

MEETING RECORD

NAME OF GROUP: URBAN DESIGN COMMITTEE

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING: November 4, 2014, 3:00 p.m., Conference Room 210, County-City Building, 555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln, NE

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

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Ed Zimmer, Stacey Groshong-Hageman and Teresa McKinstry of the Planning Department; Wynn Hjermsstad of Urban Development Dept.; Tony Curp of Aspen Heights Development; Don Linscott of Greenleaf Properties; Ken Fairchild of Olsson Associates and Trevor Hull of Erickson Sullivan Architects.

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 October 7, 2014. Motion for approval made by Huston, seconded by Penn and carried 5-0; Eagle Bull, Kissel, Huston, Penn and Tilley voting 'yes'; Peace absent at time of vote.

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

Huston declared a conflict of interest, explaining he would help represent the project, but not participate in the discussion or any vote as a UDC member.

Huston stated that they have further refined the schematics. In October, specific issues were raised by this committee. Based upon those conversations, they tried to address concerns of the committee members. The site plan shows buildings 1, 2, 3 and 4. The north face of building 4 is the 7 townhomes. Changes to building 1 include that it was moved somewhat eastward. They discovered the B-4 zoning district has a side yard setback that needed to be addressed. They needed to reflect a 16 foot side yard. The dog park has been relocated on the interior of the courtyard. For building 2, they removed any interior parking in the courtyard. There is a significant amount of diagonal parking that will be metered. They have some flexibility in the Redevelopment Agreement.

Kissel questioned if this proposal is consistent with the P Street development. Zimmer stated that the final plans aren't in place yet for P Street. Huston wants to make sure that this portion

of the street is consistent. Zimmer noted there are a number of bicycle parking opportunities. There is a strong interest from Planning Dept. in bicycle parking. Huston doesn't know numbers yet, but there will be significant bicycle parking.

Huston stated that the drawings that they have brought today tried to address the concerns that were heard at the last meeting. The garage will have two condominium units, one of which (200 stalls) will be owned by the same parties that own DuTeau building. The east side of the garage towards Antelope Valley Parkway will feature graphics of antique autos in the bays of the garage on the first level. Vehicles on O Street won't really be able to see the parking garage. Sod was a concern on the P Street landscaping. The architects have agreed that sod is not the most appropriate planting material.

Tony Curp asked what the committee thought about grass between the trees. The plans show that sod was left between the trees and he thought perhaps it should be removed as well. Zimmer noted that it doesn't look very wide. Kissel believes it would be very difficult to maintain. This gets to the question of what is P Street going to become. Huston noted that this recognizes this is subject to change, as P Street concepts become refined. Zimmer stated the question is, if a six foot strip of grass will be sustainable and durable. Huston agrees that is a fair question.

Huston would like to address the exterior lighting and lighting inside the garage. They are proposing to backlight the Aspen sign and the antique automobiles on the first floor. Interior lighting is addressed in the plans.

Kissel and Penn discussed the lighting plan.

Penn would like explanation of the materials on the antique auto display. Curp replied they were originally looking at metal mesh. It might be confusing. It might look like garage doors. They haven't reached the final details yet. Penn asked if there will be light coming through there. Curp replied yes. Huston stated the front will be a tight woven metal material.

Peace assumed this was GKE metal mesh of some sort. It is breathable. It won't cause any issues with open air requirements. When it is hit with light, it takes on an accent color.

Penn noted that is what she assumed as well. In the plans, it is described as a metal fabric.

Tilley asked if the Aspen sign will be back lit. Huston replied she was correct. Tilley asked if there are any signage rules to be aware of. Zimmer replied there will be, but this sign is not a lot of square feet being proposed. Signage rules call for a percentage of the façade under 500 square feet. This should be well under. He doesn't believe the cars would count as signs. He sees them as a design element.

Huston stated that they hope the schedule will be to have the Redevelopment Plan heard by City Council on November 17, 2014, and 1st reading on November 24, 2014. They are hoping to have this approved around December 15, 2014.

Penn asked about the west elevation. Huston believes they were asked to address the east elevation.

Peace understands that there will be a lot of details to be reviewed as this moves forward. The applicant will probably want a concrete strip along the curb, so when someone steps out of their car, there is paving, not turf. You would also want concrete strips for people to walk between meters. He guesses when that is done, there will not be enough room for turf at all. He would move the benches to out by the trees. Huston will pass that long to the architects.

Peace appreciates the new drawings. Fixtures from the light sources need to be shielded. You don't want to look up and see the light source. Zimmer added that it is his understanding that you might not see these from the sidewalk, but you would from your car on P Street.

Zimmer commented while the grass isn't wide enough, a permeable surface is preferable for the trees to survive. He further stated that this is a little out of sequence on the city's P Street work. Huston will coordinate with them.

ACTION:

Tilley moved approval of the project as proposed, with consideration being given to permeable surfaces around the trees, moving the benches toward the trees, creating an appropriate area for moving between parking stalls and sidewalks, shielding the lights, and coordinating with the renovation of P Street, seconded by Peace and carried 5-0: Eagle Bull, Kissel, Peace, Penn and Tilley voting 'yes'; Huston declaring a conflict of interest.

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

Zimmer stated that this is still in negotiations. It will be back. The Comprehensive Plan amendment will be before City Council this month. That is very general. There are no specifics with regard to the design of this site.

Miscellaneous

Zimmer stated that Urban Development has requested review of lighting the Elaine Hammer pedestrian bridge lighting on 27th Street, south of Y Street. At night, you can't see it from the street.

