

**CITY OF URBANA
COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE - FEBRUARY 13, 1995
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS - 400 S. VINE STREET, URBANA, IL**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Michael Pollock, Chairman; James Hayes; Esther Patt; Marya Ryan; Clifford Singer; John Taylor; Joseph Whelan

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Tod Satterthwaite, Mayor; Phyllis Clark, City Clerk; Bruce Walden, CAO; Jack Waaler, City Attorney; Eddie Adair, Police Chief; William Gray, Public Works Director; April Getchius, Community Development Director; Ron Eldridge, Comptroller; Joseph Smith, Assistant City Engineer; Bruce Stoffel, Community Development Division Manager; N. Patrick Pioletti, Buildings Supervisor

OTHERS PRESENT: Freida Wascher; Earl O'Shea; Mike Doyle; John Mick; Media

Chairman Pollock called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

Additions to the Agenda and Staff Report

Chairman Pollock stated that item numbers 9 ("Ryder Drainage Agreement") and 10 ("Presentation of Certificates of Completion for Contractor Seminar") were not ready for tonight's meeting and requested that Mr. Singer put them on the agenda for the next Committee on Environment & Public Safety meeting.

Chairman Pollock further stated that staff informed him that they were not prepared with the full legal review of the solid waste licensing ordinance tonight and requested that it be put on the agenda for the next Committee on Environment & Public Safety meeting.

Mr. Singer made a motion to replace item numbers 9 and 10 with an update by staff on the solid waste planning process. The motion failed due to lack of a second.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

Mr. Whelan made a motion to approve the minutes of January 9, 1995. The motion was seconded by Ms Ryan. Motion carried by voice vote.

Petitions and Communications

Freida Wascher, 803 W. Fairview, addressed the Committee on the issues of the modification for contract for sale at 1308 W. Eads and 1203 W. Dublin. Ms Wascher noted that these properties were put in escrow for Habitat For Humanity use. Wascher stated, on

behalf of Habitat For Humanity, that they are requesting that this be extended because of a project taking place involving 1203 West Dublin in which the name of Habitat is necessary in order to continue. She requested that this be sent to the next City Council meeting because the contract is required to be signed by March 4, 1995.

Ms Wascher also addressed the Committee on other issues:

1. With regard to Carle's master plan/traffic impact analysis, Ms Wascher stated that she was pleased with the comprehensive work that was done and thought it was something that should have taken place prior to the closure of Park Street.
2. Wascher stated that Sunset Drive is in terrible condition and noted that there were no sidewalks and children have to stand along there to catch the bus.
3. Coler Avenue improvement from Fairview north to Bradley narrows down right at the corner of Bradley and Coler and is in very poor condition.
4. Ms Wascher stated that the UCAN (United Citizens And Neighbors) is concerned about Church Street connection for Carle into McCullough. To take more of Crystal Lake Park is not in the best interest. Wascher said they believe the road can be designed in such a way that it would not have to take any more land out of Crystal Lake Park.
5. There is no left turn on Busey Avenue on the south side of University Avenue or the north side.
6. The entrance to Shelby's is right at the intersection of Park Street and Broadway Avenue and is a "bottleneck." Wascher said that the entrance should be shoved further north to alleviate the problem at that intersection.
7. The intersection of Fairview and Lincoln Avenues has not been completed. Wascher said that left hand turn signals are needed at this intersection because it is dangerous and people are lined up waiting to make the turn. Would like to have this done as soon as possible.
8. Regarding the four-way stop at Busey and Fairview Avenues, Ms Wascher said they feel the children are safer at this intersection and hopes the stop signs will remain.

Earl O'Shea, 606-A Glover, addressed the Committee on the topic

of better government.

Mike Doyle, 411 W. Park, spoke on behalf of himself and UCAN regarding Carle's master plan. Mr. Doyle stated that they have some concerns about the traffic report. They are concerned about losing the four-way stop at Busey and Fairview Avenues. The extension of Church and McCullough Streets into Crystal Lake Park is a concern. Doyle reiterated that the left turn signals at Lincoln and Fairview should be addressed as soon as possible. He went on to state that one of the significant recommendations an deviations from Carle's proposal is to close Orchard Street at University Avenue. This is significant in that it would mean all of the traffic would have to go through the neighborhood. Doyle said that this raises the question on how much traffic the neighborhood would have to endure. Of the 306 housing units that are currently in the neighborhood, 152 are targeted for being destroyed. Doyle said that this is about 50% of the housing units in the neighborhood under Carle's master site plan and is a significant impact.

