MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING

URBANA PLAN COMMISSION

APPROVED

DATE: August 21, 2008

TIME: 7:30 P.M.

PLACE: Urbana City Building

400 South Vine Street Urbana, IL 61801

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jane Burris, Tyler Fitch, Michael Pollock, Bernadine Stake,

Marilyn Upah-Bant, Don White

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Ben Grosser, Lew Hopkins

STAFF PRESENT: Elizabeth Tyler, Director of Community Development Services

Department; Lisa Karcher, Planner II, Jeff Engstrom, Planner I; Teri Andel, Planning Secretary; Bill Gray, Director of Public

Works Department

OTHERS PRESENT: Tom Berns, Delores Babel Cole, Chris Billing, Scott Dossett,

Marianne Downey, Andrew Durst, Sue Fristoe, Laura Huth, Marsh Jones, Mike Lehman, Margaret Miller, Dale Oakes, Tracy Philbeck, James Reedy, Jason Reedy, Rich Sciortino, Aaron P. Smith, Chris Stohr, Susan Taylor, Julie Watkins, Scott E. Wyatt

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

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m., the roll call was taken, and a quorum was declared present.

2. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

City staff requested that they move the item under New Business to be first on the agenda since a representative of the petitioner was present and was from out-of-town. With no objection from the Plan Commission, this item was moved.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Stake moved to approve the minutes of the July 31, 2008 meeting as presented. Mr. Fitch seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

4. COMMUNICATIONS

Regarding Plan Case No. 2084-S-08

♣ Site Plan for Faith Community Church

Regarding Plan Case No. 2080-M-08

- ♣ E-mail from Laura Huth
- **↓** Letter from Scott Wyatt (*Handed out during meeting*)

Regarding Plan Case No. 2082-CP-08 and Plan Case No. 2083-M-08

- **♣** E-mail from Sarah Metheny and Jason Finley
- **♣** E-mail to Tyler Fitch from Jason Finley

Other Communications

- E-mail from Elizabeth Tyler regarding the 33rd Urbana Sweetcorn Festival
- ♣ Handout for miPLAN Brief no. six
- ♣ Handout for miPLAN Brief no. seven

5. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were none.

6. OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

7. NEW BUSINESS

Plan Case No. 2085-S-08: A request by Brinshore Development, LLC for approval of a combination Preliminary and Final Plat for Crystal View Townhomes First Subdivision, located on North Broadway Avenue, North of the Saline Branch Drainage Ditch.

Jeff Engstrom, Planner I, gave the staff report for this case to the Plan Commission. He briefly introduced the case noting that the site was formerly known as Lakeside Terrace. He presented background information regarding the history of the proposed site and how Brinshore Development, LLC is proposing to redevelop the proposed site. He referred to Exhibit E, Overall Site Plan. He pointed out the land uses, zoning and Comprehensive Plan designations of the proposed site and of the adjacent properties. He discussed the following issues: green features, right-of-way vacations, subdivision layout and access, drainage and sewers, and utilities. He talked about the three subdivision waivers that the petitioner is requesting. They are as follows:

1) Waiver from Section 21.36(A)1 and Table A to allow the reduction of the pavement width for all streets from 31 feet to 28 feet. Parking will only be allowed on one side of the road;

- 2) Waiver from Section 21-36(C)4 requiring cul-de-sacs to have a minimum 100-foot right-of-way diameter and a minimum 80-foot paved turnaround diameter at the east end of Stebbins Drive. The developer is proposing that emergency and service vehicles may turn around at the parking lot access point located 50 feet west of the cul-de-sac. Construction of a full size cul-de-sac at this location is constrained by the site topography and lot dimensions; and
- 3) Waiver from Section 21-37(A)1 requiring sidewalks on both sides of the street. The developer is proposing this requirement be waived for the south side of Stebbins Drive east of Division Avenue only. An alternative sidewalk route with a five-foot width is proposed to extend along the south side of Stebbins and then north along the east side of Division Avenue for eventual extension north to Kerr Avenue and thence eastward as part of the Greenway Plan. An additional sidewalk connection will also be provided to the east at a location further north so as to facilitate a connection to the adjacent Kerr Avenue development.

He reviewed the criteria according to the Urbana Subdivision and Land Development Code that must be met when a petitioner requests waivers. He read the options of the Plan Commission and presented staff's recommendation, which was as follows:

Staff recommends that the Plan Commission forward Plan Case No. 2085-S-08, a Combination Preliminary and Final Plat for Crystal View Townhomes First Subdivision to City Council with a recommendation for approval, including the three requested waivers from the requirements of the Subdivision and Land Development Code.

Mr. White stated that on Exhibit E on the east end of Stebbins, there appears to be parking spaces on the south side of the street. Is this correct? Mr. Engstrom said that is correct.

Mr. White asked if the Fire Department and the City Engineer were satisfied with not requiring the developer to construct a cul-de-sac at the end of Stebbins Drive. Mr. Engstrom said that there was a meeting with the Public Works and Fire Departments and with the developers and engineers. They all concurred that they would be able to use the turnaround for the parking access. Mr. White expressed his concern with delivery trucks and garbage trucks having to pull into the parking lot and backing up to turn around. The proposed development is bound to have a lot of little children living there and playing outside.

Mr. White inquired if the parking lot could be moved further north. Mr. Engstrom explained that Barr Avenue is there so it would be considered a front-yard and would have to meet setback requirements.

Bill Gray, Director of Public Works Department, stated that garbage trucks would pull into the parking lot area to do a three-point turnaround and come back facing out.

Mr. Pollock wondered if the dumpster(s) would be located directly at the end of the parking lot access drive. Mr. Gray said yes.

Ms. Upah-Bant wondered if allowing Waiver #3 would set a precedent of any kind. Mr. Engstrom stated that City staff believes the proposed site is really constrained, especially with the topography of the Saline Branch Drainage Ditch on the south side of the property. They will be providing access through the proposed site. Libby Tyler, Director of Community Development Services Department, added that there is some compensation in that the petitioner has increased the width of the sidewalk to five feet (four feet is required), and they will be providing an additional length of eastward extending sidewalk at the City's request to connect the proposed development to the Kerr Avenue development. Consequently there is some compensation for other connections provided for that partial waiver.

