

MEETING RECORD

NAME OF GROUP: NEBRASKA CAPITOL ENVIRONS COMMISSION

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING: Thursday, December 17, 2009, 8:00 a.m., Council Chamber, County/City Building, 555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska

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

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Byron Boslau, Greg Allen, Jim Dobler & Mark Walz (Farmers Mutual of Nebraska); Roger Larson & Susan Rodenburg (SLR Communications); Alan Ebner, JoAnne Kissel & Dennis Scheer (The Clark Enersen Partners); Matt Metcalf (Davis Designs); Christie Dionisopoulos (Lincoln Parks Foundation); Lynn Johnson (Parks & Recreation); Bob Ripley (Capitol Commission); Ed Zimmer & Michele Abendroth (Planning Department)

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

The meeting was called to order at 8:01 a.m. The Nebraska Open Meetings Act was acknowledged.

Approval of meeting notes of November 12, 2009

Steward moved approval of the meeting notes of November 12, 2009, seconded by Laging. Motion carried 5-0. Kay, Laging, Searcy, Steward and Stoll voting 'yes'; Todd abstaining; Hewitt absent.

Certificate of Appropriateness for Farmers Mutual Insurance Company, block bounded by Lincoln Mall, 13th, K and 12th Streets

Byron Boslau, President and CEO of Farmers Mutual of Nebraska, appeared before the Commission and thanked the Commission for their guidance during this project. He noted that Farmers Mutual has a history of being in downtown since 1892. The company has continued to grow and they would like to expand the business. They purchased the entire block and are in a position to move forward. He stressed that they respect the capitol and City and want to enhance the capitol.

Matt Metcalf, designer with Davis Design, stated that the existing Farmers Mutual building faces Lincoln Mall. They are proposing a new headquarters building that fronts 13th Street and faces the capitol. The design is a three story building with 15,000 square feet per floor. They are proposing two courtyards flanking the building, one on the south and one on the north. All four sides of the building are very visible. The building design at this time is very conceptual. They have talked about building slightly set back from the property line to allow for some landscaping.

Steward asked if they are designing to green standards. Metcalf stated that they will be designing to green standards, but they have not determined if they will seek LEED certification.

Kay asked about the parking structure. Metcalf stated there is a subtle 5 foot elevation change from north to south. They want to maximize the amount of parking on the site without creating a large parking structure. The upper deck will likely be elevated off K Street by 3 to 4 feet. They also want to soften the edges with landscaping.

Hewitt asked about the plans for the existing building. Metcalf stated that the long-term plan is to preserve that building, remodel it and lease it to another tenant.

Todd suggested that they could soften the parking lot edge with a green wall.

Searcy asked about the time frame of the project. Boslau stated that they don't have a real timetable, but it is on the front burner. Possibly a year from now they will look at some detailed plans. It is his hope the project will be completed in three years.

Steward encouraged Farmers Mutual to seek LEED certification on this project.

Searcy asked about the Certificate of Appropriateness. Zimmer stated that they have completed what is required for demolition of the structures they are not using. They are submitting the concept of the headquarters building. The Commission is reviewing the project in relation to the Capitol Environs Standards, specifically the conceptual design of the building, how it sits on the block and the demolition. The Commission is not yet reviewing the appearance of the parking structure.

Todd moved approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness for the conceptual design of the Farmers Mutual building, seconded by Kay. Motion carried 7-0. Hewitt, Kay, Laging, Searcy, Steward, Stoll and Todd voting 'yes'.

Certificate of Appropriateness for Department of Labor at 16th and K Streets

Alan Ebner of Clark Enersen Partners, stated that this project is to replace the front steps and entry of the Department of Labor building at 16th and K. The current steps and entry are literally falling off the building. The challenge is a building that is very austere with little ornamentation. They want to maintain that sense of orderliness that the building has. They want to add a ramp to the front entry. Their intention is to create a small plaza seating area. They will reuse the granite pavers from the front entry on the landings of the ramp and for the plaza. The handrails will be dark bronze. The design is straightforward and fairly simple. They want to use materials that are similar to what is there which is limestone and buff colored concrete.

Hewitt stated that he believes the plaza will be heavily occupied by smokers and asked if there is something they could incorporate into the design. Ebner responded that he was reluctant to incorporate ash trays in the design, but he has spoken to the landscape designers about other alternatives. Ripley commented that perhaps the Commission would like to pass on to the designer to discourage smoking on the front, but to have that area on the east side.

Ripley asked what is proposed in terms of landscaping to soften the hardscape of the entrance. Ebner stated that the initial plan had a planter in that area. He feels that encouraging some green space is very important.

Todd asked how long they expect the limestone to last due to snow removal. Ebner stated that they want to raise the limestone up 10 inches from the sidewalk to minimize deterioration.

Steward asked about their thoughts on getting rain water and snow out of the area. Ebner stated that will be addressed primarily by the grade.

Ripley asked if there will be public access to the building from the west. Ebner stated that it is very limited.

Ripley suggested that requirements for landscaping be addressed and put in the motion.

Todd moved approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness noting the Commission's desire for a de-emphasized but appropriate looking ash litter system and the desire to seek landscape treatment plans for

the west side of the property; it was seconded by Stoll. Motion carried 7-0. Hewitt, Kay, Laging, Searcy, Steward, Stoll and Todd voting 'yes'.

Centennial Mall redesign

Dennis Scheer appeared before the Commission and stated that they received a final topographic survey of Centennial Mall. This allowed them to focus on lines and grades with a certain degree of accuracy. They have been concentrating on the area within the right-of-way. They have also tested the elements in terms of cost. They have some costs identified.

About three weeks ago, the design team discussed all the previous planning efforts. They started thinking about how those efforts apply to this one. The K Street crossing as well as all the crosswalks are very important. The first plaza from K to L Street includes a fountain and they envision it being a kind of formal space. They are proposing planting terraces around the plaza area. The perimeter is a line of concolor firs. The remainder of this block becomes tree space with columnar and overstory trees. All the pedestrian lighting is on the outside of the walks.

On the L to M Street block, they are still considering alternatives. They are considering a fountain, plaza and lawn space. They want to create an additional area for an outdoor plaza for the State Office Building.

On the M to N Street block, the treeline can be aligned if they remove the existing curb and reconstruct it as a mountable curb. Pershing is likely to remain a public use, so the area could be used as festival street space. They would like to move the curb two feet closer to the street.

Steward asked if the street could be the same material as the sidewalks. Scheer stated that they agree with that concept.

On the N to O Street block, they are proposing permeable paving. There will be a wide area of paving with half of it being concrete and half being permeable paving.

On the O to P Street block, they want to remove a large amount of the planting area and move it to the west side of the new sidewalk. Then they have a location for the columnar trees.

On the P to Q Street block, they are proposing another major water feature. They want to acknowledge the entrance to Andersen Hall and the access back to the capitol. They want to develop a theme based on creativity. They would like to create an interactive display.

On the Q to R Street block, they want to respect the location of Tem and Ptah.

In terms of materials, the walks on the edges of the Mall will be concrete. Lighting will be historical pedestrian lighting, bollard lighting and pole area lighting. They have done preliminary research on the types of trees to use.

Scheer noted that the preliminary cost estimate is \$6.7 million for all these blocks.

Steward asked about the alternative energy. Scheer stated they are still looking at and reviewing that opportunity..

Johnson stated that the legislative study report is in draft form and they anticipate the preliminary master plan becoming an appendix to that report.

2009 Annual Report

Searcy recommended that the report be reviewed at the January meeting

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:39 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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