

## BRIEFING NOTES

*Advanced public notice of the Planning Commission briefing was posted on the County-City bulletin board and the Planning Department's website.*

<b>NAME OF GROUP:</b>	PLANNING COMMISSION
<b>DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING:</b>	Wednesday, June 5, 2024, 12:00 noon, City Council Chambers, County-City Building, 555 South 10 <sup>th</sup> Street, Lincoln, Nebraska.
<b>MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:</b>	Dick Campbell, Maribel Cruz, Gloria Eddins, Bailey Feit, Christy Joy, and Rich Rodenburg (Lorenzo Ball, Brett Ebert, and Cindy Ryman-Yost absent).
<b>OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:</b>	Paul Barnes, Stephanie Rouse and Clara McCully of the Planning Department; Lyn Heaton of the Finance Department; and other interested parties.
<b>STATED PURPOSE:</b>	Briefing on the <b>Historic Preservation Design Standards</b>

Vice Chair Christy Joy called the meeting to order and acknowledged the posting of the Open Meetings Act in the back of the room.

Paul Barnes stated the focus is on historic preservation. Stephanie Rouse is the historic preservation planner. She also does transportation planning. These are update items that Stephanie has been working for over a year. There are 114 different sets of design guidelines. They have been consolidated, updated, and refined, and are going to become design standards. These updates are coming to Planning Commission as a text amendment, then on to City Council.

Stephanie Rouse stated the program began in 1980. The guidelines have different formats, different ages, and some don't take modern technology, such as solar panels, into account. We actually have 116 sets of guidelines now. This is an attempt to make it easier for the Historic Preservation Commission and for property owners. In the current guidelines there is not a lot of guidance-- no images or graphics. For example, an owner may not know what a baluster is. We worked with LTU's web developer to create an interactive image on the website and included images and graphics in the new standards.

The updates kicked off last June with engagement events. The first was Streets Alive! and there were several Neighborhood Association meetings over winter. There was an open house in May with 50-60 people in attendance, which was a good turnout. Each month the Historic Preservation Commission reviewed sections of the new standards. The standards are based on the National Parks Service, Secretary of Interiors standards, and other peer communities. The Historic Preservation

Commission made their final formal recommendations in May. This item will be on the June 26<sup>th</sup> Planning Commission agenda, then it will be heard by City Council.

The goal is to streamline reviews. Almost every item goes to the Historic Preservation Commission monthly, so it can delay projects based on what point in time the materials are submitted. The new system is set up so if an item meets standards, it can be processed through Administrative Approval, which can be done in about two days. Items that are not standard, large projects, or reconstructions will go to Historic Preservation Commission.

Altered existing topics include environment, windows and doors, entrances, porches, steps, mechanical services, and new construction. New topics include architectural details, additions, accessory buildings/garages, foundations, signs, site and landscape design, storefronts, weatherization, and insulation. New resources in the design standards include callout boxes and helpful links.

For these changes, the ordinance needs to be updated. The ordinance says each district has its own set of standards. We've added a definition section, cleaned up powers and duties, removed National Register items going to City Council to reflect the current process, and removed soliciting gifts. We are adding Thematic Districts, an example would be corner stores. For a district, all properties must be touching and have a clear boundary, but the thematic district would allow a new type of district with properties scattered throughout Lincoln, but related by a theme. This is modeled after the multiple property documentation form used by the National Park Service for the National Register.

A lot of the demolition section is the same. Demolition should be a last resort and the property is in a condition that it is a public threat. Currently if an applicant is denied a demolition request, they can wait 90 days and demolish anyway. We have a two-part approach to change the period to one year for any properties listed today, and then for any new designation after this ordinance update, they can appeal to City Council, and if City Council upholds the decision they cannot demolish. For demolition requests going forward, there will be requirements such as structural analysis, alternatives analysis and proposed mitigation plan. Also, if a demolition occurs without approval, there will be a \$100 per day fine (which is already in the current guidelines), and there is new text prohibiting new construction for one year on a site if a building is demolished without proper approval.

Rodenburg asked if there was any opposition during open houses.

Rouse stated there hasn't been opposition. Rouse went to 3-4 neighborhood organization meeting and the attendance was varied. All of them were supportive, though. Mt. Emerald has seen a lot of demolition and is supportive of the text amendment and ordinance changes.

Campbell asked if this will have its own section in planning standards and where.

Rouse stated it will be 3.86 right after Capital Environs.

Christy Joy asked how it ties to national and state guidelines.

Rouse stated they started with the Secretary of Interiors Standards as the basis, which is at the federal level. They made some modifications that they felt were important to support city goals, such as including solar panels guidance. The State enforces the Secretary of Interiors standards.

Campbell recommended a book on components of American architectural standards. It goes through guidelines for certain styles of structures. He used it as a guide throughout Village Gardens.

Eddins asked, with putting different districts and guidelines into one, we're not going to have like cases down the road. Is that the goal?

Rouse stated yes, also any site-specific items, like the municipal pool bathhouse, are included in an appendix.

Stephanie showed the website.

Campbell stated the website makes the standards easier to understand.

Eddins stated it is a good resource place to get information.

Rodenburg asked if the standards only cover exteriors.

Rouse stated it is mostly exteriors. There are a few Greek houses with interiors protected.

Rodenburg asked if there are any new historic districts planned.

Rouse stated they are discussing a South Haymarket district. They have it drafted but are waiting for the new design standards to pass. When the program began in 1980, it was more local landmarks, with neighborhoods bringing them forward. Then in the 2000's it shifted to more national landmarks. The most recent local landmark designation was Havelock in 2008.

Barnes stated Stephanie and other staff put together all these great resources online with the use of technology and GIS software. We applied for an award through the National Association of Preservation Commissions for the use of technology. Stephanie is going to the conference in August to accept the award. Stephanie, Ryan Axman, and MC Raterman all contributed.

There being no further business, the briefing was adjourned at 12:39 p.m.