

MEETING RECORD

NAME OF GROUP: URBAN DESIGN COMMITTEE

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING: November 6, 2018, 3:00 p.m., Conference Room 210, County-City Building, 555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln, NE.

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

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Ed Zimmer, Stacey Hageman, Teresa McKinstry, Rachel Jones, David Cary, Collin Christopher of the Planning Dept.; David Landis, Hallie Salem, Dallas McGee and Ernie Castillo of Urban Development; Tam Allen; Jim Van Duys with Smallwood, Reynolds, Stewart, Stewart & Associates, Inc. (SRSS); Karen Nalow and Tim Gergen from Clark Enersen Partners; Liz Bavitz from Sinclair Hille; Todd Hesson from Encompass Architects; Adam Criswell with Speedway Properties; Sam Manzitto; Corey Brodersen with JEO Architecture; Ben Hastreiter with Nebraska Nursery; and Matt Olberding from Lincoln Journal Star.

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

Penn then called for a motion approving the minutes of the regular meeting held October 2, 2018. Motion for approval made by Huston, seconded by Peace and carried 5-0: Brannigan, Casper, Huston, Peace and Penn voting 'yes'; Eagle Bull and Reed absent.

LIED PLACE RESIDENCES (TAM ALLAN/URBAN DEVELOPMENT DEPT.):

Huston declared a conflict of interest.

Hallie Salem stated that Urban Development is working with Tam Allen to prepare a plan amendment to go to the Planning Dept. for review and as part of a potential TIF (Tax Increment Financing) project. The design of the building and area around it comes to the Urban Design Committee for review. The plan amendment is to the Lincoln Center Redevelopment Plan.

Tam Allen appeared as the developer of the Lied Place Project. He thanked everyone and noted that Jim Van Duys from SRSS Architecture and Liz Bavitz from Sinclair Hille are attending the meeting today.

Jim Van Duys of SRSS appeared. His firm has been very fortunate to be architects for some significant projects. It is wonderful to see this project coming to fruition. This building will be a

twenty story combination of mixed uses—residential, retail and office uses. The lower level will house a restaurant and some service space. There will be three levels above that which will be office space, some of which designed by Sinclair Hille. This project is designed on the former Applebee's site. The property is very constrained. They have been working to create a methodology to get a building on this site. The project will be a flat concrete slab structure. The building skin will be a combination of stone skin pre-faced panels on the lower two levels and a series of pre-cast concrete bands. The infill is window well framing and metal panels. The intent is to provide open, airy spaces for residents with great views. The south side has smaller windows. This is typically a circulation space. The entry has a canopy which extends the length of the site. The canopy material is still being determined. The structure will probably be steel tubes. The top most likely be a laminated plastic panel. The band is a concrete band. Above that is metal panel and glass infill for residences. The site plan is being developed by Tim Gergen and includes an expanded sidewalk treatment which is being created by taking one lane out of service on Q Street. This allows for a more gracious screening of the building. They believe this building has great potential. The building is intended to harmonize with the building on the corner. The color palette is intended to go with the brick.

Allen noted that the picture shows an enclosure that will not be done. Hallie Salem realizes that the committee members will want to look at the façade in greater detail. The streetscape is still being worked on. Huston added that they hope to come back to Urban Design Committee in December for further review. Davis Landis noted that there is an LES (Lincoln Electric System) transformer and that it is still being decided how to camouflage it.

Van Duys is aware that a Lincoln Ordinance mandates a certain percentage of street glass on the building. They are at the 70 percent. He added that the drawings do not represent the entry doors being recessed three feet.

The building color palette is intended to harmonize with the parking garage. The height of the windows is being driven by an agreement with the City. The top of the building is mostly a mechanical screen. One elevator would go up here for servicing purposes. The building will have aircraft warning lights on the top. This will need to go through the FAA (Federal Aviation Administration).

Ed Zimmer noted this is within the zoning for height limits. This does not fall within any of the Capitol View Corridors.

Van Duys stated that the glass would be a type of Low-e glass. The specifics have not been selected yet.

Penn wondered about the color palette shown for the first floor. Van Duys replied it will be a type of granite. They found granite is most resistant to various problems over time. Marble and limestones in thin profiles can absorb water and create problems.

Brannigan questioned if the south side will be hallways. Van Duys stated that one side has a service corridor. The other side has passenger elevators. The south side is often the corridor you use to get

into your unit. Allen added there will be three units per floor with a single corridor on the south side. Brannigan was wondering if there was any design that will allow the sun to travel through to the south side. Allen stated that they put windows on the south side as far down as we are allowed for fire safety.

