

East Lawrence Neighborhood Association

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June 23, 2015

To: Jeremy Farmer, Mayor
City Commissioners
Diane Stoddard, City Manager
Porter Arneill, Director of Arts & Culture
PO Box 708,
Lawrence, KS 66044

Re: 9th Street Work Plan

To Whom it may concern,

The East Lawrence Neighborhood Association has had a chance to review the most recent East Ninth Work Plan. The work plan sets the ground rules and outline for the rest of the 9th Street project and is therefore fundamentally important to get the details right.

We appreciate the most recent updates that were made via comments by the CAC but ELNA can not support the plan at this time. In the interest of the best possible project the ELNA board advises the commission to have the plan undergo further changes before the accepting the plan and moving forward.

Statement of Values:

The statement of values were intended to be revised as was stated by Tristan of Sans Façon who presented them. The current set of values comes from the design team in response to its gatherings from interactions with stakeholders. The only change that was adopted in this version is the added words "and engagement" to the first value. ELNA proposes adding its statement of values to the list. The ELNA statement of values provides greater specificity to guide the decisions made within the neighborhood section of the project.

Artist Participation Model:

The artist participation model should include

1. The normal review process by ELNA that all other public art projects have undertaken. This matches up with the first value statement of engagement. It ensures a dialogue that can inform and improve both the work and the relationship of the neighbors to the process. This review process includes the Lawrence Cultural Arts Commission, Historic Resources Commission and the City Commission.
2. East Lawrence is a place of vernacular architecture – the words "we built it" describe the common thread of our homes, our stories, where we come from, and where we hope to be. The 9th street project should capture this essence of local craftsmanship, pride, and the beauty found in creation from necessity. It ought to be about the people who 'built it ourselves' and can only be about those people if they are hired to design and do the work.

Have 50% of commissioned work coming from Lawrence and 50% of those from East Lawrence and / or a paid partnership with an east Lawrence artist or craftperson.

Mitigations and Protections:

The work plan does not include mitigations and protections for the neighborhood. ELNA has started a conservation overlay and would like to see wording that recognizes and supports this process. The two ongoing activities could inform each other for the best possible outcome.

Budget:

To follow the value of transparency a clear and all-inclusive budget could be added to the work plan.

ELNA makes these requests in the hopes of having the best possible project and we believe the best project will reflect values and hopes and dreams of the community. We believe the current work plan falls far short of this. The proposed changes will make for a better work plan and a stronger more desirable project that engenders the stated values of respect of place, engagement, equity, and transparency.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Aaron Paden". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Aaron Paden, President
East Lawrence Neighborhood Association