

## MEETING RECORD

**NAME OF GROUP:** HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

**DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING:** Thursday, April 21, 2016, 1:30 p.m., Conference Room 214, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, County-City Building, 555 S. 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Lincoln, Nebraska

**MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:** Melissa Dirr Gengler, Jim Hewitt, Jim Johnson, Liz Kuhlman, Jim McKee and Greg Munn; (Tim Francis absent); Ed Zimmer, Stacey Groshong-Hageman and Amy Huffman of the Planning Department.

**STATED PURPOSE OF MEETING:** Regular Historic Preservation Commission Meeting

Chair Greg Munn called the meeting to order and acknowledged the posting of the Open Meetings Act in the room.

Munn requested a motion approving the minutes for the meeting of March 17, 2016. Motion for approval made by Johnson, seconded by Hewitt and carried 6-0: Gengler, Hewitt, Johnson, Kuhlman, McKee and Munn voting 'yes'; Francis absent.

The opportunity was given for persons with limited time or with an item not appearing on the agenda to address the Commission.

Peter Bleed, 1315 N. 37<sup>th</sup> Street, came forward to state that the proposed upcoming project at 9<sup>th</sup> and O Streets went before City Council without a full review by the Historic Preservation Commission. This is a historically important center which needs to be cared for and developed appropriately. It is important that Lincoln citizens be involved in the design. The thoughts of the community and this body need to be considered by the City Council. Any new development should reflect the perspective and history of this community, and not that of some developer from elsewhere. This area is also prominently located, so a new building must look right.

Zimmer said it would be reviewed by both this body and the Urban Design Committee in a joint meeting. That is yet to be scheduled because we have not received materials to review.

Kuhlman asked why it was before City Council? Zimmer said the item appearing before Council was the amendment to the Lincoln Center Redevelopment Plan, generally stating that this area is appropriate for mixed use development. The review by Historic Preservation Commission and Urban Design Committee will be of a specific proposal, if received.

Gengler asked Mr. Bleed if he had any archeological concerns about the site? Bleed said yes, in general, he does. There could be interesting things, especially considering it was the "red light

district” of Lincoln. The opportunity to look while the buildings are torn down will only happen once.

**CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS FOR WORK AT THE CREAMERY BUILDING, 701 P STREET,  
IN THE HAYMARKET LANDMARK DISTRICT** **April 21, 2016**

Members present: Gengler, Hewitt, Johnson, Kuhlman, McKee and Munn; Francis absent.

Zimmer said this project is to add two segments of canopy over three windows along the west dock. This is somewhat related to a project seen by HPC last month regarding the serving window. The owner is interested in creating a covered seating area whether or not that window gets accomplished. It would not be a sidewalk café, per se, but simply adding some tables and chairs to the dock.

Tony Persons, Nebraska Sign Company, stated he believes they currently have tables and chairs in that location. The canopies will help to guide people to another entrance and will provide cover for anyone who orders a coffee at the bookstore. They would like to keep it as low as possible to provide some shade, though the area will still get a lot of light since it is on the west side.

Zimmer said he questioned why one segment had four supports, rather than three, and suggested the shorter segment might be supported by two, thus requiring fewer holes in the building. Persons said they would have engineering look at that.

Ryan Haffey, Nebraska Sign Company, added that it could come down to the fact that the canopies are standard-sized Mapes canopies, so they have certain sizes that require a certain number of supports. That does not mean they would not be willing to do a custom model, but the standard canopy in that size would have four supports. It is built in two sections.

Zimmer said the other question raised in the Staff Report was applying the canopy across the decorative brickwork above the windows.

Johnson said that relates to the height of the canopies. He believes Zimmer was suggesting raising them in order to avoid covering the arches. He wondered if that could be considered in the design? Persons said they will consider it.

Kuhlman asked how deep the dock is? Persons said it comes out around nine feet. Kuhlman noted that the canopies were a couple of feet shorter than that. Persons said there was lighting in the way so they can only come out 84 inches.

