

MEETING RECORD

NAME OF GROUP: HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION and URBAN DESIGN COMMITTEE

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING: Thursday, April 18, 2013, 1:00 p.m., Conference Room 214, County/City Building, 555 S. 10 St., Lincoln, Nebraska

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: *Historic Preservation Commission:* Cathy Beecham, Tim Francis, Jim Johnson, Liz Kuhlman and Jim McKee; (Berwyn Jones and Greg Munn absent).
Urban Design Committee: JoAnne Kissel, Gil Peace, Michelle Penn, Scott Sullivan and Mary Anne Wells; (Peter Hind and Michele Tilley absent).

ALSO ATTENDING: Marvin Krout, Ed Zimmer, Stacey Groshong Hageman and Teresa McKinstry from the Planning Dept.; James Arter, Dave Erickson, Paula Yancey and Jordan Pascale of the Lincoln Journal Star.

STATED PURPOSE OF MEETING: Joint Meeting of Historic Preservation Commission & Urban Design Committee

Acting Chair JoAnne Kissel called the meeting to order and acknowledged the posting of the Open Meetings Act in the room.

Proposals for publicly assisted improvements in the former Tracks 1 & 2 area west of Lincoln Station, between two railroad canopies

Ed Zimmer was asked by the administration to give advice on the proposed elements. These groups have seen the streetscape in the past. This is property of Lincoln Station. It comes to these bodies as a joint project between the City and the property owner.

Jim Arter is working with Dan Marvin on adding some green space as a transition between the historic area and West Haymarket. The content has not changed. The presentation has been updated a little. This is a blend of old and new. He looked at the original West Haymarket Master Plan. The space was divided into zones for dining, relaxation and exploration. He wants to connect people using historic artifacts. The plan from Erickson Sullivan overlays a plan which has some rain garden elements. They are trying to incorporate those elements and are cooperating with the Public Works Dept. They will divert the rain from the canopies into a water retention system. In the dining zone, he presented some ideas for landscaping, a bench and borders. He proposes to build a couple of seating platforms. One of the primary uses for Lincoln Station is to create a space for outdoor weddings, tailgaters, etc. There will not be a lot

of events. It will be limited to a few private events a year. In the explore zone, they could put a railroad crossing arm across the sidewalk, possibly lowering it if there is a stage use. They kept a wheel truck. He proposes a concrete top on the wheel truck for use as a table and bench. One art suggestion was a silhouette of immigrants, laser cut from thick steel. One of the integrated plan desires was to bring in immigration. This is one way to incorporate the history. They will preserve the line from the train platform and the new improvements. He is still struggling with the asphalt topping over the deteriorated train platform. That will be a funding issue. He would consider looking at some applied techniques. One key element is to have some lighting that is subdued. The lighting plan would have it lit below the knees. They are asking for approval of the benches, plants, lighting and art elements. The facade lighting was approved last year. They will be back with the lighting scheme for the back of the building.

Dave Erickson stated there is a main public lobby. They are trying to retain the notion of the connection between the station as a train station and trackside and the canopies. The dining element proposing the new P Street aligns with the outdoor dining. They will do some higher landscaping that will block the headlights of eastbound cars. The slightly relocated engine is moved further north than it currently exists.

Beecham asked about the distance between the two canopies. Arter believes it is about 30 feet.

Erickson stated they are maintaining the line of the platform. There used to be a subway level. He understands those are being restored as well.

Kissel inquired if any City money will be used. Arter replied that for the bioretention, most of the funding will come from Public Works.

There were questions and a discussion on where the art piece by Tom Otterness would potentially be placed. Arter stated there have been suggested locations.

Zimmer stated this comes to this group as a question. The Mayor requested input. Is there a home for the train piece in this space?

Arter would caution about putting the train sculpture in the green space. Perhaps it could be placed in the corner so it is less disruptive with any event they may have.

