

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, October 3, 2023, 3:00 p.m., County-City Building, City Council Chambers, 555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln, NE.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Mark Canney, Jill Grasso, Tom Huston, Frank Ordia, Gil Peace and Michelle Penn; Emily Deeker absent.

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Arvind Gopalakrishnan, Paul Barnes, Collin Christopher, David Cary and Teresa McKinstry of the Planning Department; Peter Hind, Hallie Salem and Ernie Castillo of Urban Development Department; Ben Kunz with Hoppe Development; Evan Gunn and Kit Williams with BVH Architecture; Joy Skidmore appeared via Zoom Video Communications®; and other interested parties.

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

Penn then called for a motion approving the minutes of the regular meetings held of July 11, 2023, August 1, 2023 and September 5, 2023. Motion for approval made by Huston, seconded by Ordia and carried 5-0: Grasso, Huston, Ordia, Peace and Penn voting 'yes'; Canney absent at time of vote; Deeker absent.

Penn acknowledged Frank Ordia as the newest member of the committee and welcomed him.

TERMINAL PARKING DESIGN AT 139 S. 10TH STREET:

October 3, 2023

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

Arvind Gopalakrishnan stated that this application is for a parking structure on the lot south of the Terminal Building. The site currently houses a drive-thru area for two bank machines. In 2021, the applicant requested a waiver of the Downtown Design Standards. The application was conditionally approved by the Planning Director for 7 years. The applicant is proposing a single-story, enclosed parking structure that would accommodate 25 stalls. The entrance is to be on the south side. The parking structure would be set back 20 feet from the west alley and 60 feet from the east property line fronting 10th Street. The building doesn't have any windows, but has a wrap. The life expectancy of the wrap is about 10 years. This application appeared last month for advice. A masonry wall was proposed for screening. Both options included separate canopies for the bank machines. Option 1 was noted as preferable. Considering the temporary nature, the applicant was advised for a softer edge. He showed the proposed site plan. There

would be a common canopy for the two bank machines. Downtown Design Standards are mentioned in the staff report. Parking structures are usually required to have ventilation, but this is a temporary structure. Waivers of the Downtown Design Standards requested are to Section 4.1 and Section 4.2. At the last Urban Design Committee meeting, members asked the applicant to come up with some softer screening, per the Downtown Design Standards such as 90 percent of the right-of-way to be screened with up to 3 feet of screening

Peace asked if there was a project reviewed and approved for this. Paul Barnes answered there has been a number of iterations that have come before the committee. The last one was approved by the Planning Director. He believes the tenants are now looking for covered secure parking. Huston believes this will provide parking for tenants, to be replaced at some point with a more permanent structure.

Penn inquired if the applicant has given a timeline or if there is an agreement that this will only be temporary. Huston believes 7 years was part of the Planning Director approval of the waiver. Gopalakrishnan clarified that the waiver of the drive-thru piece was for 7 years.

Penn was thinking of the precedent this will set. She can't think of another example. Huston noted the time limited waiver. He can't think of another example. Penn wondered if this is approved and it is supposed to be temporary, how is that policed? Barnes believes those to be valid questions. That is why this application is here. Planning staff didn't feel this could be approved at the administrative level. The committee can discuss conditions or a certain timeframe. That timeframe would be on the Planning Dept. to track.

Peace asked if there is a sense of urgency to get covered parking or due to the budget. Justin Hernandez stated there is some sense of urgency to provide some covered parking for the residents. They sat on the design through the Covid-19 pandemic. The solution was reached and they moved forward with a secondary commitment to provide parking at a later date.

Grasso asked about the future plan for parking. Hernandez stated the plan was to develop the entire south lot. They would develop the entire west lot with two levels of parking that you would enter from the south side of 'N' Street. There is a mixed-family component to it. That project is on hold at the time. They worked with Urban Development to redevelop the parking lot and repave it. They haven't done a redevelopment agreement at this time.

