

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, July 9, 2024, 3:00 p.m., County-City Building, City Council Chambers, 555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln, NE.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Emily Deeker, Jill Grasso, Frank Ordia, and Michelle Penn; Gill Peace, Mark Canney and Tom Huston absent.

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Arvind Gopalakrishnan, Paul Barnes, Collin Christopher and Jennifer McDonald of the Planning Department; media and other interested citizens were present.

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 June 4, 2024.

Motion for approval was made by Ordia, seconded by Grasso.

Motion carried 4-0: Deeker, Grasso, Ordia, and Penn voting 'yes'; Canney, Peace and Huston absent.

ADDITION OF CONSTELLATION STUDIOS:
UDR24093 Final Action

July 9, 2024

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

Arvind Gopalakrishnan, Planning Department, 555 S 10th Street, Lincoln, NE stated that Constellation Studios is located at 21st and O street, in the redevelopment area of Antelope Valley in an area now called the Telegraph District. The project aims at creating an open interior to maximize the views and the daylight. This site is zoned B-4 in the Lincoln Center Business District and is subject to Downtown Design Standards. The design proposes 4 parking spaces with 2 on the southeast corner with 1 being Karen Kunc (owner), and 3 street parking spaces along 21st Street. There is not a minimum parking requirement due to the property being zoned B-4.

Ordia asked when the last time was when project was brought before the committee. Gopalakrishnan stated that this is the first time in front of the committee.

Grasso asked if the street light poles will stay or being relocated? **Mark Bacon, BVH Architecture, 440 N 8th Street, Lincoln Ne** approached and stated that the light poles will remain as shown. This will need to be confirmed by the Civil Engineer. It is not the intent to remove light fixtures.

Deeker asked if they are looking at a planter. Bacon confirmed yes.

Grasso asked about the location of the materials on the exterior. Bacon stated that at the street level and to fit in the context of the O Street corridor, there will be a brick of color that will blend in with O Street. Then there will be a metal panel with color changing LED lighting that will show through as a design display that changes, a signage and will also be a piece of artwork with the facade.

Grasso asked what the material is behind the perforation. Bacon stated it is a waterproof barrier with a two-foot space for drain holes for water. There will be a soffit with drain holes so you cannot look up into the cavity space. Grasso asked what the vertical pieces are made of. Bacon stated that they will be made of a steel structure for the perforated barrier to be mounted to. Grasso asked about the gated area, Bacon stated that there will be a pathway for security and egress lighting. Along with the building façade, there will be a metal panel that will wrap around the courtyard. This will allow natural light and gives flexibility for more uses of the classroom space. There is also a gate which will enable security in the courtyard.

Penn asked about the layout of the floor plan. Bacon stated that as you walk through the gate, there will be a retail store, courtyard, then a door that will lead to the art demonstration and workroom. The hallway leads to four studios that will be available to rent. The back of the building leads to a door that will open to a concrete pad for outside work. There is also a Mechanical Mezzanine that services the building.

Penn asked about the location of the courtyard, Bacon stated that it is between the Retail store and the Art demonstration room. It is open air between these two spaces.

Penn confirmed that there is not a basement. Bacon confirmed that is correct. Penn asked where the parking would be located.

Jennifer Hiatt, Urban Development, 555 S 10th Street, Lincoln, NE came forward and stated that there are no requirements for parking in B-4, but they are adding three stalls with two onsite parking.

Grasso asked if the entrance will be through the courtyard, Bacon stated that the existing front door can be used as a main entry but can still enter through the courtyard. It will be up to the owner to ensure her safety.

Penn asked about the signage. Bacon stated that on the existing building, the signage will remain. There will also be a large mural and signage on the existing building. Bacon stated that it was not needed to be on the addition.

Grasso confirmed that the LED screen will also be utilized as signage. Bacon confirmed that is correct. There is also a current green area and landscaping. Bacon confirmed that the landscaping plan is to be kept and enhanced.

Penn stated that there was a night lighting study and asked if there will be lighting in the back for security. Bacon stated that there will be lighting in the alley for security.

Penn stated that this is a great addition to the Telegraph District, and this will attract other artists to the area. Penn stated that she will approve this project.

