



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Planning Division

m e m o r a n d u m

TO: The Urbana Plan Commission

FROM: Robert Myers, AICP, Planning Manager

DATE: May 30, 2008

SUBJECT: 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 W. Michigan Avenue within the R-2 Zoning District

Introduction

Ken Mooney, agent for Christians on Campus, has submitted a request to allow a church in addition to an existing single-family residence at 811 W. Michigan Avenue. The property is a single-family home located at the southeast corner of Lincoln Avenue and Michigan Street and is zoned R-2, Single-Family Residential. Under the Urbana Zoning Ordinance (Table V-1), establishing a “*Church or Temple*” in an R-2 zoning district requires a Special Use Permit.

Background

The petitioner proposes to have two principal uses at 811 W. Michigan: (1) a single-family residence, and (2) regular religious gatherings and a related ministry office. According to the applicant, the non-residential uses are proposed as follows:

- Religious gatherings on Tuesday and Friday evenings (20 invited guests)
- Religious gatherings on Sunday afternoons (20 invited guests)
- Gatherings on weekday mornings (8 invited guests)
- Office uses for the Christians on Campus ministry, approximately 15 hours per week

Two principal uses on the same lot require Conditional Use Permit approval, but when Special Use Permits are also required, approval of two principal uses can be folded into SUP approval.

Development Regulations

Parking

According to Table VIII-7 of the Zoning Ordinance, a church or temple must provide a minimum of one parking space for every five seats in the principal assembly area. The petitioners are proposing that onsite parking be accommodated in the driveway, and that parking for evening and weekend gatherings (for up to 20 guests) will be provided off-site. To accommodate onsite parking, the petitioners plan to upgrade the existing driveway. The driveway will be paved, widened to sixteen feet, and extended to the concrete pad in front of the garage. The current residents plus office workers will require six parking spaces. Therefore, parking for all or most people attending gatherings at 811 W. Michigan will need to be provided off site. The petitioner proposes that parking for evenings and weekends will be provided at the McKinley Health Center located at 1109 S. Lincoln Ave. The McKinley parking lot is approximately 300 feet northwest of 811 W. Michigan, across Lincoln Avenue, and behind the McKinley Health Center Building. Section VIII-4.L of the Zoning Ordinance allows accessory, off-street parking to be located on a separate lot if within 600 feet of the principal use. So in terms of the number of parking spaces and distance to off-site parking, the proposal meets the Zoning Ordinance requirements. Practical impediments for using the McKinley parking lot are as follows:

- Parking is not visible to visitors from Lincoln Avenue;
- Although marked crosswalks are available, visitors will have to cross Lincoln Avenue, a minor arterial street, on foot and at night;
- The McKinley lot will not be available during weekdays for those attending daily breakfast gatherings; and
- The church use would need a formal agreement with the McKinley Health Center to use their parking.

In all cases where off-site parking is permitted, the Certificate of Occupancy for the building's use must specify the required number of parking spaces to be maintained in the accessory off-site parking.

According to Section VIII-4.E of the Zoning Ordinance, except for driveways serving a single-family or two-family residence, no parking space shall be permitted where the existing vehicle must be backed into or out of a public street. Vehicles are allowed to back out toward public alleys when proper aisle widths are provided.

Land Use and Zoning

811 W. Michigan Street is located at the southeast corner of Lincoln and Michigan Avenues. Lincoln Avenue, classified as a minor arterial street, is widely considered as the dividing line between the University of Illinois campus and the West Urbana Neighborhood. Generally speaking, Lincoln Avenue is faced on the east by institutional uses, transitioning to large lot, single-family homes moving southward towards Florida Avenue. 811 W. Michigan is located on the east side of Lincoln Avenue generally at the transition between where Lincoln Avenue is faced by institutions towards the north and residences toward the south. It should be noted that residences along Lincoln Avenue face and take their access from side streets such as Michigan Avenue and Pennsylvania Avenue.

811 W. Michigan is zoned R-2, Single-Family Residential. According to the Urbana Zoning Ordinance, Section IV-2.J, residential zoning districts are intended to provide desirable settings for residential uses within several density ranges, and for various types of dwelling units. As appropriate, the districts also allow other uses compatible with residential areas, either as permitted, conditional, or special uses.

Future Land Use

The 2005 Comprehensive Plan’s Future Land Use Map #9 shows the future land use for the area as “Residential, Urban Pattern” and specifically as “Single-Family Residential.” This is the City’s overall land use policy for the property and the surrounding area, but this in itself does not preempt churches within residential neighborhoods, as allowed by the Zoning Ordinance under Special Use Permit procedures. The 2005 Comprehensive Plan defines “Residential, Urban Pattern as:

“Residential areas contain primarily single-family residential housing but may also include a variety of compatible land uses such as duplexes, town homes, civic uses, institutional uses, and parks where zoning is appropriate. Residential areas can have different physical patterns of development.”

The following chart identifies the future land use designations, current zoning, and current land use of the site and surrounding properties.

