

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, September 7, 2021, 3:00 p.m., County-City Building, City Council Chambers, 555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln, NE.

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

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Paul Barnes and Teresa McKinstry of the Planning Dept.; Aaron Burd with L.A. Real Estate; Kurt Suhr with Architecture One; Cristy Joy with Archi+ etc., Jim Geasler, Rick Onnen, Gary Tucker and DaNay Kalkowski; Joy Ebmeier with Tabitha; Erin Dobesh with Davis Design; 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 called for a motion approving the minutes of the regular meetings August 3, 2021. Motion for approval made by Huston, seconded by Hind and carried 4-0: Grasso, Hind, Huston and Penn voting 'yes'; Canney, Deeker and Peace absent.

23rd & Y STREET REDEVELOPMENT

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

Aaron Burd stated that since he last appeared before this Commission, they took suggestions and obtained a licensed architect, Kurt Suhr with Architecture One.

Kurt Suhr appeared. He was asked to get involved with the project and make the two buildings look a little different. It has been simplified. He showed the colors being proposed. There used to be a vertical element with a third color. That has been simplified. The gable has turned to a straight eve. Previously there were exposed wood columns. They have proposed to wrap them and make them a little stronger. On the corners, there are spires. The center building was extended to the height of the corner spires.

Huston believes this is the third time for this applicant to appear. He thought they were asked for different colors and variations on the buildings. Burd stated that they proposed a plan for a different development on Vine Street and it was approved by this committee. They designed this one to be the same as Vine Street and were requested to modify the design for this. They made the changes to this one that were requested by Urban Design Committee.

Penn stated it is her understanding there will be more of these developments. Burd responded she was correct.

Suhr used to work at Bahr Vermeer Haecker in the 1980's. He used to do a lot of low income housing. He used to be labeled as the HUD (Housing and Urban Development) guy. He went on his own in 2000 and has continued to do some affordable housing through the years. He contracts with a company now out of Texas. He reviews some HUD projects. He travels a lot and sees a lot of apartments. He has been through the drawings and made suggestions. Penn sees the licensed architect has been taken care of.

Hind wanted to hear how they will bring water off the spires and how the drainage will work. He would also like to hear about the lighting. There was a previous residential project with a courtyard and he was wondering about access. Burd responded that the parking is in the rear of the buildings. If there is enough light, they will place a small streetlamp or fixture in the parking lot. As for between the two buildings, they aren't planning on having lighting there. It is more of a screen as opposed to a walkway. Hind understands the space between buildings is a planting area and not a walkway. Burd replied correct. He also stated that the roof is more of a parapet.

Huston inquired how many units. Burd responded 36.

Hind has a concern about Hardie board. He wanted to make sure there is the correct clearance from the ground. Burd stated that the design calls for eight inch wall and trim board, and Hardie board will go just below that. They aim to maintain at least six inches clearance.

Hind asked if there will be concrete with Hardie board when it comes to the front patio. Suhr replied that was correct. The concrete will be a finish floor elevation. Hind thinks you will find that there should be a gap of two inches between the concrete and Hardie board. He encouraged the applicant to look at the specs. It is a common problem. If Hardie board touches concrete, it isn't meeting the manufacturers recommendation. This is a difficult detail. Penn knows that this committee has talked about this before. She believes the applicant has talked about covering it with vegetation. The material can soak up water and fall apart.

Huston likes the design changes and noted that he worked with Suhr in the 1990's on affordable housing. He thinks the changes are aesthetically pleasing and comply with the design standards.

Penn wondered about the windows. Burd noted it is board and batten. Suhr added their intent is to be the same height.

Hind noted that if the applicant is intending for siding to be wrapped on a column, it needs to be six inches from the pavement. Suhr stated that he has spent a lot of time on timber frame houses and there used to be a water tape so if water damage happens, you replace the element.

Grasso wondered about the windows. She asked if there is any trim around the windows, a lighter colored Hardie board area. Suhr replied no. Burd stated they will be trimmed with 1 x 4. Grasso believes it would help with the view. She would recommend trimming the windows for a slight shadow line. She reiterated that the new rendition of the columns look better. She would suggest they perhaps consider a different material so you don't have a gap between the concrete and the bottom of the material.

ACTION:

Huston moved approval subject to considerations expressed today, seconded by Grasso and carried 4-0: Grasso, Hind, Huston and Penn voting 'yes'; Canney, Deeker and Peace absent.

