

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC SAFETY

NOVEMBER 27, 1995

7:30 P.M.

Committee Members Present:

James Hayes, Carolyn Kearns, Esther Patt, Michael Pollock,
Marya Ryan (Chairperson), John Taylor and Joseph Whelan

Committee Members Absent:

None

Staff Members Present:

Chief Adair, Acting Division Officer Charles Buirley, Bruce Stoffel, Karen Rasmussen, Diane Schober, April Getchius, Bill Gray, Jack Waaler, Bruce Walden, Phyllis Clark, and Mayor Satterthwaite

Others Present:

Earl O'Shea, Frieda Wascher, Erwin Williams, Carol Shuff, Lee Petrie-Springer, Greg Springer, Carl Reisman, Susan Freiburg, Cele Gaines, Ella Coleman, Andre Moslert, Janice McCarthy, Sharon Monday-Dorsey, John Dorsey, Sheryl Bautch, Esti Young, Dorothy Neumann, Diane Nesbitt, Kathy Sims, Steve Bien, Elisabeth Barnett, Christopher Evans, Pat Roberts, Lyn Petrie, Anita Hund, Connie Eldridge, Jim Rose, Shirley Stillinger, Paul Oliphint, Sheila Ferguson, and Members of the Media

Meeting Location:

Urbana City Council Chambers

There being a quorum, Chairperson Ryan called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.

Additions to the Agenda and Staff Report

There were none.

Mayor Satterthwaite introduced Wiley Pack 8, the 4th grade scout troop from Wiley School. The scouts were present to observe a public meeting.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

Mr. Hayes moved to approve the minutes of the September 25, 1995, regular meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Patt and carried by a voice vote.

Public Input

Chairperson Ryan requested that all public input regarding the SRO be held until that topic is discussed.

Earl O'Shea, 606A South Glover, addressed the Committee in regard to a situation he has with his neighbor, Jeffrey Cross and in regard to better government.

Frieda Wascher, 803 West Fairview, addressed the Committee regarding the regulations for the helicopter pad at Carle Hospital, stating that the pad should be used for emergency use only.

Carle Agreements: Ord. No. 9596-47: An Amendment To The Comprehensive Plan Of The City Of Urbana, Illinois (Carle Neighborhood Plan); Ord. No. 9596-48 An Amendment To The Zoning Ordinance, Text and Map Of The City Of Urbana, Illinois Zoning Ordinance, Text And Map Of The City Of Urbana, Illinois (Medical Institutional Campus Zoning District Provisions); Ord. No. 9596-50: An Ordinance Approving And Authorizing The Execution Of An Agreement With Carle Foundation (Carle Development Agreement); and Ord. No. 9596-50: An Ordinance Approving And Authorizing The Execution Of An Agreement With The Urbana Park District (Relating To Carle Development Agreement)

Community Development Director April Getchius reviewed changes to the Carle Agreements which were brought forth by United Citizens and Neighbors (UCAN). These issues have been reviewed by Mayor Satterthwaite, UCAN, Carle and City staff over the past few weeks. (See attached.)

Mayor Satterthwaite stated that additional common ground had been reached at the neighborhoods meetings over the last few weeks.

Mr. Whelan asked if the discussions were taking place in the City Building and if Council/Committee Members would be notified when they would be held so they would be able to attend if they so desire?

Mayor Satterthwaite stated the meetings were sometimes held in the City Building and were often impromptu. If two or more Council Members attend the meeting then the meetings would have to be noticed 48 hours in advance as an open meeting.

Mr. Whelan stated that he would like to be advised so that he could attend if he wanted to.

Mayor Satterthwaite that it had been the desire of UCAN and Carle not to have open meetings when discussing items on which they are not ready to comment.

Mr. Whelan inquired if Mr. Hayes, Ms. Ryan and Mayor Satterthwaite attend the meetings and if it could be arranged for other Council Members to attend?