Direction	Zoning	Existing Land Use	Future Land Use
Site	R-2, Single-Family Residential	Single-Family Residence	“Residential—Urban Pattern” and “Single-Family Residential”
North	R-7, University Residential	Institutional (Twin City Bible Church)	“University Residential”
East	R-2 Single-Family Residential	Single-Family Residence	“Residential—Urban Pattern” and “Single-Family Residential”
South	R-2, Single-Family Residential	Residential	“Residential—Urbana Pattern”
West	CRE, Conservation-Recreation-Education	Institutional (Illini Grove, U of I)	“Institutional”

Discussion

Requirements for a Special Use Permit

According to Section VII-6 of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance, an application for a Special Use Permit shall demonstrate the following:

1. That the proposed use is conducive to the public convenience at that location.

In a broad sense, providing for student needs at a location across the street from the University of Illinois campus would be conducive to the public convenience. However, parking for the proposed Special Use would not be conducive to the public convenience. The residents plus office workers will require onsite parking for six automobiles. A widened driveway should just be able to accommodate six cars stacked. Parking for all gatherings would have to be located off site. The applicants propose to use parking at the McKinley Heath Center during the evenings and weekends. The McKinley parking lot is approximately 300+ feet away, not very visible since it is located behind the building, and those parking would have to cross Lincoln Avenue, a minor arterial street, on foot. Certainly pedestrians can and do cross Lincoln Avenue every day, but the above factors would most likely lead to those attending regular gatherings eventually parking in the driveway at 811 W. Michigan or on the street. Concerning breakfast gatherings on weekday mornings, the McKinley parking lot will not be available at that time, and there is no room for up to eight additional cars to park in the driveway or on the street.

City staff recommends a finding that the proposed Special Use Permit is conducive to the public convenience in terms of location, but not in terms of parking.

2. That the proposed use is designed, located, and proposed to be operated so that it will not be unreasonably injurious or detrimental to the district in which it shall be located, or otherwise injurious to the public welfare.

The proposed use as a church will be contained within an existing single-family residence. All of the Bible study activities will be indoors, and as music for gatherings will not be amplified, there is expected to be few noise impacts from this use. From outward appearances, the property is constructed and maintained as a single-family home. The petitioner is not proposing to build any additions to the existing structure. Existing fences and hedges on three sides serve as visual screens and sound buffers.

The one site change proposed by the petitioner is to upgrade the existing driveway to more easily accommodate automobile parking. The driveway is currently unpaved and is too narrow to easily accommodate two columns of cars. The new driveway would have a pavement width of sixteen feet which would be wider but similar to that of the neighboring house at 805 W. Michigan.

For the reasons articulated in Criteria 1, the location of offsite parking provided for gatherings is problematic in terms of location and available hours.

Parking geometry also presents challenges for the proposed use. Even after widening the driveway, cars will be stacked meaning that as people need to leave, cars will need to be moved. The parking design is such that cars have to be backed onto Michigan Avenue. This presents a problem in that the driveway is less than 90 feet from Lincoln Avenue, a minor arterial street. The intersection of Lincoln and Michigan does not have a traffic signal. According to Section VIII-4.E of the Zoning Ordinance, "Except for driveways serving a single-family or two-family residence, no parking space shall be permitted where the existing vehicle must be backed into or out of a public street." Twin City Bible Church across the street provides on-site parking. Traffic onto the Twin City lot enters from Michigan Avenue but exits forward onto Lincoln Avenue. Cars exiting the Twin City Bible Church parking lot do not back onto any

street. Likewise, other institutions in the same district, such as Lincoln/Green Foundation/Opus Dei at 715 W. Michigan, provide onsite parking designed so that cars do not have to back onto the street.

City staff recommends a finding that in terms of provision of onsite parking and parking geometry, the design of the proposed use will be detrimental to the district and injurious to the public welfare as design of the church parking will require cars to back out onto a street near a busy intersection.

- 3. That the proposed use conforms to the applicable regulations and standards of, and preserves the essential character of, the district in which it shall be located, except where such regulations and standards are modified by Section VII-7.*

In a broad sense, the proposed use preserves the essential character of the district in which it will be located. The district is R-2, Single-Family Residential which offers the possibility of institutions within the district through the Special Use Permit process. Twin City Bible Church, located across Michigan Avenue, is an example. From the exterior, 811 W. Michigan Avenue appears to be a single-family residence. The applicants are not proposing any changes or additions to the building. Therefore nothing about the building's design would be out of character with other single-family homes in the district.

The exception to this is the proposed paving, widening, and lengthening of the existing driveway. Although the paving and widening of the driveway would be similar to the neighbor's driveway at 805 W. Michigan, having 6-10 cars for residents, office workers, and guests, coming and going, does not preserve the essential character of a residential zoning district. Twin City Bible Church across the street, and located in the R-7, R-3, and R-2 zoning districts, generates much more traffic at peak periods than as proposed at 811 W. Michigan Avenue. The difference is that Twin City Bible Church provides an onsite parking lot, directed traffic flow, and no cars backing out onto the street. City staff believes that parking for 811 W. Michigan is primarily a design rather than a neighborhood character issue, as discussed above under Criteria 2.

This naturally leads to the question of if and how a proper parking lot could be accommodated onsite. First, the lot size – 90 feet by 130 feet – doesn't easily allow an onsite parking lot along with the house and garage. A small parking lot might be accommodated in the rear yard but because of the distance between the rear of the house and the rear property line, as well as location of the garage, appears infeasible.

City staff recommends a finding that the proposed use does not conform to the applicable regulations and standards of the district in terms of cars having to back onto a street but does preserve the essential character of the district. Extension of the driveway around the rear of the house and exiting on Lincoln Avenue would require removal or relocation of the garage, and addition of another driveway would be undesirable from traffic volume, speed, and safety standpoints.

Summary of Findings

1. The proposed Special Use is conducive to the public convenience in terms of location, but not

in terms of parking.

2. In terms of provision of onsite parking and parking geometry, the design of the proposed use will be detrimental to the district and injurious to the public welfare as design of the church parking will require cars to back out onto a street near a busy intersection.
3. The proposed use does not conform to the applicable regulations and standards of the district and does not preserve the essential character of the district in terms of traffic patterns and parking.
5. The proposed church use is generally consistent with the future land use for the subject property identified in the 2005 Urbana Comprehensive Plan.

