were raised when Mr. Kloepfel asked who was in favor of

remaining unincorporated. Mr. Wojtkowski asked Mr. Powers to explain to those people how the County was going to decide how to proceed with proposals. Mr. Powers said the County would be ready to proceed on April 15, 2001 with proposals to satisfy the majority of residents' desires but that a proposal from the County might not include the entire map plan area.

Ms. Garino asked for a yes or no answer to the question: would the County provide data reflecting the cost of providing municipal-type services as opposed to County-type services that all residents of the County received. She thought that was crucial information. Mr. Powers said he might be able to provide that information, but that it was difficult to figure.

3. *Presentation of Bella Villa*

The Mayor Art Gordon presented Bella Villa's map plan. He said Bella Villa was a fourth-class city with a mayor and a six-member board of aldermen. He noted that the submission was small, and that Bella Villa had considered presenting a proposal at the time the previous Boundary Commission was dissolved. Before he became mayor in 1995, Bella Villa had submitted a proposal that failed due to: poor planning, poor implementation and the fact that it was unwanted. Bella Villa had changed tactics and submitted two simplified annexations. He said these had been substantial undertakings because the City needed 80% support in the form of petitions. Mr. Gordon said they would continue to use this method, trying to gain more than 51% support for their proposals.

He went on to explain the criteria for the map plan boundaries. The largest part of the map plan was west and south of the city. He said I-55 was a good divider even if it was part of Lemay. The map plan would require three phases. Ultimately the City would achieve 50% growth, with 365 homes. During the previous Boundary Commission, the City had collected nearly enough signatures to submit a simplified annexation when it was dissolved. Regarding services he said Bella Villa had a Police Department, trash pick-up, street repairs and new streets. Mr. Gordon said the City would soon construct a new city hall.

Bella Villa needed to grow, and they would need revenue in order to provide city services. They were the best community to serve the area because they offered a local government that was only a few blocks from where residents lived. There were two aldermen for each ward and one ward stood for election each year. Bella Villa had increased services, with eight police officers' accounting for 60% of the police services, although they did contract with County Police for some patrols.

Mr. Gordon said Bella Villa would communicate to those in annexation areas that it was well run and there had been no new or increased taxes for some time. With nearly enough signatures for a simplified annexation Mr. Gordon was confident there was public support for annexation.

Questions from the Commission

Mr. Wojtkowski asked if Bella Villa would rely exclusively on a simplified annexation strategy. Mr. Gordon said that was true for phase one where there was demonstrated support. But he

could not guarantee such a strategy for phases two and three. Mr. Wojtkowski said coming to the Commission with a consensus of residents was a good approach.

Ms. Ordower asked the population of the map plan area. Mr. Gordon said it was approximately 725, which would double the population of the city. He said a portion of the area was commercial while another portion was undeveloped. Bella Villa would work with the owners of undeveloped property to ensure development occurred. Ms. Ordower asked how the population of the city would grow if the map plan were implemented.

Ms. Garino asked if “the quarry” was in the undeveloped area. Mr. Gordon said it was in phase three of the map plan area. He was unsure of the size of the undeveloped area, but estimated it contained nearly twenty acres.

Mr. Spears asked of what class of city was Bella Villa. Mr. Gordon said it was a fourth-class city. Mr. Spears asked what percentage of Bella Villa comprised commercial land uses. Mr. Gordon said not much was commercial, but many businesses were operated out of people’s homes. The City had only eight businesses in commercial buildings: a dentist, a filling station, electric supply house, two restaurants, a hardware store and a chiropractor.

Mr. Ted Armstrong asked what services Bella Villa could provide more effectively than St. Louis County. Mr. Ted Armstrong said he heard they could provide snow removal and neighborhood stabilization services. Mr. Gordon said Bella Villa provided more intense police protection although he said the County police did an excellent job. The County performed ten, six-minute patrols per day in Bella Villa. Bella Villa provided twelve to thirteen hours per day of police protection within the city’s six residential blocks. He said the police met all state requirements and noted that all information about police protection would be included in any proposals.

