

MEETING RECORD

Advanced public notice of the Urban Design Committee meeting was posted on the County-City bulletin board and the Planning Department's website.

NAME OF GROUP:	URBAN DESIGN COMMITTEE
DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING:	Tuesday, May 7, 2024, 3:00 p.m., County-City Building, City Council Chambers, 555 S. 10 th Street, Lincoln, NE.
MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:	Mark Canney, Jill Grasso, Tom Huston, Frank Ordia, Gill Peace and Michelle Penn; Emily Deeker absent.
OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:	Arvind Gopalakrishnan, Paul Barnes and Teresa McKinstry of the Planning Department; Liz Elliott and Carla Cosier of Lincoln Transportation and Utilities; Aaron Burd; Erin Bright with Olsson; and other interested parties.

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

Penn then called for a motion approving the minutes of the regular meeting held April 2, 2024. Motion for approval made by Grasso, seconded by Canney and carried 5-0: Canney, Grasso, Huston, Peace and Penn voting 'yes'; Ordia absent at time of vote; Deeker absent.

TOWNHOMES AT THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF 26TH AND U STREET: May 7, 2024

Members present: Canney, Grasso, Huston, Ordia, Peace and Penn; Deeker absent.

Arvind Gopalakrishnan stated that the applicant is requesting Tax Increment Financing (TIF) assistance on this project. The buildings are oriented east/west. Garages are to the center of the lot. The east/west driveway provides access to the garages. This project was presented to Urban Design Committee at their meeting on April 2, 2024. The discussion revolved around the building façade at that time. He showed the building elevations. At the last meeting, the applicant was asked to provide some different options and elements to this project. The first option shown by

the applicant is a mix of board and batten, and lap siding. The window formations were also changed. As per previous discussion, the porches are now being treated separately.

Grasso recalls asking the applicant to look at the roof overhang, column placement, breaking up the façade a little, break up the window placement and break up the siding.

Huston stated he believes the comments have been addressed.

Grasso pointed out this is on the edge of the Hawley Historic District. The committee was a little concerned with the design as presented last time. It looks like relationship of the porch and overhang has shifted a little.

Penn inquired if the landscape plan was new. Aaron Burd stated there was a lot of proposed revisions. He likes craftsman style. A double column is usually used in craftsman style. Instead of 100 percent landscape screen, the base of the column will allow screening of the air conditioning units. They have also increased the gable to 6/12 to give more definition and added shake shingles inside the gable of two units. Hip units are board and batten. They were previously showing 5 x 4 windows on all four units. They looked at the time period of the neighborhood and decided to go with more vertical windows. The doors are not in line with the columns as previously shown. They added some grills to windows. They also included that into the door. They experimented back and forth with the design. There are limitations to what they can accomplish. To change the exterior to have some offset would change the floor plan. They decided to break it up with some board and batten. Railings didn't look right on this property. They decided to add some evergreens across the front, as opposed to railings. The colors proposed are gray and dark blue. The windows will be a lighter color. The renderings are not necessarily reflective of the colors. He met with a siding company last week and the color of the hip roof will be used as trim around the windows.

Ordia stated it appears the trim is all white in the neighborhood. He doesn't have a problem with white trim. He asked how the aesthetic for architectural style of the neighborhood would be described. Gopalakrishnan showed the house approved across the street by Historic Preservation Commission. He showed some more properties in the area.

Grasso thinks the applicant has come a long way with the design. She thinks he has listened to the committee's comments and incorporated what worked. She knows it was a big laundry list. Burd tried everything that was suggested and some things worked, and some didn't seem to. Grasso thinks this design has come a long way.

Huston believes this is the kind of infill in the inner city that we are trying to approve.

Penn asked the applicant about his preference for Option A or B. Burd likes Option A. That would be his preference. Penn agreed. That would be hers as well.

Peace read the comments from the last meeting. It appears the applicant has done what was asked of him. He inquired about the floor to floor height. Burd stated it will be eight feet.

ACTION:

Huston moved approval of Option A, seconded by Canney.

Canney stated that with regard to landscaping, Hicks Yew can get 15 feet tall. He would go for another variant such as Everlow Yew or Boxwood. He thinks this is much improved and he supports Option A as well. He appreciates the applicant working with the committee.

