

MEETING RECORD

NAME OF GROUP: URBAN DESIGN COMMITTEE

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING: Wednesday, November 13, 2013, 3:00 p.m., Room 214, County/City Building, 555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: JoAnne Kissel, Gill Peace, Michelle Penn, Scott Sullivan, Michele Tilley and Mary Anne Wells. Peter Hind not present (submitted message of resignation).

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Michael & Jillian Harpster (Applicant); Kris Sonderup (Cycle Works/Moose's Tooth); Matt Wills (Studio 951); Fred Hoppe (Hoppe Homes); John Badami and Daniel Siedhoff (DLR Group); Mark Hunzeker (Baylor Evnen Law Firm); Carl Groesbeck, Mark Matthews, Mary Herres (Argent Group/Campus Acquisitions); Jonah Busick (Shepley Bulfinch Architects); Justin Hernandez (NGC); Jordan Pascale (Journal Star); Gary Thalken (Wastewater); Mark Canney (Parks & Recreation); Mike Davis & Brian Praeuner (StarTran); Dallas McGee, Hallie Salem & Ernie Castillo (Urban Development); Marvin Krout, Ed Zimmer, Stacey Hageman & Michele Abendroth (Planning Department)

STATED PURPOSE OF MEETING: Regular Meeting of the Urban Design Committee

Michelle Penn called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m. The Nebraska Open Meetings Act was acknowledged.

Adoption of meeting record from the UDC meeting of October 9, 2013

Peace moved approval of the meeting record from the UDC meeting of October 9, 2013, seconded by Wells. Motion carried 5-0. Peace, Penn, Sullivan, Tilley and Wells voting 'yes'; Hind and Kissel absent. Kissel arrived after this vote.

Neighborhood Design Standards Appeal, 2525 R Street (Harpster)

Zimmer stated that this property is subject to the Neighborhood Design Standards. Zimmer explained the process for approval of the design standards. The first step is a review by Zimmer and then the Planning Director, Marvin Krout. The Urban Design Committee is the appeal board if they are not able to approve the project.

Harpster stated that this is a small house. They tried to match the width of the surrounding houses of the neighborhood. They pushed a lot of the living space toward the front of the lot. It is a shallow floor plan. Because they do not want a pitched roof, they decided to try to keep the massing at the same line as the first two stories of the adjacent houses. They worked carefully to ensure other aspects of the Neighborhood Design Standards have been met. They want to have an alley off the back which is typical of the neighborhood.

Zimmer stated that the Neighborhood Design Standards speak about compatibility, windows and doors, and scale. This does not match neighboring houses in roof pitch but it has other characteristics that do. It is not in staff's authority to approve the design since it does not meet the Neighborhood Design Standards, but the Urban Design Committee can approve it.

Zimmer provided an aerial view of the block that this house would reside on as well as photos of the neighboring houses.

Sullivan asked how the house is situated on the lot. Michael Harpster stated that the front of their front porch will match the neighbors to the east and west.

Penn asked if they plan to own the home. Michael Harpster stated that they will live in the house.

Michael Harpster stated that the materials will be concrete fiberboard siding. It will be a straight flat panel. The color palette will be a dark gray neutral color.

Peace stated that he likes the design and feels it is fantastic to reinvest in the neighborhood.

Sullivan likes the project but is nervous about the precedence of approving this project if it encourages other projects of a lesser design that deviates from the standards. This is design oriented and is a contemporary design. It is a good design but it will be interesting to see what is brought in the future. This is a good example for those who thought the Design Standards could not be adjusted.

Penn stated that she agrees with Sullivan. It is nice to see something that has design integrity.

Harpster offered to come back to a future meeting with a more detailed design.

Peace moved approval of the application, seconded by Kissel. Motion carried 6-0. Kissel, Peace, Penn, Sullivan, Tilley and Wells voting 'yes'; Hind absent.

“Block 68” (former “Gold’s parking block”, 10th-11th, M-N Sts.) project update (Urban Development Dept. & Argent Group)

Salem stated that this is the second time Argent is presenting the Block 68 proposal to the Urban Design Committee. They took the Committee's suggestions on the project and further refined it.

Groesbeck stated that they are continuing to refine the design. This is a student housing project with some retail and interior parking. This is a 2 acre site. They are going 5 stories in height. They have opened up a number of the vistas on the second floor. They are still working on the storefront design. The primary emphasis will be on 11th and N Street.

