

MEETING RECORD

NAME OF GROUP: HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING: Thursday, November 15, 2007, 1:30 p.m., Conference Room 206, 2nd Floor, County-City Building, 555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Jerry Berggren, Tim Francis, Bruce Helwig, Jim McKee and Bob Ripley; (Carol Walker and Terry Young absent). Marvin Krout, Ed Zimmer and Teresa McKinstry of the Planning Department; and other interested citizens.

STATED PURPOSE OF MEETING: Regular Historic Preservation Commission Meeting

Chair Bob Ripley called the meeting to order and requested a motion approving the minutes for the regular meeting held October 18, 2007. Motion for approval made by Helwig, seconded by Berggren. Motion for approval carried 4-0: Berggren, Francis, Helwig and Ripley voting 'yes'; McKee, Walker and Young absent.

The opportunity was given for persons with limited time or with an item not appearing on the agenda to address the Commission. No one appeared.

APPLICATION BY BROWN BAGGERS FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS FOR WORK AT 151 N. 8TH STREET IN THE HAYMARKET LANDMARK DISTRICT, FORMERLY THE SALVATION ARMY BUILDING
PUBLIC HEARING: November 15, 2007

Members present: Berggren, Francis, Helwig and Ripley: McKee, Walker and Young absent.

Ed Zimmer stated that the sign is intended to be hung inside the window, which would remain transparent.

Berggren asked about the color of the sign. Don Denton answered that it would be orange and white.

Berggren wondered if the letters were free standing or if the sign had a solid back. Denton replied they suspended on a ½ inch metal chain and the sign does not have a solid back. Berggren inquired how tall the letters are. Denton replied six and one half inches on the round letters.

ACTION:

Helwig moved approval, seconded by Francis. Motion for approval carried 4-0: Berggren, Francis, Helwig and Ripley voting 'yes'; McKee, Walker and Young absent.

APPLICATION BY "CRABBY BILL'S" RESTAURANT FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS FOR WORK AT 803 Q STREET IN THE HAYMARKET LANDMARK DISTRICT

PUBLIC HEARING: **November 15, 2007**

Members present: Berggren, Francis, Helwig, McKee and Ripley: Walker and Young absent.

There is no new information to present.

APPLICATION BY ROY MAURER FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS FOR WORK AT 1444 NORTH 37TH STREET CAMPUS NEIGHBORHOOD LANDMARK DISTRICT

PUBLIC HEARING: **November 15, 2007**

Members present: Berggren, Francis, Helwig, McKee and Ripley: Walker and Young absent.

There is no new information to present.

APPLICATION BY MONTE FROELICH FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS FOR WORK AT THE GRAND MANSE/OLD FEDERAL BUILDING (129 NORTH 10TH STREET)

PUBLIC HEARING: **November 15, 2007**

Members present: Berggren, Francis, Helwig, McKee and Ripley: Walker and Young absent.

Monte Froelich presented new drawings of the proposed sign. They are trying to move away from apartments on the main level, except for the west wall. He is working with Lincoln Arts Council on an event. A potential special sign district was discussed at the last meeting. The sign is shorter than initially proposed. A pole sign has a ten-foot minimum. They think there are potential challenges to creating a special sign district. The sign could be lowered a bit, but it can't be too much lower because there is too much traffic that needs to see the sign.

Greg Munn stated there will be celebration spaces in the building. "Belle Epoque" is an idea for the name of the big event space, west of the Blue Orchid Restaurant. Froelich stated that space has been vacant since 2004.

Berggren inquired if 9th St. and 10th St. are federal highways. Zimmer does not believe so. Berggren wondered if Dept. of Roads should have a say in this. Marvin Krout stated that he does not believe this falls under Dept. of Roads jurisdiction.

Zimmer stated that the Historical Society and the Parks Service will have input to protect the tax credits that run until 2009. A sign permit would have to be obtained from Building and Safety.

ACTION:

Francis moved approval of the monument signs as proposed today, seconded by Helwig.

Berggren is concerned. This is a monumental structure as a sign. Ripley understands that the options for signs here are limited.

Zimmer stated that the Haymarket is an example of a special sign district. It can allow a few sign types that aren't allowed outside the district, such as roof edge standing letters or painted wall signs. It also can prohibit certain types such as plastic faced back lit signs. The two freestanding signs that are allowed in the B-4 district are ground signs up to 8 feet tall and pole signs that can't start until 10 feet above the ground. If City Council granted a sign district for this location, they could set a specific sign that might not otherwise be allowed. There are other special sign districts in this city, Grand Theatre being one. It can be appropriate to customize a special sign for a special building.