Mr. Ted Armstrong asked if Bella Villa would have the demonstrated support of proposal area residents before making a submission to the Commission. Mr. Gordon said that no proposal would be submitted without such support. Mr. Ted Armstrong asked how Mr. Gordon would determine if there was substantial public support for a proposal. Mr. Gordon said that in the phase one area the people approached the city. In the other two areas he would ask people if they were happy with the status quo or if they were interested in what Bella Villa had to offer. He would go door-to-door, speaking with his neighbors, asking for support.

Mr. Ted Armstrong asked the borders of phase one. Mr. Gordon said Bayless was the north boundary, Hoffmeister was the south boundary, I-55 was the west boundary and the Bella Villa city limit was the east boundary.

4. *Presentation of Crestwood*

Mayor Jim Brasfield, and Alderman Jim Robertson presented Crestwood’s map plan. Mr. Brasfield began by referencing a conversation he had with a woman who lived on Old

Sappington Road. The woman had supported an annexation that had led to the enlargement of the City's southern border to its current location. He noted that annexation had been an important part of municipal development in St. Louis County for several years. He said Crestwood was a charter city with an eight-member board of aldermen and a professional administrator. The City had a highly professional Police Department, Public Works Department and Parks and Recreation Department. The City was more than fifty years old and had become a charter city in recent years.

The map plan criteria used by Crestwood were definable boundaries, a size appropriate to quality service delivery and consideration of the boundaries of surrounding jurisdictions. Mr. Brasfield said it was important to implement the map plan because it provided an opportunity for those in surrounding areas to become part of Crestwood. Looking into the future he said it made sense for a viable city to have a population of approximately 20,000 people. Crestwood was great, with an excellent police department, a street repair program and good community parks. The park system included Whitecliff Park where the voters had recently approved a measure to improve the pool facility and community center. Although Crestwood had a fire department, it agreed with the state legislation that retained the existing fire protection districts in annexed areas. The annexing municipality payed for the new residents' fire protection. New residents of Crestwood would pay a \$.25 property tax. At that point Mr. Brasfield introduced Alderman Jim Robertson who represented a previously annexed area of Crestwood.

Mr. Robertson said he lived in the Watson-Pardee annexation area. He was active in the annexation effort that took place a little more than three years before. There had been concerns about police and fire protection and how annexation would or would not affect the area, in general. He said those concerns were answered. He said certain functions were better handled by local government. There was no disruption in service from the Affton Fire Protection District. Those in his neighborhood felt the Crestwood police, being located close to the area, could respond more quickly than could the County police. This turned out to be true. The average response time of the Crestwood police was less than two minutes, while County police response time was longer. Those who supported the annexation thought they would be provided better road maintenance. Crestwood's road reconstruction program was ready to benefit the area. He said the recreation facilities were good and with the new improvements would be even better. The new residents were provided an opportunity to take advantage of recreational opportunities in Crestwood. There was a reduction in taxes. A \$140,000 house saw a reduction in property taxes of \$126.00. He said opposition to the annexation was intense but, in the end, 63% were in favor, while 36% were opposed.

When he ran for election, many residents expected him to flip-flop. When he did not many people, who had opposed the annexation told him it was a good thing. Another benefit of annexation was that people were closer to their representatives. They had a stop sign where there was none before and a lower speed limit than traffic studies suggested otherwise. Instead of having 125,000 constituents, like those on the County Council, in his ward 3,400 people were served by two aldermen. He said he had a dedicated e-mail address and could walk his neighborhood to talk with his constituents.

Mr. Robertson continued, saying residents of his ward had everything they thought they would get, and more, because of the annexation. The police regularly patrolled the area, something that was not done in the past. In Crestwood if a resident was away, they could notify the police and they would check on the house during that time. He said he understood concerns about annexation. Many of his neighbors had changed their minds about it having gone through the process.