Peace asked about the wrap and what it says. Hernandez stated it was the product of one of the designers. It is a nod to the traction company that was there initially. Rather than a mural, they did a wrap to get the full effect across the building.

Ordia inquired what other materials were considered for the structure. Hernandez replied they considered concrete masonry. This is a steel building with panels. Part of the nature of doing this was that it could be disassembled in the future.

Penn asked if this location will eventually be a parking garage. Hernandez stated it will be a mixed-use building with parking.

Ordia understood that proposal would have parking available. Hernandez replied he was correct.

ACTION:

Huston moved approval with the condition that the time limit would be through September 30, 2030, seconded by Peace.

Grasso wondered what happens in 7 years. Hernandez stated that they need to provide parking with materials that can be removed from the site. They own the ground.

Grasso understands the desire to do higher and better.

Penn wondered about a timeline of 5 or 6 years.

Ordia believes a shorter timeline would incentivize the applicant to move a little faster.

Hernandez noted they have invested a substantial sum into the Terminal Building. There are permanent residents who are living there. They have taken a new building that was about 50 percent vacant and will be 100 percent full by this time next year. He understands the concerns, but there are substantial investments that have been made. Their number one concern is trying to encourage people to come downtown and have parking available. They are trying to help residents promote downtown. He believes this is a unique situation. They have invested a lot of money and time to get this done.

Penn is not minimizing the investment in downtown. She is looking for a timeline that makes sense. She looks at this differently than a temporary building.

Canney asked if the ATM's are currently on site. Hernandez replied yes. They are currently under an existing canopy structure that is there now.

Motion for conditional approved carried 6-0: Canney, Grasso, Huston, Ordia, Peace and Penn voting 'yes'; Deeker absent.

WEST HAYMARKET STREETScape IMPROVEMENT COMPLETION: CANOPY STREET, SOUTH OF O

STREET:

October 3, 2023

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

Collin Christopher believes this is a straightforward streetscape project. Staff reviewed properties to the north and south. Under the Harris Overpass is a bit of unfinished streetscape. The City and Urban Development have been working with the West Haymarket JPA to bring a project forward that fills the gap. It would be City funding with the West Haymarket JPA doing maintenance. This is continuing the pattern of development that you see on both sides. There would be a sidewalk with enhancements, a bench, planter and trash receptacles. He believes this would provide good pedestrian connectivity. He showed

what it looks like today. They are restriping the parking lot and getting rid of a small shack building that is located there. They have some additional parking east of the columns. Parking would expand closer to the right-of-way. There is an 8 foot wide sidewalk by the Olsson's building. This would double the sidewalk and get rid of the river rock. There would be a decorative paver finish in a 2 foot gap between the sidewalk and parking. One thing that will be addressed, when Canopy Park was built, the pavers didn't match the rest of the pavers in West Haymarket. They are proposing to remove them and replace them with the correct paver blend that is seen everywhere else. They will take the pavers and stockpile them for use somewhere else. Landscaping would be 1 planter with annuals maintained by Downtown Lincoln Association. The small median, a little strip to the west will be landscaped. Ideally, it would probably just be paved. There are some cross slope issues. There was a compromise showing some landscape massing. This gets some sun because it is a little removed from the overpass and south of it. They will have to do some trial and error on what will work in the space.

Canney asked if there would be irrigation. Christopher replied no. Canney made a suggestion of Blue Zinger if the Dropsy doesn't work out.

Penn is confused by the parking. Hallie Salem believes the plan provided is showing the parking now, versus what will be changed. There is parking off the driveway to the Golds already. She believes it is showing how the proposed parking meets with the new parking. There is perpendicular parking south of the columns and parking will be added on the north side. They are separated by a chain bollard system between the north and south. The southern most parking area is divided by curb stops. The south side is City parking and the part north of that is the JPA parking. Penn understood they would be separated. Salem replied yes, that was correct.

Huston supports completing the consistency of the pavers.