Munn asked how the canopy is connected to the building? Persons said there will be drill points with a plate on the back side. Munn wondered if the keystones over the windows have depth?

Zimmer said a little bit; you can see the shadows they cast.

Kuhlman wondered if the canopy could be raised, knowing it would affect the amount that would be shaded? It would be similar to other canopies in the district if they were brought all the way out to the edge and supported on the end. She likes the idea of preserving the window-head. Otherwise, it is being chopped in half, which is not pleasing. Persons said the owner would probably be willing to go above those.

Munn said that canopies are part of the history of the Haymarket, but not of this building. He is glad they do not run the entire length of the building or obscure the round arches. The keystones should be exposed, if at all possible.

Johnson said it is a good idea to have people out on that deck. The building is hard to look at from that side because of the parking lot. The tables and canopies would bring more traffic. Munn agreed that, like the window approved at the last HPC meeting, it is nice to attract people to that area.

Kuhlman asked for confirmation that there are tables in that area? Persons said there are. She wondered how effective the seven feet will be since it is not very far out from the building? Haffey said that is part of the problem. The canopy needs to be either very low or very wide and neither of those are great options in this area, so it is a compromise. Going way out past the fence could look odd with the light poles at the edge.

Gengler said that it was noted that the canopies will only provide shade until about 1:00 in the afternoon, so much of it would be simply to provide shelter for those ordering. She agrees that it needs to be raised above the keystones so that those are fully visible above or below. Federal historic design standards would agree.

Kuhlman asked if it could be angled at all? Persons said he has not seen that in the design. Kuhlman added that it would give the illusion that it is not so high. Haffey asked if there is more incentive to allow an angled canopy so that the keystones would be fully visible from under the canopy. Kuhlman said that from the angle, you would probably still be able to see it, similar to Leadbelly, where there is an angled canopy and the beautiful cast-iron lintels are visible.

Gengler asked if the canopy is meant for strictly for shelter and shade and not intended to provide future signage? Persons said it is a possibility they may want to attach something on the front. Haffey said it would just be for the single tenant. Persons agreed. Gengler stated she asked because she wondered if the canopy would have to be restructured in the future to accommodate that. Haffey said that typically, those canopies come with the ability to support signs.

[McKee entered at 1:45 p.m.]

**Action:**

Hewitt moved approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness for work at The Creamery Building, seconded by Johnson.

Kuhlman said that she has concerns that the approval may need conditions added.

Haffey stated he would be fine with adding a condition that states that they will take the comments of this body back to the applicant and resubmit a final design to Zimmer to be reviewed again. If it needs to go on another month, that would also be acceptable.

Gengler said she thinks the canopy is appropriate and de minimus, but she would like to see it raised above the architectural detail.

Johnson agreed.

Hewitt said he does not see a point in making it conditional.

Motion carried, 6-0; Gengler, Hewitt, Johnson, Kuhlman, McKee and Munn voting 'yes'; Francis absent.

**CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS FOR WORK AT THE H. P. LAU BUILDING, 247 N. 8<sup>TH</sup> STREET, IN THE HAYMARKET LANDMARK DISTRICT**

**April 21, 2016**

Zimmer said this sign was introduced last month but was not listed on the agenda for Action.

McKee said that based on the Staff Report, it is nearly No Material Effect.

Zimmer said it has material effect of a positive sort, which requires approval of this body.

McKee said it seems like what should have been done in the first place.

Ryan Haffey, Nebraska Sign Company, said this was primarily an attempt to make the sign easier to read and to fit the space better.

McKee said that the fact that it does not introduce any new holes in the building to hold the sign is positive.

Zimmer said they will re-engineer the supports and put them back up.

