

MEETING RECORD

NAME OF GROUP:	URBAN DESIGN COMMITTEE
DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING:	July 12, 2016, 3:00 p.m., Conference Room 214, County-City Building, 555 S. 10 th Street, Lincoln, NE.
MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:	Emily Casper, Tom Huston, JoAnne Kissel and Michele Tilley; (Tammy Eagle Bull, Gill Peace and Michelle Penn absent)
OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:	Ed Zimmer, Stacey Groshong Hageman, Rachel Jones and Teresa McKinstry of the Planning Department; Nicole Fleck-Tooze of Parks and Recreation; Harry Kroos of Public Works and Utilities; Jim Berg and Michael Harpster of BVH Architects; Evan Killeen of Lincoln Children's Zoo; Matthew Roque of Union College; Cary Thomsen of RDG Planning & Design; and other interested parties.

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

Huston then requested a motion approving the minutes for the regular meeting held June 7, 2016. Motion for approval made by Casper, seconded by Tilley and carried 4-0: Casper, Huston, Kissel and Tilley voting 'yes'; Eagle Bull, Peace and Penn absent.

LINCOLN CHILDREN'S ZOO EXPANZION (ZOO AND PARKS & RECREATION DEPT.)

Members present: Casper, Huston, Kissel and Tilley; Eagle Bull, Peace and Penn absent.

Jim Berg stated that this is an expansion of the Master Plan for the Lincoln Children's Zoo. He presented an aerial that showed the confines of the existing park. He pointed out various features on the map. He explained that there are a number of co-occupants on this site such as Ager, Parks and Recreation Dept., the water reservoir, and the Rock Island and Billy Wolff Trails. The Zoo also has an LPS (Lincoln Public Schools) focus program. With the expansion, none of these occupants will be displaced. The Lincoln Children's Zoo is the number three arts and cultures attraction in the State of Nebraska. A challenge for the zoo is to maintain their current membership and expansion. It is not the Zoo's intent to change the character of the site. It will remain a children's zoo. It became apparent that parking will need to be relocated. The majority of the Zoo's parking would be relocated south of A Street. The Zoo will take over a lot that is currently owed by the City. There used to be an antique store on the lot. It is now used as trailhead parking and the Zoo has an agreement to use it for overflow parking. Public Works has decommissioned two reservoirs. The opportunity has come to expand the parking. There would be a connector between the two parking lots with access off Memorial Drive. Access to one of the lots would cross the Rock Island Trail. The Zoo is discussing how to minimize conflicts with the trail. Another big component is how to get people across A Street to the Zoo. There will be a pedestrian bridge across A Street. It will be ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) accessible with a ramp. As it stands today, the Rock Island Trail will remain. The Billy Wolff Trail

will not change either. The front door to the zoo will now be oriented to the south. The Zoo has been working with Public Works on what kind of uses would be permitted on the reservoir. The Zoo has annual events that could happen on this space and not negatively affect the reservoir. Patrons have been expressing interest in an extended season or year round experience. As part of that, the Zoo will take over the Ager Building. It will be converted from a play area to a year round facility with an animal experience. Another component is the Zoo School which will now have a permanent home in an education/conservation building. The Rock Island Trail will become the primary entrance to that building. Once the Zoo is through the main season, there isn't much conflict with parking. The Zoo is still working on the best way to minimize conflicts between people, cars, and bikes. They are not eliminating the at-grade access across A Street. This is still a schematic design. Hausmann Construction is on board to give some construction cost estimates. Phase One would develop the parking, access, and main entrance with, hopefully, some plaza design. As far as time frame, the Zoo is currently fundraising. On the construction side, the Zoo is positioning themselves for groundbreaking next spring, 2017.

Tilley inquired if the gardens will stay as they are now. Berg replied yes.

Casper asked about ADA parking and access. Berg replied that the lot directly across A Street will be for ADA parking. There will also be a drop off north of A Street. Nicole Fleck-Tooze added that there will be handicap parking as well.

Tilley knows that the parking lot in front of the Parks and Recreation building is small. Berg noted that parking lot is not part of the plan. Casper can see people using that lot for a drop off whether it is marked as zoo parking or not. Fleck-Tooze stated that Parks and Recreation staff will be parking north of the Ager Building. The parking spaces around the Parks Administration building will be for Parks customers.

Kissel would like to know more about the new structures being proposed. Berg stated there is an existing pump house that might be used as a base for signage. Building C would be the education/conservation building. There would be two smaller buildings for staff support and as holding for new animals. Kissel pointed out a structure south of A Street between the two parking lots. Berg responded that is just a paving change.

Huston sees two access drives for the south parking lot. Berg replied he was correct.

Kissel wondered what Public Works had to say about the parking lot configuration. Berg believes their concern was A Street and getting people across the street. It was the Zoo's desire to provide an enhanced experience, but also a bridge seemed to make more sense.

Tilley inquired if the bridge is still in design. Berg replied yes. Tilley thinks making the bridge wider would be more welcoming. She is fixated on the turnaround adjacent to the Parks Administration Building. Berg stated the reason it is there, is at certain times and events it would be used for handicap drop-off. Tilley is concerned with congestion and getting to the parking lot. There is not a lot of room there. It is a narrow parking lot already and is already full. By adding more congestion to it, she feels it will be a nightmare. She wonders how populated the parking lot to the north is for the

gardens.

Kissel wondered if any thought has been given to expanding the garden parking at some point. Fleck-Tooze responded that is not a factor at this point.

