

MEETING RECORD

NAME OF GROUP: NEBRASKA CAPITOL ENVIRONS COMMISSION

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING: Thursday, July 23, 2015, 8:00 a.m., Conference Room 214, 2nd Floor, County-City Building, 555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Gene Crump, Christie Dionisopoulos, John Kay, Karen Nalow, Jeff Searcy and Jon Weinberg; (Tom Laging absent). Ed Zimmer, Stacey Groshong-Hageman and Teresa McKinstry of the Planning Department; Lynn Johnson and J.J. Yost 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 June 25, 2015. Motion for approval made by Crump, seconded by Weinberg and carried 6-0: Crump, Dionisopoulos, Kay, Nalow, Searcy and Weinberg voting 'yes'; Laging absent.

A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS FOR INSCRIBED PLAQUES IN THE SPIRIT OF NEBRASKA PATHWAY AND FOR OTHER DESIGN DEVELOPMENT OF NEBRASKA'S CENTENNIAL MALL

PUBLIC HEARING: June 25, 2015

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

Searcy thanked Zimmer and Dionisopoulos for doing a great job on the editorial board.

Ed Zimmer believes they are almost through the available edits. They try when they can to have a date reference so there is some grounding in context. Dionisopoulos checks the wording with the owner. He believes they are getting them quite consistent. He hopes to bring more forward as more donors come in. They are trying to work from the south to the north, as the construction is completed.

Crump believes some of these tiles are self-purchased. Zimmer stated he was correct. This is a sort of Hall of Fame for notable Nebraskans, but also a fundraiser for the mall. Crump wondered about the diversity. Zimmer believes some future work can be done to expand on

that. Crump has a book on Notable Black Nebraskans that he believe can be of some help in researching names.

Ripley is reminded that if there is an interest in finding all of the Medal of Honor recipients, there is a plaque in the State Capitol Building, on the wall in the Memorial Chamber.

Dionisopoulos can make sure it is on the website. Ripley believes they are very confident in its accuracy. Matt Hansen was one of those who updated the names. Lynn Johnson stated that the list they have is from the website. Everyone agreed to coordinate and make sure they have all the names.

Searcy had a question on Robert Diffendal. Dionisopoulos noted there is a typo. The backslash should be between High Plains and Ogallala. Ripley believes the spelling of Ogallala should be checked. Native Americans pronounced it Oglala.

Searcy stated that it was nice to see several names that were familiar. He questioned if any plaques are physically on the mall yet. JJ Yost replied there are not. They have the first cast done. There are many fine details. They are ordering the bronze plaques at a dimension that fit as snugly as possible inside the granite. The granite is not always precise. They are deciding if the plaque needs to be made a little smaller or if the granite needs to be ground to fit each one.

ACTION:

Weinberg moved approval of the tiles submitted, seconded by Crump and carried 6-0: Crump, Dionisopoulos, Kay, Nalow, Searcy and Weinberg voting 'yes'; Laging absent.

A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS FOR WORK AT 825 J STREET IN THE CAPITOL ENVIRONS
PUBLIC HEARING: **June 25, 2015**

Members present: Crump, Dionisopoulos, Nalow, Searcy and Weinberg; Kay declared a conflict of interest; Laging absent.

John Kay is presenting this application. This is the former Benesch Engineering building. The Public Building Commission purchased the building in 2012. There was a three year lease with Benesch to remain. That has expired. This is part of a Public Building Commission master planning effort. The Building Commission wants to sell the current Crisis Center Building on the edge of the BryanLGH West Campus. A lot of services have been outsourced. Lancaster County is required by statute to maintain a crisis center. The master plan states a goal to find a new home for the crisis center. There are plans to move it to the Benesch building.

Ripley is curious if the current Crisis Center is to be sold to Bryan LGH. Kay replied it is available to whoever wants to purchase it, but he believes Bryan has expressed an interest to purchase.

Crump wondered about the SunMart building. Kay noted that Bryan already owns it.

