

MEETING RECORD

NAME OF GROUP: URBAN DESIGN COMMITTEE

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING: October 2, 2018, 3:00 p.m., Conference Room 210, County-City Building, 555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln, NE.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Amber Brannigan, Tom Huston and Gill Peace; (Emily Casper, Tammy Eagle Bull, Michelle Penn and Trent Reed absent).

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Stacey Hageman, Ed Zimmer, Paul Barnes, Andrew Thierolf and Teresa McKinstry of the Planning Dept.; Hallie Salem of Urban Development; and Matt Olberding of the Lincoln Journal Star.

Gill Peace called the meeting to order and acknowledged the posting of the Open Meetings Act in the room.

Peace noted that the minutes will be approved at the next meeting since there was not a quorum present.

DOWNTOWN LINCOLN MASTER PLAN (PLANNING DEPT.):

Paul Barnes stated that the plan is starting to be formulated. They want to share some big ideas for catalyst projects.

Andrew Thierolf stated that this is an update on the preliminary findings. An online survey was done. There were over 1,700 responses. A question was "What is ONE action that will be most important to downtown?" The highest answer was to redevelop unused and vacant sites. 17 percent gave this as their answer. The consultants put together the survey and have done these in numerous cities. They said that 17 percent is a very high response. There were several different working groups and a project committee. A kid/dog/family friendly downtown was a big theme. A central library was another. There were two open houses that were successful. One open house was held on April 10, 2018 at the Rococo with over 220 attendees. Designation of an area for music and art was a big interest. A charrette and open house was held in May 2018. There were 200 plus participants.

The first phase of this project is a development forecast. Residential was the strongest segment. We are looking at quite a few residential units in the next five to ten years. Today, we have over 500,000 square feet of office space downtown. There will also be a demand for new space. Retail is more of a niche segment. We are not making a definite recommendation on a convention center. Our consultant has said it should be about 150,000 square feet. The one in Omaha is around 350,000 square feet. We would be looking at more regional and statewide conferences. This limits the potential size. The plan will recommend a more fully fledged convention center study. The overall

theme is the Center of Opportunity. Our consultant does a report on trends every year. The biggest trend is increasing costs, particularly in superstar cities, and pushing millennials out. We need to capitalize on these trends and position ourselves to be an 'affordable' city.

Regarding the Pershing Block, we will not be able to give a definitive answer. We will point out several different options and point out the pros and cons. The one with the greatest catalytic effect would be a civic use and park. Another option would be a smaller civic plaza which would include some mixed use or office. Another idea is a library or community space, along with a civic space. The boldest proposal shows redeveloping the Federal block, possibly with a library and a larger mixed use residential.

The next catalyst is something we are calling West Park. This was also in the South Haymarket plan. In the broad sense, there would be a ten acre park. A lot of people have indicated they want a dog park downtown. Regarding the Sprenger Lumber building, this envisions it being acquired for a year round market or something appropriate adjacent to a park.

The next area is the O Street Corridor. This would enhance O Street's curb appeal. It would involve streetscape improvements and façade improvements. There are some ash trees along O Street that need replaced. There are some properties along O Street that are available for potential redevelopment.

One of the big ideas is the 11th & M Street Greenways. This would create two linear greenways through downtown. It would use existing right-of-way so no additional property would need to be purchased. By converting the diagonal parking to parallel and moving the bike lane, we gain space. 11th Street right-of-way is 120 feet, M Street is 100 feet.

The Music District wasn't really on our radar when we started this. The consultants were impressed by our unofficial music district downtown. This would allow to celebrate the live music scene in Lincoln. The Bennet Martin site could be used for a potential music type use. Special pavers or improvements to the alleyway could be used. There is also programming and branding.

