

COMMISSIONERS RECORD 5, DOUGLAS COUNTY

Term, 19

day of

19

Lawrence Co., Inc. Record No. 184-12-1

- A. The site is consistent with Plan '95 and has been recommended in a 1975 "Industrial Park Location Study" by the Chamber of Commerce, by "Lawrence Industrial Park Feasibility Study - North Lawrence," by Landplan Engineering in 1981, and by a study of the School of Architecture, University of Kansas, in 1981.
- B. The site has flat topography, availability of large tracts, and good access.
- C. The site has the advantages of rail, air, and highway transportation.
- D. Development of the site would add to the tax base and create employment.
13. Opponents of the annexation raised the following issues:
- A. Removing 274.5 acres of prime agricultural land from production.
- B. Drainage problems.
- C. Availability of other, more suitable sites.
- D. Impact on the corridor between the proposed site and North Lawrence.
- E. Traffic safety, including the Midland railroad crossing to the West tract, the proposed railroad crossing of Highway 24/59, and additional traffic on Highway 24/59. Several citizens have questioned whether--in the interest of safety--the railroad crossing may require the construction of an overpass.
- F. Potential loss to tax base of Grant Township.
- G. High cost of developing sewer and water systems, estimated to be from \$1,665,000 to \$3,752,000.
- H. Lack of precise information about the probable costs of the proposed development and the proportion of those costs which will need to be assumed by Douglas County taxpayers.
- I. Due to its location in northeast Douglas County, the proposed industrial park seems less accessible to workers living in south Lawrence and other areas of Douglas County than to residents of nearby Jefferson County. This could result in increased jobs--and an expanded tax-base for Jefferson County residents, but increased tax assessments for residents of Lawrence and Douglas County. This view is further substantiated by noting that the costs for housing and real estate taxes are generally lower in Jefferson County than in Douglas County.
- J. An owner of the proposed industrial park testified before the Board of County Commissioners that the industrial park could use Rural Water District Number 13 as its source of water. Yet, other citizens noted that rural water districts are established primarily to meet agricultural and residential needs, and could not be counted on to meet the additional requirements of an industrial park. Further, it appears to this Board that Rural Water District Number 13 may not be capable of providing water to the industrial park.
14. Additional issues raised by various experts and interested parties were:
- A. Some of the soils in the proposed annexation area may pose construction problems. This potential problem will require tests by a geotechnical engineer.
- B. Possible pollution of ground water, through accidental industrial spills, or in the course of developing wells as a water source, or in connection with an on-site waste water sewage treatment.
- C. The dependence of the proposed development on the North Lawrence and Mud Creek levees. Frank W. Wilson, Senior Geologist, Kansas Geological Survey, stated:
- "A final concern is the fact that the viability of the proposed development depends entirely on the North Lawrence and Mud Creek levees. Levees have failed under high flood conditions in the past. The local ones have not yet been tested under conditions similar to the 1951 flood.
- Likely areas of failure are the bend west of the proposed development where the river turns abruptly south and the constriction at Bowersock dam and the new bridge. In order to pass large quantities of water through the Bowersock narrows, the velocity will be considerable. Trees and debris are likely to hang up on the bridge piers and cause turbulence which might erode the levee.
- In 1951 the flood plain was relatively unobstructed and the river broke across from Midland bend into Mud Creek and gradually across almost the entire width of the valley. Most of the people in North Lawrence had time to evacuate. If a levee failed under existing conditions, however, the water would rise suddenly and rapidly and might even be trapped behind the back of the downstream side of the levees, causing greater depth and damage than the 1951 flood."
- D. The Kansas Department of Health and Environment has stated that in accordance with a policy adopted by the Kansas legislature and the State Water Quality Management Plan, "We do not encourage the proliferation of small wastewater treatment plants on the fringes of large communities for a variety of reasons." In addition, they add:
- "Other significant problems with a wastewater treatment facility solely for the industrial park, includes unknown types of wastewater to be treated and uneven flows causing operational problems. Certainly, the types of industries in the existing industrial park discharge some significant strength wastewaters to the City system. Because of the large capacity of the City system, such fluctuations can be devastating. The existing City system is well-managed and could much more easily accommodate this flow."