

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING

URBANA PLAN COMMISSION

APPROVED

DATE: February 10, 2005
TIME: 7:30 P.M.
PLACE: Urbana City Building
400 South Vine Street
Urbana, IL 61801

MEMBERS PRESENT: John Cooper, Lew Hopkins, Randy Kangas, Michael Pollock, Bernadine Stake, Don White
MEMBERS EXCUSED: Laurie Goscha, Marilyn Upah-Bant
STAFF PRESENT: Rob Kowalski, Planning Manager, Teri Andel, Planning Secretary
OTHERS PRESENT: Bill Bagby, George & Nancy Boyd, Richard Fitzsimmons, Bjorg Holte, Gabriel Lewis, Joyce Phares, Karen Smith

1. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL AND DECLARATION OF QUORUM

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m., the roll call was taken, and a quorum was declared.

2. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

Plan Case No. 1918-SU-04 was tabled until the next meeting of the Plan Commission, which was scheduled to be held on Thursday, February 24, 2005

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. White moved to approve the minutes from the January 20, 2005 meeting of the Plan Commission as presented. Mr. Kangas seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

4. COMMUNICATIONS

- Letter from Helaine Silverman

5. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were none.

6. OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

7. NEW PUBLIC HEARINGS

Plan Case # 1871-A-03: Request to revise an Annexation Agreement and approved Planned Unit Development (PUD) for the Prairie Winds Subdivision located on the south side of Colorado Avenue approximately 394 feet east of Philo Road.

This case was heard in conjunction with Plan Case No. 1902-S-04: Revised Combination Preliminary and Final Plat of the Prairie Winds Subdivision under New Business on the Agenda. Please see New Business for the minutes regarding these two cases.

Plan Case # 1918-SU-04: Request by the Apcon Corporation for a Special Use Permit to allow a concrete and asphalt recycling plant located on the north side of Somer Drive, west of North Lincoln Avenue in the IN, Industrial Zoning District.

This case was tabled until the next scheduled meeting of the Plan Commission.

Plan Case #1916-A-04: Annexation Agreement for a 2.22-acre parcel located at 3303 East Windsor Road.

This case was tabled until the next scheduled meeting of the Plan Commission.

Plan Case #1916-M-04: Rezoning of a portion of 3303 East Windsor Road upon annexation from Champaign County AG-2, Agricultural to City R-3, Single and Two-Family Residential.

This case was tabled until the next scheduled meeting of the Plan Commission.

8. NEW BUSINESS

Plan Case No. 1902-S-04: Combination Preliminary and Final Plat of Prairie Winds Subdivision.

Mr. Kowalski presented this case along with Plan Case No. 1871-A-03. He began with a background of the original plan case and talked about the first amendment that was approved in September of 2004. He pointed out the proposed revisions that the petitioner was requesting be

made to the preliminary and final plats. Those revisions included subdividing the one lot, where the condominiums would be built, into 42 individual lots, one lot for each unit. Also, the private road that was originally approved would now become a public roadway. He summarized staff finds, read the options of the Plan Commission and presented staff's recommendation, which was as follows:

Based on the evidence presented in the discussion above, and without the benefit of considering additional evidence that maybe presented during this meeting, staff recommended that the Plan Commission forward Plan Case 1871-A-03 and Plan Case 1902-S-04 to the Urbana City Council with a recommendation for approval.

Ms. Stake inquired where the utilities would be located with a 10-foot setback. Mr. Kowalski answered by saying that many of the utilities would be located in the right-of-way or within the front 10 feet. The plat showed that the utilities, in this case, would be located in the front 10-feet of each lot.

Ms. Stake thought it was a great idea to have a Planned Unit Development (PUD). So, why did they not want to stay with it? Mr. Kowalski replied that the PUD regulations did not necessarily accommodate for subdivisions. The PUD regulations were intended for a development by one owner, such as a shopping center or strip mall, where the owner would lease out each of the spaces. However, there were many requirements for re-approvals for whenever lots would be subdivided or sold. In this case, the original proposal of it being one lot was okay to be considered a PUD. Now, that there would be individual lots created and sold to different people, it made it very difficult to use the PUD standards. It was not a preference of the petitioner whether the development was a PUD or a subdivision. The development layout would stay the same; however, it would be more advantageous for the petitioner to be able to sell the entire lot with the condominium unit on it rather than just the interior of the unit.

Ms. Stake questioned if the open space in the middle of the development would remain the same as planned. Mr. Kowalski said yes. The large detention pond would have a walking trail around it.