Brannigan believes a driving lane is being taken out for a patio restaurant. Salem stated that Q Street throughout most of the corridor is four lanes. This block is five lanes. There have been discussions with Public Works & Utilities about taking out this lane. Part of the shift will be the far south lane instead of being left turn only, will be a left turn and through shared lane. This is not a very wide sidewalk. We are hoping to activate the street front to make it feel safer and more active.

Peace questioned if there will be any parking in front. Salem responded it will be loading in the front. All services will be in the front as well.

Brannigan inquired if the target will be one bedroom or studio apartments. Allen replied that the plan calls for a two bedroom unit in between two good size one bedroom units per floor. Salem stated there will be a total of 40 units.

Allen stated that parking will be in the Que Place parking garage. If you look to the garage wall facing this area, there are punchheads in the poured concrete walls anticipating a building to be here. The original stakeholders in the Lied Center requested a suitable use for this in 1992. The next one was in 1999. Zimmer added that the overall planning of this block was granted a little extra bit of right-of-way. Allen noted that this limits their construction methods due to the limited site.

Casper questioned if there are any City plans for further streetscape improvements along Q Street. She would like to see a consistency carried throughout Q Street. Salem stated that there are some improvements that can be done along with this project to make it more cohesive.

Peace thinks this looks great.

Penn commented that she will be most interested in the streetscape. That will be a very important part. She is not sure she is sold on the building material. The proposed material feels very traditional. Allen stated that he is probably the one driving the material. He wants this material to look good and last a long time. Van Duys would welcome the opportunity to come back and present the streetscape. That will be the element that most people see. The owners will retain ownership of the restaurant space. They will effectively subsidize the right restaurant and make sure that everything presents well. They are happy to come back.

Penn is not sure the buildings are meshing together. Perhaps the material won't be as traditional as it looks.

ACTION:

Peace moved to recommend this as a TIF project, subject to all the Committee members comments, seconded by Brannigan and carried 4-0: Brannigan, Casper, Peace and Penn voting 'yes'; Huston declaring a conflict of interest; Eagle Bull and Reed absent.

TELEGRAPH DISTRICT, 1935 O STREET (SPEEDWAY/URBAN DEVELOPMENT DEPT.):

Zimmer stated that the Telegraph District has a PUD (Planned Unit Development) that largely addresses issues of signs, but also included at the developer's request that major renovations and new buildings are subject to the Downtown Design Standards and come to Urban Design Committee for review.

Hesson stated that this is the old Awards Unlimited building. It is the northern edge of the district.

Tim Gergen stated that the parking lot is gravel now, but will be paved. Hesson believes the exterior improvements will be a phase of this. Adam Criswell stated that the plan is to have the parking lot completed by December 1.

Hesson continued that the east strip is a two story building, the west strip is one story. They wanted to accomplish a couple of things. The first is to tie it into the Telegraph District. He believes the darker brick and limestone front will clean it up and give it a new appearance. The east façade is a challenge. There will be a new entrance on this side. The window pattern on that side was pretty haphazard. NGC Construction will be on the east end of the lower level and the upper level. The bottom elevation has metal frame elements consistent with others in the Telegraph District. On the east side they introduced a horizontal metal band. There is a vestibule with a balcony above on the second floor. The alley side will be cleaned up. The west side will have some new windows introduced.

Criswell stated that they talked to the building owner to the south that owns part of the alley. They will clean up the entire area with concrete.

Huston didn't remember that the Telegraph District extended to O Street. Zimmer stated there were a couple of separate ownerships along O Street. The PUD covers all of it.

Huston think it looks great. This will be a great addition to the Telegraph District and will look good on O Street.

Casper inquired if the proposed location for signs are shown. Hesson anticipates some prominent signage at the corner.

The building fire alarm sounded at 3:34 p.m. and everyone was required to evacuate. The meeting was resumed at 4:00 p.m.

ACTION:

Peace noted the haphazard nature of the windows on O Street. There is one sill line on O Street. He would love to see the windows on the east side match the sill line on O Street. Hesson knows that the two windows on O Street are kind of weird. He isn't sure of the original intention of those windows. Different options were discussed. They ran up against the budget. The two odd windows on O Street are definitely a challenge.

Huston moved approval with the suggestion that the applicant take into consideration the comments related to the corner façade, seconded by Casper.

Penn likes it a lot.

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

LINCOLN SPORTS FACILITY (SAM MANZITTO/URBAN DEVELOPMENT DEPT.):

Huston declared a conflict of interest.

Ernie Castillo from Urban Development stated that the City Council approved a Redevelopment Agreement in April 2017. This is a two phase project. Phase One was for the sports facility. Phase Two is for the commercial building. There was some need for changes. They are building about 15,000 square feet of additional mezzanine space. No additional TIF is being requested. The existing agreement would be amended.