Mayor Satterthwaite responded that Mr. Hayes and Ms. Ryan attend the meetings because they are the representatives of the wards involved. He further stated that he would be willing to check with UCAN and Carle if they are willing to have open meetings; if they are not he would defer to their wishes.

Mr. Whelan inquired of City Attorney Jack Waaler what the legal ramifications of exclusion of a Council Member from a meeting if other Council Members are attending?

Mr. Waaler stated that if more than two Council Members are present at a meeting, it must be in compliance with the open meetings act. To violate that is a felony, it is a serious sanction.

Mr. Whelan stated that he would like to be informed of those meetings.

Mayor Satterthwaite stated that he would defer to Carle and UCAN, if they want to have a private meeting with a couple of elected representatives in attendance, he will abide by their wishes. If they wish to have an open public meeting he is willing to do that. The meetings in the past have been private meetings.

Chairperson Ryan stated that she and Mr. Hayes were invited to meet with UCAN because they represent the wards that are directly impacted by the Carle agreement.

Mr. Whelan requested to be invited to these meetings. Mayor Satterthwaite stated that Mr. Whelan would be invited if it was possible.

Chairperson Ryan stated that this item has been deferred to the next Council meeting and the floor is open for discussion of anything concerning the agreement.

Mr. Pollock stated that the proposed changes which have been received at this meeting need to be discussed.

Mayor Satterthwaite stated that the changes will be written in final form to be presented at the meeting next week for final

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action.

Discussion of Homestead Apartment SRO

Chairperson Ryan stated that the usual five minutes would be allowed for public input for each individual.

Ervin Williams, representing Restoration Urban Ministries, addressed the Committee regarding the effect of the SRO on the community. Mr. Williams discussed the work of the Restoration Urban Ministries and its program to help the homeless. Mr. Williams expressed support for the SRO stating that giving people the opportunity to feel good about themselves will have a positive effect on the community.

In response to Mr. Taylor's question regarding how many individuals per unit the ministry has, and how this program is conducted, Mr. Williams stated that there are three shelters, one with 11 people, another with 10, and in the final shelter there are 4 people. There are two more apartments that will be filled in the future. This is a three phase program. The first three months all the expenses are paid and the residents are encouraged to take certain types of programs and to work on certain needs in their lives. In the second phase, the residents begin to pay a portion of the responsibility. In the third phase, they usually have some security and are covering all of their own expenses. There is a residential director in each location. The 11 member unit has an assistant director. The amount of supervision needed depends upon the type of people residing in a unit. Many people need very little supervision.

Carol Shuff, 507 W. Vermont, addressed the Committee regarding the need for affordable housing in Champaign County and expressed her support of the SRO program. Ms. Shuff stated that the need has been well documented and urged that the Committee move ahead with the plan.

Lee Petrie-Springer, 206 Wood, addressed the Committee in opposition to a 35 unit SRO complex, stating that the SRO planning group needs to define its mission. Ms. Petrie-Springer reported on conversations she had with people who operate other SRO's and discussed problems these people have encountered.

Gregg Springer, 206 Wood, addressed the Committee regarding the SRO and the problems with management of the facility. Mr. Springer stated that he is not against an SRO or the homeless, but would like to have a smaller unit considered.

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Carl Reisman, 305 W. Locust, addressed the Committee stating that it seems that this project has been rushed into without considering HUD regulations for the project. HUD funding is site specific. Mr. Reisman question whether an environmental assessment has been completed. The Griggs neighborhood is located in a flood plain.

Susan Freiburg, 2320 East University, addressed the Committee in support of the SRO project. Ms. Freiburg stated that if everyone was willing to compromise, a quality program could be achieved.

Cele Gaines, 1208 Harrington, Champaign, addressed the Committee in support of the SRO to give people permanent housing. Ms. Gaines works at the Champaign Public Library and sees homeless people who would need very little supervision.

Ella Coleman, 405 S. State Street, Champaign, stated that she works with Transitional Housing and many of the services provided for people in transitional housing will be provided to the people living in the SRO.