Motion for approval carried 6-0: Canney, Grasso, Huston, Ordia, Peace and Penn voting 'yes'; Deeker absent.

LINCOLN YOUTH COMPLEX BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL COMPLEX AT N. 1ST ST. AND CORNHUSKER HWY:

May 7, 2024

Members present: Canney, Grasso, Huston, Ordia, Peace and Penn; Deeker absent.

Gopalakrishnan stated that the Sandhills Global Center is a softball/baseball youth complex. The complex will have five fields, along with two championship fields for Nebraska Wesleyan softball and baseball. Since the site is along Interstate I-180, which is a primary entry corridor, the design team is being tasked with a building design to include landscaping and shading. The Urban Design Committee also asked the applicant to consider access for emergency vehicles.

Erin Bright with Olsson appeared. Since the agenda went out, there has been additional design input. They have built upon the site plan showed at the last meeting of Urban Design Committee and incorporated some comments that were received. He supplied Gopalakrishnan with a new plan for presentation. What has remained the same is scoreboards and chain link fence. They have been able to address some comments with regard to shade. They are showing some shade sail examples on the east by the championship fields. They aren't the final form. Fields 6 and 7 are being used by Wesleyan University. There is grandstand with a press box at each of those sites. Seating has overhead canopies. The dugout will be constructed of Concrete Masonry Unit (CMU) wall on three sides, with a roof and fence in front. They will be colored to match the color of the stone banding shown on the concession buildings. In addition, between concessions and fields will be a shade sail structure. For fields one through five, each of the dugout areas will be fenced on all four sides with a metal roof. They wanted to build out the landscaping. One comment was received specific to non-irrigated turf areas. The fields are synthetic turf. They wanted to evaluate some native grass opportunities in the non-irrigated area. He showed an initial plant selection. They are looking at Buffalo Grass, as well as two different types of grass, Prairie Dropseed and Little Blue Stem. He showed an irrigated landscape bed area that would have some native plants which would include some native grass types, as well as some flowers. Fescue Turf would be used for irrigated turf areas. There will be a perimeter sidewalk all around the north side of the parking lot. There are two benches on either side of the parking lot. The south side has a bench as well. The concession building and maintenance building are identical buildings on the outside. They would be pre-engineered metal building. CMU will be used on the lower portion of those buildings. Emergency vehicle access was a point well taken. They are in the process of exploring a couple of different design elements. They had shown a monument sign. They are looking at three or four different options. They are also looking into some potential options for backlighting of the sign, as well as some different textures. They are working with the architects to develop some options. At the entry points near the fields, they would like the ability to have gates to have full access. They would make sure they are wide enough for ambulances. The internal sidewalks are twelve feet wide. He believes that might work for ambulance access in an emergency. The project is evaluating some options for the fence. At a minimum, it would be an upgrade from what was shown for the perimeter black coated chain link fence. They are looking at some different design elements. They are still evaluating some areas. They previously talked about the shade sails (shown on the east side concessions area). They talked a little about solar panels or misters. They are not part of the project at this point. They could be at some point in the future. There was also a comment from the committee

about misters. He is not sure what that would look like or where it is appropriate. It is not being considered now as part of the project.

Penn asked the applicant to point out where the shade sails would be located. Bright pointed out an area by the east concessions. Penn understood there would be just one shade sail. Bright stated yes, just one at this time.

Grasso inquired if there would be any overhang on the concession stand. Bright responded no.

Penn understands that no trees are allowed due to this property being a former landfill site. She is concerned with the lack of shade. She still thinks it doesn't make sense to have one small shade sail in the championship area. Bright recognizes the concerns for shade. It has been discussed. There is also a reserved area for a future playground. He expects kids to be in and around this area. There is a little more room there. There would be a shade structure for tables for eating. The championship area is not just for Wesleyan to use. Multiple options for shade were discussed. It is not impossible to do everything at this time. They have significant costs with the netting system they are putting in. Each field has high visibility netting. That system has a total of four poles. They will be drilling down to support the netting system. They had looked at an option to add shades to these structures early on, but it became extremely cost prohibitive with the footings that would be needed. Shade has been an ongoing discussion. He believes that some teams will bring their own shade structures. Some parents have chairs with an overhead shade as well.

