

MEETING RECORD

NAME OF GROUP: URBAN DESIGN COMMITTEE

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING: Tuesday, October 7, 2014, 3:00 p.m., Conference Room 210, County/ City Building, 555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln, NE

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: JoAnne Kissel, Tom Huston, Gill Peace, Michelle Penn and Michele Tilley; (Tammy Eagle Bull absent).

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Ed Zimmer, Stacey Groshong-Hageman and Teresa McKinstry of the Planning Department; Wynn Hjermstad of Urban Development; Jeremy Hahn, Ryan Hunter and Debbie White of Humphreys & Partners Architects, Mark Palmer and Nate Buss of Olsson Associates, Don Linscott of Greenleaf Properties, TC Selman, Tony Curp and Robert Scholz of Aspen Heights, Bill Langdon, Derek Zimmerman of Baylor Evnen Law Firm, Jeff Chadwick and Tim Gergen of The Clark Enersen Partners and Kevin Abourezk of the Lincoln Journal Star.

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

Kissel then requested a motion approving the minutes of regular meeting held September 2, 2014. Motion for approval made by Huston, seconded by Penn and carried 5-0: Huston, Kissel, Peace, Penn and Tilley voting 'yes'; Eagle Bull absent.

ASPEN HEIGHTS MULTI-FAMILY / STUDENT APARTMENT REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT, VICINITY 18TH & P STREETS

Huston declared a conflict of interest, noting he would not participate in the discussion as a member of the committee nor vote on any recommendations, but would be assisting with the presentation as attorney for the project.

Huston stated that he presented this to the Committee last month. The Project consists of 182 dwelling units and 631 beds. It will also provide much needed parking for the former DuTeau office building.

Jeremy Hahn stated that he brought the preliminary layout. There are three five-story buildings and a garage. The three residential buildings all surround interior courtyards. This Committee seemed to have a few concerns last month. The concerns he heard were that this development didn't fully interact with the street, concern with walled off courtyards, utilization and orientation of one of the courtyards. They increased the variation of the elevations and

massing in general. Also, the layout was revised and building three (on P St. between 18th and Antelope Valley Parkway) was rotated. The courtyard is now open to the street. This makes for better interaction. The Committee also talked about the location of the dog park. The clubhouse has been changed to orient to Antelope Valley Parkway and P Street. They have a landscape plan to show. There was comment that the parking garage needed to be treated more architecturally. The liner building has seven, two-story townhomes that open onto P Street. The main approach is from Antelope Valley Parkway. He believes that flipping building three has helped tremendously on the massing. He showed facades of the buildings.

Huston noted that P Street is a one-way street and he believes the project is on track for primary sight lines. They took another look at where to locate the dog park. It is by Building one at 18th & Q.

Hahn continued that they are showing some screens on the upper part of the garage. The material is a wire mesh. It is translucent during the day, and night time provides the opportunity for lighting from behind. They are proposing fiber cement panels and Nichiha panels, to highlight special elements on the building. The landscape plan is a continuation of the P Street Master Plan. There is bicycle parking and a combination of street side and interior bicycle parking. There will be translucent fencing on the dog park. A pool is proposed in the building three courtyard.

Kissel questioned the turf areas shown on the plan north of the townhouses. Hahn stated that is green space in the public right-of-way. Architect Debbie White stated that it could be turf or landscape beds. Hahn noted this is just the first pass on the design. Ryan Hunter believes this separates it from student housing. They are trying to get a single family feel for the townhouses.

Huston envisions that the separate townhomes will be condominium units.

Penn wondered if this is in agreement with the City standards as far as retail. Zimmer stated there has been discussion on the importance of continuous storefronts within the commercial core of P Street but it seems unlikely that core can extend east of 17th Street.

Tilley sees that the plan last month showed eight parking stalls within the Building two courtyard. Now it appears to be bike parking. Hahn replied she was correct.

Kissel inquired about the Nichiha panels. Hahn replied it is a rain screen that is clipped together. Hunter clarified that it is a different kind of fiber panel. The panel looks very sharp and it made of the same material as fiber cement panels. Hahn added that it comes in planks.

Peace asked if there is a color blend among the panels. Hahn stated they are showing a color blend of panels of three different colors.

Zimmer inquired about any other materials. Hahn replied the base will be brick.

Peace wondered what is planned for windows and will there be HVAC for individual units. White replied they are currently looking into a split system with condensers on the roof. They are considering vinyl windows. They are also looking into aluminum.

Hahn believes the storefront windows would be aluminum. Peace asked if they had considered fiberglass. White replied they will look in to it.

