

## MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING

### URBANA PLAN COMMISSION

**APPROVED**

**DATE:** June 5, 2008

**TIME:** 7:30 P.M.

**PLACE:** Urbana City Building  
400 South Vine Street  
Urbana, IL 61801

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

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

**STAFF PRESENT:** Elizabeth Tyler, Director of Community Development Services Department; Robert Myers, Planning Manager; Teri Andel, Planning Secretary

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Matthew Ando, Sarah Barbour, Todd and Mandy Bennett, Elizabeth Cronan, Evelyn Denzia, Keith Erickson, Paul and Margaret Friesen, Frank and Barbara Gladney, Kate Hunter, Ruth Kaplan, Tom Kilton, Hyunjoo Kim, Sigmund Ku, Sarah McEvoy, Dennis and Kay Miller, Stephen Moll, Ken Mooney, Ty and Deb Newell, Sarah Projansky, Kent Ono, Huseyin Sehitoglu, Susan Taylor, Lisa Treul, Alex and Prema Zachariah, Joan Zagorski

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

The meeting was called to order at 7:33 p.m., the roll call was taken, and a quorum was declared present.

#### 2. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

There were none.

#### 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There were no minutes presented. The minutes from the May 22, 2008 Plan Commission meeting will be on the next meeting agenda.

#### 4. COMMUNICATIONS

##### **Written Communications regarding Plan Case No. 2071-SU-08:**

- # Email from Jim Dalling, of 706 West Michigan Avenue
- # Letter from Frank and Barbara Gladney, of 709 West Michigan Avenue (*Handed out at the meeting*)
- # Letter from Kate Hunter, of 510 West Oregon Street (*Handed out at the meeting*)
- # Letter and Presentation from Sarah McEvoy and Huseyin Sehitoglu, of 805 West Michigan Avenue (*Copy of presentation handed out at the meeting*)
- # Letter from Peggy Miller, of 806 West Pennsylvania Avenue
- # Addendum to the Special Use Permit Request submitted by Ken Mooney, Petitioner (*Handed out at the meeting*)
- # Letter from Phillip and Sonia Newmark, of 706 West Iowa Street
- # Email from Esther Patt, of 706 West Coler Avenue
- # Email from Michael Plewa, of 708 West Iowa Street
- # Presentation from Sarah Projansky and Kent Ono, of 803 West Michigan Avenue (*Handed out at the meeting*)
- # Letters from David and Phyllis Schwenk, of 812 West Pennsylvania Avenue
- # Email from Shirley Stillinger, of 1003 South Busey Avenue
- # Letter from Lisa Treul, of 714 West Iowa Street (*Handed out at the meeting*)
- # Letter from Sandra Smith Volk, of 803 West Delaware Avenue
- # Email from Al Weiss, of 705 South Cedar Street
- # Photos taken by Robert Myers, City of Urbana Planning Manager

#### 5. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were none.

#### 6. OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

#### 7. NEW PUBLIC HEARINGS

##### **Plan Case No. 2072-T-08: Request by the Zoning Administrator to amend the Zoning Ordinance to add a new Section XIII-5 regarding Condominium Conversions.**

Elizabeth Tyler, Director of Community Development Services Department, presented this case to the Plan Commission. She introduced Curt Borman, Assistant City Attorney, to the Plan Commission. She explained that the proposed text amendment will fill a gap in our local legislation. It will govern condominiums, specifically where we have condominium conversions of existing buildings or apartments. She stated that the request for this amendment came from the Mayor's Neighborhood Safety Task Force and other staff groups that are looking at controlling problem properties within the City of Urbana.

The Ordinance would address a trend where City staff has seen an increasing number of conversions of existing apartment units to condominium units. Currently the City does not receive any notice typically of these conversions; therefore City staff has no way of verifying that proper provisions are made for public services and for building safety. She summarized the proposed text amendment by briefly talking about the following: A) Definitions; B) Applicability; C) Notice of Intent; D) Condominium Plat; E) Code Inspection; F) Maintenance of Common Elements; G) Easements and Dedications; and H) Penalty.

Ms. Tyler reviewed the staff findings, read the options of the Plan Commission, and presented the staff 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 Plan Commission recommend approval of the proposed Zoning Ordinance text amendment.*

She noted that City staff notified affected parties of the proposed change with this public hearing notice. The City's Housing Inspector did a presentation to the Central Illinois Apartment Association. City staff also sent copies of the ordinance to the Chamber of Commerce, the Realtors Association, the Township Assessor, local developers and engineers who participate in these kinds of activities as well as our local utility companies, and the County Recorder of Deeds.

Mr. Borman added that the bulk of the required notification is simply written documentation in terms of what aspects of projects that a project will take.

Mr. Grosser realized that a "Notice of Intent" must be submitted at least 30 days before a closing, and the requirement that all inspections must be completed no fewer than 30 days before a closing. He thought that the "Notice of Intent" should come earlier. Ms. Tyler feels that these are reasonable requirements. If there is additional work necessary, then City staff may ask for the closing to be delayed in order to be able to get the inspections done within that time period.

Chair Pollock inquired as to how City staff figured out who would be affected by the proposed text amendment. Ms. Tyler answered that City staff relies upon the associations that have members that are realtors. City staff directly contacted local engineers and surveyors who would be preparing the necessary materials. City staff feels that they outreached well. The proposed text amendment was also included in the Apartment Association's newsletter.

Chair Pollock questioned how many condominium conversions have taken place that are considered to be potential problems. Ms. Tyler stated that City staff was aware of Fairlawn Village, Water's Edge and Capstone Condominiums. Two other apartment buildings that City staff found out belatedly that there were conversion efforts underway. These two are the ones that City staff is concerned about. One is located on North Broadway, and the other is located on Colorado Avenue.

With no further questions for City staff by the Plan Commission, Chair Pollock opened up the public input portion of the hearing. With no one from the audience wishing to address the Plan Commission, he closed the public input portion of the hearing and opened it up for Plan Commission discussion and motion(s).

Mr. Ward moved that the Plan Commission forward Plan Case No. 2072-T-08 to the City Council with a recommendation for approval as presented. Ms. Stake seconded the motion. Roll call on the motion was as follows:

Ms. Burris	-	Yes	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. Mr. Myers stated that this case will go before the City Council on June 16, 2008.

**Plan Case No. 2071-SU-08: Request by Ken Mooney for a Special Use Permit to establish a “Church or Temple” in addition to a single-family residence at 811 West Michigan Avenue within the R-2 Zoning District.**

Robert Myers, Planning Manager, presented this case to the Plan Commission. He stated the purpose for the proposed special use permit request. He clarified that “church or temple” is the term used in the Zoning Ordinance; however, the petitioner is requesting two uses on the same property – a single-family residence and a smaller scale use of religious gatherings and ministry office. He gave background information on the type of religious gatherings there would be and the maximum number of guests that would be allowed.

