

# **Boards & Commissions**

## **Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission Agenda**

### **NOTICE**

Notice is hereby given that the Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission will hold a meeting on **Thursday, February 23, 2017 at 8:00 a.m.** in the County-City Building, 555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska, in Room 210 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor. For more information, please contact the Lincoln City/Lancaster County Planning Department at 402-441-7491.

### **AGENDA**

#### **FEBRUARY 23, 2017**

1. Approval of meeting record of [December 15, 2016](#).

\* [Memo from Ed Zimmer](#).

#### **HEARING AND ACTION**

2. A Certificate of Appropriateness for work on [Centennial Mall](#) in the P-Q block, being public right-of-way of Centennial Mall North/N. 15th Street.

#### **REVIEW AND ADVISE**

3. Adoption of [Annual Report](#).
4. Staff Report

To: **Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission**

From: Ed Zimmer

Re: Agenda of December 15, 2016

Date: December 9, 2016

**Item 2: Revisions to Sculpture Niche, Centennial Mall (P-Q block)**

Attached are five sheets prepared by The Clark Enersen Partners regarding modifications to the sculpture niche on Centennial Mall to accommodate the Standing Bear memorial sculpture. The Commission previously asked for examination of a pedestal taller than the 12" previously envisioned.

The existing curved wall of cast concrete measures 10' tall. The sculpture being created by Ben Victor in Boise, Idaho will be 9 feet tall. In considering the height of the pedestal statue, we must also consider how (and how much) to augment the height of the wall for an appropriate backdrop. The broad design concepts of Centennial Mall, as a wide view corridor to the Capitol tower, with an open center and parallel pathways at the east and west edges and 14' street lights lining the walkways, is also a key part of the sculptural setting.

The five images show

1. The 12" base first suggested, with a 4' addition to the top of the gray concrete wall. Dark gray granite is being considered for the supplement to the wall, and for the sculptural pedestal;
2. An 18" base, 36" wide, with the same 4' addition to the wall (totaling 14'), matching the height of the first incised horizontal line on the wall;
3. An 18" base; approximate 9 feet wide, matching both the lowest horizontal line "struck" in the wall, and the vertical lines in the wall flanking the statue's position, with a 4' supplement the concrete wall;
4. A 36" base, 36" wide, in front of a 14' wall;
5. And a 36" base, 36" wide, with the wall height increased to 16.5' to accompany the taller pedestal and statue.

I will comment on each of these based on the discussion with designers from The Clark Enersen Partners, Parks & Rec. representatives, and sculptor Ben Victor, then make a recommendation.

The group appreciated the Commission's recommendation that Option 1 does not adequately elevate the sculpture. I've added an image of Victor's heroic figure of a football player at Peru State College which is on a very low base, but it is a very open setting, a slightly shorter figure (8'), and a different design intention.

Option 2 increases the original base by 50%, creating a relationship between the pedestal height and the detailing of lines in the wall behind it. The intention is also to have the pedestal and the top of the wall match in materials. The consensus was that the 14' wall height was still sufficient for the combined base and statue in this option. This wall height also corresponds to the height of the pedestrian lights, reinforcing that



strong edge along the wall.

Option 3 explores a wide base on to match vertical lines of the wall behind. This base might invite skateboarding damage and does not seem well related to the sculpture.

Options 4 and 5 imagine a 36" tall base, with either a 14' or 16.5' wall behind it. The lower wall would have the head of the statue jutting above the wall from many vantage points, especially for pedestrians. The higher wall stands above the pedestrian lights and appears to interrupt that strong horizontal line which is a key feature of the overall Mall.

A strong consensus was reached to recommend Option 2—an 18" base, 36" wide, in front of a wall totaling 14' in height. This option appeared to the group to offer the best presentation of the statue in this specific setting, reinforcing the overall horizontality of the Centennial Mall design.

