



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Planning Division

m e m o r a n d u m

TO: Bruce K. Walden, Chief Administrative Officer

FROM: Elizabeth H. Tyler, Director

DATE: November 18, 2004

SUBJECT: Historic Preservation Commission review of the Library Master Plan

Back in September the City Council requested that the Urbana Historic Preservation Commission review and comment on the Library Master Plan with respect to the existing structures on the block. On October 27, 2004 the Historic Preservation Commission conducted a meeting and discussed this topic. Attached are the minutes of the meeting. The Commission passed a motion to the City Council which can be found on page 12 of the minutes. The motion passed 5-1 and reads as follows:

The Historic Preservation Commission recommends to the City Council that the integrity of the streetscape and the integrity of the block be maintained including the Auler Building, which anchors an important corner; the Marro Building, which also anchors an important corner and possesses historic and architectural significance; and the Fejes House, which also possesses historic and architectural significance. There is a potential for economic development in all three of these properties.

The Commission wanted to clarify that the term “streetscape” was not intended to mean simply sidewalks and streetlights but rather the overall fabric of the built urban environment.

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

DRAFT

DATE: October 27, 2004

TIME: 7:00 p.m.

PLACE: Council Chambers, 400 South Vine Street, Urbana, Illinois 61801

MEMBERS PRESENT: Rich Cahill, Scott Dossett, Alice Novak, Bill Rose, Trent Shepard, Art Zangerl

MEMBERS EXCUSED: None

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Rob Kowalski, Planning Manager; Michaela Oktay, Senior Planner; Teri Andel, Planning Secretary

OTHERS PRESENT: Ernie and Sylvia Sullivan

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

Urbana Historic Preservation Commission Chair, Alice Novak, called the meeting to order at 7:00p.m. The roll call was taken, and a quorum was declared with full attendance of the members being present.

2. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

Rob Kowalski, Planning Manager, suggested moving Item #5 – Audience Participation to occur after Item #11 – Staff Report since most of the people in the audience were there to speak on behalf of Item #9 – New Business. The members of the Historic Preservation Commission approved.

3. APPROVAL OF THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

Mr. Dossett moved to approve the minutes from August 4, 2004 as amended. Mr. Cahill seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by unanimous vote as amended.

4. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

- Letter from Rupert Evans, President of the Urbana Free Library Foundation.

5. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were none.

6. OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

7. NEW PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were none.

8. NEW BUSINESS

Discussion of the Library Master Plan

Mr. Kowalski gave a brief explanation of how the request from the Urbana City Council came about for the Historic Preservation Commission to discuss not only the Library Master Plan, but also to discuss the existing structures that were on the block. He pointed out that the commission would hear two different presentations. One presentation would be given by City staff on the analysis of the existing buildings on the block, and the other presentation would be given by the Library Board and the Foundation on the materials of the Library Master Plan.

He introduced Rebecca Guest, Planning Intern, to the commission. Ms. Guest presented the staff report on the analysis of the existing structures on the block by showing and discussing the following:

- ▶ Aerial View of the Block
- ▶ Historic Sanborn Maps
- ▶ Recent Aerial View of the Block
- ▶ Photos of the Tepper Building
- ▶ Photos of the Fejes House
- ▶ Photo of the Marro Building
- ▶ Photo of the Auler Building

Mr. Kowalski noted that the City currently did not have any code problems or issues with the Fejes House or the Auler Building. The Winkleman Building was demolished and would be placed by Cherry Alley Pedestrian Way. The Tepper Building was in fine shape. However, the City's Building Safety Division had recently inspected the Marro Building and found some significant work that needed to be done on the building. He mentioned that the Marro Building was currently not being used. Depending on how the building would be used would determine what code compliance would need to be done.

He gave a listing of who owns each of the buildings being discussed. He pointed out that the City had been doing a significant amount of streetscape improvements around the immediate area.

Ms. Novak inquired if all of the property owned by the City was for sale? Mr. Kowalski stated that he was not aware of that.

