RECOMMENDATIONS ON WEST HAYMARKET DEVELOPMENT

adopted December 2, 2009

The Urban Design Committee and the Historic Preservation Commission offer the following comments and recommendations to the City in pursuing the laudable goals of creating a new Arena for the community and developing the West Haymarket rail yard as a new urban place, adjacent to and compatible with a Great American Place--Historic Haymarket. The joint design review boards stand ready and willing to participate efficiently in this exciting public/private endeavor, as called for in the "Powers and Duties" assigned by ordinance to these boards. **We recommend that the City recognize the unique location and scope of the West Haymarket project by acknowledging that the boards acting jointly will provide design review for this project.**

The Commission and the Committee recognize that preliminary designs for arena and other West Haymarket features are illustrative–not definitive. The **"West Haymarket Integrated Development Plan" (IDP)** provides an essential starting point for articulating the community's purposes in this vast undertaking and **should be referenced in the redevelopment agreement** with the private developer.

Zoning of the West Haymarket Redevelopment area south of R Street and the proposed arena should be comparable to Haymarket district in uses and heights.

- **B-4 Lincoln Center Business District** allows very wide range of uses; west of 9th Street B-4 limits heights to 75'.
- **B-4** zoning also requires the Downtown Design Standards–an appropriate minimum in lieu of more specific design standards for area. Public and public-private projects such as West Haymarket further require design review by bodies such as Urban Design Committee and Historic Preservation Commission.

Framework for Design Review

- The IDP identifies laudable "Community Values" and accompanying goals that set higher aspirations than Downtown Design Standards. The IDP shall be used as the general yardstick for design review of individual elements of the West Haymarket redevelopment project. Quality of design and materials, wise use of resources, compatibility with Haymarket, and creation of an exciting urban place attractive to a wide range of Lincoln residents and visitors are core principles expressed in the IDP.
- Projects shall be reviewed by the joint design review boards, at an early (conceptual) point and at more well-developed stage(s) as determined by the boards.
- UDC and HPC would welcome an Executive Order or other administrative instruction to clarify the future process for this unique and monumental project. The two design review boards offer to work jointly, reviewing project components with the city and the private developer, then advising the mayor and city departments whether to sign-off on each as meeting the community principles and goals set forth in the IDP.

The IDP should be updated with a **current Project Plan** to have clarity and meaning–much has been updated since July 2009. These recommendations should be added as an appendix to that

report, or otherwise referenced in the redevelopment agreement.

The boards additionally offer the following comments on the IDP and the West Haymarket project plan (Exhibit A of 10/6/2009):

Avoiding adverse impacts on the historic Haymarket District will require careful attention to traffic congestion (especially during large arena events), visual intrusions, and material changes to historic features and buildings.

Traffic concerns include

- Introductions of roundabouts in Haymarket at 7th & Q and 7th & R. The joint boards recommend against this feature. Four-way stops are more typical of Haymarket and are usually regarded as more pedestrian-friendly than the continuous vehicular movement provided by roundabouts.
- Separation of major event traffic from Haymarket. IDP notes "It is anticipated movements along portions of those [extended R and Q] streets will be managed to limit (or prohibit) vehicular access of these streets during major events in the area." (p. 105) A stronger public statement of commitment is essential, such as: "Vehicular traffic related to major events in West Haymarket will be prohibited from access through Haymarket."

Visual intrusion should be avoided:

- The positioning of arena mitigates its height and bulk to the extent possible, associating it visually with the Modernist Post Office rather than Haymarket's historic structures. From more distant views (entering Lincoln on I-180, for instance) the arena will also be viewed in association with Memorial Stadium.
- Height of structures south of R Street, directly west of Haymarket, will be key to their compatibility with historic district. Rezoning as B-4 with similar height limits as Haymarket is strongly recommended.
- New construction in West Haymarket should be complementary in materials, scale, and design to the historic district but not mimic historic architecture (per IDP, pp. 33-34). In both overall design and in the individual buildings and streetscapes, West Haymarket should be clearly respectful to and reflective of its adjacency to Haymarket–its context–while achieving contemporary design excellence. (Every element of West Haymarket should meet this standard. Haymarket Parking Garage demonstrates clearly how design and function can be combined in a pleasing manner, enhancing its prominent setting, on a "utilitarian" building.)

Avoid or minimize and mitigate impacts on historic features:

- Renovation and incorporation of the historic canopy/platform system as a pedestrian amenity and "hinge" between Haymarket and West Haymarket is essential. The IDP "pavilion" concept (p. 73) is an excellent illustration of compatible contemporary design.
- Any reductions or interruptions of canopies and platform should be carefully reviewed, justified, and mitigated.
- Any relocation of Locomotive 710 should be carefully planned and reviewed for impact on its visibility, public enjoyment, and historic compatibility.
- The Humane Society fountain at 7th and Q Streets should be carefully preserved and well-located within the area if moving it is necessary.
- The joint boards recommend developing and implementing a **Historical Interpretive**

Plan that will strengthen West Haymarket's community connection and sense of place (p. 33). Early identification of a process, timeline, and budget is essential. Such a plan also broadens the lasting community benefit of expenditures required for project environmental/historic preservation approvals. Professional archaeological study of the **Emigrant Home** provides the area with a unique connection between Lincoln's immigrant origins and current events and residents.

Streetscape and open space

- **Outdoor dining opportunities, including sidewalk cafes** are desirable to enliven West Haymarket's streets. Sidewalk cafes should be carefully reviewed in location and size to coordinate with pedestrian traffic, enhanced pavements, infiltration basins, and other amenities. Plazas on private property may also provide opportunities for outdoor dining where the sidewalk width cannot accommodate all uses.
- **Landscaping of the public right of way** will provide a desirable distinction between Haymarket and West Haymarket. Planting in the streetscape also requires ample space and well-planned maintenance.
- **The spaces between the buildings** require careful design attention to create desirable urban places including aesthetic lighting mindful of human scale; excellent graphic design for signs; pleasing and maintainable "hardscape" and streetscape furnishings; water features with all-season design interest; well-selected and maintained public art.
- Incorporate a **children's play area** into a public open space .

Trail connections:

Lincoln's trail system is making great strides in connectivity. Consider a more direct connection from Arena Drive trail to Salt Creek Roadway (around the 2 roundabouts) – if it is not provided, the bike riders/walkers will make their own connection. (page 116)

Festival Spaces:

Smaller festival spaces should be designed into the open spaces and plazas of Haymarket and West Haymarket. At the large festival space, design the layout and amenities first; then configure the parking lot to fit into festival design, adding shade trees and green space to the fenced area. _____

Arena Parking Structure:

The scale of the arena provides an opportunity for the parking structure attached to the west to be appropriately of greater height than would be desirable for the other freestanding parking structures, offsetting need for additional surface parking.

Recreation (p. 166)**:**

Move the existing Charleston St. & bike trail further away from Oak Lake (south) and create a green buffer zone between the lake and street and separate the bike trail from the roadway.

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