The last item is finishing or cleaning up projects from 2005. Some West Haymarket blocks are still undeveloped. There are some holes in the O Street streetscape. There is still the K Street building. There is the possibility of two way traffic on 13th. The downtown shuttle and the multi-modal transportation center are being worked on. We have a grant submitted for that. There are some other projects and sites that aren't necessarily catalyst projects such as the LPD maintenance facility, Southeast Community College on O Street, two new public parking garages, StarTran property and underused blocks such as 9th St., 10th St., M St. & N St.; 9th St., 10th St., L St. & M St.). There is also the Federal garage block, JPA lands, Bennet Martin/YMCA, Post Office and one-way to two-way street conversion. We have worked with Public Works to identify phasing for one-way to two-way. 13th Street would be first. Next would be 11th St., 12th St., 14th St. and maybe M St. and N St. After that, we would look at P St., Q St., 16th St. and 17th St. 9th St., 10th St., K St. and L St. probably wouldn't change.

The next steps are to write the plan. We hope to have the plan done by the end of this month. We have a couple of neighborhood meetings scheduled. There will be a public open house on October 30 in the rail yard. The cube will be utilized. There will be a City Council briefing on October 29 and we are targeting adoption of the plan for mid December 2018. There is a lot more information available on the City's website at www.plandowntown.com

Huston stated it has been a good process. He is impressed with the level of interest. The consultants have done a good job.

Peace inquired if this will be a standalone master plan. Thierolf responded that yes, it will be a standalone plan. The consultant is PUMA (Progressive Urban Management Association) from Denver, Civitas and FHU (Felsburg Holt & Ullevig). PUMA has an impressive resume. They have a global trends report that is used a lot. Huston likes that their planning is market based.

Peace wondered if they took a look at the existing 2005 Downtown Master Plan. Thierolf replied yes. Huston noted that most of the catalyst projects that were listed in that plan were completed. Thierolf agreed. Most were accomplished that we wanted to do. Hallie Salem stated that the 2005 plan is on the City's website so it can still be seen. Barnes added that there is a story map online for this master plan. Huston believes the primary emphasis is adding to the range of housing options downtown.

Peace wondered what the adoption of this plan will trigger. Barnes stated that the plan has short term, mid-term and long term action steps. It is a matter of prioritizing things. The 13th St., K St. to O St. could be a capitol project. Steps need to be taken. There are also City partners, DLA (Downtown Lincoln Association) partners and private partners.

Peace inquired if the Federal government is will to cooperate on any of the catalyst projects. Barnes believes it is a matter of having more discussions and the funding. They have requirements that they have to follow. Salem added that part of the difficulty is the criteria for security for temporary parking.

Huston stated that when you think how much downtown has expanded since 2005, i.e. Antelope Valley, West Haymarket, there is a lot that has been built. The biggest challenge is affordable housing. The cost of housing in Denver has increased exponentially. It could happen in Lincoln in the future. Brannigan also wonders about small businesses. How do we manage cost of renting a space downtown? Salem believes it is weighing what the City can do versus what the private sector has to assist with. Barnes added that our consultants have said the prices in Denver have gone too far. It is figuring out strategies.

STAFF REPORT:

- Stacey Hageman stated that this committee will need to review the new CIP (Capital Improvement Program). She will review the document and try to determine which projects need reviewed. She will come up with a preliminary list and find ones that have an urban design impact. Barnes believes one example is the 33rd St. and Cornhusker Hwy. project.

Zimmer explained that the CIP is a six year document, but not all of the projects are funded. Mill and overlay on Holdrege St. doesn't have an urban design impact. Street widening could have a large impact on an area. Staff is trying to build a system that will flag other departments.

- Zimmer stated that staff reviews outdoor dining downtown. We don't bring a lot of vendor carts in for review. This is a question of a built cart. There is a list of what you can sell on the sidewalk. This is for balloons. The applicant has proposed a two wheel cart with a bungeed on helium tank. This lacks an element of livening downtown. There are also other issues of football Saturdays that don't allow vendors downtown.

Huston would suggest some screening so it doesn't look so industrial. Brannigan offered that it could be camouflaged with balloons or something.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m.