Mr. Dossett commented that he walked around the proposed block. He assumed that the Auler Building was brick fascia over some other kind of constructed material. On the north side, the material had degenerated and was peeling away from the wall. On the south side, the tuck-pointing was in bad enough condition that some of the bricks looked pretty loose and liable to fall off. He was concerned about the south and eastern parts of the building in a life safety perspective with the close proximity of the building to the sidewalk.

Rupert Evans, President of the Urbana Free Library Foundation, read his letter of statement to the Urbana Historic Preservation Commission. He mentioned that he had copies of the Second Agreement for anyone interested in reading it.

Ms. Novak questioned when the library would purchase the Tepper Building? Mr. Evans answered by saying that the library would not purchase the Tepper Building. The City had already purchased the Tepper Building and was in the process of transferring the property to the library. The library was currently using it, and the Foundation re-roofed and strengthened all of the floors inside. Ms. Novak asked if there would not be any reimbursement to the City for the purchase of the Tepper Building? Mr. Evans replied that was correct.

Ms. Novak understood that the Auler Building was currently for sale. Mr. Evans stated that he had talked to Mr. Auler about the building being for sale and also about the possibility of the building becoming available for library use. Mr. Auler had indicated that he would be willing to work with the Foundation and the City if they could come up with a significant amount of money.

Mr. Rose noted that the Master Plan was adopted on July 13, 2004. Was there a preliminary plan of some kind that accompanied the architectural development? He imagined that there would have to be one in place for placement of the front entry. Was there another document prior to the July 13, 2004 adoption that described the disposition of the proposed properties? Mr. Evans replied yes and no. July 13, 2004 was the date of the adoption by the Library Board of Trustees and the Library Foundation. It would not go into effect until it was adopted by the Urbana City Council. There were two or three versions of the Master Plan that were discussed over a period of several months by the Foundation and the Board of Trustees before they reached an agreement on what they wanted to send to the City Council. The Overall Site Plan, that was included in the packet of information for the Historic Preservation Commission, was the plan that the Foundation and the Board of Trustees had been working from. The site plan was dated around July 2004.

Charlie Smyth, Vice-President of the Board of Trustees, noted that he was going to address the issue that had been raised as part of his statement. He presented some background information that lead to the statement from the Library's Board of Trustees that also had been included in the packet of information.

He noted that when he came onto the Board in 2001, the plans for expansion were going full tilt. Therefore, he was involved in the last steps of the process. Planning for the most recent expansion of the library immediate began the last expansion in 1971. During the planning process, the current Board of Trustees had tried to take a block-wide approach to planning. As a result, a formal Master Plan had been developed and submitted to the City Council. The Master Plan came from an earlier version that was developed in 2001, which was part of the initial drawings of the building. The Master Plan was not a done deal. They were only trying to formalize the process. It did not have

any dates for action or call for specific actions at the present time. The Master Plan was there to guide development in the coming years and calls for regular revision, because no one knows what was going to happen in 20 years.

Mr. Smyth went on to say that the single, most important thing for the library was that incompatible uses not develop immediately adjacent to the library that would somehow limit the possibilities for the future. To this end, the Library Foundation and the City have worked to acquire control of as much of the properties surrounding the library as they could. The City owned the Winklemann Building and was using it for archives. The Winklemann Building was demolished and the functions of that building were relocated to the Tepper Building, which had been remodeled. The City now owns the Marro Building. With owning the Marro Building, no one could go in and buy the Marro Building and the Fejes House and develop something there that would limit the library in the future. Effectively, the City now controlled the block from the point-of-view that nothing commercial could be developed that would limit the library in the future.

He talked about the Auler Building on the southeast corner of the block. It had a very small footprint. It would be nice if the library could control the Auler property as well; however, it was not essential to the future expansion of the library going westward.

In the foreseeable future, the City would like to develop a compatible use of the Marro Building that worked with the library such as a café or a bookshop. They wanted to develop something that would compliment the library in its new footprint.

Mr. Smyth stressed that in the Master Plan, the library wanted to be a part of the planning and redevelopment of Downtown Urbana. The library had made a commitment to stay downtown, but there were drawbacks with limited parking, etc.

