MEETING RECORD

NAME OF GROUP: HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING: Thursday, July 15, 2010, 1:30 p.m., DSC Conference Room 214, 2nd Floor, County-City Building, 555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Tim Francis, Jim Johnson, Jim McKee, Greg Munn and Bob Ripley; (Cathy Beecham and Berwyn Jones absent). Ed Zimmer and Teresa McKinstry of the Planning Department; and other interested citizens.

STATED PURPOSE OF MEETING: Regular Historic Preservation Commission Meeting

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

Ripley then requested a motion approving the minutes for the regular meeting held May 20, 2010. Motion for approval made by Johns on, seconded by McKee and carried 5-0: Francis, Johnson, McKee, Munn and Ripley voting ‘yes’; Beecham and Jones absent.

APPLICATION BY LINCOLN URBAN DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS FOR WORK AT 1114 C STREET IN THE EVERETT LANDMARK DISTRICT

PUBLIC HEARING: July 16, 2010

Members present: Francis, Johnson, McKee, Munn and Ripley; Beecham and Jones absent.

Olga Kanne from Urban Development appeared. This building is beyond repair. The demolition was previously approved by this Commission. They are attempting to construct something with similarities to the existing buildings in the neighborhood. It will have scallops and a wraparound porch. Columns will be installed.

ACTION:

Francis moved approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for construction of a house as submitted in plans from Sayer Drafting and Design, seconded by Johnson. Motion for approval carried 5-0: Francis, Johnson, McKee, Munn and Ripley voting ‘yes’; Beecham and Jones absent.
APPLICATION BY STEVE WISTHOFF FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS FOR WORK AT 2305 S STREET IN THE HAWLEY LANDMARK DISTRICT
PUBLIC HEARING: July 16, 2010

Members present: Francis, Johnson, McKee, Munn and Ripley; Beecham and Jones absent.

Pastor Steve Wisthoff appeared as applicant. He is part of a concerned group of church congregation members. A church member has allowed his house to deteriorate and it needs immediate work. They would like approval to move from a truncated hip roof to a gable roof. He believes this would be consistent with the house to the east. The proposed roof would be 5/12 pitch with soffits.

McKee questioned if the existing roof is a 5/12 pitch. Wisthoff replied that it is probably closer to a 4/12 now. He believes the neighbors house is a 5/12.

Wisthoff noted there is so much sag to the roof now.

ACTION:

Francis moved approval of replacing the existing truncated hip roof with a gable roof, seconded by Johnson.

Ed Zimmer noted there would be an overhang of about 12 to 15 inches.

Motion for approval carried 5-0: Francis, Johnson, McKee, Munn and Ripley voting ‘yes’; Beecham and Jones absent.

APPLICATION BY GARY BUTTS ON BEHALF OF VINCENZO’S FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS FOR WORK AT 808 P STREET IN THE HAYMARKET LANDMARK DISTRICT
PUBLIC HEARING: July 16, 2010

Members present: Francis, Johnson, McKee, Munn and Ripley; Beecham and Jones absent.

Zimmer stated that this item appeared on the agenda due to some revisions. He has concluded that this is still consistent front deck was approved by the Commission some years ago. It has since been lowered to the sidewalk level. There will be an entrance to the east for accessibility. It seems less intrusive than what was already approved. It is a little narrower. It has gained one step up at the service entrance. He does not think this needs action.
Ripley questioned if the floor elevation of the veranda is consistent with the principal floor elevation of the restaurant. Gary Butts replied that he believes it is consistent.

The Commissioners agreed that this item does not need action.

**REVIEW OF SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING APPLICATION FROM THE CITY OF LINCOLN, A CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT, TO THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION FUND OF THE U.S. DEPT. OF THE INTERIOR THROUGH THE NEBRASKA STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

PUBLIC HEARING: July 16, 2010

Members present: Francis, Johnson, McKee, Munn and Ripley; Beecham and Jones absent.

Zimmer stated that the Commission previously approved the application of Lincoln as a Certified Local Government to the Historic Preservation Fund. The Nebraska State Historical Society invited requests for additional funding on a schedule that did not allow prior consultation with the Commission. Zimmer requested additional funds and would like the Commission to endorse the revised proposal. An additional $1,250.00 in activities with $750.00 additional grant support is outlined.

McKee moved approval, seconded by Johnson and carried 5-0: Francis, Johnson, McKee, Munn and Ripley voting ‘yes’; Beecham and Jones absent.

