

MEETING NOTES

Advanced public notice of the Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission meeting was posted on the County-City bulletin board and the Planning Department's website. In addition, a public notice was emailed to the Lincoln Journal Star for publication on Wednesday, January 20, 2021.

NAME OF GROUP: NEBRASKA CAPITOL ENVIRONS COMMISSION

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING: Friday, January 29, 2021, 8:00 a.m., City Council Chambers, County-City Building, 555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Mary Campbell, Kile Johnson and Karen Nalow; Heidi Cuca, Delonte Johnson, Ann Post and David Quade absent.

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Collin Christopher and Teresa McKinstry of the Planning Department; Lynn Johnson from Parks & Recreation; Danielle Vachal with Lincoln Transportation & Utilities (LTU); Bob Ripley and Matt Hansen of the Capitol Commission; Larry Small; Judy gaiashkibos; and other interested parties.

STATED PURPOSE OF MEETING: Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission Meeting

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

Johnson noted there was not a quorum of members present.

INTRODUCTION OF PROPOSAL FOR A NEW SCULPTURE ALONG NEBRASKA'S CENTENNIAL MALL AND A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS FOR AN INSCRIBED PLAQUE ALONG THE SPIRIT OF NEBRASKA PATHWAY

Lynn Johnson appeared. This proposal is for a statue of Dr. Susan La Flesche Picotte that will be on Centennial Mall. Susan was a member of the Omaha tribe, and is recognized as the first Native American woman to become a doctor in the United States. She was also a major human rights proponent. Mr. Johnson showed an image of the sculpture. His understanding is that the sculpture would be approximately nine feet tall. The proposed placement is on Centennial Mall between 'L' Street and 'M' Street, east of the State office building. The sculptor is expected to be

Benjamin Victor, who also is responsible for the Standing Bear sculpture. They would like to have the sculpture in place on October 11, 2021 for the first Indigenous People's Day in Nebraska. They are working with Clark & Enersen on developing some concepts for the backdrop and will come back to the Commission with those details at a later date.

In addition to the sculpture, a bronze plaque is proposed to be placed in the pathway. The process on pathway tiles is that Parks brings the text for all of those to this Commission for review.

Ripley asked about the location. Lynn Johnson responded that it would ideally be centered between the State parking garage and the Scottish Rite building, but they are still determining the exact location. Ripley would hope for some plantings. Ripley thinks this is a great choice of location. The value could be enormous if the piece could be centered and have a wall that is just as impressive as the one behind Standing Bear. It is not a pleasant view corridor. He thinks this placement is very appropriate and could be a terrific asset to the Mall. It could also be an architectural barrier that wouldn't fade with the snow. He believes the barrier would give standing to the importance of the memorial. If underground utilities can be avoided, he would hope to find a way to center the sculpture, with a wall high enough to give closure to the alley behind.

Nalow noted that there were utilities at the location of Standing Bear. They weren't quite to the degree of this location, but they were able to make that work.

Kile Johnson believes this statue is well deserved and to have that class of a statue is wonderful. He thinks the location looks great. He doesn't anticipate any problems.

Campbell echoed everyone's comments. She is excited about the project.

Ripley inquired if the pedestal shown is what is proposed. He doesn't quite understand the scale. Lynn Johnson responded that the details are still being worked on. Ripley is glad to know she will be on a monumental scale. Lynn Johnson stated as they work through the final details, they will bring back a formal request.

Karen Nalow noted that when this comes before the Commission for a vote, she will declare a conflict of interest due to the fact that Clark & Enersen is providing design services for this.

RESIDENTIAL STREET REHAB WORK BY THE CITY OF LINCOLN IN THE PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY OF LINCOLN MALL FROM S. 10TH TO S. 14TH STREETS, GOODHUE BOULEVARD FROM A TO H STREETS AND S. 14TH STREET FROM A TO K STREETS IN THE NEBRASKA CAPITOL ENVIRONS DISTRICT

Danielle Vachal stated this project is for street rehab and curb reconstruction. They will replace curb ramps when necessary. Ramps will be added along Lincoln Mall. Based on feedback from the Commission, they have changed their plans to include brick pavers at the intersection nodes

along Lincoln Mall. There was concern along Goodhue Blvd. where the sidewalk would impact the ramp. What they replace will match the existing pattern. Otherwise, the plans remain the same as what was previously presented.

Nalow appreciates Vachal coming back to accommodate previous comments by the Commission.

Kile Johnson appreciates the improvements being proposed.

Vachal stated the plans will be reviewed within her department and most likely constructed this summer.

Kile Johnson is in support of this. Campbell indicated her support as well.

Nalow would like to make sure that the pavers match. Vachal stated their intent would be to install a concrete base below the pavers and replace just what is needed.

