

**BOUNDARY COMMISSION
ST. LOUIS COUNTY, MISSOURI
TRANSCRIPT OF
BC1601 PLAN OF INTENT PUBLIC HEARING
VINITA PARK/VINITA TERRACE CONSOLIDATION PROPOSAL
MAY 24, 2016**

COMMISSION ATTENDANCE:

Commissioners	Present (P)/Absent (A)
TR Carr	A
Rick Dorsey	P
Steve Frank	P
Kathleen Schweitzer	P
Ben Uchitelle	P
Kyra Watson	P
Steve Wegert	P

OTHERS PRESENT:

Michelle Dougherty, Executive Director

Mike Hart, Legal Counsel

CHAIRMAN DORSEY: Okay, we'll get going. Call this Public Hearing for the Municipal Consolidation Proposal between the City of Vinita Park and the Village of Vinita Terrace to order. My name is Rick Dorsey. I'm the Chairman of the St. Louis County Boundary Commission. I was appointed to represent Unincorporated North County. The Boundary Commission is charged by State Statute with reviewing all proposals for annexations and consolidations between municipalities and unincorporated areas in St. Louis County. We do not approve or disapprove annexations or consolidations. We review the proposals for completeness and if we believe they are complete and in the best interest of the public, they are then submitted to a vote in the affected areas.

I'll have my other members of the Commission introduce themselves starting at my far right.

FRANK: I'm Steve Frank.

SCHWEITZER: I'm Kathleen Schweitzer. I was appointed by the County Executive to represent Unincorporated West St. Louis County.

WATSON: My name is Kyra Watson. I was appointed by the Mayors of Small Cities.

WEGERT: I'm Steve Wegert. I was appointed by the Mayors of Large Cities, Metro Mayors, to represent the north ... the north area.

UCHITELLE: And I'm Ben Uchitelle. I was ... oops. I'm Ben Uchitelle. I was appointed by the Mid ... well, Medium-Sized Cities, to represent medium-sized cities.

CHAIRMAN DORSEY: Okay, so we will go forward. First there will be a presentation from Vinita Park and then Vinita Terrace. They each have 15 minutes ... oh, together, together. All right. It's a joint effort so good, that's 15 minutes less.

RIDDLER: Thank you, Chairman Dorsey and members of the Commission. Michelle, thank you for all your help also. Very cooperative and we really appreciate being able to work with her and her staff. I'm [inaudible] and I was hired by the City of Vinita Park and Vinita Terrace to help them pull some of the data together that went into the massive report that you ended up getting which is probably a little dry, but I didn't want to take time tonight to just regurgitate all that to you because I know that you ... you've had it and it's going to be available to the public, but I did just want to touch on a couple of important topics here this evening.

First off, let me apologize for Mayor McGee. He couldn't make it this evening, but I know that Chairman Dan Clasby is here from Vinita Terrace and other members of their boards are here as well.

Tonight's a little bit of a homecoming for me. I haven't been back in this building for over 50 years. This is where I went to grade school. So ... and a little bit bittersweet though because it was in this gym that they came in in 1963 and told us that the President had been shot so a little bit bittersweet being in the gym here.

I want to say that Vinita Park and Vinita Terrace share a real common history. It's even embedded in their name because Vinita Station that dated back to 1905 over here was where they both drew their names from later on. They ... so they share that history and over the years, they've shared a lot a more. They've shared a lot of their services including most importantly police and other services through the years because it made sense for them, and it made sense economically, and I think that out of that grew a friendship and cooperation that after Senate Bill 5 came about and we were looking at the State of Missouri wanting people to do more consolidations that we thought that this would be a good direction to go. It's somewhat historic as you know. There hasn't been one of these before so we're hoping that this'll start a trend and that you'll see a lot more of these.

Tonight, I just wanted to give you this handout that just re-emphasizes the eleven points that I know [inaudible – too far from microphone] by State law to know that we completed and gave

you the information for. So ... with that there are other people here from the cities and I'm around, but just mainly I just wanted to introduce the report to you, give you that and let you know that we would really appreciate your approval of this proposal for consolidation. I have been the City Council in St. Charles for 27 years, and I can tell you from my experience in city government that this is the best possible thing for these cities to be able to share expenses, be able to ... be more economical in the way they deliver ... deliver services, and it will be the best thing in the interest, I believe, of the residents' long term. So thank you very much. Yes.

CHAIRMAN DORSEY: Do any of the Commission members have question for Mr. Riddler? Seeing none, thank you, Mr. Riddler.

RIDDLER: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN DORSEY: All right, at this point we would open it up to public comment. I will call in the order they were received, and what I'm going to do just to keep things moving a little bit faster is not only call up the speaker, but I'm going to tell you who's on deck. Our first speaker is Mary Tevlin and on deck is Gail Choate.

TEVLIN: Good evening. I am one of the trustees in the Village of Vinita Terrace. I've been a trustee for over 20 years, and Vinita Terrace has been chartered for 75 years this year I believe so it's kind of a bittersweet combination that's going to be happening or hopefully happen. I just wanted to say that I encourage you to consider us consolidating with Vinita Park as much I would not like to have to do that. As a board member, I do feel that it is best for our community. Our community will benefit from Vinita Terrace ... or Vinita Park, rather, with all the facilities and the larger numbers there and like our lawyer said we've ... we've done a lot of things together from National Nights Out to picnics to lots of organizational things, church things. It's always been kind of a dual community. So, I really hope you'd consider approving this. It would benefit both communities. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN DORSEY: Any questions from any of the Commission members? Seeing none, thank you. Next is Gail Choate and on deck is Mary Carter.