Ms. Upah-Bant questioned if it would set a precedent to allow this waiver just because there are no homes being scheduled to be developed on the south side. Ms. Tyler stated that each case is unique and must meet the three criteria according to the Subdivision and Land Development Code. It is not like a variance. It is a technical waiver from the standards. The City does not get too many plats that meet each and every standard. So, it is not the same bar that the City has for zoning variances, where there needs to be a public hearing and the petitioner needs to prove there is a hardship or unique circumstance.

Ms. Stake asked if there is room for more houses to be built. Mr. Engstrom replied no. The Saline Branch Drainage Ditch is there.

Ms. Stake inquired as to how much the City of Urbana is helping pay for the proposed redevelopment. Mr. Engstrom recalled that the City will be paying over \$200,000 in Federal HOME funds and CDBG funds.

Ms. Stake questioned what was going to be redesigned. Mr. Engstrom clarified that the far west side of the proposed site, the lots do not meet the required setback requirements. If the petitioner feels that they cannot redesign the plans for that area, then they will need to get approval of a variance request.

Ms. Stake commented that the entire project looks like a wonderful development for many people. She feels that it is important to have time to think about it. She asked about the proposed path. Mr. Engstrom responded that the Greenways and Trails Plan calls for a path along the Saline Branch Drainage Ditch to go straight from Broadway all the way across Cunningham Avenue. Since there is private property not owned by the petitioner, they could not construct the path all the way to Cunningham Avenue. Even if they could have constructed the path, the City does not want pedestrians and cyclists to cross Cunningham Avenue mid block. Creating a tunnel beneath Cunningham Avenue presents some problems. The Urbana Park District and the City Engineering Division are in agreement that it would be better for pedestrians and cyclists to cross Cunningham Avenue at Kerr Avenue where the crossing is protected by a signal.

Ms. Stake inquired about the right-of-way vacation. Mr. Engstrom explained that there would be a public hearing to vacate the existing rights-of-way of the former development, Lakeside Terrace. The public hearing would be held on September 2, 2008, and he believes that the City Council would then take action at their next meeting.

Ms. Stake wondered how many people would be living in the townhomes. Mr. Engstrom stated that Exhibit E shows the floor plans and elevations. There will be 48 two-bedroom units, 12 three-bedroom units and 10 four-bedroom units. Each unit will house one family. The units are grouped like townhomes.

Ms. Stake questioned whether City staff has heard back from any of the utility companies. Mr. Engstrom explained that whenever staff receives a preliminary or final plat, they send it out to different agencies including Champaign County and utility providers for comments. He has received comments back from Illinois American Water Company regarding the existing water lines. They wanted to know if the petitioner would be vacating the existing water line down Division Street.

Ms. Stake believed that they should receive the Preliminary Plat first. City staff send it out for comments and review, bring the Final Plat back to the Plan Commission along with any comments received and then the Plan Commission make a recommendation to City Council. She argued that the Plan Commission does not get to see all of the information. Ms. Tyler replied that City staff has met with the utility providers. They still have a few more days to respond, but staff is not expecting more responses. The engineers met with the utility providers already.

In terms of whether it is proper to bring both the preliminary and final plats together to the Plan Commission, it is most courteous to allow for grouping. This way the Plan Commission and City Council can see all of the information at one time. The developers are ready to start construction on the proposed development. The developers and the City staff have been working on this project for about five years. City staff had brought some description prior to this meeting to the Plan Commission about four years ago.

Preliminary and final plats are not a one-step/two-step process. They serve different functions. The preliminary plat shows all of the detailed important information, such as utility lines and topography. The final plat is almost inconsequential. It only shows the lot lines. If the Plan Commission approved the Preliminary Plat only tonight, then under the Subdivision Ordinance, City staff could take the Final Plat to the City Council without the Plan Commission reviewing it. The final plat is important in that it is the plat that gets recorded, which is what allows people to buy lots that are legally described. So, for the transfer of property, final plats are important. For planning issues, preliminary plats or general area plans are more important. In this case, City staff felt it was important to bring both the preliminary and final plats to the Plan Commission for review. Ms. Stake commented that when she was on the City Council, they never had both the preliminary and final plats presented to them at the same time. By presenting them at different times, it gives the Plan Commission more time to look at it. Therefore, she objected to both plats coming before the Plan Commission at the same time.

Chair Pollock stated that the overall site plan shows an existing fence line. Is the fence still there? Will there be a fence between the Saline Branch Drainage Ditch and the proposed development? Mr. Engstrom deferred this question to the developer when he came up to speak.

Chair Pollock commented that the Plan Commission and the City staff have talked about sidewalks and about paths. Are they both going to be constructed in the proposed development?

Mr. Engstrom answered that in the proposed development the sidewalks will be extra wide as Ms. Tyler had mentioned. The sidewalks and the paths are one in the same.

Chair Pollock inquired about the connection to the Kerr Avenue development to the northeast. Will this be a path connection or a street connection? Mr. Engstrom explained that it is a proposed path connection. It will be a ten-foot right-of-way, which will allow for emergency access. It will not be a public street.

With no further questions from the Plan Commission for the City staff, Chair Pollock opened the hearing up for the petitioner's representatives and any one else that would like to address the Plan Commission.

Rich Sciortino, President of Brinshore Development, LLC, thanked everyone, especially City staff. He mentioned that the company does many projects down state and in other states in the Midwest, and he felt the Urbana City staff has been the most professional staff that he has ever worked with. They have been working on the proposed development for a long time.

Brinshore Development has tried to blend into the proposed project everything that is important to the City of Urbana from "green" elements to the walkway along Stebbins Drive, etc. They are proud to work cooperatively with the City of Urbana. He believes the Birch Village project in Champaign is a testament of how well the proposed development will run. He encouraged the Plan Commission and anyone else interested to look at the former Birch Village site. It has a waiting list and is a model community. He expects the proposed development to be just as nice.

Concerning the fence along Saline Branch Drainage Ditch, he stated that they intend to keep the fence. There is actually a space between their property line and the fence line. So, they decided rather than improve an area that is a floodplain along the Saline Branch to leave it the way it is and improve the sidewalk and the pedestrian way along south part of Stebbins Drive.