Questions from Commission

Mr. Ted Armstrong asked what Crestwood was doing to gain the support of residents in the south area. Mr. Brasfield said they had considered the issue for several years. A list of residents had been developed and he had gone to several meetings to discuss the issue. With the map plan completed staff members were taking a close look at where to propose annexation. Then they would begin meeting with residents to let them know the advantages Crestwood offered. Mr. Ted Armstrong asked if Mr. Brasfield has a sense for how citizens of the south area felt about annexation. Mr. Brasfield said many had let him know they supported annexation, but he had no idea what percentage of people supported annexation. Mr. Robertson said people near his ward were curious about what Crestwood had to offer.

Mr. Hayek asked Mr. Brasfield to describe code enforcement in Crestwood. Mr. Brasfield said the City had an exterior code but no occupancy code. Code enforcement was handled by a person in the Public Works Department. Mr. Hayek asked Mr. Brasfield to compare code enforcement in the Crestwood to St. Louis County. Mr. Brasfield said he was not familiar enough with the County's procedures to speculate.

Mr. Ford asked if Crestwood had a phasing plan. Mr. Brasfield said their first effort would be to the south rather than the east. In the south area the staff was conducting a review regarding service delivery and would soon conclude whether to include the whole southern area or just a portion.

Mr. Ford asked who provided emergency ambulance service to the area. Mr. Brasfield said that was provided by the Mehlville Fire Protection District and if there was an annexation that would continue. He the Mehlville Fire Protection District had continued service the last time Crestwood succeeded in an annexation attempt.

Mr. Kloeppel asked whether Crestwood would move forward with a proposal if they discovered a majority of citizens did not support it. Mr. Brasfield said he was not sure, that a previous annexation attempt at Eddie and Park and Gravois failed when the fire district situation was in flux. The effort failed 75% to 25%. Under adverse conditions 25% supported annexation. If Crestwood felt, there was no chance for success they would not proceed. In Alderman Robertson's ward annexation once failed by sixteen votes. The second effort led to a two-to-one victory. He said an annexation effort was a campaign and if they engaged in such a campaign Crestwood would make its case and would see what happened.

Ms. Ordower asked if people in the map plan area would pay higher or lower taxes than at the

present time. Mr. Brasfield said there would be lower property taxes and a 1% increase in utility taxes. In previous annexations there was a net decrease in taxes.

Ms. Garino asked for an explanation of the rationale for the map plan's eastern boundary. Mr. Brasfield said Crestwood had only annexed to Rock Hill Road, creating a pocket-like area. Along the Watson Road border there was a small area with a subdivision and a cemetery. So, without a clear indication of interest they included it in their map plan. Overall, it made sense for the area and Crestwood.

Ms. Garino asked to have the eastern boundary of the south area explained. Mr. Brasfield said Crestwood wanted a definable boundary, so they used major roads. They also were cognizant of the need to define an area that was reasonable for service provision. The Crestwood did not anticipate making proposals east of Lavinia or Musick in the present or future, although they might draw a smaller proposal boundary, something allowed under the rules.

5. Presentation of Shrewsbury

Mayor Bert Gates and the City Administrator Mr. Barry Alexander presented Shrewsbury's map plan. Mr. Gates said Shrewsbury was an eighty-six-year-old fourth-class city. Shrewsbury's criteria for inclusion in the map plan were to define the maximum area to which the City could provide quality, personal services. Shrewsbury was submitting the map in order to keep its options open. He said the map plan area included a "good" mixture of residential and commercial areas. There was no phasing plan because the City had no specific annexation plans and might never submit a proposal. He noted that in the past there was a plan to consolidate the municipalities in St. Louis County. Under that proposal Shrewsbury was to remain one of twenty-five municipalities in St. Louis County. As a full-service city with quality services Shrewsbury wanted to be prepared should a consolidation plan become reality.

