

MEETING RECORD

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, August 16, 2023.

NAME OF GROUP: NEBRASKA CAPITOL ENVIRONS COMMISSION

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING: Friday, August 25, 2023, 8:30 a.m., City Council Chambers, County-City Building, 555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Andrea Gebhart, Delonte Johnson, Kile Johnson, Karen Nalow, Ann Post and David Quade; (Heidi Cuca absent).

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Collin Christopher, Paul Barnes and Teresa McKinstry of the Planning Department; Matt Hansen with the Nebraska Capitol Commission; Bob Ripley; Jeff Chadwick with Clark & Enersen; Kerin Peterson with the Public Building Commission; and other interested citizens.

STATED PURPOSE OF MEETING: Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission Meeting

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

K. Johnson then called for a motion approving the minutes of the regular meeting held July 28, 2023. Motion for approval made by Quade, seconded by Gebhart and carried 4-0: Gebhart, K. Johnson, Post and Quade voting 'yes'; D. Johnson and Nalow abstaining; Cuca absent.

FAÇADE AND SITE IMPROVEMENTS AT 635 'J' STREET

PUBLIC HEARING:

August 25, 2023

Members present: Gebhart, D. Johnson, K. Johnson, Nalow, Post and Quade; Cuca absent.

Collin Christopher stated that this project has some relatively minor façade and site improvements that will have positive impacts. This site is in the South Haymarket Neighborhood Plan that is envisioned to have more of an office and residential feel in the future, but in the short-term he believes these improvements are all in line with the existing character of the building and its surrounding context.

Karen Nalow will abstain from this item as she has worked on this project.

Jeff Chadwick believes this was an Implement dealership at some point. There is a grade change on the property. It is about 8 inches lower than the rest of the garage to the south. It is also a couple of feet higher than the street. There is some buckling above the windows. They will be remedying that. They will look into some stone repair in some areas. The interior is a wide open space. The building has had a few renovations over the years. They will clear that out. It is a thin concrete brick structure. It is three steps down into the building and one step up from the outside. They are looking at that to create ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) accessibility. There will be a garage for Police Officers to bring people in. There is an intake section. There are two secure rooms for a precautionary measure. Otherwise, they go to the control and intake area. That will be staffed by LincPoint. There will be a milieu area with chairs, a kitchen area and a television. There are some areas for cots, though they are not looking for people to spend long periods of time here. He pointed out the entryways. When someone comes to pick up an individual, they will be let in and screened for anything as well, before they can take someone out into their custody. There are restrooms and showering facilities. They went through many iterations of the plan before deciding on this design. For the exterior, the approach was a light touch. They wanted to update it, but not draw a lot of attention to it. They looked at the brick itself. It is currently a red brick with some black, pink and charcoal coloring. They want to cover the concrete block that is currently there. They would like to limit demolition. They will be replacing some windows and covering the block. He showed a large format of a porcelain tile. They are looking at a darker gray and a beige color. He believes they go really well with the brick tones on the facility. They are designing in a way that draws less attention to the outside. It will be a darker band and lighter tones by the windows. There are some large uninsulated windows that they will be filling in. He showed an image of the material. It has somewhat of a patina to it. He showed a small canopy over the main entrance. They are going through contract negotiations now. They are hopeful to finish construction in mid-July of next year.

K. Johnson asked if it would be fair to assume the gray building on the east side will be gone. Chadwick noted there was a discussion to get this done quickly. In the interim, in order to fulfill the needs of Lincoln Police Dept. (LPD) and Lancaster County Sheriff's Office, they contacted Lincoln Public Schools and had an old classroom remodeled. LincPoint has been using that. That will go away. There have been some discussions on how it goes away. They are also looking at the timeframe for how long it stays. K. Johnson hopes it doesn't become a common site in the Capitol Environs district.

Gebhart stated that it sounds like accessibility has been a forethought. She inquired if there were any accessibility issues with the proposed exit. Chadwick stated there are two openings for doorways on the north side. Gebhart noted that this looks like it is just part of the building. She wondered if similar façade treatments will be extended throughout the building. Chadwick stated that LPD owns the building. They will be very involved with the next phase. There is an approach to wrap the building with the same materials.

K. Johnson asked if this will be taking the place of the Independence Center activities. Chadwick understands this is more in line with the services The Bridge previously provided. A place was needed to take over those individuals.

Post stated this was a good refresher of the building.

ACTION:

Post moved approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the façade and site improvements as presented, seconded by D. Johnson and carried 6-0: Gebhart, D. Johnson, K. Johnson, Nalow, Post and Quade voting 'yes'; Cuca absent.

STAFF REPORT AND MISCELLANEOUS:

- Paul Barnes stated that staff is doing a text amendment for all design review boards. Most of the changes have to do with Historic Preservation Commission and Urban Design Committee. Currently, there is a section in the Capitol Environs code language that speaks to jurisdictions. For a historic landmark within Capitol Environs district, this body looks to Historic Preservation Commission. There is a sharing of duties amongst the boards. We don't have those sections with the other two design boards. Staff is already following this procedure in practice, but it has not been in the code. It will be coming forward in the next few months. Staff is also working on a cleanup of the Capitol Environs code section as well. He wanted everyone to be aware that is what is coming up.

Christopher noted that the cleanup is related to a change made a few years ago where this Commission went from three to four Ex Officio members. When that change was made, there was a section was a section that should have been modified but was not. Matt Hansen made staff aware of the discrepancy. This is just a cleanup. It doesn't require a vote from this board.

K. Johnson asked if appeal conditions would be looked at. Barnes stated that would require a lot more change at the State level because this is a board where duties and powers are both the city code and state statutes. He doesn't believe the city would want to move forward with a code change without also addressing changes to the state statutes. K. Johnson agreed with Barnes.

- Christopher noted the demolition happening on the Pershing block. It is exciting to see some movement on the project, and the hope is that the developer for Phase I redevelopment will be back with a streetscape proposal in the coming months.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:45 a.m.