Ripley commented with respect to paving on Goodhue Blvd., he would recommend replacing curbs as well, as needed. Based off stormwater and needing to make sure water is flowing correctly, Ripley would encourage the commission to not install barrier curbs on the islands. He would have those installed on the outside where water drains. They had the same thing occur with regard to re-curbings of islands on Sheridan Blvd. Barrier curbs look like something from an industrial park. He would propose any curbs replaced on islands only mimic what is there today. They would match what is on Sheridan Blvd. The top width of the barrier is not as wide. Sheridan Blvd. curbs were all replaced in the last ten years. He would like to see the curbs around the median similar to what is there now.

Vachal stated their intent is to replace only what is needed. She expects that they would replace to match what is there. Ripley noted they are lower than normal. He is delighted for the work that will be done and he supports it.

Matt Hansen inquired about the type of paver used on Lincoln Mall. Nalow replied that they are a concrete paver, not clay brick. She doesn't remember the exact product. She has information on file for what the product is and will pass that along to Vachal.

Christopher stated he believes this can now be approved with a Certificate of No Material Effect in order to speed up the process and give LTU the go ahead to proceed.

Kile Johnson believes the members today are quite comfortable with going ahead with a Certificate of No Material Effect. The Commission supports this. Christopher will initiate the process of approving a Certificate of No Material Effect. He will get this done in the next 10 days or so.

Hansen stated the last time this was presented, the applicant proposed handicap ramps along the Capitol. He wondered if perhaps adjustments were made to those. Ripley remembers the discussion. He hasn't seen any modified proposal. Vachal stated that as those are reconstructed, she would prefer to realign the crossing on the southwest corner of Lincoln Mall. There isn't a handicap ramp accessible on the east side of 14th St. There is a ramp, but it doesn't meet ADA. They will be cutting out the ramp and re-sloping it.

Hansen believes the discussion for the original proposal showed moving the ramp and shifting it. He believes the preference was for leaving it where it is. Ripley thinks the need to center and align crosswalks is exaggerated. He has never seen someone get lost crossing the street and not find the other side. Vachal noted they are proposing to take out the existing ramps that don't comply and place ramps that do. Nalow noted it appears that is what is being proposed.

Vachal wanted to bring attention to a future project. LTU will be replacing the water main along 'G' Street. Construction is scheduled for next summer. They are looking at curb ramps they might impact on 'G' Street and Goodhue Blvd. The water main is under the pavement on the north side of the street. Typically, when LTU replaces a water main, they like to get it out from under the street. They haven't found the exact location of where to put it yet. It may get into the curb ramps they show to be reconstructed. Vachal stated that if they rebuild those ramps and don't replace the patterning, it is because they are looking at coming back next year. At that point they would reconstruct it with the correct patterning.

Ripley is delighted to see the water main in this area being replaced. Vachal noted there will be significant water replacement in this neighborhood happening this summer.

OTHER

- Christopher stated that in August of last year, this Commission approved a law enforcement memorial. At that time, there was a discussion about drafting some design standards for monuments and memorials. He has recently begun drafting some potential standards. He has not identified where they would go in the Capitol Environs chapter yet. The draft language is more generally in nature, and in his experience, keeping them more general allows the Commission to make some judgement calls as they see appropriate. He asked that the Commissioners take a look at the draft between now and the next meeting. He talked with Lynn Johnson recently and used the Veteran's Memorial Guidelines as a template to start from. He hopes to have more Commissioners present next month and will talk about this more at that point. By then he will have more details in regards to where the standards would fit within the existing design standards chapter.

He also mentioned that he talked with Lynn Johnson a couple of days ago about the sculpture on Centennial Mall, and they discussed the possibility of revising the standards for Centennial Mall to limit future public art installations. He suggested it might be wise to pull this all together into one text amendment.

Lynn Johnson stated that he didn't know where else on Centennial Mall sculptures would be appropriate. He would be interested in exploring whether the Commission would consider Centennial Mall to be complete.

Ripley thinks of places like Andersen Hall. What if they were to propose a monument? The front yard of their property would be within the 120-foot right-of-way of Centennial Mall. He thinks the Commission might like to leave a little room for what others might ask for in the future. He is thinking of those property owners adjacent to the Mall's 120 feet of right-of-way. Nalow asked about plaques and those types of monuments. Ripley would suggest defining the language to only address aboveground statues and monuments, as opposed to surface enhancements like plaques.

Christopher believes this conversation could be continued next month.

- The Annual report approval will be delayed until next month.
- This group is scheduled to meet on Friday mornings through August of 2021, and it is possible that could extend out through the remainder of the year.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:45 a.m.