Options

The Plan Commission has the following options for recommendations to the City Council. In Plan Case 2071-SU-08, the Plan Commission may:

1. Approve the request for a special use permit without any additional conditions.
2. Approve the request for a special use permit with any conditions deemed appropriate or necessary for the public health, safety, and welfare, and to carry out the purposes of the Zoning Ordinance
3. Deny the request for a special use permit.

Recommendation

Based on the evidence presented in the discussion above, and without the benefit of considering additional evidence that may be presented at the public hearing, staff recommends that the Plan Commission forward Plan Case No. 2071-SU-08 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.

Should the Plan Commission choose to recommend approval of this application, City staff recommends the following conditions in order to mitigate impacts:

1. That the site shall conform to and maintain the existing layout, except that the driveway shall be paved and widened to a maximum width of 16 feet and extended to Michigan Avenue. Doing so would require a curb cut permit and an erosion control permit from the Urbana Public Works Department.
2. That other than for the residents of 811 W. Michigan Avenue, parking for all gatherings shall be provided off site in an existing parking lot for which the petitioners shall have a written agreement with that property owner to share parking.

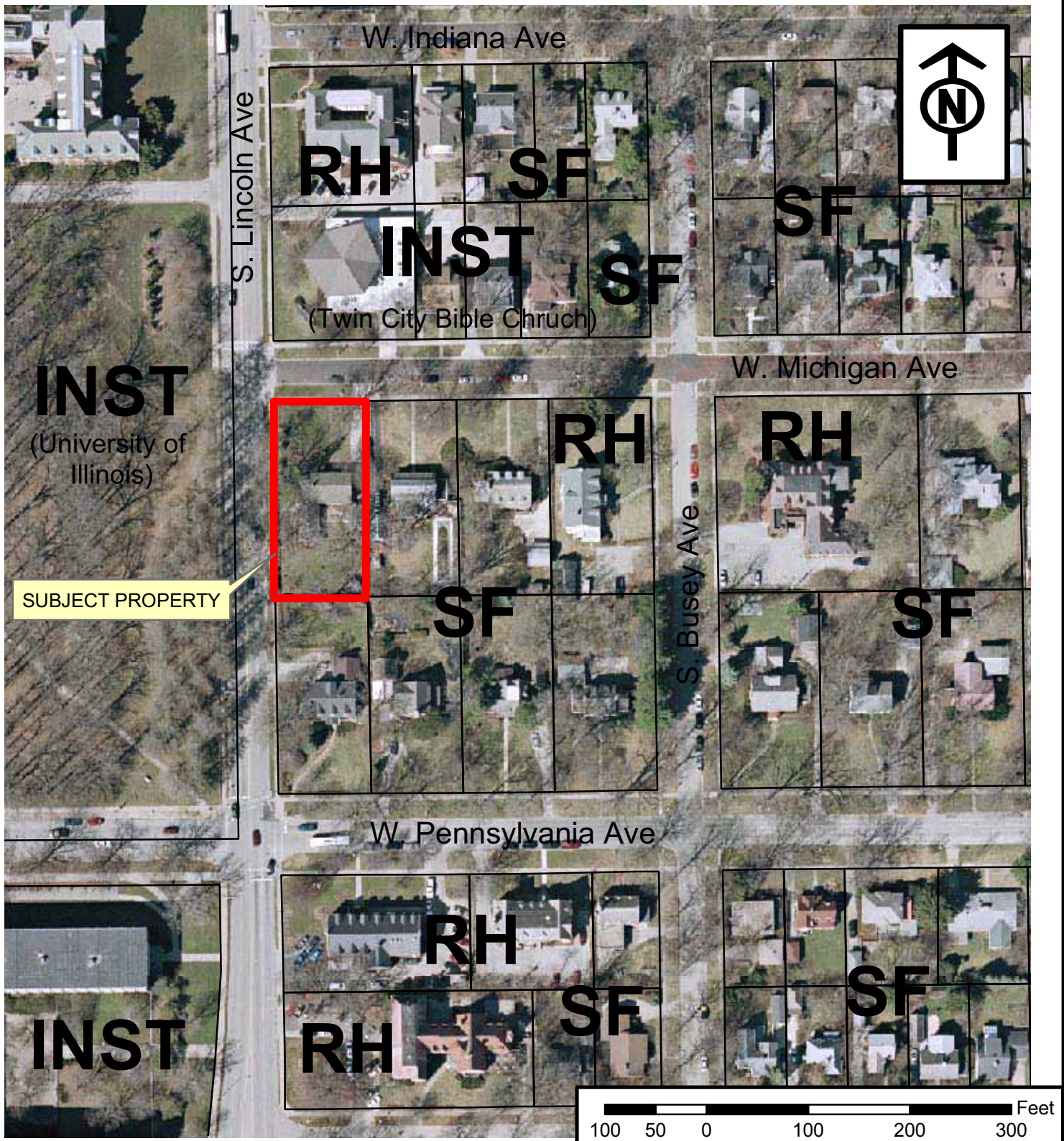
3. That the existing driveway shall serve as the exclusive vehicular access to/from the site to minimize traffic conflicts for Lincoln Avenue.
4. That pedestrian access shall be provided from the sidewalk along Lincoln Avenue to a building entry.
5. That the hours of operation for office-related uses shall be limited to 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
6. That gatherings with a maximum of 20 attendees be allowed on Tuesday and Friday nights between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m., and on Sundays between noon and 4:00 p.m.
7. That existing fences shall be maintained and/or replaced in kind and the existing landscaping be maintained in terms of location and height so as to provide a visual screen and sound buffer.
8. That approval of this petition is limited in duration to the current property ownership. The Special Use Permit approval shall become void if and when the property transfers ownership from David and Judy Chang.

