

## MEETING RECORD

<b>NAME OF GROUP:</b>	NEBRASKA CAPITOL ENVIRONS COMMISSION
<b>DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING:</b>	Thursday, October 23, 2008, 8:00 a.m., Room 206, County-City Building, 555 South 10 <sup>th</sup> Street, Lincoln, Nebraska
<b>MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:</b>	Jim Hewitt, Cecil Steward and Larry Stoll. Tom Laging, Kim Todd, and Jeff Searcy absent.
<b>OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:</b>	Dan Worth (BVH Architects); Tom Lorenz (Pershing Center); Lynn Johnson and Jerry Shorney (Parks & Recreation); Bob Ripley (Capitol Commission); Kent Morgan, Ed Zimmer and Michele Abendroth (Planning Department)
<b>STATED PURPOSE OF MEETING:</b>	Regular Meeting of the Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission

The meeting was called to order at 8:06 a.m. The Nebraska Open Meetings Act was acknowledged.

### **Approval of meeting notes of August 28, 2008**

As there was no quorum, the meeting notes were not voted upon.

### **Update on PARS Study “Pershing Adaptive Reuse and Site Study”**

Morgan updated the Commission on the Pershing Adaptive Reuse and Site (PARS) Study. He stated that this study is related to the West Haymarket Redevelopment study. A redevelopment plan is in process, and negotiations are underway with Lincoln Traction Partners. A study in 2003-04 determined that Pershing is significantly below industry standards.

Morgan began with a PowerPoint presentation and noted that there are four working concepts for the West Haymarket site layout. He stated that the most asked question in relation to the West Haymarket project is “What is going to happen to Pershing Center?”

Morgan then provided the history of Pershing Auditorium. The first Pershing bond was passed in 1939. Almost 20 years passed before construction began. Pershing opened in 1957. The question now is what is the future of Pershing considering that it is over 50 years old. The basic premise is that Pershing will not be an arena or auditorium. The goal of PARS is to work with the community on the reuse of the building or the site should the building be razed. PARS is not intended to provide the final answer on Pershing’s future; rather it is intended to enumerate and elaborate on potential uses.

Several interviews were conducted to get opinions from key stakeholders on the reuse of Pershing. There is also a community session at Pershing on Oct. 29.

Dan Worth continued the presentation by stating that they began by looking at the opportunities and constraints of the facilities. The building is currently at the height limit of the capitol environs district. In general, the granite and brick masonry are in good condition. The mosaic panel has considerable deterioration. The auditorium roof is generally in fair condition. The rock ballasted system over the stage is in poor condition. The bridge and recessed loading dock is severely deteriorated. The assembly hall lacks storage and accessibility is restricted. The main level arena is very durable but has many restrictions in terms of trusses and accessibility. The main level concourse has discontinuous offices and the restrooms and concessions are inadequate. On the stage level, there is a lot of outdated equipment

and the dressing rooms are cramped and limited in amenities. The meeting rooms are in fair condition. The mechanical and electrical systems are antiquated and nearing the end of their life. In terms of the structural analysis, the building is generally structurally sound.

Ripley asked about the load capacity of the trusses. Lorenz stated that the load capacity is very high.

Ripley noted that the shell is in good condition and the large, clear span space offers many potential uses.

Hewitt asked about the use of Pershing if the public does not pass the arena bond. Worth stated that an analysis will need to be done to determine how much money would need to be put into Pershing to make it functional.

Steward commented that this is an opportunity to inform the public about conservation and reusing existing materials and structures. He encouraged staff to include sustainability in the presentation.

Zimmer noted that the Commission will review the site for exterior issues as it is in the capitol environs district.

#### **Request to relocate Veterans memorial benches from Centennial Mall to Veterans Memorial Garden at Antelope Park**

Johnson presented photos of the benches and stated that they would like to relocate them from Centennial Mall to Veterans Memorial Garden. Parks recommendation is to support this request.

Steward noted that there would be a loss of public seating space on the Mall and asked if it could be replaced. Johnson stated that they would bring in standard park benches. The Commission members present noted that they would support this request if the benches are replaced on the Mall.

Steward noted for the record that he does not believe this Commission is living up to its public responsibility with respect to Centennial Mall. He believes we need to work with the Building Commissioner, the Governor and the Mayor to move forward with renovations on the Mall.

#### **Staff report**

There was no discussion on the staff report.

#### **Miscellaneous**

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:25 a.m.

*\*\*Please note that these minutes will not be formally approved until the next meeting of the Capitol Environs Commission. \*\**

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