

## MEETING RECORD

*Advanced public notice of the Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission meeting was posted on the County-City bulletin board and the Planning Department's website. In addition, a public notice was emailed to the Lincoln Journal Star for publication on Wednesday, January 18, 2023.*

**NAME OF GROUP:** NEBRASKA CAPITOL ENVIRONS COMMISSION

**DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING:** Tuesday, January 27, 2023, 8:30 a.m., City Council Chambers, County-City Building, 555 S. 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Lincoln, Nebraska.

**MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:** Heidi Cuca, Kile Johnson, Karen Nalow and David Quade; (Andrea Gebhart, Delonte Johnson and Ann Post absent).

**OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:** Collin Christopher and Teresa McKinstry of the Planning Department; Maggie Stuckey-Ross, Director of Parks & Recreation; Bob Ripley and Matt Hansen with the Nebraska Capitol Commission; Michelle Potts with the Nebraska State Building Division; James Walbridge with Studio 951; and other interested citizens.

**STATED PURPOSE OF MEETING:** Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission Meeting

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

K. Johnson then called for a motion approving the minutes of the regular meeting held December 23, 2022. Motion for approval made by Quade, seconded by Cuca and carried 4-0: Cuca, K. Johnson, Nalow and Quade voting 'yes'; Gebhart, D. Johnson and Post absent.

### **SMOKING SHELTER AT 1501-1599 'M' STREET**

**and**

### **SMOKING SHELTER AT 1526 'K' STREET**

#### **PUBLIC HEARING:**

**January 27, 2023**

Members present: Cuca, K. Johnson, Nalow and Quade; Gebhart, D. Johnson and Post absent.

Michelle Potts presented what she hopes will be a standard for a smoking shelter. The largest state building is at 301 Centennial Mall. They have on average 2,500 to 3,000 employees. They have a large smoking population. They currently have an area north of the building for those who smoke. This is in the open, with no shade. Those who choose to smoke tend to move closer to the building. On a day-to-day basis, they have a lot of smoke entering the building. Studio 951 was enlisted to help with this project.

They would like to move the smoking area across the Mall next to the parking garage. It is more open for air filtration and smoke won't enter the building. This would be north of the Susan La Flesche Picotte statue. The fiscal year for the State ends in June so they would like approval today, to get these in the budget. She will bring back more details at a later meeting.

James Walbridge stated that this seemed like an innocuous program, but the location is very important. They took steps to take cues from the Mall. They engaged with Karen Nalow who gave them some very good tips. They looked at everything that has been done in the area. They came up with a simple structure. He showed a simple cross section. It is about eight foot high and constructed with powder coated steel. The color will be matched to the existing bronze color for a lot of the site furniture and surrounding pieces in the area. They don't want this to stand out. They want to protect the inhabitants. It is open air, but the roof is solid. The panels are proposed to be laser etched with prairie grass, indigenous to the state. It is meant to project the historical legacy of the flora of the state, and an homage to the existing landscape architecture. They will provide some living grasses in front of the shelter. This will all be done by the State. This is intended to be a modular type system so the State can use this as a model for other structures that might be used. Potts added that there is no seating. They wanted to wait and see how it will be used. Walbridge stated that they spoke to some smokers in the area and received their input. He showed different views of the proposed shelter. The panels face the street and the shelter is open toward the parking lot. On Centennial Mall, the panels face the Mall and the shelter is open toward the parking garage.

Quade asked if this will be laser etched or through cut. Walbridge stated they will be through cut. It is not intended to be a large aperture. They will be doing some full size mock-ups to understand the degree of opacity. Based on the budget, they hope to have all three grasses represented.

Nalow sees that the structure is represented as having two separate side panels that are separate from the main structure. Walbridge added that they wanted a wind break that wasn't attached. They looked at a variety of options. Those would also be etched. Nalow wondered if those panels could capture a little of the movement and angles of the main structure. Walbridge noted they discussed that in design meetings. They felt that the contrast in form was the way they wanted to go but were open to the Commission's suggestions.