Penn motioned for approval, seconded by Grasso.

Motion carried 4-0: Deeker, Grasso, Ordia, and Penn voting 'yes'; Huston, Peace and Canney absent.

DOWNTOWN CORRIDORS PHASE 1 DESIGN

July 9, 2024

Final Action

Deeker will recuse herself from this agenda item due to a conflict of interest.

Penn stated that there will not be a quorum, **Paul Barnes, Planning Department, 555 S 10th Street, Lincoln, NE** came forward and stated that this should be heard, comments made, and put in the meeting comments, so this project can progress forward.

Collin Christopher, Planning Department, 555 S 10th Street, Lincoln, NE stated that feedback is acceptable and appreciated at this time. Christopher stated that this project came out of the 2018 Downtown Master Plan. The 2018 Downtown Master Plan identified several streetscape-related improvement projects. In 2022, a design team was hired to begin the visioning process. With the visioning and the Master Plan, the project is to start construction in Spring 2025. Christopher stated that there will be Priority A and B in the Phase 1 Improvement Project. The improvements will include the removal of the Ash trees and replacing with other shade and landscaping opportunities. Also, sidewalk improvements, pedestrian intersection improvements, outdoor living room spaces along with art and decorative lighting. Christopher stated from a funding perspective, the funding for the TIF district, individual TIF projects and

the general fund contributions. There are also State and Federal grants associated being used. Part of the project is the proposed and existing one-way and two-way street projects. Christopher stated that street goals for the Downtown Corridor included pedestrian lighting, landscape buffer, eliminating a turn lane for a buffer sidewalk space and to make this ADA accessible. Christopher discussed the Downtown Corridors Phase 1 Design that included enhancements and opportunities to the downtown area for long term solutions. The solution will be different in every corridor of downtown. This will support the businesses that are already there along with the bike and pedestrian areas. Christopher gave examples of sidewalk café and opportunities that can be offered with the flexibility of having it curbside or against the building. Christopher stated that moveable street furniture and an addition to pedestrian lighting is another option. The solution will be different in every block. Another possibility would be the adding of a Kiosk for a pop-up retail. Christopher discussed changing the parking from metered to drop off, for the convenience of quick pick up, deliveries or drop off. Christopher stated that working through convenient street closures and event permitting is being streamlined to have a standard approved special permit plan to work from. The next step is to analyze the feedback from the meetings and open houses that were held. Then incorporate any changes that came from the feedback. There will be additional open houses prior to the start of the construction.

Grasso asked if there has been any consideration about bike parking in the new bike lanes. Christopher stated that each block will be looked at for bike parking and what is the best solution.

Ordia stated that this is brilliant and necessary. Ordia questioned if calling it the Music District would isolate some of the business owners on 14th street. Christopher stated that the Music District name has been used for a long time, but a firm has been hired to determine how to brand this.

Deeker stated that the bike share station on 14th Street will be relocated.

Penn stated that this has been a long time coming and is questioning whether there are umbrellas for shade and was wondering if there are other opportunities for temporarily shading like movable shade structures. Christopher asked Penn if it was an umbrella or something more structural that she had seen. Penn stated that she will show Christopher pictures of what she has seen in other countries. Penn also mentioned a moveable wall or fencing for the outdoor seating. Christopher stated that a rail is needed for the liquor law requirements, but it can be moveable would be the goal.

Ordia asked how this will affect the Husker Football fan experience. Christopher stated that it should make the experience safer.

Grasso asked that with the addition of the landscape, how is it going to be maintained. Christopher stated that there is a plan with which he will be implementing and maintaining the plan. There hopefully be a budget or endowment that will help with the repair and replacement. Christopher stated that the pavers subbase has failed over time and there is an area that has been recently fixed. A lot of repairs have been made in the past year, but a larger repair is coming in the future.