We also are pleased to recommend to the Commission an inscription for the wall:

**Our skins are of a different color but God made us both. I am a man.**

**Ma<sup>n</sup>chú-Na<sup>n</sup>zhí<sup>n</sup>**

**Chief Standing Bear**

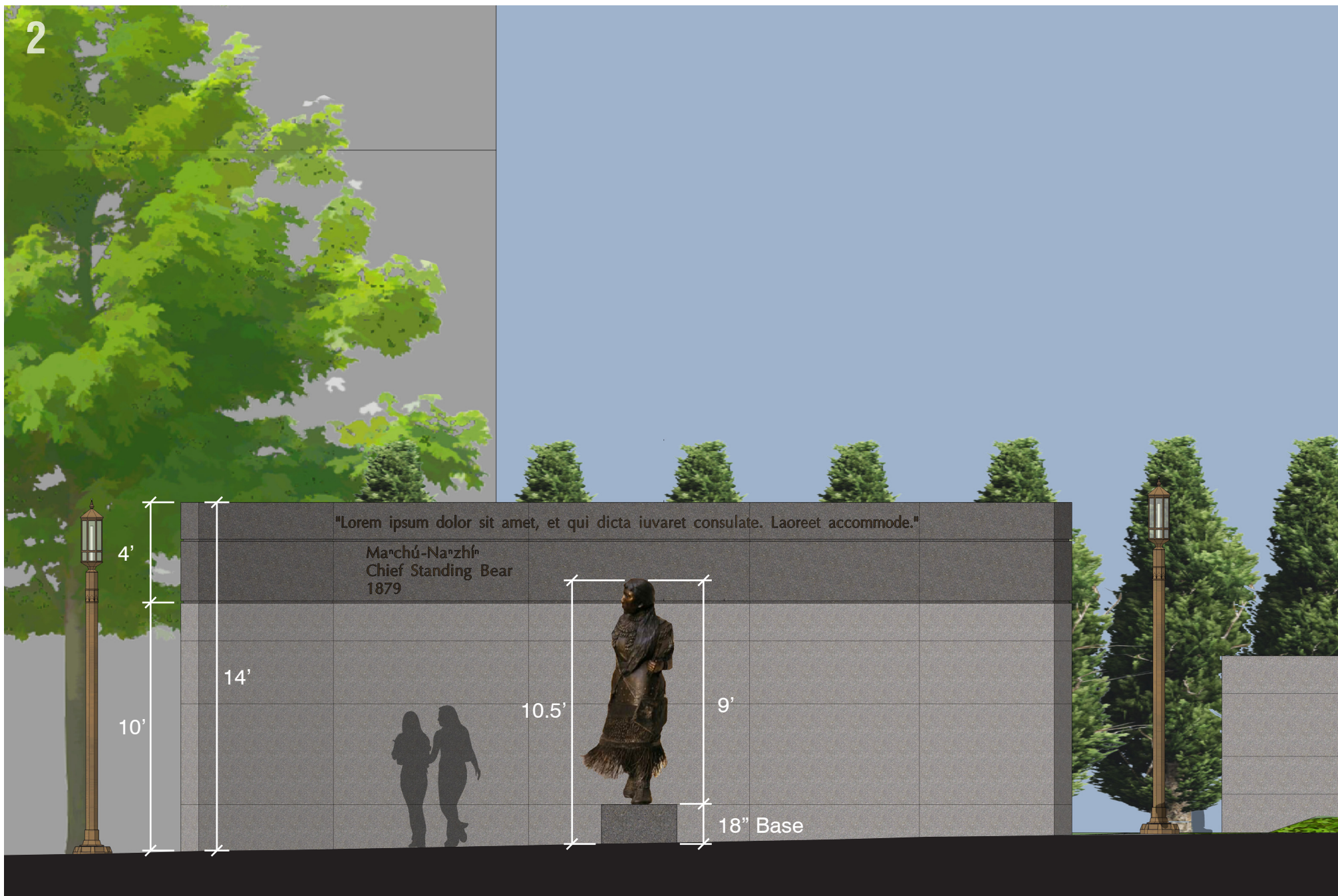
**1879**

This inscription is based on contemporary (1879) newspaper accounts of statements made by Chief Standing Bear, through an interpreter at the habeas corpus hearing "Standing Bear v. Crook" in 1879, or immediately afterwards to his attorneys when he expressed his gratitude for their successful services.

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"Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, et qui dicta iuvaret consulate. Laoreet accommode."