Ms. Stake inquired if this was the case that the Mass Transit District (MTD) originally had problems with how people would get to the bus stop. Mr. Kowalski said yes. However, the problem was not with the condominium area, but instead it was with the single-family subdivision side. The original proposal was for the single-family area to be a cul-de-sac. MTD had some concerns about not connecting developments very well. After the Plan Commission had discussed this at one of the previous meetings, the developer decided to stub the street to the south, so that it could someday connect with roads inside the Eagle Ridge Subdivision. MTD was satisfied with this.

Ms. Stake asked if all of the lots would front on a public street in the condominium area. Mr. Kowalski said yes. Ms. Stake questioned who would be required to take care of the street. Mr. Kowalski responded by saying that the City of Urbana would take care of and maintain the street. The City felt it would be better in the long run for the public if the City took care of the

street. He pointed out that by making it a public street, there would not be a gate to make it a gated community.

Mr. Hopkins questioned whether there would still be a fence since the private street would become a public street. Mr. Kowalski answered by saying that there would be a fence around the property, but there would not be a fence restricting any kind of access to the street or into the development.

Mr. Hopkins expressed his concern with a precedent being set with regards to a street being laid out in a way that if it were a public street, it would be arguably quite illogical, because there would be a second street parallel to the street immediately to the north of it. It would essentially be a fenced community without a closeable gate with private streets that go nowhere. The public would be asked to maintain the streets, but would not be welcomed in. The idea of the design of the proposed layout was to keep everyone else out.

In looking at the subdivision map, the right-of-way of the street would abut property lines to the south and to the west. It was not clear to him who would be responsible for the land between the street and the backyards of the adjoining residential homes. Normally, the City would not allow the right-of-way to abut the backyard of adjoining properties. There would not be a sidewalk or anything else, except presumably a fence. In essence, it would be a private street that would be maintained by the public. Mr. Kowalski replied by saying that would be true, and in most cases, the City tried to avoid double frontage lots, where a right-of-way backs up to a lot that had frontage on another street on the other side. In this case, the City made it clear in the annexation agreement that it would be the responsibility of the owners to maintain the right-of-way. Mr. Hopkins commented that it would be a collective responsibility of the homeowner's association, and not the individual responsibility. So there would be people whose backyards backed up against the public right-of-way, which would be the responsibility of a homeowner's association to maintain, and they would not be members of the homeowner's association. He felt this would set a bad precedent.

Ms. Stake asked if there would be a sidewalk. Mr. Kowalski pointed out that there would be a sidewalk in front of all of the units on the interior or the street. There would also be a sidewalk in front of the four duplexes/units on the south side of Prairie Winds Circle.

Ms. Stake commented that she remembered the problems with Anderson Street, where there was a road that went through people's back yards. Those people were not very happy. It sounds like the same thing that would be happening here.

Mr. Kangas moved that the Plan Commission forward both Plan Case No. 1871-A-03 and Plan Case No. 1902-S-04 to the City Council with recommendations for approval. Mr. White seconded the motion.

Mr. Hopkins stated that it was a bad precedent. The design was appropriate as a PUD, but would be inappropriate for reasonable subdivision layout logic of streets, how much the public should be paying for streets, and single-loaded streets instead of double-loaded streets. This was the kind of thing that the City should not be doing. The original logic for the design layout was to

create a gated community for a particular population. It would have been paid for by that particular community. It did not make sense as a public subdivision layout. He stated that he would vote against it. Ms. Stake agreed and said that she would vote against it as well.

Mr. Kowalski noted that the City would restrict any access from the single-family subdivision onto Prairie Winds Circle through the subdivision plat. There would be a fence there anyway.

Roll call was as follows:

Mr. Cooper	-	No	Mr. Hopkins	-	No
Mr. Kangas	-	Yes	Mr. Pollock	-	Yes
Ms. Stake	-	No	Mr. White	-	Yes

The motion failed by a vote of 3-3.

Mr. White felt it was a good plan. The developer would be paying for the construction of the roads, and the layout of the lots was nice for condominiums to face out onto the water. He did not see a reason for having roads to go all the way through all of the developments. There were many cul-de-sac streets and dead-end streets that service mostly people that live along those streets. He did not see this proposal as being all that much different.

Mr. Pollock commented that it seemed that the Plan Commission were fairly well set in their votes. He suggested that the Plan Commission send the case to the City Council with a 3-3 vote and no recommendation. The rest of the Plan Commission agreed. Mr. Kowalski stated that it would be forwarded to City Council and be heard on March 7, 2005.

9. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Bill Bagby, of 2314 North High Cross Road, passed out some handouts about smart growth and the Rural Urbana Roads and Land (R.U.R.A.L.) Preservation Group's views on the study being done on IL Route 130 and U.S. Route 150. He noted that he was concerned about the Comprehensive Plan Update 2005. It was a wonderful document and was well pleased with most of it.

Goals 1-18 of the Comprehensive Plan Update 2005 reflected the smart development strategies mentioned in the handout, which was an article written by the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency. The Comprehensive Plan addressed issues like reducing automobile dependence and protecting the air, water and wooded areas. It called for more parks, trails and trees.

There were two things, however, that he noticed stood out as in direct conflict with the rest of the goals and objectives. One of them was Goal 49.2, which was to create a ring of higher speed corridors around the urbanized area. City staff had told the RURAL Preservation Group that this goal would be deleted from the final plan. He hoped to see this come true.

The second item that concerned the group even more was the new roads and especially the extension of the I-74/University Avenue exit over to High Cross Road. This would dump an

unnecessary amount of traffic onto High Cross Road. Even though most of the traffic would head south on High Cross Road from the exit, it would encourage auto travel and more car ownership, not discourage it as the Comprehensive Plan Goals call for. It would make it dangerously easy for criminals to get in and out of the City and disappear. It would be way too easy for residents to leave in town business and head to the outskirts of town to shop. He pleaded to the Plan Commission to not sacrifice the beautiful, green belt surrounding the community for a scenario that would only erode the in-town tax base.

The map indicating a new road every half mile that was recently included in the Comprehensive Plan Update 2005 was completely outdated and not at all in line with the smart growth principles. It lacked any detail thought about the area. In fact, it was the same map that was included in the previous update of the Comprehensive Plan, and it offered none of the vision for the future that the rest of the Comprehensive Plan Update 2005 offered.

They need intense, compact development in town. This intense development would increase property values and the City's tax base. It would help attract small businesses. It would probably be the only way that the City of Urbana could keep the University of Illinois (U of I) from continuing to erode the City's tax base with eminent domain.

If you want a city to thrive, then you need to bring people to the city and give them what they need to stay there, so that business could survive. This would mean providing living spaces to rent and restaurants and stores to shop in. The City of Urbana had a great opportunity with the U of I to have mostly bicycle or bus travel. There were an incredibly large number of students living in the City of Urbana. The City could take advantage of this and turn the whole tax problem around.

Bjorg Holte, of 1001 North High Cross Road, was impressed with the Comprehensive Plan Update 2005. She realized the amount of work that had gone into updating the plan. She noted that she lived in northeast Urbana, and she was pleased to see that the newly proposed Comprehensive Plan had allocated in the Future Land Use map a large area north of I-74 both east and west of High Cross Road as rural residential.

She talked about the issue of the access road, which would connect the University Avenue/I-74 interchange to High Cross Road between Anthony Drive and Perkins Road. She read the letter submitted by the RURAL Preservation Group.

George Boyd, of 3705 East Airport Road, stated that he lived in northeast Urbana as well. He had the understanding that Champaign County had jurisdiction over them as far as zoning. He talked about the maps that were included in the handouts. The first map illustrated their contention of the mistake and belief that there would be a great savings of time and distance by spending millions of tax dollars into modifying the existing I-74 intersection with University Avenue by connecting it to High Cross Road. He talked about the differences between the existing road between US Route 150 and University Avenue and the proposed new route connecting IL Route 130 and I-74 /University Avenue exit.

The second map illustrated a ring road high-speed corridor with a suggested alternative. They suggested using existing roads, connects and balance proposals to the west and south of the communities. This would not impact the last visage of the Big Grove area and the valuable Saline Green Belt, which was habitat to countless wildlife species, many of which are in peril. They recommend that each of the Plan Commission members take a drive through these areas, then look 20 years into the future and protect their agriculture and environmental assets for future generations. Please leave a legacy of responsibility.

Ms. Stake stated that the City had been talking about using High Cross Road or Cottonwood Road as part of the ring road. Was he suggesting that the City should go even further where there was already a road in order to save the Trelease Woods and Prairie and the Saline Stream? Mr. Boyd replied that they object to all the future roads, which were laid out in the quadron east of High Cross Road and north of Anthony Drive. The City was proposing to put a road between High Cross Road and Cottonwood Road connecting with Olympian Drive, which according to CUUATS literature, the proposed roads would support freight traffic, which would mean semis delivering things in the middle of the night. They certainly do not want freight traffic or heavy traffic of any kind running through this area during the night.

Mr. Boyd stated that the 1800 East Proposal balanced perfectly with Rising Road on the west side of the City of Champaign. If you drive around on Rising Road, Curtis Road, Olympian Drive and 1800 East, you would find that they all look the same. There was a perfect opportunity to install a properly designed diamond intersection to connect with I-74, and it would provide an access from US Route 150.

