

Boards & Commissions

Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission Agenda

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission will hold a meeting on **Thursday, October 25, 2018 at 8:00 a.m.** in the County-City Building, 555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska, in Room 214 on the 2nd Floor. For more information, please contact the Lincoln City/Lancaster County Planning Department at 402-441-7491.

AGENDA

OCTOBER 25, 2018

1. Approval of meeting record of [August 23, 2018](#).

* [Memo from Ed Zimmer](#).

DISCUSSION and ACTION

2. Certificate of Appropriateness for the concept of installing a [bronze statue of William Jennings Bryan](#) on the L-M block of Nebraska's Centennial Mall in the Capitol Environs District.

DISCUSSION

3. Briefing on Lincoln Downtown Master Plan (Planning staff).
4. Miscellaneous/staff report: Reminder of upcoming joint meeting of Capitol and and Capitol Environs Commissions, November 13, 2018, at the Nebraska State Capitol; etc.

To: **Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission**
From: Ed Zimmer
Re: Agenda of October 25, 2018
Date: October 19, 2018

Item 3: Permanent Location for Bryan statue from U. S. Capitol Statuary Hall

The City of Lincoln has offered a proposal to the Standing Bear Selection Committee (formed by LB807) to provide a permanent location on City of Lincoln property for the William Jennings Bryan statue, when it is relocated from Statuary Hall. Mayor Beutler's letter to the Committee is attached.

Two potential locations are mentioned in the letter—the SW corner of 12th & O Streets (opposite Bryan's original office site in Lincoln) and the L-M block of Centennial Mall, with a stated preference for the latter location.

The City's request of the Environs Commission is for approval of the concept of installing the statue on that block. The City will return to the Commission with a specific design if the project moves forward.

District design standards and guidelines include the following (with highlighting added to the most relevant portions:

Design Standard 3: Memorials and Monuments

Installation of monuments and memorials shall be based on the symbolic program established at the Capitol. Capitol Square is considered a complete and finished design, and therefore no memorials shall be added to the Capitol grounds. The Capitol itself is a memorial and has integral memorial spaces (the Nebraska Hall of Fame and Memorial Hall). **Memorials may be considered for addition to the Malls, within their overall design guidelines, assigning memorials of statewide or national significance to Centennial Mall, and individual memorials to the other malls.**

Guideline 3.1:

Addition of memorials and monuments facing Capitol Square (not on the Capitol grounds) and on the Malls will be evaluated within the same guidelines as other improvements such as buildings and landscape features, stressing compatibility with setting, high-quality design, and appropriate materials.

Design Standard 4: Public Art

Public art can enliven an urban environment, enrich pedestrian experience, and stimulate interaction between artist and viewer. In the District, public art, like all other improvements, is subordinate to the overall purpose of enhancing the Capitol. The Commission encourages the addition of public art to the District, while applying the same standards of fitness to place and quality of materials required of other improvements.

Guideline 4.1:

Proposals for placement of public art in the District should consider and describe the relationship of proposed works to their immediate surroundings and to the Capitol.

Guideline 4.2:

Two *types of public art which may be appropriate in the District are:*

- *monumental works, of national or international significance;*
- *pedestrian-scale works.*

Within the Commission's guidelines, Centennial Mall seems a very appropriate venue for the relocated Bryan statue, consistent with Bryan's national importance and the provenance of this particular sculptural portrait of him. The specific placement and installation design will be important on this key block of Centennial Mall. Two priorities for the installation would be to integrate into the overall design of the block, and to enhance the setting through screening the utility features of the space between the state parking garage and the Scottish Rite Temple.





Recommended finding: *The concept of installing the William Jennings Bryan statue on the L-M block of Centennial Mall is consistent with the Environs Standards and guidelines.*

Recommended action: *Approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness.*

Item 4: Briefing on Downtown Master Plan

The City and the Downtown Lincoln Association have been collaborating on an update to the Downtown Master Plan. Planning Dept. staff will brief the Commission on elements of the draft plan pertinent to the Environs Commission's mission of enhancing the setting of the Capitol

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MAYOR CHRIS BEUTLER

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lincoln.ne.gov

October 9, 2018

Senator Tom Brewer
Standing Bear Selection Committee
P.O. Box 94604
Lincoln, NE 68509

RE: Loan of William Jennings Bryan Statue to the City of Lincoln

Dear Senator Brewer:

The purpose of this letter is to express interest on behalf of the City of Lincoln in entering into a loan agreement with the State of Nebraska for display of the William Jennings Bryan statue.

