

ARIZONA STATE LEGISLATURE
Forty-fifth Legislature – Second Regular Session

LEGISLATIVE GOVERNMENTAL MALL COMMISSION

Minutes of Meeting
Wednesday, April 17, 2002
House Hearing Room 3 -- 3:30 p.m.

(Tape 1, Side A)

Chairman Knapp called the meeting to order at 3:38 p.m. and attendance was noted by the secretary.

Members Present

Leroy Brady	Joy Rich
Elliott Hibbs	Representative Voss
Norman Hintz	Senator Smith
William McMullen	Tom Knapp, Chairman

Members Absent

John Clements	David Richert
Donald P. Kueth, Jr.	Polly Rosenbaum

Speakers Present

Terri Taylor-Lima, representing City of Phoenix Economic Development Office
Jule Dionne, representing JDL, LLC
Larry Chesley, House Majority Research Analyst
Gary Schmidt, representing LSW Engineers
Andy Staubitz, Chief, Capitol Police

Continued presentations on the Grace Court School redevelopment

Terri Taylor-Lima, representing City of Phoenix Economic Development Office, stated the RFP for the Grace Court School redevelopment was awarded to Mr. Jule Dionne. She distributed an aerial map of the site (Attachment 1).

Jule Dionne, representing JDL, LLC, reviewed the master plan (Attachment 2) and the project elevation (Attachment 3). The site is 9 1/2 acres and is bordered by Van Buren Street, Adams Street, 7th Avenue and 9th Avenue. Woodland Avenue and Woodland Park have been abandoned by the City of Phoenix, which is integral to the project. There will be seven parcels on the site, five for office/residential, one for a parking lot and one for a parking garage. The entire property will be surrounded by a six foot high wrought iron fence. Landscaping will be similar to Wesley Bolin Plaza. The main entry will be from 7th Avenue and will be gated and manned 24 hours a day.

Senator Smith asked for the project's timeline. Mr. Dionne replied he is hoping to have the certificate of occupancy in hand by May 1, 2003.

Larry Chesley, House Majority Research Analyst, asked what would be done with some of the historic military buildings on the site. Mr. Dionne said the old Armory will be renovated and be used as the phone building for the site.

Motion was made to approve the concept as presented. Motion was seconded. The motion carried.

Mr. Dionne continued with the presentation of the Grace Court II elevation. The proposed building will be 75,000 square feet with three levels, even though the prior approval was for a four level building. Tucson Buff brick will be used for the façade. The office of the Maricopa County Public Defender will be housed in this building.

In response to inquiry by Chairman Knapp, Ms. Taylor-Lima replied this project meets the City of Phoenix's setback requirements. Mr. Chesley added formal approval from the City of Phoenix cannot be sought until this committee approves the design. Mr. Dionne said the proposed window treatment is identical to historic Grace Court building. The historic Grace Court building has a molded metal piece that runs along the entire perimeter of the building near the roof.

Chairman Knapp stated it is difficult to get the true feel of the building from the elevation rendering. It does not indicate the building's relief or the human scale of the building.

Senator Smith asked if the project's neighbors have been included in discussions. Mr. Dionne responded the Capitol Mall Association has been consulted.

Mr. Hibbs asked what exactly the City of Phoenix needs from this Commission. Mr. Dionne said he is unaware of what the Phoenix Historical Rehabilitation Commission requires from this Commission.

Chairman Knapp stated he is supportive of a motion that would move forward on the concept with reservations. He needs much greater details before he can wholeheartedly support the project.

Mr. Hintz said historically this Commission supported not demolishing the Grace Court school and this proposed project does not do much to preserve that building.

Ms. Rich asked if there will be pedestrian access to the buildings. Mr. Dionne responded in the negative.

Chairman Knapp said this project as presented feels like a "compound." He understands the need for a fence for security purposes but it will also make the building look unfriendly. The building should be warm and welcoming. He hopes Mr. Dionne and the City of Phoenix staff takes the Commission's comments under advisement.

Ms. Rich remarked she thinks the building looks like a fortress and would like the buildings to be more welcoming.

Mr. McMullen said a fence around a building does not have to be permanent. It could be installed and removed at a later date.

Mr. Hibbs opined the Commission is getting into much more detail than he thinks the Commission is prepared to talk about today. The Commission has already given approval to the concept at a prior meeting and the project's momentum should keep moving forward.

Chairman Knapp said the City of Phoenix usually requests a letter and a copy of the meeting minutes as proof of the Commission's approval. It appears the Commission approves the general concept but would like much more detail prior to specific approval.

Ms. Rich asked if a certificate of appropriateness has been requested for this building. Mr. Dionne responded in the negative.

Mr. Dionne queried if the Commission has issues with the building being 75,000 square feet and three levels high. He needs to know an answer prior to submitting the formal offer tomorrow. Architectural design can be modified at a later date. Chairman Knapp responded he does not see a problem with approving the height and mass of the building.

Mr. Hibbs stated it is difficult to give any kind of approval at this point without knowing how the building sits on the property and how it fits into the neighborhood. Mr. Dionne attested the proposed building is four feet higher than the existing Grace Court School. It does not look like any of the neighboring buildings to the west because that area is zoned residential.