Sam Manzitto stated this is a challenging site due to the soil condition. They had to do a number of additional boring on this site. It was an old dump site. As they were getting to the foundation design, it became challenging to place the building. They found that the soil in another location was more workable. As they worked on it further, it benefited them a couple other ways. After working on the Saline Wetlands, the drainage needed to move to the corner location. They were able to achieve another 60 parking stalls on the site.

Corey Brodersen stated that the original design had the building turned away from West O Street. He believes the design now is more inviting to West O Street and pedestrian access. Beyond that, a mezzanine was added across the entire front. Not much has changed in terms of the overall floor plan layout. There is the opportunity for some viewing up above. The roof was previously sloped. This is sloping to the back. Additional glazing is provided on the north side. Upper level natural lighting is provided. An example of signage is shown. There has been discussions about adding additional landscaping out front.

Ben Hastreiter with Nebraska Nursery appeared. They are hoping to get some greenery around such a large building. They kept out a lot of parking lot trees and kept them along the periphery. One of the bigger things is the enhanced landscape along West O Street. They are going to mirror what has already been done. They tried to utilize as much of the space as possible.

Casper wondered about the reason for taking trees out of the parking lot and placing them on the edges. Hastreiter stated this was to maximize parking stalls. Collin Christopher noted this is currently allowed. Casper would encourage a few trees sprinkled in the parking lot. It would negate the heat island effect. She believes that flipping the building improves the architectural presence of the building.

Penn questioned why the handicap parking spots were placed way in the back corner. Brodersen replied there are some significant slopes involved. The site is somewhat constrained. Penn would definitely consider addressing that. She would almost think it might be offensive to have them so far around the corner. Casper believes there are distance requirements to be met as well.

Brodersen stated the building material will be stone and insulated brick with metal panels. It will transition to a metal panel in the back.

Penn likes the raised parapet a lot better. She would second the comment on the trees. It would be nice to have trees in the parking lot, not just around the edges.

Peace has a lot of similar thoughts. He believes all of this has made the project better. Knowing there is a four percent slope, he would echo the thought to add more trees in the parking lot. He would also like the applicant to consider some kind of access pathways through the parking lot that lead to the front door. It would make it better for safety reasons.

ACTION:

Peace moved approval noting the comments regarding trees in the parking lot, the location of the handicap parking and potentially having a sidewalk or access pathways through the parking lot to the door, seconded by Casper and carried 4-0: Brannigan, Casper, Peace and Penn voting 'yes'; Huston declaring a conflict of interest; Eagle Bull and Reed absent.

ZONING & DESIGN STANDARDS TEXT AMENDMENT (PLANNING DEPT.):

Rachel Jones appeared to share information about a text amendment being proposed by the Planning Dept. This will be before Planning Commission on November 14, 2018. It will cover parking regulations, screening and landscaping for parking lots and street trees. This comes from our Comprehensive Plan. We are encouraging equity across the City for landscaping. We tried to create a balance with incentives and enhancements.

First is a reduction to minimum parking requirements. Where it makes sense, the space can be better utilized for building expansion. There are also changes to off-site parking standards. We allow off-site parking in most of our commercial districts. We would be adding it in H-4 and clarifying off-site parking distance measurements. Three other changes are trying to allow flexibility to our parking regulations. Where appropriate, we allow parking in the side yard setback. This proposal would simplify the shared parking provisions and allow in all zoning districts. The proposal

calls for administrative approval of minor parking modifications for both minimum and maximum parking separation distance. This would be for a change no greater than 25 percent.

Huston inquired about the current distance for off-site parking. Jones replied that most cases are 300 feet measured from property line to the stalls being counted. The proposal would measure from property line to the nearest line that contains those stalls.

Peace questioned how you define off-site parking. He believes it used to be you either have to own it or have a 99 year lease. Jones responded you must enter into a long term lease with a minimum of ten years. Brannigan noted that ten years is not a long time. Huston stated that typically you will see the permit conditioned on that agreement.

Christopher stated the intent is also to increase the standard of landscaping in Lincoln. We are closing some loopholes and exceptions that currently exist. In targeting some of the loopholes, we hope to get a more consistent application. The first clarifies the exception for screening of abutting parking lots. The intensity of the screen depends on the distance to the property line. One exemption to be eliminated does not require landscaping on lots less than 150 feet deep.

Peace inquired if there is any equivalent to architectural treatment versus landscaping. Christopher noted there is a waiver process. Perhaps during the process, an alternative could developed. A landscape screen doesn't always have to be landscaping. There could be a low brick wall or other possibilities.

Christopher continued that currently, you can plant shade trees on a 2:1 ratio along the perimeter instead of inside the parking lot. We are proposing standards requiring a certain number of trees based on square feet. We are trying to avoid large swaths of parking with no landscaping items. We are proposing an island at the end of every parking row. There would be no more than 20 consecutive stalls in a row without doing another island.

