MEMBERS PRESENT:  Dave Ciaccio, Chair
                    Tim Holland, Vice Chair
                    Robert Peters
                    Gerald Torczon
                    April Rice
                    Rachel Jacobson
                    Jay Noddle

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:  Larry Jobeun
                       Michael McMeekin
                       Leanne Ziettlow
                       Anna Nubel, Non-Voting Ex-Officio Member

STAFF PRESENT:  Jed Moulton, Urban Design Manager
                Trina Westman, UDRB Administrator
                Alan Thelen, Law Department
                Clinette Warren, Recording Secretary

Certification of Publication:  Urban Design Review Board Administrator certifies publication of this agenda in the Daily Record, the official newspaper of the City of Omaha on Monday, October 8, 2012.

Mr. Ciaccio, Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m.
PUBLIC MEETING:

Public Cases for Discussion & Approval:

It was the consensus of the Board to hear this case first.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>UD-12-015</th>
<th>NAME: Missouri Ave/Spring Lake Park Sewer Separation - CSO</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ryan Bentley of Big Muddy Workshop, Inc.</td>
<td>LOCATION: F Street &amp; Spring Lake Drive</td>
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<td>REQUEST: Approval of 30% Design Submittal and Subsequent Administrative Disposition</td>
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At the Urban Design Review Board meeting held on October 18, 2012, Ryan Bentley and Big Muddy Workshop, appeared before the Board in support of the request.

Mr. Bentley stated that the proposed project will impact streets designated as “Green Streets” which include: 24th Street, F Street, Spring Lake Drive, and 13th Street. He noted that in some areas the roads could potentially be narrowed. He explained that much of the project includes Spring Lake Park and includes tree mitigation as required by the Omaha Parks Department and the Urban Design Division of the Planning Department.

Mr. Peters moved to APPROVE the 30% Design Submittal and Subsequent Administrative Disposition. Ms. Jacobson seconded the motion.

AYES: Peters, Jacobson, Holland, Ciaccio

MOTION CARRIED: 4-0
NAME: Dundee Streetscape Improvements  
LOCATION: 49th – 51st Streets & Underwood - Webster  
REQUEST: Approval of 30% Design Submittal with the conditions in the Recommendation Report

At the Urban Design Review Board meeting held on October 18, 2012, Tim Teig, Project Manager – Snyder Associates, Pete Festersen – City Council, Matt Shimerdla, Project Manager – City of Omaha, Mike Geier – Snyder & Associates, and Molly Romero, Dundee Merchants Association, appeared before the Board in support of the request.

Mr. Festersen stated that the Master Plan for this project had been approved by the Urban Design Review Board a few years prior (Case #UD-09-008, October 22, 2009) and included extensive input from the community. He noted that the plan had also been approved by the Planning Board and City Council. He stated that this project was the first to receive the NCE Overlay (Neighborhood Conservation/Enhancement Plan) to ensure that any development that occurs would be consistent with the historic character and design of the Dundee neighborhood. He added that a new Business Improvement District and Tax Increment Financing District were adopted to help maintain the project with the support of neighborhood merchants. Mr. Festersen stated that all of these factors enabled the community to raise the funding needed for the streetscape improvements which include: streets, curbs, lighting, additional parking, and landscaping. He encouraged approval of the plan since construction is planned to begin in April 2013. He noted that when the case had gone before the Board in October 2009, there was concern with access points at Max I. Walker and a salon. In response to those concerns, the business owners were contacted; however, no changes were made to the original plan. Regarding the intersection at 50th & Underwood, Mr. Festersen stated the plan was to have a final decision by the end of October 2012.

Tim Teig showed a slide presentation which depicted the proposed changes to the Dundee area. These included: additional parking; widening of the sidewalk in certain areas; the installation of 8 elevated planters with benches and decorative fencing; the addition of plaque squares; construction of a pedestrian plaza; a potential rain garden and bio-swales; and, a clock tower. Mr. Teig presented 3 designs for the intersection at 50th & Underwood, which depicted the area with a four-way stop, traffic signals, and a mini roundabout.

In response to Mr. Ciaccio, Mr. Teig stated that, because building setbacks vary, sidewalk widths can be anywhere from 9’ - 12’ - 19’.

Mr. Ciaccio asked about the results of the Dundee public meeting held earlier in the month of October 2012. Ms. Romero stated that over 100 people attended the meeting, and submitted written responses to the proposed plan to Snyder & Associates. She noted that many people who attended were very enthusiastic about the changes, although much of the discussion centered around the intersection at 50th & Underwood.