**Action:**

McKee moved approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness for work at the H. P. Lau Building, seconded by Kuhlman. Motion carried, 6-0; Gengler, Hewitt, Johnson, Kuhlman, McKee and Munn voting 'yes'; Francis absent

**DISCUSSION ON SPECIAL PERMIT NO. 16020****NEBRASKA LUTHERAN CAMPUS MINISTRIES****535 NORTH 16<sup>TH</sup> STREET:****April 21, 2016**

Members present: Gengler, Hewitt, Johnson, Kuhlman, McKee and Munn; Francis absent.

Zimmer explained that Planning Dept. asks for the advice of this body before items in historic districts move on to Planning Commission. The Greek Row area of the UNL City Campus is a historic district, listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Many of the Greek chapter houses in the area are designated as individual landmarks, though this particular property is not. The applicants seek a special permit to reconstruct a nonconforming use, one that is non-standard in some way in regard to yards, setbacks, or other site requirements.. It is a very broad category of special permit that allows the owners to rebuild or even extend the footprint of the building, if granted. This Commission's advisory review focuses on the effect of the proposed new building on the historic district..

Hewitt asked if the Greek Row district is also on the east side of 16<sup>th</sup> Street. Zimmer said it runs from 14<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> on R Street and from R to Vine on 16<sup>th</sup>. The existing Lutheran Center was built in 1951 and was identified as "non-contributing" to the National Register district at the time of the nomination, when the building was less than 50 years old.

Bruce Fischer of the Lutheran Center stated this project has been in discussion for over a year. As the building exists now, it has reached a point where it needs major renovation or complete replacement. The owners are pursuing replacement because of functional limitations of the current building.

They are interested in using as much of the site as possible while maintaining a five-foot setback on the north and south. They would like the front to line up with the neighbors. On the west (rear) side, they would like to go to the lot line, but they may set-back three to five feet in order to open windows on that side. They would like to build up to three stories which conforms to surrounding buildings. A two-story solution was considered. Their goal is to bring the chapel, currently hidden within the building, into the southeast corner, to make it highly visible to passers-by.

There is a great deal of student housing to the east and if you have been in the area, you know the pedestrian flow tends to jaywalk across the street. They would like to work with that flow

of pedestrian traffic assist in a safer crossing, while guiding pedestrians right past this new building in the front and along the north side, towards a passage through the Selleck complex and into the heart of campus. The University likes that idea.

Pastor Adam White of the Lutheran Center said that one utilization of the building is an open-shelf pantry which is shared with Student Affairs. Food is provided in dorms, but they have found that many students need simple hygiene items. Much of the current center is very open to the public, so they would like to provide a pantry space that can provide some privacy and greater dignity by having a second entrance to use the pantry.

McKee asked if the pedestrian flow goes all the way through? Fischer said there is an area to cut through Selleck Hall. The overall goal is to bring the flow of people around the new building.

McKee asked if the area to the rear, on the west, is an alley. Fischer said it may have been intended for that purpose, but it has never been platted as such. It does look like it has been kept in mind for utilities. McKee wondered if there were any constraints placed by the University in regard to that rear space. Fischer said it comes down to building codes. The west walls will be fire rated and the number of windows limited for fire protection. UNL also has a vested interest in what becomes of that side because it is a problem for all the buildings along the west side of 16<sup>th</sup> St., so they looked at alternatives such as easements from the University. The Lutheran Center representatives emphasized that an open space between the University's buildings and those along 16<sup>th</sup> St. would allow buildings on both sides to have windows.

Fischer went on to say that the main exterior material of the new building will be brick, possibly precast or site-installed. The two primary facades are east and north, as both are highly visible to southbound traffic on 16<sup>th</sup> Street. The view coming from the south is secondary. To the west, it is almost utility.

They are trying to incorporate 10 to 13 student sleeping units as part of this ministry. UNL has offered Lutheran Center residents the ability to purchase parking privileges from the University, on the same basis as for other students. Pastor White said that on the north, there are also garages for staff and an additional one for storage of equipment. McKee asked if there were two stalls? White said yes.