Attachments: Exhibit A: Location and Existing Land Use Map
Exhibit B: Existing Zoning Map
Exhibit C: Future Land Use Map
Exhibit D: Application for a Special Use Permit
Exhibit E: Correspondence
Exhibit F: Site photos

CC: Ken Mooney
1705 Melrose Village Circle, Apt 832A
Urbana, IL 61801

David and Judy Chang
660 N. Diamond Bar Blvd. #210
Diamond Bar, CA 91765

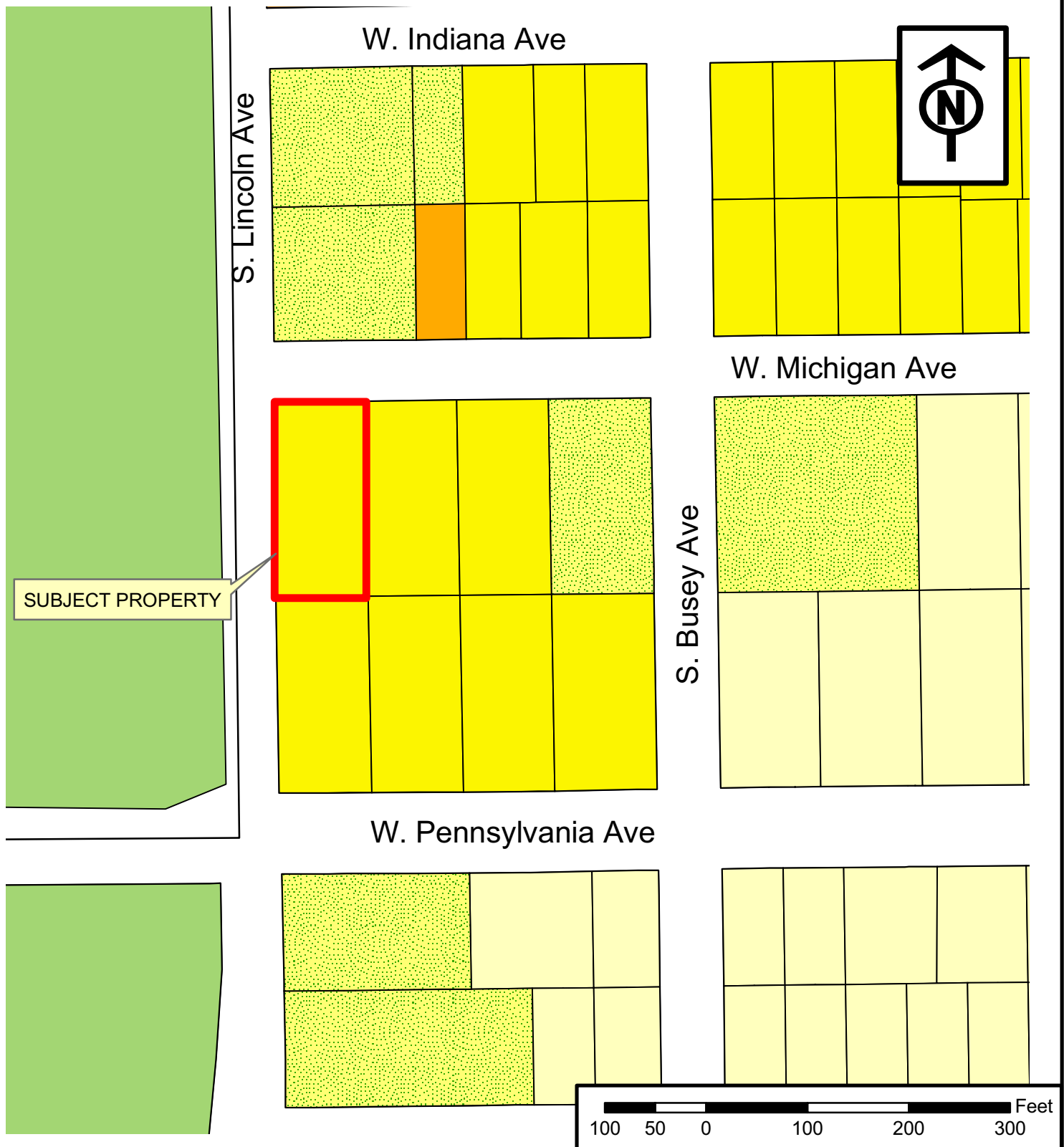
EXHIBIT A: Location and Existing Land Use Map



Plan Case: 2071-SU-08
Petitioner: Ken Mooney
Location: 811 W. Michigan Avenue
Description: Special Use Permit to establish a "church or temple" in addition to a single-family residence.