Mr. Gates said Shrewsbury had worked hard to establish a sound commercial base with low residential property taxes. The City had sound zoning and building code enforcement and they did not wish to see changes on their borders adversely affect conditions in Shrewsbury. He said the City had stringent permitting requirements and provided most interior and exterior code enforcement services. Shrewsbury would be the best to service the map plan area because they had a long history of service provision with fifty-seven full time employees and ten part time employees. The budget was \$6.2 million for 6,500 people. Shrewsbury was the only inner-ring suburb that grew in population between 1980 and 1990. Services provided by the City included: police, fire, ambulance, streets, public works, parks and recreation. He said the departments were professionally operated without bureaucratic hassles. Citizens knew who the fire and police chiefs were and received prompt attention to any concerns. Mr. Gates said in addition to the quality staff the City's facilities were second to none, considering the city's size, 1.4 square miles, and its population. Shrewsbury's five-year-old City Center was highly regarded, combining a city hall and recreation center.

Mr. Gates said the Police Department had eighteen uniformed officers with three patrol shifts. Every day and every evening every street was patrolled. The police's activities included, traffic

control, bike patrols and community-oriented policing. There was a staff of seventeen in the fire and ambulance department. He said Shrewsbury contained sixty-five acres of parks for the 6,500 residents, as good a ratio as could be found in St. Louis County. Included within parks were, ball fields, tennis courts and an aquatic center. In recent years he said the former City Hall was remodeled as the Police Department headquarters. The Public Works Department had modern equipment to care for streets, parks and athletic fields. Shrewsbury was involved in a \$3 million program for reconstruction with general street maintenance and had a reputation for the best snow removal in St. Louis County. In a few years a site in Shrewsbury would become the terminus of the cross-county Metrolink extension that would ensure greater access to the airport, Clayton/University City and the City of St. Louis. The “extension” had led to an interest in transit-oriented development.

If Shrewsbury were to make its case for annexation Mr. Gates said they would remind those in the area of excellent, personalized service that preserved the character of neighborhoods. This would happen with low taxes, \$1.00 per \$100.00 of valuation. Only 25% of that revenue was for the general fund with 75% used to pay off the city hall/recreation center development.

He said a number of citizens express interest in the map plan. He noted that Shrewsbury already provided services for the Village of Mackenzie. The City would not proceed with any annexation plans, unless there was a plan to consolidate cities in the future, if there was development that might harm Shrewsbury or if those in the south area sought out Shrewsbury desiring better services.

Questions from the Commission

Mr. Ted Armstrong said he thought Mr. Gates was saying the city was trying to keep their options open and that the Mayor made a good case for the City’s services. Mr. Ted Armstrong asked Mr. Gates how he would make his case to residents if an annexation proposal was submitted. Mr. Gates said with no annexation plans the City had not developed such a strategy. He said, however, that he was active in the communities of the Affton School District and other communities to the south and would make them aware of any proposals by Shrewsbury. Mr. Gates said he had tried to be responsive when a newspaper reported that the Village of Mackenzie was interested in consolidating with Shrewsbury. He said that story was misinterpreted to mean Shrewsbury was attempting to annex the Village of Mackenzie.

Mr. Gates went on to say the map plan area was largely residential and would be a money loser for the City. He was concerned that some residents of Shrewsbury might not like annexation fearing it would lead to less personalized service delivery. He noted people were building additions to their houses rather than moving out of the area and that property values had risen over the previous fifteen years.

Mr. Wojtkowski asked if Shrewsbury would engage in any planning to consider a first phase keeping in mind the “15% requirement” for annexations. Mr. Gates said they had long term planning sessions and that a first phase would extend along Mackenzie Road no further than Heege because that was where inquiries had come from and people there were familiar with

Shrewsbury's services. The next phase would be to the southeast, around the Village of Marlborough, area. That area overlapped with Crestwood's map plan. Mr. Gates said that in a perfect world things would stay the same but that the City might have to expand in order to remain viable.