Mr. Cahill inquired what the relationship was between the Library Board of Trustees and the Library Foundation? Mr. Evans responded by saying that the Board of Trustees was an agent of the City. The Mayor appointed the members of the Board of Trustees, and they had a responsibility for operating the library. The Foundation was setup 6 or 7 years ago because there was recognition by a number of people in the City of Urbana that there were some things that needed to be done to help the library, and there was not enough tax money to do it. So, the Foundation mostly engages in raising money for the library. All of the money that the Foundation raises has to be spent on enhancements of the library, including acquisition of property, which would enhance the library. Anything the Foundation does was in aid of the Board of Trustees. The Foundation was made up of all volunteers.

Mr. Shepard thought that Angie Mitchum had owned the parking lot to the west of the Tepper Building while Mike Tepper owned the Tepper Building. Did the City own the parking lot now? Mr. Smyth stated that the City owned the parking lot and would continue to rent the spaces as they see fit, even through the transfer of the Tepper Building to the library.

Mr. Zangerl commented that he was still trying to figure out the details regarding the transfer of the Marro Building. Mr. Smyth explained that the City was basically giving the Tepper Building to the library. The City still owes money on the Tepper Building. The City had been renting it out as an income producing property to pay off the mortgage. Basically what was going to happen was that the Foundation would kick in money to cover the mortgage, buy the Marro Building and allow the

City to use the Marro Building to pay down the mortgage on the Tepper Building, so they could give the Tepper Building to the library. It was sort of a three-way swap. Should the Foundation come up with the money to pay off the leftover debt of the Marro Building would be an option in the Agreement to speed up the acquisition of the property by the Library Foundation.

Mr. Zangerl asked if the fate of the building would have to be agreed upon by the three signatory bodies? Mr. Smyth replied that was correct. Their original thinking was that the Marro Building would be demolished. For the foreseeable future, they thought that the Marro Building could be used in some fashion that would be compatible with the library as an income-producing property, such as a café.

Mr. Dossett noted that the library's immediate problem was parking. He asked what the library's plan was to address it? Mr. Smyth replied that the Cherry Alley would add back a little more parking spaces than what was available in the alleyway between the Winklemann Building and the City building. The layout shows the flow of traffic going out between the Tepper Building and the Fejes House. There really would be no net loss of parking, and in actuality a gain of a few spaces. There would also be some bicycle parking and a pedestrian way when the plans were completed. The library was exploring some possibilities with the Historic Lincoln Hotel to see if they could share the hotel's parking lot. The library found that the parking needs are in the late afternoons into the evenings when the students get out of high school and when families start coming in from around the community and on the weekends as well. Mr. Evans added that there was a problem with the handicap parking. There were only two handicap parking spaces, which were often filled.

Mr. Dossett guessed that the Winklemann Building would give the library four more handicap parking spaces. Mr. Evans said that there would be eight additional parking spaces in total from the Winklemann Building. Mr. Smyth added that there would also be a much nicer bus shelter built somewhere along and adjacent to the Cherry Alley design.

Mr. Dossett asked for more detail about the egress between the Fejes House and the existing structure. Mr. Smyth noted that the book drop would be in a driveway that would run between the library building into an alley that went to the Tepper Building. There would be two loading areas for the library. One would be off Elm Street on the north side, and there would also be the ability to back into the main doors of the library on the south side.

Mr. Shepard inquired as to how many parking spaces there would be in total. Mr. Smyth replied that there would be 45 parking spaces including two designated for handicap, which was a lot less than what a suburban library would have. This was a City library, and they tried to balance having some parking against having miles of parking. He pointed out that the former metered parking spaces on Elm Street would be returned at the conclusion of the construction.

Mr. Shepard questioned if the entrance to Race Street would still be useable? Mr. Smyth replied yes. The Elm Street entrance would only be a delivery entrance or emergency exit.

Mr. Zangerl commented that part of the Master Plan referred to the responsibility of costs for certain activities. Would there be some discussion of who would bear the responsibility for the moving of the Fejes House? Mr. Smyth answered by saying that was not addressed in any of the Agreements between the library, the Foundation and the City, because there was no need to move the Fejes House at this time. Nor would it be likely unless the library needed to expand westward. Mr.

