

MEETING RECORD

NAME OF GROUP: URBAN DESIGN COMMITTEE

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING: February 3, 2015, 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; (Emily Casper and Tammy Eagle Bull absent).

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Ed Zimmer, Stacey Groshong-Hageman and Teresa McKinstry of the Planning Department; Hallie Salem from Urban Development; Jordan Berger from Tetrad Property Group; Mike and Cindy Manley from Tom & Chee; Ryan Schmitt and Dave Johnson from Studio 951; Brett West from WRK, LLC; 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 January 6, 2015. Motion for approval made by Huston, seconded by Peace and carried 5-0: Kissel, Huston, Peace, Penn and Tilley voting 'yes'; Casper and Eagle Bull absent.

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

Hallie Salem explained that this outdoor dining project has a long history before Tom & Chee became tenants in the Larson Building. She showed one of the original designs for Tower Square and indicated there were already two outdoor dining spaces defined. One is outside of Bison Witches (currently under construction). The second indicated fencing that goes all the way around the north dining area. In addition there is seating in Tower Square that Parks & Rec will pull in and out, depending on events, that anyone can use. Next to the Larson building is what was proposed for outdoor dining. Tom & Chee is looking at using round tables and umbrellas rather than a canopy. One of the original thoughts was to have the outdoor spaces follow the concentric circles. What Tom & Chee is proposing is very similar to this original proposal. The fencing is the same fencing that will be used for Bison Witches. It was originally planned for the space. The powder coating and gray color will be the same.

Architect Dave Johnson appeared on behalf of Tom & Chee. He stated that Ryan Schmitt, Mike and Cindy Manley and Jordan Berger were also present today. He apologized for not being present at the last meeting. He has read the minutes from the previous meeting and heard the committee members' concerns about the fencing and umbrellas.

Penn had concerns about the fencing. Johnson showed what was originally proposed followed a concentric circle. They are proposing to have the fencing go to the edge of the window, corresponding to the restaurant space on the interior. There would be a six foot wide opening instead of a gate. The clients are open to discussing the fence. There was discussion at the previous meeting about the need for a fence. They are not planning on having alcohol, so a fence is not required.

Huston would be very cautious about not having a fence. Tom & Chee could not exclude anyone from their dining area unless it is defined with a fence.

Salem believes something is needed that delineates the area. Kissel questioned if it has to be permanent? Salem replied that you would want permanent enough that someone couldn't walk it off somewhere. Another concern is the pavers. The fencing needs to be anchored to the concrete beneath the pavers. The City doesn't necessarily want the retailer taking pavers out and putting them back except to install the fence.

Jordan Berger stated that you can't guarantee that someone won't want to license the outdoor dining space for alcohol in the future. He would hate to have limitations on the space.

Mike Manley sees that a fence would give them control about who is in their area and who is not.

Johnson stated that the plan is for each post to be secured in concrete substrate, with the pavers replaced above.

Tilley stated that at the last meeting she could not envision the fence in context with the square.

Huston wanted to know the approximate square footage. Mike Manley believes it is about 525 square feet--15 feet by 35 feet.

Penn walked around the area. Sitting there looking at it, she starting thinking maybe it wasn't a big enough space. The other thing that isn't shown is a landscape drain in the outdoor space.

Salem has seen a lot of different design ideas on the drain. It is a functioning drain. Johnson noted that they will have to work around it.

Penn questioned where the trash bins will be located. Salem replied there will be trash containers for Tower Square now that have not been placed yet. She could order more and the applicant could have the same containers.

Johnson continued that the applicant is looking at 9 foot commercial grade umbrellas. They will be vented at the top with wood shafts and pedestals. He has inquired if the manufacturer

offers a yellow color. Mike Manley added that they don't. He would have to go a different manufacturer or a different style. He is planning on doing four umbrellas. He is looking for thoughts on color. Johnson stated they would prefer all four umbrellas in red. With the stage structure and the sculpture, he would prefer a single color.

Huston questioned if there are any franchise restrictions. Cindy Manley replied yes. Huston noted that is why he would hate to restrict the colors.

Tilley is okay with all one solid color.

Johnson would like to address the furniture. Salem pointed out that already in the plaza is Bison Witches' black wrought iron tables and chairs. Tower Square has wrought iron silver tables and chairs. Mike Manley stated that their chairs will be stackable and will be brought in at night. They will have two different sizes of tables to accommodate different size groups.

Ed Zimmer added that silver and black are being used as a subtle variation to distinguish what is movable and what belongs to the food vendors.

Penn questioned the process in determining when furniture will be in the square, and not. Salem responded that is a Parks and Recreation situation. She thinks the hope is, as the weather warms up, the tables and chairs will be out all day, every day. This probably won't happen during the winter. The intention was to have the tables and chairs out when the weather is more suitable for outdoor activities. There is storage in the garage. She believes the plan is to not have them tethered so they can be moved around. They are working the Downtown Lincoln Association in terms of maintenance.

Johnson questioned if there is a preference for the railing or any other issues.

Tilley likes the idea of having the fence on the sides and having an open concept.

ACTION:

Huston moved approval, seconded by Tilley.

Johnson will make sure that there is at least one trash can in the seating area. Tilley loves hearing that. It is important to know.

Motion for approval carried 5-0: Kissel, Huston, Peace, Penn and Tilley voting 'yes'; Casper and Eagle Bull absent.