INST - Institutional
 RH - Rooming House
 SF - Single-Family

EXHIBIT B: Existing Zoning Map



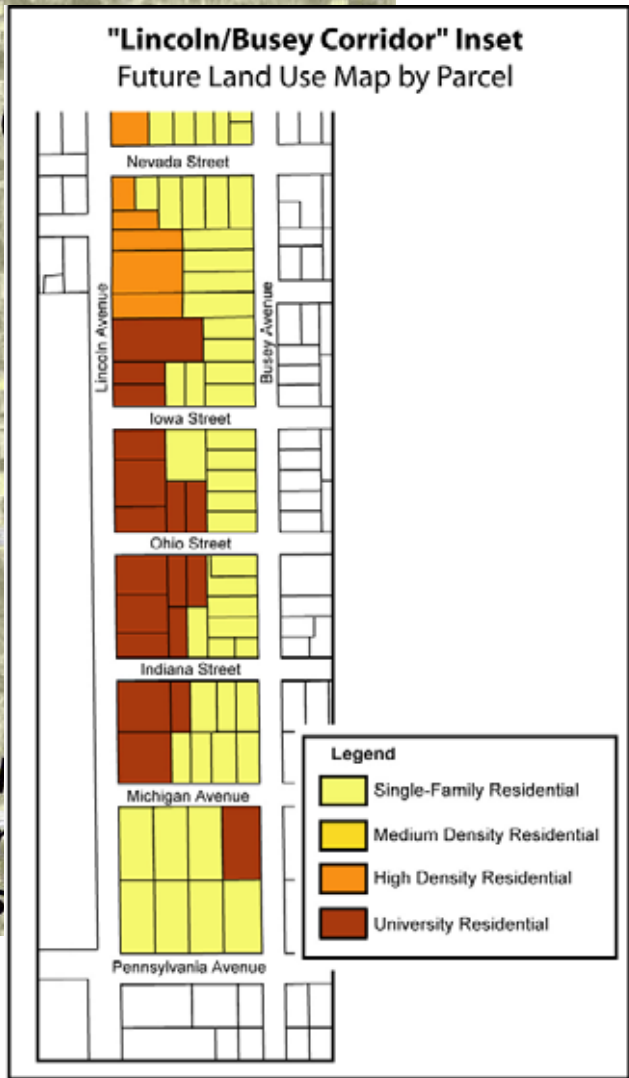
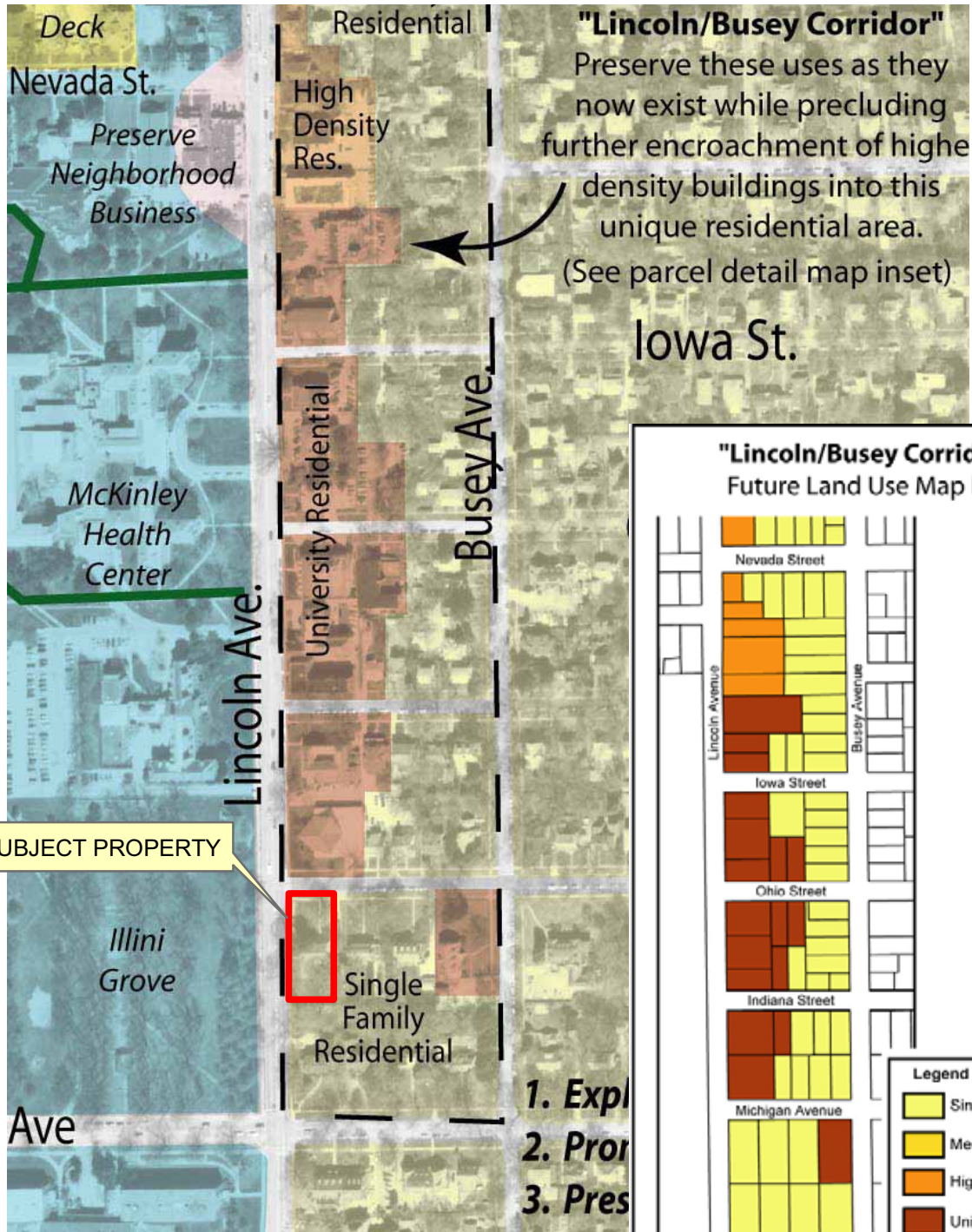
SUBJECT PROPERTY



Plan Case: 2071-SU-08
Petitioner: Ken Mooney
Location: 811 W. Michigan Avenue
Description: Special Use Permit to establish a "church or temple" in addition to a single-family residence.

	R1
	R2
	R3
	R7
	CRE

EXHIBIT C: Future Land Use Map



Plan Case: 2071-SU-08
Petitioner: Ken Mooney
Location: 811 W. Michigan Avenue
Description: Special Use Permit to establish a "church or temple" in addition to a single-family residence.

