

MEETING NOTES

NAME OF GROUP: NEBRASKA CAPITOL ENVIRONS COMMISSION

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING: Thursday, December 1, 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: 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; Judi gaiashkibos and Scott Shafer from the Nebraska Commission on Indian Affairs; John Badami from DLR Group; Byron Brogan from the Nebraska State Building Division; and Zach Pluhacek of the Lincoln Journal Star

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 November 8, 2016. Motion for approval made by Crump, seconded by Campbell and carried 7-0: Campbell, Crump, Dionisopoulos, Nalow, Searcy, Sinclair and Weinberg voting 'yes'.

INTRODUCTION OF CHIEF STANDING BEAR SCULPTURAL PROJECT, CENTENNIAL MALL (P-Q BLOCK)

PUBLIC HEARING:

December 1, 2016

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

Ed Zimmer stated that today is a report on the progress of the Chief Standing Bear sculptural project. He introduced Judi gaiashkibos and she presented the project together.

Judi gaiashkibos is the director of the Nebraska Commission on Indian Affairs. About twelve years ago, a Chief Standing Bear breakfast was started to raise funds for scholarships and to educate people about sovereign rights. The breakfast has grown from 500 to 800 people who

attend. We have given over \$50,000.00 in scholarships over the years. Congressman Fortenberry attended the first breakfast. It became his dream to have a trail bill. The Indian Commission works on behalf of all native people. This is a unique case in that this Chief ended up in a federal court case against the United States. It was another trail of tears. It was a one way dead end removal to Oklahoma. In Standing Bear's case, he promised to bring his son's remains back to Nebraska. He was arrested upon coming back. Standing Bear took the case to court and won. This is a story that all tribes in America are learning about. As we get ready to celebrate the Nebraska Sesquicentennial, everyone has embraced this story. This is a great way for Nebraska to celebrate one of its great leaders.

Zimmer stated that the guidelines talk about memorials or artworks to be of a very high standard and relate to figures of high importance. He believes Standing Bear is a figure of such importance and easily qualifies under the guidelines. We gathered visual representations for the artist. We were fortunate that there are a number of excellent photographs. He presented some photos from 1877. In almost all shots, Standing Bear was photographed with his grizzly bear necklace. After the trial in 1879, he and several others went on speaking tours. They won the trial but initially lost the land. It took another journey to get back to the Niobrara.

gaiashkibos attended Doane College. She was invited to be a trustee five years ago. When she came on the board, Don Campbell from the Miller and Paine family was a trustee as well. He was impressed with the work of the Standing Bear Commission. He learned of the story and two years ago, she received word that there would be a gift from the Campbell Family Foundation. She saw some statues on a trip to New Mexico and believed Nebraska needed a memorial to celebrate Chief Standing Bear. There has been great support from the Mayor and others in Nebraska. She learned there was already a place on Centennial Mall for public art. Fundraising was done and an artist has been chosen.

Zimmer continued that the artist is Benjamin Victor. As a college sophomore, Victor received a commission to install a statue in the U.S. Capitol. Zimmer presented photos of other works by the artist. Victor now has two works in the nation's Capitol. Many works are of the outdoor scale. He also has a work recently installed at Peru State. He is willing to finish the work in Lincoln for the final casting. There are multiple threads that brought Victor to this project. George Neubert has been very active and is a consultant advisor to Parks Dept. on public art. The intention is that this work will be nine feet tall. The Lincoln statue at the State Capitol is nine feet tall and it stands on a pedestal. He believes the settings where these are installed, the height is necessary.

gaiashkibos stated that she has traveled around the country the last few years and has been studying and looking at other pieces of art. She met with some native sculptors. We believe Victor was the best person and want to celebrate the story of Standing Bear. We feel it is most important to have the best sculptor. We want the location to be a gathering place where people can celebrate great moments. The proposed location lends itself well to that. We

wanted it to be a location where all Nebraskans could have access. We felt this was an appropriate location.

Zimmer stated this is the block between P St. and Q St. The alcove is intended for a sculptural placement. Various places will be left uncompleted, ready to receive additional sculptures or memorials. It would require some modifications. This is a nine foot figure on a one foot pedestal. The wall is ten feet tall.