Referring to Exhibit A, Location and Existing Land Use Map, and Exhibit B, Existing Zoning Map, he described the current land uses and zoning of the proposed site and of the surrounding properties. Referring to Exhibit C, Future Land Use Map, he explained how the 2005 Comprehensive Plan relates to the proposed special use permit request. To give the Plan Commission a sense of the character of the neighborhood, he then showed photos of the property, streetscape, and neighboring properties, including the Twin City Bible Church.

Mr. Myers pointed out that the petitioner is proposing additional parking spaces for evenings and weekends at McKinley Health Center, which is located across Lincoln Avenue down the street to the north. He noted that the McKinley Health Center parking would be unavailable during weekdays, and so the petitioner would need to make other parking arrangements for their weekday morning gatherings.

He reviewed the requirements for a special use permit according to Section VII-6 of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance. He stated that staff finds that the proposed use does not conform to the applicable regulations and standards of the R-2 Zoning District in terms of cars having to back out onto the street. The proposed use would preserve the essential character of the district.

Chair Pollock wondered if a special use permit would permit the construction of a parking lot onsite. Mr. Myers replied that it could. It would need to be indicated in a site plan, and the site plan would need to be reviewed by City staff and meet all of the development codes though.

Mr. Myers pointed out that since the request is for a special use permit, the Plan Commission is charged with making a recommendation for the Urbana City Council.

Mr. Grosser inquired as to how City staff came to the finding that the proposed use is generally consistent with the future land use for the subject property identified in the 2005 Comprehensive Plan as stated on Page 6 of the written staff report under "Summary of Findings" number 5. When he looks at the Comprehensive Plan, he feels that it is more particular about this area than anywhere else in the City due to the inset for the Lincoln-Busey corridor. It clearly specifies single-family residential for the proposed property.

Mr. Myers answered that the Future Land Use Map is a policy guide and does not trump existing zoning. The property is zoned R-2, and the Zoning Ordinance allows churches in R-2 districts by special use permit. Special uses are about how the use is designed and are they going to be a good neighbor with the neighborhood. If we said that the Comprehensive Plan excludes what's now allowed by zoning then new churches could never be located in residential zoning districts unless the Comprehensive Plan showed Institutional as the future land use for the site.

Ms. Upah-Bant noticed that the Addendum to the Special Use Permit submitted the petitioner shows the residents have four vehicles. Is this a single family living here? Mr. Myers responded that there is a family with two other additional unrelated people living in the house.

Chair Pollock wondered how the property would be taxed with allowing two primary principle uses – a church that is tax exempt and a single-family residence that is not exempt. Mr. Myers was not sure how the Tax Assessor would classify the property, but his understanding is that the property owners would not be seeking any kind of exemption for a religious or institutional use. The property owner intends for the property to stay on the tax roll as a single-family residence.

Chair Pollock asked if a single-family use could widen their driveway with a building permit without having to ask for a special use permit. Mr. Myers said yes. A single-family residence could widen their driveway up to a certain maximum width without getting approval of a special use permit.

With no further questions for City staff by the Plan Commission, Chair Pollock opened up the hearing for public input.

Ken Mooney, petitioner and local agent for the property owner of 811 West Michigan Avenue, said he apologized for their extensive learning curve. It has taken them a little bit of learning on how to fit into the neighborhood. He believes they will now be able to do so.

They intend for the property to remain a residence and to only have the appearance of being a residence. This helps provide an environment where the students feel comfortable to come to. They have no desire for it to become an institutional use. They do not plan to pave the backyard.

They have hired a lawn care company to maintain the lawn. There will be no signage or advertisement of any kind, even though for a brief period of time they had something on the internet. It has been removed.

They have worked with their neighbor at 805 West Michigan Avenue to erect a fence between the properties to protect the young children. They also have installed a side gate in the fence along Lincoln Avenue so any pedestrians can enter off of Lincoln Avenue and not impact the quiet, residential atmosphere of the neighborhood.

He said that they found off-site parking at the McKinley Health Center for evenings and weekends. It seems the main concern is the parking availability for the morning gatherings. There would only be up to eight people who attend the morning gatherings. They can car pool or ride public transportation or walk to the proposed location.

Todd Bennett, resident of 811 West Michigan Avenue, lives in the home with his family and two small children. He noted that they moved into the house at the end of January 2008. He summarized the addendum that was handed out prior to the meeting. He mentioned that he spoke with Tom Skaggs, University of Illinois Parking Services, about parking at the McKinley Health Center. Mr. Skaggs said they did not need a written contract/agreement because he did not think any other organization using the McKinley Health Center parking lot has a written agreement.

He addressed the concern about weekday morning parking. The addendum contains drawings of how they plan to widen the driveway access and driveway to 16 feet. They intend to mirror image their neighbor's driveway by asphaltting their gravel driveway. They also plan to shift the curb and driveway apron to lead straight into the proposed asphalt driveway. They have four cars for the residents' use. The second drawing shows a 6-car layout. As you can see the cars would be able to get out of the driveway without any shuffling of the other vehicles. This would only be for the weekday morning meetings. If there are any additional vehicles, then they would find off-site parking either using the metered parking along Pennsylvania Avenue or along Dorner Drive. They could possibly rent a parking space in the University F23 Parking Lot for one of the residents little used cars. The other option is to park one of the residents' cars on the street. Mr. Mooney added that public transportation will reduce the need for parking.

Mr. Ward questioned how much room would be between the proposed asphalt drive and the newly erected fence. Mr. Mooney said there would be 18 to 24 inches. Mr. Ward asked if that would be enough room to open and close car doors. Mr. Mooney said it would be doable. The asphalt drive would be 16 feet wide and the additional 18 to 24 inches from the asphalt to the fence, it would basically be two 9 foot parking spaces, which is comparable to most parking lots.

Mr. Ward does not understand their desire to limit the number of people attending the meetings. Most religious organizations encourage growth, yet they are limiting the number of guests. It seems to him that if the organization is successful then the potential of invited guests might increase well beyond the numbers mentioned in the written staff report. They did not address this possibility in their proposal. Why are there limits?

Mr. Mooney answered that the limits are valid as long as the special use permit is in place. When they first started this organization the meetings were a little bit larger than they wanted them to be. So they tried to encourage smaller groups to meet which some the students did not agree with. Now with the restrictions of the City, they are forced to hold smaller groups which an ideal number of people to meet at one time are 12 to 15 people. They would increase their numbers by increasing their locations.

