

## Long Range Land Use

# Pinckney Plan Nears Adoption

BY BARRY SHALINSKY

A comprehensive neighborhood plan for the Pinckney neighborhood in the works since September is slated to be adopted by the City Commission this month.

The Pinckney neighborhood plan will be the result of months of work by the city planning staff and neighborhood representatives. The plan addresses long range land use in this area.

The neighborhood is bounded by Sixth street on the south, the Turnpike access road on the west, the river and city limits on the east and north.

A survey was taken of area residents and landowners, followed by deliberation by a committee consisting of four members of the City Planning Commission and Mona McCoy, former Pinckney Neighborhood Association president. The committee initially could not reach agreement and proposed four alternative plans.

The neighborhood presented a fifth alternative. From these, the full Planning Commission hammered out a plan which is to be submitted to the City Commission.

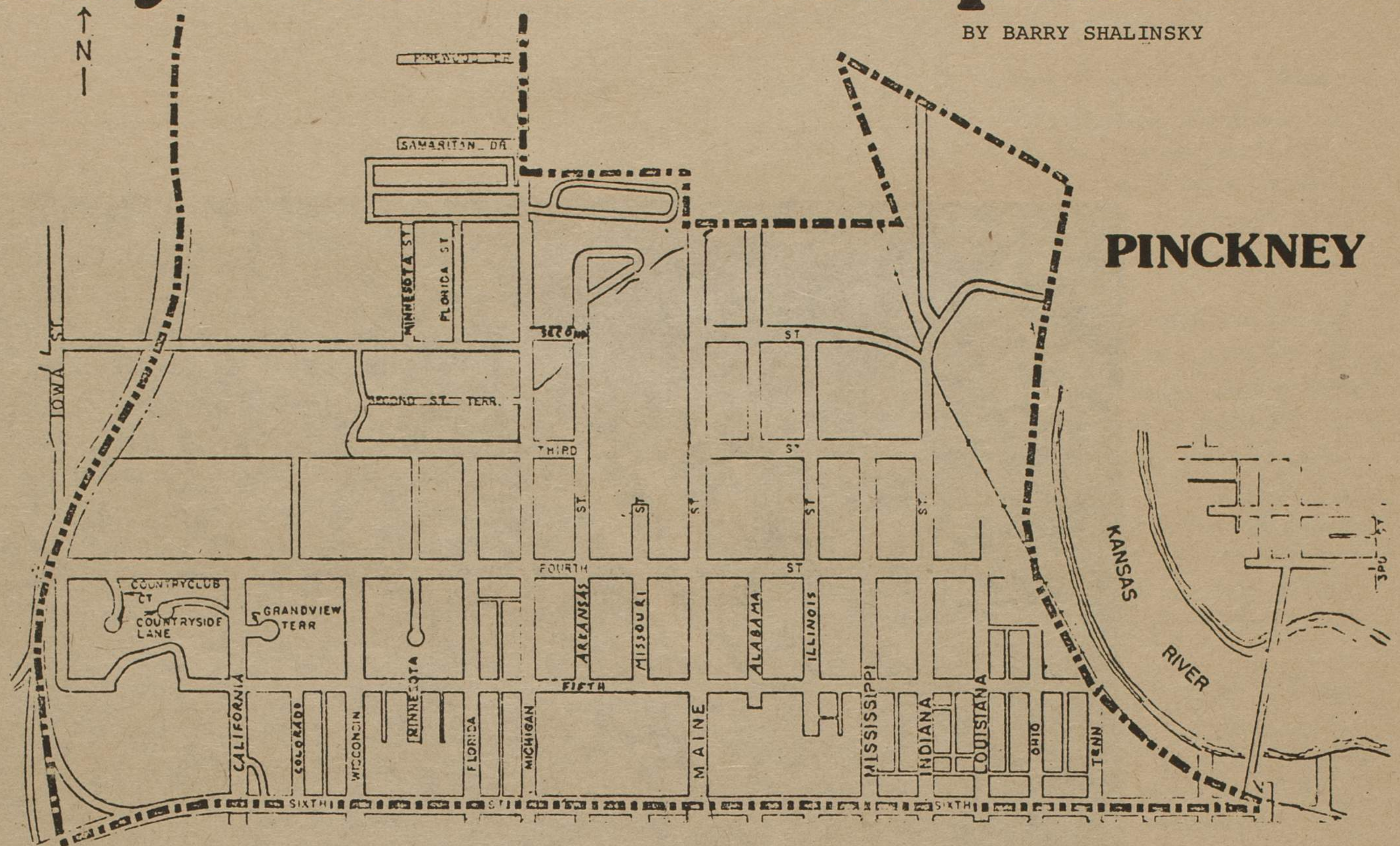
Unlike other neighborhood plans, the City gave high priority to the Pinckney plan. Other neighborhoods must pay for the creation of their comprehensive plans out of revenue sharing money allocated to their neighborhood associations. The City paid for the Pinckney plan through the Planning budget.