CENTRAL LUMBER REDEVELOPMENT

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

Cristy Joy appeared to talk about Central Sales new distribution facility. They will be amending the Redevelopment Agreement for 56th and Arbor Rd. There are some process items as we move forward. They are looking at rezoning from AG to industrial and being annexed into the City. This also consolidates multiple facilities for Central Sales bringing into Lincoln. approximately 43 employees. They have access off Arbor Rd. It will be a 122,550 square foot facility. It will be a pre-engineered building. The site location will have 50 parking stalls. She tried to focus the southeast corner to be pedestrian and vehicular and approach the southwest for truck traffic. They will locate 20 plus Crimson Oak Spire, 16 plus White Oaks and focus the design to the entry corridor on Arbor Rd. They are keeping some existing vegetation with natural landscaping and grasses toward the northwest and east side of the site. As you approach the entry, they are using low grow Junipers and perennials in the islands. They have allowed enough area to the west for future expansion. She showed the exterior elevations. The south will be the main entry on the southeast side of the facility. There will be simulated stone. They are doing a cool gray on the building. The entry piece will have cool gray and the main portion of the building will be lighter colored with cool shell gray. This is the skin that will be on the insulated panel. The main portion of the roof is a galvalume product. They are using MR24 by Butler Manufacturing. They are using a fine line corrugated design so a clean look is maintained while providing a nice exterior pattern. Exterior

doors will be white. The main entry door is clear anodized aluminum. The walk-in doors will match the panel colors. The main canopy columns will be wrapped with simulated stone. The roof will be cool white. She showed how the roof slope works with the building. Windows are toward the top of the building. This is a facility that is designed to last a long time. It provides quick and easy access to I-80.

Grasso inquired about signage. Gary Tucker stated there will be no additional signage on site or the walls of the building. Penn understands there is signage on the street side and one on Arbor Rd. Tucker reiterated that they plan no additional signage.

Penn inquired about the site plan. Joy stated to the north is a fenced storage area. To the north of that is for future expansion. Grasso asked about the type of fencing. Joy responded it is chain link.

Penn is familiar with the road. Do they plan on traffic coming from I-80? Tucker stated they have deliveries with semi-trucks. These are not local deliveries. They frequently use Interstate 80. Joy believes it is in the plan to update that road. Camping World will go to the west of this site with an end of October completion date. She believes this road has plans to be updated.

Huston believes this is an industrial property with no site design requirements. It is in a redevelopment area. He inquired if the applicant will be using TIF (Tax Increment Financing). Joy replied yes. Huston noted they have talked about having general standards but aren't there yet.

Penn believes the general design intent is there. There is the antique mall and sporting event building. There is precedent in the area.

Hind has taken the position that buildings getting TIF, he has problems with a simulated stone façade. He would be happy to share his many failure photographs with the applicant. The climate and salt are detrimental to the product. He is unsure about gluing it onto a metal building. There can also be a problem with this material meeting the ground. He takes issue with simulated stone and encouraged the applicant to think through it. Other than that, the expansion is smart and thoughtful.

Grasso agreed with Hind. The color is varied. This is a metal building. She would be cognizant of the view from the interstate. She thinks it is a great location for the building.

Huston likes the stone. He believes it identifies with the office area. Hind just has an issue with simulated stone. Huston believes it is the owner's choice to make the selection. He would support this.

Penn commented she likes the porch area. It adds some solar benefit to the south. She is trying to remember, there is somewhat of a grain belt area on the east side that might be captured for employees. The fence is not the most exciting. It would be nice if it was a better building product. Huston is not sure how visible that would even be. At one point, the City was talking about entryway corridor standards. Joy noted this is not an urban corridor entryway from what she was told.

ACTION:

Hind moved approval with the suggestion that the applicant rethink the simulated stone and chain link fencing, seconded by Huston.

Penn wondered if this will be seen from the Interstate. Joy replied yes, but it is very far away. The simulated stone is on the wall construction with metal panel next to it. The metal panel is insulated so there is thermal dynamics. They wanted to emphasize where people touch the building.

Penn likes the solar white roof.

Motion for approval carried 4-0: Grasso, Hind, Huston and Penn voting 'yes'; Canney, Deeker and Peace absent.