Marchú-Na'zhí  
Chief Standing Bear  
1879

4'

10'

14'

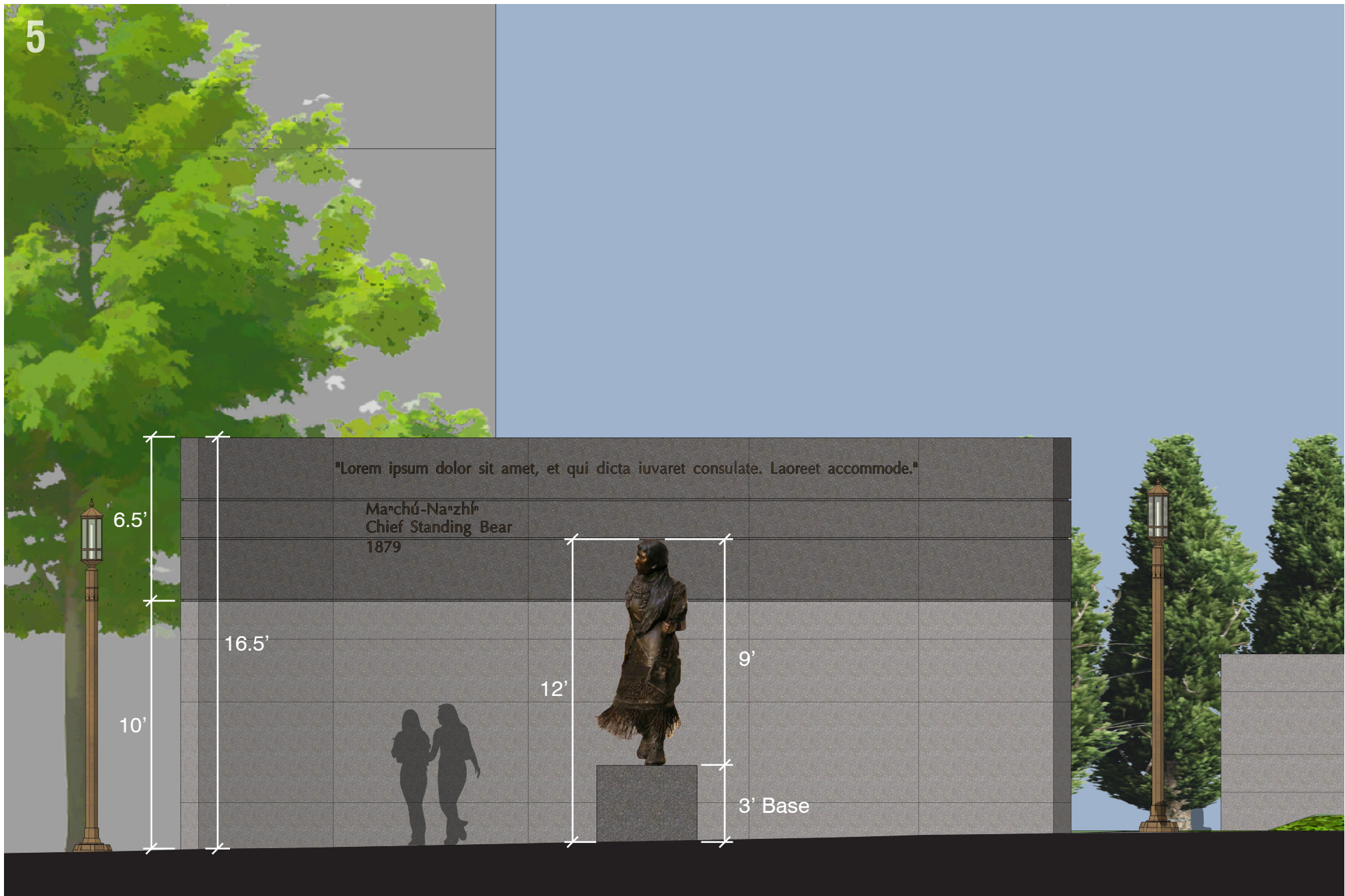
12'

9'

