

## MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING

### URBANA PLAN COMMISSION

**APPROVED**

**DATE:** February 21, 2008  
**TIME:** 7:30 P.M.  
**PLACE:** Urbana City Building  
400 South Vine Street  
Urbana, IL 61801

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**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Tyler Fitch, Ben Grosser, Michael Pollock, Bernadine Stake, Marilyn Upah-Bant, James Ward

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:** Jane Burris, Lew Hopkins, Don White

**STAFF PRESENT:** Robert Myers, Planning Manager; Lisa Karcher, Planner II; Rebecca Bird, Community Development Associate; Teri Andel, Planning Secretary

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Megan Barcus, Brandon Bowersox, Jim Gonzalez, Daniel Hayes, Cynthia Hoyle, Susan Jones, Rick Langlois, Carol Lichtensteiger, Roger Meyer, Rita Morocoima-Black, Andrew Ogorzaly, Beverly and Tom Rauchfuss, Mike Rizzifrello, Michelle Thornley, Don Wauthier

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

The meeting was called to order at 7:31 p.m., the roll call was taken, and a quorum was declared present.

#### 2. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

Robert Myers, Planning Manager, asked if Items 7 and 8 could be moved to the beginning of the agenda. Chair Pollock suggested that the Plan Commission move just Item 8 to be the first case heard, following with Items 5 and 7. Mr. Myers commented that would be fine. The Plan Commission agreed.

#### 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Ward moved to approve the minutes from the February 7, 2008 meeting. Ms. Upah-Bant seconded the motion. Ms. Stake commented that the minutes were great as usual. The other Plan Commission members agreed. Chair Pollock called for a voice vote on the motion to approve the minutes as presented. The minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

#### 4. COMMUNICATIONS

- ◆ Invitation to the Cunningham Avenue Beautification Plan Charette
- ◆ “Inside Historic Urbana” Press Release
- ◆ “Sustainability: What You Can Do” Public Forum Information Handout
- ◆ Rain Garden Class Information Handout
- ◆ Urbana’s 175<sup>th</sup> Birthday Commemorative Calendar Flyer
- ◆ Urbana Bicycle Master Plan (paper copy of reference at the meeting)
- ◆ Figure 8.1: Recommended Bicycle Network (paper copy for reference at the meeting)

#### 5. NEW BUSINESS

**Plan Case No. 2061-S-08: Request by Khalid Hussain for a Preliminary Plat of Wisley Inn/Super 8 Motel First Subdivision located immediately southeast of the I-74/Lincoln Avenue interchange in the B-3, General Business Zoning District.**

Lisa Karcher, Planner II, presented this case to the Plan Commission. She began by giving a brief description of the proposed site. Referring to Exhibit A, which is an aerial of the site, she indicated the existing land use and zoning of the proposed site as well as that of its surrounding neighboring properties. She talked about how the proposed development would relate to the 2005 Comprehensive Plan. She discussed several improvements that need to be made to complete the subdivision, which include access, drainage, sanitary sewer, water and sidewalks on the proposed site. She read the options of the Plan Commission and presented staff’s recommendation, which was as follows:

*Staff recommends that the Plan Commission approve the Preliminary Plat of the Wisley Inn/Super 8 Motel First Subdivision as submitted.*

Mr. Ward inquired as to whether Kenyon Road would require some reconstruction with the construction of the proposed hotel. If so, who would bear the cost of the improvement? Ms. Karcher said that she spoke with Bill Gray, Public Works Director, about this specific issue. Her understanding is that the applicant will need to build a street connection from the cul-de-sac to Kenyon Road as part of the project. Since it will be a portion of a public road, the City would be responsible for its maintenance. According to Mr. Gray, at this time there is not any proposal to specifically upgrade Kenyon Road. The road will just be maintained as it is. The applicant does understand this.

Mr. Fitch understood that no waivers are being requested. As he read through the memo from Berns, Clancy & Associates, he noted that they referenced possibly needing a variance for the parking lot. They talk about that the Urbana Zoning Ordinance offers either a 17-foot or an 18.5-foot drive, but the petitioner may need an 18-foot wide parking lot aisle. Is this contradiction in the Zoning Ordinance that needs to be addressed prior to the petitioner coming forward? Ms. Karcher replied that there is an allowance depending on the aisle widths that a developer chooses and depending on the different sizes of parking spaces. The petitioner is saying up front that they are not going to be able to meet the City’s requirements. They may need to request a variance at the time when they submit their Site Plan.