Chair Pollock wondered if the fence runs along the entire length of the southern property line. Mr. Sciortino said yes.

The community building is intended to be a model for green initiatives. The building will have recycled materials, and there will be a wind turbine to help with some of the electricity costs. Everything energy efficiency has a great payback. All of the apartments will have tenant paid utilities so they want to make sure that the utilities are not a burden to their residents. The community building will have a community room which will get used a lot. It will also have a computer center and business center in it. There will be an exercise facility for the residents.

Tom Berns, of Berns, Clancy and Associates, mentioned that they held discussions with the Urbana Park District regarding the sidewalks connecting Crystal Lake Park to Chief Shemauger Park on the east side. If they would have extended the sidewalk to Cunningham Avenue as originally planned in the Greenways and Trails Plan then the pedestrians would have ended up in the wrong place. With how they plan to provide the connection, it will be easier for pedestrians and bicyclists to cross Cunningham Avenue and get to Chief Shemauger Park at the Kerr Avenue intersection.

With no further testimony or public input, Chair Pollock closed the public portion of the hearing. He then opened the hearing for Plan Commission discussion and/or motions.

Mr. White remarked that the Urbana School District #116 has 55% low income. The problem is that the mobility rate is 25%. Champaign School District #4, by comparison, has 47% low income. The state average is 40% low income. The real problem is that the proposed development would be bringing in more low income children. The Equalized Assess Value (EAV) behind each child in Champaign is \$165,000. In Urbana, the EAV is \$115,000. The State of Illinois suggests \$150,000. Therefore, he feels that the City of Urbana has more of this type of development than they can support to really give the children the education that they need to get out of the situation that they are in.

Regarding the cul-de-sac, he is not sure if he likes the cul-de-sac not being built. Chair Pollock shared Mr. White's concern about which side of the street the parking would be on. It seems they might lose a couple of parking spaces, but they would have people facing out when they parked. It might be a better idea.

Mr. White commented that to turn around an UPS truck with ease, it would take 50 feet. A fire truck needs 60 feet. The only thing that one could turn around in the proposed cul-de-sac would be a car. He did not know how to suggest to improve it.

Ms. Stake suggested that the Plan Commission send the case back and have the developer look at the cul-de-sac. Chair Pollock did not feel that this issue would be major enough to not forward the case on. The Plan Commission could send it to the City Council with a recommendation and let the City Council know of their concern with the turnaround on the east end of Stebbins.

Mr. Gray elaborated more on this issue. He pointed out that City staff had a lengthy conversation with the developer about the cul-de-sac. In the beginning, City staff also rejected the plan outright, because it did not meet the 100-foot radius of right-of-way and 80-feet of pavement standard. City staff spoke with the engineer on the project and with the petitioner about various options, which included shortening the street and removing units, etc. If you look at the contours of the area, you can see that there is a very steep drop off, so they cannot make it a large, typical cul-de-sac width. So rather than do nothing, the proposed cul-de-sac would at least be able to accommodate smaller vehicles. When they discussed larger vehicles such as dump trucks, moving trucks, garbage trucks, etc., City staff concluded that if they pull in, then they could do a three-point turn through the large driveway to the parking to the north. It is not ideal, but they would not be pulling into someone's private driveway.

They cannot fit a normal size cul-de-sac in this area, and they did not want to reduce the street width because they want access to the units all the way to the east. They thought the proposed cul-de-sac was the best idea in a tough situation. They even looked at making it a private street versus a public street. City staff gave it a lot of thought and feel like this is the best of all the scenarios.

Chair Pollock asked if City staff had considered not allowing large vehicles beyond the turnoff. Mr. Gray replied that they are going to need to allow larger vehicles to make deliveries. Mr.

White commented that he is concerned about there being a lot of little children playing outside when a driver is trying to back up.

Ms. Stake inquired as to whether they could remove one unit to allow for a larger turnaround area. Mr. Berns explained that they have spent more time worrying about the cul-de-sac than about all the other serious, technical issues. The proposed plan is a product of a long time working with the City staff. If they did not have the cul-de-sac and did not extend Stebbins Drive to the end of the homes then it is more difficult. There is ten-foot high bluff represented by a diagonal line on the overall site plan. Barr Avenue is a long way up there. It is not possible to move anything further east because of the bluff. They were trying hard not to diminish the size of the capacity of the project, but to provide a reasonable accommodation of the right-of-way and to still allow some grass area on the south side of Stebbins before you get to the ditch.

Ms. Stake commented that sometimes developers might have to change their plans and not have as many units as they think they need to have. Ms. Tyler noted that everyone had talked early on about the size of the project. The prior City Council had pushed for more units at this location because of the affordable housing goals. This actually led to their inability to get funding for the project from the State of Illinois. So the developer went back and reduced the number of units to 70. This is the minimum that City Council felt comfortable with because they were looking at maximizing replacement of affordable housing. The previous development on the site, Lakeside Terrace, had 99 units. The last Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) submittal was successful which has locked funding into providing 70 units.

The proposed development has much more green space than Lakeside Terrace did. It will be a much safer, calmer layout than before. The traffic circle is designed to slow down traffic. City staff went back and forth with some of the technical issues on the turnaround. The proposed culde-sac is the least objectionable concept.

Mr. Fitch wondered if they had considered angling the units to the northwest. Chris Billing, of Berns, Clancy and Associates responded that he reviewed different scenarios by turning and trying to stack things in different orders, etc. There is no way to get a full-size cul-de-sac within the space that is available. The nice thing about it is that it is a very short segment of street, so there would be very little traffic that will use it. It is as low a volume street segment from a traffic standpoint as one would ever see in Urbana. This just seems to be the best solution.

Chair Pollock questioned if it would help to take out the last parking space to the south. It might be easier for one to access the cul-de-sac if there was not a car parked in the last parking space. Mr. Billing replied that the parking spaces on the south side are for visitor parking, and they are not going to be striped. They could post a "no parking" sign in that last space. There are enough parking spaces on the site.

Mr. White moved that the Plan Commission forward Plan Case No. 2085-S-08 to the City Council with a recommendation for approval including Waivers #1 and #3. He wanted to vote on Waiver #2 separately, so City Council would know that there had been discussion. Ms. Burris seconded the motion.