Zangerl felt that this was important enough to think about and to figure out the cost of acquiring and moving the Fejes House versus buying the Auler property, demolishing the Auler building and developing the property as a parking lot. Mr. Evans remarked that the cost of acquisition of the Auler Building would be so substantial that it would dwarf any other consideration on the block. Ms. Novak commented that to make a house available for moving was one thing, but the reality of moving a house was another thing. If the City was interested in preserving a structure through moving, then the dropping of utility lines and the cost of a lot onto which to relocate the structure must also be considered. The simple outright purchase of a property was a portion of what the real cost would be.

Curtis Pettyjohn, of 907 South Orchard, stated that it was difficult to speak against the Master Plan, because the people working for the library were good people, and what they were trying to do was for the good of the City. Yet, he felt that the direction that the plan was moving was wrong. Historic preservation was not about preserving a building for 5 years or 10 years. It was about preserving it.

One of the statements that were made at the City Council meeting concerning the Master Plan was that parking was needed. People could not walk half a block to the City's parking lot. But ironic enough, if the library demolished the Marro Building and replaced it with parking, people would still have to walk half a block to get to the entrance of the library. He watched far too many buildings in the neighborhood be torn down. He would like to see a plan in place to preserve and use all of the existing structures on the block.

Mr. Pettyjohn went on to say that the buildings were contextual. It bothered him that every building that was developed wanted to have a clear view of itself with nothing in the way. He was concerned that there would be yet another hole in the community.

Linda Lorenz, of 409 West High Street, stated that she was a librarian and loved the library. However, she did not want anyone to tear down the existing structures on the block. She agreed with Mr. Pettyjohn's comments. She did not understand how they got to this point without more input from the people. When the library decided to expand and presented a plan to the City, where were the people to ask about the plans for the parking? There was nothing but parking lots all over Downtown Urbana. She thought that there should be someone involved in the planning process that understood transportation planning. They had the opportunity to do something innovating such as having a mini bus that would go around and pick people up and take them a half a block to the library if they could not walk. Mr. Zangerl responded by saying that the Mass-Transit District (MTD) intended to build a heated bus shelter where the Winklemann Building used to be.

Robert Nemeth, representative for the Preservation and Conservation Association (PACA), would like to see the Marro Building and the Fejes House be preserved. Both buildings have historical value to the City of Urbana. The Fejes House was well over 100 years old, and to this day appeared to be in good condition. The Marro Building, although not nearly as pristine, still had a lot of character and appeared to have a lot of potential. The Urbana Free Library Master Plan described their desire to purchase and move the Fejes House and demolish the Marro Building. This would be unfortunate.

These buildings have been part of the existing location since the 1930s, and they used to be part of a residential urban fabric that existed in the neighborhood. Regrettably from an architectural and

urban standpoint, the entire Green Street corridor had lost several charming residences throughout the last 20 years. Because the context surrounding these buildings has to a large extent vanished, these buildings become all the more important. They provide a portal to the past by allowing people to see a part of Urbana's history and by serving as a connection to our fore fathers and our heritage.

PACA would like to see the buildings become a composition with the beautiful new library, so that one could compliment the other. What kind of urban fabric did the City want? A diverse fabric that respected and incorporated historical structures into its fabric that did not have much connection to the past?

Mr. Nemeth went on to say that moving homes in order to preserve them used to be a fairly common practice. It has become prohibitively expensive to do so today. He talked about his experience being involved with the group that had tried to move the Garrett House. Unfortunately, it had become so expensive to move the house a simple block and a half that the Garrett House ended up being torn down. It was very disappointing.

One other aspect to consider was how did this concept of sustainability relate to the corner where the Marro Building is located? Should the City of Urbana practice sustainability and to reuse these buildings in creative ways? Do we challenge ourselves to try to reuse these buildings or do we wipe the slate clean? By reusing these buildings in a creative manner, we send a message that we care about our past and end up with something much richer and stimulating than without these buildings. PACA hoped that the Historic Preservation Commission, the Urbana Free Library and the City of Urbana work together to save the Marro Building and the Fejes House and leave a legacy for future generations. This composition of old and new would hopefully cause people to reflect upon and gain an appreciation for a bygone era, and with any luck appreciate the vision it took to create this marriage of old and new.