Canney remembered in his youth, there was a lot of idle time, and those facilities had shade. It can get pretty hot. There is no shade along the sidewalk corridor. Bright doesn't think anyone discounts the shade concerns. Without trees, he is not sure what can be done. From a budgetary standpoint, this is what they have been able to address.

Peace stated that it sounds like this is in the planning phase. Bright stated they are in the middle of a lot of different construction documents. Some have already been issued. What is still developing is the landscape plan and the dugouts are still not designed.

Peace has been to a lot of baseball grounds recently. Having to address ingress and egress at the same point is impossible. He questioned how the applicant landed on metal buildings. It feels like these buildings are small enough that the applicant could

have some fun with the architecture. In his opinion, there is hardly any reason these need to be metal buildings. Was any consideration given to allowing the architects to have a little freedom with the design? He would let them see what they can come up. Warm ups before games are regular and a necessity, and players are not allowed to warm up on the field. He loves the idea of native grasses, but perhaps keep warmups in mind in those spaces as well. The last place he was at had four fields back to back. They had the vertical mat, but a horizontal net as well. You could have netting that also provides shade. He inquired where the scoreboard and entry sign would be placed. He wondered if they would be faced towards a public street. Bright stated the monument sign is on the entrance at 1st Street. Scoreboards should be pretty far away from the street, visually. Bright pointed out the locations. There is an opportunity to perhaps relocate one of the scoreboards. Peace believes there is more of an opportunity for the donor to perhaps receive some advertising on the back side of the sign. Also, CMU and the materials shown on the image in the agenda are two different things. Bright believes the applicant is leaning towards masonry stone. Peace noted that veneer attached low on the buildings will eventually fall off. Thin stone veneer has a habit of falling off the wall. Bright stated that thin veneered stone is the intent on the concession stand. They talked about ingress and egress a little at the last meeting of this group. This project is doing turn lane improvements to 1st Street. The point is well taken on separating ingress and egress, but they are pretty well restricted on what is allowed. The City is engaging on a new intersection design at 1st Street and Cornhusker Highway. The bridge over Salt Creek is immediately to the south. Between the state highway and the Salt Creek bridge, they could not meet design standards for traffic separation by separating ingress and egress. Peace understands, but perhaps go to one of these facilities that doesn't have separation and see how far back cars are stacked. Traffic can back up a long way in each direction. Bright understands. He pointed out there is somewhat of a dedicated access aisle on the outside of the lot. Peace asked if the exit would be right turn only. Bright noted you could turn left or right. Penn stated this was brought up at the last meeting as a concern. Bright noted the traffic study anticipated most traffic coming in from the north. They expect most traffic to leave to the north as well. With regard to engineered metal buildings, that was a design decision with the owner.

Ordia asked about the seating area outside the championship fields. Bright pointed out the bleachers on the plan.

Bright showed some preliminary drawings of the grandstands. Fields one through four have regular row seating.

Canney asked if there is one drinking fountain located near the restrooms. Bright replied yes; there would be a drinking fountain at each concession building. Canney would think about putting in quick couplers for irrigation, etc. He believes wayfinding signs will be important here. There is the opportunity to integrate the monument sign with wayfinding. That would be important. Bright stated that has been brought up. They haven't discussed it in depth yet, but they plan to. There is acknowledgment by the owner that signage will be an important piece. Canney wondered if some thought was given to electrical outlets. He asked if the applicant had thought about Wi-Fi or any other elements, i.e. charging stations for electronics. He noted it is something to consider. Bright agreed. They had a conversation with the electrical engineer. There is an outlet at each dugout and backstop. There is also fiber conduit that is being run for a potential Wi-Fi connection. More discussion and design needs to happen before they figure that part out.

Huston believes everyone is supportive of the project, but wondered why this is in front of this body. There is no TIF funding and urban design standards don't seem to apply. He asked if this will appear before any other body. Gopalakrishnan stated this project has visibility from entryway corridors. Paul Barnes added that funding is coming from the City, County, and JPA (West Haymarket Joint Public Agency). Since the project is receiving public funding, the design is subject to review by the Urban Design Committee. Canney asked if this is located on public land. Barnes doesn't recall the arrangement. Bright stated yes, this is on public land. Barnes doesn't think there was any zoning change required. Councilperson Sändra Washington is on the advisory group. She contacted the Planning Dept. to have this reviewed by this group.