Mr. Doyle also brought up the issue of the Carle's incinerator. He stated that the plastics being burned at Carle every year produce dioxane, which is the most toxic waste known to man. Doyle said he did not believe this is compatible with a residential neighborhood and people who represent this area should share those concerns.

On the subject of neighborhood stability, Ms Patt asked Mr. Doyle what types of things he felt the City should be addressing when looking at traffic and related issues. Mr. Doyle responded that residents would like to see the City take steps to protect some of the housing units and preserve the neighborhood nature of the area.

Mr. Singer stated that the only thing he could imagine that would demonstrate they (Carle) were really serious about not tearing down those houses is to sell off what they own now. Singer asked Mr. Doyle if he could think of any other mechanisms. Doyle agreed that the most straight forward way is for Carle to sell the houses, however, there are probably other mechanisms that would delay the destruction.

Mr. Singer inquired if UCAN was incorporated and in a position to make a contractual agreement on this type of mechanism. Doyle responded that they are incorporated and could enter into a contractual agreement.

Section 125 Employee Benefit Plan Approval

Bruce Walden, CAO, presented. Mr. Walden stated that the plan provides for pre-tax payment of certain employee costs (i.e., child care, medical cost not covered by medical plan, dental expenses). Walden stated that he is prepared to contract with a third party administrator. There is no out of pocket cost to the City, but rather a "break even" type of proposition and provides certain tax benefits that are approved by Congress to our employees which can be significant. Walden added that there is a small deviation from the City's usual resolutions in that it does provide the Chief Administrative Officer the authority to terminate the third party administrator as well as add or delete certain costs as may be determined eligible by the IRS.

Mr. Taylor said that the way he understood this to work is that the funds go into the plan and are not eligible for social security tax. Therefore, the City does not have to contribute the 7.8% that it would otherwise pay on that money. Mr. Taylor asked, to the extent that the employee doesn't use those funds during the year for medical or related expenses, does that money ever come back into their paycheck and become taxable wherein the City would have to make a contribution to social security or IMRF? Ron Eldridge, Comptroller, responded, "No, it can't by law." Mr. Eldridge explained that the way the IRS looks at the plan is that the employee's salary has actually been reduced and in return for that the employer pays for those benefits. Because the taxes are not paid on those monies, there is no way, by law, that it can be returned to the employee in the plan.

Mr. Taylor asked if this could be considered a "money saver" for the City. Mr. Eldridge stated this was not a good term to use in that the plan is not designed to save money. Eldridge said he would have to wait to see just what type of employee participation would be received before he could determine how much the city would save.

Mr. Hayes brought up the issue of tax shelter and inquired what benefit is it for the employee to get into the Section 125 Plan. Mr. Eldridge responded that with this plan the employee does not actually defer the taxes, but rather permanently saves the taxes.

After further debate, Mr. Taylor made a motion to send this item to Council for approval. Ms Patt seconded. Motion carried by voice vote.

Acquisition of 1209 West Dublin Street

Bruce Stoffel, Community Development Division Manager, presented.

Ms Patt asked Mr. Stoffel to explain the process and what was

involved in the relocation of the occupant.

Mr. Stoffel began by stating that, because it is Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funded, we would follow what is referred to as the "Federal Uniform Act." This is the act that would apply to any relocation of tenants caused by the acquisition of property with Federal funds. First we counsel with the tenant to find out what their existing housing circumstances are as far as size of unit, amenities, where they would like to relocate, and what sort of unit (i.e., multi-family, single-family, etc.). We then go to the market and find at least three properties that we feel would be comparable to the structure that they are in with the principal exception being that all the comparables would be standard properties; meaning they would be up to code. We would then look at the array of properties, approximately a dozen. All of those would have to be on the market available for rent. We would then select one unit we feel is most comparable as far as size of unit and amenities to the property that party is now in. We compare the rent in that most comparable unit to the rent being paid at the existing unit. The difference in rent is then used to determine the amount of relocation allowance the party would be eligible for. The Federal formula is that difference times forty-two months. The tenant is then allowed to select either that unit or they can go anywhere they want to in the United States. Our obligation ends at fifty miles radius from Urbana, but they could go anywhere in the country. We then will assist them with that move. We pay both the actual moving expense as well as the relocation displacement amount. We make sure the unit they are going into is up to standard. If not, we would ask the landlord to make improvements so that it meets code. Then we would typically follow-up in six and twelve months thereafter to make sure things are running smoothly. Under the Tenant Relocation Program and the Uniform Act there is an option the tenant can take to use the calculated relocation amount as a down payment to purchase a house. Otherwise, the program works the same. We would determine the relocation amount and then if they say they want to use it for a home purchase, we would go out and try to locate some homes and try to put them into one of the existing first time homebuyer programs.