Ms. Upah-Bant inquired as to how wide the driveway is at 805 West Michigan Avenue. Mr. Mooney stated that it is shy of being 15 feet wide.

Mr. Myers clarified that he had just been reviewing his information on the minimum driveway width. The City Engineer has indicated that 18 feet is adequate for two lanes of parallel parking.

Mr. Mooney responded that there would be 18 feet of driveway width once they widen the driveway as planned. Sixteen feet they are proposing to asphalt, and they plan to leave a 2-foot portion in gravel, because the car would not drive on the area anyway. The 2 feet of gravel area would be used to open the car door and for the driver to exit the vehicle. If need be, they could pave the entire driveway all the way to the fence.

Chair Pollock asked Mr. Bennett if he and his family are renting the home. Mr. Bennett said yes. Chair Pollock inquired as to whether the Bennetts were sub-leasing to additional people or are they renting from the owners. Mr. Bennett explained that there were two other people who lived in the home with his family and himself during the school year. They currently only have one additional person living with them over the summer.

Chair Pollock questioned if the owner of the property is a local resident. Mr. Bennett answered that the property owner lives in California. Mr. Mooney is the local agent for the property owner.

Ms. Stake inquired about the ministry office use in the home. Mr. Mooney replied that there is an office in the home but that 90% of the office use is for personal use of the residents of the house. His office is not located there. Mr. Bennett added that there is a computer, a printer, and a scanner/fax machine in the office. They also have a cabinet to hold office supplies. Most of his own personal office use is done on his computer in his bedroom. One of the other tenants uses the office for the majority of her personal use.

Ms. Stake wondered who does the organization for these meetings and where do they do it. Mr. Mooney said that most of the organization is done by the students out of their dorms or apartments. We have other meetings on campus. Ms. Stake asked who "we" are. Mr. Mooney stated that "we" is the organization "Christians on Campus". Ms. Stake wanted to know where the "Christians on Campus" office is located. Mr. Mooney explained that there is no office. It is a registered student organization. There really is no need for them to have an office. Ms. Stake commented that they must send out notices somehow. Mr. Mooney responded that the students send out notices via e-mail from their dorms or apartments. There may be some small amount of office work done at the house.

Mr. Grosser stated that the written staff reports list 15 hours per week of ministry office use in the house for the organization. Is this accurate? Mr. Mooney said that is a little high. Mr. Bennett explained that 15 hours is the amount that they are requesting just to set a number. They do not come close to using the office at the house for that purpose. The majority of the use of the office is for personal use of the residents.

Mr. Grosser asked if they had employees. Mr. Mooney replied that there are paid Christian workers but that he would not call them employees of the organization. They are paid by some church groups. They would use the office in the house only for a small amount, well under the 15 hours.

Ms. Burriss expressed confusion. It sounds more like they are having small groups, but yet they are trying to accommodate permanent parking for a much larger group. She stated that she has 20 people over to her house from time to time, but she would not expect to have to get a special use permit in order to have her visitors come and go. She can understand the confusion of the neighborhood not knowing what is going on at the proposed house with people coming and going. She is confused about why they would need a special use permit.

Ms. Tyler explained that the organization, Christians on Campus, operated from this location last semester. The City received some complaints and calls of concern so staff investigated. It was a difficult determination to piece out what the uses are. City staff's interpretation is that in order for the Christians on Campus organization to continue those uses, they would need a special use permit because one of the primary uses is closest to being a "Church or Temple" use. This way the City can pin down the hours of operation, the parking, etc. Also the special use permit request is to allow two principle uses in the same structure. People are allowed to have visitors at their homes, but not on a regular basis, not advertised and not with an official affiliation. These are the tests that they worked through with the Legal Department to come to this determination.

Mr. Fitch wondered if there would ever be a situation where the residents would have more than four cars. Mr. Bennett said no. He does not have to worry about his children driving for a long time, because his oldest child is 5 years old. Mr. Mooney pointed out that they would continue to work within the constraints of the special use permit.

Mr. Ward remarked that he shared some of Ms. Burriss' confusion. Is Christians on Campus a local organization or part of a national organization? Mr. Mooney stated that it is a registered student organization at the University of Illinois. Mr. Ward asked if there were any other units anywhere else or is it indigenous to the University. Mr. Mooney said it is totally at the University of Illinois.

Mr. Ward questioned if there is an address listed on the registration as a student organization. Mr. Mooney answered by saying that they use an e-mail address.

Ms. Stake inquired if the property owner, who lives in California, is part of the group or does he just decide who is going to live in the house? Mr. Mooney explained that the property owner is a personal friend of his. The owner's son was very well taken care of by a Christian organization

on a campus when he was in college. The owner wanted to purchase a house to help other students so they would also be well taken care of while they are at college.

Ms. Stake asked if the owner ever visits. Mr. Mooney replied that the owner has been here before. It is his responsibility to make sure that the house is kept in good shape.

Sarah McEvoy and Huseyin Sehitoglu, of 805 West Michigan Avenue, approached the Plan Commission and gave a presentation with illustrations in opposition of the proposed special use permit request. Ms. McEvoy referred to the document that was handed out prior to the start of the meeting titled "Presentation by Sarah McEvoy and Huseyin Sehitoglu." Page 2 shows all of the properties within 250 feet of 811 West Michigan Avenue. The properties in blue are single-family owner-occupied homes that oppose the proposed special use permit request. Seventy percent of the owner-occupied homes signed a letter of protest. She mentioned that it was difficult to get signatures from larger institutions, sorority, the Farm House, and the University of Illinois because they are either governed by a Board of Directors or governing body that perhaps meets quarterly, so she could not get the nine required signatures to have an official protest. They did gather 51 signatures representing 43 households who are in opposition.

She talked about the safety concern of vehicles backing out of the driveway at 811 West Michigan Avenue. They feel it is injurious and detrimental to the public welfare. The corner of Michigan and Lincoln Avenues is already used as a drop off point for members of the Twin City Bible Church, creating major traffic flow and management problems.

She showed pictures of several vehicles parked in the driveway at 811 West Michigan. She feels that widening the driveway would necessitate widening the apron. Even though Mr. Mooney and Mr. Bennett have obtained parking at the McKinley Health Center, it is human nature to park as close as you can to where you are going.

The photos show that all the cars in the driveway make it look like a parking lot, and she stated that typically there are cars parked double up and down the driveway during the morning and at night. Although the Bennetts did not occupy the home until January of this year, the Christians on Campus organization was holding meetings at the home during the fall semester.