Penn believes it will be good to tie the sides together. It is currently not aesthetically matching. She supports this.

ACTION:

Penn made a motion for approval as recommended by staff, seconded by Huston and carried 6-0: Canney, Grasso, Huston, Ordia, Peace and Penn voting 'yes'; Deeker absent.

CENTERPOINTE 13TH AND E, 1000 S. 13TH STREET:

October 3, 2023

Peter Hind introduced himself and thanked Frank Ordia for joining the committee. He stated this is a great group to serve with. He wanted to report that the work that the Urban Design Committee does, really does matter and people do listen. City Council member Washington commented on the Urban Design Committee minutes that were presented to Council members. People are reading them and it makes a difference. He believes it is reassuring to see the work is filtering to the public. He has been with the City for five weeks now. It has been wonderful to see the amount of investment and work that developers and design firms are doing. The next two projects are here because the Urban Development Dept. has looked

at the timeline. November 30 is the deadline. He is recommending that folks come before this committee early and go through the system. They want as much input as possible.

Ben Kunz stated this is a partnership with downtown. It is a typical design process. They are in the conclusion of schematic design right now and want to get this reviewed by Urban Design Committee ahead of the November 30 application deadline. He showed what is there now, the old CenterPointe building. It is currently primarily a parking lot. A one-story building is about one third of the total site. There is an alley. This stemmed from a community drive process. They have continued community meetings. This would be for the creation of affordable housing. Safety is a key concern. Lack of gathering spaces, neighborhood parking, trees and greenspace were noted as priorities. As they started to design this, they looked at the context. There is multi-family mixed with larger apartment type blocks. They tried to understand how this context is incorporated. It would include 125 affordable homes, a 6,500 square foot clinic with a heart and free health care services for the neighborhood. The ground floor would be secured parking, as well as on-street parking. On the design side, they have committed what could be a much larger building into three distinct forms, drawing on materials from the neighborhood. They have committed to having some platform for public art. They are looking to have a public art process this fall. They are not dialed in yet on color selection and materials. They are committed to community spaces as well. They want to have a community plaza that becomes somewhat of a front door. In addition to that will be a stall for a mobile vendor. There would also be a community room on the corner of the building. It would be open and reservable to neighbors and residents. They are looking at a linear park on the ground floor. Additionally, this would have a centrally located property manager office and roof deck. They are still looking to further engage with neighbors for more input.

Penn asked about the number of units and parking stalls. Kunz stated there would be 125 units and 19 street stalls. They are exploring options for off-site private stalls. There would be 92 garage spaces. Units are a mix of one and two bedrooms, with some three. Huston asked if they will all be 100 percent affordable housing. Kunz replied yes.

Canney inquired if the applicant will target elderly, single parents, etc. Kunz replied they have no target population. They will most likely draw a disproportionate amount of seniors and perhaps single parents. Roommates typically don't qualify well in the affordable housing program. Canney can't help but comment that as things are developed, if limestone benches or rectangular chunks are proposed, he would encourage the applicant to think about skate stops and how to design amenities with things that can't be destroyed. He would also encourage them to think about the maintenance of the space and that the owner understands this will be additional work with quasi-public spaces. Be aware of the potential activity. He thinks it is a great idea to open the spaces to the neighborhood.

Huston stated this looks like a great project to him.

Grasso would like the applicant to discuss the site plan. Hernandez pointed out the clinic space and community room. There is an alley which will be maintained. Vacating it completely is not an option due to utilities in the space. He showed the proposed parking. Grasso wondered if you can drive through the alley now. Hernandez reiterated that the alley will remain. There would be a corridor bridge over the alley. This would require an exception to the air rights above the alley. They will vacate that portion. The

minimum clearance is 13 feet, 6 inches. The rest will be more of a 21 foot clearance. The south leg of the building has a roof deck. They will have stairs down to the public plaza on the ground floor. The roof deck is pulled back from the property line. That is what creates the linear park. They are proposing a resident only community room that opens to the roof deck.