In response to Mr. Ciaccio’s request for information regarding the final plan for the intersection, Mr. Shimerdla stated that they received both positive and negative feedback from attendees of the public meeting regarding the installation of a roundabout. Mr. Ciaccio inquired as to the reason why the roundabout was even proposed as an alternative. Mr. Shimerdla responded that he suggested the roundabout as a way to effectively move traffic through the intersection. Todd Pfister, City Engineer – Public Works Department, added that the roundabout would provide the best level of service for the intersection, noting that the City aims to achieve a service level of “C” or better.

Mr. Teig explained that the concept for the intersection has always included the introduction of a four-way stop, replacing the existing traffic signals. He added that both motor vehicle and pedestrian traffic were taken into account. Mr. Ciaccio responded that the goal should be to slow down traffic, providing an opportunity for motorists to see the storefronts and possibly stop and make purchases.
Murthy Koti, City Traffic Engineer – Public Works Department, stated that he reviewed the three traffic scenarios presented with the safety of pedestrians as being the top priority. He stated that a roundabout is the safest application for pedestrians because of the reduction in the number of conflict points, which are basically opportunities for cars to hit pedestrians. With a traditional intersection, or all-way stop, there are 32 conflict points that exist. A roundabout would reduce this number to 8. The second reason the roundabout is a safer alternative is because it operates at between 15 – 20 miles per hour. He added that the crossing distances in a roundabout are also reduced. In response to Mr. Peters, Mr. Koti explained that although an all-way stop would stop vehicles, it also creates some confusion as to which vehicle or pedestrian would proceed first. Mr. Peters replied that it was unreasonable to expect traffic to move at 15 - 20 miles per hour at the main intersection in Dundee.

Ms. Rice expressed concern with how a cyclist would maneuver through the roundabout, noting that it would create a dangerous situation for cyclists. Carlos Morales, Bike Pedestrian Coordinator, stated that he receives several complaints about bicyclists who ride through stop signs without yielding. He added that the yield maneuver with the roundabout would also include cyclists and should be safe for all forms of traffic.

Mr. Noddle stated that a simple intersection where vehicles come to a complete seemed to be the best solution for pedestrians, instead of the continuous movement of a roundabout which could seem confusing to them. In response, Mr. Pfitzer stated that a four-way stop would be the least pedestrian-friendly option available for this intersection since there would be movement there at all times. He noted that there a number of pedestrian accidents occur with right and left turning vehicles at a four-way stop.

Mr. Pfitzer addressed how the traffic signal option would affect the intersection. He explained that a person could survive the impact of a vehicle traveling at 25 miles per hour; however, the chances that a person could survive the impact with a vehicle traveling at 35 – 40 miles per hour through a signalized intersection drops to 15%. He further explained that it is almost impossible for a vehicle to travel through a roundabout at more than 20 miles per hour. Mr. Pfitzer also added that the installation of stop signs would mean a service level of “F” within 5 – 6 years.

In response to Mr. Ciaccio, Mr. Pfitzer stated that there have been 32 accidents at the intersection of 50th & Underwood in the last 4 years (2008 – 2011), which is twice the number that it should be. However, he did note that none of those were pedestrian accidents.

Mr. Noddle stated that he felt that features of the proposed plan were in conflict with one another. He cited as an example the proposed plaza at the south end of the Creighton Medical Center parking lot that includes a planter with seating located directly on the curb line. He suggested more collaboration between Snyder & Associates, Public Works, and the neighbors as to the details of the proposed plan. Mr. Noddle also suggested using re-purposed materials that fit better with the Dundee neighborhood. In response, Mr. Festersen stated that the Dundee neighborhood has not been able to address other details of the plan because of the distraction with the intersection issue.

Mr. Tieg mentioned the importance of sustainability and stressed the danger of reusing materials. He stated that the challenge lies in using sustainable products that coincide with the feel of the neighborhood. He further stated that so much attention has gone to the intersection that there has been little attention paid to other elements of the streetscape.

Mr. Peters stated that what could be perceived as imperfections to the neighborhood are really characteristics that make the area unique. He felt that the proposed plan was predictable and engineered. Mr. Tieg stated that a majority of the details with the proposed plan could be settled when it was determined whether the intersection would be a four-way stop, a roundabout, or a signalized intersection.

In response to Mr. Ciaccio, Mr. Festersen stated that the intersection issue is what is holding up progress of the project. He anticipated a resolution to the matter in the following week. He added that since the people living in Dundee or the majority of the merchants would not support a roundabout, there needed to be a decision made as to whether the intersection would be a four-way stop or signalized. In response to
Mr. Ciaccio, Mr. Pfitzer advised that advanced warning systems could only be used on state highways with posted speed limits above 45 miles per hour. He noted that signals are already installed at the intersection, and that they create the potential for someone to drive through a yellow light and hit a car that is backing out of a parking space.