Kay continued that the Benesch Building was constructed in 1951 for Bruning Manufacturing. In 1955, it was expanded to the west. In 1957, they added a metal building to the rear. In 1977, another wing was added. There is an aggregate parking lot to the west and south. The metal building will be removed. There will be no changes to the façade, with the exception of the south side. The scope of work includes a new roof and paving the parking lot. The south wall is a wood frame with metal panel. It will be removed and filled in with concrete block. The function of the Crisis Center is a place where people at their worst moments are provided with assistance. This is not a walk-in facility. Clients are usually placed in emergency custody.

Crump inquired why the wood wall needs to be removed. Kay stated that there are standards for DHHS facilities that require windows.

Kay continued that some of the glass needs to be replaced. In some instances, high impact glass will be installed. The current entrance is on the north side. That will be retained for the public visitation entrance. The south side will be the client entrance. This building will be hooked on to the former District Energy Building. There is a required outdoor area, per the standards.

Crump wondered if they met the standards at their current location. Kay replied they did not. They were grandfathered in. They are making sure to do that now.

Kay presented the plan for the layout of the inside. The only thing being saved is the corner conference room on the northeast corner. The program is small enough that they do not need the south wing. There is a basement under the east portion that is a mechanical room. They are saving the south wing and the basement space underneath it for future use or tenant.

Crump questioned when this could be occupied. Kay replied they are moving from their current location in March of 2016. They would like to begin construction around late August, 2015.

Searcy inquired the square footage of the footprint. Kay believes about 17,500, with additional square footage in the basement.

Ripley believes that locationally, it seems ideal. It would seem to be an asset. Kay stated there are continuing functions of drug court is across the street. There is some synergy with various functions in the area.

ACTON:

Weinberg moved approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness, seconded by Dionisopoulos.

Ripley wondered if any landscaping needs to be addressed. Kay pointed out the new bushes and screening that is noted on the plans.

Nalow questioned if this will meet the parking lot and screening requirements. Kay replied yes.

Ripley would like to see more trees along J Street. Kay replied that is a possibility. Zimmer noted those would be street trees. Lynn Johnson will take a look and make a recommendation. He believes the draft of the South Haymarket plan envisions a tree canopy. This is a question for the Building Commission whether they want to install street trees here. Kay will take this request to them.

Motion carried 5-0: Crump, Dionisopoulos, Nalow, Searcy and Weinberg voting 'yes'; Kay declared a conflict of interest; Laging absent.

Kay abstained

MISCELLANEOUS:

- First draft, revisions and additions to Environs District design standards

Zimmer stated that he has been looking at specific areas that had no guidelines. Some cleanup was made on references to various streets. Some language was briefly added on renovations. There was almost no language on what the commission would be looking at, in reference to those.

Stacey Groshong-Hageman noted that some clean ups were done on language for Centennial Mall. Zimmer believes it would be well to have Parks and Centennial Mall designers look at that language to make sure it is consistent.

Ripley made some suggestions for certain language changes in the standards.

There was a discussion on street trees.

Kay would like staff to share their approach to writing these standards. This can be very tricky.

Zimmer stated that broadly, design standards need to be specific when authority is exercised by staff. Ones written for a design body such as NCEC can talk more broadly about what the goal is. These can be broader and interpretive. Also, precedent becomes important, how these have been interpreted in the past.

Weinberg made some suggestions for language changes.

Zimmer believes this discussion has been helpful. These are the types of changes staff is looking for, words that resonate more with the general public.

Ripley believes the reason these design standards exist is because they take the design standards of the City and apply them to a district that needs to be held to a higher standard. The whole point is to be as prescriptive as possible. Staff writes the standards and this

commission votes on the applications. There is precedent taking place. The longer this body exists, the more definition occurs.

Dionisopoulos suggested some changes to the language that speaks to art.

Crump would like to see a definition on what is permanent when speaking to art.

Searcy hopes the feedback has been helpful. Zimmer appreciates all the feedback. That is why they presented the draft language.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:08 a.m.