Roger Meyer, Engineer with Berns, Clancy and Associates, explained that the Zoning Ordinance lists two aisle widths based upon the parking lot space width. The table lists an 8.5 and a 9-foot parking space. Associated with the 8.5-foot parking space is an 18.5-foot aisle width. Associated with the 9-foot parking space is the narrower aisle width. The petitioner has an 8-3/4" foot parking space, so they are halfway between the two aisles width options allowed in the table in the Zoning Ordinance. Therefore, they may need to request a waiver.

Mr. Grosser stated that when looking at the aerial, you can see a north-south path between the Urbana Garden and the Lincoln Commerce Center. Is this a city street? Ms. Karcher answered that this is a private drive. Mr. Meyer added that it is a parking access to the Lincoln Commerce Center. Mr. Grosser commented that if it would be extended just a few more feet, it could be a logical access for the proposed property. However, since they do not own it, then it does not matter.

Mr. Grosser inquired about the cul-de-sac. He wondered why there is no plan to remove the cul-de-sac bump out. Ms. Karcher replied that she had not spoken with Public Works about this. Mr. Grosser mentioned that the situation is similar to the cul-de-sac on Saline Court where the property owner is going to extend the road and remove the bump out part of the cul-de-sac at the request of the City. Chair Pollock commented that at the very least it would be a good idea to align it if the City is not going to request it be taken out. Ms. Karcher stated that the Plan Commission could make this a recommendation as part of their motion. This is just a Preliminary Plat request, and this issue could be addressed in the Final Plat of the subdivision.

Ms. Stake wondered if the petitioner is going to expect a variance for the parking issue. If so, shouldn't they be asking for the waiver now rather than later? Mr. Meyer responded that asking for waivers are part of the site development. Ms. Karcher explained that it would be a variance from the Zoning Ordinance. Therefore, it would be handled by the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Ms. Stake commented that if there is some kind of problem, then it should all be looked at the same time. Chair Pollock replied that City staff would follow the rules as written. Ms. Karcher stated that the petitioner submitted a Preliminary Plat request. Potentially, they can submit a Preliminary Plat without an end user. However, for the sake of the proposed subdivision, the petitioner is helping us in showing us what the end user would be.

With no further input from the audience, Chair Pollock opened the hearing for Plan Commission discussion and/or motions.

Mr. Grosser moved that the Plan Commission approve the Preliminary Plat for the Wisley Inn/Super 8 Motel First Subdivision as submitted with one recommendation to City staff to explore whether the cul-de-sac bump where Killarney Street will meet Kenyon Road as to whether it should be striped or modified for when the Final Plat comes before them. Mr. Ward seconded the motion. Roll call was as follows:

Mr. Fitch	-	Yes	Mr. Grosser	-	Yes
Mr. Pollock	-	Yes	Ms. Stake	-	Yes
Ms. Upah-Bant	-	Yes	Mr. Ward	-	Yes

The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

## 6. OLD PUBLIC HEARINGS

**Plan Case No. 2059-CP-08: A request by the Urbana Zoning Administrator to adopt the Urbana Bicycle Master Plan as an amendment to the 2005 Urbana Comprehensive Plan (as amended) including a Proposed Bicycle Network Map indicating future bicycle routes.**

Robert Myers, Planning Manager, introduced the case to the Plan Commission. He spoke about how the proposed Urbana Bicycle Master Plan relates to specific Goals and Objectives of the City's 2005 Comprehensive Plan. He then spoke about the Comprehensive Plan Implementation Strategies relating to the proposed Urbana Bicycle Master Plan. He showed Appendix C of the 2005 Comprehensive Plan, which is the Greenways and Trails Map. Although the Greenways and Trails map was adopted in 2005, the network proposed in the Urbana Bicycle Master Plan is much more extensive. The proposed plan proposes a city-wide network of bicycle facilities. Another striking difference from what the City's current bikeway policy is that a variety of facility types is proposed, including on-road bike lanes, sidepaths, and off-road paths. Once people looked at bicycling principally as recreation, but we now look at bicycling as a form of transportation, and in response the City is looking to provide a network of bicycle facilities throughout our community.

Mr. Myers felt that the proposed plan is innovative or groundbreaking for Urbana in:

1. Creating an integrated bicycle network throughout the City.
2. Proposing many on-road facilities.
3. Basing its proposed network on a comprehensive roadway inventory of existing conditions.
4. Using "before" and "after" photographs extensively for visualization.
5. Designing the network based primarily on community and public input, which was then tested by transportation planning and engineering standards.