6. *Presentation of Sunset Hills*

The City Attorney, Mr. Bob Jones, Sr., presented Sunset Hills' map plan. He began by saying it was a fourth-class city formed in 1957. Mr. Jones said that when he graduated from law school he became the City Attorney and was the only City Attorney for Sunset Hills, with the exception of a few years in the 1970's. Sunset Hills had engaged in four annexations in recent years that had been presented to the voters. One of those was reviewed by the Boundary Commission, the other three were during a time when there was no Boundary Commission. Two annexations were by consent. All of the annexations with one small exception, near Meacham Park, extended from the city limit west to the Meramec River.

The criteria for inclusion within the map plan were the similarity between the map plan area and three previous annexation areas. The homes were similar to those areas, the few businesses were similar and street progressions along Eddie and Park, Kennerly and Sappington were similar. In the past Sunset Hills had good cooperation with the Lindbergh School District and with Gemp Park, on Sappington Road. Gemp Park was rented to the Conservation Commission for twenty-five years and included a school's program with the Lindbergh District. Although Mr. Jones could not say the Lindbergh School District supported a potential annexation proposal, he did say Sunset Hills had a good relationship with the school district.

Mr. Jones noted the overlap in the map plan with Crestwood, in the northern part of Sunset Hills' map plan. He said the Sunset Hills boundary extended further west and that the Crestwood's boundary extended along Gravois, Eddie and Park and Sappington. He said there was a second overlap in their map plans at Ronnie's.

Mr. Jones said Sunset Hills' prior annexations were citizen driven. The current city leadership was unsure they needed to attempt the annexations but there was concern they would tie the hands of future leadership who might desire annexation. If no map plan was submitted, Sunset Hills feared being landlocked and unable to make proposals until 2006.

Sunset Hills' studies showed that the annexations would not be money makers. The best-case scenario showed a deficit of \$800,000. Mr. Jones called this a serious problem. Annexation proposals might not be submitted because it would be difficult to provide the same level of services to the annexed areas as were provided to current residents. He said Sunset Hills had no phasing plan. If a plan was filed, it might be for the whole area. There was also no timetable, though a committee was studying the issue, just as committees were created to consider previous annexation proposals. Mr. Jones said he was unsure what would happen if cities made simultaneous proposals for the same areas.

Mr. Jones said he doubted Sunset Hills would move forward with a proposal if the citizens in

the area were opposed to annexation. He said there was no plan to gain public input. He said he heard from people near Lindbergh High School who were opposed to annexation, although, if they had to join a municipality, they would prefer to be in Sunset Hills. He said there was a mix of reactions from people along the Meramec River, the south area of the map plan. The City had not undertaken a survey. Although people were not beating down the doors for annexation Sunset Hills had received some interest in certain areas of the map plan. Mr. Jones said he would combine questions four through seven. He said the professional Police Department had twenty-one officers, three lieutenants and a chief. If the whole map plan area was annexed by Sunset Hills, a “satellite” station needed to be built. He said the City had constructed new buildings for police and public works along Lindbergh Boulevard. If the City did annex the map plan area, a “satellite” public works facility needed to be constructed for snow removal and other equipment.

Mr. Jones said Sunset Hills’ staff was very responsive, with good fiscal management, presiding over a \$5-\$6 million budget with a \$2 million surplus. He said the City had been “in the black” for some time. He said the Parks Department was good, with a city park behind City Hall and parks on Eddie and Park and Lindstone. Also, Sunset Hills had closed a deal that morning for an area known as Minnie Ha Ha Beach, at Highway 30 and the Meramec River. That would be a passive park, with the area sometimes under water. Mr. Jones said Gemp Park was on land left by the Gemp family to the state that the State of Missouri could not afford to maintain.

Mr. Jones said three of the City’s eight aldermen had come from annexation areas. They received no calls from recently annexed areas with people complaining of having “second class” status. He said he understood the feelings of those in the audience who did not wish to be annexed. He said he had lived in municipalities and unincorporated areas and preferred cities that offered more personal contact with community leaders.