Mr. McMullen summarized the Commission's concerns: aesthetics, appearance and compatibility with the existing Grace Court School. The Commission is favorable on the building size and placement on the property.

Mr. Hibbs said he would be uncomfortable giving approval to the building size and placement without knowing more details.

Motion was made to approve proposed building size and placement and to state concerns related to aesthetics, appearance and compatibility with the existing Grace Court School. Motion was seconded. The motion carried by a voice vote of 5-1.

Mr. Dionne requested specifics as to what the Commission would like to see at its next meeting. Chairman Knapp replied he would appreciate point by point guidelines related to what was approved on page 10 of the building plan. Detail on items like materials for the building needs to be better articulated.

Presentation on new lighting plan for Wesley Bolin Plaza

Gary Schmidt, LSW Engineers, stated his firm has been contracted by the Arizona Department of Administration (ADOA) to provide site improvements at Wesley Bolin Plaza. A new building will be built on the site to house electrical service to the Plaza. The new building will also have room to accommodate pumping equipment for the fountain. The final improvement will be to provide uniform lighting for public safety and security as well as electric receptacles for public functions.

Mr. Schmidt reviewed a handout on the proposed site improvements (Attachment 4). All in-ground lighting as well as wall-mounted lighting will be removed and not replaced. The fixture featured in the package can be seen along 17th Avenue.

Mr. Hibbs asked if new lighting will be added in the Plaza. Mr. Schmidt responded the purpose of the project is to provide uniform lighting distribution throughout the Plaza. If additional lighting is needed, it will be placed

In response to inquiry by Chairman Knapp, Mr. Schmidt said if taller light poles are used to spread out the illumination, fewer light poles will be needed. They are striving for balance in lighting efficiency and poles 25-30 feet in height will be adequate. In-ground and wall-mounted lighting is not being replaced because they are too easily damaged. All monuments in the Plaza will still be adequately lit.

Senator Smith remarked he agreed with the idea of removing lights that are easily vandalized.

Chairman Knapp inquired as to what is going to happen to the existing holes for wall-mounted lighting. Mr. Schmidt replied his firm will be submitting an architectural detail of the repair on the walls.

Mr. Hibbs pointed out that whatever agency is overseeing this project should contact the organizations responsible for the memorials in the Plaza to see if they are concerned about changes to the lighting of their memorial. He is concerned about the project being bid in phases. He does not think that \$90,000 is going to cover everything in the project.

Mr. Schmidt said the building to house the electrical service and fountain pumping equipment is the first priority. After that has been bid, the rest of the project will be re-examined to see what can be completed with the remainder of the budget.

Mr. Hintz opined there should be two different pole heights, one for parking lots and one from pedways. Mr. Schmidt recommended a 15 foot high pole for the pathways and a 25-30 foot pole for the parking lots. It is important to remember this is a preliminary presentation and designs will be presented at a later date.

Motion was made to approve the schematic proposal with additional details to follow. Motion was seconded. Mr. Hibbs recused himself from the vote. The motion carried.

Presentation on guidelines for the subcommittee that will study the issues on Wesley Bolin Plaza and memorials within the plaza

Mr. Chesley said he has created the preliminary guidelines and will e-mail them to the members. He apologized for the delay in the presentation.

Discussion on improved security for 1700 West Washington (Capitol area)

Andy Staubitz, Chief, Capitol Police, reviewed handout on current security measures in the Capitol area (Attachment 5) and plans for placement of additional security measures (Attachment 6). The portion of 18th Avenue near the Capitol has been closed since September 11, 2001.

Security experts have warned that government buildings are prime targets for terrorist attacks and the Executive Tower is vulnerable by design.

(Tape 1, Side B)

Chief Staubitz continued the presentation. The object is to keep the building accessible but safe. A removable bollard system that will stop traffic on Jefferson and Adams toward 18th Avenue would be a good way to provide security while allowing limited access. Grant money is available through Risk Management to implement the removable bollard system. However, time is of the essence as the grant period is over at the end of the budget year.

Miss Voss asked why bollards are not in front of the Executive Tower along 18th Avenue. Chief Staubitz responded in the future protection will be placed near the entrance. There are already a few bollards at the entry. He would prefer to use concrete planters as security measures at that location.

Mr. Hibbs said the intent is not to have bollards on 18th Avenue all the time. The bollards would be there depending on the level of national security determined by the Homeland Security Office.

Miss Voss said the current access area comes close to the building. She thinks the bollards should be closer to the building. The area should be opened up and technology used to prevent attacks or that portion of 18th Avenue should be shut down entirely. Chief Staubitz said he is also concerned about the loading dock Miss Voss mentioned and some security cameras are going to be installed in the area.

Chairman Knapp commended Chief Staubitz's efforts to maintain accessibility while providing a high level of security.

Motion was made to approve the general concept as presented. Motion was seconded. Mr. Hibbs recused himself from the vote. The motion carried.

Without objection, the meeting adjourned at 4:51 p.m.

Andrea Allen, Committee Secretary
April 24, 2002

(Original minutes, attachments and tape on file in the Office of the Chief Clerk.)