He introduced Rita Black and Gabe Lewis from the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission and Jennifer Selby of the City of Urbana Public Works Department. Ms. Black and Mr. Lewis approached the Plan Commission to give their presentation on the case.

Ms. Black discussed the following about the proposed Urbana Bicycle Master Plan:

- ◆ Timeline
- ◆ Background
  - ◆ Council Common Goal: Get Urbana Bicycling
  - ◆ Implementation Strategy
  - ◆ Resources Used
    - ◆ Champaign County Greenways and Trails Plan, 2004
    - ◆ Urbanized Area Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), 2004
    - ◆ City of Urbana Comprehensive Plan, 2005
- ◆ Study Area
  - ◆ Recreation
  - ◆ Alternative Transportation
  - ◆ Transportation Necessity

- ◆ Map
- ◆ Goals
  - ◆ Goal 1: Increase bicycle mode share in Urbana for all trip purposes by 50% in the next five years.
  - ◆ Goal 2: Achieve a Bicycle Friendly Community award through the League of American Bicyclists.
  - ◆ Goal 3: Substantially expand the bicycle network
- ◆ Objectives
  - ◆ Create and maintain a bicycle network that is continuous, connected, and easily accessible for all users, and includes on-road and off-road facilities.
  - ◆ Provide a bicycle network that is safe and attractive for all users
  - ◆ Provide supporting facilities to make bicycle transportation more convenient
  - ◆ Educate residents about alternative modes of transportation and bicycle facilities
  - ◆ Secure funding and implement bicycle improvements
- ◆ Existing Conditions
  - ◆ Inventory of Existing Facilities
  - ◆ Research Existing Documents
  - ◆ Create Existing Conditions Database
  - ◆ Determine Bicycle Level of Service (BLOS)
- ◆ Roadway Selection Guidelines
- ◆ Bikeway Types
  - ◆ Bikeway
  - ◆ Target Bicyclists
  - ◆ Mixture of on-road bikeways and off-road trails
    - ◆ On-Road Bikeways
      - ◆ Bike Lane
      - ◆ Bike Route
      - ◆ Shared Bike/Parking Lane
      - ◆ Share the Road Signage
      - ◆ Shared Lane Marking (“Sharrow”)
    - ◆ Off-Road Bikeway
      - ◆ Shared-Use Path (Trail)
      - ◆ Sidepath
      - ◆ Rail-to-Trail
- ◆ Future Conditions
  - ◆ Proposed Bicycle Network
  - ◆ Determine Bicycle Level of Service (BLOS)

Mr. Lewis discussed the following about the proposed Urbana Bicycle Master Plan:

- ◆ Recommended Bicycle Network
  - ◆ Corridor Recommendations
    - ◆ Washington Street
    - ◆ Main Street
    - ◆ Broadway Avenue
    - ◆ Kinch Street

- ◆ Bicycle Parking Recommendations
  - ◆ Recommended Bicycle Racks
- ◆ Drainage Grates Recommendations
  - ◆ Bicycle Safe Grates
- ◆ Bike Activated Stoplights Recommendations
- ◆ Implementation Plan
  - ◆ Implementation Plan Matrix 0 – 5 Years
  - ◆ Bicycle Network Improvements 0 – 5 Years Map
  - ◆ Implementation Plan Matrix 6 – 10 Years
  - ◆ Bicycle Network Improvements 6 – 10 Years Map
  - ◆ Implementation Plan Matrix 10+ Years
  - ◆ Bicycle Network Improvements 10+ Years Map

Ms. Black continued by discussing the following:

- ◆ Education
  - ◆ Recommendations for Bicyclists
  - ◆ Recommendations for Motorists
- ◆ Encouragement
- ◆ Enforcement
- ◆ Implementation Funding
- ◆ Bicycle Coordinator
- ◆ Next Steps
- ◆ Bike Plan Website

Chair Pollock asked if the stretch of Broadway Avenue between Lincoln Square and the Urbana High School is wide enough to have both bike lanes and parking. Mr. Lewis replied that the street is wide enough to allow parking on one side. It just falls short of allowing parking on both sides plus bike lanes.

Chair Pollock inquired if there were instances in which there might be bike lanes next to each other going in opposite directions. Ms. Black said no.

Ms. Stake noticed that the proposed plan mentions bicycles and motor vehicles together sharing the roadways, but it did not mention pedestrians. Ms. Black stated that there are examples like Race Street where they plan to have pedestrians and bicyclists on the same path. Ms. Stake expressed her concern about this. Sometimes you have to have enough space so that the pedestrians are safe. Ms. Black responded that they have taken this into consideration. There are places where it is impossible to provide bicycle facilities on the street, but there is enough width on one side of the roadway to widen the sidewalk to make it wide enough for both pedestrians and bicyclists. Most of the time there is enough room for bicyclists to share the street with the motorists, but when there is not enough room, they had to come up with other alternatives with what we have to work with.