CHOATE: Hi. I'm Gail Choate. I'm with St. Louis County Department of Planning. I'm the Interim Director of Planning. I would just like to say that St. Louis County is certainly in favor of more efficient units of government that is being proposed tonight. We did review the report, and we did concur that there is no immediate impact to any unincorporated residents, doesn't include unincorporated residents or any unincorporated areas. St. Louis County does not object to this proposal. In concept, we see it as a very good thing, and we also assume the residents are in favor as we are hearing tonight so that's the only comments we have. Any questions?

CHAIRMAN DORSEY: Thank you.

CHOATE: You're very welcome.

CHAIRMAN DORSEY: Next speaker is Mary Carter, and on deck is Chris Krehmeyer.

CARTER: Good evening.

CHAIRMAN DORSEY: Good evening, Ms. Carter. Before you start, I just want to remind anybody that if you wish to make some public comment, we would ask that you fill out one of these speaker forms. Thank you. Please proceed.

CARTER: I'm Mary Louise Carter, the Mayor of the City of Pagedale. We are neighbors with Vinita Park and Vinita Terrace, and I applaud and commend them for making this move. It is an economical, feasible to take. I know it's difficult, but it would be best, and it will [inaudible] improve the quality of life for the residents in this area, and it will make them ... they will be able to participate in all the services that Vinita Park provide. So I ask that you look favorable upon this, and hopefully there will be of these in the future. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN DORSEY: Any questions for Ms. Carter? Seeing none, Chris Krehmeyer.

KREHMEYER: Good evening. I'm Chris Krehmeyer, President and CEO of Beyond Housing. Beyond Housing has for the last six years been working with the leaders and the residents of the 24 communities that comprise the Normandy School District in an initiative we call 24:1. We were proud to lend a small hand to the folks in Vinita Terrace to help put their piece of the application together. While we applaud [sound cuts out] difficult and the hard set saying both saying "Let's look to the future and do things a ... a different way." We think the most important thing about this process and hope the Commission agrees is that this is coming from the leadership of the ... these two communities. They're deciding on their own. They think and ... this is in their own best interest and hopefully the ... the voters will agree to that if you concur and move the process forward. But again, given everything that's happened in the last several years, it's good to have something that comes from a community as opposed to press down on community so we're hopeful that you ... look in favor of their ... their request to merge the two cities.

CHAIRMAN DORSEY: Any questions from the Commission members? Thank you, sir.

KREHMEYER: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN DORSEY: I see a gentleman filling out one of our forms so ... we'll ... yeah, we'll give him a second. I do want to inform the members of the audience that if you're shy about getting up in front of a microphone and speaking, there is a period of public comment. You can submit your comments to the Commission office for the next twenty-one days, and we will certainly consider them before we reach any conclusions.

The next speaker is Mr. John Phillips.

PHILLIPS: Good evening. I also attended Washington. I attended this school myself. I'm probably one of the few people in the room who grew up in Vinita Park and now live in Vinita Terrace so I'm very much in favor of the two neighborhoods coming together. My mother still lives in Vinita Park, and just growing up it was almost like Vinita Park and Vinita Terrace were

together anyway. Even the street that I live on now, Monroe, I can still remember at least three different friends who lived on the same street so we constantly crossed Midland basically to know, you know, interact and socialize, and all of us went to this school so it's almost like one big neighborhood anyway.

CHAIRMAN DORSEY: Any questions for Mr. Phillips? Seeing none ...

UCHITELLE Question.

CHAIRMAN DORSEY: Yes, sir.

UCHITELLE Everybody I hear is so enthusiastic about this, is that the sense of the two communities in your opinion?

PHILLIPS: Definitely, definitely. First of all, from a practical sense of business, it makes perfect sense, and I mean it's like one community almost anyway. Like I said, man, in Vinita Park we used to cross Midland, come over here to go to school, go to the Chinese restaurant here, go over to Hanley Hills, play with the kids over there, so it's already like one community anyway.

UCHITELLE I note that there is a slight increase in property taxes for Vinita Terrace. That apparently is offset by no longer having to pay monthly garbage ...

PHILLIPS: Services.

UCHITELLE: ... so that's a factor that's a plus.

PHILLIPS: Definitely. Definitely. Definitely. I mean a few extra taxes for a few extra services.

UCHITELLE: Thank you.

PHILLIPS: No problem.

CHAIRMAN DORSEY: Are there any other questions or comments from the Commission before we conclude the hearing?

WATSON I have a question. Out of the residents that are here both from Vinita Park and Vinita Terrace, if you could by a show of hands show if you're in favor of the merger ... just to get a general sense? Okay. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN DORSEY: Any other questions or comments? Kathleen.

SCHWEITZER: Yes, now that we've shown ... anybody opposed to it? Apparently not. Well, all righty then.

CHAIRMAN DORSEY: Okay, well, if there's nothing further I'll entertain a motion ...

DOUGHERTY: I just want to comment that written comment can be submitted to the Boundary Commission through US Mail or via our website. If you want to read the Proposal, it is also on our website www.boundarycommission.com.

CHAIRMAN DORSEY: Okay. There's nothing further, I'll entertain a motion to adjourn this public hearing.

WATSON So moved.

CHAIRMAN DORSEY: Is there a second?

SCHWEITZER Seconded

CHAIRMAN DORSEY: All those in favor?

ALL: Aye.

CHAIRMAN DORSEY: This hearing is concluded. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen.