

MEETING RECORD

Advanced public notice of the Urban Design Committee meeting was posted on the County-City bulletin board and the Planning Department's website.

NAME OF GROUP: URBAN DESIGN COMMITTEE

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING: Tuesday, July 6, 2021, 1:00 p.m., County-City Building, City Council Chambers, 555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln, NE.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Mark Canney, Gil Peace and Michelle Penn; (Emily Deeker, Peter Hind and Tom Huston absent).

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Stacey Hageman, Paul Barnes and Teresa McKinstry of the Planning Dept.; Dallas McGee of the Urban Development Dept.; Craig Smith and Adam Criswell of Speedway Properties; Kevin Riley with Riley Designs; Aaron Burd of L.A. Real Estate; and other interested citizens.

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

Penn then noted the approval of the minutes will be postponed until the next meeting due to a lack of quorum.

ATRIUM REDEVELOPMENT

Members present: Canney, Peace and Penn; Deeker, Hind and Huston absent.

Craig Smith appeared to present the proposed façade. They are doing an energy enhancement through Tax Increment Financing (TIF). The windows are currently single pane. There has been a lot of neglect on this property. A lot has been cleaned up already. Part of the plan is to activate a roof deck. We had to do quite a bit of planning to re-point the roof area. The façade was primarily done about twenty years ago where the terra cotta was pulled off the roof of the building. The rest of the building has been fairly well maintained. We hope once we repair the windows, we don't get into a bag of worms with unforeseen issues. The underside of the awning was removed. Our plan is to replace that and do updated lighting. This is all part of the TIF project.

Peace asked if the applicant is working on PACE credits as well. Smith replied that is a different program. Due to the current rates on PACE and the fact that this is a staged process, we are trying to get things on a schedule. We want to try and stabilize the building and bring it back to a viable downtown property. Peace commented that the plans look a little generic at this point, but he applauds everything the applicant is trying to do. This building has been neglected. He assumes

more detailed plans are forthcoming. Smith stated he was correct. We plan to do the windows so a portion of them open for ventilation. Peace asked how the heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) is dealing with that. Smith stated they are challenged, but with a new HVAC system design, we are bringing in a lot more fresh air. We are hoping the building will be better than it has been.

Canney inquired if the applicant envisions ground level retail or offices. He applauds the canopy and would like to hear more. Smith stated the plan is to maintain this as an office building. The first floor offers some opportunities. We have some plans to reconfigure the connection through the skywalk at some point. All users on that level had left the building when we bought it or they moved a month later. Our thought has been to try and repurpose it and continue the connectivity to all the garages. He thinks it is important to keep downtown viable for offices. When we see shifts in the downtown market, there is degradation of the downtown core. They are partners on this project with Allo Communications. It seemed a natural fit to purchase this building and make it a combined partnership. On the seventh floor, there is an outdoor covered area that goes up through. There is the option for either side to reactivate the elevator to that level. The plan is to remove the HVAC that was on that area and move part of it to another level. They could activate those spaces to form meetings rooms. There is also the possibility of activating the deck space. It will be all engineered space above the deck. It has a handrail. It is a very large area. He thinks it will be an ideal amenity for the tenants.

Peace inquired if the deck would be open to the public. Smith doesn't believe so. That floor will be limited to certain hours. It is all controlled and believes it will continue to be that way. Funds are set aside for a couple of issues. The City is deciding on 13th Street. A percentage of the TIF has been set aside if that needs handled. There is also money set aside to see if the skywalks are still safe. Everything will be spelled out in the TIF agreement.

Penn noted that some of the skywalks appear to be in a little disrepair. She is curious if there is going to be a cohesive standard that will be designed for those. She was always confused who owned them. Dallas McGee stated there is a total of six different skywalks with different owners and responsibilities for each. City staff has looked at the two connecting skywalks for this. They will be part of the agreement. They will have them analyzed to see if they are structurally safe. One of the issues is there are vaults under the skywalks. They are working through the discussion at this point. Penn stated it would be nice if they were cohesive. McGee stated that agreements have officially expired on the skywalks and need to be renegotiated.

Penn wondered if replacement of the windows on the first floor is necessary or not. Smith noted those were all fairly recently replaced. They are all plate and tempered, and in good shape. The Cost Benefit from the Energy Analysis showed replacing those wasn't necessary.

The committee members all noted that the plan looks good. Peace had no personal recommendations. He inquired if the applicant plans to come back with more detail or if this will be phased. Smith stated there was no active façade change planned. Stacey Hageman added that generally, if anything has not been changed significantly from the conceptual drawings, this will not come back for further review. She will review and approve with the committee members comments in mind.

Penn thanked the applicant for investing in our downtown.

23rd & 'Y' REDEVELOPMENT

Members present: Canney, Peace and Penn; Deeker, Hind and Huston absent.

Kevin Riley with Riley Designs appeared. This is similar architecture to a previous building they proposed. They are representing L.A. Real Estate. They are creating two buildings. Each building will have 18 units per building and they will be three stories tall. All parking is captured at the back of the building. L.A. Real Estate already declared and received the easements. The alley will be paved from 23rd Street to 24th Street. They have agreements with adjacent property owners agreeing to the parking. Based on comments they received from their proposed building on Vine Street, those have already been integrated into this. The original package shows a blend of different siding materials. The consideration would be for no vinyl along the 'Y' Street corridor. They will probably use a Hardie board product and stone along the facades as well. There will be entrances off 23rd Street and 24th Street. Two primary entrances will be off 'Y' Street. They have integrated additional landscaping above and beyond what is required. 23rd Street doesn't have room for landscape improvements due to the fiber optic in the street.

Mark Canney commented that a white spire birch tree can be prone to bugs. He applauds the applicant for going above and beyond with the landscape. He sees the applicant is proposing a native prairie mix. Those can be challenging. He asked if there will be a grounds person or who would maintain the landscaping. He wanted to make sure the applicant understands it takes some effort to get it established. It typically takes about three years. A progressive landscape can take some extra care. He applauds them for doing a native mix. He cautioned them to be prepared. There can be some issues. Riley stated they will be doing some bioswale containment as well.

Peace likes the U shape with interior parking. He likes the model. He would urge the applicant to not have all the buildings exactly identical. He understands wanting them similar. He would urge them to not have all their developments identical.

Penn is looking west on 'Y' Street and trying to figure out the material. Riley stated they are proposing Hardie panels with a board and batten trim concealing the joints. The street frontage

will be a four inch lap siding. There will also be an off-white six inch Hardie lap siding. It will be capped with a panel system. Below the canopy is a stone beltline and a lap siding as well. The base of the building is 4 x 8 Hardie panels all around the building. Penn inquired how close the product will be to the ground. Riley responded six inches off the ground. Penn believes that Riley is not a licensed architect. Riley responded he is not, but one will be on the job. Penn is concerned about that. Riley fails to understand the point. Penn asked if the foundation will be exposed at ground level. Riley answered yes, a minimal amount of the foundation will be exposed.

Penn inquired why there is no architect on this project. Aaron Burd is the owner. He responded that there will be a licensed architect on the job. Penn is asking for there to be a little more design intent. She suggested having good design doesn't necessarily cost money. These buildings will be around for a long time. She thinks the applicant should be spending a little more money on the design. She would like to see some variations in the façade design. This is one of the few projects she can think of that doesn't have an architect on it. She believes it is State requirement. That is there for a reason. She has been on this committee for many years now and she can't think of a project of this magnitude that doesn't have an architect. She would strongly suggest they be involved in the design.

Canney wanted to know if the landscape plan shows any room on the west side for street trees. Riley noted they will probably be asking for a waiver on that point.

Peace had a few thoughts he wanted to express. It sounds like these parties have worked together before. This is a good sized project in an important part of town. He would like to see more. There could be more of these. He would ask Dallas McGee with Urban Development to think about some standards. We are trying to encourage creativity. He believes that having a City group that specializes in design wouldn't hurt. This would be more for City staff that oversee how TIF money is spent.

Canney agrees that the applicant could vary the entrance or some small detail to make these buildings seem more inviting and individualized.

Burd is somewhat confused how a certain structure can be approved for a previous application and they took those recommendations to replicate for this project. Now they are told to make changes. He wondered how this works with everyone else who does their buildings the same. He is trying to get some consistency. This is misleading to a certain degree. What we are showing was approved 45 days ago. Peace doesn't think about what was approved 45 days ago. His comments were related to a 100 percent repeat of a block long building. He wants the owner to think about that. Some details could be varied such as colors, the entrance, features or details. Two, block long buildings that are absolutely identical would be a little too much for him. Burd will look into it. This will also be affordable housing. This has to be somewhat consistent. They are trying to keep them the same. We have spent countless hours doing this. He likes the way

they look. He thinks that similar buildings but with different colors would work. Once we figured out what works, we replicated it. Peace understands that the applicant did a lot of things on the previous application that the commission suggested and created more definition. He should have said thank you. He believes when you repeat a building exactly, you could create issues.

Canney wondered if this is intended for college students or families. Burd responded it is intended for anyone who wants a two bedroom. A certain amount of the units are intended for affordable housing, but it would be unrealistic to say some won't be college students.

Canney suggested the applicant should look at an outdoor recreational component for families.

Penn stated that we just want the best that can be done. This commission is supportive of the Mayor's initiative of affordable housing. Burd noted that six units will be affordable housing. Penn applauds the applicant for that. These are just some points that need to be thought about. If there are more developments coming down the pipeline, what should be done? She noted her comment is directed more towards McGee and Urban Development. Burd foresees variation in future buildings. Peace thinks these are all things that sound good. He encouraged the application to explore some options.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:45 p.m.