Peace asked how this currently aligns with the ordinance for parking ratio and how it aligns with the expected number of tenants who would have cars. Hernandez stated they are submitting a Planned Unit Development (PUD) amendment. The proposed parking ratio is .6 per unit. There is evidence from neighborhood data sources that up to 25 percent of households in this area do not have a car. They are looking at options for a smaller rent burden for those who don't need parking. Peace noted that the PUD has only slightly less parking than the current ordinance. Huston added that a PUD allows you to make those kind of adjustments. Hernandez understands that previously on plans, parking was perceived as very important. They have proposed on-street angle parking in a greater amount. In neighborhood meetings, landscaping was deemed more important than parking. Peace noted that the south side appears to not have any parking. Hernandez replied that was correct. The neighbors wanted more green space.

Grasso believes this is a start to a good project. There is significant need for something like this in the area. Moving forward with design, she would encourage the applicant to pick up on neighborhood infrastructure. Be cognizant of the alley. It could be a great space for people to sleep. She encouraged the applicant to come up with some creative ways to keep it light, airy and safe. Hernandez will be back as the design progresses. It most likely won't be until March 2024. They are not looking for a vote on this before they go before Nebraska Investment Financing Authority (NIFA). They are working on the redevelopment plan amendment now.

Huston believes this is off to a very good start. Grasso agreed.

Penn loves the idea of a clinic with this. She applauds that direction.

Huston stated that the modern amenity affordable project is highly commendable. He noted that the committee will like to see materials in more detail.

Hernandez stated that the details are still in development. The building will most likely have lap siding. Trim and windows still in design.

Canney noted the details need to be figured out with regard to landscaping as well.

CENTRAL AT SOUTH HAYMARKET, 205 S. 10TH STREET:

October 3, 2023

Evan Gunn stated that this is the same team that worked on Union at Antelope Valley. They are about halfway through the schematic design in the process. They would like a cursory review for input. They will be back next month for a vote. Their deadline is November 30, 2023 for financing. Today, the plan is to do the streetscape and landscape the first part of next year when financing is approved. There are a few things they are doing on-site that they would like to walk through. This is the north half of the block. There is a bike lane on the north side. Their plan is to not have vehicles cross that. The sanitary sewer runs

through the middle of the site. There is not currently an alleyway. They need to provide something for access. They are calling it a passageway for pedestrians. They don't anticipate vehicles. They would also like to use that as the main entrance of the building. The leasing office will be located there, along with vertical circulation.

Grasso asked what this building will be. Gunn replied they are proposing 170 units of affordable housing. There will be no parking on-site. The owner is working with the City to have parking located in Center Parking Garage for all the tenants.

Grasso questioned the demographic. Gunn replied they will not have student housing. They are looking at affordable housing for families.

Huston asked if the developer is anticipating making application to NIFA at end of November. Gunn replied yes.

Gunn continued that this will be a mix of one, two and three bedroom units.

Penn inquired how the applicant came to the conclusion of no parking. Gunn stated that discussions were held with the developer and the City. Huston noted that the City doesn't require it in this zoning.

Peace believes that those details and an agreement would need to be part of the package for the NIFA application. He thinks that part of the score involves parking. Gunn noted that is his understanding as well. The agreement is underway. This is just the middle of schematic design.

Gunn continued that there is a courtyard in the middle that is accessed in the passageway. They are still exploring materials in relation to the Downtown Design Standards. They will present that at the next meeting. They are looking at about half of the units to have balconies. They are looking to start opening up the corner where the program allows. They would like to have a fitness room on the corner, along with a leasing office.

Canney wondered about the distance from the ground to the first row of windows on the 10th Street side. Gunn noted that there is two foot more on the ground side. Kit Williams added that from 10th Street to 9th Street is a slope going down. It didn't make sense to have apartments on that corner.

Penn asked about the north side. Gunn stated there are two separate properties with an alleyway that cuts through.