Steve Mechling, of 901 West Green Street in Champaign, stated that he had been involved in historic preservation and was a member of PACA. His interest was in the Marro Building. He noted that the building had been heavily altered from its original design, and it was in questionable condition. It would take an extreme amount of work to salvage it. Basically, he wanted to go on record to say that if they decide to raze the building, then he would like to have the opportunity to try to preserve it and move it. He did some research and found that it would be possible to move it without damaging it.

Mr. Smyth had some follow up comments. He stated that the Library's Board of Trustees position was that they did not know what the future held. All that they had done so far was to expand the footprint of the library. Although, they expected to see some growth of the library over time, they did not know what was going to happen or what the parking needs would be. They had addressed the needs of MTD, and there would be a heated bus shelter located somewhere close to the front steps of the library. No demolition was scheduled in the foreseeable future. He felt very strongly in favor of historic preservation, which was why there was no mention of demolition in regards to the Fejes House or the Auler Building.

Ms. Lorenz inquired as to what the MTD shelter would look like. It was nice that it would be heated; however, was it going to be ugly like other MTD shelters or would it fit in with the rest of the library? Mr. Smyth replied that they had not seen the design of the shelter as of yet. They only know that MTD wanted to put a shelter in along or adjacent to Race Street.

Ms. Novak reiterated the task handed down to the Historic Preservation Commission from the City Council. Mr. Kowalski added that the Historic Preservation Commission recently had a similar type of charge from the City Council regarding brick sidewalks. City Council was not looking for an official vote. They were looking for the Commission's expertise as a Historic Preservation Commission on both the Urbana Free Library Master Plan and more so on the existing structures on the block and how the Master Plan might or might not affect different parts of the block.

Mr. Zangerl requested more information on the Marro Building regarding what the original structure was. Ms. Novak responded by saying that it was the left 1/3 portion of the existing structure. Mr. Kowalski added that it was in the interest of the City's administration and of the Mayor to possibly use the Marro Building temporarily for a café or some kind of small-scale commercial service type of venture. One of the challenges was what kind of repairs would be needed to the building to be able to facilitate such use.

Mr. Zangerl talked about which structures he felt were historically sensitive. From his standpoint, the Auler Building ranked quite a bit lower than the Marro Building and the Fejes House. Although the Auler Building was old, it had been modified quite a bit, and he would not say that it was particularly distinctive or an important example of architecture that could not be found in other apartment buildings.

Regarding the Fejes House, he stated that the biggest problem associated with preservation by moving was that frequently those wishing to have the house moved were not willing to put the money into seeing that happen. He felt that this was a big whole in the entire plan. The expense of moving the Fejes House should be something that should be seriously considered either in the Master Plan or in the Second Agreement.

With respect to the Marro Building, Mr. Zangerl noted that there was a question of whether the additions to the original Tudor were historical additions or not. This has some bearing on whether or not they should be considered worthy of preservation as well as the original Tudor portion of the building. He felt it was a bad idea to have any language about demolition in the Master Plan. Therefore, he advised City Council to be very wary about that particular statement.

Mr. Cahill believed that it was important that all three structures were preserved. It was the whole streetscape or view of Green Street. Another thing to consider preserving were the very large trees behind the Marro Building and the Fejes House. Currently, as you come down Green Street, there was still a sense of buildings and space. He did not want to see the Urbana Free Library surrounded by a huge piece of concrete to the Green Street side. By keeping the Marro Building, the Fejes House and the Auler Building in place, it at least gives some semblance of a streetscape and would preserve some mature trees. The Fejes House could become another Lindley House. The Marro Building anchors the southwest corner. The Auler Building anchors the south corner.

He was concerned about the parking issue. He believed that there was plenty of parking in the area with parking across Cedar Street, across Race Street at the Historic Lincoln Hotel, across Elm Street at Busey Bank, and the parking structure was being underutilized. The right for people to drive up and drop off their borrowed items from the library without having to get out of their vehicles was a bogus argument. Therefore, he urged that all three structures should be retained.

Mr. Rose complimented the Library Board of Trustees in playing in the education of his children and many other children. He thanked the Library Foundation for their effort to improve what was already one of their strongest assets that Downtown Urbana had.

