

# NEBRASKA CAPITOL ENVIRONS COMMISSION

## 2009 ANNUAL REPORT

(DRAFT)

The Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission was established in 1988 to protect the Nebraska State Capitol by promoting the improvement of the Capitol's setting—its Environs. By Section 27.56.060 of the Lincoln Municipal Code, the Commission is required to meet at least quarterly. Four of the seven appointed citizen members constitute a quorum of the Commission, assisted by three non-voting, ex-officio members representing State and City government.

The Commission membership in 2009 remains unchanged from the end of 2008: Jeff Searcy (chair), Jim Hewitt, John Kay, Tom Laging, Cecil Steward, Larry Stoll, and Kim Todd. Ex-officio members are Lynn Johnson (director of Lincoln Parks & Recreation Dept.), Marvin Krout (director of Lincoln/Lancaster County Planning Dept.) and Bob Ripley (Office of the Capitol Commission).

The Commission met in nine times in 2009, with quorums present at every meeting.

In February the Commission received a report on redevelopment efforts in the “South Capitol” area including the portion of the district around Goodhue Blvd. The Commission also supported and closely monitored LB450, to extend the Environs District protections west to Rosa Parks Way (which was adopted into law).

In March the Commission considered and supported amendments to the Lincoln Center Redevelopment Plan, making Tax Increment Financing (TIF) generated by projects along Lincoln Mall available to a wider portion of the Capitol Environs, especially Centennial Mall. These amendments were adopted by the City of Lincoln, allowing the City Parks & Recreation Department to solicit for and select a design team to begin work on a new Mall master plan.

The Commission received reports on this very welcome Centennial Mall project at each subsequent meeting of the year from the Parks Dept. and from design team representatives. Commissioner Tom Laging is a member of the design team with The Clark Enersen Partners and BVH Architects, continuing his career-long contributions to enhancing the Capitol Environs. Progress on the renewal of Centennial Mall is the most noteworthy Environs event of the year and perhaps of the decade.

Other significant projects are illustrated below:





*NSEA Building, Sept. 2009*



*Kaplan University, view from northwest (K St. Facade), November 2009*



*Kaplan University, view from south "J Street Mall" summer 2009*





*Antelope  
Creek bridge  
at J Street,  
November  
2009*



Lincoln High School (opened 1915) and renovated front yard, November 2009



In December, the Commission review conceptual designs for a new Headquarters for Farmers Mutual Insurance Company on their block bounded by Lincoln Mall, 12<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, and K Streets. The Commission unanimously approved a Certificate of Appropriateness for the building design.



Respectfully submitted  
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