Roll call on the motion was as follows:

Ms. Burris	-	Yes	Mr. Fitch	-	Yes
Chair Pollock	-	Yes	Ms. Stake	-	Yes
Ms. Upah-Bant	-	Yes	Mr. White	-	Yes

The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Mr. White moved that the Plan Commission forward Waiver #2 to the City Council with a recommendation for approval. Mr. Fitch seconded the motion.

Mr. White commented that he does not like how the cul-de-sac is planned to be built. He would rather eliminate some of the units but he realizes that this is impossible. Chair Pollock stated that he has come to the same conclusion in that although the proposed cul-de-sac is not ideal it appears to be the best solution given the situation. Ms. Upah-Bant agreed. Every idea or suggestion the Plan Commission comes up with has already been thought of and rejected. She would hate to jeopardize the project because we need this development.

Roll call on the motion was as follows:

Ms. Burris	-	Yes	Mr. Fitch	-	Yes
Chair Pollock	-	Yes	Ms. Stake	-	Yes
Ms. Upah-Bant	-	Yes	Mr. White	-	No

The motion was approved by a vote of 5-1.

Ms. Stake was curious as to whether the developer planned to remove any of the trees. Mr. Billing said no. All of the existing trees will remain.

Ms. Tyler noted that Plan Case No. 2085-S-08 will be forwarded to the City Council on September 2, 2008.

8. NEW PUBLIC HEARINGS

Plan Case No. 2084-SU-08: A request by Faith Community Church for a Special Use Permit to allow for the construction of an accessory building on an existing church property located at 2105 North Willow Road in the R-1, Single-Family Residential District.

Lisa Karcher, Planner II, presented the case to the Plan Commission. She gave a brief introduction and background of the proposed special use permit request. She described the proposed site, noting its location, zoning and future land use designation as well that for the adjacent surrounding properties. She referred to the Revised Site Plan that was handed out prior to the meeting. She discussed parking and screening requirements. She reviewed the requirements for a special use permit according to Section VII-4 of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance. She read the options of the Plan Commission and presented staff's recommendation, which was as follows:

Based on the evidence presented n 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 special use permit in Plan Case No. 2084-SU-08 to the City Council with the following conditions:

- 1. The proposed development shall be constructed in general conformance to the revised site plan.
- 2. Screening shall be provided along the south boundary of the proposed parking lot to screen the parking from adjacent residential properties. The screening shall be reviewed and approved by the Zoning Administrator and the City Arborist.
- 3. Additional parking shall be provided that is equal to the amount of parking that is eliminated by the construction of the proposed accessory building.

Mr. Fitch inquired as to whether City staff expected an increase in the number of events held (i.e. wedding receptions) and if so, would there be adequate parking spaces for the increased activity? Ms. Karcher assumed that they may have an increase because they will have better facilities; however, these types of events will not be occurring at the same time as a church use would be going on. Hopefully there will not be a need to increase the number of parking spaces.

Chair Pollock asked about the subject property. Are all three lots owned by Faith Community Church? Ms. Karcher said that is correct.

Chair Pollock wanted to know if the existing parking lot is lit. Ms. Karcher replied yes.

Chair Pollock inquired as to what type of screening would be required. Ms. Karcher stated that although there is a nice tree line there, parking lot screening will be required to shield car headlights. If vegetation is used it must be at least 18 inches when planted. The City Arborist will review the screening plans.

Marsh Jones, Pastor of Faith Community Church, thanked City staff for working with them on this project. The Church is willing and happy to meet all of the City's requirements. They are planning to plant more trees. The parking lot will be striped and meet the required number of handicap parking spaces. In addition, they are hoping to make the building as green as possible.

Chair Pollock asked about the nature of the lights are in the parking lot. Pastor Jones explained that they have lights on the power towers that shine toward the existing building.

Chair Pollock commented that there is a lot of property available to build on. What was the nature of the decision that led the Church to want to build as close to the adjoining residential neighborhood as possible? Pastor Jones stated that there are two considerations. First, they want the building to be accessible out of the existing units so people could walk to the proposed building easily without going clear down to the west end of the property. It would be a long walk through the parking lot. Second, the major power lines crossing the property make it impossible to build under. Ameren IP has an easement which prohibits the Church from building under those lines. The Church is required to build 45 feet off of the center either way.

Chair Pollock asked whether the Church had considered constructing the accessory building on the west side of the existing building. Pastor Jones replied that they had thought of it. The reason for not proposing that is because again it would be a long walk from the entrances/exits of the existing buildings to the new building.

Sue Fristoe, of 2102 Hagan Boulevard, mentioned that she does not live in City limits. She expressed her concern about how far the proposed building would be from the property line. Does this set a precedent for another structure to be built to the west? Chair Pollock answered that if the petitioner plans to construct additional structures on these lots, then they would need to come back through a regular public hearing process depending upon what it is they want to do and whether or not the use would fit into the current zoning.

Ms. Fristoe expressed the concern of a neighbor about noise. Her neighbor had commented to her that she could set her clock on Sunday mornings by the children and the bus honking the horns. Chair Pollock stated because it is a request for a special use permit, the Plan Commission can make certain requirements and demands to protect the neighborhood. There is no noise barrier. The foliage used for screening the headlights in the parking lot might stop some of the noise, but it will not stop it all. Ms. Tyler explained that noise is something the Plan Commission can take into consideration and place restrictions on as far as hours of operation. The City of Urbana also has a noise ordinance to protect against loud, raucous noise. A disturbed neighbor can call the police. The City also limits the hours of construction as well.

Ms. Karcher answered Ms. Fristoe's first question by saying that the proposed building will be about 50 feet from the property line. Ms. Fristoe asked if there would be open areas to the south of the proposed building. Ms. Karcher stated that the drive is located there and will remain the same, which is about ten feet from the property line.

Ms. Stake asked whether the children will be playing in an open grassy area or on the black-top. Pastor Jones said that they would be playing on both places. Ms. Stake asked if the black top was for both parking and for children to play. Pastor Jones clarified that they are talking about two events. They have a small private school, and no one is allowed to drive on the black top on the weekdays when the children would be playing there. They have restrictions on that. However, on Sunday mornings many children play on the front drive, which is north of both existing units. This is where the buses are. He agrees that the children should not be getting on the buses and honking the horns. They try to fight this all the time.