Andre Moztert, representing Human Services Council, stated that for the past sixteen and one-half years he has operated and helped manage Federal employment and training programs through CETA and the Job Training Partnership Act. He has dealt with a good portion of the homeless. Mr. Moztert stated his support for the need for affordable housing and the redevelopment of 302 West Griggs.

Janice McCarthy, owner of 303 W. Locust, addressed the Committee in opposition to the SRO as it is now planned. Ms. McCarthy stated that she is opposed to a bad project, not the homeless.

Sharon Monday-Dorsey, 301 W. Locust, addressed the Committee in opposition to the SRO in its present plan. Ms. Monday-Dorsey stated that there needs to be housing for the homeless and they are not opposed to an SRO, just the density of the building that is planned. A smaller building is preferable to the people in the Griggs Street neighborhood. Ms. Monday-Dorsey also addressed the costs to move the building and the operating budget.

John Dorsey, 301 W. Locust, addressed the Committee in opposition to the density of the SRO as it is planned. Mr. Dorsey urged that the characteristics of the homeless be recognized, stating that many of the homeless people have some type of abuse problem.

Sheryl Bautch, Executive Director of Family Service of Champaign County, addressed the Committee in support of the SRO project.

Esti Young, Financial Manager from the Men's Emergency & Community Day Shelter, addressed the Committee in support of the SRO and gave statistics regarding the men who come into the shelter for assistance. Mr. Young stated that many of the men coming to the shelter would profit by the SRO.

In response to a question from Ms. Patt regarding the number and status of men staying at the shelter, Mr. Young stated that from 50 to 65 men stay at the shelter on any given night and more are eating. The numbers decline in very cold weather. Some of the men staying at the shelter are employed but staying at the shelter because of a child support obligation that makes them unable to afford rent. There should be no problem finding eligible people for the SRO apartments.

Dorothy Neumann, 301 E. Griggs, addressed the Committee in opposition to the SRO in its current size. Ms. Neumann lives directly across the street from the proposed location.

Kathy Sims, representing the Center for Women in Transition, addressed the Committee in support of an SRO program stating that the need is well documented. With proper support, a 35 unit SRO is viable.

Steve Bien stated that he rents the warehouse at 302 Griggs and there is very little activity there.

Elisabeth Barnett, representing A Woman's Fund, addressed the Committee in support of the SRO. Ms. Barnett stated that there are many people that can make it on their own with minimal supervision if they have the opportunity. This community's social services are very impressive and very supportive. A lot of thought and research have gone into this project.

Christopher Evans, 202A N. Coler, a former resident of the Men's Emergency Shelter, spoke in support of the general concept of the SRO and the need for such housing.

Connie Eldridge, 804 McHenry Street, Anita Hund, 308 W. Green street, and Diane Nesbitt did not speak at the meeting but asked that their positions in support of the SRO be entered into the record.

Lyn Petrie, 204 Wood, and Pat Roberts, 502 W. Main Street, requested that their positions in opposition to the SRO be entered into the record.

Chairperson Ryan read a letter from the Salvation Army of Champaign County which stated the need for additional housing for the homeless. It further stated that the Salvation Army supports efforts

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to develop more affordable housing for single, homeless men and women. The Salvation Army is prepared to support individuals in the SRO program with services they provide.

Jim Rose, Shirley Stillinger, Paul Oliphint, and Sheila Ferguson, representing the advisory committee for the planning group, addressed the Committee to present the basic fundamentals of this

project. The advisory committee supported the SRO with 35 units. The Housing Authority of Champaign County passed Resolution 95-67 on November 15, 1995, in support of the SRO development project.

Ms. Ferguson stated the commitments of the Mental Health Center to this project such as the preventive measures, and addressed the need for affordable housing for single individuals.

Mr. Pollock moved to allow the advisory committee more time to present its comments. The motion was seconded by Ms. Patt and carried by a voice vote.