Wells is not sure it fits with the design of Canopy Street. It might fit nicely with the new Telephone Exchange along Antelope Creek.

Kissel is curious. There are a lot of small pieces to all of what is being proposed. She is trying to picture what seems like a remarkable change from what Canopy Street is trying to do. The table and bench seems like a display of artifacts. Erickson stated they are trying to create a transition between the two spaces. They aren't intending to clutter

it. This is a subtle transitional area, nature retaking the previous industrial use. Arter noted there would not be a lot of stuff sticking up.

Wells thinks the green space will be a nice addition to quiet. She has always wanted some turf in the area.

Penn is wondering if there is room for art on the north side of the park.

Sullivan has questions about the scale of the train sculpture in front of the real train.

Penn noted that it is a kids area. It feels like it belongs there more than anywhere.

Kissel thinks this is a question for the art committee.

Beecham wonders if the whimsical nature of the sculpture might seem out of place.

Wells believes it might be trying to do too much in one space.

Sullivan questioned what will be done to try to bring back a little bit of the history. Arter replied they have selected some photos and will display them in Lincoln Station. They have worked with Ed Zimmer on the photos.

Arter stated that it is his understanding that there is no other green space planned in the West Haymarket other than this area. This will hold up to foot traffic. It will be maintained by Lincoln Station.

Kissel questioned if it will be privately owned. Arter replied yes. There were early on discussions as to how this would work. It will be private land. They are selling the City an easement for public use. In exchange, they are giving up the right to add onto the building or build something else on this piece. It limits their ability to have private events to 10-12 times a year. They are not looking at an entertainment district. They are also looking at reconfiguring some of the tenant space.

Peace questioned if the public access easement will have liability insurance for the City. Arter replied there will be no indemnification by the City. It will be privately owned and they agree to let the public on it. It will be privately owned and insured.

Kissel thinks that Urban Design Committee tends to look at these from a contextual point of view. This particular project sounds like it will be creating more of an attraction. She can see someone taking pictures and having events. This will be more of an experience as opposed to a more urban design fabric. The elements may refer back to railroad days, but they have no logical placement. There are a lot of things that seem gimmicky. It seems like it is trying to create a collection of pieces. The applicant has every right to do this, but because you are using public funds, this is the review. It may

sounds like a logical thing for a property owner to do. From a streetscape point of view, it breaks a lot of rules.

Arter looked at the design and saw a lot of concrete. The struggle he had was one to proceed privately. Arter reiterated that the City wants to do the bioretention funds.

Beecham questioned if there are particular elements that concern Kissel. Kissel is not fond of the wheel benches or wheel truck picnic table. Wells agreed.

Arter noted that the silhouettes are suggested art. He does not want to compete with an art committee.

Kissel thinks that content and connection are important. This collection is very different from what has been done. It would be nice if it were more integrated.

Zimmer believes these committees are addressing this because of the potential of City participation in this space. The applicant seems to be offering a blend. The question is, does this look like something the City should be involved in.

Arter is trying to incorporate what he believes are the City's main goals.

McKee likes the idea of a transition. He finds the crossarm and signal nicer than the bench and recreated stuff. That is just his personal opinion. He doesn't see the train piece fitting into this anywhere.

Beecham likes the grass between the railroad trestle. She would like the wheels better in the landscaping.

Penn doesn't particularly like the picnic table and bench either. Overall she likes the area with the concrete and grass growing. It goes back to refinement. Those two pieces don't feel refined to her.

ACTION:

Urban Design Committee: Penn moved approval without the bench, picnic table and train sculpture, seconded by Wells. Kissel, Peace, Penn and Wells voting 'yes'; Sullivan abstained; Hind and Tilley absent.

Historic Preservation Commission: Johnson moved approval without the bench, picnic table and train sculpture, seconded by Beecham. Johnson, Kuhlman, McKee, Beecham and Francis voting 'yes'; Jones and Munn absent.

There being no further business, the joint meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.