

to: **Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission**  
from: Ed Zimmer  
re: Agenda of March 25, 2010  
date: 03/19/2010

**Item 2:**

Lincoln Public Schools will present information to the Commission about plans for Beechner Athletic Complex at Lincoln High School. The Environs District extends 300 feet north and south of the J Street right-of-way, placing a portion of the athletic complex in the Commission's jurisdiction for design review.

I apologize that I overlooked one of the scheduled items for the December meeting—the second meeting on the west entrance improvements to the building at 500 South 16<sup>th</sup> Street for the Nebr. Dept. of Labor. Alan Ebner of The Clark Enersen Partners will present to the Commission based on the discussion at the November meeting.

The key design standards in this location are:

**Design Standard 2: Proximity**

The nearer a property is to the Capitol, the greater responsibility it bears in the District. Buildings

and other improvements facing Capitol Square should meet very high standards for design, construction, and maintenance. Improvements facing the Capitol Malls (Centennial/north, Lincoln/west, south, and east) should also meet high standards. Other improvements within the District but not facing the Square or the Malls should not intrude upon the Capitol's setting and should contribute to the overall quality of the District. (emphasis added)

and

**Design Standard 12: Reinforcing the Edges of the Malls**

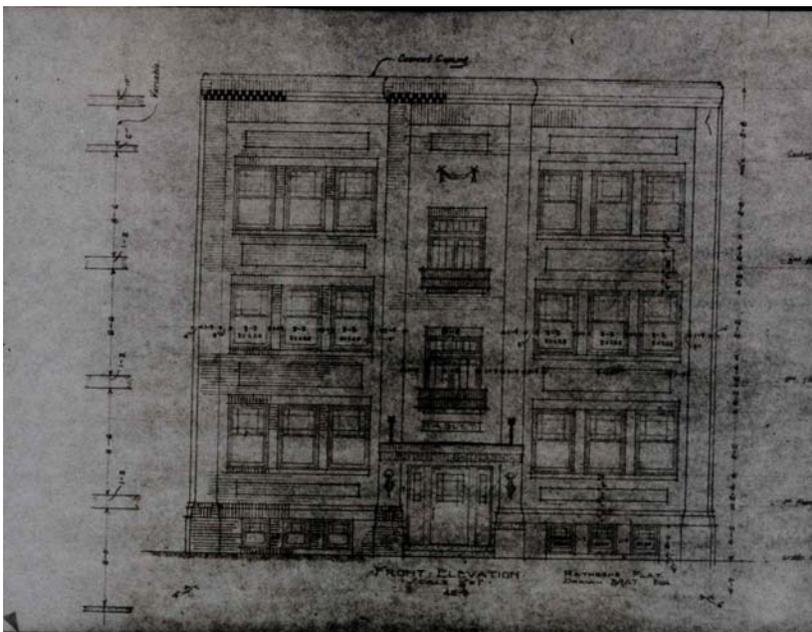
The Malls should provide dignified pedestrian and vehicular environments, with well-defined edges and a variety of Capitol views. To reinforce the edges of the District' spaces, it is essential that new buildings be oriented to their respective Mall, or to Capitol Square, and that new buildings have a consistent setback.

**Item 3:**

The City of Lincoln has notified the owners of “The Juliet” apartment building at 610 S. 17<sup>th</sup> St. that the building has been declared dangerous and that it must be immediately secured and repaired or it will be demolished.



The Juliet was built in 1917 for an estimated \$30,000 by Lincoln developer Harvey Rathbone. His drawings for the building were inscribed by O. A. Ellis. Oscar A. Ellis was identified as a draftsman in the office of Berlinghof and Davis in the 1917 Lincoln directory. That architectural partnership ended in mid-1917.



O. A. Ellis, draftsman, 1917

The specific design standard on demolition states:

**Design Standard 7: Demolition**

Any requests for demolition permits within the District must be accompanied by detailed plans for redevelopment of the site in accord with these Design Standards. Applications for demolition and redevelopment shall be evaluated in light of the contribution of the site to the character of the District, and based on the assumption that landmarks designated by the City of Lincoln or identified in these Design Standards should be preserved.

In this instance the demolition request/requirement is originating with the City, not the property owner. Hence no redevelopment plans are available. The Environs District ordinance provides another possibility for addressing hazard buildings:

**27.56.130 Hazardous Structures.**

The Planning Director shall issue a certificate of "allowance on grounds of hazardous conditions" for razing a structure or other work if the Department of Building and Safety has determined that failure to carry out said work poses an immediate hazard to human health and safety. However, no owner shall by deliberate acts or deliberate neglect allow a property in the Capitol Environs District to become hazardous to human health and safety with the intent of then obtaining such certificate. When a certificate of "allowance on grounds of hazardous conditions" is issued, a copy of that certificate shall be transmitted to the Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission at its next public meeting.

The City's inspectors have indicated to me that the structure has been badly damaged by a long period of neglect, especially to the roof, necessitating the dangerous building action.

**Item 4:** The owners of the "Gathering Place" at E Street and Goodhue Blvd. have received grant assistance for improvements to the building. I will meet with them next week prior to the Commission's meeting and have listed this item in case a discussion with the Commission is warranted.