With no further questions or comments from the public audience, Chair Pollock closed the public input portion of the hearing. He, then, opened it up for Plan Commission discussion and/or motions.

Ms. Stake moved that the Plan Commission forward Plan Case No. 2084-SU-08 to the City Council with a recommendation for approval. Ms. Upah-Bant seconded the motion. Roll call on the motion was as follows:

Ms. Burris	-	Yes	Mr. Fitch	-	Yes
Mr. Pollock	-	Yes	Ms. Stake	-	Yes
Ms. Upah-Bant	-	Yes	Mr. White	-	Yes

The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Ms. Tyler announced that this case would be forwarded to City Council on September 2, 2008.

Plan Case No. 2080-M-08: A request by the City of Urbana Zoning Administrator to rezone a number of properties in the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood.

Given the number of properties and area involved in this case, Chair Pollock suggested that after hearing the staff report and taking public input, the Plan Commission continue this case to the next scheduled meeting to allow people who want to speak and are unable to attend this meeting, an additional opportunity to do so. The Plan Commission agreed.

Lisa Karcher, Planner II, presented the case to the Plan Commission. She began by addressing the Comprehensive Plan and explained that the proposed rezoning request is a directive from the 2005 Comprehensive Plan to correct inconsistencies in the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood between the zoning and the land use. She explained the steps City staff has taken that lead up to this point in the process, which are: 1) conducting land use and zoning studies of the areas identified by the Comprehensive Plan; 2) presenting Staff's initial rezoning proposal at a Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Association meeting and a public open house in January 2008; and 3) conducting a property owner preference survey. City staff adjusted the initial proposal during each of these three steps based on the response of property owners.

She explained the proposed rezoning designations from R-4 to R-3. Chair Pollock asked if the City would be turning churches and educational institutions that are part of the proposed rezoning request into non-conforming properties under the proposed zoning. Ms. Karcher answered that technically the property itself would not become non-conforming. The use would be non-conforming in the sense that it would not have a special use permit to allow the existing use. Chair Pollock wondered if a property owner of these types of uses would be allowed to rebuild under the new zoning. Ms. Karcher explained that the property owner would need to apply for a special use permit in order to rebuild. Ms. Tyler replied that City staff wanted to avoid any situation where a property owner could not possibly rebuild, but they did allow some properties to be included in the rezoning request that would require either a conditional use permit or a special use permit to rebuild.

Chair Pollock asked what the down side would be if they do not allow these properties to be rezoned. If something happens to a property of this type, and it was not included in the proposed rezoning, then a multi-family apartment building could be built in its place, correct? Ms. Tyler said yes. The feedback from neighborhood is to correct the zoning to be more compliant with the actual uses and to limit some of the uncertainty in the area that has hampered its improvement. City staff does not want to take away the property rights of the owners, but at the same time, they want a good pattern of the rezoning so that it makes sense and fits the 2005 Comprehensive Plan. Yes, the proposal would create a very few non-conforming properties, but they have also removed some of the non-conformities that currently exist. The proposed rezoning will make the neighborhood more conforming that what it currently is. Being legally non-conforming is not necessarily harmful. Most of us probably live in homes that are legally non-conforming in one way or another.

Mr. Fitch wondered if Ms. Karcher had talked to someone at the Marilyn Queller Child Care Center or at the School of Metaphysics. Ms. Karcher pointed out that the Marilyn Queller Child Care Center is owned by the Webber Street Church, so that was part of their vote. The School of Metaphysics did send in a support of the rezoning of their property. She did not actually call them though.

Ms. Karcher continued with her staff presentation. She talked about the proposed rezoning from R-5 to R-3 and the differences between those zones. She talked about the properties that are being proposed to rezone from R-4 to CRE. She mentioned that the Urbana Park District is in favor of these three properties being rezoned to CRE.

She reviewed the proposed rezoning of the commercial properties on the north side of Main Street from B-3 to R-3. City staff is not proposing to rezone the properties in this category where the owners are opposed to the rezoning. She went on to talk about the proposed rezoning of properties from B-3 to B-2. She listed the major differences between the two districts. She mentioned that the properties who opposed being rezoned to R-3 are being proposed to rezone to B-2.

Ms. Karcher said that Staff tried to limit the number of non-conforming properties that the proposed rezoning would create. The only concerns that City staff have regarding non-conformities are with the School of Metaphysics, the Webber Church and the Marilyn Queller Child Care Center. Article X of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance does address non-conformities. It basically says that by the act of the City rezoning a property, the use would be rendered non-conforming, but it would still be considered as lawful uses and may continue as a non-conformity. City staff mailed property owner preference forms as part of its review of potential nonconformities.

She reviewed the LaSalle National Bank Criteria that pertains to the proposed rezoning case. Regarding the options of the Plan Commission, she stated that the City Attorney's office has indicated that the Plan Commission can recommend the rezoning of properties either individually, in blocks or as a whole.

Ms. Tyler added that Ms. Karcher and Mr. Engstrom have worked very hard over the last several months with the neighborhood. There is a lot of detail work on this. It is the most comprehensive zoning study that City staff has done in years. In addition to being a directive from the 2005 Comprehensive Plan, the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood is the only older neighborhood that isn't zoned single-family residential or single and two-family residential. Most older residential neighborhoods are zoned single-family. Decades ago, planners and developers had big eyes and zoned higher than uses were. There was a lot of multi-family zoning in the various neighborhoods. In recent decades, the City has down-zoned those older areas. In West Urbana, there were two or three different down-zoning efforts into the 1980s.

Regarding the three places where the business or organization would become non-conforming and need either a special use permit or a conditional use permit, should something happen to their building, the Plan Commission could try to grant those permits, but she did think it would be advisable along with the rezoning. The Marilyn Queller Child Care Center, the Webber Street

Church, and the School of Metaphysics each have a right to continue to exist. They are grandfathered.

Mr. White stated that City staff has done a good job on the rezoning case. Chair Pollock agreed.

With no questions from the Plan Commission for City staff, Chair Pollock opened up the public input portion of the hearing.