MAY 13 2008



Application for Special Use Permit

Plan Commission

APPLICATION FEE - \$150.00

The Applicants are responsible for paying the cost of legal publication fees as well. The fees usually run from \$75.00 to \$125.00. The applicant is billed separately by the News-Gazette.

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE - FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Request Filed 05/13/2008 Plan Case No. 2071-SU-08
 Fee Paid - Check No. 5443 Amount \$150.00 Date 05/13/2008

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION

A SPECIAL USE PERMIT is requested in conformity with the powers vested in the Plan Commission to recommend to the City Council under Section _____ of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance to allow (insert proposed use) While the primary usage of the house at 811 West Michigan will continue to be residential, we would also like to use the home for ministry outreach to students by having regular Bible studies on Tuesday and Friday evenings as well as Sunday afternoons. This will be for gatherings of approximately 20 invited guests. We would also like to have a time every weekday morning with approximately 8 invited guests. In addition, we desire to use the property as an office approximately 15 hours a week for the student organization Christians on Campus.

On the property listed below.

1. Location of Subject Site 811 W. Michigan Ave.
 2. PIN # of Location 93-21-17-351-001
 3. Name of Applicant/Petitioner(s) Ken Mooney Phone 847-274-4175
 Address 1705 Melrose Village Cir., Apt # 832A, Urbana, IL 61801
(street/city) (state) (zip)
- Property interest of Applicant(s) Local Agent for the owner
(owner, contract buyer, etc)
4. Name of Owner(s) David K.W. & Judy T.J. Cheng Phone 909-612-5888
 Address 660 N. Diamond Bar Blvd #210, Diamond Bar, CA 91765
(street/city) (state) (zip)

If there are additional owners, please attach extra pages to the application.

5. Name of ^{Paving Contractor} Professional Site Planner(s) To be determined Phone _____

Address _____
(street/city) (state) (zip)

6. Name of Architect(s) N/A Phone _____

Address _____
(street/city) (state) (zip)

7. Name of Engineers(s) N/A Phone _____

Address _____
(street/city) (state) (zip)

8. Name of Surveyor(s) N/A Phone _____

Address _____
(street/city) (state) (zip)

If there are additional consultants, please attach extra pages to application.

DESCRIPTION, USE, AND ZONING OF PROPERTY: Attach an additional sheet if necessary

Legal Description _____

Lot 1 in University Heights Addition to Urbana as per Plat recorded in Plat Book "C" at Page 206, situated in Champaign County, Illinois.

PIN: 93-21-17-351-001

Commonly known as 811 W. Michigan Avenue, Urbana, IL.

Lot Size 90 feet x 192.5 feet = 17,325.0 square feet

Zoning Designation R-2

Proposed Use of Property Church/Ministry outreach to students.

REASONS FOR REQUEST FOR APPLICATION FOR SPECIAL USE PERMIT

NOTE: The following information must be provided in order to process the application. If additional space is needed, attach extra pages to application.

1. Explain how the proposed use is conducive to the public convenience at the location of the property.

The property is located at the corner of Michigan and Lincoln Avenues, and therefore there is easy access for students to come and go because it is directly across the street from the campus. There is a pedestrian entrance to the property from Lincoln Avenue, and there are already designated cross walks that can be used so the pedestrians can safely cross Lincoln Avenue. In order to take care of parking needs, we plan to use McKinley Health Center which allows free public parking after 5:00pm on weekdays and all weekend long. This fact means that there is ample off-site parking available during the times of the evening and Sunday Bible studies. McKinley is across the street from the home. As far as weekday mornings go, there is sufficient on-site parking for the weekday morning Bible studies.

2. Explain how the proposed use is designed, located and proposed to be operated, so that it will not be unreasonably injurious or detrimental to the district in which it shall be located, or otherwise injurious or detrimental to the public welfare.

Because there is an entrance from Lincoln Avenue to the home, most of the extra foot traffic from students will occur on Lincoln Avenue, and will not visibly impact the neighborhood. All of our Bible studies are indoors, and we only use acoustic guitars and a piano for accompaniment for singing. We do not use any amplification for the music; therefore there will not be any noise impact to the neighborhood. We have also worked with our neighbor at 805 W. Michigan to jointly erect a fence between our properties so as to reduce the visibility of cars parked in the driveway. As was stated earlier in the permit request, the primary use of the house will continue to be residential; therefore we have no need or desire to have any signage on the house. The house will continue to maintain its residential appearance.

3. Explain how the proposed use conforms to the applicable regulations and standards of and preserves the essential character of the district in which it shall be located.

The neighborhood is zoned R-2, therefore a church or ministry related use (i.e. regular Bible studies) is acceptable according to the zoning. We will abide by the occupancy requirements of the R-2 zoning rules. In order to facilitate on-site parking, we request to have the driveway paved with asphalt from the concrete slab in front of the garage to the sidewalk along Michigan Avenue. The paved portion will be approximately 16 feet wide, and will start about two feet to the west of the east property line. This means that the west edge of the asphalt will be 18 feet from the east property line. The paved portion will narrow as necessary when it comes alongside the house. In order to facilitate this driveway width, it will be necessary to widen the apron at the street by about seven feet to the west. When done, the driveway will be virtually the same width and have the same appearance as the neighbor's adjacent driveway at 805 West Michigan Ave. These two similar driveways side by side should have a symmetrical appearance that is pleasing to the eye, which will aid in upgrading the appearance of the home thereby helping to maintain property values in the neighborhood.

WHEREFORE, petitioner prays that this petition be heard by the Urbana Plan Commission and the Application for Special Use Permit be granted.