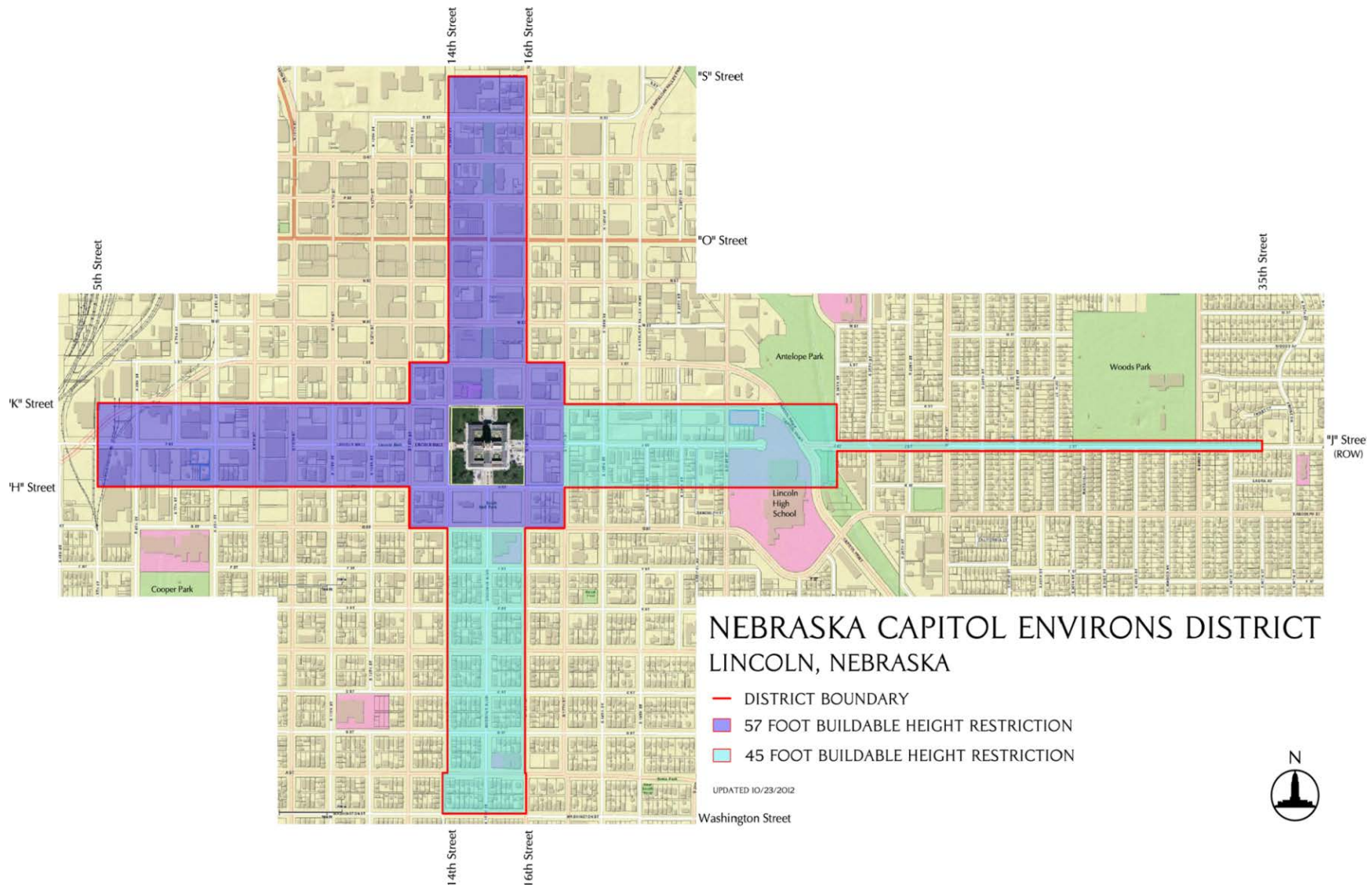
3' Base



5



# Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission - *Annual Report 2016*



The Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission was established in 1988 to strengthen existing protections for the setting of Nebraska's landmark State Capitol. Commission membership of seven citizen volunteers includes five members appointed by the City of Lincoln and two appointed by the State of Nebraska.

In 2016 Tom Laging, Professor Emeritus in the UNL College of Architecture who had served continuously since the Commission's founding in 1988, retired from this service and architect John Sinclair was appointed in his place. Architect John Kay completed his term and attorney Mary Campbell was appointed to the Commission. Otherwise membership remained unchanged with Jeff Searcy continuing as chair, and Commissioners Gene Crump, Christine Dionisopoulos, Karen Nalow, and Jon Weinberg. The seven appointed citizen members are assisted by three *ex officio* members—Bob Ripley of the Office of the Capitol Commission (for the State of Nebraska), the director of Lincoln/Lancaster County Planning Department (David Cary), and Lynn Johnson (director of Lincoln Parks & Recreation Department). Staffing is provided by the Lincoln/Lancaster County Planning Department.