Neighborhood organizations are pushing for the adoption of comprehensive neighborhood plans because Plan 95 is too vague, allowing developers too much land use latitude.

One of the most controversial aspects of the Pinckney plan is the location of health care facilities in the neighborhood. Pinckney residents endorsed a proposal to construct a Lawrence Medical Plaza along Sixth, from directly east of Dillon's over to Maine.

According to McCoy, "This would keep it from going commercial, provide all the potential doctor's space they could need, and save the rest of the neighborhood."

But the hospital fears competition from a competing facility. Therefore Lawrence Memorial Hospital proposes an office complex north of the present hospital. The neighborhood sees the mobile home park to the north as a logical place to build such a facility.



"The city accused us of being anti-mobile homes even though they thought nothing of moving them out for McDonald's," McCoy asserted, "We are not against mobile homes, but they are portable. The alternative of tearing down existing solid homes is silly."

Originally, proposals called for doctors' offices on the west side of Arkansas between Third and Fourth and in the block bounded by Illinois and Alabama, Second and Third. The Planning Commission agreed to allow Arkansas to retain its residential zoning.

The encroachment of gaudy commercial development is a concern neighborhood residents, according to the survey. Although two-thirds of Pinckney residents surveyed favored some commercial development, many favored strict limitations, and one-third fully disapproved of any new commercial development.

The plan to be submitted for the City Commission approval will recommend a uniform commercial zoning depth of 300 feet back from Sixth. This will give most commercial entrepreneurs some space to expand and give Fifth Street residents the security of knowing that there are defined policy limits to commercial growth.

The old Mt. Hope nursery in western Pinckney which Mona McCoy termed "a nonconforming land use of the best kind" is to be rezoned commercial in part. Part of the parcel is to be used for a motel. The neighborhood failed to convince the Planning Commission to downzone commercial parcels on the north side of Sixth street east of Maine.

Almost all of Pinckney east of Michigan Street which is not to be zoned for medical purposes will retain its character with single family dwellings.

A large portion of this area is included in a historic preservation proposal currently being drafted by Ed Boles of the Lawrence Historic Preservation Trust. Jane Eldredge, new Pinckney Neighborhood Association president termed the recommendation, "a good step in the right direction."

Eldredge attributed the decision to the fact that the area's existing land use is 95 per cent single family dwellings.

Many neighborhood residents are not pleased with the parks and drainage in Pinckney. Both Eldredge and McCoy agree that Woody is a city ball park, Clinton is a ravine used for drainage and Burcham is a wilderness park. Pinckney has no real neigh-

borhood park where people can have a picnic and set up a volleyball net. The plan does not address these needs.

In working on the plan, McCoy found the planning staff to be "very reasonable." Eldredge termed the plan to be "not unreasonable," but expressed concern that planners are reluctant to downzone commercial property but not to upzone residential property. "Each type of investment should be given the same consideration, regardless of scale," Eldredge said.

Eldredge said she lived in Pinckney because it had a good mix of people in terms of age, race, and income.

Both Eldredge and McCoy live in old houses which they bought and restored. A city official labeled this activity "gentrification," which means freezing out low income people by raising property value and taking rental property off the market.

The clear alternative is that some unconcerned landlords will allow property to deteriorate and seek upzoning. Eldredge listed maintaining existing housing for elderly and low income people as an important neighborhood goal. "These are people's homes. They have invested time and energy, and they don't want to lose it."

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