There were five points that Mr. Smyth had raised that Mr. Rose commented on. They were as follows:

1. *Early on in the planning, the library tried to take on a block-wide plan.* Speaking architecturally, Mr. Rose stated that there were two ways to develop a property. One was to begin with a piece of paper that already had buildings on it. The other way was to begin with white paper. If you begin with white paper, then you get block-wide plans, because the other buildings are far enough away that they would not fit on the paper. The result is bank buildings such as Busey Bank. He felt it was important for the Historic Preservation Commission to reject this architectural approach. In its place should be a recognition of the context in which any building was being built. In this case and in other future deliberations of the Historic Preservation Commission, the members needed to recognize the importance of scale elements that stood in the way of the block approach.
2. *The effort to control the surrounding property.* Mr. Rose believed that City building involved imagining nearby properties not for what their absence could do for us, but how in fact they may help the library link to the City.
3. *Intent to control the other properties on the block so that nothing commercial could be developed.* Mr. Rose hated to go on record saying that the Master Plan was part of hindrance to commercial development. The areas that were being considered as future parking lots might be considered appropriate, if parking were studied and the transportation needs were met, to have more buildings rather than fewer buildings on the lot.
4. *The library was to be an integral part of the City.* One integrates with the City by knitting the building into the City and by creating scale elements in series that create links.
5. *There would be limited parking, and the effort was made to balance this as an urban property, so that it would not require all of the parking spaces that a suburban library might.* As Mr. Rose understood it, the number of parking spaces would be about the same after construction was finished.

He wished the Urbana Free Library the best of luck. He hoped to see the number of people visiting the library double. However, he would like to append to it that it was done with adding absolutely no parking spaces.

Mr. Dossett pointed out that one of the historic properties that they had not talked about was the library itself. Given the development that they hoped would take place in the rejuvenation of the Lincoln Square Mall, when talking about the perspective of the library from the ground and the visual approach from the neighborhood, he believed that the Auler Building was the biggest problem. He suspected that the building would come down on its own, perhaps before the year 2017. He was not in favor of the removal of either the Fejes House or the Marro Building. The Fejes House presents to him a beautiful example of that type of architecture.

He hoped as a group that they could generate a formal motion to the City Council that might arrange some priorities with preservation for the Fejes House, the Marro Building, and the Auler Building.

Mr. Shepard corrected the staff report by saying that the Jacques House on Elm Street was actually lost as a result of the library's current expansion. He recalled one or two houses that had been relocated to Main Street kind of across from the Canaan Baptist Church.

He noted that he had about much fondness of the Tepper Building as he did the Winklemann Building. He felt that they both were plain office buildings. He was not concerned if in the future the library demolished the Tepper Building to expand even more.

Regarding the Auler Building, Mr. Shepard commented that it seemed like a lot of money for the library to spend to buy the Auler Building, demolish it and build a few parking spaces. He suggested that some of the demolition language could be put in the background of the Master Plan. The library needed to analyze what the parking usage of the proposed 45 parking spaces and how often the spaces are all full, etc. Maybe in five years, when the library reviews the Master Plan, would be a time to serious question whether anything needed to be bulldozed or moved.

Ms. Novak agreed. She appreciated the idea of having a Master Plan and looking into the future, but they really did not know what to expect. With this being the case, she would like to see any language about demolition or moving of properties removed from the Master Plan.

When looking through the Historic Preservation Plan that was passed in conjunction with the Historic Preservation Ordinance, she found several goals that went against what was being proposed in the library's Master Plan. Some of those goals were as follows: 1) Promote economic development by encouraging investment in historic resources; 2) Promote the preservation of Urbana's historic resources including building sites, structures, objects and historic districts; 3) Preserve the character of historic neighborhoods; 4) Foster an understanding in civic pride in Urbana's history and architecture; and 5) Preserve Urbana's historic downtown buildings and facades.

