

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, March 15, 2023.

NAME OF GROUP: NEBRASKA CAPITOL ENVIRONS COMMISSION

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING: Friday, March 24, 2023, 8:30 a.m., City Council Chambers, County-City Building, 555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska.

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

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Collin Christopher and Teresa McKinstry of the Planning Department; Michelle Potts with the Nebraska State Building Division; James Wallbridge with Studio 951; Bob Ripley; 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 February 24, 2023. Motion for approval made by Quade, seconded by Gebhart and carried 4-0: Gebhart, K. Johnson, Nalow and Quade voting 'yes'; Cuca, D. Johnson and Post absent.

SMOKING SHELTER AT 1501-1599 'M' STREET

AND

SMOKING SHELTER AT 1526 'K' STREET

PUBLIC HEARING:

March 24, 2023

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

Michelle Potts stated that they have already received a Certificate of Appropriateness for the smoking shelters. They have come back before the Commission to go over the final design of the screen panels. The construction timeline has been pushed a little due to funding. They now anticipate the project to be bid out by late summer or early fall.

James Walbridge stated that the Commissioners wanted to see what type of pattern would be on the screens. There are a couple of design considerations. He showed the layout for each of the panels. Each

panel has a specific type of native grass depicted. The design will be seven to eight feet tall. Each panel is perforated. They will be laser cut in 1/8 inch thick steel and powder coated in bronze, similar to the color of the benches that are already there. The degree of opacity is different depending on the species of grass being portrayed. He believes that you won't see light between the panels. There are a number of different types of grasses being shown. The design is the same as has been previously shown. The Commissioners asked them to explore the opportunity for the end panels to be more congruent with the leaning and rake of the main structure. They have followed this direction, and so the panels will now be tied into the structure as opposed to standing freely.

Gebhart stated that when this item appeared before the commission in January 2023, there were two or three variations of the panels. Today, she sees seven different panels. She wants to make sure this feels cohesive and not cluttered. Walbridge believes the degree of opacity is good. From 100 feet away, you see just an outline. Up close, you will realize the perforations. Potts added that with the bronze color, she believes it will blend in better. Wallbridge noted that there will be native grasses planted in front as well. Natural landscaping will help soften the look.

Gebhart inquired if the graphics are in scale in relation to each other, or the native grasses. Wallbridge stated they are in relation to each other, somewhat. Not all these grasses are the same height in nature.

Nalow appreciates the applicant looking at the end panels and angling them. She questioned the pattern itself. In looking at the bottom of the structure, it appears to be angled slightly. She wondered how this would affect the pattern. Will the pattern still be upright, or will it end up tilting with the panel itself? Walbridge stated it will be tilting with the panel itself. Nalow added that some of the grasses shown have a sort of movement to them. It might be good to look at the ones on the right hand side so they tilt a little. Wallbridge pondered if the grasses tilted to the left. They will take all of this into consideration.

Johnson thinks this project is unique and fun.

1501-1599 'M' STREET

ACTION:

Gebhart moved approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the site work as proposed, with the finding that the plans are in conformance with the Capitol Environs Design Standards,, seconded by Nalow and carried 4-0: Gebhart, K. Johnson, Nalow and Quade voting 'yes'; Cuca, D. Johnson and Post absent.

1526 'K' STREET

ACTION:

Quade moved approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the site work as proposed, with the finding that the plans are in conformance with the Capitol Environs Design Standards, seconded by Gebhart and carried 4-0: Gebhart, K. Johnson, Nalow and Quade voting 'yes'; Cuca, D. Johnson and Post absent.

STAFF REPORT:

Collin Christopher wanted to take the opportunity to note that Bob Ripley has retired from the State of Nebraska. He expressed his thanks for all of Ripley's years of service. Mr. Ripley has been around since the conception of this Commission, and he has been a valuable resource. He believes and hopes we will continue to see him in the future.

Bob Ripley thanked Christopher for the kind acknowledgement. It has all been great fun. He remembers when the first discussion occurred after he started working at the State Capitol about instituting a permanent body. This has been around officially since 1988. In the beginning, the commission was heavily involved with the University of Nebraska Lincoln (UNL) College of Architecture and Tom Laging. He is grateful for the acknowledgement. He is more grateful for the incredible broad base of support that the issues have taken on in the community. All of the Mayors he has worked with have all been involved deeply. He expressed his greatest appreciation for them and for this community, which he was born and raised in. He has always been engaged and will continue to remain intellectually and emotionally engaged. This is a small example of what can happen with design guidelines. There were a lot of skeptics when the guidelines came into place. He hopes to develop a slide show at some point that might cover the spans of time that the Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission has been involved in. He will bring any additional information he can to help educate the community. He thanked everyone for the support and continued engagement in what he considers a very important asset to the community.

K. Johnson expressed his gratitude for all the service that Ripley has given over the years. He expressed a concern about his property many years ago. It was taken care of. It has been great fun to watch the Commission over the years. Ripley has a tenacity and his great attention to detail is appreciated.

Ripley stated that the State Capitol, like the Capitol Environs Commission, takes a team. There is a fantastic team of people that take care of the Capitol building. He had the good fortune to be associated with them for years.

Nalow moved to adjourn, seconded by Gebhart and carried 4-0: Gebhart, K. Johnson, Nalow and Quade voting 'yes'; Cuca, D. Johnson and Post absent.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned 8:50 a.m.