Ms. Ferguson stated that the Mental Health Center is still in the organization. Over time the board will commit and contract, on an individual basis, to provide management services and case management services. The SRO planning group has approached the Mental Health Center to continue a management contract through a longer period of time. They are open to that opportunity.

Ms. Ferguson discussed the supervision at the Mental Health Center. They have an on-site supervisor and a locked facility.

In response to a question from Mr. Hayes regarding what kind of guarantee the City has that the Corporation will not come to the City repeatedly for funding, Shirley Stillinger stated the reason for 35 units was a fiscal reason. There needs to be a larger number of people for the services provided to make it economical. The record of the Mental Health Center speaks for itself. Ms. Stillinger feels the project can be done as planned. HUD does not see a problem.

Mr. Rose stated that the Homestead Corporation will have an asset it will be ownership of the building. The Mental Health Center is acting as primary developer of the project. There are other opportunities to acquire additional funding. These opportunities are not included now because it is not yet time to apply for those funds.

Mr. Pollock stated that it is clear that Council will be asked to make decisions before having all the answers for the life of the project. As many answers as possible on the earliest part of the project need to be provided.

In response to Mr. Pollock's inquiry regarding the impact of

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a smaller unit, Mr. Rose stated that the 35 unit is an upper limit and the number could be lowered. The development process is proceeding one step at a time.

Mayor Satterthwaite inquired if the facility on Carrol Avenue that the Mental Health Center is operating has been a model for the SRO? Ms. Ferguson said that it is basically the same.

Mr. Taylor inquired if there was a limitation on the number of units under Section VIII, SRO funds? Mr. Rose stated that the group would not want to go to a much lower number, but there is no limitation. A lower number of units has not been considered because of the facilities available to rehab. The prime consideration of the 35 unit facility is need.

Ms. Patt inquired if the cost of running the building would be the same whether there would be 35 units or 12 units? Ms. Ferguson stated that the operating costs would be the same; cutting the number of units would cut revenue in half, but not the operating expenses.

Ms. Patt inquired about who would be living in the building? Ms. Stillinger stated that it is affordable housing for people who can't pay rents.

Mr. Hayes moved to extend the meeting until 11:15 p.m. The motion was seconded by Ms. Patt. Mr. Taylor stated that much more time is needed on this issue and perhaps it should be moved to the next agenda.

Mr. Pollock suggested a substitute of 30 minutes, until 11:30 p.m. The amendment was seconded by Mr. Whelan.

Mr. Stoffel stated that staff needs a general sense of direction as to whether to proceed the drafting phase of a recipient agreement. It would be helpful to meet deadlines.

Ms. Kearns stated that if the decision of the Council is to start an agreement, one of the items she would like to see incorporated is the section referring to the Mental Health Center having expressed a willingness to contract to manage the Homestead Corporation Apartment for the first two operating years and that the City could mandate such an agreement.

The motion to substitute to extend the meeting to 11:30 p.m. carried by a voice vote.

The motion to extend the meeting carried by a voice vote.

Chairperson Ryan stated that she had a late communication

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that Patricia A. Toggel Wilson and Woodrow L. Wilson that they would like to be entered into the record in opposition to the SRO.

Mr. Pollock moved that Committee take a straw poll to indicate support for having staff start to work on the agreement. The motion was seconded by Ms. Patt. Following debate, the motion carried by a show of hands vote.

A Resolution For Improvement By Municipality Under The Illinois Highway Code (Windsor Road/Philo Road Engineering Design Services)

Mr. Whelan moved to send A Resolution For Improvement By Municipality Under The Illinois Highway Code (Windsor Road/Philo Road Engineering Design Services) to Council for approval. The motion was seconded by Mr. Taylor and carried by a voice vote.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee, Chairperson Ryan declared the meeting adjourned at 11:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine Taylor
Recording Secretary

*This meeting was taped.

**This meeting was broadcast on cable television.