

MEETING NOTES

NAME OF GROUP: NEBRASKA CAPITOL ENVIRONS COMMISSION

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING: Thursday, July 28, 2016, 8:00 a.m., Conference Room 214, 2nd Floor, County-City Building, 555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Mary Campbell, Gene Crump, Christie Dionisopoulos, Karen Nalow, Jeff Searcy, John Sinclair and Jon Weinberg.

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Stacey Groshong-Hageman and Teresa McKinstry of the Planning Department; J.J. Yost of Parks and Recreation; Robert Ripley from the Office of the Capitol Commission; Melissa Dirr Gengler of HRG, Inc.; Jeremy Raridon of WRK, LLC.; Jason Day and Jeff Jensen of Nebraska State Building Division; and Cleve Reeves of BVH Architects.

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 welcomed the new Commissioner John Sinclair.

Searcy then requested a motion approving the minutes for the regular meeting held June 23, 2016. Motion for approval made by Campbell, seconded by Crump and carried 6-0: Campbell, Crump, Dionisopoulos, Nalow, Searcy and Weinberg voting 'yes'; Sinclair abstaining.

A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS FOR GROUND (MONUMENT) SIGNS AT THE NEBRASKA STATE OFFICE BUILDING, 301 CENTENNIAL MALL SOUTH, IN THE CAPITOL ENVIRONS DISTRICT
PUBLIC HEARING: **July 28, 2016**

Member present: Campbell, Crump, Dionisopoulos, Nalow, Searcy, Sinclair and Weinberg.

Jason Day presented a drawing of the proposed sign. They worked with ASI and changed the sign lettering to white.

Crump recalls the concern was that the sign was not uniform throughout the Capitol Environs District. Jensen replied that the 1526 building sign will still be white and red. When the

Legislature named the Nebraska State Office Building, the sign was white and red. This sign is a little different from the others.

Campbell believes that visually it can be confusing. Jason Day stated that all the buildings are named by address. They are trying to identify more with the address, which is a more permanent name. A building name can change with each Governor. The design was picked by the previous governor, so they are trying to stay in line with that. Ripley believes there was previous concern with the address. For security reasons, they try to identify more with the address instead of what is happening inside.

Nalow believes switching the letters back to white starts to make them read more legible. It is an improvement.

Searcy believes the white lettering looks better than the red.

Sinclair questioned if every sign says "State of Nebraska" in red. Jensen replied that was done with the 1526 building. This is different since the building has a name.

Crump inquired if the lower portion of the sign with the white address will be in limestone. Day replied yes. The 1526 building is already done. Other buildings will be more uniform than the State Office building. This building is unique.

Searcy asked if the sign will say 301 Centennial Mall South. Day replied that can be incorporated.

Ripley wondered when the name of the building is identified as the address, will the full address also be listed in the limestone portion below. Day replied yes. Ripley believes it could be a little repetitive, but it will be easier for the public to identify the building.

Campbell asked if all the bases will be limestone. Jason replied yes. They will be clad in limestone. Jensen concurred.

Ripley would suggest that the pad on which the sign sits, be extended four to six inches. It will work better for ground maintenance and will avoid a lot of issues.

Searcy would like to see all the building addresses on the base as well. Ripley knows it would be a repeat, but it will help in identifying the building to the public.

Sinclair stated it sounds like the building name can frequently change. Day replied yes. A building name can change with each administration. That is why we would like to identify each building with its address.

Searcy believes it would look better to center the address on the lower limestone portion. Campbell agrees. It would look better centered. Ripley believes that is a good idea. The applicants stated they can incorporate that into their design.

Searcy stated that we appreciate the opportunity to work together and find solutions.

Ripley would like clarified that this would be approving a standardized signing system for signs within the Capitol Environs District. Day stated that is their intent. This will be a standard sign. They are planning on expanding these to their buildings outside the Environs district.

Searcy believes consistency is key.

ACTION:

Weinberg moved approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for grounds signs as proposed at the Nebraska State Office Building and 1526 K Street, seconded by Sinclair and carried 7-0: Campbell, Crump, Dionisopoulos, Nalow, Searcy, Sinclair and Weinberg voting 'yes'.

Crump appreciates the applicant moving quickly to address concerns.

A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS FOR WORK AT THE FORMER YWCA BUILDING, 1432 N STREET, IN THE CAPITOL ENVIRONS DISTRICT

PUBLIC HEARING:

July 28, 2016

Member present: Campbell, Crump, Dionisopoulos, Nalow, Searcy, Sinclair and Weinberg.

Cleeve Reeves stated they are working to match the original historic intent. There is ivy growing in the corner. There are a number of places where the brick and mortar needs to be fixed. That is all being corrected. The current windows were installed in the 1980's. The new windows will be closer to what the original windows looked like. They will retain the green space. The courtyard is on the plan. It steps to the lower level. It will become a great place for residents. This is a high end condominium project. There will be 12 units. Some will be in non-

historic spaces. There will be a roof deck. It will be below the parapet line, so it will not be visible until you get much further back. Within the yard, there are some fences. There is intended to be some parking and private yard space. The stairs will be included so people can come to those spaces directly. The fence will be aluminum with a wrought-iron look. The courtyard will be stepped. There is a blank north (alley) façade that has been bricked over time. It will be opened up.

Nalow inquired about the fence. Centennial Mall has a landscape with oaks and shrubs. Reeves stated the fence is planned to be right along the parking line. The current fence jogs over. It is their intent to straighten it out.