Brannigan stated that can be expensive from a facilities side. Christopher stated the intent is to provide a place for a shade tree to survive. Casper understands that it beautifies the space and creates more shade. Brannigan stated that they can be a hassle to shovel snow around though, which can damage curbs.

Huston is worried that we need to increase density and remove barriers. He is interested in the effect of these proposals on the quantity of stalls. Casper understands this would be removing the amount of stalls you need in some districts. Jones stated they are generally meant to offset one another. Huston believes that a business usually has a much higher threshold of what they need for parking as compared to City regulations.

Casper questioned if these proposed regulations are being coordinated with Public Works Watershed Management, and wondered if the islands could be curbless. Christopher responded that might be a future consideration. Casper believes that stormwater mitigation requirements will become more intense in the future. She believes the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) is

going to start cracking down on watershed mitigation requirements. If some of these landscaping areas are working with stormwater mitigation, you could handle a lot of problems at once.

Christopher stated that a couple of other changes are to increase open space landscape requirements, shade trees bumped up and required understory. This is additional landscaping beyond parking lot landscaping. We would require street trees as a condition of the commercial building permit process. This is a significant one. Now street trees are only required as part of a subdivision, PUD, Use Permit or Special Permit process. Moving forward, they would be required for sites receiving a commercial building permit that are new construction or a major remodel where the total investment exceeds 50 percent of the property's current assessed value.

Brannigan wonders how these new proposals will be received. Someone under a budget will not have some funds to use for trees. Huston can foresee some push back on this.

Christopher believes a push back we might hear is a concern that these trees will block views or signage. From certain angles there could be blocked views, but as you move along a roadway you can see around trees from some angles. It is only temporary blockage as you are moving. He believes whatever sight line issues exist are balanced out by the advantages of trees. There are some minor updates and formatting changes to the design standards being proposed as well.

Christopher stated this will appear before Planning Commission on November 14, 2018. Jones added that it will move on to City Council after that.

Peace wondered if staff has received any feedback on these proposals. Jones received a couple comments, nothing on the parking changes yet. Some comments were received from a UNL professor and a general list of why this wouldn't work was received from someone else.

Brannigan wanted to know what is the truly defined benefit to the City to make these changes. Jones noted these have been in the works for a while. This goes back to the Comprehensive Plan. Christopher believes it is raising the quality of development. These standards don't really go beyond what is happening now. He believes this brings the standards up to the current standards of development. Many places in the last ten to sixteen years are doing this now.

Huston believes concerns he has heard is that this adds to the permit approval process. Incorporating some stormwater changes that are coming down the road is a plus, but decreasing density is a downside.

Penn doesn't like a large parking lot without any trees. Casper understands there is a struggle between what the developers want and what the community wants.

Casper believes the Downtown Master Plan is an indicator of a shift in our demographic. Development standards in other parts of the country are a lot more strict and intense. This is already happening in other places. Penn believes we are missing the point of heat reduction and the aesthetics that help bring people in.

Peace noted that most developers are opposed to the bureaucratic tie up. Some developers would personally go beyond the standards, but are opposed to governmental regulation. Huston agreed. Peace thinks Costco is a great example. A smaller tenant is a challenge. That one tree could block their smaller sign. It would be nice to have an offset or some kind of negotiation.

Huston wants to avoid lengthening the permit process. Peace noted we could be approving that this would take a lot of extra time. There is nothing bad about these ideas. He likes the idea of landscaping screens and making parking lots look nicer, but he doesn't want to see a lot of projects get more expensive with more review. He doesn't want to make it tougher.

Penn agrees. She likes the ideas but doesn't want to add more regulations. Casper believes you could add more weeks of landscaping design and review. Peace thinks this could add a much bigger layer of complexity.

Jones noted that if a parking lot being redone is currently triggering a landscape review, that is nothing new.

Penn is unsure of the 50 percent regulation. Huston would recommend removing that provision. Streets trees continue with new construction, but the second threshold of 50 percent is eliminated. He liked Casper's comment on stormwater as well. Brannigan believes it is a great selling point.

ACTION:

Huston moved approval of the zoning and design standards text amendment, noting the Committee's concern about an extended review process and the threshold for when the street tree standards apply, and in support of exploring if these proposed regulations could be coordinated with Public Works Watershed Management regarding stormwater, seconded by Casper and carried 5-0: Brannigan, Casper, Huston, Peace and Penn voting 'yes'; Eagle Bull and Reed absent.

ENERSEN URBAN DESIGN AWARD:

Hageman stated that a Chair needs to be picked for this subcommittee.

Huston would like staff to circulate a list of projects from last year. He agreed to Chair for another year.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.