

MEETING RECORD

NAME OF GROUP: URBAN DESIGN COMMITTEE

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING: January 6, 2015, 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; Jeffre Chadwick and Tim Gergen of Clark Enersen; Derek Zimmerman of Baylor Evnen; Bennie McCombs and Jeff McCombs; Kevin Abourezk of the Lincoln Journal Star and other interested parties.

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 December 2, 2014. Motion for approval made by Huston, seconded by Eagle Bull and carried 6-0: Eagle Bull, Kissel, Huston, Peace, Penn and Tilley voting 'yes'.

TOM & CHEE "SIDEWALK" CAFÉ AT TOWER SQUARE, 13TH AND P STREETS

Ed Zimmer stated that this café is proposed for Tower Square on the north edge. There will be two restaurants on the first floor of the Larson Building. They are putting railings on the curve of the pavement pattern in the Square. Their installation plan is to lift the bricks, install, anchor and replace the bricks. Tom and Chee and The Pretzel Maker are the two vendors. They submitted a railing design. They will be using the same tables and chairs as Bison Witches. They will paint theirs black. The City's furniture will be gray. Strictly speaking, this will not be a sidewalk café, as it is not on right-of-way. Since Tower Square is City property, the City's position is to treat this area and the outdoor dining adjacent to Bison Witches like sidewalk cafés.

Tilley how far the stage cuts into the park. Zimmer replied the stage is well off to the east. Tilley wondered about the green space. Zimmer replied there is a berm is along 13th St. Tilley questioned how big Tower Square is. Zimmer believes it is nearly 142 feet deep, could be 158 feet or so. The north end reads as part of the park, but it is lined up with the alley space to the east.

Peace questioned if the owners want the railing, or the City is requiring it. Zimmer believes they both want it. Huston wondered if a railing is required under the sidewalk café provisions. Zimmer replied you don't need a railing if you aren't serving liquor. It is the City's view that this use will help in activating the space.

Kissel understands they could have liquor if they want? Zimmer doesn't know if this is dedicated as park space or not. That would typically affect whether a liquor license would be considered. Like a sidewalk café, they would pay an annual fee to use the space.

Kissel questioned if this is the last opportunity for dining outside on Tower Square. Zimmer believes this is the last private-business opportunity.

Penn is trying to figure out how far this is encroaching into the space. It feels like it is pretty far, but it may not be. Zimmer has measurements of the request, but no aerial or overall site plan of Tower Square. Eagle Bull would like to see the measurements. Penn concurred. This is such an artistic area and she would hate to damage the aesthetic of the area.

Kissel asked if the size is consistent with what has been approved. Zimmer believes this will be visually consistent and is part of the master plan for the Square.

Penn really wishes the fence didn't have to go up. Something about ten percent of the park being taken for private use, concerns her.

Huston is sympathetic to the idea that there needs to be control of the outdoor space.

Kissel sees this as more of a European piazza. The fence breaks up the space.

ACTION:

Huston moved approval, subject to no expansion for additional "sidewalk café" space within this park, unless a larger site plan is shown to see the greater effect. He believes what has been proposed is consistent with the original design. The motion died for lack of a second.

This will be deferred until next month

Peace would like Zimmer to clarify if the City is requiring the railing. Kissel concurred. It would be nice to know why a railing is being proposed. Penn wondered about a movable fence.

23RD AND O STREETS REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Kissel declared a conflict of interest.

Jeffre Chadwick stated that this is the former OfficeMax building. They liked the building because it had good lines. This is an old Safeway. They would like to get rid of some of the

railings and grade-changes at the front entrance and streamline the entry experience. The proposal would remove the old OfficeMax stepped parapet at the front and add opportunities for signage. They would maintain as much of the existing structure as possible, reface with new brick and provide ADA accessibility. They are looking at adding some greenery on the islands in the parking lot. This building will house a couple of different medical/human services tenants who would coordinate their services. They will maintain a lot of the openness with glass on the façade. The intent is to maintain trees on the west (23rd St.) side, and add trees on O Street. Originally there was a question about a drive up window and an east addition. At this point, they are not adding either of those. This will be a combination of Peoples Health Center and Lutheran Family Services. It is a great location and very accessible. They want to have a welcoming reception area. They are proposing to take off the south loading dock and create more green space on N Street.

