

## MEETING RECORD

<b>NAME OF GROUP:</b>	NEBRASKA CAPITOL ENVIRONS COMMISSION
<b>DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING:</b>	Thursday, May 27, 2010 8:00 a.m., Room 203, County/City Building, 555 S. 10 <sup>th</sup> Street, Lincoln, Nebraska
<b>MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:</b>	John Kay, Cecil Steward, Kim Todd, Jeff Searcy and Larry Stoll. Jim Hewitt and Tom Laging absent.
<b>OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:</b>	Jim Hille and Michael Ryan (The Gathering Place); Dan Worth and Dennis Coudmet (BVH Architects); Theresa Baker (HDR); Christy Abraham (Sen. Avery's Office); Lynn Johnson and Jerry Shorney (Parks & Recreation); Bob Ripley (Capitol Commission); Marvin Krout, Ed Zimmer & Michele Abendroth (Planning Department)
<b>STATED PURPOSE OF MEETING:</b>	Regular Meeting of the Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission

The meeting was called to order at 8:03 a.m. The Nebraska Open Meetings Act was acknowledged.

### **Approval of meeting notes of March 25, 2010**

Kay moved approval of the meeting notes of March 25, 2010; seconded by Stoll. Motion carried 5-0. Kay, Searcy, Steward, Todd and Stoll voting 'yes'; Hewitt, Laging absent.

### **Central Lincoln Reliability Project (Rob Schmidt, LES)**

Schmidt stated that this project will be in the Capitol Environs District, and they looking forward to hearing what the Commission has to say regarding their future project. There is a transmission project across central Lincoln. The project need revolves around aging cables, the load capacity and the reliability of the system. In order to meet the growing demand for electricity in central Lincoln and to improve overall system reliability, it is necessary for LES to construct a new 115 kV transmission line that will connect four substations at 56<sup>th</sup> & Everett, 30<sup>th</sup> & A, a new substation at 21<sup>st</sup> & N and 17<sup>th</sup> & Holdrege. They will receive public comment on routing as well as overhead vs. underground transmission lines. There has been a concern that LES is trying to promote overhead or underground, and he wanted to reiterate that they can design a good system either way. There are two main differences which is cost and longevity. Overhead lasts twice as long and the underground is significantly more expensive. They want to provide a reliable system that will last.

Commissioners requested that any transmission lines that are in the Capitol Environs District be underground lines.

Steward suggested that there are calculable costs that are not economic related. It is important to identify other non-monetary costs to the public. Schmidt stated that they have identified three criteria including land, environmental and engineering criteria that they will take under consideration and identify those to the public.

Ripley stated that there is a responsibility for the Capitol City to look like a Capitol City, a responsibility that we bear for all citizens of the state. He believes we need to seriously consider using underground lines the entire route.

Schmidt stated that construction will begin in 2012 and will be completed in 2016.

**Centennial Mall redesign (Design team/Parks & Rec.)**

Johnson stated that there are parallel efforts which include the Centennial Mall Master Plan and the fund-raising effort. The Master Plan is in conformance with the Downtown Master Plan (DMP) with one deviation. The DMP had a retail corridor on P Street and the State Historical Society would be converted to retail to open up Centennial Mall. The NCEC is not in support of opening up Centennial Mall. They have decided that they want to slow down the process and resolve that issue. They anticipate that they will bring the Master Plan to the Commission this summer.

Worth stated that the Mall has threads that run through the entire design beginning at the capitol and running through the State Historical Society. Two paths are consistently aligned. There is a 10 foot wide sidewalk. On the outside there will be a series of plantings, overstory trees and some ornamental trees. They are also looking at a Mall that maintains three water features near the capitol, at the State Office Building and on P Street. The Plan will also address accessibility. They adjusted the grade to accommodate accessible routes throughout the Mall. They addressed the concept of keeping it timeless but not competing with the capitol. Finally, safety on the Mall is very important. There is a series of pedestrian scale lights along the outside of the sidewalks.

The block next to the capitol is extending the formality of the capitol out into the first part of the block between K and L. The water feature has cheek walls that accommodate a changing grade, has plantings on either side, steps in the middle, and seating on each side. Coudmet added that the concept with the trees is to keep it as clean as possible in order to keep the view to the capitol open. On the next block, the paving pattern will continue. Paving materials have not been chosen, but the materials need to relate to the capitol. At the intersections, there will be small ornamentals to make the transition into another space.

On the State Office Building block, they want to create a plaza in the center of the Mall. They want to create terraced seating areas on the edges of the Mall and perhaps a linear water feature. Opposite from the entrance to the building, they are looking at another water feature.

On the Pershing block, the edges of the curbs are moved in slightly. They will not lose any parking. On the M to N Street block, the biggest improvement is softening the edge. At the intersection of O Street and Centennial Mall, they are suggesting that this area receive special treatment. They are not sure yet what that will be. On the O to P Street block, they want to continue the planting plan. On the P to Q Street block, they want to accommodate the change in grade. It will include a water feature and an activity center with productions from the Children's Museum. From there, it becomes a little more informal reflecting the usage by the University students. Ending with the Historical Society, the sidewalks will travel across R Street. As visitors enter the Mall, they would like to use some interpretive art or monument.

Steward asked about using solar panels. Kissel stated that in design development, they are going to incorporate best design practices. They will also look at incorporating other ideas.

**Goodhue Blvd street tree planting (City Forestry)**

Due to time constraints, this item will appear on the next meeting agenda.

**Staff report/misc: The Gathering Place, etc.**

Hille stated that this facility exists for the purpose of providing evening meals. They are located at 14 & E which is next to the 15<sup>th</sup> Street corridor. The goal is to make some physical improvements to the property during the summer. They want to become a better neighbor by taking better care of the property. They want to replace the roof, the porch, the front steps and the front fence. If money allows, they would like to replace the wood windows with vinyl windows. They would like to place the fence in the right-of-way, but Zimmer informed him that the design standards do not allow that. He is here to appeal that. Zimmer stated that the design standards require a 120 foot right-of-way. There is a route to pursue this question. The first is to get the advice of the Commission and the City departments. It then goes to City Council.

Ripley stated that he does not see an issue with the fence in the right-of-way, but asked if there is a consistent policy if other neighbors have the same request. Zimmer stated that this addresses the transition process from built conditions.

Steward raised the issue of displacing the patrons who gather prior to meals. He questioned where the patrons would congregate if they are not allowed on the property prior to a meal being served. Hille stated that he cannot respond to that, but he will convey that concern to the owner. Zimmer stated that the manager is trying to find a way to push the gathering time closer to the serving time in order to best serve the neighborhood. He is not trying to push the problem onto the neighborhood.

Commissioners were supportive of the physical changes to the building. With respect to the right-of-way issue, Commissioners determined they will need to discuss this further and requested more detailed drawings be presented at the next meeting. Steward moved to approve the physical changes to the building and that the fence will be reviewed at the next meeting; it was seconded by Stoll. Motion carried 5-0. Kay, Searcy, Steward, Todd and Stoll voting 'yes'; Hewitt, Laging absent.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:12 a.m.

*\*\*Please note that these minutes will not be formally approved until the next meeting of the Capitol Environs Commission. \*\**

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