Respectfully submitted this 13th day of May, 2008

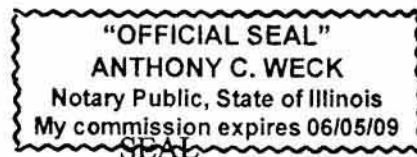
Kenneth O. Mooney
Signature of Applicant

STATE OF ILLINOIS }
 }
CHAMPAIGN COUNTY }

I, Anthony C. Weck being first duly sworn on oath, deposes and says, that Kenneth O. Mooney is the same person named in and who subscribed the above and foregoing petition, that he has read the same and knows the contents thereof, and that the matters and things therein set forth are true in substance and in fact as therein set forth.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 13th day of May, 2008

Anthony C. Weck
Notary Public



Signature of Applicant Kenneth O. Mooney

Petitioner's Attorney (if applicable) _____

Address _____

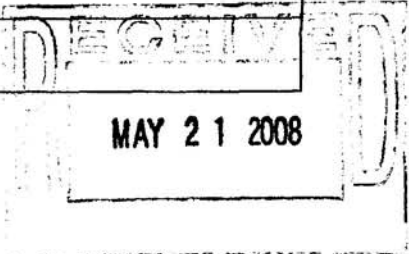
Telephone _____

May 15, 2008

We, the neighborhood families in the vicinity of 811 W. Michigan Ave. property, oppose the 'Special Use Permit' proposed by tenants and the pastor in 811 W. Michigan Ave. for the following reasons:

- (1) The property is occupied by renters who use it as an office/dwelling/fellowship house and this is incompatible with the neighborhood. The church personnel arrive early in the morning and work, essentially using this property as an office. The owner of this property, David Chang, resides in California.
- (2) Up to 8-10 cars in the driveway creates congestion; potential risks to pedestrians and children playing in the neighborhood, and is also unattractive.
- (3) A fellowship house decreases the property value of the houses around 811 W. Michigan and this is not in the City's best economic interest.
- (4) If given a special use permit, they will apply for a second driveway from Lincoln Ave. to increase parking in the backyard, effectively destroying the gardens and the look of the property.
- (5) The City of Urbana's obligation should be to the homeowners who occupy their homes and care for them (by up keeping, maintenance and beautification), not homeowners who reside outside the state and rent to multiple renters.

Name (Print)	Address	Signature
Sarah McEvoy	805 W. Michigan Ave.	<i>Sarah McEvoy</i>
Huseyin Schitoglu	805 W. Michigan Ave	<i>H Schitoglu</i>
DAVID SCHWENK	812 W. Pennsylvania Ave	<i>David M Schwenk</i>
Angelis Hays Zink Schenk	812 W Pennsylvania	Angelis H Zink Schenk



May 15, 2008

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Name (Print)	Address	Signature
Michelle Miller	204 W Pennsylvania	M. Miller
Sarah Projansky	803 W. Michigan	Sarah Projansky
Kent An	803 W. Michigan	

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May 15, 2008

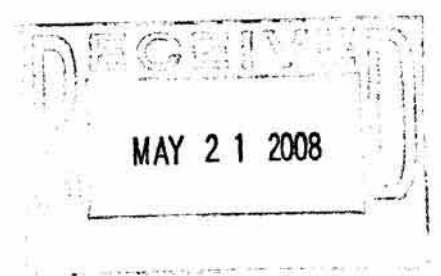
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Name (Print)	Address	Signature
Katherine Hunter	510 W. Oregon	Katherine Hunter
Lisa Trend	714 W. Iowa St	Lisa Trend
Elizabeth Cronan	305 W High	Elizabeth Cronan
Esther Patt	706 S. Cedar Av	Esther Patt
SHIRLEY STILLINGER	1009 S. BUSEY	Shirley Stillinger
Dannie Otto	405 W. Illinois St.	Dannie Otto
Susan Frobish	809 W Delaware	Susan Frobish
Georgia Morgan	804 W Nevada	Georgia Morgan
Sonia Newmark	706 W. Iowa St.	Sonia Newmark

MAY 21 2008

Name (print)	Address	Signature
Jan Fredmore	605 W. Ohio St.	Janice Fredmore
CHARLES & DANES	1107 S. BUSEY	Charles R. Jones
Lori Raetzman	1107 S. Busey	Lori Raetzman
NORMA CHILDERS	611 W Iowa	Norma H. Childers
STEVE SCHER	703 W VERMONT	Steve Scher
Joan Zagorski	1605 S. Row	JOAN ZAGORSKI
MURIEL SCHEINMAN	907 S. Busey	Muriel Scheinman
Kathryn Anthony	309 W. Penn.	Kathryn A.
Dannie Otto	409 W. Illinois St	Dannie Otto
PAT CARDENAS	204 W. IOWA	Pat Cardenas
Peggy Patten	609 W. Indiana	Peggy Patten
Richard T. Bruner	905 S. Busey	Richard T. Bruner



Karcher, Lisa

From: Tyler, Elizabeth
Sent: Tuesday, May 27, 2008 5:08 PM
To: Benjamin Grosser; Bernadine Stake; Don White; James G. Ward; Jane Burris; Lew Hopkins; Marilyn Upah-Bant; Michael Pollock; Tyler Fitch
Cc: Andel, Teri; Myers, Robert; Karcher, Lisa
Subject: 811 Communication

TO THE PLAN COMMISSION, THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES OF THE CITY OF URBANA, TO BE FILED WITH THE CITY CLERK AS A LETTER OF PROTEST AGAINST A SPECIAL USE PERMIT FOR 811 W. MICHIGAN AVE.

