



COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
January 24, 2005

Committee Members Present:

Christopher Alix, Danielle Chynoweth, James Hayes, Esther Patt, Dennis Roberts, Joseph Whelan, and Ruth Wyman –7.

Committee Members Absent:

None.

Staff Members Present:

Police Chief Eddie Adair, Phyllis Clark, Bill Gray, Bob Grewe, Steve Holz, Joe Smith, Libby Tyler, Mayor Satterthwaite, and Bruce Walden

Others Present:

Public Input Participants listed below and Members of the Media

Meeting Location:

Urbana City Council Chambers

There being a quorum, Chair Chynoweth called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

Additions to the Agenda and Staff Report

Ms. Wyman requested that item 10. Discussion – Elm & Vine Intersection Safety be moved up to follow Public Input on the agenda since there were a number of people present to address the topic. There were no objections.

Grants Management Manager Bob Grewe reported on Housing Partnership with the PACE Homeownership Coalition for People with Disabilities. Mr. Grewe introduced Carrie Dunn, President of the PACE Board of Directors, and Robin Arbiter, Director of Programs for PACE, who presented an overview of the program and presented Mayor Satterthwaite with a Certificate recognizing the City as a partner in PACE Homeownership Coalition for People with Disabilities.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

Ms. Wyman moved to approve the minutes of the January 10, 2005 meeting of the Committee of the Whole. The motion was seconded by Mr. Roberts and carried by a voice vote.

Public Input

Stephen Kaufman, 4 Burnett Circle, addressed the Committee with his views on the use of TIF funds.

Ricky Baldwin, 801 East California, addressed the Committee in support of the domestic partner registry.

Scott Dossett, 501 East High, addressed the Council with his concerns regarding the hazardous intersection at Elm and Vine Streets.

Teresa Lehrhardt, 803 South Walnut, and Tiger Swan, 508 West Elm, were present in support of the domestic partner registry but did not speak.

Discussion – Elm & Vine Intersection Safety

Mr. Roberts presented his concerns and the concerns of constituents regarding the danger posed by the wall at the Champaign County Courthouse at the intersection of Vine and Elm Streets.

Public Works Director Bill Gray presented answers to the concerns of Committee members that had been presented at the January 18, 2005.

Following debate, Samuel Furrer of St. Joseph, reported on the accident he had at that intersection and stated his concerns regarding the safety of that intersection.

Following debate, Mr. Roberts moved the Committee direct staff to contact the County Board and Administration to request that the sign be removed for the sake of public safety. The motion was seconded by Ms. Wyman. Following debate, Chair Chynoweth requested that the Traffic Commission specifically review Section 20-86 Determination of Area Intersections and consider changing what it says under Table 1 Speed Limit of Street X to average speed limit.

The motion carried by a voice vote.

Laurel Prussing, 2106 Grange, addressed the Committee with her concerns regarding vision triangles, stating that the problem is a much broader than Elm and Vine. There are other hazardous vision triangles in the City.

Ordinance No. 2005-01-012: An Ordinance Amending Article V of the Urbana Local Traffic Code Establishing Speed Regulations on Certain Streets (Goodwin Avenue) and **Ordinance No. 2005-01-013: An Ordinance Amending Schedule J of Section 23-172 of the Urbana Local Traffic Code Establishing Curb Loading Zones on Certain Streets (Oregon Street)**

Public Works Director Bill Gray presented staff report. **Ordinance No. 2005-01-012** is for the establishment of decreased speed limit on Goodwin Avenue from 30 MPH to 25 MPH. The Traffic Commission agrees that since Goodwin Avenue is a low-volume minor collector the reduced speed limit is in keeping with the intent to keep the University District safe to better accommodate pedestrian, bicycle, transit and vehicular traffic movements.

Ordinance No. 2005-01-013 is for the creation of a curb-loading zone at the intersection of Oregon Street. The commercial business at the southwest corner of the intersection has requested a 30-minute loading zone along the south side of Oregon Street to load and unload trucks during all days at all time.

The Traffic Commission has considered these items and recommends approval.

Ms. Patt moved to forward **Ordinance No. 2005-01-012: An Ordinance Amending Article V of the Urbana Local Traffic Code Establishing Speed Regulations on Certain Streets (Goodwin Avenue)** and **Ordinance No. 2005-01-013: An Ordinance Amending Schedule J of Section 23-172 of the Urbana Local Traffic Code Establishing Curb Loading Zones on Certain Streets (Oregon Street)** to Council with a recommendation for approval. The motion was seconded by Mr. Whelan and carried by a voice vote.

