

MEETING NOTES

NAME OF GROUP: NEBRASKA CAPITOL ENVIRONS COMMISSION

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING: Thursday, February 23, 2017, 8:00 a.m., Conference Room 214, Lincoln, Nebraska.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Mary Campbell, Christie Dionisopoulos, Karen Nalow, Jeff Searcy, John Sinclair and Jon Weinberg; (Gene Crump absent).

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Ed Zimmer, Stacey Hageman and Teresa McKinstry of the Planning Department; Robert Ripley and Matt Hansen from the Office of the Capitol Commission; and J.J. Yost of Parks and Recreation.

STATED PURPOSE OF MEETING: Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission Meeting

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

Searcy then called for a motion approving the minutes of the special meeting held December 15, 2016. Motion for approval made by Campbell, seconded by Weinberg and carried 6-0: Campbell, Dionisopoulos, Nalow, Searcy, Sinclair and Weinberg voting 'yes'; Crump absent.

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

PUBLIC HEARING: February 23, 2017

Members present: Campbell, Dionisopoulos, Nalow, Searcy, Sinclair and Weinberg; Crump absent.

Nalow stated that she will abstain from voting on this. She and her firm are working on this project.

Ed Zimmer stated that he has two new images to present of the Chief Standing Bear monument, planned for Centennial Mall. The proposed inscription is "Our skins are of a different color but God made us both, I am a man". The words are from 1879 newspaper transcripts of what the interpreter stated that Chief Standing Bear said. He believes Parks and Recreation is eager to start the modifications to the sculpture niche to have it ready by fall 2017.

Sinclair questioned if the lettering will be etched or raised letters. J.J. Yost replied that the detail hasn't been decided on yet. It could be raised lettering or attached. They don't want to encourage vandalism. It could be metal panels. Nalow added that new granite veneer is also being brought in. This provides for different options. Engraving prior to installation is easier. With the limestone, letters haven't been colored. With granite, the surface is different. The detailed have yet to be fleshed out.

Ripley wondered if the Native American community is okay with word 'Chief'. He was told on numerous occasions that Chief is a word that was not in their lexicon. Zimmer noted he will continue to vet that. Judi M. gaiashkibos, Executive Director of the Nebraska Commission on Indian Affairs, has been a source of information and assistance.

Ripley sees the drawing as showing the base as 18 inches tall. Zimmer replied he was correct. Ripley asked if the top portion of the wall will be granite. Zimmer noted that the lower portion already exists. The base is granite, the top will be granite as well. Ripley questioned if it will be granite veneer. Zimmer believes yes. Ripley suggested checking on solid block granite. It is easier to maintain and sometimes the cost of the material is not as great as the cost of freight from the quarry. He would recommend getting a cost estimate on solid block as opposed to veneer. Veneer has endless maintenance issues. Nalow stated they will check with the engineer. Block will be attached to the top of the existing wall with veneer over that. Ripley noted that solid blocks of granite might not be that much more expensive. Nalow stated they will discuss with the structural engineer. For the pedestal, it might be the most efficient route to use solid granite.

Zimmer believes the addition on top of the wall will echo the proportions of the existing wall. The base would match the first line in height. He believes this is the proposal that knits everything together well.

Campbell wondered about the lighting. Yost replied the lights will be behind the statue. Zimmer believes there is electricity available. This would provide an opportunity for some night lighting. This issue would need to be fine-tuned when the statue is available.

Ripley commented that if there were to be lighting, he would offer it come from above and be downlit. He doesn't want to add to the problem of up-lighting. Something could be mounted on the roof of the Anderson Building across the mall and shoot a spot of light on the statue. Nalow noted they have talked about this with the electrical engineer. With the light that is available now, they are able to do more of a theatrical approach to the lighting. They want to focus on the facial features. They also want to be able to read the inscription behind the statue. They are looking at several different lighting sources. The design has not been finalized yet.

Ripley inquired if this issue will be revisited in the future. Zimmer replied that the lighting hasn't been designed yet. Today's review is for the materials, height and inscription.

Searcy stated that the image provided of the wall shows the base is 18 inches tall and 36 inches wide. He questioned if those are the specifications suggested by the sculptor. Zimmer replied yes. The statue will be 9 feet tall. He believes the feet will be visible. He thinks there will be more uplift. J.J. Yost stated they are anxious to get the granite ordered. There is quite a bit of lead time involved.

Sinclair inquired what the base sits on. Nalow replied concrete pavers.

ACTION:

Weinberg moved approval of the inscription, size and granite materials as presented, seconded by Sinclair.

Campbell wondered about the final language of Chief Standing Bear. Zimmer will work with others on the language. Dionisopoulos noted that the tile on Centennial Mall says Chief Standing Bear. That language came from the Indian Commission.

Searcy got the impression that one illustration presented in the agenda materials had more of a substantial base. It feels to him that the base is a little small for such a large wall. That was his initial impression. Campbell would echo those thoughts. The base could be a little larger. Sinclair shares the opinion, but would defer to the sculptor. Zimmer stated that the sculptor seems confident that the 36 inch base is sufficient. He will voice that interest to the sculptor. We don't want to invite standing on the base.

There was a discussion of the engraving. Yost noted the method hasn't been decided on yet. Ripley expressed concerns on the longevity of engraving.

Motion for approval carried 5-0: Campbell, Dionisopoulos, Searcy, Sinclair and Weinberg voting 'yes'; Nalow abstaining; Crump absent.

ADOPTION OF ANNUAL REPORT

Searcy thanked Zimmer and Stacey Hageman for the work of the Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission. He also acknowledged Ripley for the work done with the Office of the Capitol Commission.

Zimmer stated that the new design standards are now in effect. The City Council has already approved them.

ACTION:

Sinclair moved approval of the 2016 Annual Report, seconded by Weinberg and carried 6-0: Campbell, Dionisopoulos, Nalow, Searcy, Sinclair and Weinberg voting 'yes'; Crump absent.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Searcy is anxious to see the Standing Bear monument installed in 2017. He believes the Nebraska Sesquicentennial will be a major event of the year. Friday evening of the celebration weekend will be a major event with a show and fireworks. This is subject to pending funding. March 1, 2017 there will be events happening at the State Capitol with the unveiling of the Sesquicentennial postage stamp. There will be many events and musical renditions. The kickoff will be at 2:00 p.m. with recognition of the 150th anniversary of the statehood of Nebraska. There will be an attempt to have the most people singing happy birthday in history. This will be broadcast throughout the state on NETV. In the evening at the Nebraska State History Museum will be the unveiling. It will be a lot of fun. There will be a whistle stop tour across Nebraska. There is a lot happening behind the scenes. There will be many events happening across the state.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:40 a.m.