The Commission is required to meet at least quarterly by Section 27.56.060 of the Lincoln Municipal Code. The Commission has met nine times in 2016.



▲ Nebraska's Centennial Mall from the Capitol Tower, 2016

## Nebraska's Centennial Mall

The substantial completion and rededication of Nebraska's Centennial Mall on October 9<sup>th</sup> was the banner project in the Capitol Environs in 2016.

The Commission continues to review numerous inscriptions for the Spirit of Nebraska Pathway. We hope proud Nebraskans continue to take advantage of this opportunity for years to come, celebrating their pride in the Capitol and enriching the experience of visitors to its environs.

*Spirit of Nebraska Pathway Plaque for  
Susette La Flesche Tibbles ("Bright Eyes")* ►



The Commission also welcomed the completion of the renovations of the Nebraska History Museum and the reopening of this important attraction on Centennial Mall.

*Nebraska History Museum,  
Centennial Mall North at P Street* ►



## Other Projects

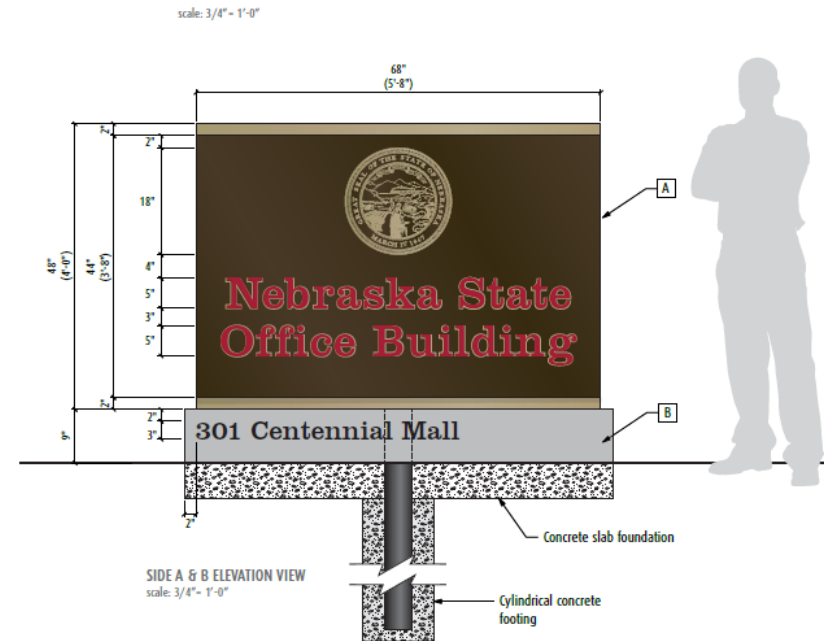
The Commission reviewed two projects involving the Nebraska State Office Building. Renovations at the east and west entrances are a welcome response to the completion of Centennial Mall.

New signs for the building, as a first step towards a consistent program of signs at State facilities throughout Nebraska, benefited by the Commissioners' design expertise and attention to detail.

*Proposal for new signs at ►  
Nebraska State Office Building*

The Commission has a long-standing interest in advocating for the removal of overhead wires crossing key vistas to the Capitol within the Environs District, and especially along the axial streets of Centennial, Lincoln Mall, Goodhue Boulevard, and J Street. LES and other utilities have been very cooperative on Lincoln and Centennial Mall, and have made progress on Goodhue Boulevard as well. In recent correspondence with LES, the Commission has been informed that removing the overhead wires crossing Goodhue, all the way south to A Street, is in the municipal utility's capital improvement plans; the design work is well advanced; and construction is currently slated for next year. Welcome news indeed, gratefully received!

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The Commission and staff also undertook a substantive revision of the Nebraska Capitol Environs Design Standards to reflect the rebuilding of Centennial Mall, lessons learned in a quarter century of applying the Standards to real-life projects, and additions to the District's boundaries. The Commission reviewed, revised, and recommended the amended Standards in a production work session on December 15<sup>th</sup>. (The revised standards were adopted by the City Council early in 2016.)

*February 2017  
Ed Zimmer, Lincoln/Lancaster County Planning Department*