Resolution No. 2005-01-002R: A Resolution Approving and Authorizing the Execution of An Agreement With the State of Illinois for the Modernization of the Traffic Signals at the Intersection of I-74 and Cunningham Avenue (Section 25 X-N) and Traffic Signal Interconnects from Perkins Road to O'Brien Drive (Cunningham Avenue Between Perkins Road and O'Brien Drive)

Mr. Gray presented staff report. The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) is proposing to modernize the traffic signals at both the eastbound and westbound ramps at the I-74, Cunningham Avenue intersection. Traffic signal modernization includes the removal of the island at the entrances to the eastbound and westbound access ramps to I-74 and the signals located in them. Replacement signals will be placed at the sides of the ramps and the existing signal control box will be replaced with a new one.

Ms. Wyman moved to forward **Resolution No. 2005-01-002R: A Resolution Approving and Authorizing the Execution of An Agreement With the State of Illinois for the Modernization of the Traffic Signals at the Intersection of I-74 and Cunningham Avenue (Section 25 X-N) and Traffic Signal Interconnects from Perkins Road to O'Brien Drive (Cunningham Avenue Between Perkins Road and O'Brien Drive)** to Council with a recommendation for approval. The motion was seconded by Ms. Patt. Following debate, the motion carried by a voice vote.

Resolution No. 2005-01-003R: A Resolution Appropriating Funds for the Modernization of Signals at the Intersection of US 45 & I-74 and Signal Interconnects from Perkins Road and O'Brien Drive (Cunningham Avenue Between Perkins Road and O'Brien Drive)

This resolution corresponds with the previous resolution. Ms. Patt moved to forward **Resolution No. 2005-01-003R** to Council with a recommendation for approval. The motion was seconded by Ms. Wyman and carried by a voice vote.

Ordinance No. 2005-01-014: An Ordinance Authorizing the Mayor to Execute a Redevelopment Agreement with Blackrock Properties, Inc. (Five Points Northwest)

Community Development Director Libby Tyler, Chief Administrative Office Bruce Walden, and Joe Petry, representing Blackrock Properties, Inc., presented the report on this ordinance.

The purpose of this ordinance is to seek approval for the Mayor to enter into a pre-development agreement with Blackrock Properties, Inc. to construct a minimum of 50,000 square feet of new retail, service and office space, located on a 10-acre site at the northwest corner of the "Five Points" intersection.

The developer envisions a combination of hotel, restaurant, shopping center, and out lot retail development on the site. The undertaking would be in the area of an 8 to 10 million-dollar project.

If the agreement were approved, the City would provide Tax Increment Financing (TIF) assistance to Blackrock Properties, Inc. for a period of 10 years. In addition, the City would be obligated to commit \$150,000 towards improvement to the site.

Other City obligations include extending the duration of the TIF District 2 to 2022 and working with IDOT towards replacement of a traffic signal at the intersection of Cunningham Avenue and Crystal Lake Drive. The development would be completed in phases with the expected completion in 2009.

Mr. Petry presented the site plan for Gateway Shoppes at Five Points after which Mr. Walden reviewed the financial aspects of the project.

Following extensive debate, Mr. Whelan moved to forward **Ordinance No. 2005-01-014: An Ordinance Authorizing the Mayor to Execute a Redevelopment Agreement with Blackrock Properties, Inc. (Five Points Northwest)** to Council with a recommendation for approval. The motion was seconded by Ms. Patt and carried by a voice vote.

Discussion – Domestic Partner Registry for City of Urbana

Chair Chynoweth stated that due to the Illinois Defense of Marriage act, same sex couples do not have the legal right to civil marriage. Urbana is the home of same sex couples, as well as unmarried opposite couples living in committed relationships, sometimes with children and/or extended family.

Unmarried partners do not have the normal privileges that married opposite sex partners have.

Some cities and counties and a few states provide domestic partner registries. The benefits of a domestic partner registry include:

1. The City can know who qualifies as a domestic partner for the sake of code enforcement.
2. Employers who offer domestic partner benefits will have a source to determine domestic partner status for their employees.
3. When partners register at the city they can receive valuable information about what this status does and does not provide.
4. A domestic partner registry provides partners with recognition of their relationship.

Chair Chynoweth recognized Julie Watkins, 805 E. Green Street, who indicated her support for the Domestic Partner Registry but did not wish to speak.