Huston would be inclined to move approval, subject to encouragement of the Urban Design Committee to continue to address multiple areas including access, shading, aesthetic of the building, seating and building materials.

Grasso thinks this is a project that will be used by everyone in the community. The applicant has an opportunity to do it well. There are some human elements missing such as no shade and limited seating.

Bright commented he is not sure what approvals or follow up looks like. A lot of design decisions have been made by the group currently.

Barnes noted that it is common that larger projects are perhaps approved with additional design considerations for staff to review later. The project could come back if staff felt the direction wasn't followed or as additional details are developed.

Penn believes the issues are access to the site, shade structures, benches, the warm up area, external materials and design.

Bright feels that ingress and egress is already decided. Huston noted that design standards can be negotiated

Elizabeth Elliott stated that her team has looked at this and talked about it. There are very limited options in this area with the creek and other constraints with Cornhusker Highway. They have looked at this a lot and worked with the developer. They are pretty limited on ingress and egress.

Penn asked about right turn only. Elliott doesn't recall the exact discussion on that. Peace noted that some games have people directing traffic. Elliott stated this has been discussed in length with the developer.

Canney can't think of any large venue where the traffic control is ever enough.

Ordia wondered if a playground is necessary. Bright stated that was one goal of the project. The intent is to have play equipment. Ordia noted that perhaps some money could be saved with that point. Perhaps three fields could be built instead of four. That could have some cost savings. Bright doesn't know the exact metric. The conceptual layout of this site has been around for five to seven years. This is admittedly to get some competition to come here. He is unsure of the advantage of removing one field for additional shade.

Ordia asked how this is different from a complex from the early 1970's. Bright believes the details they are talking about are at levels that don't currently exist in Lincoln. They are excited to bring this to Lincoln. This is a project that has had a lot of input from many sides to meet the established goals and budgets. They are working to accommodate comments.

Huston inquired about the schedule for grading. Bright stated that grading is underway now. They hope to have turf down by fall and playing ball by next spring. That is the schedule. To be able to get this square footage for baseball and softball allows so many opportunities. There will always be wish list items. That doesn't stop them from happening in the future.

Penn thinks overall there is a disappointment from this committee on some items such as shade, benches and the warm up area. Any decision from this committee would still be contingent on those items. There are no trees in the parking lot at all. She doesn't understand that. We want this to be a place we are proud of. She would add netting for shade to the wish list. Peace noted that insurance might pay for that since people would be protected from fly balls. It might also pay for shade structures as well. Bright stated they can always consider the options.

ACTION:

Huston moved approval, subject to encouragement of the applicant and the Urban Design Committee to continue to address multiple areas including access, shading, aesthetic of the building, the warm up area, seating, and building materials, seconded by Ordia and carried 6-0: Canney, Grasso, Huston, Ordia, Peace and Penn voting 'yes'; Deeker absent.

MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION CENTER AT 701 S. 10TH ST.:**May 7, 2024**

Members present: Canney, Grasso, Huston, Ordia, Peace and Penn; Deeker absent.

Liz Elliott wanted to give an update on the Lincoln Transportation and Utilities (LTU) StarTran Multi-Modal Transportation Center. LTU received a Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant of nearly \$24 million dollars. Ultimately the goal is to create a safer and more inclusive center in Lincoln. The current site is at 11th Street and 'N' Street. What used to be Gold's store is now a large hole in the ground. They are moving two blocks south to 11th Street and 'L' Street in about six weeks. There are no public facilities on either of these sites. Passengers and drivers have no access to restrooms or shade. There is no ability to expand where they are now. The concept of a multi-modal transportation center has been discussed for twenty years. It was first talked about in 2004. Since then, it has been discussed in multiple transit development plans, as well as the Downtown Master Plan. It was talked about in the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) as well.