Busick stated that they are introducing another material which is a synthetic wood panel. They have a ribbon roof, a low-sloping roof. They are detailing so it appears to grow out of the courtyard. Around the ground floor, there is quite a bit of glass, and they are meeting and exceeding the requirement. On the south side, they are pulling the ribbon out to the street and recessing the podium level back. There is a swimming pool and activity center. They have a “city deck” to the north. They are working to

address some issues noted by Public Works on the site plan. Groesbeck stated that they have hired Olsson Associates to do a traffic study. Hallie Salem stated that the redevelopment agreement will show that you can't have egress on N Street.

Kissel asked if they moved the bank to another location on the site if that would satisfy Public Works' concerns. Salem stated that Public Works' concerns are related to the bike lane and the lanes of travel on N Street.

Busick stated that on the second floor, they made some changes so the deck can open up. They are trying to create a flow between the amenity decks. Groesbeck stated that they pulled residential units away from the city deck to create multi-purpose rooms with limited public access for meetings.

Wells asked about N Street. Groesbeck stated that they are planning active areas. Salem stated that they will come back to Urban Design Committee with a streetscape plan. The agreement is expected to go to City Council on December 2 with the public hearing on December 9. Groesbeck stated that the hard part of the retail is that they need to get the big piece established as an anchor point which will allow them to work more with the streetscape.

Zimmer stated that the Downtown Design Standards don't anticipate visible roofs in core downtown; there is a gesture to a sloped roof. The Urban Design Committee is the appeal body to the Downtown Design Standards. Other than the roof, the design meets the Downtown Design Standards. There is a predominantly masonry expression on the main facades.

Sullivan asked about the design thoughts on the ground floor level. As you think about the retailers, he asked what they anticipate for opportunities for restaurants or sidewalk cafes. Groesbeck stated that they are hoping for more retail than restaurants. They want to discourage bars since it is a student housing project primarily. Sullivan asked for the reason for the recesses on N Street. Groesbeck stated that they hope to have some restaurants there.

Matthews stated that sign band on 10th Street is going to be very important to retailers as the traffic counts are very high on that street.

Kissel asked about the location of the tables. Busick stated that they have recessed some areas to have opportunities for tables.

The Committee expressed their support for the roof design. Peace cautioned about the gutter being able to handle large rain or snow fall.

Penn asked if they are using real brick. Groesbeck stated that it is real brick.

Peace commented that the steel cantilevered out is a nice gesture, but he is not seeing covered shelter. On the north elevation on the N Street side, cover would be nice there and may be more important than the open rail. He would encourage more of the gray glass rather than the punched openings. On the 11th Street side, there is one place that it is different, but as he looks around the lobby, he doesn't see anything that says this is for tenants and that this is the lobby.

Kissel asked if these plans are an appendix to the redevelopment agreement. Zimmer stated that City Council will see a more developed plan. There is another Urban Design Committee meeting before the City Council votes on it.

Sullivan stated that he likes what they are seeing but he is concerned about the pedestrian first floor. He is nervous about parking on the ground floor. He would like to see the commercial element and all those facades that go with it.

Penn stated that there are still pieces that aren't exactly clear. She is interested in the second story on the north side. They want this to be an urban space that capitalizes on the area. She is also interested in the other side with the pool. Penn asked if TIF money is being used for the project. Salem stated that TIF money is being used. It is similar to other projects.

The Committee asked for clarification on what they are voting on today. Salem stated that they are approving general direction rather than the final plans. Zimmer offered they are approving that it is a worthwhile project with final input forthcoming. Groesbeck stated that they appreciate encouragement that the massing of the building is appropriate, not necessarily the store front arrangement but the general concept. Salem noted that there won't be a final plan, but more a final concept because they won't know the tenants.

Matthews stated that on the retail perspective, they have been doing urban infill retail for many years. As a retailer developer, you can't dictate to the retail developers, they dictate to you. Right now, it's not the greatest retail location. They have to have a plan that is flexible and allow them to move around the retail that is dictated to them.

Penn moved to approve the direction of the project with further review in December, seconded by Peace. Motion carried 6-0. Kissel, Peace, Penn, Sullivan, Tilley and Wells voting 'yes'; Hind absent.

“Lincoln Exchange” redevelopment, 21st St. N-L (Urban Development Department & Hoppe Brothers)

Hoppe stated that they are here to present the design for 21st and N. This is in response from the city for redevelopment at 21st and N. He noted that the Windstream warehouse is off the plan now.