She commented that even though the petitioners want to keep their meetings to invitation only, she feels that by granting the special use permit, the City would be opening up a door to a lot of uncertainty. Once given a special use permit, habits and people change. The Twin City Bible Church has promised numerous times that they would not expand, but they continue to do so.

She showed a photo of her own driveway next door noting that towards the garage it is 10 feet wide and expands to 13 feet wide in the middle and then expands to 15.5 feet closer to the sidewalk and apron. Running a new asphalt driveway 18 feet wide would not be congruent to their driveway. This would give an institutional appearance. It also appears that the expansion of the driveway at 811 West Michigan Avenue would encroach upon a mature tree in the front yard.

Another photo shows vehicles backed up dropping people off at the Twin City Bible Church on a Sunday after school was over. She feels that coming from a major arterial [Lincoln Ave.] to a minor street cannot handle this kind of congestion. It is not safe. She noted that the Christians on Campus Sunday luncheon, of course, happens when there are several services being held at the Twin City Bible Church. Traffic really becomes unmanageable at that point.

Ms. McEvoy stated that West Urbana was selected by the American Planning Association as one of 10 Great Neighborhoods in America in 2007. This standing would not be maintained if the family atmosphere in the neighborhood disappears. Her family feels that the driveway at 811 West Michigan Avenue will end up looking like a parking lot, which lends an institutional appearance to the property, and which does not conform to preserving the essential character of the district.

She showed a copy of the advertisement that Christians on Campus had posted on the internet. It advertised Friday Night Dinner and Fellowship at 811 West Michigan Street. It contradicts the "by invitation only" concept that Mr. Mooney and Mr. Bennett talked about earlier. When talking with Mr. Mooney, she commented about the number of vehicles and people at 811 West Michigan Avenue. She asked what the organization planned to do if they were successful, and Mr. Mooney told her that they would move some of the people to other sites. This is one of her concerns because she has never encountered a church that did not want to grow.

She feels that once the driveway at 811 West Michigan Avenue is widened then it would be difficult to sell the home ever again as single-family. No one wants to buy a house with a parking lot in front or in back if they are a single-family. Increasing the intensity of use at 811 West Michigan with the dual purpose including a fellowship house and office would not be preserving the use as previously existed, and would most definitely be an encroachment of higher density into this area. This would be inconsistent with the 2005 Comprehensive Plan.

Ms. McEvoy stated that they feel the granting of the special use permit would lower the property values of the few remaining owner-occupied homes on West Michigan Avenue. Two residential homes have already been converted for office use by the Twin City Bible Church, and they have recently acquired a third property. In that case, the church pastor said that they would be submitting a special use permit application to use the third single-family home as an office. This has created an imbalance, and there is a danger of losing the flavor of what was once known as an owner-occupied family neighborhood.

The final requirement that a special use permit must meet is that the proposed use is conducive to the public convenience at that location. While a fellowship house would be conducive to the members of the Christians on Campus organization, it is not conducive to the public convenience of the neighborhood.

She talked about what little she actually knows about the Christians on Campus organization. When inquiring about who her neighbors were going to be, several people helping unload a moving truck handed her business cards saying "Recovery Bible – Living Stream Ministries". She suggested that Mr. Mooney and/or Mr. Bennett might address the association between Living Stream Ministries and the Christians on Campus organization to give people a better

understanding of who will be visiting or living at 811 West Michigan Avenue. The neighbors are confused about what the organization is about. Lastly, she commented that they hoped that the petitioner would select a more safely located property that is technically compatible with the intended use as a fellowship house.

Mr. Sehitoglu noted that when he purchased 805 West Michigan Avenue, there were families living on both sides of his home. They have invested in their property and kept it well maintained.

They are concerned about the proposed use at 811 West Michigan Avenue. Residential driveways are not designed to accommodate 10-12 vehicles. This kind of traffic affects the safety of the neighborhood. Once a special use permit is allowed it is possible for things to change. Although the Bennetts live in the house they are renters and could move. They have out-of-state license plates so no one knows how long they will live on the property.

He wanted to point out that on the diagram shown by Mr. Bennett for a possible parking solution in the driveway they indicated two guest cars. Pastor Mooney comes to the property every morning and works at this location. He stays there most of the day. In addition he has assistants. So there are already two to three vehicles associated with the church personnel parked in the driveway before any students arrive to visit the fellowship home.

Parking is a very difficult problem in this neighborhood. There are no parking spaces available on the street for visitors. The issue of parking, in conjunction with the residential flavor of the neighborhood changing, concerns his family very much. So they ask the Plan Commission to follow the City staff's recommendation to deny the request for a special use permit.

Chair Pollock asked Mr. Myers to reiterate staff's recommendation. Mr. Myers responded that staff recommends that the Plan Commission forward the case to the Urbana City Council with a recommendation for denial because the proposed church use will introduce additional traffic and parking in a way which will be unreasonably detrimental to the single-family residential district in which it will be located.

Lisa Treul, 714 West Iowa Street, stated that the neighborhood has a covenant with the City of Urbana, and it is called the "Comprehensive Plan". It clearly states how we want to preserve the West Urbana Lincoln-Busey corridor. She stated that she attended the open house that the fellowship/church held. They are lovely people and are doing wonderful things. There is no argument there. The argument is whether or not this is a good use at the proposed location and is it consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. She does not believe it is.

She is a co-coordinator for the West Urbana Neighborhood Association (WUNA). Last month, they held a WUNA at large meeting which they hold once a year. The church members attended and presented their application. Overwhelmingly the 50-odd neighbors attending the meeting said "no." This cannot go on. It does not accommodate the public and it violates the Comprehensive Plan. So she encouraged the Plan Commission to oppose the request for a special use permit.

Ruth Kaplan, 811 West Michigan Avenue, spoke in favor of the special use permit request. She mentioned that she is a junior at the University of Illinois, and she has been a member of the Christians on Campus organization since her freshman year. Christians on Campus has been in existence since 2000. The organization is growing, which of course, is one of their goals. However, their largest meeting is the Sunday morning meeting which is held at the Illini Union. Many religious groups hold their meetings at the Illini Union. If they were to grow to the size where the Illini Union could not accommodate the organization then she is certain that the Michigan house could not accommodate them either. The only meeting at 811 West Michigan Avenue where there are a lot of members attending is the Friday night meeting which is actually a smaller group meeting. Some of her friends host smaller Christian group meetings in their dorm rooms. The difference with Christians on Campus is that the members like to visit with families. Christians on Campus is an organization unto itself. They have no technical affiliation with anyone else. But like other Christians they communicate with other Christians. Any Christian is welcome to attend their meetings. Having the house at 811 West Michigan Avenue is new to the organization as well. Even some of the students in the organization felt that they were over using it at the beginning of the semester, which is one of the reasons why the use has decreased. It is not just because of the City staff.

Sarah Projansky and Kent Ono, 803 West Michigan Avenue, stated they were opposed to the special use permit request. Ms. Projansky stated that she has a specific argument that she wanted to make, which is that the City of Urbana needs to step back and take a look at the 800 block of West Michigan Avenue as a whole and think about the block in the context of the neighborhood. To support this argument, she made a visual presentation on a 45-year history of the block, a copy of which was handed out prior to the the meeting.

Her charts show that for forty years there were very few changes on their block. In the last three years, there have been major changes which is why she is advocating that the City slow down and take a look at the block. Twin City Bible Church was built in 1964. Sometime between 1964 and 1990, the Twin City Bible Church purchased 806 West Michigan Avenue, and they began using it as an office space, but it maintained the look of a single-family home. In 1990/1991, the Downtown to Campus Plan rezoning occurred. The Twin City Bible Church and the rooming house were both rezoned to R-7, University Residential Zoning District. The properties at 804, 806 and 808 were all rezoned to R-2, Single-Family Residential. This rezoning increased the protection of existing family residential emphasis for the block and the neighborhood. She explained the City's justification for the rezoning of these properties.

In 1992, the Twin City Bible Church expanded their structure at 810 West Michigan Street. This was the first change to the structure of the block in 28 years. In 2004, they moved to 803 West Michigan Avenue. They were not aware of the major changes that were coming in less than a year. They saw historical character in their home as well as the other seven homes on the block. Families with children lived in the three homes on the south side of the block and the block had the appearance and feel of an entirely residential neighborhood. So, in 2005 the Twin City Bible Church demolished the single-family homes at 806 and 808 West Michigan Avenue and expanded significantly including an additional driveway and making the parking lot bigger. The appearance of the block began to change, but there was no additional high use organizations located on the block, whereas the proposed special use permit is for a high use organization.

Recently Twin City Bible Church purchased 804 West Michigan, and there is talk that they plan to submit an application for a special use permit to use it as an office. The rooming house at 1301 South Busey Avenue is now occupied by ten young men, and there are only five single-family residences left, in one of which the petitioner is proposing ministry offices and renter occupied uses.

In their petition, the applicant stated that there would be meetings held six days a week. As Mr. Mooney testified earlier, the house was primarily purchased by the owners to assist students. Thus, it is clear that the primary purpose of the property is the ministry and offices. If they pave and widen the driveway, then it will look like a parking lot in the front yard. She acknowledged that the petitioner has worked hard to solve the parking created by the proposed use. The parking actually concerns her less than the vehicular traffic. This has not been solved. There have been a number of near misses that the residents in the area have had with their cars, that she has had with her 2-1/2 year old son on his tricycle, and that her next door neighbor has had with their 3 year old twins on their tricycles with the increased traffic flow. We are talking about morning, afternoon and night time meetings. So, the increase in the traffic flow threatens the neighborhood feel.

The McKinley parking solution is a good solution, except that the members of the organization would then need to cross Lincoln Avenue. It is extremely dangerous. Many of the members of the Twin City Bible Church park on Michigan Avenue, because they do not want to cross Lincoln Avenue.

In conclusion, Ms. Projansky stated that given two of the ten lots on the 800 Block of West Michigan Avenue are already zoned R-7. We have very recently lost two of the historic homes on the block to the addition of the Twin City Bible Church. Given all this and the fact that more time is needed to understand the vehicle flow and the safety issues, she argued that it is time for the City to step in and prevent any further erosion of the neighborhood quality and the balanced use. She respectfully requests that the Plan Commission recommend against the proposed special use permit request.

Mr. Ono commented that as you drive down Lincoln Avenue going south institutions line both sides of the street for part of the way until you get to Michigan Avenue, and then there is a mix of institutions and single-family residences. It makes sense that there is a residential feel as you go down Lincoln Avenue to Michigan Avenue because of the Illini Grove, which is a beautiful, park-like forested arbor preserve.

When David and Judy Chang chose to purchase 811 West Michigan Avenue directly across from the Illini Grove and in a residential neighborhood, they took a very big risk. They gambled. They made a bet, and perhaps took for granted that the City of Urbana would allow them to convert a single-family residence on a residentially zoned section of one of the premier streets in the historic state street area in Urbana into an office space, ministry, and living quarters for workers doing institutional church related activities. Given the seriousness of that risk, it is surprising to him that not a single person from the organization talked to him, his partner or any of the neighbors up and down the block prior to or after the house was purchased to find out

what people might think of them turning the single-family home into a church and the front yard into a busy driveway parking lot. From the outset, they purchased the single-family dwelling knowing that the use of the house was in conflict with the feel of the residential neighborhood. Nevertheless, they assumed they could use the property for non-residential purposes. He submitted that the Changs' decision to purchase the home – a home where they had no intention of ever living themselves – for the purpose of using it as a church was a mistake. It is a mistake because such an institution neither fits within the City's plan for the street or neighborhood, nor is it compatible with the view of the residents who live here. There are more obviously appropriate buildings one could purchase for such activities; sites already zoned for high-intensity use.

He remarked that no one from the organization came around and introduced themselves until Mr. Bennett visited the neighbors trying to explain the purpose of their special use permit request. He had never met Mr. Mooney or even saw him until today. The kind of economic transaction that took place in the purchase of 811 West Michigan Avenue, the administrative act to try to get a special use permit, and with no face-to-face discussion either before purchasing the house or before and after the institutional activities began are precisely the unneighborly experience that happens as a result of creeping, unfeeling institutional encroachment and transactions without humanness into residential neighborhoods in Urbana.

They received no information about the institutional goals of the church. Thus, they have lots of questions. What is Christians on Campus? It is a student organization, but it has a site off campus in which they do their ministry. How is it connected to the Living Stream Ministry? How is it related to the University of Illinois precisely? Can the University have a student organization that functions in this way? Why did the Changs front so much money to buy a house for several people to live there and participate in institutional activities while they themselves never plan to move there? What is the ultimate goal of the proposed church?

We cannot support what is clearly institutional encroachment into their residential neighborhood. He hoped the Plan Commission would not support it as well.

Matthew Ando, of 712 West Michigan Avenue, stated that it is not a question of a church-like activity belonging at some R-2 location. There is a mutual concern about having multiple such activities in such a small concentrated area. It is a request for a certain amount of balance. 811 West Michigan Avenue is the last single-family residence as one goes north along Lincoln Avenue. It is important to take into consideration that the 2005 Comprehensive Plan states that single-family uses in the Lincoln-Busey corridor should be preserved. He mentioned that he shares an 18-foot wide driveway with his neighbors. He can testify that it is impossible to park two cars next to each other and still be able to exit the vehicles in an 18-foot wide driveway.

Frank and Barbara Gladney, 709 West Michigan Avenue, spoke in opposition of the proposed special use permit. Ms. Gladney requested that the Plan Commission recommend denial of the request for a special use permit. She stated that the proposed use would add to the traffic congestion at the corner of Michigan and Lincoln Avenues and further exhausterbate the parking problems. Granting this proposed permit would further erode the residential, livable quality of the neighborhood. There are already traffic problems at the corner of Michigan and Lincoln

Avenues. The Twin City Bible Church is located across the street from the proposed location. Drop offs and pick ups often can cause traffic snags. Consider the effect of another church at that corner. One church on Michigan Avenue may be all that the neighborhood can adapt to. The neighborhood already has a parking crunch. Church members park bumper to bumper along Michigan and Busey Avenues often making it difficult for residents and their company to find a space to park. There have been several times when they have even had their driveway blocked.

Hyunjoo Kim, 383 Paddock Drive in Savoy, spoke in favor of the special use permit request. He said that when he came to the University of Illinois, he attended the Christians on Campus meetings. Since then he has held Friday night meetings at his place for the last seven or eight years. He has never had a problem with his neighbors. When his family purchased a new home at the beginning of this year they decided not to have Friday meetings anymore at their home. If there is a problem with too many people meeting at 811 West Michigan Avenue, then he would certainly be willing to hold Friday night meetings at his new home so there would be less traffic on Michigan Avenue. He expressed his confusion with why the neighbors are upset. He would have 25 to 30 people at this old place. Now they need a special use permit in order to hold meetings. If there are any changes that need to be made, then the organization is willing to make those changes so they can continue to have their fellowship meetings.

Sigmund Ku, 508 East Clark Street, spoke in favor of the proposed special use permit request. He mentioned that he is a fourth year student at the University of Illinois. It has been fantastic for the students to have the house at 811 West Michigan Avenue to meet. All of the members want to keep the property as a single-family house, because it is the environment that they want to meet in, especially for incoming freshmen that join the organization. Having a family welcome you into their home really eases a new student's nerves when going into a large college environment. He feels that there has been some miscommunication about how often it is used by the students. The members of the organization do not just come and go, they call first to see what meeting time is available. They respect the Bennetts, and they do not just barge into their house and hang out. The Bennetts really enjoy having students come over to their house. Christians on Campus is not responsible for the Twin City Bible Church and what they have done over the past few years. The members of the organization do not plan and have no intention of repeating what the Twin City Bible Church has done by expanding. They enjoy the residential feel and want to keep it as such. It is like a home away from home for the students. They would like to work with the neighborhood to keep everything at peace and to keep the flavor of the neighborhood.

Kate Hunter, 510 West Oregon Street, expressed her concern about the neighborhood. She stated that she has lived in the neighborhood since 1973. She has seen many changes, and some of them have been very good, but she believes that the neighborhood has reached a tipping point about ten years ago. There is encroachment that is possible from all directions. She feels that the City needs to be very careful in considering requests in which someone is asking for yet another exemption to what has been long discussed for this particular area. She mentioned that she bicycles back and forth on Busey Avenue all the time. The traffic, especially on Sundays, is unbelievable. So let's not do any more damage.

Paul and Margaret Frieson, 1705 Melrose Village Circle, Apartment 832, came before the Plan Commission to speak in favor of the proposed special use permit request. Mr. Frieson pointed out that they just recently moved to the City of Urbana. They knew Todd and Mandy Bennett prior to joining the fellowship. They enjoy going over to the Bennett's home to study and read the bible. They find it strange and frustrating to feel it is illegal to go over to their friends' house. He remarked that we live in a nation of law. We make laws to keep us from people's human nature. He thinks that the solution that Mr. Mooney and the Bennetts have proposed meets the requirements. They want to set limits so everyone would be clear what their intent is. He feels there is a lot of confusion about what is really going on at the home. He expressed his confusion as to why a family would be required to get a special use permit to hold bible studies in their home. This is why we have laws, and it is why the Bennetts and Mr. Mooney is applying for a special use permit. He feels it is reasonable to allow two guest cars park in the driveway. He agrees that it is not reasonable to have ten cars parked in the driveway everyday. He feels this is why the neighborhood is against the proposed use. Most people in opposition have talked about things that have happened in the past as the petitioners were learning to get along with the neighborhood. He did not feel this was relevant because the petitioners are not asking permission for the past, instead they are asking for a special use permit for the future. They are asking for specific guidelines which if they violate they would be subject to the law.

Since the petitioners were forced to stop holding bible study sessions in their home, he and his wife have started hosting the bible studies in their home. As previously mentioned they are not a typical institution in that they do not meet a big building. They would rather meet in people's homes. They expand their membership by adding more homes to meet at. He and his wife are happy to provide one of these homes. They love having the students over to their house. He believes that they offer an excellent benefit to the community because it reduces the number of kids out drinking. Mr. Frieson believes that it is the duty of the local government to protect the interest of the minority group in this situation.

Ms. Frieson echoed what her husband said. They are new in the community, and it has been really nice to have a friend in the community. She has been afraid to even go over to the Bennett's home to visit because she feels like they will be watched or written up. The past is the past and they are trying to move forward. They are trying to set guidelines for the members to follow. She mentioned that they held an open house which was opened to the neighborhood to attend and address their concerns. There were only two people from the community that attended the open house. It is strange to her that all these concerns are coming out now instead of in a civil place at the Bennett's home.

Ty and Deb Newell, 704 West Michigan Avenue, approached the Plan Commission to speak in opposition. Mr. Newell pointed out that it is not the Bennett's home. They are tenants. It is not Mr. Mooney's home. He is supposedly representing someone who owns the home, but do we know that he officially has that representation? Do we know that legally he is responsible for providing and asking for the special use permit? When you look up the address provided in the Tax Assessor records for the owner, you find out the address is for an attorney's office. The discussion about the learning curve, being naïve and the ambiguity of what is going on, he did not understand where an attorney purchases the home and there is a lack of knowledge of zoning rules. He is surprised that it did not come up when the owner purchased the house to check into

the zoning to ensure that the proposed use would be allowed. His urged the Plan Commission to deny the request for a special use permit. He stated that he and his wife have lived in their house since 1981. There are annual block parties going from the 600 to the 800 block of Michigan Avenue each year. This is their neighborhood. Their earnings go into maintaining their home. He mentioned that he is a preacher's kid. His father would have been without a job if he didn't increase the size of his flock. This is the mission of a church. Meetings occur all day long, every day. It is not realistic for them to think that they are going to limit the size of their meetings. Out of 40,000 students at the University of Illinois, and they only plan to allow about four new freshmen in to meet the upper classmen. If they want to be successful, then they need a place that follows the law and is within the zoning ordinance. There is no reason for this particular house to be changed in this manner.