The only changes for those in the map plan area would be a \$.06 per \$100.00 valuation property tax. For example, he said a \$200,000 house at 19% appraisal would equal \$22.80 per year. All other taxes would remain about the same.

Questions from the Commission

Mr. Ted Armstrong said he was pleased that prior annexations were citizen-driven, and future annexations would be as well.

Ms. Garino asked where the map plan boundary was in relationship to the Highway 21 right-of-way. Mr. Jones said it was to the west side. He said the west side was the Sappington boundary on past annexations and that had worked well.

Ms. Garino asked for an estimate of the amount of residential areas versus commercial areas in the map plan. Mr. Jones said he thought residents were 75%-80% of the area. He said several areas provided no revenue, such as hospitals, schools and churches. He said Sunset Hills was a point of sale city, except in annexation areas.

Ms. Garino asked who provided fire service in the area. Mr. Jones said the annexation area would be in the Mehlville Fire Protection District, although a small portion of Sunset Hills was in the Fenton Fire Protection District. He noted that Sunset Hills did not have a fire department.

7. *Public Comment*

Carl V. Kersting, 7301 General Sherman Lane

Mr. Kersting said he lived in the small triangular area between Grantwood Village and Marlborough, west of Laclede Station Road. He noted that area was included in both the Crestwood and Shrewsbury map plans. He represented the Citizens to Remain Unincorporated, one of three groups formed with the goal of keeping South County unincorporated. Under the old statute he went door to door on evenings and weekends from February to May with a petition to create an unincorporated zone. A friend of his from Indian Hills had obtained 500 signatures before the previous Commission was abolished. Their goal was to obtain 10,000 signatures necessary to place all of South County on the ballot as an unincorporated zone. He had personally gone to 993 houses, of which 432 were not home and 513 signed petitions. Only forty-six people refused to sign the petition. Those who refused were either unaware of the issue or wanted to talk with their spouse before signing. One woman said she desired to be annexed by Crestwood.

Mr. Kersting said it was expressed several times over the past few months that they were opposed to annexation by any municipality. They received excellent services from St. Louis County and the Affton Fire Protection District. Mr. Kersting said he moved to his present subdivision after residing in a municipality in North County. He said the quality of police service was much higher in the unincorporated areas than in those controlled by municipalities. Most people did not desire an extra layer of government and did not want the rules and politics of small towns. If those in unincorporated St. Louis County desired to live in a municipality they could move to one. He said if plans of intent were submitted to remain unincorporated and to annex the same area the Commission should allow the election on remaining unincorporated to go first. Mr. Kersting said some areas of the County that voted to be annexed had contacted his group and said they wished it had not happened because promises were broken, and unanticipated problems had arisen.

Mr. Jim Booher, 10516 Wisteria

Mr. Booher said he looked at Mr. Powers map and that keeping 160,000 people unincorporated was not a bad idea if it worked. He said, if the County filed a proposal approved by the Commission there would be a vote of the entire area. If it were approved by the voters, then annexation proposals would be a waste of time. He said he filed a lawsuit against St. Louis County because they were the ones who created the statutory law. He said subpoenas had been sent to Jeff City officials for depositions, which the County filed a motion to squash. As of that evening the County effort had failed. On November 3, 2000, high officials would have to give testimony regarding the lawsuit.

Mr. Booher said he wanted to discuss two aspects of the law. If Crestwood desired to annex an area with 5,700 Sappington residents and a vote was allowed, and ten people in Crestwood

voted yes, Crestwood could annex the area. This was one of thirteen issues in the lawsuit his group put forward.

Ms. Dottie Till, 9252 Pardee Road

She represented the Indian Hills subdivision, with 534 houses. They had easily obtained 500 signatures under the old Boundary Commission law for a petition to remain unincorporated. She was a neighborhood block watch coordinator and for fifteen years and was proud to work with the County police. She did not think people realized how good the quality of their police service was.