TABITHA REDEVELOPMENT

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

Joy Ebmeier stated this is an intergenerational project that represents an important addition to Tabitha. They will be utilizing TIF funds. This is designed to meet and approve upon three challenges. The first is to address the epidemic of loneliness across generations; second is to address a lack of moderately priced housing; and third is to address the shortage of health care workers to support seniors. The work force shortage must be addressed to ensure access of health care to seniors. The two groups that will live in this development will be active independent seniors 65 and older, and students from Bryan Health Sciences. The need for this is supported by data. Tabitha is eager and poised to create this addition to our campus to empower residents to live joyfully and age gracefully. They have been at the same site for over 135 years. Due to strong community support, we can provide exceptional care. This will sit on 48th St. and 'L' St. It will be a four story structure with 128 units. It has been designed to fit cohesively on the campus. Exterior materials and rooflines have been chosen to fit with current campus structures.

Erin Dobesh showed the elevations. She believes they kept the feel of the neighborhood. The exterior is red face brick with fiber cement siding. They will be using two different sidings, Vermeil

and Hardie inverse board and batten. They have incorporated asphalt shingles. Gable rooflines are mixed with flat rooflines for variation. They are using a recessed metal panel that looks like wood. In addition, they are showing punched opening instead of large ribbon openings. The windows are very large. Most are seven foot 6 inches with operable portions. She believes it will break down the mass of the building. She pointed out the garage entry off 'L' Street. Not all the apartments have balconies. Amenity spaces were brought out into the south wing. This allowed us the opportunity to have a more residential height building. There is a rooftop terrace between the living space and the lower building. She showed the east side of the building that will be visible off 48th Street.

Hind asked about the black squares on the drawing and if they were for ventilation. Dobesh replied yes. They incorporated all the electrical meters in the garage below. They are showing some green space between the building and the sidewalk. She showed the west side of the building. The parking will be accessed off 47th Street. The front entry has a small canopy that covers the main entry point. They are incorporating different wood tone soffit panels on the canopy. There will be spaces for fitness, yoga, a common area, a lounge and small café, amongst other areas. The rooftop terrace will have seating. She believes it will be an active space. They are showing a parapet wall which will be the edge of the terrace. There will be some nice decorative elements. She showed the preliminary landscape plan. They are asking for a front yard setback reduction of five feet. This is part of the PUD (Planned Unit Development) process going on. They have requested this waiver on the 'L' Street side and the 48th Street side. They will incorporate trees. The drainage will be surface drainage. They are discussing water quality plantings.

Penn stated the staff report says the applicant is asking for various waivers. One of them is a waiver of the allowable height from 35 feet to 70 feet, not including mechanical equipment and elevator towers. Also, parking would be reduced to one stall per unit and would be allowed in the front yard. It also says the applicant is proposing to eliminate or reduce the stormwater detention and runoff requirements and that they are requesting to reduce the internal setbacks to zero feet and the front yard to twenty feet, along with allowing multi-family and healthcare facilities with residential uses. She inquired as to the proposed location of the mechanical units. Dobesh answered that some will be in the rooms. The units will be on the roof. That should be the bulk of the mechanicals. They are still working on exact locations. The intent is to have them not be visible. Two elevators are tucked on the inside corners. One elevator goes to the rooftop.

Hind wants to congratulate what Tabitha is doing. This is a true thing that is happening. He is glad they are tackling this head on. He applauded them on the program. They have a great architect working with them. He would encourage them to spend dollars on a parapet to hide the HVAC equipment. He doesn't like to see the units on top. He suggested they work with the HVAC contractor or engineer. This is a small detail. Regarding the elevation on the north, there is a relatively steep slope down to the garage area. He is assuming it is a natural slope of the street.

He looks at the first floor and wishes the brick changed there so it became more of a utility brick, bigger or a slight difference to the finish to create a datum line. Dobesh noted they are planning on a soldier course through there. Hind thinks a landscape architect can help as well. Dobesh stated their first meeting with the landscape architect is tomorrow. Hind thinks that scale is something to look at. He also pointed out the simulated wood panel on the north elevation. There is an awkward bump under the overhang. It happens again on the south side. He is not sure how to solve it. There could be a way. He encouraged the applicant to think about some details. He gave his congratulations again. This is a great project to see.

Grasso asked about the material on the parapet wall, upper level terrace. Dobesh stated they haven't shown any material on the back side yet. It is a continuation of the reveal system board, Hardie board with a top on cap for screening.

Grasso wondered about grills for the patio space. Dobesh stated they haven't talked about them in depth yet. They are showing four but believes they only need two. They are potentially adding a couple of openings to break up the façade to let in more air or light.

