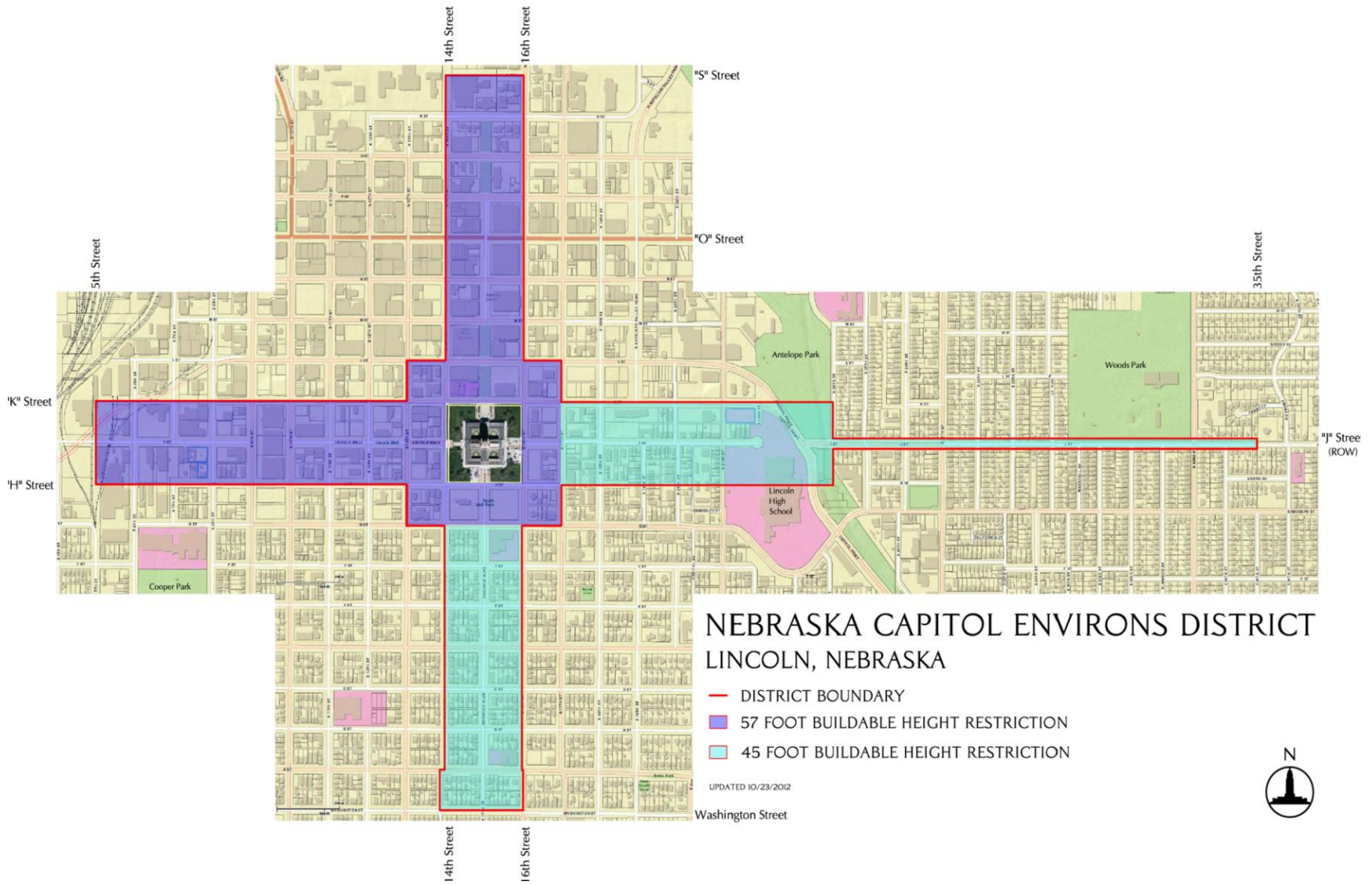


Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission - Annual Report 2014



The Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission was established in 1988 to strengthen existing protections for the setting of Nebraska's landmark State Capitol. Commission membership of seven citizen volunteers includes five members appointed by the City of Lincoln and two appointed by the State of Nebraska.