Tim Gergen stated that removing the loading dock gives a lot more opportunity for green space. The interior break room is moving and this creates opportunities for an outdoor area. They are also adding a lot more green space on O Street. He believes it will be about 20 feet wide.

Chadwick noted that it was discovered that the dock was added on to the building at some point. It will be taken out. There will be a new loading dock on the east side.

Tilley questioned what the trees will be. Gergen replied that they are thinking about larger canopy trees. Tilley asked about the rooftop HVAC equipment. Chadwick responded that currently, there is one large system on the roof. They would remove that and are looking at three or four smaller systems. They would be installed farther north on the building to hide them better.

Tilley really likes the green space being proposed. This is a thoughtful treatment.

Huston stated that they have done exactly what was asked.

Penn noted that the only thing they weren't able to do is influence the front a little more.

ACTION:

Huston approval of the design as proposed, seconded by Tilley and carried 5-0: Eagle Bull, Huston, Peace, Penn and Tilley voting 'yes'; Kissel declaring a conflict of interest.

DRAFT FOR 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

Zimmer stated that he presents an annual report to the committee each year. He looked back at last year and noticed that it was full of projects that are now built. He tried to include major projects that were looked at, into this report.

Huston inquired if the lighting has been implemented on the Elaine Hammer Bridge. Zimmer believes it will be installed in the spring.

Zimmer asked for advice on what to include regarding the Larry Enersen Urban Design Award in the annual report. Kissel questioned if it has gone to the Arts Council. Zimmer replied that he is just talking to them today. Committee members agreed that they believe it should be in the report, and wondered if something could be created for the Internet. Tilley believes that there is a "reveal" aspect to this. Perhaps it should wait until the Mayor's art awards? Everyone agreed it should be revealed after the Mayor's awards. Zimmer will place it in the annual report, but not formally publicize anything until after the Mayor's art awards in May or June, 2015. Zimmer will state the rationale for the decision as well.

Miscellaneous

- Zimmer stated that the appointment of Emily Casper to the Urban Design Committee was introduced at City Council. She is a landscape architect who works for the University of Nebraska. Her appointment should be finalized next week. He anticipates her joining this group for their February, 2015 meeting.
- Huston wondered if Zimmer has any insight into what is on the horizon for 2015. Zimmer believes you will see a lot of redevelopment activity. He thinks there are some new ideas for the 21st and N Street site. We keep getting inquiries about student housing projects. He would like to see current projects finished and occupied before more are approved, but those may be solely private sector decisions, if zoning is in place and no public assistance is sought.

Huston can appreciate bringing students downtown, closer to the campus. Zimmer noted that Lumberworks is not student housing, it is elderly housing. Huston stated that it is his recollection that the 2040 Comprehensive Plan speaks to 3,000 dwelling units for downtown. He noted that we are halfway there only five years into it.

Hung Vo stated that he is a student who worked with the Nebraska Dept. of Economic Development and was involved in a focus group on young-adult housing. The main complaint seemed to be about too much student housing and the frat atmosphere of the downtown area.

- Zimmer noted there has been some discussion about redevelopment next to the LES Building at 11th & O Street.
- Kissel asked about SODO (a South Downtown planning effort). Zimmer replied it is not a city project. Kissel posed the question, what if we want to be involved? Zimmer will look into it. Huston thinks perhaps a typical subarea process would be appropriate.

Kissel just wants the chance to be involved and see the information available. Zimmer doesn't have any sense that the private funding for this effort was obtained to avoid the city's involvement, but rather to prioritize the planning study of the area, ahead of when public resources would have been available. He will see what he can find out for UDC's information and involvement. He believes SODO currently has more ties with Urban Development than with Planning Dept.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

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