Mr. Harry Donnegan, 12011 Grantham Drive

He said he was a trustee of the Southwick subdivision, east of Concord, off Highway 21. He lived in St. Louis County for fifteen years on a cul-de-sac with five houses. He said he investigated the implications of annexation for police and fire protection. He said they had the best fire and police protection in the area. Four times Mr. Donnegan had called 911 in the previous two years to go to the hospital. Each time a police officer arrived within three minutes and ambulance service arrived within five minutes. He received services no municipality could match. When he lived in the St. Louis City, he lived two blocks from a fire house, and it took them longer to get to his house than it did for ambulance and police service in St. Louis County.

Mr. Edgar Lustig, 12226 Mentz Hill Road

He said he lived in Sunset Hills because Mr. Booher scared people on his street into deciding to be annexed by Sunset Hills, although seventy-one people did vote against the annexation. Mr. Lustig said he had lived in eleven cities and in all his years in the unincorporated county he heard no complaints. He said he built a house and put on an addition and the County planning people were great. He said the only benefit to living in Sunset Hills was his ability to call his alderman. He said he would not go into what was nearly done to Mentz Hill until it was discovered there were no federal funds available. He had attended the County citizen police academy and said not one of the fiefdoms that, were municipal police departments, had the capacity to do more than patrol and hand out parking tickets. If any serious problems arose, the County's crime scene, tactical squad or bomb squad would be called in to handle it.

Mr. Gilbert Johnston, 10444 Golterman Drive

Mr. Johnston said he lived about three lots from the school in an area with fifty-six houses. He had talked to those in forty-five houses and the consensus was that they did not desire to be annexed and that they were part of a substantial tax base. The municipalities could not provide any extra services and he felt the whole issue was a large land tax grab. He was part of a group called Friends of Lindbergh High School that was created to oppose commercial development near the school. The boundaries they were concerned about were Lindbergh/Sappington to Gravois, Lindbergh to Concord School Road and east to Baptist Church Road. Mr. Johnston said that group would mobilize to defeat annexation. He said Sunset Hills had a 5% utility tax and Crestwood had higher property taxes than the County. Mr. Johnston said he thought the municipalities had not polled the residents to find out what they desired. He hoped Mr. Powers would place the issue on the ballot. They desired a "green" corridor along Lindbergh and did

not want commercial development there. If the County did not put the area on the ballot, he would get people together and get new elected officials.

Ms. Betty Jones, 4564 Blairimoor Terrace

She lived off Mattis near Lemay Ferry Road and desired to continue to live in unincorporated St. Louis County. She was opposed to annexation.

Ms. Theresa Saunders, 5443 Hollow Oak Court

She represented the South County Citizens Association, a nonpartisan outgrowth of Citizens Against Southpointe. Most residents were just as opposed to incorporation now as they were when the Southpointe vote took place. Many people, like herself, enjoyed living in unincorporated St. Louis County and had moved from other municipalities to be in unincorporated areas. She did not want to be ruled, regulated and taxed for every service by a municipality. There were high ambulance rates in the cities and villages in the County. Ms. Saunders said people who dealt with the County did not always have to deal with the same person.

Ms. Saunders said there were problems at local city halls including Sunshine Law violations. She said when growing up in Ferguson children engaged in partisan bickering at school based on their parent's disputes. She said the madness should stop and no more dividing and conquering through annexation should be allowed. Why should citizens have to go through the growing pains of a new municipality. She said the County police were wonderful. She heard from people in municipalities that their police offered worse services and did not patrol enough. There were drug houses that the municipalities could not control. Ms. Saunders said the Boundary Commission should have received many letters opposing annexation and that the residents had worked hard and deserved to vote to remain unincorporated.

Mr. Carl Kleusch, 5609 Nantasket Court

Mr. Kleusch represented The Meadows at Quail Creek and said his subdivision was in Sunset Hills' map plan. He had lived in the subdivision for five years after leaving Maryland Heights and enjoyed the cleanliness and serenity of unincorporated St. Louis County. He received a good deal on taxes and services. The Police Department was one of the best in the country. Mr. Kleusch noted that a County police officer lived in his subdivision. He liked the experts the County had to help with problems. He said Mr. Gary Earl, from Public Works, helped with silt run off in their subdivision. A service that would have cost more had they had to pay for it. The County Planning and Zoning Commission had forced gravel trucks to find a new route and not go through his subdivision.