Berggren does not know the dimensions of the Lied sign, but the minutes reflect that it was a wall mounted sign, but in looking at the sign, it appears to actually be a ground sign. This sign, the whole thing is incredibly heavy and very tall. It reads like a billboard. The northwest corner is a primary entrance to the city. If there ever was a reason for a special sign district, this would be it. He thinks the applicant is doing an adequate job for the regulations they have to deal with. The idea of a message board, we can't dismiss it. It's twenty-first century technology. This is a 1905 building with a need for new technology on the sign.

McKee inquired about the height of the signs. Munn replied that the signs are two feet shorter than presented at the last meeting.

Ripley questioned the sign at the Lied Center. Zimmer replied that their sign complies with the zoning code for "P" Public District. It is University and State ownership.

Froelich would like to keep the benches in place at the 9th and "P" St. corner.

Berggren believes they all believe the same thing. It needs to be a pole sign and not look like a pole. He thinks this is a massive height to sit that high in the air. He cannot think of a sign that large anywhere else. There needs to be a balance. The theory of a sign is to

get the message across. That can be done with a simple backdrop. The poles will assist in not distracting from the building. The architecture of the comfort station, it isn't trying to copy the architectural elements of the building, it just fits.

Berggren questioned if the Lied Center sign is close to fitting the B-4 district in the monument sign category. Zimmer believes it is taller than would be permitted. It is a huge building with blank architecture on that side.

Ripley observed that the applicant has done a terrific job with detail. He would guess the sign itself would be more effective if the actual monument that it stands on is less monumental and more subtle. It should be sympathetic to the building but does not need to look so much like the building.

Marvin Krout believes the sign is competing with the building. It is oversized looking. He believes it would look better if it wasn't so wide.

Froelich appreciates the comments. He doesn't want to create something that looks like a sign. He is trying to create something that doesn't look cheap and compliments the building.

Francis sees 9th St. and 10th St. as more vehicular, not pedestrian. Berggren thinks the Lied Center sign is more appropriate. It is comfortable for pedestrians and drivers alike. That is not an easy task to accomplish.

Zimmer thinks a different design direction might be more compatible. Instead of thinking of this sign as architecture, it might take its design cues from the "street furniture" of the area, especially the decorative light poles around the building. The lights at the main entrances are fairly ornate. A sign might be mounted between tall historic streetlight poles.

Motion for approval failed 1-4: Francis voting 'yes'; Berggren, Helwig, McKee and Ripley voting 'no'; Walker and Young absent.

Berggren moved that staff work with the applicant on creating a special sign district that might step outside provisions of B-4 signs but with the intention of a digital message board as part of the district, seconded by Helwig.

Krout stated that some things talked about today do not require a special sign district. The main idea is to lower the sign and it would be helpful to know if the applicant wants to maintain the ten feet or is the issue more with the massiveness of the sign.

Froelich thinks the sign can be brought down some. They don't want to go so low that the far lane of traffic won't be able to see the sign.

Berggren believes that scale is important. He does not want to see a billboard on the corner. As it hugs the ground more, it can be more massive. He does not know of another sign in Lincoln that fits this site. You only get about eight words at highway speed. He is concerned with the things that you can do with digital imaging. It can be quite distracting.

Krout explained some of the restrictions of digital signs. There is a one second transition time. Berggren wants to maintain the digital message guidelines.

Ripley would urge the applicant to work with staff on the design and the timeline for public hearings before Planning Commission and City Council.

Motion carried 5-0: Berggren, Francis, Helwig, McKee and Ripley voting 'yes'; Walker and Young absent.

STAFF REPORT

- Zimmer stated that he is on the Nebraska Transportation Enhancement Grant Selection Committee. The bulk of the funds are given to hiker/biker trails. There is also a category for historic properties, transportation related. Fitting the guidelines can be difficult. This year, there are two Lincoln historic applications. One is for funds for the stable at Wyuka and the second one is "O" Street streetscape around 1st St. and the west base of the Harris Overpass. Urban Development is doing the "O" St. project and Wyuka is the applicant on the stable. There is the issue of the DLD Highway post. He is hopeful that the restoration of the post can be written into the grant. It is amazing that it has survived as well as it has. The grant can also include some streetscape improvement. It would be nice to pave and link the pedestrian access with the Salt Creek trail which is currently graveled.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:40 p.m.