Ms. Newell stated that she wants to maintain the neighborhood in which her four children grew up in. She does not have a problem with what the Christians on Campus do. She just has problem with the fellowship wanting to use the proposed site as a regular meeting place.

Stephen Moll, 608 East Clark Street, Champaign, mentioned that he recently graduated from the University of Illinois. He was a member of the Christians on Campus during his four years of attending the University. From his understanding, the staff's recommendation to deny the proposal is due to parking. If the petitioner wanted to widen the driveway, then they could simply take out a building permit with the City without having to obtain a special use permit hearing. He apologized for the number of cars that were previously parked in the driveway. There were e-mails sent out to the students in the organization to not park there anymore. The students took the e-mail very seriously and began parking at the McKinley Health Center. Regarding the confusion about the whole idea of growing, the previous speaker talked about growth being an essential element of a church. Christians on Campus is not a church. It is a student organization. They are registered with the University of Illinois. He knows that there is frustration with the Twin City Bible Church and how they continue to expand. However, there needs to be a clear distinction made that the proposed site is a house, and they plan to keep it as a house. They are not going to tear the house down and build another church on the corner. The students like the environment that is provided in meeting in residential homes with families at dinner. Again, the reason for staff's recommendation for denial is due to the parking. He feels that there are many options that the Bennetts and Mr. Mooney have presented to alleviate the parking problems.

Keith Erickson, 607 West Indiana Avenue, stated that the neighborhood is not against anyone. They are only in favor of maintaining a single-family environment that is conducive to bringing up children and to have a friendly neighborhood environment. He feels that some of the statements made tonight are negative to what people feel. This is simply a land use issue, and the neighborhood would be reacting in the same fashion if it were an attorney's office, a medical office, an insurance office or an auto body shop. It has nothing to do specifically with the current petitioners. It is more the long-term goal that is being purported to the Plan Commission at this hearing. Therefore, he requested that the Plan Commission deny this request.

Chairman Pollock gave the petitioners an opportunity to respond to any of the testimony and to make any closing statements.

Mr. Mooney reiterated that they intend to keep it as a single-family home. The Christians on Campus organization grows by adding families who can host students. They do not grow by increasing the size of the meetings. For their larger meetings, they have used the YMCA and the Illini Union. They make use of other facilities, and the house at 811 West Michigan Avenue is by no means their only meeting place. They are looking for an amount of usage of the home that is consistent and fits within the neighborhood. They are willing to work with the neighborhood to find that amount of usage. They do not want to impact the way the neighborhood looks or the overall residential feel to the neighborhood. The students are comfortable there. Because it is close to campus, it gets a little more use than some of the other meeting places. They are willing to work to find a solution, so that the students can be cared for and hold bible studies sessions at the same time they add to the community. He mentioned that they did not have any meetings at this location during the first semester because they did not take possession of the house until mid December. So, there is some confusion and/or inaccuracy there. The driveway width is not 18 feet between two walls. There is a wall on one side, but it is wide open on the other side. So, they could park two cars side-by-side. However, the plan they are proposing is to use the one side for exiting the driveway. If necessary, they do not need to meet at this location in the morning. The traffic congestion in the morning seems to be the primary issue mentioned in the written staff report. Their primary concern is that they fit within the residential aspect. If the City and the residential neighborhood feel that a couple of extra cars coming into the neighborhood early in the morning is going to create too much traffic, then the Christians on Campus organization can move the morning meetings elsewhere. Many of the issues are with the Twin City Bible Church. There is nothing they can do about that. Their Sunday morning meeting is held at the Illini Union, so it would not conflict with the church services held at the Twin City Bible Church on that day. They would have lunch meetings start at 1:00 p.m. on Sundays, but the students can park at the McKinley Health Center. He believes that they can work within the requirements of the community and to a regulated degree. He strongly recommended that the organization and the City work together with the community to help take care of some students who are away from home and want to study the bible.

Mr. Bennett echoed that throughout the time since he moved in at 811 West Michigan Avenue, they were made aware of the neighborhood's concerns, specifically with the neighbors next door. There has been an air of civility, even during the public hearing. They want to be part of the neighborhood which is why they are going through this process to establish what guidelines would be appropriate that fit in and meet the concerns and needs of the City, of the neighborhood, and of the Christians on Campus organization.

With no further comments or questions from the public, Chair Pollock closed the public input portion of the hearing. He, then, opened the hearing for Plan Commission discussion and motion(s).

Ms. Upah-Bant asked what would happen if a bunch of students parked in the driveway. Is there any legal sanction? Can the City regulate the number of cars parked at a residential neighborhood?

Mr. Myers recommended that if the City Council would choose to approve the proposed special use permit request then they do so with a site plan. The petitioner has presented a site plan, and if the Plan Commission feels that it should be the plan, then they should recommend approval of it. Through the site plan process, the City can basically regulate the number of cars. It would be difficult to regulate which ones are for residents and which ones are for visitors. The "R" and the "G" indicated on the site plan for "resident" and "guest" parking indicates the petitioner's intent on how they would manage cars within the driveway. The City would not enforce which spaces are for residents and guests. If there were additional cars parking there, then the City would follow up with the property owners and find out the nature of the ongoing gatherings and office use. The City could generally hold the use to the site plan. However, the City cannot strictly say that there could never be any additional guests, because households occasionally have larger personal gatherings.

Mr. Fitch wondered how often a person can use their home for religious fellowship before it becomes problematic and they need to seek a special use permit. People have a right to practice their religion in their homes up to some point.

Chair Pollock reworded the question to be what was the criterion that the staff used to determine that this was a violation of the Zoning Ordinance.

Mr. Myers answered that part of this case is based on the nature of what was taking place at the time that was reported by the neighbors. Another part is based on what City staff found when they investigated. There were gatherings held at 811 West Michigan Avenue on an on-going basis. These gatherings were being advertised via the internet and through flyers. It is one thing to have an occasional meeting or gathering in your home, but it is a different thing to have regularly scheduled and advertised meetings or gatherings five days a week, in addition to having an office in the home for staff. When City staff initially investigated, they recommended to the petitioners that they apply for a special use permit. Since that time, he believes that the petitioners' original plan has been modified somewhat in terms of the number of hours and the nature of the office use. It sounds like they are trying to make it more compatible with the neighborhood's desire to keep the residential atmosphere in the neighborhood.