Badami stated that the biggest change is the removal of the Windstream site. That changed how they looked at the development. There will be 60 plus townhomes that will be privately owned. To the north, there will be a mixed used building with retail on the first floor and 30 studio apartments above that and parking to the south. They have worked closely with Public Works to establish where the utilities will go to support the project. There is a large loop that runs through the property which is where the utilities will be. The other thing they tried to do is activate 21st Street. They are looking at this being more of a downtown neighborhood. They want to create a green space. They have also tried to create a walking path along Antelope Valley, and they are working with the NRD to do that. They would like to attach that to the park to the north. They have also changed the footprint of the retail space. They reduced the space but created outdoor plazas for people to sit. They have also incorporated the bike trail on N Street. They still want to keep some parallel parking along the building and they were able to accomplish that. They are still allowing access to the Muni building.

Siedhoff stated that the renderings are similar to the last time. They want to have a cohesive neighborhood. They want to bookend 21st and N with the warehouse. There is opportunity for a restaurant café with the storefront pushed back in the covered space. In order to activate N Street, they are trying to incorporate parking, and walkable and bikeable areas. There is a small elevated plaza for an intimate coffee shop space.

Siedhoff stated that in terms of design in the right-of-way, they want to use concrete pavers. Instead of treating the parking lot as a typical suburban parking lot, they talked about using pavers to delineate the parking. This will create a soft intimate residential neighborhood with a few nice shops the neighborhood can support. One of the waivers they are requesting is a landscape waiver because they are not able to screen the parking lot. They want to have as many plantings and shrubs as they can that will give a sense of an upscale neighborhood and will support downtown.

In terms of the row houses, there are four different types of row houses. They are different sizes and income levels, but they all have similar design and material. There is a rooftop community and terrace community. In terms of materials, the brick is taking cues from the warehouse. There will be cedar siding material with darker metals. Option A is the largest of the units. There will be a garden level that has an opportunity for a granny flat. Option B is a modern design with some homage to the neighborhood and warehouse building in a subtle way. There is cedar cladding with lots of windows. They are 2 bedroom units. Options C & D are similar frontage. In order to accommodate some of the awkward angles, they needed to have different options. All units have a 2-car garage. Option C has an option for an office with a large living space and 3 bedrooms and roof deck. Option D is truncated to account for some of the site issues. There are 2 bedrooms. They are trying to keep the interiors simple, clean and modern with lots of light from the windows. They will have window boxes for plantings that will soften the space.

Hoppe stated that the feel of the lanes is intended to be European and tight. They are trying to get that urban village walk.

Tilley stated that she loves it and feels it is great.

Sullivan stated that he has concerns about the lack of canopy system on N St. Siedhoff stated that there are canopies on N Street. The renderings do not show the updated plan. They have pushed the building back and softened the edge quite a bit. Sullivan stated that he would like to see an updated rendering to see how it feels as a pedestrian corner in terms of canopies and signage. He loves the frontage to the waterway.

Wells stated that she likes the layout of the building, but it looks densely packed with no green space for the tenants. There is no gathering space. Hoppe stated that there are parks and open space surrounding the site. Wells agreed with that, but there is no useable space right within the community. She would like to see a better space for the trash receptacle.

Peace asked if the M Street center line could be open without hurting the unit count. Siedhoff stated that they tried to do that many times but were not able to.

Zimmer noted that there is an application from Parks & Recreation to landmark the Muni building. It will be kept in public ownership but this will give it more protection.

Kissel commented on the facades. She likes that it looks like rowhouses but what's different is that there is a sameness to it. She wondered if there are opportunities to create personality. The garage doors are so dominant and asked if they plan to use the same garage doors all the way throughout. Siedhoff stated there is opportunity for personalization in how they soften the space with landscaping. They are also going to offer different types of doors. If you think about the adjacent blocks, you are setting the tone for something different to happen.

Zimmer stated that there is mention of not using wood siding. This is downtown zoning. There is nothing objectionable about brick and cedar siding, but the Committee may want to comment if they are comfortable with the wood siding.

Peace stated that the brick is at a premium cost and if the steel beams change the cost, he asked if they looked at a thin brick which would have a big impact on the design. Badami stated that the structural engineer is looking at this, and they may possibly need to make some changes.

Penn asked how far along are they in the process and if they have done cost estimates. She wondered about maintenance of the cedar siding. Hoppe stated that they do not have all the cost estimates back.

Kissel commented that this is the first design like this in Lincoln so they want to see it succeed.

Zimmer stated that the designs have been submitted to the Mayor, and he will decide if he would like the Urban Design Committee to review it again. Krout doesn't believe there is a time constraint in terms of the Mayor's approval.

Sullivan stated that he would like to see better development of the retail building as he is concerned about what he sees from the pedestrian perspective, but he likes what he sees.