In addition, the future Walmart development would not attract customers from the west quadrons, because there was going to be a new Super Walmart in Rantoul, a new Super Walmart in Champaign, and there was already a Super Walmart in Savoy. Customers would be coming from the east.

Richard Fitzsimmons, of 4004 North Willow Road, stated that he watched two members of the Plan Commission stare at the ceiling as people were talking. It was a shame that when people talked, the Plan Commission did not feel it was important. However, when the Plan Commission talked, then it was very important. It would be nice for the Plan Commission to consider where they live, because they would have a little different outlook. He went on to talk about how the Plan Commission members were appointed, and he felt that they were biased because of it.

He spoke about how everyone, who lived in his neighborhood, opposed the garbage transfer station being developed near them. No one listened to them, and now they have roads that have been torn up by the large garbage trucks and semis.

Now, the people have legitimate reasons to address the Plan Commission regarding the ring road, and he was afraid that they were not going to be heard once again. These people were concerned about a number of things including safety. If the City puts in a road around a U of I wooded area, then many people were going to be involved in accidents from hitting deer. There was a guarantee that this type of accident would occur more than once, because there were herds of

deer that live in the area. The City of Urbana needed to consider the consequences of the actions they took.

Mr. Fitzsimmons stated that they could sway an election if he needed to. For the betterment of the City of Urbana, he pleaded that the Plan Commission take into consideration the betterment of the people in the rural areas surrounding the city.

Karen Smith, of 3306 Nordland Drive, stated that her family had lived there since 1978. Over the years, she had watched the traffic increase on High Cross Road to the point where she did not feel safe riding her bicycle on the road anymore. The speed limit had been increased to 40 mph as well.

She noted that on her way to work in Rantoul every morning she could count on seeing herds of deer. Since she had traveled these roads for the last several years, she knows where the deer cross the roads. People who are not aware of these crossing areas would get hurt. Not only does the City need to think about people getting hurt driving in this area, but they need to think about the wildlife in the area as well.

This was a very unique area, and it did not exist anywhere else in the City of Urbana. She mentioned that she could go out into her backyard every evening and see herds of deer. If the City allows the ring road to go through this area, then it would be impossible to preserve the wildlife in the area. People, who live in the area, moved here for a reason. Why should this unique area be taken away from them?

Mr. Boyd re-approached the Plan Commission. He talked about his family history and how his grandfather had moved here in 1890. He had watched how the City of Urbana had changed from what was once a proud and prosperous city to what it had become now. The beginning of the end for the City began with the construction of Lincoln Square Mall. It destroyed a lot of housing. It reoriented the City from east-west to north-south. Obviously, it had not been as sustainable as what was there originally. He wanted the Plan Commission and City staff to consider the possibility of trying to encourage certain businesses to come into the downtown area.

The City of Urbana was a very important place. It is the actual home of the University of Illinois. He believed that the City should publicize this more. There was a difference between living in Champaign and living in Urbana. He would like to see the City be more aggressive at improving the downtown area and the Cunningham Avenue/Route 45 area. Let's do some serious planning and some serious plan approval.

Mr. Pollock agreed to many of the things that Mr. Boyd had suggested. He noted that as a result of the controversy with the Big Grove issue, there was a member on the Plan Commission from outside the City of Urbana to represent the rural interests.

10. STAFF REPORT

Mr. Kowalski gave a staff report on the following:

- **The Comprehensive Plan Update 2005** will be coming before the Plan Commission on March 10, 2005 for their review and consideration.
- **A Comprehensive Plan Open House** was held on Tuesday, February 8, 2005 at the Civic Center. The Comprehensive Plan in its final draft was on display. The open house went very well with approximately 200 people in attendance.
- **The Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee** will meet for the last time on Thursday, February 17, 2005 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers. City staff expected the Committee to have a consensus opinion on the draft to forward to the Plan Commission.
- **Input given during Audience Participation:** City staff was taking the objective out of the Comprehensive Plan that talked about promoting a series of high-speed corridors around the cities. He agreed with Mr. Bagby that this objective contradicted with a lot of the other goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan. He noted that there were also problems with people not being able to read the Mobility Map as well as they should be able to, so staff would work on improving the map to be more readable and understandable.
- **Future meeting:** Mr. Kowalski talked about the caseload for the both February 24th meeting and the March 10th meeting.

11. STUDY SESSION

There was none.

12. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

Chair Pollock adjourned the meeting at 8:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rob Kowalski, Secretary
Urbana Plan Commission