Zimmer will inform the Commission on upcoming tours, brown bag lectures and additional GIS information that the Planning Dept. is working on for our website.

**NOMINATION TO THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES OF AGRICULTURAL HALL/INDUSTRIAL ARTS BUILDING AT FORMER STATE FAIRGROUNDS**

PUBLIC HEARING: July 16, 2010

Members present: Francis, Johnson, McKee, Munn and Ripley; Beecham and Jones absent.

Bob Puschendorf, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer appeared. The Ag Hall/Industrial Arts Building (IAB) at the former State Fairgrounds was evaluated for National Register eligibility in July 1998 as part of the Antelope Valley study. The survey methodology was to examine buildings more than 50 years of age, relying primarily on visual inspection of the exterior. From the exterior, it was deemed that the building suffered a loss of features. Specifically mentioned was removal of a “monitor” from the roof. Historic photos show skylights, but that the building never had a monitor.
Meeting Minutes

National Register procedures allow buildings to be re-evaluated when new information has been found or simply from the longer perspective from the historic events being examined. The IAB has been thoroughly re-evaluated and the Historical Society staff has prepared a formal application to resolve the question of eligibility for the National Register.

Puschendorf presented a PowerPoint detailing the nomination. Ag Hall is located on the former State Fairgrounds. It is a trapezoidal building with exterior brick walls with arched entrances. The principal structural system of the interior is webbed trusses. The nomination states that IAB is significant under National Register Criterion A for agriculture, industry, and entertainment/recreation and under Criterion C for architecture. The building was designed by Burd F. Miller of Omaha and built by W. J. Assenmacher & Co. of Lincoln.

Zimmer stated that whenever there is a National Register nomination from an area represented by a Certified Local Government (CLG) such as Lincoln, the opinion of the local preservation commission is requested. The Historic Preservation Commission’s comments are also passed on to the Mayor and he is asked to comment as the chief elected official of the CLG. These comments and the nomination will then be reviewed by the State Historic Preservation Board in September, and then sent to the National Park Service for a final technical review, prior to listing.

Bill Nunez from UNL appeared representing Chancellor Pearlman in opposition to this nomination. When the planning of the UNL Innovation campus was started, the potential reuse of this building and others was considered. With the assistance of many planners and engineers, an in-depth analysis of each structure was done. After considerable thought, the 4-H building was envisioned as the featured historical building on the site. The AG building was deemed inappropriate for its lack of future use within the vision of the Nebraska Innovation Campus. Prior to this analysis, meetings were held between UNL, UNL consultants and the City Historic Preservation Planner to inquire about any historical concerns. The City Planner conveyed that the Arsenal and 4-H Building were seen as significant, but the IA (IAB) building was not seen as historically significant. Contrary to being given a recommendation to not reuse the building, Chancellor Pearlman was sensitive to public concerns and solicited proposals from potential developers who would provide a plan for redevelopment of the building. One proposal was received. UNL has a long history of historic preservation of buildings for strategic reuse. They find it perplexing that a building that has sat abandoned for many years and fallen into a state of disrepair is now so passionately supported. That aside, the ramifications of this preservation effort have the potential to put the university in an economic bind, jeopardizing campus development. A vacant dilapidated building does not help spur investment. The 4-H Building has a great deal more to offer and is already slated for rehabilitation. The Governor, Legislature, Mayor, Lincoln business leaders and citizens of Nebraska have confirmed their commitment to Innovation Campus. UNL does not believe this building will contribute to the success of the campus. We strongly urge the Commission to consider the context and background and end the efforts to place the Industrial Arts Building on the National Register of Historic Place. (Written comments attached.)
McKee congratulated the University on Whittier and other historic buildings that have been reused, but he believes it is necessary to find a economically viable solution to the Industrial Arts Building.

Ripley echoed McKee's praise of reusing and adapting culturally significant resources. That has not always been the case. He questioned if UNL has any sense of the timing of when a decision will be rendered regarding the single proposal that was received for the building. Nunez does not have any information on the proposal yet. He hopes to know more in a few weeks or a month.

**ACTION:**

McKee moved approval of a Resolution that as the commission of a certified local government, the Lincoln Historic Preservation Commission finds that the nomination received for the Agricultural Hall/Industrial Arts Building appears complete and that it is the opinion of the Commission that the building is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Furthermore, the Commission urges the preservation of the Industrial Arts Building and recognizes that it must be returned to use in order to be retained. Motion seconded by Jones.