Ms. Novak agreed with Mr. Rose's comments completely in that this provided an opportunity for the City to weave important assets in the downtown area together. Certainly, the library was one of those important assets. She was disturbed to hear language that buildings would be demolished to improve the view of a third incarnation of additions on the library. She hoped, given this window of opportunity, that they were looking at future generations making decisions for a third building campaign on the library. There was plenty of time to plan ahead. She hoped that the third incarnation of addition on the library would be facilitated in the way that the library had constructed the second addition, where the view of the section would not be important and that the Fejes House would not be in the way.

She talked about how the Tudor Revival gas station was a rare resource. It greatly spoke to the history of our community and how the automobile age was entering the downtown. They needed to use this as an opportunity to preserve the character of what they have and to tell the story of the downtown.

There had been many alterations made to the Auler Building, which made it tempting to not be as concerned about it; however, as a corner building in the downtown area at a well-traveled intersection, the building provided corner definition and scale. It also gave us an important urban fabric and how we feel as pedestrians.

Ms. Novak suggested for the Commission's main message to be worded as such: The Historic Preservation Commission was uncomfortable with demolition and removal of structure language. They wanted to encourage the reuse of these buildings in an appropriate manner that would compliment the use of the library.

Mr. Shepard commented that he liked the idea of strongly encouraging the City, the Library Board of Trustees and the Library Foundation to consider the cost or be responsible for the cost of moving the Fejes House, if it should ever come to that. Ms. Novak stated that contradicted what he had said earlier about waiting five years to see what the parking needs would be.

Mr. Dossett believed that the City Council was looking for direction and input from the Historic Preservation Commission. He moved that the Historic Preservation Commission recommend to the City Council that the integrity of the streetscape and City environment on the block be maintained in the context of the Master Plan for the future expansion of the Urbana Free Library. Mr. Cahill seconded the motion. He wanted to maintain the two corners with the Marro Building and Fejes House anchoring the Cedar Corner and the Auler Building anchoring the Race Street Corner.

Mr. Rose would support the motion up to the word "maintained". The language following that referred to the block as the "library" block, and he was not prepared to give in to this as the "library" block. He still saw the area as an "Urbana" block of which the library occupied a large part, but whose corners were anchored by non-library functions. So, as a friendly amendment, he suggested taking off the wording "in the context of the Master Plan for the future expansion of the Urbana Free Library". Mr. Dossett and Mr. Cahill agreed to the friendly amendment.

Mr. Zangerl was concerned about the vagueness of the motion. As it read, the motion included the Tepper Building. Clearly, the Historic Preservation Commission did not want to include the Tepper Building, and there was some disagreement about the Auler Building amongst the Historic Preservation Commission members. He felt that they should state which buildings the Historic Preservation Commission wanted to preserve in the motion.

Mr. Rose proposed a friendly amendment to add that the Auler Building performs an important function of holding the corner on a main intersection in Urbana. The Marro Building holds another important corner and has the potential for economic development. The Fejes House was of historic significance. The Historic Preservation Commission took no stand on the Tepper Building.

Mr. Dossett mentioned that he had forgotten about the Tepper Building when he made the motion. He was trying to make it as general as he could yet still try to follow up on the concerns that Mr. Rose and Mr. Cahill had expressed earlier in their discussions.

Mr. Zangerl added that the Marro Building also had historic significance, and that should be added to the friendly amendment. Mr. Rose agreed. The Marro Building holds the corner, provides an urbanist importance and a historical importance, and has potential for economic development.

Ms. Novak understood the motion to read as such: The Historic Preservation Commission recommends to the City Council that the integrity of the streetscape and integrity of the block be maintained to include the Auler Building, which holds an important corner in Downtown Urbana; the Marro Building, which also holds an important corner, has potential for redevelopment, and is of

historic and architectural significance; and the Fejes House, which has historic and architectural significance and the potential for redevelopment.

Mr. Dossett and Mr. Cahill agreed to the friendly amendment. Ms. Novak asked Teri Andel, Planning Secretary, to read the motion again.

Mr. Rose proposed that the Commission remove the wording, “the potential for redevelopment” from the Marro Building and the Fejes House, and add the following at the end of the motion “There is potential for economic development on all three of these properties”.