Ms. Upah-Bant wondered how the proposed plan would accommodate residents on North Lincoln Avenue to get to campus. Ms. Black explained that the Plan is proposing a sidepath from the student residences on Lincoln Avenue north of Bradley Avenue to go along Bradley

Avenue to Goodwin Avenue, where there is an existing bike facility to Springfield Avenue. They just received money to improve Goodwin Avenue between Springfield Avenue and Gregory Street to provide bike lanes along the whole segment. They chose Goodwin Avenue because it has lower traffic volumes. Also, since there is no truck traffic, it is a safer for bicyclists to use. Mr. Lewis added that on page 8-29 of the proposed Urbana Bicycle Master Plan, it is outlined in the text about the Lincoln Avenue Corridor.

Ms. Stake expressed concern about Carle Park. She explained that all of the other parks in the City area just plain green, but Carle Park is designated as part of the Hickman Tree Walk. It is misleading to have a bicycle facility shown on the proposed route map. There is a group of people who have been working together for about the last eight months on what to do with Carle Park. She thought they were to decide whether or not a bicycle facility is located there. Because it's premature to show bike paths in Carle Park, the group would like to have the bicycle facility shown in the proposed plan removed. Mr. Lewis replied that the map shows Carle Park as an existing bicycle facility. Ms. Black noted that they received this information from the Urbana Park District. Ms. Stake remarked that it is not an existing bicycle facility. It is a tree walk, not a bicycle path, and it should be deleted from the proposed plan.

Mr. Grosser expressed his appreciation for the great work that everyone has done to create the proposed Urbana Bicycle Master Plan. He acknowledged that there were a lot of people who worked on it. He believes that it will provide a lot of uses for many of the over-wide streets there are in the City of Urbana. It will also slow down traffic in places where people just exceed the speed limits.

Mr. Grosser inquired if there was a section in the proposed plan where there are specific recommendations for future development. Every time a new street is conceptualized is there a guideline for the developers or for Public Works as to how the street/bike paths should connect to the bike network. Ms. Black explained that the idea is for any new development, if they are going to provide bike paths, to connect to the proposed paths in the Plan. Mr. Myers added that the City can link development of bike paths through the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance by referencing the map that is in the proposed plan and by requiring developments that generate traffic demand to include bicycle facilities when they provide transportation facilities. Mr. Grosser commented that this would give the City leeway when Special Use Permit requests come before them. Mr. Myers pointed out that the Urbana Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance already has very specific standards about streets regarding width, thickness of the pavement, etc. The proposed Bicycle Master Plan could tie into that regulatory document.

Mr. Grosser questioned whether having marked bike lanes on the streets would make the Fire Department want to have the streets be even that much wider. In other words, the Fire Department always wants streets to be a certain width, so they can drive the fire trucks down them. Are they willing to drive on bike lanes if there is an emergency? Ms. Black said that she presumed that the Fire Department is willing to drive on bike lanes. Mr. Grosser explained that he is concerned about oversized streets. He feels some people like streets to be a lot wider than they need to be. Mr. Myers responded by saying there is not anything in the proposed plan that encourages narrowing of streets in such a way that they would not be safe for any type of vehicles that should be travelling on the street, including fire trucks.

Mr. Grosser stated that he likes to ride his motorcycle, but he sometimes has difficulty getting the signal activation to recognize his presence at a stoplight because of the motorcycle being lighter weight than a car or truck. He noticed there is a recommendation in the proposed plan for there to be signal activation sensors put in the road for bicyclists. The Plan also mentions motorcycles. Will the sensors also detect motorcycles? Will the sensors go all the way across the road or would they just be put in the bike lane? Ms. Black explained that the bike lanes end at the intersections because of the turning lanes. There will be signs placed at the intersections where bicyclists will need to place their bikes to be recognized by the sensors that are on the pavement.

Mr. Grosser asked how this would work for motorcyclists. Ms. Black said it would be the same way. It would be the same space that the bicyclists would use.