We believe that display of the bronze statue of Bryan by artist Rudolph Evans in a prominent public location in Lincoln would be a fitting tribute to "The Great Commoner". William Jennings Bryan was a popular young attorney in Jacksonville, Illinois when he visited Lincoln in July, 1887 as a guest of attorney A. R. Talbot. In October, Bryan and Talbot announced in Lincoln newspapers that they had associated in partnership. Bryan immediately immersed himself in the social, civic and political life of his adopted city and state and in 1888 resettled his family in his chosen hometown, Lincoln, Nebraska. By 1890, he was nominated as a candidate for Congress. A Lincoln paper declared "Mr. Bryan's manner is singularly genial, and his eloquence on the platform wins him admirers whenever he speaks. He has the rare gift of making friends on sight, as it were, and will be an exceedingly strong candidate." He was elected to the House in 1890 and re-elected in 1892. Lincoln remained his home through his 3 campaigns for President in 1896, 1900 and 1908. He returned to Lincoln after his service in the Nebraska National Guard in Florida in 1898. His newspaper *The Commoner* was published from Lincoln.

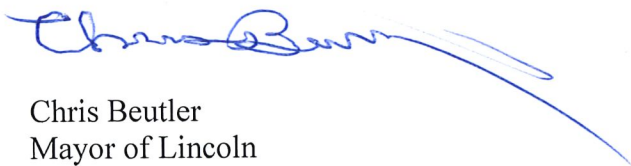
We have identified two possible locations for installation and display. The renovated Centennial Mall between the State Capitol and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln is a tribute to the natural and cultural heritage of Nebraska. We believe that there is a fitting location for the sculpture on the east side of the Mall between L and M Streets facing the Nebraska Heritage Plaza and the State Office Building. Please see Attachment A which are depictions of the Bryan statue in this location. Placement of the Bryan statue on the Centennial Mall would complement the recently dedicated portrait sculpture of Chief Standing Bear on the Mall between P and Q Streets with both statues having a significant connection to the National Statuary Hall.

A second possible location for installation and display is a plaza space on the southwest corner of 12th and O Streets facing the building at the northeast corner of the intersection that housed Bryan's law practice office. Please see Attachment B which is a depiction of the Bryan Statue at this location. We believe that both locations are meaningful placements for the statue, with our preference being the location on Centennial Mall.

The Nebraska Liberty Bell is on public display in Antelope Park through a long-term loan agreement between the City of Lincoln and the State of Nebraska. We envision that the Bryan statue would remain State property and that its placement and display in Lincoln would be administered through a long-term loan agreement similar to the Nebraska Liberty Bell. We understand that there may be interest in display of the Bryan statue at the Nebraska National Guard Museum in Seward, and we would support temporary display of the statue at that location for a two-year period prior to installation and public display in Lincoln. Bryan's military service is an important piece of his legacy and should be honored in this manner.

I wish to extend my appreciation to the Standing Bear Selection Committee for your work in placement of the third casting of "Standing Bear, Chief of the Ponca" in the National Statuary Hall, and for your thoughtful consideration of placement of the statue of William Jennings Bryan upon its return to Nebraska. I encourage you to contact Parks and Recreation Director Lynn Johnson at 402-441-8265 if your committee has questions or guidance to share.

Sincerely,



Chris Beutler
Mayor of Lincoln

Cc: Judi gaiashkibos, Standing Bear Selection Committee
Kathryn LeBaron, Standing Bear Selection Committee
Ed Zimmer, Standing Bear Selection Committee
Lynn Johnson, Parks and Recreation

Attachment A: Depictions of Bryan Statue on the East Side of Nebraska's Centennial Mall between L and M Streets



The Bryan statue would be placed mid-block facing west to the Nebraska Heritage Plaza inscribed with a map of the State of Nebraska and to the State Office Building.



The statue would be backdropped by a curving row of columnar evergreens reminiscent of the granite wall backdrop of "Standing Bear, Chief of the Ponca" located on the west side of Centennial Mall between P and Q Streets.

Attachment B: Depiction of Bryan Statue on the southwest corner of the intersection of 12th and O Streets



The Bryan statue would be placed facing northwest to the building on the northwest corner of 12th and O Streets that housed his law office.