Mr. Fitch commented that he gathered this from the testimony also. Now he is thinking that if it is true that the use has been scaled back somewhat, then is a church designation or special use permit an overkill. Ms. Tyler replied that City staff, pending this public hearing and this resolution, did ask the petitioners to cease all non-residential related activities.

Mr. Ward stated that the case states quite clearly that it is a dual use. It would seem to him that if there is a change then the proper procedure would be for the petitioner to withdraw the petition before the Plan Commission and to come back at a later date with whatever is necessary, if in deed the facts have changed. What the Plan Commission has before them is a petition to allow two principal uses, a single-family residence and regular religious gatherings and related ministry office, on one lot.

Mr. Grosser remarked that any time there is a room full of people addressing the Plan Commission, it is helpful, and he appreciated everyone attending the meeting. He then

addressed several issues that he felt was happening during the public hearing. The first issue is that some people feel that this particular activity of holding religious gatherings is the problem. The use itself is not important, but what is important is how often the meetings are held and what goes along with it such as the office use.

The second concern is that the issue of parking is important. He feels that the parking plan submitted by the petitioners is not reasonable. Mr. Ando had addressed the same question he had which was about the driveway being 18 feet wide for parallel parking. With a fence on one side they would not be able to open their doors in that width of space. This means that the people will park further over into the yard and it will look more like a parking lot. The issue that also makes this particular use incompatible with the single-family neighborhood is the activity level. When you have a single-family home, there is an expectation of the level of activity that is going to be happening in the house as far as the coming and going, etc. What has been proposed are meetings with up to 20 people three times a week, meetings with up to 8 people every weekday, and an office use that is on-going. This is not what one would see in a single-family neighborhood, and it is not the kind of activity level one would expect to have. He feels this is incompatible with the neighborhood district. Regarding Mr. Fitch's question about when it becomes a church use. He feels that because it is an organized religious group, it falls in the church category. It no longer gives off a single-family feel.

Mr. Grosser moved that the Plan Commission forward Plan Case No. 2071-SU-08 to the City Council with a recommendation for denial because the proposed church use would introduce additional traffic and parking and an increased activity level that will be unreasonably detrimental to the single-family residential district in which it would be located. Ms. Stake seconded the motion.

Mr. Grosser noted that his motion is close to the staff recommendation, but it included a second clause, which is the added increased activity level. The staff recommendation was simply to deny because of the traffic and parking situation. In his motion he is trying to make an argument that the activity level is not conducive to the neighborhood. The Comprehensive Plan is really clear about this particular area. While the Comprehensive Plan is not zoning, the purpose of a special use permit process in looking at this case in an R-2 Zoning District is to look at the whole picture and see what is the picture of the neighborhood. Is a second church a reasonable use on this block? The Comprehensive Plan states, "*Lincoln/Busey Corridor. Preserve these uses as they now exist while precluding further encroachment of higher density buildings into this unique residential area*". This house is one of the houses on the Lincoln/Busey Corridor that has been a subject of a lot of discussion and efforts by the City to maintain the atmosphere. Furthermore, one of the neighbors gave testimony on the history of the block. He felt this testimony is relevant to the case, because there is already a large church across the street which has taken up several single-family homes on the block to the point where the percentage of uses is about half and half. Granting the proposed special use permit would tip that balance further.

So in conclusion he wanted to add these two points for the Plan Commission's consideration on the motion.

Ms. Stake read a letter in opposition submitted by Sandy Volk. She agreed with Ms. Volk's comments. She stated that she has been working for the preservation of most all neighborhoods in the City of Urbana for 39 years. It has been difficult because there are always groups like the Twin City Bible Church who promise to keep the residential homes as they are even though they were using them as offices. Now they have torn those homes down. So, there is no balance now in the neighborhood. Many promises have not been kept. The City needs to stop and think and just say "no". We cannot go any further with these types of uses and developments or else we will not have the residential neighborhood anymore. We have some really nice neighborhoods that we want to keep.

Ms. Upah-Bant agreed with Mr. Grosser that the increase in activity level really bothers her. She mentioned that she lives in the area. When she bought her home she knew she was 100 yards away from Farm House so if there is too much traffic at Farm House then she has no one to blame except for herself because she knew it was there when she purchased her home. However, she does not believe that anyone would have expected a second church to be built on the 800 block of Michigan Avenue. She finds that the proposed use does not conform to the standards of the district, and it is not generally consistent with the future land use for the property. According to the LaSalle National Bank criteria, it would be unfair to the other property owners in the area. She reiterated that it is not the use itself that they are opposed to. Any kind of business that generates the kind of traffic that this institution seems to generate would be incompatible with the residential neighborhood.

Mr. Ward thanked everyone for the civility and rational discussion. His major concern is the congestion, the traffic and the public safety issue. Anything that increases the existing problem with parking and amount of traffic is problematic. He does not believe that the proposed special use permit is conducive to the public convenience as per the Comprehensive Plan because it will alter the nature of the neighborhood. The parking issue is also a concern to him as well. He reiterated that it is not the nature of the activity. It is the increase of the activity level. He just feels that it is the wrong proposal in the wrong place in the wrong environment in the wrong neighborhood at the wrong time. So he intended to support the motion.

Ms. Burris stated that although she supports the cause and benefits that Christians on Campus provides for students being away from home she does not feel that they are considering that the influx of traffic into this neighborhood generated for this use has disturbed the single-family feel of the neighbors. In effect what they are trying to provide for the students, they are actually robbing the neighbors of. The activity is novel and they should keep on doing what they are doing. It is just that 811 West Michigan Avenue is not the place to have the leadership located.

Mr. Fitch agreed with Mr. Grosser's motion. This is not a freedom of religion issue. The Friesons can go over to the Bennetts house and study the bible with their friends. This is about running a second church in a single-family residential neighborhood and the increase in the level of activity in the neighborhood along with the other activities mentioned by Mr. Myers, such as advertising, etc.

Roll call on the motion was as follows:

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

The motion was passed by unanimous vote. Mr. Myers stated that this case would go before the City Council on June 16, 2008.

**8. NEW BUSINESS**

There was none.

**9. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

There was none.

**10. STAFF REPORT**

Mr. Myers reported on the following:

Howard Wakeland Rezoning for 701, 705 and 707 North Lincoln Avenue; 903, 905 and 909 West Hill Street; and 906, 908 and 910 West Church Street will be heard by the Urbana City Council on July 7, 2008.

**11. STUDY SESSION**

There was none.

**12. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Robert Myers, AICP  
Secretary, Urbana Plan Commission