Chris Stohr, Chairman of the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Association (HEUNA), spoke in favor of the proposed rezoning case. This is an affordable housing neighborhood. Many of the property owners have put a lot of sweat equity into fixing up and maintaining their homes. It has been distressing for neighbors to see some of the homes fall into neglect and become distressed because of lack of maintenance often because they are being rented. When this happens, the property owner might apply for a demolition permit and construct an apartment building. Some apartment buildings have not fit in with the surrounding properties. There are some where the dumpster and/or the parking lot are located in the front yard. This does not benefit the neighborhood or add value to the surrounding properties. It is the Association's contention that owner-maintained and renter-maintained single and two-family residential properties adds value to the neighborhood, and so they are glad to see the City down zone many of the properties in the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood.

He submitted a letter with some photos attached from a fellow neighbor, Scott Wyatt, who lives at 204 South Grove Street. The letter is in regards to how Grove Street has fallen to developers demolishing single-family homes that add historic value to the neighborhood and building apartment complexes in their places. In his letter, Mr. Wyatt complained about variances being requested "after the fact" and often are to reduce the setback requirements, which allow the multi-family units to encroach even more into the neighborhood. The owner of the apartment complex uses the setback area to erect a self-supporting sign between the sidewalk and the complex. The photos are of two apartment complexes; one at 404 East Elm Street and the other is located at 606 East Elm Street. The so-called increase in property values and taxes is created by the property owner allowing an existing structure to be run down to the point where it has no property value. If they would have maintained the property as a good property owner might, the whole area would benefit.

Deloris Elizabeth Cole, owner of Lipton Animal Hospital, stated that her property is not up for rezoning. However, she wanted to ask the Plan Commission to consider the affect the rezoning would have on her property and the future of her business. She is not necessarily opposed to the rezoning.

Laura Huth, of 408 West William in Champaign, mentioned that she owns a business at 201 West Green Street in downtown Urbana. She pointed out that she had submitted electronic comments in support of the rezoning. She stated that the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood is very supportive of the proposed rezoning. When she moved to the Champaign-Urbana area, she lived at 504-1/2 East Elm Street. She got to know her neighbors pretty quickly, and then they began to leave either because their units were being torn down and replaced with apartment buildings that do not fit into the character of the neighborhood. Many other people chose to leave as the neighborhood began to change. This is one of the reasons why she decided to run

for City Council. She is very supportive of the proposed rezoning. The work that City staff and HEUNA have done is great. She commented that she is also in support of Plan Case No. 2082-CP-08 and 2083-M-08 to rezone 502, 504 and 508 East Elm Street as well.

Scott Dossett, of 501 East High Street, stated that he is not totally supportive of the proposed rezoning case. He is one of the founding members of HEUNA. His concerns have more to do with the integrity and the feel of the planning process and how it relates to citizen expectation and fudging of boundary lines in this specific case. He realizes that City staff has spent a lot of time on this and has met with the neighborhood to get input from the residents.

If you align Exhibit B, C and D, you will note that on Exhibit B in the yellow area marked as the "Historic East Urbana area" and up, it extends the entire way along Green Street to Urbana Street, which is where the pink area starts. In looking at Exhibit C, you will note that the area in yellow that was targeted for neighborhood preservation gets truncated by the block between Urbana and Maple on Green Street. In Exhibit D, we lose another block between Maple Street and South Grove Street. He is particularly concerned about the loss of the last area, which essentially amounts to the 8 or 10 properties that project out to the west. His interest in these properties is magnified by the next two cases, Plan Case No. 2082-CP-08 and 2083-M-08, which are the properties on the north side of the block where three property owners have come together to petition the City to down zone their homes to R-3. Immediately across their properties to the south (in spite of the fact that it was included in the study area) are properties being left zoned R-5. He does not understand why this happened, because two of the homes are small single-family homes that have not been occupied very steadily for many years. His fear is that someone has made offers on these two homes, and the neighborhood is going to get R-5 development there. Therefore, he asked the Plan Commission to look at the inconsistencies in the planning process as they make their deliberations.

Ms. Karcher responded that City staff originally began this case studying the entire area, and when they looked at the Comprehensive Plan, they realized that the areas that were the intent of the City Council and in the Comprehensive Plan were outlined by the dashed lines. This is part of the reason why the block was taken out of the proposed rezoning. The other reason is that City staff has already seen construction plans to convert two properties into apartment structures. These plans have already moved forward regardless of the outcome of the proposed case.

Ms. Tyler added that the dashed line is hard to see on the Comprehensive Plan map. The dashed line goes down Grove Street. It is a border on the map. City staff did not feel that they could second guess what the Comprehensive Plan maybe should have been. The Comprehensive Plan took years to update. These boundaries were drawn and adopted by Ordinance. City staff felt it would be not in keeping with the Comprehensive Plan to extend the boundaries of the proposed rezoning. City staff did study a little larger area and then adjusted the boundaries. City staff did let owners of properties just west of the line that the City would be able to deal with their requests as a separate case.

Mike Lehman, of 608 East Green Street, stated that he is happy to see the proposed rezoning. He has a long term commitment to the area. This started out in 1950, somehow or another. The Illinois Terminal, what we now called light rail, went right down along Main Street. Hopefully, the proposed rezoning will preserve the area in case the railroad comes back.

Almost half of the properties included in the proposed rezoning are single-family owner-occupied homes. Almost 80% are already in conformity meaning duplexes or single-family homes whether rented or owner-occupied. He feels that there is an enormous amount of support for the rezoning. One person complained that they had just bought a house and had big plans. This person felt that the proposed rezoning would hurt the neighborhood. His opinion is that the community does not owe anyone for bad market timing with their investments.

The real question is whether the government is supposed to guarantee people a quick profit or support a viable neighborhood. Sure someone could come in and tear down a house and build an apartment complex and say that the property value went up. It does not take into account the neighboring properties, and if it is 80% of the people, then this needs to be taken into account. He stated that he would like to be able to sell his house someday if he should ever move and make a little money on it, but the bottom line here is a longer term investment where people invest their money, their families and work in rehabilitating and maintaining their homes. These are all strategic investments in building a better community. The majority of the property owners support the down zoning. It makes a lot of sense.

