

## MEETING RECORD

**NAME OF GROUP:** URBAN DESIGN COMMITTEE

**DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING:** October 6, 2015, 3:00 p.m., Conference Room 210, County-City Building, 555 S. 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Lincoln, NE

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

**OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:** Ed Zimmer, Stacey Groshong-Hageman and Teresa McKinstry of the Planning Department; Steve Werthmann, Sean McClatchey, Pat Ribeiro and Kurt Elder of Urban Development; and Ken Innes.

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

Penn then requested a motion approving the minutes of the regular meeting held August 27, 2015. Motion for approval made by Tilley, seconded by Huston and carried 4-0: Huston, Kissel, Penn and Tilley voting 'yes'; Casper, Eagle Bull and Peace absent.

### **NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN STANDARDS REVIEW OF SINGLE-FAMILY DWELLING AT 224 N. 28<sup>TH</sup> STREET (AFFORDABLE HOUSING INITIATIVE/URBAN DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT)**

Steve Werthmann stated they are attempting to build a small house to fit on a nonstandard lot, approximately 50 by 60 feet. They would like to submit a change of design for the house. This was previously approved for a different design. They think this might be more acceptable to the committee.

Zimmer stated there were also financial considerations to the previously approved design.

Penn believes last time, there were concerns about budget and some design issues as well. This design is completely different from the last one submitted.

Kissel questioned if a different architect was used for this design. Werthmann replied yes. They didn't just want to build a small version of houses in the neighborhood, they wanted to build something unique.

Zimmer stated that there is a similarly positioned house across the street. This lot size is 55 by 48 feet. It is quite small. There are varying designs of houses in the neighborhood, with the houses facing all different directions. It doesn't seem to make a lot of sense to govern the new design based on what it faces on the block face since there is such diversity present in the area.

Huston wondered whether or not the garage could be accessed from the alley. Zimmer noted that garage doors facing the alley have to be ten feet off the alley.

Kissel wondered when you have a nonstandard lot and something has to give, what should give first, in Ed's opinion. Zimmer believes that the zoning code will spell out most of this. Huston realizes there is some criteria involved. This lot predates both the subdivision and zoning code. Zimmer believes this is one of those adjustments based on those around it. He doesn't think you could waive the garage door ten foot rule. He believes that is a Building and Safety rule.

Tilley thought there was an accessibility issue to the previous design. Huston remembers Peace and Penn talking about the expense of the last design.

Werthmann stated that the owner of the house to the south would have purchased this parcel if he could. It would have been too big of an expense for him. Urban Development uses federal funds. We have no choice once the house has been demolished. We have to rebuild and place a low to moderate income owner in the property.

Tilley believes the last time we reviewed this house, there was a discussion about referencing the Queen Anne style. The neighborhood seems to be quite mixed in designs. Zimmer was involved in discussions on both designs. Part of the expense of the former design is they were reusing a couple of elements. IT was a fairly contemporary design with a couple of pieces added on. He wouldn't propose this in a historic district, or on the block face of P St. or Q St., but this is a backlot. He believes there is a place for more opportunity on this lot.

Penn questioned who designed this house. Sean McClatchen of Urban Development Dept. replied that Paul Sayer drew it. McClatchen looked for some smaller houses on the internet and sent them over to him for reference. Penn understands that Urban Development was looking specifically for a modern design house. McClatchen replied yes. Penn questioned some of the materials. Ken Innes reviewed some of the elements with Penn. Penn sees this as a very complex design. Innes sees some interior elements they can do a lot less expensive than the first design. They were thinking metal siding. He doesn't really see an issue with this design. Werthmann thinks that one issue that comes up with a simple design on a small house, the interior is not very interesting. They wanted to add some elements to the exterior to make this space more unexpected.

Penn is of the opinion that she is an advocate of modern design. There are some elements to this that she really likes. She likes the windows and angle ceiling, but to her it doesn't quite fit in the neighborhood. A cute cottage style would have fit much better. She believes it would have opened up the market much more. She is not criticizing modern style, she just believes it doesn't fit in this neighborhood.

Kissel stated that when she saw this design, it reminded her of an affordable neighborhood. She would agree that a cottage would have been more appropriate. The garage issue concerns her. It

is such a narrow lot. It is a shame that we are eating away at the space with a garage. She believes there is a better way to orient the house.

Tilley loves modern architecture but this feels like a sore thumb in this neighborhood. She thinks you could do something really charming that would fit the neighborhood.

