

MEETING RECORD

NAME OF GROUP: NEBRASKA CAPITOL ENVIRONS COMMISSION

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING: Thursday, November 20, 2008, 9:00 a.m., Legislative Hearing Room 1510, Nebraska State Capitol, 15th and K Streets, Lincoln, Nebraska

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Jim Hewitt, John Kay, Tom Laging, Jeff Searcy and Larry Stoll. Kim Todd and Cecil Steward absent.

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Kevin Flecky (Schemmer Associates); Mike Holleman (Development Resources Inc.); Lynn Johnson (Parks & Recreation); Bob Ripley (Capitol Commission); Ed Zimmer and Michele Abendroth (Planning Department)

STATED PURPOSE OF MEETING: Regular Meeting of the Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission

The meeting was called to order at 9:01 a.m. The Nebraska Open Meetings Act was acknowledged.

Searcy welcomed John Kay, new Commission member.

Approval of meeting notes of August 28 and October 23, 2008

Hewitt moved approval of the meeting notes of August 28 and October 23, 2008, seconded by Stoll. Motion carried 5-0. Hewitt, Kay, Laging, Searcy and Stoll voting 'yes'; Steward and Todd absent.

Request to relocate Veterans memorial benches from Centennial Mall to Veterans Memorial Garden at Antelope Park (Parks & Rec Dept.)

Zimmer stated that the Sertoma Club has requested to move the two granite memorial benches from Centennial Mall to the Veterans Garden at Antelope Park. This item was on the October agenda, but no action was taken as there was not a quorum present. Commissioners present at that meeting supported the request as long as the benches were replaced on Centennial Mall. The Parks Department has stated that they would honor this request and replace them with their standard benches.

Commission members urged Parks to consider a standard more upgraded park bench on the Mall. Ripley added that the bench could tie in with the street furniture.

Laging moved to approve this request and asked that the Parks Department look in to establishing a street furniture standard on Centennial Mall and perhaps in the entire Capitol Environs District, seconded by Kay. Motion carried 5-0. Hewitt, Kay, Laging, Searcy and Stoll voting 'yes'; Steward and Todd absent.

Hewitt commented that the benches used in the Memorial Garden and Sunken Gardens are very attractive and would be appropriate on the Mall. Commissioners noted that the University should be brought into discussions on the benches as well.

Request by Kaplan University to modify proposal approved August 28, 2008

Flecky explained that in an effort to save money, they are requesting to make two changes to the Kaplan University renovations. The first change is to eliminate a low wall and replace it with a parking lot on J Street. They are also proposing to substitute EFIS for the architectural metal panels at the west end of the addition. On the north elevation at 19th Street and Antelope Valley Parkway, EFIS is proposed in bands between the first and second story windows and above the upper windows. They are looking at a more

durable material in the ground level interface. There is an opportunity to add brick up to window height. The brick is already used in the design so they are not adding another material.

Zimmer noted that this building offers some unique challenges. The property is zoned O-1 and is subject to the Environs District Standards and the Downtown Design Standards. The south facade will provide a major entrance from the new parking area and the question is whether it should be considered a street facade. Zimmer believes the modifications requested fit the environs standards.

Commissioners recommended moving the height of the brick on the south elevation up to the window header instead of the window sill. Holleman indicated he did not believe that would be a problem.

Commissioners also recommended adding more street trees. Zimmer cautioned about creating a canopy that blocks the view to the capitol. Ripley believes that lining the street is good, but the question is where does it end. Johnson stated that Parks & Rec will review the street trees in the area.

Laging moved approval of the proposed changes and to increase the height of the brick on the south elevation, seconded by Stoll. Kay, Laging, Searcy and Stoll voting 'yes'; Hewitt, Steward and Todd absent.

Staff report: Annual report of Commission

Zimmer provided a review of the Commission activities during 2008. There have been two new appointments of members including John Kay and Larry Stoll. There have been eight meetings in 2008 with five of those having a quorum.

Major projects reviewed by the Commission include the Nebraska State Education Association renovations, the landscape plan of the north yard of Lincoln High School, the Downtown Design Standards, the repairs to Centennial Mall, the J Street bridge, Kaplan University, and the Habitat for Humanity house at 15th & D Streets.

Commissions recommended adding photos showing the current condition of Centennial Mall. They feel the real issue is public safety.

Misc

Ripley provided a follow-up on the item on the August agenda which is to lengthen the existing capitol environs district at the west axis. He distributed a draft memo addressed to Senator-elect Kathy Campbell describing the request. This request requires legislative change and must be brought to a member of the Legislature for their consideration in sponsoring the bill. Laging volunteered to meet with Campbell to discuss this request further.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:56 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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