As owners of the single family home next door to 811 W. Michigan, and as neighbors living within 250 ft. of said property, we oppose a special use permit for a fellowship house for the following reasons:

1. The city of Urbana's comprehensive plan includes the goal of preserving owner occupied single-family homes to maintain the feel of a residential neighborhood. The American Planning Association selected West Urbana as one of 10 Great Neighborhoods in America for 2007. This standing would not be maintained if the family atmosphere in the neighborhood disappears.
2. This lowers the property values of the few remaining owner occupied homes on W. Michigan Ave. Two residential homes have already been converted for office use on this block by Twin City Bible Church and a third property has recently been acquired by TWBC. 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.
3. Because of the changes in this block, there already exists a traffic and parking problem. The addition of a fellowship house with consistent visitation during the day and evening hours, increases traffic flow considerably, on a street designed for less use. The safety of children and pedestrians in the neighborhood are threatened by these conditions, created by a fellowship house that attracts sometimes as many as 8-12 cars in the driveway. The shuffling of that many cars creates a danger, as the driveway is so close to cars entering and exiting Lincoln Ave. Neighbors have observed several near accidents.
4. Once a home is converted for group meetings, fellowship meetings, ministry and related office use, the home won't ever again be appealing as a single family home. 811 W. Michigan, until now, has always been owner occupied by families.
5. In preserving the residential character, the city is providing attractive housing to enhance recruitment and retention of University employees. For example, 803 W. Michigan, two houses from 811 W. Michigan Ave., was purchased by the previous chancellor of the University of Illinois.

Sincerely,
Sarah McEvoy and Huseyin Sehitoglu
805 W. Michigan Ave., Urbana, IL

Myers, Robert

From: Masumi Iriye [iriye@uiuc.edu]
Sent: Thursday, May 29, 2008 4:49 AM
To: Myers, Robert
Subject: Special Use Permit for 811 W. Michigan

To the Urbana Planning Commission:

I am out of the country and unable to appear in person at the June 5 meeting. I would like to register my strong opposition to awarding a special use permit for 811 W. Michigan. With Twin City Bible College, Lincoln Green and Akademia already situated very closely together on the west end of Michigan Avenue, it is imperative to protect simple single-family residential use for the remaining houses. We are already suffering from increased traffic and parking problems due to those non-single family residences. Having 20 or more people for services 3 times a week, 8-9 people for breakfast about 4 times a week will truly undermine what is such a benefit of living on that particular street: no significant non-resident foot or automobile traffic.

Sincerely,
Masumi

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Masumi Iriye
608 W. Michigan
Urbana, IL 61801

(217) 384-7092 (home)
(217) 333-6729 (work)
(217) 244-3396 (fax)

May 30, 2008

To the Urbana Plan Commission:

We are writing in strong opposition to the request for a Special Use Permit at 811 W. Michigan Avenue to conduct organized and regular religious services and business. There are several serious problems with the proposed special use.

- 1) **The proposed use is very intensive and would harm the quality of life of the families with small children in the neighboring houses.** The applicants are proposing evening gatherings of around 20 people three nights a week, and breakfast gatherings of 8-9 people around 4 mornings a week, with random dropins at all hours. That is a tremendous amount of car and foot traffic for a regular house in a residential neighborhood. The noise and threat from vehicular activity will be oppressive to families nearby.
- 2) **This use would threaten the single-family character of the Michigan Avenue block of the Lincoln-Busey corridor – an outcome at odds with the Comprehensive Plan.** In the Plan, that corridor is identified as an area where single-family use should be preserved. 811 W. Michigan is currently the northern-most single-family home in this area of Lincoln Ave, and serves as a valuable single-family residential bulwark against the procession of institutional and multi-family structures. If this permit is granted, 811 W. Michigan would no longer really be a home – it would be a small church (and our lenient sign ordinance would permit a large “information sign” identifying it as such). That block already has a large church (Twin City Bible Church, or TCBC) which recently demolished two homes to expand its structure. This block is at a tipping point, and more conversion would threaten the continued single-family status of the rest of the homes. The remaining single-family homes should be preserved for that use alone to adhere to the intent of the Comprehensive Plan.
- 3) **This activity would exacerbate parking pressure on W. Michigan Avenue and parts of Busey St.** This area is already parked up intensively on Sundays (and other occasions like weddings etc.) because of TCBC. The applicants at 811 W. Michigan claim they will use parking at McKinley. However, (a) that parking is not available during business hours for the clinic, which would seem to rule it out for morning gatherings; (b) TCBC already uses the parking at McKinley on Sundays, and (c) there is no credible plan to enforce a condition that attendees of services at 811 W. Michigan Avenue would have to park in the McKinley parking lot. The city does not have the resources for enforcement, the owners of the house live in California, and the pastor named in the permit application has no incentive to force visitors to park in an inconvenient place when they visit this church he wishes to expand.

In the last few months we have repeatedly observed a long line of cars parked single-file in the driveway of 811 W Michigan, giving it the appearance of an over-occupied rental. If the Special Use permit is approved, then over time the natural course will be to expand greatly the parking at 811 W Michigan itself, either by making parking spaces in or extending the

driveway through the back yard. Recent experience at nearby locations shows that this conversion is more or less unstoppable and detrimental to the neighborhood. It would be particularly detrimental in this particular location, whose pastoral and residential character currently offers a striking and pleasant contrast to the structures north of it for several blocks on Lincoln Ave.

Thus, we urge the Plan Commission to recommend strongly to the City Council that this application for a Special Use permit be denied.

Sincerely,

Amy W. Ando and Matthew Ando

712 W. Michigan Ave., Urbana IL 61801



NO
LEFT TURN

Notice of Public Hearing