Mr. Grosser noticed that the proposed plan suggests reducing Race Street between Illinois Street and Main Street to two lanes from the existing four lanes. He wondered what the results were in the traffic study and how does it compare to any other places in the City that would be two lanes only without any turn lane. Mr. Lewis replied that the traffic count at Main Street is 5,385 vehicles in a 24 hour period. It increases to 6,555 at Green Street and to 7,725 at Illinois Street. It, then, decreases to 6,755 south of Illinois Street. Ms. Black commented that these are high for a City, but you have to keep in mind that this area is considered downtown Urbana. We do not want people speeding in the downtown areas.

Ms. Black explained that the traffic counts are over 24 hours, and they are not just concentrated at one time. Ten percent is concentrated during the peak hours. This will happen even with the four lane section. The four lane section is a small segment, and it is not significant. She believes that if we reduce the number of lanes and install bike lanes, it will encourage more people to switch over from driving their vehicles to riding their bicycles. This will also reduce the traffic counts.

Mr. Grosser asked if there are other streets with that many traffic counts in the City of Urbana that are two lanes without a turn lane. Ms. Black stated that we would keep the turn lanes. Mr. Grosser asked if there would be right turn lanes as well. Ms. Black said no, there would only be left turn lanes. Mr. Lewis added that they are planning to keep the right turn lanes at the intersection of Main Street and Vine Street.

Ms. Stake questioned if the bike path would be part of the sidewalk. Ms. Black said no. It would be a shared use path. It will need to be at least 8 feet wide. Ms. Stake asked if motorcycles would be allowed to use it. Ms. Black said no. Chair Pollock added that it is illegal for motorcycles to use shared use paths and sidewalks.

Ms. Upah-Bant wondered if any other City that has extensive bicycle network systems requires helmets to be worn. Is it part of the proposed education program? Chair Pollock stated that every state gets to make their own laws about this issue. There was an Illinois Supreme Court case in the 1970's that had to do with motorcycles, in which the helmet law was declared unconstitutional. He suspects based on this that we can't make adults wear bicycle helmets if they choose not to.



Mr. Fitch exclaimed that the proposed plan is excellent. He was looking at the cost to construct the bicycle network and make the necessary changes to existing roadways. It seems that the entire project will cost over \$15,000,000 and will take beyond ten years. The City's portion will probably require a tax increase. He asked if they have talked to the Urbana Park District since their tax referendum failed about the amount they would be expected to contribute to the proposed plan. Ms. Black stated that they have not spoken to the Urbana Park District since prior to the tax referendum being denied. However, the Park District has participated throughout the entire process.

Chair Pollock commented that if the City is going to make a financial commitment to this, then it will no doubt have to be built into the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), which is a ten-year horizon. Has there been any discussion at either staff or council level about the willingness to dedicate those funds out ten years to some of the proposals that we are looking at? Mr. Myers stated that for major improvements that the City would be doing would need to be in the Capital Improvements Plan. It is possible that there may be able to be an on-going conversion that would not be considered capital improvements such as stripping. It is also possible that of the \$5.4 million that is the City's projected portion over 10+ years, some of it might actually be able to be the responsibility of major developments that would border on arterial roadways.

In terms of the bigger connector streets and arterials, Chair Pollock inquired as to whether the City currently has a requirement for developers to install bike paths when they construct the road, such as with the extension of Florida Avenue. Mr. Myers stated that we should reference the proposed Bicycle Master Plan in the Urbana Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance to ensure implementation in new developments. Chair Pollock stated that he is not sure how this would address future arterial streets that are not part of the map. How would the City keep the bicycle network if the City continues to expand without requiring the developers to build them in the new developments? Someone mentioned the requirement to connect. The flip side of this is the requirement to build.

Rick Langlois, of 1412 Mayfair Road in Champaign, stated that he is the Chairman of the Champaign County Bike Steering Committee. They have been involved in creating the proposed Urbana Bicycle Master Plan. The idea for the proposed plan came out of the big.small.all Plan that the Champaign County did. It was recognized that the citizens of Champaign County, the City of Champaign, and the City of Urbana want bicycle facilities. On behalf of the Champaign County Bike Steering Committee, they do like the proposed plan quite a lot.

Champaign County Regional Planning Commission and everyone involved has taken 30 years worth of experience from other cities around the country and have done their research and created a great plan. They looked at a variety of services and how to implement the plan. As a result, the proposed plan will make a huge difference in making Urbana a city that is for people.

He mentioned that the City of Champaign recently passed a similar plan. The City of Champaign and the City of Urbana along with the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission have been working together to make sure that the two plans connect.

He feels that the proposed plan will make money for the City. It will make the City really attractive and livable. It will attract people who want to be here and bicycling.