Kuhlman asked about service access. Fischer said there is access north of the building to the dining facility in Selleck. The fraternity north of that driveway has approximately a dozen parking stalls accessed by an easement over that driveway. UNL is very favorable to use the same driveway as the access point for the Lutheran site.

Fischer said that another aspect of the design is to integrate the landscape in such a way that gives opportunities to take many activities outdoors. One side with the nave reads more like a chapel and they would like it to be a visual draw.

Fisher showed iterations of a two-story design that steps its way back, from the proposed architectural landscaping in the front, up to a terrace on top of the first story, then up to a second and potentially even a third story. They are considering a design with the residential units located in a partial 3<sup>rd</sup> story. That would then step down towards 16<sup>th</sup> Street. Nothing is completely set, other than the type of materials they would like to use to tie in with the masonry of the surrounding Greek housing. Discussion regarding this project occurred throughout 2015. Now in 2016, they look towards development of the actual plans. 2017 will provide time for fund-raising. The ultimate goal is to build throughout 2018, with completion for occupation by 2019. They have been in the location since 1919, so finishing by 2019 would coincide with their centennial.

Pastor White said that from a financial point of view, the housing is an important feature. He considers himself a pastor and an educator and this will provide a unique opportunity for faith and vocational service. Having housing for twelve students allows them to care for the building more effectively. One of the biggest current challenges is that the old building has essentially undergone year after year of the cheapest possible fixes to problems. They think it is responsible to find a way to fund the upkeep of the building and the ministry. Fischer added that it will be a fortunate situation to go from no budget to one that will cover annual needs.

Munn asked what type of feedback they are looking for? Fischer said that they want to hear the opinion of how well this building will fit in, and to make sure it won't detract, but will be a benefit to the surroundings.

Hewitt asked if this has any relation to the Lutheran Center to the south. Pastor White said that is a different denomination.

Munn thanked the applicant for bringing this forward. He said it is the job of this body to focus mainly on the architecture.

Johnson said that he visited the area recently, and though he means no offense, the current building does not really fit in. The new proposed designs seem more compatible, even though it is not historic.

Munn noted that there is a distinction between attempting to look like the surrounding area, and complementing it. A new building should complement the area, but not attempt to fool the eye. Fischer said they want to be modern and efficient. Other materials could be considered, but we want them to have a historical feel. But it will be obvious that this is a new building, and it will complement the surrounding in both color and feel. They don't want to stand out, but they do want the chapel to be a more prominent feature. Pastor White added that the point is to have the function stand out, but to still blend with the neighborhood as a beautiful place to live, work, and do ministry. They are very concerned about being good neighbors.

Munn said he wondered if it is appropriate in terms of scale. Fischer said they struggled with that. They originally wanted to keep the building short, but as things developed, it seemed that maybe the partial 3<sup>rd</sup> story would function as a better solution.

Kuhlman asked about the stepped effect. Fischer said that was to help the building be less overwhelming. Kuhlman added that she likes the outdoor area on 16<sup>th</sup> Street. She wondered if they are in the loop in terms of longer term plans of UNL for 16<sup>th</sup> St. Fischer said yes. They have discussed options for the street and what is a massive jaywalking area. The point is to give a better, safer point at which to cross. Pastor White added that having one property on the west side of 16<sup>th</sup> that takes their appearance very seriously could raise the entire neighborhood.

Gengler stated that she will abstain from discussion and voting even though she has no involvement with the Lutheran Center, but has a professional affiliation with the project designer, with whom she is undertaking some other, current projects.

Munn said that if everything goes well, it might be appropriate to look at more specific designs later. Zimmer noted that special permits often are approved conditionally, for instance requiring approval of the Planning Director for final designs. In this instance, the Commission might recommend that the applicants return to the Commission when the design is more developed, and that the Commission advise the Planning Director before his/her sign-off. Zimmer said that it makes sense for the applicant to seek the special permit at this stage to know what site parameters they have to work within.