Grasso thinks this is a beautiful project. She is excited to see this developed. Tabitha has historically done a very nice job. This will be an added asset to this corner

Hind stated that if the current zoning is 35 feet, he questioned why the applicant was asking for 70 feet. Ebmeier doesn't want to ask for too much. She is not sure where that number came from. Dobesh added they don't know the full ridge height counts. Hind believes it is to the half center line. Ebmeier doesn't want to ask for more than is needed. Hind noted it is measured to the center of the gable.

Huston thinks this is a wonderful project. It is unique. They are targeting two generations of residents. He likes the efforts to minimize the height differential. He recognizes that Tabitha owns all the facilities directly across from this facility. He understands the waivers. It is hard to avoid waivers with three front yards. He would suggest they pay attention to 'L' Street. That is the only interaction with the Witherbee neighborhood.

Ebmeier stated that they have met several times with the Witherbee neighborhood folks and will continue to work with them. Huston believes that Tabitha has had a great relationship with Witherbee over the years.

Penn wondered about the waivers. She is wondering about the stormwater detention. Dobesh stated there is no stormwater at that location for them to tie into. Tabitha has a stormwater detention plan. Jeff Morrison with Olsson Associates has been working with the City and calculated this to be minimal more than what was originally proposed which was houses.

Greenspace in the parking area has been identified as a strong landscape area. Hind would recommend trying to introduce some bioswales.

Penn doesn't think parking will be an issue. Dobesh noted the street parking at one point was pitched for some perpendicular parking. She doesn't think the City is in support of that. That was deleted from the plan and will be additional green space.

Hind believes that lighting and light trespass is important. Even meeting code, you can still get a lot of light trespass. He would be cognizant of how light works for safety and also consider the intergenerational aspect. Dobesh noted the four main entry points are on an interior courtyard. They hope to not have a lot of light pollution going onto the neighbor's homes. Ebmeier stated they are keenly aware that they need to think of lighting and safety as well.

Penn questioned why the applicant has chosen to not to have balconies for everyone in apartments. Dobesh responded that in looking at the demographics and economics, they believe that not having balconies on some units might make them more affordable. Also, they are providing a lot of outdoor space. This is an attempt to bring the community together. Ebmeier pointed out that one apartment is a micro-apartment which they expect to be used by students. The philosophy is about bringing people together

Penn questioned the outdoor space on the south side. She appreciates the space but pointed out it is in the direct sun. Ebmeier stated they are designing it so it will be a common space with garage type openings. The entire area can be opened up. They haven't put anything there which would permanently give shade, but they expect people will be out there when it is comfortable. It also sits close to the house to the south of it. Sun hasn't been an issue yet. They are open to suggestions.

Penn can see this being a space that would be popular during fall or spring, would be unusable in 90 degree weather. Ebmeier believes the deck on the second level might be more comfortable and shaded. Dobesh added they have talked about a pergola being a more permanent structure.

Penn thinks this is a beautiful project

Hind complemented the applicant on nice work.

ACTION:

Penn moved approval of the project as presented, including all waivers, seconded by Huston and carried 4-0: Grasso, Hind, Huston and Penn voting 'yes'; Canney, Deeker and Peace absent.

STAFF REPORT & MISCELLANEOUS:

- Paul Barnes stated there is a proposed street art project at 35th St. and Washington. It is currently an existing peace sign. The neighborhood association would like to redo it with a smiley face.

Hind thinks these are good because it is people owning their neighborhood.

Hind moved approval, seconded by Grasso and carried 4-0: Grasso, Hind, Huston and Penn voting 'yes'; Canney, Deeker and Peace absent.

- Hind wanted clarification on how an item appears before Urban Design Committee. Barnes answered that it has to do with public or publicly assisted projects, within the entire City of Lincoln. Huston added that they have also heard appeals for neighborhood design standards. Barnes stated that TIF is a big deciding factor. Huston stated that it has been previously discussed to try and set up some standards that can be used for all developments. Penn noted there are specific standards for cell towers and outdoor dining. Barnes stated that since the pandemic, a streamlined process was introduced for outdoor dining. He thinks perhaps this will be revisited. Penn stated that hopefully there is precedent now.
- Hind asked about the music district. Barnes stated that a RFP (Request for Proposal) was out and closed a few weeks ago. There is a programming side and physical improvements to consider. Groups are meeting regarding this. The DLA (Downtown Lincoln Association) is coordinating conversations.

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