Casper wondered about drop-off for Zoo camp. Evan Killeen responded they are still looking into it. It may necessitate parents walking farther with their children from the parking lot across the street.

Huston thinks this is a great, ambitious plan and a much needed expansion. He can see parking is an issue. He applauds the effort.

Tilley sees things that are going to be a problem. She is thinking the parking is still not resolved. She thinks it will be a problem. Berg replied they can take another look at it. Kissel stated that it is hard to find a solution that doesn't impact the neighborhood. We have a great zoo that needs to grow. The question is if it has outgrown the triangle. At what point does the cost become too great in terms of functionality? She thinks the limit is being pushed. It is beginning to be less functional. It is a beautiful site with Sunken Gardens and a park in the area. It would be a shame to go somewhere more remote.

Casper thinks one of the great things about the Zoo is that it is so easy to get in and out of. It would be hard to lose some of the accessibility, but the expansion will be great. She wonders about a connection to the Rock Island Trail, south of C Street. Perhaps bike parking could be provided. Berg stated they are still looking at a location.

Tilley has reservations about the parking lot across A Street. She believes some people will use the bridge, some will use the street. Huston noted there is a crosswalk and light there. Berg stated it is their intent to make the entrance an attraction. There could be sounds or activities on the bridge.

Tilley questioned if the crosswalk will be covered or open and how the Zoo would police safety. Berg stated they aren't that far in planning yet. Tilley would like them to keep the safety aspect in mind.

Huston thinks this is great start. Tilley agreed.

Berg stated that the Zoo anticipates coming back as plans develop.

UNION COLLEGE CAMPUS ENTRYWAY FEATURE, 48TH & PRESCOTT

Members present: Casper, Huston, Kissel and Tilley; Eagle Bull, Peace and Penn absent.

Rachel Jones stated this is Union College at the intersection of S. 48th Street and Prescott. There are some entryway improvements to the campus being proposed. Union College would like to incorporate several signs as well. There would be a "Union College" sign on either side of Prescott. The south side will incorporate a sign for the church. Two signs on the columns are also shown. The plan is for these signs to say "7th Day Adventist". According to Public Works, private signs are not permitted in the right-of-way. Planning staff has suggested an alternate location.

Cary Thomsen has been working with Union College. This project came out of the college's master plan. Union College wants to create a front entrance and gateway to the campus. In the future, they want to potentially create a parking lot. The overall plan is to almost continue the streetscape. Future plans would continue the sidewalk and create connections into the campus. There is a little grade change. The front entrance would also create a seating area and a gathering space. Pavers are being looked at for the material and brick for the vertical walls, with a cast stone cap and aluminum lettering. There will be some bronze inlay for lettering on the columns. Improvements are outside of the bio-retention area that was just created by the City. The planting would be extended around the corner with low ground plantings and perennials. Plans are in the process of being submitted to the City for review.

Kissel sees this as the new vehicular entrance to the campus. Thomsen agreed.

Ed Zimmer stated that this project requires Public Works to approve a use of the right-of-way. Jones added that they are also expanding the special permit to expand the use to the other side of Prescott.

Matthew Roque stated that the church and school are two separate entities. Many of the public sees that they are one and the same. This project brands them almost as one campus but the church still wants to keep their individuality. It gives the image that you are entering a campus.

Tilley believes this will make it more pedestrian friendly.

Roque has met with the College View Neighborhood Association and there is excitement about this project.

Kissel would like to know more about the lighting. It will be an important detail. Thompson pointed out the uplighting on the Union College letters and there will be two small lights on the columns on each side. The glass panel will have a small light as well. It will be more effect lighting. There is a street light that will be replaced.

Tilley inquired what the brass plaques will say. Thomsen replied they are working with the City on that. They would like to have them identify 7th Day Adventists.

Jones stated that she does not believe you can have signs in the public right-of-way. Zimmer thinks perhaps an "Established 1890" could be placed there. It would be an identifier, not a sign.

Huston thinks it would be possible to vacate a small strip of the right-of-way. He wouldn't want to see the design compromised over the sign issue. Roque agrees if the wording would be limited, the idea of obtaining more right-of-way could be explored.

Casper wondered about using aluminum. Roque replied they are trying to create a new standard. Casper would recommend that. She asks to be cognizant of what materials are used. She would suggest minimizing it to two materials. Tilley thinks that is a good point. Kissel agrees. She would also urge taking another look at the illumination. There is a lot going on.

Roque noted on the north end of campus there are some pillars and what used to be an old road. There is a bus shelter there. StarTran has been involved in discussion about removing the bus shelter and doing some signage there.

Tilley wondered about the signage on the entrance piers. Zimmer thinks you could say College View which is the name of the neighborhood.

Tilley believes this design knits everything together in a smart way.

ACTION:

Huston moved approval, seconded by Kissel.

Roque stated the goal is to be completed by September 2016.

Harry Kroos noted this application hasn't gone to City Council yet to approve the elements in the public right-of-way.

Tilley likes the bump outs, she thinks the design is great

Motion for approval carried 4-0: Casper, Huston, Kissel and Tilley voting 'yes'; Eagle Bull, Peace and Penn absent.

STAFF REPORT:

- Stacey Hageman stated that the application for N. 48th St. and Leighton will be before this committee next month with a design for redevelopment.
- Huston stated that Wesleyan is moving forward. He thinks it is good to see this area coming alive.
- Hageman stated that there will be some joint meetings coming up with Historic Preservation Commission.

There being no further business, the joint meeting was adjourned at 4:35 p.m.