

MEETING RECORD

NAME OF GROUP: NEBRASKA CAPITOL ENVIRONS COMMISSION

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING: Thursday, March 26, 2009, 8:00 a.m., Room 206, County-City Building, 555 South 10th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Jim Hewitt, John Kay, Tom Laging, Jeff Searcy and Larry Stoll. Kim Todd and Cecil Steward absent.

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Clay Buell (Citizen); Rick Noyes (Downtown Neighborhood Association); Hallie Salem (Urban Development); JJ Yost (Parks & Recreation); Bob Ripley (Capitol Commission); Ed Zimmer and Michele Abendroth (Planning Department)

STATED PURPOSE OF MEETING: Regular Meeting of the Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 a.m. The Nebraska Open Meetings Act was acknowledged.

Approval of meeting notes of February 26, 2009

Laging moved approval of the February 26, 2009 meeting notes, seconded by Stoll. Motion carried 4-0. Hewitt, Laging, Searcy and Stoll voting 'yes'; Kay, Steward, and Todd absent.

Amendment to Lincoln Center Redevelopment Plan/Lincoln Mall Redevelopment Project (Urban Development Department)

Hallie Salem of Urban Development Department (UDD) stated that there is an existing redevelopment plan that had a project called the Lincoln Mall Redevelopment project, which consisted of everything along the Lincoln Mall. UDD has found that because the redevelopment of the Lincoln Mall area was so successful, it is expected to generate a surplus of tax increment financing (TIF). The current proposal is to amend the Lincoln Mall project and apply that surplus to a broadened area of the Capitol environs. This would require amending the text and maps to include those portions. Salem noted that the goal of the project has not changed. The goal of the project area was to improve the Capitol environs, and it has done that in a portion of the area, but not entirely. The goal is not changing, but the area is changing to meet that goal. The expanded area has to be contiguous. The intention is not to do any improvements on Capitol grounds but to focus on portions of Centennial Mall.

Ripley suggested that the boundary extend to the west side of 10th Street. Zimmer noted that the funds are likely to only cover two blocks of Centennial Mall and that seems to him to be an appropriate priority. Salem noted that the key is that we are not expanding the original intent of the project. The goal is intact, and they wish to be able to expand the boundary to accomplish that goal.

In response to a question about what can be accomplished with the funding in the two blocks of Centennial Mall, JJ Yost noted that the first block is estimated at \$1.3 million and the second block is \$900,000. This includes water features in the southernmost block.

Zimmer noted that the Commission's role today is advising the Planning Commission and City Council on whether to expand the boundaries of the redevelopment project.

Noyes stated that this is wonderful news. Downtown Neighborhood Association has advocated for improvements on Centennial Mall. From a TIF perspective, he believes that speaks to the original intent of the plan. He offered their support in any way they could.

When asked about the time frame of the project, Salem stated that they go to the Planning Commission on April 8, then to City Council in late April with a vote on May 4. Staff expects to begin design as soon as possible if this amendment is approved.

Zimmer noted that the design will be brought to the Commission for a vote.

Laging moved to accept the recommendation to amend the Lincoln Center Redevelopment Plan, seconded by Hewitt. Motion carried 5-0. Hewitt, Kay, Laging, Searcy and Stoll voting 'yes'; Steward and Todd absent.

Review of 1986 South and East Mall plans

Zimmer noted he has distributed copies of the 1986 South and East Mall plans for the Commission's information. A lot of work has been done since 1986 which follows the spirit of those plans, but not all the details. Ripley stated that his recollection is that this was approved as a conceptual plan.

Staff Report: LB450

Ripley stated that the status of LB450 remains positive, although it has not been acted upon yet. This item is on the consent agenda calendar. LB450 would extend the west boundary of the Capitol Environs District.

Staff Report: LES Open House

Zimmer stated that he attended the LES Open House on how they go about siting transmission lines. They have the capitol environs district in their GIS system. The capitol view corridors were addressed, and they were attentive and interested. Searcy and Ripley also were in attendance at the open house, and they agreed that LES had a very cooperative spirit.

Miscellaneous

Ripley asked about the process for proceeding with Centennial Mall in light of the information presented today. Zimmer stated that he will invite Lynn Johnson to the next meeting.

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:04 a.m.

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