The Commission's appointed membership in 2014 remained unchanged, namely Jeff Searcy continuing as chair, Christine Dionisopoulos, John Kay, Tom Laging, Karen Nalow, Cecil Steward, and Jon Weinberg. The seven appointed citizen members are assisted by three *ex officio* members--Bob Ripley of the Office of the Capitol Commission (for the State of

Nebraska), the director of Lincoln/Lancaster County Planning Department (Marvin Krout, until his demise in December, succeeded by David Cary, acting director), and Lynn Johnson (director, Lincoln Parks & Recreation Department). Staffing is provided by the Lincoln/Lancaster County Planning Department.

The Commission is required to meet at least quarterly by Section 27.56.060 of the Lincoln Municipal Code. The Commission met ten times—in January, February, March, April, June, July, August, September, October, and the annual joint meeting with the Capitol Commission on November 18th.

Nebraska's Centennial Mall (Centennial Mall, K Street to R Street)

Continued, substantial progress on rebuilding Nebraska's Centennial Mall was 2014's banner project in the Capitol Environs. The complicated process of rebuilding the intersections of the Mall and the east-west streets, while maintaining east-west traffic, has been accomplished at most of the intersections and substantial construction has begun on the K-L and L-M park blocks.

The north blocks (P-Q and Q-R) are scheduled for construction in 2015, with substantial completion expected by the end of that year, with some planting occurring in 2016.

A fruitful conversation was held with Public Works Dept. staff regarding the traffic signal arms that extend into vistas to the Capitol. A mutually acceptable concept was developed to improve visual corridor at a modest overall cost and funds are being sought to accomplish the proposal.

The Commission reviewed inscriptions for the Spirit of Nebraska Pathway and formed an editorial committee to assist with that detailed process. Several dozen inscriptions have been approved, with many more in process honoring a broad spectrum of Nebraska people and organizations. The approved inscriptions are attached as an appendix.

1220 Lincoln Mall Building

Farmers Mutual Insurance Company followed up completion of its handsome new headquarters at South 13th Street and Lincoln Mall with a plans to renovate the former headquarters at 1220 Lincoln Mall, which the Commission readily approved. The renovation includes windows in the formerly windowless east façade, providing outstanding Capitol views. The construction is now underway.



*Approved Design
from Northwest*



*Approved Design
from East*

III Landmark Centre (Lincoln Mall, 11th Street to 12th Street)

Construction also continues on III Landmark Center, directly west of the Farmers Mutual Block. As promised, III Landmark Centre is similar in materials and overall design with I Landmark

Centre west of it, across 11th Street, but includes structured parking on the north half of the block, rather than surface parking.

Nebraska History Museum Renovation

In May, June and August, the Commission reviewed exterior changes to the Nebraska History Museum of the Nebraska State Historical Society, located at Centennial Mall and P Street. The project will include major improvements to the

interior and mechanical systems, and also will create a welcoming new entry on Centennial Mall and an attractive new sign package.



*Approved Design
from East*

Residential Rehabilitations

In addition to the office projects more commonly seen in the Lincoln Mall and Centennial Mall areas of the Environs District, the Commission reviewed and approved two significant rehabilitation projects of existing downtown residential structures. Early in the year, the Commission reviewed a welcome and thorough rehabilitation apartments at 1421 P Street, adjacent to the west of the Museum of Nebraska History. That project is nearing completion. The Commission also reviewed and approved a redevelopment project for the President and the Ambassador apartments adjacent Capitol Square on Lincoln Mall. Largely an interior upgrade, the project will include restoration of the Art Deco canopy now missing from the east entrance of the President, as well as improving the courtyard between the buildings and the west alley adjacent to the Ambassador, benefitting Lincoln Mall.

The Commission recommended approval of a zoning application from representatives of Century House at 1201 Lincoln Mall to remove an obstacle to converting the second floor of that building from office space back to its original use as apartments. The proposed change would require the same parking standards in Capitol Environs as in the

underlying zoning districts. Planning Commission concurred with the Environs Commission by a unanimous vote on November 12, 2014 and the City Council adopted the proposal in December.

Maintaining a variety of good quality housing units throughout the Environs District is among the goals of the Environs Commission.



*President
&
Ambassador
Courtyard
Proposal*

Goodhue Boulevard Monument

Near South Neighborhood Association proposed in September install a “precinct marker” or area monument near the A Street end of Goodhue Boulevard, identifying the neighborhood and celebrating Bertram Grosvner Goodhue’s contribution to

Lincoln and to Nebraska. The overall concept was well received, with a spirited discussion of the optimal placement for the monument. The Association plans to return to the Commission in 2015 for further review and hopefully, approval.



*Goodhue
Monument
concept*

*Respectfully submitted January 16, 2015
Ed Zimmer, Lincoln/Lancaster County Planning Department*