Trevor Hull of Erickson Sullivan Architects stated that his firm was asked by the City to light this bridge. The only light fixtures are the streetscape lighting and glow fixtures on the piers. What

you don't see is another set of piers and a plaza. There is a little landscaping. The existing lighting lights the sidewalk and plaza, but the arch is indistinguishable from the night sky. Hull wanted to light the arch. He found an LED linear fixture. It is color changing. It has the capability for a slow color change. You might not even notice it changing. The second priority is to light the piers. If the budget allows, they would also like to light the bottom portion. They would shield it so it would hit just the bridge and you wouldn't see the light fixture. He believes this would be a nice ambient light. They would like to get this installed as soon as possible.

Kissel understands that the color changing is not for vehicles. She questioned who it would be for and why. Hull thinks it is for vehicles, but you wouldn't notice it unless you were there over different days. They don't want a casino feel, but it would add some differentiation.

Tilley asked if they are looking to define bridge and make it more attractive. Hull replied yes. Tilley questioned if they foresee any safety benefit. Wynn Hjermstad believes this will be purely aesthetic. As designed, it's a nice bridge. They want to continue the revitalization of N. 27th Street. Back when this was first done, some lighting was incorporated, but taken out due to money and upkeep issues. These have since been taken care of. David Landis, Director of Urban Development, has been a champion of wanting to do something that would just give a little more visual image to this area. The Mayor has also expressed that he really likes this.

Kissel questioned if the colors can be changed. Ken Fairchild responded that it is whatever you can get with red, green and blue. Everyone was concerned about the amount of light that could be seen. It is about 5.8 watts per foot. The whole thing top and bottom would be about 3,000 watts, which is extremely low. They are using mostly 8 foot increments in the lighting strips. The piers would be shorter.

Huston generally likes the idea of highlighting the bridge. He supports this.

Fairchild stated that the color changes occur from one end to the other. They have talked with the manufacturer about control of the colors so it isn't a distraction.

Hull stated that it would be white inside the shield, and the outside color would be the color of the bridge.

Eagle Bull inquired if there is any light on the bridge currently. Hull doesn't believe there are any lights now. Fairchild noted this is a very busy bridge.

Kissel asked if this is a unique bridge in Lincoln. Huston believes the piers make it unique. Zimmer believes it is the most decorative of bike bridges.

Kissel stated that this lighting seems unusual from any other bridge. She is still making up her mind about it.

Zimmer stated this is one of those conspicuous placements. Kissel understands this is a lively retail corridor. She isn't uncomfortable with the idea, she is just making up her mind how she feels about it.

Peace wondered if there will be a point that you look up at the last minute and it could be really bright. Hull replied they tested that issue and he doesn't think it would be an issue. You would have to really lean out of your car at the last minute to see it. Fairchild added there is a diffuser.

Hull didn't consider uplighting the top chord. They didn't want excessive light pollution. Fairchild stated that they tested at night to see if a diffuser was needed.

Penn wondered if crime has been an issue on this bridge. Hjerstad is not aware of any safety issues. The only problem she has heard was an area on the east side that was attractive overnight sleepers. Parks & Recreation placed boulders there and now it is not a problem.

Huston inquired if these lights would be installed on the north and south face. Hull replied yes.

ACTION:

Huston moved approval of the lighting as proposed, seconded by Eagle Bull and carried 6-0: Eagle Bull, Huston, Kissel, Peace, Penn and Tilley voting 'yes'.

Larry Enersen Urban Design Award Nominations

Tilley would like to take a few minutes to discuss this award. She wants to gather some nominations.

Zimmer believes that the Holmes Lake renovation really makes it a lovely place.

Kissel asked if there was any reason Whittier wasn't nominated in the past. Zimmer replied that it might have been overlooked in a year that the process was still taking shape.

Tilley stated that the next step is to gather a list of past years nominations, and suggestions from today, send it to Gordon and the rest of the jury and nail down a date. We need to take a tour of all the nominees and bring the recommendation to this table.

Tilley noted that Ed listed the Paley sculpture and the Kuneko heads. Tower Square is amazing, but not lit. Kissel believes P Street is not ready, as well. The whole thing should be complete. Zimmer feels likewise about the canopy. He feels the area is still incomplete. Huston added that 11th Street from K St. to D St. is not yet done, but under appreciated.

Penn suggested the old Kmart building. When Kmart left, there was a huge old shell of a building for years that was an eyesore. She loves that it is revived and looks amazing. Peace designed it. It is a beautiful building.

Tilley noted that Lincoln has one of the best trail systems in the country. Zimmer stated that the trail system just won an APA award for Great American Places, along with the Haymarket.

Tilley would like the jury to look at any nominated sites before Thanksgiving. She requested that everyone send her their nominations by the end of the week.

Eagle Bull inquired what is on the list so far. Zimmer responded that it consists of Edge, Whittier, Holmes Lake, the Ferguson sculpture at 33rd St. and Sheridan Blvd., S. 11th Street and the protected bikeway.

Tilley stated that the criteria is flexible, but she believes the main point is if it enhances the urban fabric. Fallbrook was the winner last year.

Kissel was wondering about sculptures in front of a building. Tilley had considered the Kuneko heads herself. Since they sit so close to the hotel, it feels like it is part of the hotel. If it enhances the area, she believes it fits the criteria. Tom Laging had said that it could be something as small as a parking area. Kissel believes it needs to have impact. Tilley noted that NeighborWorks is a good example. It revitalized the neighborhood in a really smart way. They wanted to reward it for being a really positive change for the neighborhood.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.