Pastor White said he is amenable to that suggestion. It is their desire to fit in as well as possible so that seems like a fruitful suggestion. Fischer agreed that they are still exploring options on some of the details.

**ACTION:**

Johnson moved to recommend approval of Special Permit No. 16020, with a condition that the final design be subject to the approval of the Director of Planning, following advisory review by the HPC, as to whether that design is compatible with the character of its historic setting; seconded by McKee. Motion carried; 5-0; Hewitt, Johnson, Kuhlman, McKee and Munn voting 'yes'; Gengler abstaining; Francis absent.

**DISCUSSION ON SPECIAL PERMIT NO. 16009  
FOR EXPANSION OF A NON-CONFORMING USE FOR A  
CARPORT AT 1801 KINGS HIGHWAY IN THE  
WOODSSHIRE HISTORIC DISTRICT:**

**April 21, 2016**

Members present: Gengler, Hewitt, Johnson, Kuhlman, McKee and Munn; Francis absent.

Zimmer explained that Woodsshire is a National Register District, not a Lincoln Landmark District, so ordinarily the Commission would not review proposed changes in the area. However, when a zoning application is received for property within any designated historic district, our practice is to seek the advice of Historic Preservation Commission prior to the hearing and action by Planning Commission.

The request is to cover a portion of an existing driveway at 1801 Kings Highway with a carport. Because it would be attached to the house, it would extend the footprint of that principal building into the required backyard area, which ordinarily is not allowed. This property is already “non-conforming” in terms of some of the setbacks, which means it is eligible to request a special permit to allow expansion of the non-conforming use..

Troy Wenzl of Window World, representing the property owner, stated this is a corner lot with very sharp turn into the garage. The applicant has never parked there because it is too difficult to maneuver a vehicle there, so the goal is to give her something to park under. The carport would be installed over existing cement and near an existing cinder block wall that already encases the driveway. Mr. Wenzl described the carport as an attractive, aluminum-insulated roof panel. It is not wood and will not have issues with rot. It is an industrial roof panel with a gutter system, supported with posts that are sunk into footings, cut through the paved driveway which is already there.

Zimmer said that the Woodsshire district is significant for its architecture and especially for the integration of architecture and landscape design. This corner property is one of the key, unusual properties with an oddly shaped lot because of the layout of the district. The house is also tucked back on the lot, away from the corner, as far back as it can be. Around 20% of structures in this district are ranch-style. The neighbor’s driveway is immediately adjacent to the area proposed for the carport, because the neighboring house to the east is positioned more southerly than the applicant’s house. The Planning Dept. recommendation to Planning Commission is for Approval, but because the property is in a historic district, we are seeking the HPC’s recommendation as well.

Wenzl said that there are patio doors. It will look like the back of the house. The homeowner parks exclusively in that area.

Zimmer noted that this is essentially a reversible feature and will not have a permanent architectural effect on the property.

Munn said he would prefer something like this versus trying to add a hip roof on it to try to blend it in.

Gengler said it matches with other ranch houses.

Kuhlman asked if the applicant has talked to the neighbors and the neighborhood association? Wenzl said they have talked to neighbors but he is unsure about the association.

Kuhlman said she is not a fan of these kinds of structures and she does not think it is appropriate for this neighborhood. It is not a good addition to the neighborhood.

McKee agreed and is also ill-at-ease with it. He also does not see how it could still leave seven feet to the lot line. Zimmer said that is how it measured out and it must not cover the entire driveway area. Wenzl said it comes out almost to the edge. The property line splits at their driveways and opens up. It will be around a foot inside of the cinder block wall that goes around.

McKee said he just does not like carports.

Gengler said she can understand not liking them aesthetically, but on a building like this, in a neighborhood of this vintage, like in Eastridge, you would see them. They were standard and would be appropriate to the period.

McKee said in Eastridge, they are part of the original design. This is a different situation and this looks tacked on. He wondered if there were any garages in Eastridge. Zimmer said some had garage options and some were converted. McKee said they were probably roofed with the house. Zimmer said carports are in the ranch-style vocabulary, though maybe not with limestone ranch houses.