Canney is trying to understand the design. The pedestrian would be walking along a 6 foot wall. He is wondering if there is anything comparable to it. It looks like there is no room for vegetation. He understands this hasn't been rendered yet. He was wondering about the interface between that portion of the building and someone walking. He thinks the streetscape component can and should be part of this. He appreciates the applicant coming in early. Christopher stated that referencing the Downtown Corridors design, 9th Street and 10th Street are an integral part of that project. Staff will take a much closer look and have conversations with the applicant. Regarding the streetscape, it hasn't been determined if the City is

doing it or if the developer will do it. One way or another, the streetscape will be something that is given the stamp of approval to be part of the corridors project.

Peace asked if there will be a redevelopment agreement. Gunn replied yes.

Gunn continued that he would like feedback on the design decision to enter mid-block. It is a little unique. He believes they need to provide access in the middle. They want it to be pedestrian friendly. It would be gated off at the leasing office entry doors. Canney noted that the alley gives access, but wondered if you would need to be a tenant to access it. Gunn replied yes, that was correct. The amenities are all for the affordable housing component.

Peace asked if someone would be in the space maintaining the sewer line or something else, if there is a secondary entry. Gunn replied yes. There is an access off 10th Street and access from the south.

Canney inquired if there will be any balconies on the courtyard side. Gunn replied they are currently proposing balconies on the outside perimeter, not on the inside.

Ordia asked what else could be done in the courtyard space. Gunn stated they are currently discussing other amenities such as playgrounds and bicycle storage. They have also talked about community gardens. They are not sure that would be quite the fit here. Canney noted the applicant might need to do a light study on that. Gunn noted if they had one, it would be a garden just for this community.

Grasso stated the building appears to be 5 stories on the west. Gunn stated there are 5 on the east and 6 on the west.

Huston inquired where the applicant is in the process regarding materials. Gunn stated they haven't gotten there yet. They are still looking at the Downtown Design Standards. They are thinking about a brick masonry base and looking at a cementitious material above that. Huston noted that this committee would like to see material selection at some point. Gunn will plan on bringing samples.

Peace wondered about the Downtown Design Standards and if there is a portion of glass and windows that is needed. Gunn stated yes, if you are north of 'N' Street. Barnes noted that the standards call for 70 percent transparency between 7 and 9 feet, but there is an exception for residential on the first floor.

Huston thinks the proposal is commendable.

Penn loves the balconies. She thinks the project is headed in a good direction. She is concerned with parking. That needs to be answered clearly. She would like a better response on where these people are going to park. Huston would use that as part of the redevelopment process

Joy Skidmore pointed out a garage on the aerial. They are also in the process of making a plan amendment. In that agreement, there will be parking reserved in the garage. She understands that they need to provide parking. They will work on that agreement.

Peace believes the applicant needs to think about where the parking will be, and maybe there should be a drop-off lane for people that are getting groceries or something. Perhaps a drop-off and pickup can be incorporated. Skidmore noted they received the same comment from the CEO yesterday. They are going to work through that.

Grasso likes the idea of the entrance in the middle of the block. She encouraged the applicant to pay particular attention to giving some street presence, so it doesn't seem like a harsh building. She encouraged them to celebrate the entrance. She thinks the entrance will be an important piece, along with what the applicant decides to do in the courtyard. She would figure out a location to place bike racks. With parking two blocks away, there could be a bike situation.

Canney doesn't know the proposed demographic. He asked if this will be pet friendly and if so, will there be a grass area for pets. It is something worth discussing. The component was included in the Union at Antelope Valley project. Skidmore stated they will have a dog area in the courtyard. They do anticipate this will be for families, so they foresee an area for pets and a playground, along with outdoor gathering and grill area.

STAFF REPORT AND MISCELLANEOUS:

Barnes welcomed Frank Ordia. He believes he will bring some good perspectives to the group.

Ordia stated he looks forward to serving with everyone.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.