Matt Hansen understands that the creation of shelters would inhibit smoking close to the building. He inquired how people would be encouraged to use these. Potts answered they would have signage and work with Capitol Security.

Cuca finds it ironic that Tobacco Free Nebraska is in the same building. Potts noted they have also seen a growth in the population of people who vape.

K. Johnson sees an opening in the middle of the shelter. This appears to intersect with the sidewalk. He questioned if that sidewalk continues across the street. Walbridge answered no. That sidewalk would have to be used to go south to get back to the building.

Nalow noted that the history of this area is that prior to renovation, there was already an existing seating area on this location. That has been a movement that has been happening on the Mall. Walbridge noted there is an existing sidewalk that doesn't really have a purpose. They want to remove it so there is one entrance and exit.

Nalow noted in regard to final design with this being a potential prototype, she wondered if it is a consideration to have the pattern on Centennial Mall be a pattern specific to Centennial Mall and others are a State pattern. Walbridge stated that they spoke about this in a meeting. Perhaps the building behind the parking lot could be a more geometric shelter. Nalow loves the idea of bringing in the native grasses. She knows when you are working with laser cut panels, there is some void space that needs studied. She believes this could come in for final approval with construction documents for the final panel design. She is thinking about scale, and how the scale of the plant material plays with the overall scale of the mall and the pedestrians. She is thinking about the boldness of the pattern. Walbridge believes that makes sense. There is the issue of opacity. It will be metaphorically stylized, but representative. The cuttings may not go all the way to the top. They may be five or six feet tall and have the ability to see through somewhat. There are safety concerns and aesthetics to take into consideration.

Quade asked if any consideration was given on how the structure is connected to the ground. Is there a cast base on the ground that it mounts to? He wondered about snow removal and maintenance considerations. He further wondered if there would be some kind of a curb at the base. Walbridge stated that they could potentially raise a curb. Right now, it is intended to be bolted. They believed their construction assembly to be reasonable.

Nalow noted the importance from a safety perspective of being able to see into the structure. Walbridge stated that in speaking to stakeholders, they asked about any safety concerns. That was all taken into account.

Cuca wondered if there will be trash receptacle built in. Walbridge stated they are still debating freestanding versus attached. It has to do with maintenance. That piece hasn't been decided yet. They do have a State approved receptacle. Potts noted that it most likely, won't be fixed.

Quade inquired about the overhead portion of the structure and if they are wide flanges or tube. Walbridge responded they are proposed to be tube steel with L plates or T plates, all mechanically fastened.

**1501-1599 'M' STREET**

**ACTION:**

Cuca moved approval of the smoking shelter structure as presented, seconded by Quade.

Nalow suggested an amendment that the approval goes for the structure, and this commission will have a final review of the laser cut pattern prior to installation. Cuca and Quade noted their agreement and amended their motion.

Motion for approval of the smoking shelter structure, subject to final review of the laser cut pattern prior to installation, carried 4-0: Cuca, K. Johnson, Nalow and Quade voting 'yes'; Gebhart, D. Johnson and Post absent.

**1526 'K' STREET**

**ACTION:**

Cuca moved approval of the smoking shelter structure, subject to final review of the laser cut pattern prior to installation, seconded by Quade and carried 4-0: Cuca, K. Johnson, Nalow and Quade voting 'yes'; Gebhart, D. Johnson and Post absent.

**MISCELLANEOUS:**

- **2022 ANNUAL REPORT**

Christopher noted there is an updated annual report. The one in the agenda is similar to the draft that was presented in November 2022. Updates for November and December 2022 were added.

Johnson stated the report was well done and he appreciates the good work. The other Commissioners agreed.

**ACTION:**

Nalow moved approval of the 2022 Annual Report, seconded by Cuca and carried 4-0: Cuca, K. Johnson, Nalow and Quade voting 'yes'; Gebhart, D. Johnson and Post absent.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 a.m.