They are currently working to launch an education campaign to make sure that people understand the rules of the road. He pointed out that the Illinois Vehicle Code says that bicycles are vehicles, and bicyclists can go anywhere except on restricted access highways. The proposed plan makes it easier for the B Level riders to want to park the car and ride their bicycles.

Cynthia Hoyle, of 2207 South Cottage Grove, mentioned that when she and her husband were looking to relocate in 2000, they wanted to reduce their auto dependency. The two places they came down to were the City of Urbana and Toronto. Since moving here, they have been able to dramatically decrease their auto use. The City of Urbana has been a community that provides for mobility choices already, and she is very excited about the proposed plan and about the opportunity for our community to be certified as a bicycle friendly community.

She thinks an answer to part of the question and concern about revenues is that there will be more revenues forthcoming from the federal government for facilities for walking and biking. One reason is because the construction of roads is becoming more and more expensive. The highway system is essentially complete and our fuel taxes are not going up, so the federal government is looking for ways to reduce expenditures on roadway building. There are not too many things that are less expensive than bicycling. The other reason is the emphasis on health. The Center for Disease Control has said that obesity is an epidemic in this country. They have really focused all of their research on our built environment. They feel that our built environment is a major contributor to the problem of obesity, so they working hard on getting communities to be built to allow for and encourage active transportation. We also have the issue of global warming, and the fact that the City of Urbana wants to be a sustainable City. All three of these things converge on providing people with options for active transportation.

She recommended that the City of Urbana adopt a Complete Streets Policy. It would help to address the question of new development that our new collector and arterial streets will be complete streets. It would also address the issue of not only does the City of Urbana require sidewalks for pedestrians, but for new developments we could require infrastructure for bicycling.

She mentioned that she is she is a Transportation Planning Consultant with the Mass Transit District (MTD). They did a survey when creating the miPlan, and they received over 7,000 responses. One of the major reasons people gave for not bicycling is because they do not feel safe. She feels this addresses the concerns of the less experienced cyclists. If there is not a lane or a sign, then they do not feel comfortable or that they have been invited and they do not feel that the roadway is shared with them. They indicated that having facilities for bicycling would help them feel more comfortable with using that mode of transportation.

Susan Jones, the representative for this district to the League of Illinois Bicyclists. When she first started in this position, Champaign and Urbana were most famous for Gary Zeiko's pictures of the hazards of the campus bikepath. This has been an exemplary series of what not to let happen with your bikepaths. Now, Champaign and Urbana are famous for having the most people coming and the most educated and actively involved and sane people working to make real solutions happen.

She suggested that instead of referring to bicycling as recreational or as alternative mode of transportation, we could make it more mainstream to be okay to use a bicycle. Many people

look at her as a dynamite intrepid commuter. In fact, she would not be doing this anywhere, but in a place like this where the motorists are reasonable and the roads are already ready for bike paths.

Many people have worked together in creating this plan including bicyclists and people who have done the research. Therefore, she thinks it is an excellent integration of the specific things that bicyclists need and the knowledge and the experience of other places in the state and in the country.

She remarked that bicyclists will fight tooth and nail to keep multi use paths from looking too much like bike paths. Bicyclists would rather ride on the streets. They do not like to have to dodge kids and their strollers on the multi use paths. It hurts bicyclists when they fall down too.

Tom Rauchfuss, of Iowa Street near Carle Park, stated that the part that interests him about the planning processes is its integration with other planning processes that are currently being planned or discussed, such as Ms. Stake mentioned that her group is talking about Carle Park. The proposed plan discusses the eventual integration with the Rails-to-Trails process. He feels these interfaces are particularly important.

The one that interests him is that the Urbana School District is set on changing the high school into a commuter school, whereby they remove a lot of housing and essentially encourage the students to drive cars more. For the reasons Ms. Hoyle mentioned, he thinks it is the wrong move to encourage more driving to the center of town. He wondered if the proposed plan could not somehow inform the Urbana High School's plan for manifest destiny for their cars, because the biggest enemy of bicyclists is avoiding automobiles. It is a lethal encounter. So, when we have more traffic from students driving cars to school, it runs counter to what the bicycle path is all about.

With no further comments or questions from the public, Chair Pollock closed the public input portion of the hearing. He, then, opened the hearing up for Plan Commission discussion. He suggested that they talk more about the procedure.

He mentioned that the case is slated to go to the City Council in March. He asked if the other Plan Commission members were comfortable with voting on and making a recommendation to the City Council during this meeting.

