

MEETING RECORD

NAME OF GROUP: NEBRASKA CAPITOL ENVIRONS COMMISSION

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING: Thursday, September 25, 2014, 8:00 a.m.
Conference Room 214, 2nd Floor, County-City Building, 555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: John Kay, Jeff Searcy, Cecil Steward and Jon Weinberg; (Christie Dionisopoulos, Tom Laging and Karen Nalow absent). Ed Zimmer, Stacey Groshong-Hageman and Teresa McKinstry of the Planning Department; Lynn Johnson and Jerry Shorney of Parks and Recreation; Robert Ripley and Matt Hansen from the Office of the Capitol Commission.

STATED PURPOSE OF MEETING: Regular Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission Meeting

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

Searcy then requested a motion approving the minutes for the regular meeting held August 28, 2014. Motion for approval made by Steward, seconded by Weinberg and carried 4-0: Kay, Searcy, Steward and Weinberg voting 'yes'; Dionisopoulos, Laging and Nalow absent.

PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL FROM NEAR SOUTH NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION FOR A MONUMENT HONORING B.G. GOODHUE AT GOODHUE BLVD. AND A STREET
PUBLIC HEARING: **September 25, 2014**

Members present: Kay, Searcy, Steward and Weinberg; Dionisopoulos, Laging and Nalow absent.

Brayden McLaughlin appeared. He has been on the Near South Neighborhood Board of Directors for almost three years. The association received a leadership development grant. They would like to make positive changes in the neighborhood. The Near South Association received \$2,500.00. From our perspective, the entrance at A St. and Goodhue Blvd. has been a little overlooked. They would like to capitalize on the entrance to Near South, as well as a historical marker. The association wanted to come to this commission and discuss the preliminary plans. They will be working with Public Works & Utilities and the Parks Department. They are trying to create something that is visually appealing, that will draw you to the entrance of Goodhue Blvd and the Near South neighborhood. The initial plan is to create a poured concrete structure with a metal plaque. This would build a marker at the end of the median, so when you turn

onto Goodhue Blvd., you know you are in Near South. It will be pedestrian friendly. They are proposing information about Goodhue on the plaque. With the amount of concrete needed, it will cost \$780.00. Phase two may be to build an additional slab on the north end of the marker and build a bench. The association has talked with the Dept. of Roads on the median location. There has been some other discussion to place it by McPhee School or other locations, if this plan would fall through. This would need 58 cubic feet of concrete. It seems to be a low maintenance solution. The association also talked about plantings along the median. They believe this will be a more beneficial way to bring more attention to the neighborhood. There will be a metal plaque detailing the life of Goodhue. Phase one would be the marker. They talked to a couple of companies in town about the construction of this.

Matt Hansen wondered if the informational content been formulated. McLaughlin replied not at this time. They are considering some of Goodhue's history, the Capitol design, as well as the corridor and the neighborhood itself. This would be laser etched. Photos can be placed also.

Searcy would encourage the association to run the context by the historians, Robert Ripley and Matt Hansen. A brief reference to the naming of the boulevard in 2005 would be a nice addition as well.

Robert Ripley remembers a plan that this commission initially approved, he believes in 1983, that supported the idea of precinct markers. The markers were a pair on either side, on the corners, at the church corner and apartment building. He personally has some concerns. He is wondering about such an item being in the median for traffic issues. He would have a bit of a concern if it were placed in this location. The premise could not be more on the mark, it has great merit. He also thinks the start of the boulevard at A Street is a great location. Having something that acknowledges the entire length of the boulevard is the right and general location. If it was located perhaps at the outlying corners, it might be safer and easier for people to stop and read it. He will see about getting a copy of the East and South Mall Plan. McLaughlin would definitely like to take a look at it. Zimmer believes it was adopted in 1986.

Steward agrees with Ripley that this is a good idea. He is concerned this is too timid. It could be a beginning. This Commission has struggled over and discussed all four of the accesses to the Capitol. He is wondering if Public Works can be brought back in and perhaps a roundabout at this location would be considered for something more dramatic. It is just a thought. McLaughlin believes the neighborhood would be excited about that option.

Steward was wondering if the electronic information system couldn't be extended to this piece. Lynn Johnson believes it would be very feasible. Maybe this could be done in the same style as the marker on the north end of the mall. There might be a possibility here. He suggested that for pre-cast concrete, Pacific Stone here in Lincoln would do a beautiful job. It would look a lot like limestone. McLaughlin would like it to be a higher quality. Johnson coordinates with Capitol staff on mowing. Perhaps pavers could be

done around the base to make it easier on maintenance. McLaughlin agreed. There could be a base all the way around so it could be easily mowed. This is just a start.