Mr. Peters requested that Mr. Pfitzer provide traffic accident information about the intersections in the South Omaha Business District between “L” and “Q” on 24th Street, which are 3-way and 4-way stops.

Mr. Noddle and Mr. Holland both stated that they felt that the roundabout conflicts with the movement of pedestrians in the area, and urged the design team to produce a plan that solved that particular issue.

Mr. Ciaccio commented on the importance of corners in downtown districts and stated that the roundabout eliminates these corners. He added that the whole reason for the project is to encourage better business in the Dundee area, and noted that the reason for the success lies in the character of the neighborhood which he felt is produced by the traditional intersection and the cast iron light poles.

In response to Mr. Ciaccio, Mr. Moulton clarified that the Board does not serve in an advisory capacity; but that it does have the authority to approve, deny, or approve with changes. He added that decisions about particular programmatic details are left up to the representing agency as described in the UDRB Rules of Procedure.

Bob Stubbe, Public Works Director, stated that when Public Works designs a project they look at all of the transportation issues related to it. He reiterated that a four-way stop at the intersection would not provide an acceptable level of service, and that it would increase the potential for additional accidents. He added that it would be difficult for him to approve a plan for an intersection that would lower the level of service from what already exists. He strongly urged that the four-way stop not be considered as an option for the intersection. He also advised that the traffic signals currently in place may not be the standard that is used by the Public Works Department at present. He noted that new traffic signals could require different structural support, ADA requirements, and four mast arms instead of the two currently in place.

Ms. Romero stated that the majority of the private money provided to fund the project was raised on the basis of the conceptual plan, which showed a four-way stop at the intersection. She stated that the residents and merchants all agree that a roundabout would have a negative impact on the neighborhood. In response to Mr. Ciaccio, Ms. Romero and Mr. Festersen both stated that the business owners preferred that the intersection be changed to a four-way stop since, in their opinion, it would be the most pedestrian-friendly solution. Mr. Festersen added that if the merchants were convinced that a four-way stop would not be in the best interest of the neighborhood, they would possibly agree on a signalized intersection but definitely not on a roundabout.

Mr. Ciaccio suggested the possibility of decreasing the width of some of the sidewalk in order to increase the depth of diagonal parking by 2 – 3 feet, thereby increasing visibility when a vehicle is backing out of a space. Mr. Moulton responded that he supported the idea of 19’ stalls, which are recommended by the Institute of Transportation for walkable urban thoroughfares. In response to Mr. Holland’s suggestion of back-in diagonal parking, Ms. Romero stated that the business owners were not in favor of it.

Mr. Peter’s requested from Mr. Pfitzer detailed information regarding the 32 accidents that occurred at or near the intersection of 50th & Underwood from 2008 to 2011.

Gerald Torczon and April Rice both excused themselves from the meeting at 4:37 p.m.

Mr. Peters suggested laying the case over for 30 days so that a determination could be made about the intersection and to give the Board the chance to discuss other details of the plan. Mr. Moulton stated that he recommends that the case come back within 30 – 60 days to show some resolution to the outstanding issues. Mr. Festersen responded that he would prefer that the case be approved at 30%, adding that the intersection issue would be resolved in the upcoming week. He also wanted to come back before the Board at 60%.
Mr. Ciaccio’s suggestion was to approve the 30% with the exclusion of the recommendation for the intersection. He also wanted to recommend that a traditional intersection be considered. Ms. Jacobson moved to APPROVE the 30% Design Submittal as submitted with the exception that the intersection be designed with a traditional form.

Ms. Jacobson amended her motion to make an exception that the cast iron light poles be considered for reuse, and a recommendation that the case be laid over for 60 days, until the December 20, 2012 meeting of the Board to allow time for the resolution of traffic control issues at the main intersection and to allow for the review of other streetscape details. Mr. Peters seconded the motion.

AYES: Peters, Jacobson, Holland, Ciaccio

MOTION CARRIED: 4-0
ADMINISTRATIVE ITEM:

Motion by Mr. Peters to approve the September 20, 2012 meeting minutes. Seconded by Mr. Holland.

AYES: Peters, Jacobson, Holland, Ciaccio

MOTION CARRIED: 4-0

It was the consensus of the Board to adjourn the meeting at 4:43 p.m.

Clinette Warren, Planning Department
Recording Secretary