Ms Patt asked if they would get the cost of moving if they left the fifty mile radius. Mr. Stoffel said they always get the cost of moving and the displacement amount. We just do not have to look for properties beyond that fifty miles. There have been parties who have moved out of state.

Ms Patt made a motion to send this item to Council for approval.
Ms Ryan seconded. After further debate the motion carried by

voice vote.

Acquisition of 1104 West Church Street

Mr. Stoffel presented.

Chairman Pollock inquired why the relocation cost for this property was so much greater than the Dublin Street property. Mr. Stoffel explained that with this property we are dealing with the homeowner versus the tenant. With a homeowner property the computation is made with the difference between the most comparable standard up to code property as far as it's acquisition value versus the acquisition of this specific property.

After further debate, Ms Ryan made a motion to send this item to Council for approval. Ms Patt seconded. Motion carried by voice vote.

Modification of Contract for Sale, 1308 West Eads Street, Habitat for Humanity (extension of construction deadline)

Mr. Stoffel presented.

Mr. Whelan made a motion to send this item to Council for approval. The motion was seconded by Ms Ryan. Motion carried by voice vote.

Modification of Contract for Sale, 1203 West Dublin Street, Habitat for Humanity (acceleration of the title transfer, extension of construction deadline)

Mr. Stoffel presented.

A motion was made by Ms Ryan to send this item to council for approval. Ms Patt seconded. Motion carried by voice vote.

Rescission and Release of Contract for Sale, 1104 North Harvey (Federal Home Loan Bank)

Mr. Stoffel presented.

Ms Ryan made a motion to send this item to Council for approval. Mr. Taylor seconded. Motion carried by voice vote.

At this time item numbers 9 (Ryder Drainage Agreement) and 10 (Presentation of Certificates of Completion for Contractor Seminar) were brought up again with Mr. Singer making a motion to send these items to Council. Mr. Whelan seconded the motion.

Following debate, the motion carried.

Discussion of Carle's Master Plan Traffic Impact Analysis Study

William Gray, Public Works Director, presented. Mr. Gray gave brief background information noting that approximately one year ago staff was given the Carle master plan and a presentation was made to Council. One of the decisions that was made was the importance to understand the transportation and traffic impacts of the plan so that staff could adequately address whatever needs in the neighborhood could be addressed. To that end, staff hired a consultant, solicited proposals, received proposals, and had a consultant selection panel. Metro was selected last August. There was a series of neighborhood meetings. Mr. Gray stated that this report will be the framework for projects that staff feels will help compliment and address the Carle expansion. With respect to the loop road, Mr. Gray stated that staff has been in contact with the Park District regarding this issue and it is staff's intent that the amount of land taken from Crystal Lake Park would be minimal at best, and staff would look at a land swap with the property that Carle owns and the parking lot at the northeast corner of Orchard and Park with property that would be necessary to build this road. The road would be such that it would be an equal swap of land to offset what would be lost in building that roadway system. Mr. Gray then introduced John Mick from Metro Transportation Group, Inc.

Mr. Mick gave a demonstration to the Committee depicting the area(s) for which the traffic impact analysis study was taken. Mr. Mick then reviewed the study section-by-section with the Committee beginning with page III-21. (A copy of this draft plan is available at the City Clerk's office for review.) Discussion ensued.

Discussion of Construction of City Building

Pat Pioletti, Buildings Supervisor, presented staff's report.

Mr. Whelan expressed some concern about the term "institutional look" that was referenced in Mr. Pioletti's memo of February 13, 1995 and indicated that the appearance of the new facade should give a good representation of the City of Urbana. Mr. Whelan offered a suggestion that the City Council consider the inclusion of some advisors to the Council to have some input. Whelan stated that he does not believe this would slow down the process. Mr. Whelan read a memo that he had prepared to Committee dated February 10, 1995. Mr. Whelan said the panel of advisors should be bipartisan and suggested that he and Mr. Taylor serve on the panel.

Mr. Taylor inquired about the timeframe for the facade and if it would have an adverse impact on the project if the Committee were to go along with Mr. Whelan's suggestion. Mr. Pioletti indicated that this would have some impact on the project.

Following much debate, Chairman Pollock suggested meeting with the architect and taking a look at the renderings in two weeks.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Committee, Chairman Pollock adjourned the meeting at 10:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah J. Roberts
Recording Secretary

*This meeting was broadcast on cable television.