Ripley inquired about the timetable. McLaughlin believes the money must be spent by the end of 2015. He thinks proposals are required by the end of August 1, 2015.

Searcy noted that Johnson pointed out the north end of the mall. Has it was noted similar to the north end of Centennial Mall. Has McLaughlin visited with Johnson? McLaughlin replied that this seemed to be the most agreeable design that the Board liked. If there is an existing design to the north marker, they would be open to change for conformity sake.

Johnson stated that the north end of the mall is a plaza space with a concrete wall with a series of markers. There is some history and information about the most recent renovation that he can share with the applicant.

Ripley noted that there is also no vehicular traffic at the north end. The center of a median is a slightly different human experience.

Kay remembers the north marker. It has multiple topics. He thinks there are two different things going on here. This is a good location for a street marker, but when you put things on it to engage people, they are stopping in the median. He agrees with Ripley. Perhaps this could be moved to the corners or north. McLaughlin thinks moving it north would be the most advantageous. It would be its own stand-alone item. It would be a destination. It could be moved further north with cross pavers across the median.

Ripley believes wherever you put it on the median, you are placing people in the middle of traffic. Searcy would agree except the vista is in the center. Ripley stated that the 1983 plan called for precinct markers on each corner. Steward stated that we are not trying to take a modest proposal and make it larger. Hansen pointed out that if you look at other neighborhood entrance markers, he believes there is a precedence for flanking markers.

McLaughlin stated that this is preliminary. He wanted to let the Commission know that the neighborhood wants to work with everyone and cooperate.

Searcy believes we have a little bit of time.

McLaughlin understands that once the funds are obligated, then the association should be okay.

Ed Zimmer stated it would be great to get Public Works specific input whether there is enough room to separate this from traffic lanes. He doesn't believe this is a high traffic location. Precinct markers are nice, but they don't have the degree of impact that their budget may allow. Pedestrians may not notice them. He doesn't think A street drivers

will. He encouraged the applicant to check with Pacific Stone. They do very high quality work. They could also get together some ideas from the plan that created these vista corridors and perhaps coordinate the thinking.

Steward suggested a roundabout not so much for traffic control, but an urban design element. This would create a vista. The circular juncture in European countries was a military strategy. It became an urban design feature and a highly attractive one.

Searcy inquired where the power lines are located. McLaughlin replied they are down the alley between A Street and B Street. Ripley noted that all the blocks south of this, have a mid-block power line. Searcy added it has been a long standing desire to get the lines buried with no overhead power lines. It was not that long ago when the lines were crossing Centennial Mall. He is curious if there is any reason to think if the concern is street traffic. Ripley just doesn't see putting it in the median. It is a long standing desire to do markers. He just doesn't see anything in the median. There is a lot of traffic at A Street and it could be very problematic. McLaughlin believes this would stand back quite a ways from A Street. We are still open to it being moved north. They have talked with the Dept. of Roads. They treat Goodhue as a residential collector.

Steward questioned if there is any benefit to engage Public Works and extend the median so the sidewalk route crosses the median and the extra space could be paved. It would make it more inviting for pedestrians. Ripley would be curious to see what Public Works would have to say.

Johnson asked where the markers were located in the 1986 plan. Ripley replied it is his best memory that they were proposed where the sidewalks cross, just inside the sidewalks. Zimmer will look into the plan.

Johnson stated in terms of funding sources, he would encourage the applicant to talk with the Urban Development Dept. He doesn't think extending the median is a possibility.

Searcy summarized that the Commission appears supportive of the project in general and believes more information is needed. There are various concerns and opinions. He would suggest the applicant discuss this with the Near South Neighborhood Association Board and come back with the next steps. He is hopeful this can come back with a conclusion that satisfies everyone. McLaughlin will talk with Public Works and others and will be back.

Searcy thinks this is a great first step.

Miscellaneous

- Ed Zimmer and Stacey Groshong-Hageman are working with National Register on the Amil Koop house. Zimmer classified this under academic eclectic. This is a diverse great house, very well maintained by its owner. It is a George

Berlinghof design. Academic eclecticism is mixing and matching of styles. Ferdinand Fiske is another practitioner of this. The interior condition of this house is good. Ripley questioned if there is any art glass. Zimmer replied yes. One or two windows have been lost. The owner has replaced the missing stained glass with his own creations. He noted there are two large art glass windows in the dining room.

- Searcy stated that there will likely be an October, 2014 meeting. Reminder that the November 18, 2014 meeting is a joint meeting at the Capitol.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

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