MEETING RECORD

NAME OF GROUP: HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING: Thursday, August 20, 2015, 1:30 p.m., Conference Room 214, 2nd Floor, County-City Building, 555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Tim Francis, Jim Johnson, Jim McKee, and Greg Munn; (Jim Hewitt and Liz Kuhlman absent). Ed Zimmer, Stacey Groshong Hageman, Paul Barnes and Amy Hana Huffman of the Planning Department; Kevin Abourezk from the Lincoln Journal Star.

STATED PURPOSE OF MEETING: Regular Historic Preservation Commission Meeting

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

Munn requested a motion approving the minutes for regular meeting held July 16, 2015. Motion for approval made by Johnson, seconded by Francis and carried 4-0: Francis, Johnson, McKee and Munn voting ‘yes'; Hewitt and Kuhlman absent.

The opportunity was given for persons with limited time or with an item not appearing on the agenda to address the Commission.

Resolution on NRHP Nomination of Wesleyan Hospital and Nurses Training School

Members present: Francis, Johnson, McKee and Munn; Kuhlman and Hewitt absent.

Zimmer explained that approval of the Commission, as the preservation board of a Certified Local Government, is necessary for National Register nominations of Lincoln properties to advance to the State Board and the Park Service. The nomination distributed with the agenda packet presents the same information the Commission reviewed and approved in recommending Lincoln Landmark designation for the property earlier this year, which was successful.

He also noted that the property owner, Brett Harris, requested that Planning staff prepare “Part One” of the certified historic rehab application for this property, to begin the application process for federal income tax credits. “Part One” is essentially a draft National Register nomination. It was submitted to the National Park Service and recently approved, so the property has received a “Preliminary Certification of Eligibility” for the National Register from the federal agency.
With the HPC’s approval, Zimmer and Stacey Hageman will present this nomination to the State HP Board September 4th in Omaha.

Members noted that the Commission had encouraged that this nomination be brought forward when the Landmark application was reviewed and recommended. While the building has been painted and the windows have been changed since 1906, it retains an high degree of exterior integrity.

**ACTION:**

McKee moved approval of a resolution endorsing the nomination to NRHP of the Wesleyan Hospital and Nurses Training School to the Nebraska Historic Preservation Board and to the National Park Service. Seconded by Johnson. Motion for approval carried 4-0: Francis, Johnson, McKee and Munn voting ‘yes’; Hewitt and Kuhlman absent.

**STAFF REPORT AND MISCELLANEOUS:**

**Discussion on Wyuka CUP, Digity Radio Broadcast Tower, and Tanglewood Apartments, all generally located at N. 45th Street and Vine Street:**

Members present: Francis, Johnson, McKee and Munn; Hewitt and Kuhlman absent.

Zimmer stated that Planner Paul Barnes is currently working on applications for the next Planning Commission meeting that this body should be knowledgeable about, though it not formally part of today’s agenda. It is a development project at the southwest corner of 45th and Vine Streets, immediately west of Wyuka Cemetery, including the 500 foot tall radio tower. Barnes confirmed that the property is currently still owned by Wyuka. Zimmer said they had also owned considerable property on the east side, most of which is now developed into apartments, and this is a proposal to develop the remaining part into apartments. It is almost entirely outside of the National Historic Register boundaries.

The proposal is that the developer would come in on the line of S. 42nd Street. A deceleration lane would connect through to the Tanglewood Apartments further to the south near O Street.

There is a hidden pond on the property that very few people are aware of. It is part of the Tanglewood drainage system and retention. The new apartments would be constructed on that bare corner which would move the radio tower location to the southwest where a new one would be built at a lower height of approximately 300 feet. The new tower will be better screened by buildings and set back farther from the street. It will be closer to the east boundary of the cemetery.
McKee asked if the property would stay with Wyuka and be leased? Barnes said they would probably sell, similar to Tanglewood. That developer has expressed some interest but Planning is not aware of any commitment at this time. Zimmer went on to say that the proposal shows where apartments would be built. They are looking to prepare this property for sale and improve their balance sheet.

Zimmer explained the layout of the proposed plan which is east of the national register line. Only the southern part is directly adjacent to historical cemetery. There is a road between the apartment garages and utilized parts of the cemetery, and there is an undeveloped corner that is part of the historic boundary area but does not have historic features.

McKee said 42nd was a street not long ago, and he wondered if it has been abandoned? Barnes stated he believes it has been vacated between Vine and O Streets. Zimmer said it comes back in to a driveway and private road. Barnes said a driveway would be added at the stub where 42nd Street used to be.

Zimmer stated that the apartments close to the corner helps to finish off this development across the east line of the cemetery.

Johnson asked if the pond would stay in its current configuration? Barnes said the pond drains a much larger basin than just the site; it is part of a bigger system. There is nothing proposed to improve or modify it. Zimmer added that it has an easement on it. Barnes agreed, saying there is a flowage easement that allows it to get deeper when necessary, without impacting structures.

McKee wondered about the authority to sell the land and asked whether Wyuka was operated by the State, a committee or commission, and if they can make the decision to sell that without State action? Zimmer said it is nonprofit corporation established by the State and governed by a board of five members, appointed by the Governor. It is a corporation governed by that unusual structure, so it has a very direct State relationship, but is not regarded as State property.

Zimmer noted that the proposed changes near the national register footprint occur primarily on the undeveloped portion and include the deceleration lane. The line of dying conifers would be removed and there is a requirement to add a new line to reestablish it.

McKee wondered the responsibility of Historic Preservation Commission, as far as this new development is concerned? Zimmer replied that this project will not appear before the Urban Design Committee because it is purely a private development. Due to its proximity to a historic area, it was important for this Commission to at least be briefed on it. The impact to the historic character of the cemetery is carefully positioned to soften those impacts, but this needed to be presented in case this body disagrees.
McKee asked if KFOR has been leasing the land the radio antennae is on? Zimmer said yes, there is a long lease and that occupies a large area to include the fall zone of the tower. By making the tower shorter and moving nearer to the pond, they open up some developable property on the corner.

Francis asked about the zoning of another parcel on the corner. Johnson clarified that it is property north of the current County Department of Motor Vehicles. Barnes stated that it is also zoned R-4. It is not part of this proposal and is under separate ownership. Various potential future options for that corner have been discussed. Some type of commercial or mixed use would be appropriate.

Barnes mentioned that there is also the detention pond on Wyuka. Zimmer said the grading plan does hollow it out a bit to create some detention. The historic qualities of the cemetery are essentially unchanged by this new project.

Johnson clarified that this is not officially before this body for action, but just for information. McKee said it will never be officially be on the agenda for action. Zimmer said that is correct. However, if the Commissioners felt the view of Planning staff was incorrect, that information would be reported to Planning Commission.

Johnson stated that the project seems fine and other Commissioners were in agreement.

Barnes noted that the plan indicates that if the tower were ever to go away, the developer would like to build more apartment units; they are planning ahead. McKee said in moving the tower likely requires a new lease. Zimmer agreed that by moving it, it is outside of the boundaries of the original lease, so the entire area is shifted. The new location is as close to the pond easement as possible. This corner has been a bare area so this will create a more urban situation.

Zimmer mentioned that staff has been discussing improvements to pedestrian surfaces in the Haymarket where some bricks and concrete are shifting and people have fallen. The goal is for a permanent solution, but it will take a couple of years’ budget to accomplish that so there may need to be some temporary corrections. The public will be informed about the temporary solutions and encouraged to participate in the process.

There have been several inquiries about landmark special permits for various sundry purposes on some interesting properties, so if they mature, they will appear before this body.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:50 p.m.