Kissel was not at the meeting last month, but she read the minutes. It seemed to her, the Committee talked about materials a lot. Peace stated that these materials, probably with the exception of the Hardie reveal, have been used in downtown buildings before, so they are not anything new. He is not sure the James Hardie product has been used as much. It's maybe not as high a finish as the others, but it can be a good product. He has spec'd it out in the past and it appears to be a good product, but in his opinion it is probably on the lower end of durability and longevity. In his opinion, it is still a good product. Peace noted "We use it in my office."

Zimmer wondered about the material being proposed for the garages. Hahn replied they talked about stamped concrete. White stated these are precast panels. Zimmer thinks there might be a concern with precast, stamped with a brick pattern, in a brick color. Penn is a little concerned. There have been some issues with brick and imitation brick products.

T.C. Selman stated that they have ordered precast material from the factory in the past. It would go up as an erected panel and have the same effects as a masonry panel. It would only be used above the townhome level, not at the street level. He looked at a garage on Q Street that he believes uses this product. Zimmer believes he was noting the Larson Building. Selman continued that they are suggesting something like that, very similar. He thinks there are a lot of options above the second floor.

Tilley asked if they will be using real brick on the first two floors. Selman of the development team replied yes, it will be brick. His architectural team noted this decision.

Kissel asked if there is a formal lighting plan being proposed. Selman replied more than likely, there will be some kind of lighting. They need to do some lighting studies. They will make sure the light is contained. Theirs will be more of a design element to add some pizzazz to the parking garage. Kissel would be uncomfortable signing off on any lighting now. Zimmer noted this is done in steps. Huston stated that the Redevelopment Agreement has the steps and schematic drawings approval process. Zimmer believes this is a big step in terms of specificity, but this is far from the last step.

Tilley thinks this is great. The comments from the Committee were heard. She likes the way the buildings are positioned on the streets now. It has some dimension that it didn't have before.

Huston stated that Rick Peo has developed the first draft of the Development Agreement. He would hope to have this in front of the City Council by Thanksgiving. Zimmer noted there is likely to be some more design development. The Committee could indicate if this is going in the direction they would like to see. Huston stated that they could bring back some concepts in lighting to the November, 2014 meeting. Kissel would like to see more detail on lighting and landscaping. Kissel said she needs to be convinced that turf is the right thing to do.

Peace thinks this tells a nice story. It looks great. He appreciates it coming back. The courtyard helps to break up the facades.

Penn appreciates everyone making changes. There was a lot being asked. She thinks it will help the project. She knows they have been working hard. She is still struggling a little with the parking garage. She is wondering if there isn't another solution. This has come really far and she appreciates the changes. She would like to see a lighting plan for the parking garage. She has seen a garage downtown where you are blinded by the interior lights as you walk by.

Tony Curp questioned if there is a way to get a recommendation with conditions. They are contractually under an extremely tight time frame. Zimmer responded that the committee could make a recommendation based upon the conceptual design.

Penn needs to see more on the parking garage lighting.

ACTION:

Tilley moved approval of the general conceptual design, needing further attention and detail to landscape, lighting schemes, and further development on the garage, seconded by Peace and carried 4-0: Kissel, Peace, Penn and Tilley voting 'yes'; Huston declaring a conflict of interest; Eagle Bull absent.

23RD & O REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT (FORMER SAFEWAY / OFFICE MAX BUILDING)

Kissel declared a conflict of interest

Jeff Chadwick with Clark Enersen stated that he is not at liberty to talk about a tenant at this point. He comfortable with what is being shown as to intent. The property line to the east is an alley. They have been searching for precedents. This used to be a Safeway building. There are some interesting details on the building. They looked at a couple of different options on what could be done. Preliminary plans show open areas in the front that would allow for more glass. There is a dip in the parking lot. They are trying to get as much green space around this building as possible, as well. They would like to create more of a pedestrian scale. They are also trying to retain as much of the existing structure as possible. Conceptually, there is somewhat of an umbrella.

Peace asked about the user. Zimmerman replied it will be a medical user.

Chadwick continued that the two side wings are opportunities for windows. They are also trying to maintain as much of the existing structure as possible. The building would be light tones and brick. He was hoping to have a little more to present with regard to the addition. He doesn't have the go ahead at this point. They are pulling the front about six feet forward. The pole sign will be coming down. Parking is not necessarily changing. Some green areas will be added. There is about 23,000 square feet in the existing building. The possible addition would add 7,500 square feet. He is unaware if the tenant wants to retain one or both of the docks.

Huston questioned if 23rd St. and O St. falls under the Downtown Design Standards guidelines. Zimmer replied that this is in the B-4 district so Downtown Design Standards would apply. This is called a major remodeling. The standard is to apply as many of the standards as reasonable and possible. His judgment would be that moving the building to O Street would not be reasonable.