Nalow stated that both walls are concrete. There is a pattern on the wall that is from the Capitol itself. The existing concave curved wall is ten feet tall. The ten foot wall was determined to be a little low. The group started to look at the height. A darker band at the top would be an extension of four feet.

Ripley questioned what material will be used for the new portion. Nalow replied there have been discussions of different options. There hasn't been a final selection yet. Zimmer added that part of the discussion has been extending it with concrete. It would almost surely be two different colors. We felt that should be deliberate. It is important to have some inscription on the wall. The discussion has been the granite might be appropriate. Letters could be inscribed in the wall. We don't want it to be a magnet for souvenir takers. There will be further design discussion. We hope to have the final design and installation next fall. The commission will receive updates.

Campbell inquired if the cost of the wall addition will come from contributions. Zimmer responded that is our hope. The donor seems to be very committed and has been very generous.

gaiashkibos stated that Don Campbell wants to be the sole donor. She believes he would cover the cost. On the lower wall, there would be a plaque. The vision is to have a quote on the taller wall from Chief Standing Bear. There would be informational plaques on the lower wall.

Zimmer stated that the lower wall is a work in progress with opportunities. He believes it could perhaps speak to events before the trial, the trial and the events after the trial. He presented a first suggestion of the lower wall. The lower wall is six feet tall.

Lynn Johnson spoke to the significance of the circles on this block of the Mall. There are 27 tribes who have historic ties to Nebraska. Zimmer added that this ties into the paved space down to the Children's fountain with native language and graphic representations.

Nalow stated that this is the first block we can stand back and have the first beautiful view to the mall.

Weinberg questioned how many areas there will be on the mall for embellishments. Nalow responded that this is the art alcove. Throughout the mall there are different walls and other

areas that have not been engraved yet. We also have a number of different types of installations. Zimmer the first block north of the capitol has an area that might be appropriate for relief sculpture.

Searcy believes it is very exciting to see this project coming to fruition.

Ripley believes this is a very appropriate location for many reasons. The mall wins and the memorial wins. Students will be able to see a true American hero. He thinks this is a particularly appropriate location and is delighted to see it placed here. He would say the pedestal under the statue is at least one foot short. He thinks the statue needs to be elevated more than one foot off the ground. It may take an elevation study. Perhaps it could be granite under the statue.

Searcy believes the timing of this project has moved along great over the last two years. He is excited to have this completed on the newly revitalized Centennial Mall. With the sesquicentennial celebration coming up, he questioned the unveiling time. gaiashkibos responded she hopes to have it done around September, 2017. The artist would arrive in spring of 2017 for his final work. The artist would be here for two weeks. The unveiling ceremony would include tribal leaders, the team, the donor and others. A documentary is simultaneously being done. It could coincide with the Sesquicentennial celebration.

Sinclair thinks the sculpture looks plopped down. He would encourage the base in some way to be more integrated into the base of the sculpture. He agrees with Ripley. The base needs to be raised. He would suggest the base be integrated into the plaza. He would encourage the sculptor to be involved in the base. He believes this is a wonderful idea.

Zimmer stated that the artist Ben Victor, was in town for one discussion on the alcove and another discussion on the content. Zimmer will work closely with Clark Enersen on the details.

Sinclair would encourage the team to keep the scale of the Lincoln statue in mind. Zimmer stated that it is part of the visual context. It would be wise to keep the scale of the Lincoln statue in mind.

Crump agrees. The base needs to be in scale with the grandeur of the statue. Ripley noted that you don't want bronze on the ground. The elements and snow removal processes might damage it. There are many reasons to have an elevated base.

Zimmer will have continuous updates on the progress of the statue, along with location details and will keep the commission updated.

Matt Hansen stated that he hopes some consideration is being given to long term conservation and maintenance. It is an ongoing issue with bronze. He would encourage the applicant to remain mindful of how to maintain the statue. He inquired if the endowment would cover

maintenance costs. Johnson replied that the intent is to have the Centennial Mall Endowment cover the maintenance.