Ms. Stake wondered if Mr. Myers would speak about the issue with Carle Park to get it changed. Mr. Myers explained that the Plan Commission's comments are part of the public process as well as the comments expressed by the public. City staff will take all the comments into consideration and make any necessary changes.

He pointed out that should the Plan Commission recommend approval of the proposed plan during this meeting, the public process is still taking place, so there may be minor adjustments made to the proposed plan afterward. Chair Pollock inquired as to what public process is still on-going. Mr. Myers explained that there is a 30-day public comment period for the proposed plan. This ends on March 17, 2008, and the City Council could conceivably take action on the proposed plan for approval. The Committee of the Whole will likely review this case on March 10, 2008.

Chair Pollock commented that if there is continuing public comment on the proposed plan, and the Plan Commission is responsible for making a recommendation to the City Council, should they not be aware of any future comments made prior to making a recommendation. Mr. Myers replied that the Plan Commission could continue the case to the March 6<sup>th</sup> Plan Commission meeting, which is a lot closer to the end of the public comment period. The other factor is that if there would be any major change once the Plan Commission makes a recommendation to the City Council, then the case would need to be brought back before the Plan Commission to review that change. Chair Pollock inquired as to who would decide what is a major change. Mr. Myers answered by saying that Libby Tyler, Community Development Director/Zoning Administrator, would make the decision in consultation with other City staff. He feels that minor tweaks could be incorporated without bringing the case back to the Plan Commission.

Chair Pollock questioned what the nature of the 30-day open comment period is. Are those comments coming into the staff at the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission? Are those comments coming into the City's staff in the Community Development Services Department? Ms. Black responded that for the ad that was placed in the News-Gazette regarding the public comment period, the comments would come back to the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission. So far, they have not received any comments. The comment period began on February 15, 2008. Usually when a document, such as the proposed plan, has gone through a public involvement process, we do not get comments at the end of the process. During the public comment period for the Illinois Route 130 Plan, they did not receive any comments, because it was heavily produced by the public. Chair Pollock agreed that there was clearly an incredible amount of public involvement in producing this plan, so it might very well be that there are no public comments submitted during the 30-day open comment period. However, he suggested leaving the case open until the March 6<sup>th</sup> meeting. At that meeting, we will invite Ms. Black and Mr. Lewis back to speak again. If there is no further public comment, then perhaps, the Plan Commission might feel more comfortable making a recommendation to the City Council. If there are some comments, then the Plan Commission could discuss this issue again and decide at that point what the proper procedure would be.

Mr. Grosser likes the suggestion. It puts the Plan Commission in a difficult position of approving a plan that may change, and the delineation between what the Plan Commission recommends approval for and what might change probably would not be well communicated to the City Council. So, the City Council could not be clear on what the Plan Commission is necessarily recommending if there are any changes. This would give staff time to research how the traffic counts compare to other places in the City. Mr. Lewis stated that he can answer that now. On Main Street at Lierman Avenue, the traffic count is 7980. At Cottage Grove and Main Street, the traffic count is 10,320. Both places only have two lanes and the traffic count is higher than Race Street.

Ms. Stake agreed with Mr. Pollock's suggestion as well.

Mr. Ward commented that he agrees also. He is even uncomfortable with considering the case at the March 6<sup>th</sup> meeting, because it would still put them in the position of recommending approval on a plan that could still change. They have heard a lot of positive testimony during this meeting, and he would hate to see some of the good features could be removed for some reason. He does not suspect that this would happen, and he trusts the staff, but it still could happen. So,

the Plan Commission is still placing themselves in a position of telling the City Council that they approve something that they do not even know what it is. He supports the plan very strongly. He feels it is a wonderful idea. He has heard some great suggestions of how we could even extend this further, but he is hesitant to recommend approval until it is final.

Ms. Upah-Bant expressed her curiosity as to why the Plan Commission is reviewing the case before the final public comments were in. Is there some urgency to have the City Council approve this by March 21<sup>st</sup>? Mr. Myers replied that there is not an urgency. They just wanted to follow the timeline that was set up.

Mr. Myers pointed out that there were changes made to Pages 8-11 and 8-48 in the proposed plan. The hard copies of the proposed plan reflect those changes, but the changes are not on the CD that was mailed out in the packet of information. There are some slight technical changes that the Steering Committee is recommending based on their most recent meeting. One change has to do with bicycle parking.

Chair Pollock stated that this is a really good illustration of why he does not want to rush through this before they are prepared to make a recommendation to the City Council. Therefore, he recommended continuing the case to the March 6<sup>th</sup> Plan Commission meeting. At that point, the Plan Commission can decide what to do in terms of time tables. The Plan Commission agreed.