Grasso asked about the outdoor seating and the policy change that came with it, if has it been implemented? Christopher stated it was being used as a test, but there is not a policy change yet. Penn stated that Sultan's Kite was going to do the test. **Hallie Salem, Urban Development, 555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln, NE** approached and stated that there was a liquor test case with Longwells that had a space, sidewalk area and then another space that they were able to use, and this is a matter of insurance and making the changes to the ordinance permanent. Grasso asked if the bike map is going to be redone and implemented and enforced. Christopher stated that in addition to the sidewalk café ordinance change there will need to be another change to address the bikes on the sidewalks in certain areas through an ordinance change or text amendment to make it clear, legal and official.

ACTION:

There is no vote due to not having a quorum. Penn stated that the presentation would not need to be repeated next month.

BISON WITCHES – PROPOSAL FOR A NEW ENCLOSURE
Discussion

July 9, 2024

Hallie Salem, Urban Development, 555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln, NE came forward representing Bison Witches, who was unable to attend. Salem stated that the rendering that was submitted is a starting point of the canopy structure. A solution of lower cost and feedback is what they are looking for. Salem stated that there are some concerns with the initial proposal and looking for potential solutions.

Penn asked Salem to explain the design. Salem stated it is a red tarp structure that was previously installed, that would be replaced with black material and a transparent window. Salem is hopeful to come up with a solution that would be acceptable to everyone with additional feedback.

Ordia asked what was recommended. Salem stated that creating more usable space during the heat of the summer or cool of winter is understandable, but it needs to be more transparent and meet fire code requirements. This structure needs to be more durable to go through the seasons. Something more permanent than a curtain or tarp.

Grasso stated that there was a white storm door that was stuck there also. Are they required to have egress to the patio and how are they going to address it with the additional option. Salem stated that the picture does not accurately reflect the canopy structure or other requirements. Any feedback that can be provided would be helpful.

Ordia stated that without seeing some type of rendering, there is not much to work with. Salem stated that if this was set in the canopy structure, is this a direction that would be supported by this body or are they proceeding in a direction that would not be supported at all. Grasso stated that she would like to know if they do need egress, Salem stated that fire code would require it. Grasso asked if this is a solid panel or curtains and will the storm door stay. This rendering is better, but more information is needed with a full view. Grasso stated with a plan as to how they are going to address egress, is this a permanent fixture, more information and direction is needed. Salem stated that they want this to be more of a permanent fixture. Grasso asked how this ties into the discussion 10 years ago with this corner being active with outdoor seating and this is an attempt not to have it or make it part of the building.

Penn stated that it is open today, Salem stated that they are being required to have it open. Grasso stated that it looks like a red canvas building. Penn thought that this would be open as part of the corner and what is their intention here. Salam asked what percentage of the year they want it to be open or closed. Grasso stated that she feels that it is an addition to the building without wanting to do an addition to the building. This looks very permanent. Grasso stated that she wants to know their intent for this structure. Penn asked if this is supposed to be a permanent structure. Salam stated that portions are permanent, and portions are temporary and not in the right of way but public property. This is being governed but not by the same criteria as a sidewalk café.

Ordia stated that transparency improvement is needed. Deeker stated that if it can go back to a style that can be moved in sections or tied together. Salam stated that is what they are proposing in sections, but the question is whether black and clear is acceptable in sections. Deeker stated that it looks like a full-blown canvas tent.

Grasso stated that this direction is better, but it needs to look accessible and that they need to see more intent of what the plan is for the canvas and plastic. Salam stated that some of the questions is what the clear material is made of and can it discolor or show spots over time. Salam asked if the red color material is acceptable or would a different type of material be acceptable. Penn stated that the intent is what is important. If it is to be a permanent solution with the walls and doors. Grasso asked if it is to be permanent, should it not have to meet the downtown standards. Grasso stated that this is a great business, but this is an important corner for the Plaza area and does not want to make it worse by putting a plastic or canvas structure up that doesn't get opened or closed.

Penn stated that the homeless people are not hanging out in the area and Grasso stated that she thought that this was put up for that purpose, to separate the patrons from the homeless.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Paul Barnes, Planning Department, 555 S 10th Street, Lincoln, Ne came forward and introduced Juan as a new staff member to the Long-Range Planning. Barnes stated that this hearing is Frank Ordia's last meeting and wishing him well. Barnes asked if the members would be acceptable to going paperless. The members would like to continue to keep receiving printed copies during the hearing.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:36 p.m.