Mr. Kleusch said he was a co-leader of Citizens Against Southpointe. He had spoken to many people who did not desire to vote again and again against incorporation measures. He felt residents were concerned about three things: no taxes for partisan projects, no added layer of government and no loss of police protection. Mr. Kleusch said Sunset Hills was understaffed and did not perform adequate police patrols. He said he was two miles from the County substation while the closest Sunset Hills police station was six miles away. Therefore, there would be worse response times if annexation took place. Mr. Kleusch said there would be a loss

of local control and residents would be subject to laws they had no role in creating. He said Sunset Hills had not asked residents if they desired annexation and said the City might be more interested in having General American and St. Anthony's Hospital in their city. Mr. Kleusch asked if citizens would be fully informed regarding any tax increases, particularly utility taxes.

Mr. Robert Shelley, 6840 Delma Drive

Mr. Shelley said he had been an Affton resident for five years and liked the police, fire and ambulance service he received. Lakewood Homes, at Rock Hill and Laclede Station had been involved with the Affton Fire Protection District since 1937. The fire department had an excellent, A3 rating.

Ms. Debbie Merkel, 710 Reed Avenue

Ms. Merkel represented Concerned Lemay Citizens. She said they had a petition drive under the previous Boundary Commission rules and had received more than the 15% of signatures required to bring a proposal to the Commission. They were tired of Bella Villa attempting to "muscle" its way into Lemay, that the 1993 flood and the Landor Court annexation had brought annexation issues to a head. She said Bella Villa was a speed trap. She said motorists were being pulled over in Arnold.

Ms. Merkel said the County had many resources including a home improvement tax credit. She said there was a small business incubator to support small businesses. The planning, police and fire departments put people in the right direction, and they had been particularly helpful to Concerned Lemay Citizens. She urged the Commission to allow a vote for Lemay to remain unincorporated. Ms. Merkel felt Bella Villa had nothing to offer Lemay's citizens.

Mr. Charles Dasho, 7425 Cheshire Lane

He represented the Knollshire trustees and was the block captain for the Cheshire neighborhood. He had spoken to his neighbors over the previous week and found no one interested in annexation by Crestwood. He was fearful because it only took one more vote for annexation than against annexation for his subdivision to become part of a city. Mr. Dasho said any election to remain unincorporated should happen before any annexation election. He said there was little benefit to South County being annexed. He had supported the incorporation of Affton because they were opposed to the incorporation of Sappington/Concord. Like Lemay, he said Affton had its own identity and that the County had constructed a nice community center in the area. He said the County police were helpful and unlike most municipalities, they could choose their own trash pick-up.

Mr. Wojtkowski said a majority vote was required in both the submitting municipality and the annexation area for annexations to be approved. The only exception was if the area was declared an unincorporated pocket. He said South County did not meet those criteria. He said those in attendance should not leave thinking they did not have a voice.

Mr. Robert Lindecke, 432 Bridget Drive

Mr. Lindecke said he lived around I-55 and Telegraph Road. In 1977 the Behlman company wanted to place a used car lot on an unimproved piece of property on the north side of I-55 between Telegraph and the Dave Sinclair dealership. The only support for the project was from

Behlman, his attorney and the seller of the land. Residents gathered signatures in opposition and gave those to the County Council. The proposal was withdrawn, and the used car lot was built at Meramec Bottoms Road and I-55. Two years later the used car dealer moved out. He said the County government was responsive, just a phone call away, whether the councilmanic districts include ten people or 125,000 people. He concluded saying that in 1995 the Southpointe incorporation was defeated by a margin of 73% to 27%.

9. *Adjournment*

At the point the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted
Daniel Krasnoff
Executive Director

Approved.