

MEETING NOTES

NAME OF GROUP: NEBRASKA CAPITOL ENVIRONS COMMISSION

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING: Thursday, November 13, 2018, 10:30 a.m., Hearing Room 1524, Nebraska State Capitol, 15th & K Streets, Lincoln, Nebraska.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Gene Crump, Kile Johnson, Karen Nalow, Ann Post, Jeff Searcy and John Sinclair; (Mary Campbell absent).

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Ed Zimmer of the Planning Department; Matt Hansen of the Nebraska Capitol Commission; Tara Knuth and John Badami for Lincoln Children's Museum (LCM); and JoAnn Young of *Lincoln Journal Star*.

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 regular meeting held October 25, 2018. Motion for approval made by Crump, seconded by Johnson and carried 5-0: Crump, Johnson, Nalow, Searcy and Sinclair voting 'yes'; Post abstained; Campbell absent.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS FOR WORK AT THE LINCOLN CHILDREN'S MUSEUM, 1420 O STREET

PUBLIC HEARING:

November 13, 2018

Members present: Crump, Johnson, Nalow, Post, Searcy and Sinclair; Campbell absent.

Zimmer introduced Tara Knuth of the Lincoln Children's Museum (LCM) and John Badami, an LCM board member and architect with DLR Group.

Badami explained that the parking area east of the LCM building, abutting Centennial Mall, is a deck or slab built over the basement of a building formerly on that site. The basement area leaks, rendering it of little utility to LCM. The project addresses correcting the leaks to make that basement space usable. The Museum wishes to install STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) programming to the area, oriented towards older children than the

Museum's current exhibits and activities. In addition, LCM hopes to energize fundraising for the project and further expand programming by creating outdoor play space (instead of parking) on the deck/slab over the basement. That outdoor space would be enclosed by walls and fencing of limestone and iron, in keeping with the character and materials of Centennial Mall. A small building at the southeast corner of the LCM property would enclose an exit stair from the basement STEAM area.

LCM has identified a "Luckey Climber" play structure as the centerpiece of the outdoor area. The company that produces these custom-designed structures has operated since 1985 and has installations world-wide, especially at children's museums. There are none in immediate proximity to Lincoln or Nebraska.

Sinclair asked whether the fencing and screening is intended to block views into the play area from Centennial Mall. Badami said LCM could accommodate either transparency or opacity, and noted that there is also opportunity for plantings along that boundary. Tara Knuth expressed a preference for visibility. Nalow pointed out that the Mall design is intended to activate spaces along the Mall, noting the greater connectivity provided by the University Lutheran Chapel renovations. Members expressed a general preference for visibility.

Johnson asked whether the outdoor space would exit to Centennial Mall or to P Street. Knuth and Badami said the gates would address P Street, but access to and from the play area would typically be through the Museum.

Sinclair asked about nighttime security. Badami said the intention would be to light the climbing structure internally, and to lock the fencing.

Members asked how many phases the project would have. Badami outlines a first phase to correct the leaks and secure the area with fencing, a second phase to install the Luckey Climber, and a third phase to install the STEAM programming in the basement. The timing, and whether any phases could be consolidated, would depend upon fund-raising.

Post commented that the project offered a great combination of elements, enhancing both the Museum and the Mall. Sinclair pointed out that the rebuilding of Centennial Mall sets the bar very high for projects like this one immediately adjacent the Mall. He noted the conservative character of the Mall design and materials and LCM's goal of encouraging active play, and said the designers have a great opportunity and challenge before them. He encouraged that the fencing/screening be given especially careful attention and that drawing on precedents from the Capitol, as occurs throughout the Mall, would be a good starting point.

Zimmer noted that LCM is asking conceptual approval at this time, not approval of specific design elements.

ACTION:

Jeff Searcy made a motion to offer conceptual approval of the LCM proposal, with acknowledgment that specific elements must return for Certificates of Appropriateness. Sinclair seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-0: Crump, Johnson, Nalow, Post, Searcy and Sinclair voting 'yes'; Campbell absent.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.