Motion for approval of Resolution carried 4-0: Francis, Johnson, McKee and Ripley voting ‘yes’; Munn abstained to avoid any appearance of conflict of interest.

**LES CENTRAL RELIABILITY PROJECT**

**PUBLIC HEARING:** July 16, 2010

Members present: Francis, Johnson, McKee, Munn and Ripley; Beecham and Jones absent.

Rob Schmidt is supervisor of the underground department LES. He stated that there is an existing underground 115 KV line running north/south around 30th and "A" St. They are nearing the end of their life. LES is anticipating load growth along the Antelope Valley. They are getting ready to start on a substation at 21st and "N" St. By joining the substations together, they gain some reliability.

There are a number of potential routes to get to the substation. Overhead and underground options will be considered. All options crossing the Capitol Environ District are underground. They are trying to get out and show the public the alternatives and receive input. If any sections are overhead, they would like to build them in existing right of way. The underground vaults would have six openings for cable with three being used and some slots for fiber optics.

McKee questioned how many vaults there would be. Schmidt replied there would be a vault about every 1,800 feet.
Ripley questioned the material of the primary core conductor. It appears to be aluminum. Schmidt replied that is correct. His sample is from an existing line. LES would prefer the new ones be copper.

Munn wondered about a cost comparison. Schmidt showed a presentation that showed an overhead line has a life span of about 70-80 years and costs $400,000 to $600,000 per mile. Underground lines have a life span of about 35-40 years and cost around $5 million to $10 million per mile.

McKee wondered about the installation time of underground versus overhead. Schmidt replied that underground takes longer due to all the excavation. The biggest challenge of underground is finding locations for the vaults.

Zimmer stated that one reason they wanted historic districts represented on the LES map is because this was presented to the Capitol Environ Commission also. LES has been willing to appear before that commission and Historic Preservation Commission due to the scope of this project.

McKee noted that the map appears to show that the historic areas have already been taken care of. He has a friend in England and after World War I, everything went underground. As a citizen, he prefers underground lines.

**ACTION:**

McKee moved approval of a Resolution that any lines in proximity to or visible from a historic district should be an underground line only, seconded by Johnson.

Munn realizes it might not be practical to bury all lines.

Francis is willing to deal with the occasional outage associated with overhead lines. LES is very good about fixing any problems.

Motion for approval of Resolution approved 5-0: Francis, Johnson, McKee, Munn and Ripley voting 'yes'; Beecham and Jones absent.

Schmidt stated that next month they would hope to have a set route and hold public informational meetings.

Becky Martin noted that Woods Park Association voted to support of burying all the lines in their neighborhood.
LES DISTRIBUTION LINE MODIFICATION ON S. 27TH STREET IN BLVDS. HISTORIC DISTRICT (OVERHEAD TO UNDERGROUND)
PUBLIC HEARING:  
July 16, 2010
Members present: Francis, Johnson, McKee, Munn and Ripley; Beecham and Jones absent.

Jonathan Jakub with LES appeared. He explained that due to the fact that these lines go through the Boulevards District, he wanted to consult with this commission. This project is slated to start in the next three to four weeks. This project area is 27th to South St. The Comprehensive Plan states that overhead lines converted to underground lines is preferable. For this project, they are removing and replacing over 3/4 of a mile of overhead line with underground line. The street lights also need to be taken care of since some lights are on the existing power poles. Riser poles will still be installed since the neighborhood houses still have overhead lines. This is an attempt to bury the lines on arterial streets.

Ripley stated that the work going on right now by city Public Works Dept. is discouraging. The city is currently creating a parking lot in the historic boulevards district. Watts Construction vehicles are now being parked in the middle of Sheridan Blvd. As work is being done, he would encourage LES to intrude in the public right-of-way as little as possible.

Zimmer received a question if it would be possible to pay a fee and have the lights upgraded. Steve Young from LES street lighting division stated that they are working with the neighborhood to address that question.

ACTION:

McKee moved approval of a Resolution that the Commission encourages the burying of overhead lines along arterials in historic districts, seconded by Munn. Motion for approval of Resolution approved 5-0: Francis, Johnson, McKee, Munn and Ripley voting ‘yes’; Beecham and Jones absent.

Staff Report

Zimmer stated that with the return of Denise Pearce in the Mayor’s office, she is working on Commission appointments. Mayor Beutler’s wish is to reappoint all existing Commissioners.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:52 p.m.