Nalow asked if the gate to access the site means this to be a major entrance. Reeves stated it is not intended to be major entrance. The main entrance will still be the existing main entrance to the building.

Ripley questioned if the fence is in the public right-of-way. Is this something that needs to be address with plant material, still to be installed? Nalow replied the plants are already installed on Centennial Mall. The planting bed now is a combination of trees, shrubs and perennials. J.J. Yost added that the plant material was part of Phase One.

Reeves pointed out green spaces that will be developed. There will be ramps coming out. They will be less than five percent grade, so there is no need for a railing. The fence on the property line will be six feet in height. The elevation is not quite five foot, six inches. There will be one ADA compliant ramp.

Sinclair inquired if the space is already that low, or will they be excavating. Reeves replied there is a ramp now that goes down into what was a day care. They will be extending it about 20 feet. Sinclair further inquired if there is a storm system. Reeves stated there is a drain that needs to be enhanced.

Campbell asked if the underground parking is current there. Reeves replied no, they will be excavating to create this. A little structural gymnastics will be involved due to the pool storage under the building.

Crump would like more detail about the window conversion. Will the windows be energy efficient? Reeves stated that the windows all need completely replaced. They were installed in

the 1980's and have failed. They will install wood windows with an aluminum clad exterior. It will greatly enhance efficiency. They will be double hung windows.

Ripley inquired if the fireplaces and murals will be retained. Reeves replied that one mural has already been taken to Ford Conservation. Jeremy Raridon replied it will be up to the tenant where the mural will be placed.

Dionisopoulos asked how many parking spots there will be. Reeves replied 17. We are challenging our engineers to see if we can eek out any more spaces. The turn radiuses are quite tough.

Dionisopoulos asked how many units will be in the building. Reeves replied there will be 12 units across three floors.

Searcy is confused about different reference to tenant and owner. Raridon replied that the end result will be owned condominiums. Melissa Dirr Gengler added that this is being done with historic tax credits. The end result will be owner occupied condominiums. In order for the owner to achieve historic tax credits, they need to retain ownership for 5 years. The properties will then be transferred to individual owners.

Ripley asked if there will be any easements for historic preservation. Dirr Gengler replied that the tenants will be responsible to fit out their own individual space. The owner will have to work with the Secretary of the Interior standards. Weinberg stated that a condominium regime would have to be filed and that will dictate the appearance and other items. Ripley is concerned with interior space. Weinberg doesn't believe that can be dictated. Ripley disagrees. He believes interior features can be identified. The courtroom in the Old Federal Building has covenants to keep people from converting it or changing it. Dirr Gengler stated that hasn't been decided yet. Ripley believes it is possible to write covenants to protect interior elements.

Campbell thanked everyone for a project done in the downtown area that is not student housing.

Ripley believes this is a great partner for Centennial Mall.

Dirr Gengler stated this has been a challenging project. It is not an easy building to rehab. With financial incentives available at the state and federal level, it is enough to make it work. The

pool, fireplaces and murals make it challenging. Reeves stated that it can be challenging building without tax incentives. The complexities compound.

Dirr Gengler noted that they have unearthed some great historic photos of the building.

Sinclair wondered about the fence design. Searcy believes that the fence design aspects along Centennial Mall are the highest priority. Reeves understands that the fencing, landscaping and additional signage are items that this commission would want to see. Nalow stated that the first look is good. Ripley finds it a treat to see something at such an early stage. Its impact along the mall is a priority. Searcy agrees. The application coming in early is of great value. The communication can happen at an early stage. Knowing the commission's viewpoints, helps the project. He thanked everyone.

ACTION:

Weinberg moved approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the design as submitted, subject to additional review of the signage, fence and landscape, seconded by Nalow, and carried 7-0: Campbell, Crump, Dionisopoulos, Nalow, Searcy, Sinclair and Weinberg voting 'yes'.

Crump inquired about the timing of the additional items. Reeves replied it could be as early as next month. They would like the longevity and preservation of the building addressed. Raridon believes those can be addressed with the condominium regime.

STAFF REPORT AND MISCELLANEOUS:

J.J. Yost stated that progress continues on the renovation of Centennial Mall. The landscaping is primarily all that is left to do. Planting paused from the heat spell. They hope to start back in late August and plant through the first half of September 2016. They will pull in crews for multiple plantings. They hope to have the complete landscape done this fall, before the dedication event in October. Fountain operations are still a work in progress. They are working through some issues. They all run, just not quite the way Parks wants them to. It takes adjustments. They hope to clear it up in the next few weeks. The fountains are programmed and sequenced. There will be LED lighting in the evening. There will be some interpretive signs for Reflection Plaza.

Crump asked about the fountains inside the Capitol building. Ripley stated it is coming along very well. They were delayed on getting the cast bronze bowls. They are due in September,

which puts the work about one month behind. It is the intent to have them done by the early part of 2017. They are working on one courtyard at a time. The doors for access to the courtyards are through the cafeteria. That will be last item.

Yost stated that they were going to do an event this spring for turning on the fountains. They weren't ready. A donor recognition event is planned for this fall. The fountains will be a part of that.

Dionisopoulos stated that the donor recognition celebration is tentatively planned for October 9, 2016, on a Sunday. They are planning on having it inside the Capitol building. Weather permitting, they are thinking of a tour prior to the celebration to walk the mall and hear about the different features. The dedication event will follow. They are still doing a few more details. They hope to release more information in the next week or so.

Searcy is delighted to see on how this is all coming along.

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