Marianne Downey, of 503 East California Avenue, spoke in favor of the proposed rezoning. She has lived in the area for the last four and a half years, and she loves it. She has seen many young families move in and continue with the efforts of the retirees. She would like to see a balance maintained, not only of the older neighborhood members, but of the new members who move in. She would also like to see a balance between owner-occupied homes and renter-occupied homes. When any of these particular populations get out of balance that is when you see situations in the neighborhood that are not sustainable or wear down the neighborhood in one way or another. Balance is what they are trying to achieve, and the proposed rezoning will help them to continue to bring more balance into the neighborhood.

Margaret Miller, of 501 East High Street, expressed her concern about Maple Street being dropped from the proposed rezoning. She does not want to see more houses be demolished and turned into parking lots or apartment buildings.

With no further comments or questions from the audience, Chair Pollock closed the public portion of the hearing.

Ms. Stake asked why Maple Street was not included in the rezoning. Ms. Karcher explained that City staff is essentially sticking to the Comprehensive Plan that shows a dashed line ending at South Grove Street. It goes from Grove Street to Green Street to Glover Street to East Main Street. City staff stayed within this boundary for the actual proposed rezoning.

Ms. Stake wondered why the Comprehensive Plan was planned this way. Ms. Tyler responded that the zoning jumps up to R-5 west of Grove Street. City staff is looking primarily at the R-4 Zoning District. It may be with the next two cases through the City's regular rezoning process that it could be altered.

Ms. Stake wondered if people on Maple Street could then come in and ask for their properties to be rezoned. Ms. Tyler said yes. With the boundary (dashed line) in the Comprehensive Plan,

City staff felt they would be out of line to extend that within the purview of the study. City staff is following the Comprehensive Plan's study area. There may be some subsequent actions occur which would not be surprising.

Chair Pollock announced that this case would be continued to the next scheduled meeting of the Plan Commission on September 4, 2008.

Plan Case No. 2082-CP-08: A request by Sara Metheny, Jason Finley, Samuel Santos and Elizabeth Adams to amend the 2005 Urbana Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use Map designation for 502, 504 and 508 East Elm Street from Central Business to Residential (Urban Pattern).

Plan Case No. 2083-M-08: A request by Sara Metheny, Jason Finley, Samuel Santos and Elizabeth Adams to rezone 502, 504 and 508 East Elm Street from R-5, Medium High Density Multiple Family Residential, to R-3, Single and Two-Family Residential.

Lisa Karcher, Planner II, presented these two cases together to the Plan Commission. Referring to Exhibit A, she showed where the three properties are located on East Elm Street. She described the proposed uses of the three properties as well as that of the surrounding properties. Also, she noted the zoning of the proposed properties and of the surrounding properties. Exhibit C shows how the proposed rezoning relates to the Future Land Use Map. The properties are part of the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood area. The petitioners have proposed an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan, so that the proposed zoning and its existing use is consistent with the current use of the properties as single-family homes. She reviewed the LaSalle National Bank Criteria that pertain to the proposed rezoning case. She read the options of the Plan Commission, and she presented staff's recommendation, which was as follows:

Staff recommended that the Plan Commission take action on the Comprehensive Plan Amendment prior to taking action on the rezoning. 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 forward both Plan Case Nos. 2082-CP-08 and 2083-M-08 to the Urbana City Council with a recommendation for approval.

Ms. Upah-Bant stated that she is entirely baffled by this case. It appears to her that this would be spot zoning. She understands why the property owners would want to rezone to R-3, but it bothers her that there are two properties zoned R-5 right in the middle of them. How can they approve this? How can they amend the Comprehensive Plan and make a little island of R-5? Chair Pollock commented that "Residential" as indicated in the Comprehensive Plan would cover the R-3, R-4 and R-5 Zoning Districts. These zoning districts are all residential zoning districts. The rezoning would be different though. The Comprehensive Plan would allow us to do this in a uniform way.

Ms. Karcher suggested looking at this in a larger context. City staff is proposing a rezoning of the properties to the east to R-3. Planners like to think in terms of blocks. In the proposed rezoning case, it is consistent in the sense that City staff is proposing to rezone properties east of

Grove Street which would also be zoned R-3. It would be somewhat of a continuation of that rezoning except the two properties in between would remain zoned R-5. Ms. Upah-Bant asked if this is not kind of odd. Ms. Karcher replied said yes and no. South of there, everything is zoned as R-5, but there is still a mix of multi-family and single-family. The applicants are attempting to preserve the use of their properties as single-family and protecting it. Ms. Tyler added that it is not an easy case. Usually people want to up zone, and here we have people wanting to down zone to match what their use is. There is a rezoning study going on nearby.

The harder planning question is about changing the Comprehensive Plan. We cannot meet the LaSalle National Bank Criteria without changing the Comprehensive Plan. One question led to another. Chair Pollock asked if it is fair to say that the HEUNA rezoning case and the fact that this area was left out has spurred the petitioners to want to attach to the HEUNA rezoning. Ms. Tyler said yes.

Mr. White remarked that the community decided in 2005 that they wanted to do through the Comprehensive Plan. He does not understand why staff is messing with it at all. It is a 2005 document and is labeled as such. It is not zoning, and it is not a legal requirement. So let's not keep trying to amend the Comprehensive Plan. As far as the change in zoning, he does not have a problem with it. It does kind of look like spot zoning.

Chair Pollock commented that in the past there have been zoning changes made that did not necessarily match the Comprehensive Plan, and there has not always been a change to the Comprehensive Plan to precede the changes. He inquired as to whether there is some legal jeopardy in doing rezoning without changing the Comprehensive Plan. Why are they going together in this case? Ms. Tyler replied that City staff is trying to be fastidious. She believes that they could rezone without changing the Comprehensive Plan. She did not think it would create legal jeopardy but that staff could check with the Legal Department.

Chair Pollock questioned if they are moving into a direction where if a proposed rezoning is not in line with the Comprehensive Plan designation, then the Plan Commission and City Council should expect to see an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Tyler said yes. This is what they have done in the past. It is the way in which City staff feels they need to bring rezoning requests forward technically. The Plan Commission and/or City Council might feel comfortable with the rezoning but not with the amendment to the Comprehensive Plan. This has happened in the past, and it is okay. Generally, Staff wants the two to be consistent.