She continued that this has gone through numerous applications for the grant. A design charrette was held. This culminated in site selection criteria. It needs to be in the downtown area, it needs to accommodate the full program, accessible from surrounding streets and needed to be feasible, amongst other items. She showed a map showing the predominate areas of origination and destination. 17 potential sites were considered. Many were dismissed for a number of reasons. They looked at the

former Police Station. It used to be a gas station and has gas tanks underground. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) said that site wasn't fit for investment. That shifted LTU to look at Block 101 where the City County parking garage is located, and Block 146 to the south where the surface parking for employees is located. They considered the advantages of both sites. Many options were considered. They also looked at current and planned bicycle paths and trails. The south site was a little more connected. Block 146 ended up as the preferred site. 9th Street, 10th Street and Rosa Parks Way are very busy streets. Grant requirements state the center needs to have a minimum of 18 bus bays. It also allows for more room for the multi-modal aspect. The building will be fairly small. The first level will be accessible to the public. They currently have a contract with off duty police officers who would have a space in this building for work. The second floor would be administrative staff and a meeting room. The outside would have 18 bus bays and a plus one. There would be roughly about 50 parking stalls for staff and those using the facilities. They are going through the environmental studies now. She showed an early plan. There would be glass for the passenger waiting area. There would be bike parking and potential for scooters. She showed the bus bays and different viewpoints. The wayfinding was just recently updated. There would be interactive kiosks at some of the bus stops. That would continue here. They are looking at offsite improvements such as replacement parking on 'H' Street, crosswalk improvements, and trees and landscaping. The plan is to do some sort of pedestrian signalization. We would want to make sure they can maintain as much as they can of the landscaping, but enhance it as well. This would have a comfortable indoor waiting area and enhancement of safer spaces. This would allow for convenient transfers. This is an anchor for everything that is going on in South Haymarket and Downtown. Right now, this project is estimated to cost around \$33 million dollars. The RAISE grant is \$23.6 million dollars. They have been doing a lot of community engagement. Elliott and Carla Cosier have been going door to door. They had an open house. They have done a number of presentations. They will continue to do more. She wanted everyone to know that this will also impact City and County employees. It will impact parking during construction and the long term. They are working closely with the Public Building Commission. There is a website dedicated to this project: <https://www.lincoln.ne.gov/City/Departments/LTU/StarTran/Projects/MMTC>. Comment forms are on the website as well. They hope to incorporate the feedback. They are doing regular updates via social media. They have been asked to do soil testing at this site as well. They hope to start that in the next few weeks. They are also doing noise and vibration testing to make sure there aren't impacts to the neighborhood or area businesses. The hope is to have the environmental studies wrapped up this month. Property acquisition discussions can't happen until after FTA has signed off on the environmental aspect. Once that happens, they will move into

additional property acquisition and final design. The goal is to start construction in 2025.

Huston stated that Elliott makes a great case for this. It has been a 20 year discussion and will be rewarding to see it come to an end.

Elliott encouraged everyone to feel free to reach out with any questions. She will keep the committee updated with their progress.

Peace remembers looking at the site location and wondering about the traffic circulation. Elliott stated the initial idea theory is that buses can access the site from 9th Street and circulate in a counter clockwise fashion. There have been some concerns about pedestrian movements. There will be sidewalks all around as well. This will be refined most likely. They want to do everything they can to reduce pedestrian/vehicle interactions. They know this is something to work through.

Peace wondered if any parking is being shown for ride share. Elliott pointed out the area for StarTran administration staff. There would be public spaces for those utilizing StarTran services. It might be someone running in to pick up a bus pass. The University calls ride share Zip cars. They could perhaps provide a couple of spots for those, for ride share drop off and pick up. There are many ideas happening now.

Huston wondered if the surface stalls would be relocated to the north. Elliott replied that was correct, that is the plan. They have had conversations with Law Enforcement. This is consistent with some of the security measures that the Sheriff is wanting to do. They are looking at a courtyard space of sorts. That would be more on the east side

Canney commented this is a very exciting plan. He worked for Parks and Recreation for many years and one thing that often came up is that planning for managing outdoor space is usually overlooked. He questioned who will take care of the outdoor green space. Elliott stated they are still working through those things There is still some fine tuning to be done.

Huston wished Elliott luck. Elliott stated she will be back as more designs are refined.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Barnes stated that this is Teresa McKinstry's last meeting. She is retiring on May 31, 2024.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:05 p.m.