Sullivan moved to approve the project with another opportunity for review of the retail building, seconded by Tilley. Penn would like to add that if there is a dramatic departure from the materials presented, they would like to review it again. Motion carried 6-0. Kissel, Peace, Penn, Sullivan, Tilley and Wells voting 'yes'; Hind absent.

Hartley Flats redevelopment, southeast corner 27th & S Streets (Urban Development Dept.)

Castillo stated that this project is for the redevelopment of the Hartley Flats at 27th & S Street. The project uses TIF funds for façade enhancements, curb cut and access point off S Street, paving of the alley, and possibly the fence on the east side of the project. The corridor redevelopment area ends this year. They think this is a nice addition to the area.

Sonderup stated that he owns Cycle Works and Moose's Tooth and has been there for 32 years. They have worked with Urban Development as part of the North 27th corridor development. He sees a need for residential housing geared at the 35-45 year old professional. The plan is to have 13 units and will be a nice upscale place to live. It is close to Antelope Valley and downtown. The building is very clean

looking and modern. He has met with the Hartley Neighborhood Association and addressed their concerns and has their support. The surfaces will be darker brick with hardy board. The lighter colored panels will be galvanized panels and will have some vine cover.

Penn asked where the address will be identified since the doors are hidden. Wills stated that there are walks up to each door and he envisions addresses on the brick. There is a small retaining wall at the front of the property, and they intend to put a low fence there. They are trying to strike a balance between the door that opens up to the street and the fence that is providing some buffer. Wells stated that she would like the entrance to be a little more inviting.

Zimmer noted that the Neighborhood Design Standards apply here. The design of the roof does not meet the standards.

Kissel stated that she likes the modern design but is concerned about the entries. Tilley stated that she agrees as it seems unsafe. She thinks it is a great project but is concerned about the metal grating and would like to see less of it. Sonderup stated that they intend to have growth on the west side as they were trying to provide some protection from the heat since it is west facing.

Krout commented that metal isn't a banned material on N. 27th Street as they feel there is a place for it. One of the problems of N. 27th Street is that when the street was widened, it left it with not a very friendly streetscape. They recommended that the sidewalk be moved in 8' to create a public sidewalk with room for street trees.

Kissel stated that everyone wants to see a softer transition from the housing to the street, but it seems there are more residential ways to do that. The vines may not be the best approach, and trees would be a more long-term approach. Wells stated that she likes the idea of moving the sidewalk. Zimmer suggested that maybe it could be more of a trellis effect.

Penn stated that she is excited about the project and feels this project will add to all the development on N. 27th Street.

The Committee requested that they see the design again in December. Castillo stated that they are working on an amendment to the N. 27th Street plan. They are hoping to begin construction in April of next year.

Peace asked about possibly reducing the side yard setback. Wills stated that attempting to waive a side yard setback would be a big hurdle. Castillo recommended that they talk with Planning about possibly doing that.

Update on 11th & N bus stop area, etc.

Praeuner stated that the Lincoln Police Department approached them about the criminal activity at the bus stop on 11th & N Street. They felt the public area was too hard to identify as separate from the bus waiting area. The solution at the time was to put in a chain link fence, but there has been public input to change the fence. In August, they presented a solution to the Urban Design Committee which was a

wrought iron fence, but the Committee felt there was another better solution. They are here today to present two proposals. One proposal is a wrought iron fence with a cost estimate of \$15,000. The second proposal is a concrete wall and a planter with a cost estimate of \$176,000. It was important to LPD to have visibility so they prefer the fence option. LPD has stated that since the fence has been up, they have had less criminal activity.

Canney stated that the concrete option creates narrow planting beds, so there would be irrigation and landscape maintenance. He also believes that it will become a place for people to sit and to throw trash.

The Committee is supportive of the fence design rather than the concrete walls, irrespective of the cost.

Penn stated that she would like to see this area enhanced. This is an area that could be so much more. She would like to make a recommendation to the Mayor to see a more enhanced area.

Tilley moved to approve the option for the wrought iron fence with the hopes that a full service transit center is in the future, seconded by Peace. Motion carried 5-0. Kissel, Peace, Penn, Tilley and Wells voting 'yes'; Hind and Sullivan absent.

P Street Wastewater Pump Station

Zimmer presented photos of a design for a Wastewater Pump Station on West P Street and Sun Valley Boulevard.

Tilley moved approval of the design, seconded by Wells. Motion carried 4-0. Kissel, Peace, Tilley and Wells voting 'yes'. Hind, Penn and Sullivan absent.

Misc., Staff report.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:09 p.m.

**Please note that these minutes will not be formally approved until the next meeting of the Urban Design Committee. **

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