

## MEETING RECORD

<b>NAME OF GROUP:</b>	NEBRASKA CAPITOL ENVIRONS COMMISSION
<b>DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING:</b>	Thursday, February 26, 2009, 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, John Kay, Tom Laging, Jeff Searcy and Larry Stoll. Kim Todd and Cecil Steward absent.
<b>OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:</b>	Jon Carlson (Lincoln Police Department); Lynn Johnson (Parks & Recreation); Bob Ripley (Capitol Commission); 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 8:05 a.m. The Nebraska Open Meetings Act was acknowledged.

### **Approval of meeting notes of November 20, 2008**

Hewitt moved approval of the meeting notes of November 20, 2008, seconded by Laging. Motion carried 5-0. Hewitt, Kay, Laging, Searcy and Stoll voting 'yes'; Steward and Todd absent.

### **Update on South Capitol redevelopment area (Jon Carlson)**

Jon Carlson updated the Commission on the stronger, safer neighborhood program which is community-wide. One of the areas identified as needy is the Everett Neighborhood and Near South Neighborhood. The blight designation was passed last Monday by the City Council. One of the great things about this neighborhood is that it is an energized group willing to do things. He noted that 125 people signed up for Neighborhood Action Teams. They are organizing people to do volunteer work in different areas. One of the challenges is that the area is highly renter-occupied. They would like to create market housing opportunities. Landlords are key in the process. They had a meeting of landlords and about 85 owners attended. They are working on many issues including building and safety violations, crime and safety, and property maintenance. Searcy stated it is important to encourage owner-occupied homes and requested that Carlson promote the \$8,000 tax credit for home-buyers..

### **Update on street tree plans, vicinity of Kaplan University (K and J Streets, east of 18<sup>th</sup> Street) (Parks & Rec)**

Lynn Johnson stated that the Commission is being asked to look at opportunities for street trees particularly along the J Street side of Kaplan University. Right now, there are 33 street trees, mainly red oaks. There are four trees along the Kaplan University frontage and it looks like there is an opportunity for three additional trees. The intent is to have a narrow, upright tree. They would like to have street tree diversity.

Ripley stated that he feels there should be color, form and unity in the tree selection along the south side.

Zimmer suggested that a recommendation be made at a future meeting, and he will bring in a plan showing the design adopted in 1986.

### **Update on LB450 (west extension of Capitol Environs District)**

Ripley stated that LB450 went before the Government Committee last month and it was well-received. The testimony went well. The Public Building Commission unanimously supported this measure. It

came out of committee with unanimous support. He is hoping that this will be on the consent agenda and get approval. Zimmer noted that if this bill is successful, we will need to develop additional design guidelines.

### **Staff Report**

Johnson stated that they would like to organize a Centennial Mall Committee, and they would like a Capitol Environs Commission member to serve on that Committee. They are planning to have the first meeting in March. Searcy, Laging and Ripley volunteered to serve in this capacity.

Ripley stated that Lincoln High has been working on the new Mall in front of their building, and he was wondering if this would be an opportunity to move the utility pole on J Street to open up the corridor. The Commission supported this concept and asked that Lynn Johnson address this issue at the next joint Public Works/ Parks/LPS (SPARKS) meeting.

### **Miscellaneous**

Searcy stated that at the end of last year, the Commission sent a letter to LES to ask them to bury the overhead lines on Centennial Mall. He distributed a letter that he received from LES which stated that they are going to have a public open house on this matter on March 17.

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:23 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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