Huston sees this as an improvement from what this committee approved two months ago. Tilley stated this is an improvement from what is there now. Penn stated that there were many details to the previous design that were going to be too expensive. Tilley noted that Peace and Penn believed they were missing an opportunity to do better architecture. This design is more cohesive, but it doesn't feel like it fits the neighborhood. Kissel added that the old design had context, this one doesn't. Penn commented she isn't sure the applicant is going for the broadest market with this design.

Zimmer explained that Urban Design Committee is advising on a City project affecting urban design. As far as the Neighborhood Design Standards go, this probably fits the standards, but the standards aren't contextual.

Tilley stated that the previous application tried to be conscious of the surrounding designs. She imagines driving down 28<sup>th</sup> Street and this will be so different from everything else. Her feeling is that this should probably be a cottage style house. She questioned if that would increase the cost significantly. Zimmer doesn't believe that would necessarily be the case.

Penn stated there are a lot of great interior attributes to the proposed design. Tilley agreed. She just doesn't believe this design is right for this neighborhood.

**ACTION:**

Huston moved approval. Motion died for lack of a second.

Penn stated that on many historic homes, the floorplan is the same, but the roof line or porch changes. This could even be a prairie style. Kissel noted that a cottage wouldn't have the garage in front. With City money involved, she believes it is important to have a good design. You want to be able to point to a project with pride.

Innes doesn't think this lot is big enough to do any type of garage off the alley. He doesn't think it can be done. The alleys have been so encroached on in most places.

Zimmer brought up a design for a house on 22<sup>nd</sup> St. and E St. While the block has an alley, this particular lot lacks alley access. Sometimes even in a neighborhood with no facing garages, it is the only option.

Werthmann stated that we want the buyer to have a private backyard.

There was a discussion of different house styles and elements.

Tilley wants to be proud of what is approved. She wants the neighborhood to be enriched. This is another opportunity to address this. She is leaning towards asking the applicant to go back and do something that fits into the neighborhood.

Tilley made a motion that she would like to see an alternate design, seconded by Kissel.

Huston wondered if we are saying that everything in the neighborhood must look alike. Kissel thinks that contextual is different from lookalike. Huston likes this a lot better from what we saw a few months ago. He thinks this design has possibilities to raise the bar. Penn would disagree. There were some interesting details on some of the other houses in the area. There are some redeeming characteristics on houses in the neighborhood. We have approved modern designs on this committee.

Motion for an alternate design failed 3-1: Kissel, Penn and Tilley voting 'yes'; Huston voting 'no'; Casper, Eagle Bull and Peace absent. (Four affirmative votes are required to pass a motion of the Committee.)

Zimmer stated that November 3, 2015 is the next regular meeting for this committee. There will be a joint Historic Preservation Commission/Urban Design Committee next Thursday, October 15, 2015. This application could possibly be heard after the joint meeting, if the applicant is ready and the committee desires.

#### **SIDEWALK CAFÉ FOR COTTONWOOD CAFÉ, 440 S. 11<sup>TH</sup> ST., SUITE C**

Zimmer stated the applicant hasn't provided any materials yet.

Huston likes what they have done to the entryway.

Zimmer stated this will be a coffee shop, café and wine bar. They have repaved the sidewalk. It seems that they could place the café on either side, but he believes the south side is their intention.

#### **UPDATE ON OUTDOOR DINING APPLICATIONS**

Zimmer stated that the previous drawing submitted by the Falafel King was inadequate. He informed Hallie Salem with Urban Development that the café design hasn't been approved yet. He is hoping for more information.

**Staff Report:**

- There will be a joint meeting on October 15, 2015 for Historic Preservation Commission and Urban Design Committee. This will be to review the “Telegraph District” redevelopment in the vicinity of 21<sup>st</sup> St. and N St. They have hired Clark Enersen and Papageorge of Chicago as the master design team. The first piece will be the 401 building, the old red brick Windstream building that Nelnet wants to be in as soon as possible. That will probably be the first piece. Liz Kuhlman requested to meet jointly. The other item to be heard is the South Haymarket subarea plan, which is ready to go into the formal approval process. There is an open house this Thursday, October 8, 2015 from 4:30 – 6:30 p.m. in Room 113 of the County/City Building.
- There was a discussion of the SoDo neighborhood plan. City staff hasn’t been asked to review a plan yet. The consultant team have done a lot of research and outreach process, but not directly engaged the City yet.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:40 p.m.