Zimmerman noted that there is a box culvert underneath the property that has created some challenges in terms of renovation. Wynn Hjermstad clarified it is the Antelope Creek box culvert. This is an amendment to the Antelope Valley Redevelopment Plan. This presents some limitations to trees in the parking. Zimmer noted that some key items of the design standards that can be addressed are to maintain a high degree of transparency on the front and meet the parking design standards. They are retaining some design character. He is not seeing where there are necessary design waivers of the standards.

Hjermstad stated that one item the Mayor wants to see is more trees along O Street and the applicant has agreed to do.

Penn stated that the parking lot is in pretty bad shape. Tim Gergen believes it will be repaved.

Penn questioned if this project involves TIF money. Zimmer replied yes, this is a redevelopment project. Hjermstad added that all parties are just starting to talk about the agreement this week. Zimmer noted that the next time the committee sees this, there should be more detail.

Tilley inquired about landscaping on the south. Gergen responded there is very limited room to do anything. It is essentially a two foot strip. One drive on N Street is being eliminated so there might be room for some trees.

Huston wondered when this was built. Zimmerman believes around 1959.

Tilley stated it would be awesome to see some landscaping on N Street.

Penn had a few questions about exterior improvements. Bill Langdon replied there is no firm agreement with this tenants at this moment. This is still a work in progress. They are committed to do everything that has been shown. Because of the nature of the use, there are

some limitations. Chadwick would like to dig into the overhangs. He believes there is asbestos in the building. The approach would be to try and leave as much exterior skin as possible.

Peace questioned if there is a backup plan when the brick gets expensive. Langdon replied they are committed to the brick.

Peace wants to know about the sign element on the front. Does it need to wrap back and what is the scale? Chadwick believes the scale is ten, eleven foot range. There was talk that this could accommodate more than one tenant on the sign. It could be a little thinner. Peace is unsure of the shape. It feels a little undefined to him.

Huston is pleased with the general direction and concept. This goes a long way. He likes what he is seeing.

Penn thinks we have come a long way with the parking area and grass area. This will be such an improvement. But she can tell a lot of the character hasn't been changed. She would like to see something even more improved. She thinks they have done a good job with the parking and the green. She understands budgets. That is just her personal opinion.

Peace wants the applicant to know if they get into a situation where brick becomes very expensive, he would recommend looking at other options that would save a lot of money. Perhaps something lighter weight. He likes the sill height of the windows.

Hjermstad noted that this project is on an aggressive timeline. It is due to be at Planning Commission with the plan amendment on Oct. 29, 2014 and looking at City Council for mid-November, 2014. They hope to have the Redevelopment Agreement vote by City Council at their last meeting in December, 2014.

ACTION:

Huston moved approval of the concept as shown, subject to point of refinement reviewed at November, 2014 meeting, seconded by Peace.

Langdon stated it is their intention to have an agreement with the tenant in place before the next Urban Design Committee meeting.

Penn thinks this is an important project because it is changing an existing area that needs it. She is unsure she would vote for approval at this point.

Peace believes that this motion is encouragement that the applicant is moving in the right direction. Huston concurred, subject to the refinement points the committee has mentioned, including additional landscaping on N Street, perhaps different treatment on the façade. Peace added there needs to be more detailed discussion of the building materials, and building addition versus no building addition. He thinks there is a lot of refinement to be done yet.

Penn doesn't see this as fully ready yet. She doesn't want the City Council to perceive this as being approved by Urban Design Committee.

Huston clarified that his motion is for approval of the general direction of the project, as an improvement from existing conditions, subject to the refinement points of including additional landscaping on N Street, perhaps different treatment on the façade, a more detailed discussion of the building materials, and building addition versus no building addition. Peace agreed as second.

All members agreed that they want to see this application again before it goes to City Council.

Motion carried 4-0; Huston, Peace, Penn and Tilley voting 'yes'; Kissel declaring a conflict of interest; Eagle Bull absent.

Larry Enersen Urban Award Design Nominations

Michele Tilley stated that the Committee is tasked with finding nominations and deciding on who wins the Larry Enersen award. They have as a group formed a separate committee to make recommendations. The process so far has been pretty loose. It has since been shored up. The process in the past has been that they have a pool of projects. They want to change the criteria to two awards with contrasting strengths. Up till now, public and private has been the criteria. In November, the nominees will be before Urban Design Committee. We need some projects for nominations. Kissel stated the intent is for recently completed projects that have made a major impact on the urban fabric of Lincoln. Zimmer noted that last year it was Fallbrook and the Antelope Creek Townhouses. The NeighborWorks Townhouses are different in scale, hard to say whether those are public or private. They wanted to get away from public/private. Kissel noted that things from last year are still in the running. Tilley encouraged everyone to send her any nominations.

Miscellaneous

Zimmer stated that Misty's was considering installing a sidewalk café. They found out they have to expand their liquor license. Their plan showed a revised railing. He believed it was a simple revision that puts back what was displaced with the P Street work. The Committee members concurred this was an administrative item for Zimmer to take care of.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.