Chair Pollock wondered if this is a minor change in direction in terms of looking more regularly at looking at rezoning requests and amendments to the Comprehensive Plan together. Ms. Tyler said that City staff would like to be able to do that. We stopped being able to do that very effectively with the old Comprehensive Plan. The old plan was just so out-of-date. Now, we have a new up-to-date plan, and we really do not want to see a lot of amendments. If there is a big change of direction then staff will bring it forward to Plan Commission and City Council to discuss it. We do need to be able to amend the Comprehensive Plan from time to time for the right reasons. Staff feels it is best to bring rezoning requests and amendments to the Comprehensive Plan together to the Plan Commission and City Council.

Mr. White remarked that the 2005 Comprehensive Plan was approved by City Council without changing the zoning, so why change the Comprehensive Plan when changing the zoning? Chair Pollock suggested that the Plan Commission concentrate on what is before them. They have the opportunity if they do not agree with this to vote on one and not on the other.

Mr. Fitch asked if the block immediately to the south of the proposed three properties was the block that City staff removed from the proposed Historic East Urbana rezoning area. Ms. Karcher said yes.

Mr. Fitch inquired if these three property owners had requested to be included in the Historic East Urbana rezoning area. Ms. Karcher explained that the proposed case before them came out of the petitioners attending the Neighborhood Open House that City staff held regarding the Historic East Urbana rezoning study. The petitioners told staff that they desired to have their properties be part of the rezoning study. City staff told them that unfortunately their properties are not within the study area and that under the Comprehensive Plan, their properties are designated as being "Central Business." These three properties were not included in the Historic East Urbana rezoning for these reasons.

Mr. Fitch questioned if the petitioners had filed the proposed rezoning application prior to City staff removing the block to the south from the study area. Ms. Karcher replied that technically staff did not publish anything in the study area. When the petitioners attended the open house the block to the south was part of the zoning study. Many things changed after receiving input from the neighborhood.

Ms. Karcher reiterated that the proposed rezoning request is different from what they normally see in that the rezoning is going down rather than up. They look at the Comprehensive Plan to see if it supports what is being proposed. Her only recommendation is that if the Plan Commission is thinking about doing a rezoning and not a Comprehensive Plan amendment that they make sure they state why they are doing it. The Comprehensive Plan is a guiding document. Ms. Tyler added that if the Plan Commission did not want to approve the Comprehensive Plan and approve the rezoning, then they make a finding about the timing. It is a good thing to think about in terms of in the long run, what should the Central Business District area be. There is a way to decouple these two cases if the Plan Commission is not comfortable with the Comprehensive Plan aspect.

Chair Pollock stated that they are two different cases. It is his intention, especially after hearing the discussion, to take the cases separately.

Ms. Upah-Bant felt like she was still missing something. She appreciated the explanations that Ms. Karcher and Ms. Tyler have given. However, what if these three property owners had asked to be rezoned to R-7? They are not making any changes based on the zoning change. She felt that this is what the real difference is in the proposed case. No one ever asks to increase their zoning and then not act on it. Now we are down zoning and it will not make any difference. Ms. Karcher explained that it will make a difference to the petitioners because it is their intention to preserve their properties as single-family. Ms. Upah-Bant argued that the petitioners are the property owners so of course they can preserve their properties even without the rezoning. Is this an attempt to reach beyond the grave and make sure that their properties never change? One

might almost think that it is a way to stick it to the two property owners in the middle of these three properties.

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

Jason Reedy, of 501 East Elm Street, explained that he is not one of the petitioners in this case. He owns a property on the other side of Elm Street that refused to participate. He stated that the petitioners do not want to rezone their properties. They think they do because they think they are preserving their neighborhood, but it is too late to preserve the neighborhood, especially now that two more homes to the east are planned to be demolished and rebuilt as multi-family apartment building.

Chair Pollock asked if Mr. Reedy realized that under a lower zoning this would not be allowed to happen. The petitioners in this case want to rezone their properties to a lower designation to protect that area from being redeveloped into multi-family dwellings. Mr. Reedy urged the Plan Commission to deny the proposed rezoning case before them because otherwise the petitioners will be stuck in the neighborhood surrounded by multi-family homes like he is. The difference is that he wants his property to remain zoned as R-5, so he can sell his home easier when he decides to do so. No one wants to live in a single-family home completely surrounded by multi-family apartment buildings. The Plan Commission would be helping the petitioners by denying the proposed rezoning case before them.

He agreed that it would be great if all of the properties in this area were included in the Historic East Urbana rezoning. It would force the R-5 units to become non-compliant. Then if something happened to the apartment buildings such as a wind storm, fire, etc., the property owners would not be able to rebuild the apartment buildings. The neighborhood could have an opportunity to retake these properties and turn them back into single-family homes. But as it stands now, this part of the neighborhood is gone as far as single-family homes. The only thing left to do is sell your house, leave the neighborhood and let it get demolished. It is a shame but that is where it is going.

Christopher Stohr, of 405 East High Street, stated that Ms. Metheny could not attend the meeting because of work responsibilities. He commented that Mr. Reedy's story has been heard time and time again where a property owner has sunk their hearts and souls and money into maintaining and fixing up their properties only to find themselves living next door to an apartment building. It is heart breaking. This is the same reason why Ms. Metheny and the other petitioners want to try and hold onto and preserve what little single-family residential aspects are left in this area. As a part of that neighborhood he supports the petitioners and continues to encourage his neighbors to down zone their properties to preserve what is left.

With no further input from the audience, Chair Pollock suggested that the Plan Commission continue these two cases to the next scheduled meeting to give the petitioners another opportunity to attend the public hearing and address the Plan Commission. With no objection from the Plan Commission this public hearing was continued until September 4, 2008.

9. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

There was none.

10. STAFF REPORT

Ms. Karcher reported on the following:

- ♣ Rezoning of 804-1/2 East Main Street was approved by City Council.
- ♣ Trammel Crow Special Use Permit was approved by City Council.
- ♣ The cases forward at this meeting will go before City Council on September 2, 2008.

11. STUDY SESSION

There was none.

12. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

The meeting was adjourned at 10:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Myers, AICP Secretary, Urbana Plan Commission