

MEETING RECORD

NAME OF GROUP: HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION and URBAN DESIGN COMMITTEE

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING: Thursday, February 24, 2011, 2:00 p.m., DSC Conference Room 214, 2nd Floor, County-City Building, 555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: *Historic Preservation Commission:* Cathy Beecham, Jim Johnson, Berwyn Jones, Jim McKee, Greg Munn and Bob Ripley; (Tim Francis absent).
Urban Design Committee: JoAnne Kissel, Gil Peace, Michelle Penn, Gordon Scholz and Michele Tilley; (Scott Sullivan and Mary Ann Wells absent).
Ed Zimmer, Nicole Fleck-Tooze and Teresa McKinstry of the Planning Department; Jim Martin of SAIC, Dennis Scheer and Jeffrey Chadwick of Clark Enersen Partners, Dan Worth and Dan Spiry of Bahr Vermeer Haecker Architects, Stan Meradith and Greg Garlock of DLR Group and other interested citizens.

STATED PURPOSE OF MEETING: Joint Meeting of Historic Preservation Commission and Urban Design Committee

Acting Chair Bob Ripley called the meeting to order and acknowledged the posting of the Open Meetings Act in the room.

Ed Zimmer stated that there are many architects working on the numerous aspects of the West Haymarket arena. The purpose of today's meeting is to view and discuss design elements.

Dan Worth stated that this is the beginning of the design process. They are trying to figure out how this project fits between railroad tracks and the physical restraints. He has prepared some examples of other arena projects and prepared some more realistic images from eye level to show everyone.

Stan Meradith gave a Power Point presentation. He explained that this arena will be a very prominent building. He showed other arena designs. As a team, they have been on three benchmarking trips. He stated that since the bond issue, there have been numerous changes. He showed earlier designs of the arena. In 2008, an RFP was put out for the whole area. The bond issue was passed for no seating in excess of 16,000 seats. In comparison with other cities, Lincoln's square feet per seat is about in the middle. They are working on a budget. It isn't lavish but it is adequate. The design team has met with the Mayor. The Mayor liked the historic aspect of it. That led to the Immigrant Depot. The retro design of the arena was not well accepted.

Greg Garlock stated that the arena is really designed around basketball, but will accommodate the circus, concerts and trade shows, amongst other uses. This will be a multipurpose facility. Seating sections are designed for site line. The event level is at grade. The lowest level is a non-public level with lockers, etc. The main concourse is about 28 feet above entry level. The premium level is 14 feet above the main concourse and 18 feet above that is the upper concourse. The upper deck can be curtained off. Floor level to top row is under 88 feet. The industry standard is 90 feet from the event floor to the lowest rigging steel. There are constraints with the railroad tracks that will not be removed until 2012.

Ripley does not want to see "R" Street open and access through the Haymarket. It is a pedestrian district and he doesn't want to see that.

Jim Martin stated that "R" St. will not be open during events. You don't mix vehicles and pedestrians.

Berwyn Jones wondered what is the point of having "R" St. at all. Martin replied that a parking garage will have access to "R" St. and there is the possibility of a hotel and retail with a main drop off on "R" St. There have been two exhaustive traffic studies.

Zimmer stated the 106 Review involves a close examination of the traffic model and event management of traffic, with the possible closing of "Q" St. Ultimately it will be written into the Memorandum of Agreement.

Garlock noted that there are two main entrances. There will be parking and a pedestrian bridge over the parking lot. The lowest level will have locker rooms, etc. The main concourse is the level most people will experience. This level will have restrooms, concessions, club seats and a club lounge.

Zimmer stated that Capitol Environs Commission met this morning and discussed the view to the State Capitol from the arena. They are willing to work on that issue.

Garlock stated that the premium level is designed for 36 suites and lower level four person suites.

Ripley wondered if the suites are anticipated to be leased annually. Garlock replied that typically suites are leased for a whole year. Lease terms are usually staggered so they don't all become vacant at the same time.

Garlock noted that the city wanted to have a facility that could accommodate an expansion to 18,500 seats beyond the current 16,000. Subsequently, the north end of the arena has room to expand.