## **7. NEW PUBLIC HEARINGS**

### **Plan Case No. 2053-T-07: Request by the Zoning Administrator to amend Section XII-4.A.1 and XII-5.A.1 of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance regarding nominations for local historic districts and landmarks.**

Rebecca Bird, Community Development Associate, presented this case to the Plan Commission. She stated the purpose of the proposed text amendment, which is to allow Historic Preservation Commissioners to nominate properties for local historic district and landmark designation. She spoke about the proposed changes to the Urbana Zoning Ordinance and about the Historic Preservation Commission. She read the options of the Plan Commission and presented staff's recommendation, which was as follows:

*Based on the evidence presented in the written staff report, and without the benefit of considering additional evidence that may be presented during the public hearing, staff recommends that the Urbana Plan Commission recommend approval of the proposed text amendment to the Zoning Ordinance, as presented.*

Ms. Stake moved that the Plan Commission forward this case to the City Council with a recommendation for approval. Mr. Fitch seconded the motion, following which discussion on the motion took place.

Mr. Grosser felt that the proposed text amendment makes a lot of sense, and he is glad to see it happening. He also agrees with the stipulation that nominators should have to abstain from voting on these types of cases. For example, if one of the Historic Preservation Commissioners had nominated the recent Elm Street historic landmarks, it would have made even more turmoil in the city and amongst the stakeholders involved in the argument. It would have clearly been a

conflict of interest. Therefore, he wanted to state that he supports the motion, but specifically with the “conflict of interest” language that is being proposed.

Mr. Ward stated that he also supports the motion. He noted that often in public policy what counts is not a legal conflict of interest, but the appearance of a conflict of interest. He would hope the Historic Preservation Commission would be sensitive, if the proposed text amendment is adopted by the City Council, that even having a member of the Commission make the presentation to nominate a historic landmark or historic district could present a conflict of interest.

Ms. Upah-Bant recalls talking about this specific issue when the City first approved the Historic Preservation Ordinance. She appreciates Ms. Bird pointing out that the Historic Preservation Commissioners are some of Urbana’s most capable residents in terms of historic preservation, but they are also people who are really interested in historic preservation. She believes this prejudices the case completely. She did not feel that there could be a possibility where a Historic Preservation Commissioner could present a nomination without it being prejudicial. As a result, she cannot support the proposed text amendment. She did not support it originally, and nothing has changed.

Chair Pollock commented that a balance needs to be struck. If you refuse to allow any Historic Preservation Commissioners to have any input into the types of properties that should be considered historic landmarks and historic districts, then we not only reduce the number of cases that come before the Historic Preservation Commission, we also may also reduce the number of members who are willing to serve on the Commission.

He mentioned that he has a very broad definition of “conflict of interest.” He believes that an appearance of a conflict of interest is a conflict of interest. He would never support the proposed text amendment without the language regarding the conflict of interest being included. It is essential to make clear that it is not appropriate for a Commissioner to nominate a property and still expect to be able to vote on the nomination.

Roll call was as follows:

Mr. Fitch	-	Yes	Mr. Grosser	-	Yes
Mr. Pollock	-	Yes	Ms. Stake	-	Yes
Ms. Upah-Bant	-	No	Mr. Ward	-	Yes

The motion passed by a vote of 5-1. Ms. Bird noted that this case would be forwarded to the Urbana City Council on March 3, 2008.

**8. OLD BUSINESS**

There was none.

**9. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

There was none.

**10. STAFF REPORT**

Mr. Myers reported on the following topics:

- ◆ Robert Myers introduced Rebecca Bird as the Planning Division's Community Development Associate. She is a recent graduate from the University of Illinois with a Masters degree in Planning. She previously worked as an intern in the Planning Division before her promotion.
- ◆ T-Mobile Special Use Permit request was approved by the City Council.
- ◆ CCZBA-596-AT-07 was presented to the City Council, and they defeated a resolution of protest for the text amendment regarding lighting near residential uses and districts and regarding adding "Township Highway Maintenance Garage" to the table of uses.
- ◆ Champaign County's Hazard Mitigation Plan Amendment – The City Council approved the City's participation in amending Champaign County's Hazard Mitigation Plan.
- ◆ Chatham Annexation Agreement Resolution was approved by the City Council. This is in support of state laws that will limit the impact of the Chatham Court case on Champaign County municipalities.

**11. STUDY SESSION**

There was none.

**12. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Robert Myers, AICP  
Secretary, Urbana Plan Commission