COLOR COURT REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT, L – M, 8TH – 9TH STREETS

Salem stated this is an older TIF project. A couple of items have been funded. One of the things that is still left undone is the 9th Street streetscape. They feel they can get the best bang for the buck on N Street.

Brett West from WRK appeared. They are redoing the old Peanut Butter factory. They plan to fill the space with new tenants and long term leases. There is some disrepair along the street. There are some trees and landscape areas. The current plan is to replace the concrete. There will be a ramp to access the front of the “Booth Building.” They will redo the curb and planters. They will work with the DLA on a planting mix. They hope to have new low growth-height plants.

Kissel asked if there are any plans for a streetscape improvement up and down 9th Street. Salem replied that the South Haymarket study provides ideas to do something in a broader area. At this time, the limited funding doesn't provide enough. There is potential for something in the future. The intention here is to not do something that makes it difficult to do something different in the future. You don't typically see this as a dining street. It would be nice to improve the streetscape in this entryway corridor.

Kissel sees this as a transition area. Huston doesn't believe these concepts would be inconsistent with that idea. Salem believes the trees that are healthy can be maintained and in the future, something else could be added.

West will look at the health of the trees and if less concrete is needed around the trees, that will be ironed out with the DLA.

Penn questioned if more trees would be added. West thinks one more tree could be added. He added that there are current issues with needing an ADA access.

Salem noted that generally we aim for a minimum of 4 x 12' planting beds for trees.

Peace thinks this is fine as is, but the south end where you go from 14 foot to 4 foot, you could stair step. He thinks you could make the west edge more green.

Zimmer stated one of the characteristics is 9th Street has 120 feet right-of-way. Stacey Groshong Hageman noted that the sidewalks are about 25 feet wide. This leaves room to make it comfortable for pedestrians. Zimmer would also mentioned that stairs and ramps into the Booth Building were contemplated five years ago, along with a dock-like feature.

Peace asked if the detail on the railing is still in progress. West replied yes. Peace would like to see if kept as simple as possible.

ACTION:

Peace moved approval, seconded by Penn and carried 5-0: Kissel, Huston, Peace, Penn and Tilley voting 'yes'; Casper and Eagle Bull absent.

SP15004 FOR HELIOSAGE "HOLDREGE SOLAR CENTER" NORTH OF I-80 AT 7501 WEST HOLDREGE

Zimmer stated there is an item coming up on the Planning Commission agenda for a solar project. The client is LES. HelioSage is the installer of solar farms. LES is trying to find a location somewhat like their windmill location. They would like some visibility, but won't be visually obnoxious. This is proposed for a location that is on one of the entryways. There is language in the zoning code that can apply to this, requiring screening if the project would adversely affect an entryway. LES wishes to have some visibility from the Interstate. It is about six miles from the State Capitol. They haven't done all the environmental work yet. It will most likely be a minimum of 200 feet from the Interstate. This would be on the hillside in the distance. The solar panels are six to eight feet tall, on a pedestal. They tilt and follow the course of the sun. There is about 140 acres in the area being applied for, but they will use only 40 acres. In looking at the Capitol Environs View Corridors in that location, there are important views of the Capitol but you are looking the other way. LES is promoting customer support of this installation through the Solar Shares program. There would be a kiosk on West Holdrege, the north border of the site.

Huston stated there are many restrictions with being along the Interstate.

Zimmer stated that the intention is to have all wiring underground.

Huston stated I-80 is a primary entryway in the 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

Penn thinks there would need to be an inverter somewhere. Zimmer stated this site is very close to a substation.

Zimmer noted that a key question is, they are planning on asking not to screen it from the Interstate. They are asking urban design advice on the screening.

Penn thinks these should be visible. They are very cool. The other committee members agreed.

Peace wondered if there should be something there, other than just the panels. Penn thinks you are going to see them. There will be reflection and other issues. You would not want landscaping to obscure the light they receive.

Zimmer noted that the FAA has seen this and stated they have no issues.

Penn loves the idea and loves it being visible. It would be nice to see more details.

ACTION:

Huston made a motion expressing general support and allowing the site to be visible (unscreened), requesting that the site plan, when developed, be brought back to Urban Design committee for comment, seconded by Tilley.

Kissel thinks everyone applauds this and just doesn't want it to seem out of place in forty to fifty years when the technology is likely to be out of date. That is why she wants to see it again. She questioned if there is an entryway plan for this corridor.

Zimmer replied that recently, he and Stacey Hageman were asked to review entryways from the 2040 plan. The opinion was that entryways shown on the map are so varied that they should be addressed individually. A "one size fits all" seems like a very poor idea. Even east Cornhusker Highway has its strengths. Staff recommends this needs to be on a case-by-case basis and work on prioritizing. They will engage other departments to make a set of recommendations.

Huston believes the Comprehensive Plan makes reference to that. Zimmer sees that as the next step. Parks & Rec and Public Works are key players. Huston believes this could involve Urban Development as well, for those parts that are in redevelopment areas.

Motion carried 5-0: Kissel, Huston, Peace, Penn and Tilley voting 'yes'; Casper and Eagle Bull absent.

Miscellaneous

- Zimmer stated that the new Committee member Emily Casper was planning on attending today, but was unable due to a last minute meeting at work.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:15 p.m.