Robert Michael Doyle, 105 East Green Street, Champaign, addressed the Committee in support of the Domestic Partner Registry.

Following debate, Chair Chynoweth moved to direct the City Clerk to prepare a plan for a Domestic Partner Registry for same sex and opposite sex cohabitating partners. And that the Clerk be directed to prepare the plan and to return the plan to Council for review and approval. There shall be no residency or citizenry requirement for registration. Registered domestic partners shall at minimum receive:

1. a certificate of domestic partnership
2. wallet sized versions of the above certificate
3. an informational packet about what this status does not convey, resources for how to protect an unmarried relationship, and places in the community that recognize domestic partnerships, to the best of the City's knowledge.

The domestic partnership shall be at least revenue neutral. The motion was seconded by Ms. Wyman.

Following debate, Chair Chynoweth stated that she would accept the relationship not being a romantic relationship and the change of citizenship as friendly amendments. The motion could stand as is with the clarification that it not be required to be in a romantic relationship.

Ms. Patt stated her preference that the motion be stated as "I move that we direct the City Clerk and City Staff to prepare a plan for Domestic Partnership Registry and to return the plan to Council for review and approval. There should be no citizenship requirement for registration. Registered domestic partners shall at minimum receive:

1. certificate of domestic partnership
2. wallet sized versions of the above certificate
3. an informational packet about what this status does not convey, resources for how to protect an unmarried relationship, and places in the community that recognize domestic partnerships, to the best of the City's knowledge.

The domestic partnership shall be at least revenue neutral.

Domestic partners shall be persons in a close and committed relationship of mutual financial and emotional support who intend to remain in a relationship."

Chair Chynoweth stated she would accept Ms. Patt's preference as a friendly amendment.

Following further debate, the motion carried 6-1 by roll call vote. Voting aye were Members of the Council: Alix, Chynoweth, Hayes, Patt, Roberts, and Wyman – 6; voting nay: Whelan – 1.

Discussion on Zoning Ordinance and Other Changes Necessary to Address Domestic Partnerships, Unrecognized Marriages, and Foster Child and Other Dependents in Dwelling Unit Definitions

Ms. Patt moved to direct City staff to initiate a plan case to make the following changes in the Urbana Zoning Ordinance:

1. All references defining a family or applying the definition of family should treat foster children in the same manner as children who are born or adopted into a family.
2. All reference to persons related by blood or marriage should be changed to say "blood or marriage or domestic partnerships registered with the City.

The motion was seconded by Ms. Wyman. Mr. Alix requested that the language used in the Zoning Ordinance that talks about children in custody and loco parentis and so forth, in lieu of the words foster children to cover temporary custody in situations.

Ms. Patt accepted that as a friendly amendment. The wording would be “all references defining a family or applying the definition of family should treat children or any children in a loco parentis relationship in the same manner as children who are born or adopted into a family.”

The motion carried 6-1 by roll call vote. Voting aye were Members of the Committee: Alix, Chynoweth, Hayes, Patt, Roberts, and Wyman – 6; voting nay: Whelan – 1.

Mr. Hayes moved to extend the meeting for 15 minutes at 11:00 p.m. The motion was seconded by Ms. Wyman and carried by a voice vote.

Ordinance No. 2004-01-015: An Ordinance Approving the Philo Road Business District Revitalization Action Plan

Economic Development Division Manager John Regetz presented staff report. This report would serve as the City’s guiding document for redevelopment efforts and policies in this commercial area. The document does not recommend zoning and land use changes.

Market Research has shown that there is potential for the Philo Road Business District to develop as a regional retail and service destination. Investment by the public and private sectors is necessary for this to occur.

The Philo Road Business District Revitalization Plan provides detailed study results and proposed redevelopment policies and programs to address economic issues and realize opportunities in the business district.

Following debate, Ms. Wyman moved to forward **Ordinance No. 2004-01-015: An Ordinance Approving the Philo Road Business District Revitalization Action Plan** to Council with a recommendation for approval. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hayes and carried by a voice vote.

Presentation on Downtown Tax Increment Finance District No. 2 Plan Amendment

Chair Chynoweth suggested that since the hour was late, this item be forwarded to the City Council on February 7, 2005 for presentation. There were no objections.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further debate, Chair Chynoweth declared the meeting adjourned at 11:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine Taylor
Recording Secretary

*This meeting was taped.

*This meeting was broadcast on cable television.

MINUTES APPROVED: February 14, 2005