Ripley questioned if an effort is being made by the design team to preserve the visual to the Capitol. Martin replied that until the actual levels are set and some construction equipment is on site, we don't know exactly what the visual will be. That information could be a year from now. We won't know until then what views we need to protect.

Dennis Scheer noted that we are aware what vista will exist from street level. There is a corridor that is there. This will be further explored as the upper levels are built.

Martin noted that there is an awareness amongst the design teams to have a collection of buildings or a place. Working with public art, aesthetics and the theme, they have learned there are some stories to tell. The railroad features prominently. There are values from the immigrants that arrived here and values from the sports that are featured here. Our goal, at the Mayor's direction, is to come up with an idea of the theme for the West Haymarket.

Michelle Penn observed that there are a lot of firms involved in this project.

Meradith stated that he is the team leader. An association was formed with everyone. DLR is more the sports side, more of the lead. The design aesthetic is more a collaborative effort. Clark Enersen is taking the lead on the parking element. A project this big involves a team of many to design it. BVH is doing the building shell. Right now, it is 455,000 square feet.

Dan Spiry presented street level views of the proposed arena.

Ripley questioned if any thought has been given to roof terrace use. Martin replied they are looking at a myriad of opportunities. This is budget driven. Ripley noted there are a lot of future opportunities for the space.

Gordon Scholz wondered about the flexibility and structures that are being worked with. Spiry replied that the design has been constantly evolving.

Cathy Beecham thinks this is a very interesting building. She would like to see something in-between the retro approach and this approach. She would like to see something just a little more traditional. This feels a little too modern to her.

Meradith noted that the design teams meet every few weeks with the Mayor.

Michele Tilley believes the arena will function as the newest addition and the design reflects that.

Penn noted that the square footage issue comes into consideration. It will be hard to do a traditional style with bricks. She understands the plan has been threshed out and now

the exterior design is being worked on, but it is predetermined by what is going on inside.

Beecham questioned if the shape has to be a bowl.

Jim McKee understands the concept of fitting into the economy and the size allowed. We have almost forced ourselves into a rounded arena.

Ripley would like materials and elevation addressed.

Meradith is in the process of going through that right now. Materials at pedestrian level need to be more durable. The building type on the upper levels will have long span trusses, probably metal.

Spiry noted that we need to reflect that this is on the edge of historic buildings. This should not be a flashy trendy building. They would like for March 17, 2011 to be the first public open house with materials available for viewing. The base level will probably be concrete and/or brick. Above that, metal or something that is low maintenance.

Beecham is still not sure of the design. This looks very modern to her.

Greg Munn believes there is a danger of trying to borrow from the Haymarket. It could look outdated.

Design elements were discussed.

Martin stated the Mayor noted the old canopy almost lines up with the new pedestrian walkway. This is an area of sports events with the ice arena and ball fields. If you think of the transition from the old as you walk along the canopy line, "R" St. is a transition. You move from historic Haymarket to the new. You don't want to build instant history.

Beecham doesn't believe the building can't look new, just that it needs to be respectful of the Haymarket.

Dennis Scheer believes there is a stitching. The canopy line is a longitudinal stretch that is kind of chronological.

JoAnne Kissel stated that this is two groups that are trying to look at how this all fits. She is not sure she likes the idea of red brick at the lower level. She likes the idea of this looking newer.

Ripley observed that the building is being looked at from a distance. Mostly, the impression will be different at the ground level than from a distance.

Zimmer stated that he is hoping to schedule another public meeting of both of Historic Preservation Commission and Urban Design Committee. He foresees the format as an open house followed by a public hearing on March 17, 2011. He would like for this to be an evening meeting. Perhaps it could be an afternoon meeting following by an evening open house. This is part of the public process for the Section 106 review.

Jones questioned what happens following the open house. Zimmer responded there would be a follow up meeting. Conference Room 113 could be set up for a better forum. Some of this could be made available on City Channel 5. Issues will also need to be discussed with the State Historical Society and the Army Corp. of Engineers. Zimmer will email everyone with further information on the future dates. He envisions an open house with multiple stations, followed by a brief presentation of the design process with comments following.

Meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

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