UPDATE ON CAPITOL CAMPUS MASTER PLAN PROJECT

Byron Brogan stated that last January or February, the State Building Division had the privilege of being the sponsor for a twenty year master plan for the campus. This is a fairly large area. It encompasses most of the offices, buildings and properties that the state of Nebraska either owns or leases in the general area of the Capitol Building. An RFP (Request For Proposal) process was begun. The team is led by the DLR Group. Olssons Associates is doing the traffic portion. WRT is part of the team. It is in the investigation and information planning stage. We have never done a master plan in the Capitol Environs area. We are trying to control and avoid costs and make good judgements. Making good decisions is very important. Our main goal is economic to make sure we are good stewards of the citizens of Nebraska's financial resources. A strong sub-goal is to try and consolidate as many state agencies as we possibly can. Beautification is another sub-goal and to encourage economic development and better housing in the area. We are looking at a completion date of April 2017 with a final deadline of June 2017. For the master plan, the State Building Division selected WRT and DLR partially because they did a wonderful master plan of the capital campus area in Denver, Colorado. He believes the State of Nebraska would be in good company. We are hoping to receive a lot of valuable expertise from this commission.

John Badami is the project leader. He will share a snapshot in time of where we are at today. We are in phase one which is the data gathering stage. We are compiling all the studies that have been done, interviewing departments and going over their staffing needs. We defined the boundaries of the study area. WRT is the consultant. They have done over 25 capital campus master plans around the country. One of the teams is looking strictly at workspace needs. A lot of this is difficult to project because many things are mandated by the legislature. We are starting to see some overall trends. Security is a big concern. Parking is a challenge. We are looking at space types, along with recruiting and retaining employees. Technology is very important. Growth is important to look at. There are many departments in leased spaces. We are looking at space inventory along with projected personnel in the future. We need to collect data and the next step would be going back to everyone and refine the ideas.

The 2040 Comprehensive Plan, the Downtown Master Plan, the UNL Master Plan and the South Downtown Revitalization Plan will all impact our decisions. We are also looking at the existing land use in the area, along with existing property ownership. Zoning and height restrictions come into play, as well as the design guidelines. We are looking at parcel sizes available. There are historical regulations and the Capitol View Corridor Overlay District. We are looking at access and street hierarchy. Olsson Associates is looking at transportation aspects. Parking and transit is being considered, along with pedestrian and bicycle routes.

Initial planning observations are divided into three districts; the active downtown, mixed use transition and the Capitol District/residential. Demographics is a big part of this. The state seems to be growing about eight percent. He thinks that might be more for the Lincoln area. Another partner is NAI/FMA Realty. They are going to be looking at cost acquisition and lease rates. We are reaching out to a lot of community and stakeholders. He believes they will be back after the first of the year to give an update. We welcome any input to make this as robust as we can make it. The next twenty years will be crucial for the state. The state is looking to bring a lot of their departments back to the downtown area. He wants this group to consider activating the street level in downtown. That is something that hasn't been a dialogue with the state. They are thinking about public/private partnerships.

Searcy appreciates everyone attending and the preview.

Campbell noted that there might be some social service providers and non-profit providers that might have some input as a stakeholder. Badami noted that is a great suggestion. Crump agreed.

Ripley complimented Byron Brogan who initiated the study. Brogan is leading the study. Ripley has been trying to get this study going for 30 years. He thanked the administration for realizing the importance of this.

Brogan stated that they are awaiting the completion of the 20 year plan. Major projects and acquisitions are waiting for the 20 year plan as well.

Searcy has noticed that the HVAC seems to be moving along at the Capitol. He questioned if geothermal will be involved with that in the future. Ripley responded that the geothermal well fields are outside the Capitol Environs District. We are coordinating and want to allow for a future parking structure above ground over the well fields. Footings will be in place for a future structure.

AMENDMENTS TO CAPITOL ENVIRON DESIGN STANDARDS

Zimmer stated there are many zoning pieces being worked on. There are changes to the B-4 zoning district, Capitol Environs Standards updates and South Haymarket Plan updates. This is a big project.

The Commissioners agreed to hold a special meeting on Thursday, December 15, 2016 at 8:00 a.m. to review the changes and guidelines.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:30 a.m.