**ACTION:**

Gengler moved to recommend approval of Special Permit No. 16009; seconded by Johnson. Motion failed, 3-3; Gengler, Johnson and Hewitt voting 'yes'; Kuhlman, McKee and Munn voting 'no'.

Munn asked what the result will be with a tied vote.

Zimmer said he will convey this discussion and vote to Planning Commission, who will deal with the Special Permit. A 3-3 vote is a 'failed' motion, but the minutes can reflect the discussion.

McKee said that discussion is about all this body provides in this instance.

Zimmer agreed that HPC acts as advisors in this matter, while Planning Commission approved or denies the Special Permit. He would not recommend that Planning Commission action be delayed to see if Historic Preservation Commission moves differently next month. The discussion was a rich one and the minutes will reflect the Commissioners' comments.

**PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION OF AN AMENDMENT TO THE SPECIAL PERMIT FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION FOR WESTVIEW BED & BREAKFAST INN, 7000 NW 27<sup>TH</sup> STREET, TO PERMIT A SIGN NOT OTHERWISE ALLOWED:** **April 21, 2016**

Zimmer stated this item is not ready for Action, but it can be introduced. He has had contact with the owners who operate this bed and breakfast which is a landmark that operates under a special permit. They are finding some lesser patronage of their facility and would like a sign visible from Highway 34 that would let people know they are there. They have a tree row that hides the property. It is a challenging distance; they are around 750 feet from the travel lanes. He has provided some initial thoughts.

McKee asked if they owned property right up to the highway? Zimmer said they do not. McKee said that makes this particularly difficult.

Zimmer agreed. They have five or so acres. He informed them that it would be better to have an initial discussion with this body before turning in a formal application to amend their special permit. Then they could have ideas about what might work to see if it will even be worth bringing in a proposal.

Gengler asked for clarification that the sign is intended to be seen from Highway 34? Zimmer confirmed that is the case.

McKee said it would not be much use if it were not visible, but he noted that people do not tend to look for a B & B by driving around. The money might be better spent on another form of advertising. Zimmer said that their reaction is that many people do not even know they are there, and there are thousands of cars that pass by.

McKee asked if they have any sign now? Zimmer said he thought they have something to indicate where to turn in at the drive, but at that point, a customer is already heading there.

Hewitt asked if this where the old County poor farm was located? Zimmer said it is the former the County poor farm. It is a red-roofed, H-shaped building. Their initial request was for 12 apartment units. They developed a couple of very nice apartments and their own residence.

The special permit was amended to convert some apartment space to bed and breakfast use, which is comparable; they developed a few lovely suites for that purpose. They get quite a bit of business, but that has been slowing. They have also considered having events at the space.

McKee reiterated that it does not seem that they have much advertising.

Zimmer said that at the first discussion, the owners wanted to have the name, phone number and website included on a sign. He suggested that if a sign ends up being possible at all, it would likely only have the name. People could then search for more information.

#### **Staff Report and Misc.:**

- The annual report was included in the packet for review.
- The application for next year's funding is in. Formal response has not been received yet. There was approval of the annual report and the Historical Society are looking forward to seeing the projects we have proposed.
- Schwarz Building is coming along and lots of work has been accomplished on the inside.

McKee noted that the buildings at 13<sup>th</sup> and L have been torn down. Zimmer said the area is within the Capitol Environs District. They have appeared before the commission several years ago. McKee said the apartments were in use up until recently. Zimmer said those were the Cornhusker Apartments and the former Asian restaurant. McKee said that on the south elevation there were remnants of the old music conservatory building still plastered to the back. Zimmer said the Cornhusker building was a Fiske building, originally two stories, with two more added later. The sidewalls clearly reflected different patterns. McKee asked if there were any plans in place for the property yet? Zimmer said he will get in touch with the owners since they are within Capitol Environs District.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:53 p.m.