Ms. Novak now understood the motion to read as follows: The Historic Preservation Commission recommends to the City Council that the integrity of the streetscape and the integrity of the block be maintained including the Auler Building, which anchors an important corner; the Marro Building, which also anchors an important corner and possesses historic and architectural significance; and the Fejes House, which also possesses historic and architectural significance. There was a potential for economic development in all three of these properties.

Mr. Dossett and Mr. Cahill agreed to the wording of the motion.

Mr. Zangerl asked staff to clarify that the Historic Preservation was using “streetscape” differently than the way that City Council would be thinking about streetscape, which was only the sidewalks, the street lamps and streets. Mr. Kowalski stated that they would clarify it to the City Council. He felt that “streetscape” was clarified better in the rewriting of the original motion.

Mr. Zangerl felt that the Historic Preservation Commission needed to drop the idea of the Library Board of Trustees, the Library Foundation, and the City to consider the cost of moving structures at this point, because at this point, they were recommending that moving and demolition be taken off the table. At such time in the future as plans might change, one would hope that the future City Council and the Library Board would come back to the Historic Preservation Commission for more advice.

Mr. Shepard felt torn on the Auler Building. As he looked at the Auler Building, he thought it might stand out like a sore thumb. It was not a bad building and might have some interest to it. He understood the concept of anchoring the corner. Ms. Novak stated that she had mixed feelings earlier about the Auler Building as well. However, corner buildings were a huge issue, because when the corner definition was lost in the downtown area, then it quickly whittles away at the character. The Busey Plaza and the County Plaza were examples of where the City had lost the corner definition. Her comfort level improved when she looked at the Auler Building more as part of the urban fabric. She thought that it could be integrated within any kind of plaza development that was done so that it would not dangle. Mr. Rose added that he was comfortable with the motion as it stood, because the Historic Preservation Commission certainly was not saying that the Auler Building had any architectural significance. They were saying in the motion that the Auler Building was anchoring the corner.

Roll call was taken and was as follows:

Mr. Dossett	-	Yes	Ms. Novak	-	Yes
Mr. Rose	-	Yes	Mr. Shepard	-	No
Mr. Zangerl	-	Yes	Mr. Cahill	-	Yes

The motion was passed by a 5-1 vote.

9. MONITORING OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES

There was none.

10. STAFF REPORT

Mr. Kowalski reported on the following:

- **The newly formed Development Review Board** met for the first time on October 12, 2004 for an orientation meeting.
- **The First Baptist Church** was listed for sale. The building needed a lot of work depending on how it would be reused. The building was located in the M.O.R., Mixed-Office Residential Zoning District.
- **A text amendment to the Zoning Ordinance** regarding parking lots in the single-family residential zoning district would be coming up. This came as a request from the City Council.

11. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

There was none.

12. STUDY SESSION

There was none.

13. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- On November 19th, Purdue would be holding a preservation workshop on “Paint Finishes”.
- On November 19th and 20th, there would be a conference in Washington, D.C. on “Historic Preservation and Architectural Education”.
- Mr. Rose mentioned that he had attended the Illinois Main Street Conference in Dixon, IL about two weeks ago. He found it important that came out of the conference was a Study of Department of Energy Data that showed that commercial buildings built before 1920 use only 60% of the total energy of commercial buildings built after World War II.
- Reminder that the Historic Preservation Commission wanted to do a “Stucco Workshop” in the Spring. They discussed with staff whether it would be possible to apply for a Certified Level Grant (CLG) to cover the expenditure of the workshop. They also talked about who to invite to be the guest speaker.
- Reminder that they still needed to get signs for the Buena Vista Court showing that it was a Historic District.
- Inquiry about finding a replacement for the Senior Planner position.

- Reminder that there was a vacancy on the Historic Preservation Commission.

14. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Zangerl moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:12 p.m. Mr. Rose seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.

Submitted,

Rob Kowalski, Planning Manager

Master Plan for the Urbana Free Library Block, Urbana, Illinois

Adopted July 13, 2004 by the Trustees of the Urbana Free Library and the Urbana Free Library Foundation. Revised version adopted November 9, 2004 by the UFL and the Foundation on November 16, 2004.

Master Plan Goal

The goal of this revised UFL Master Plan is to provide for orderly development of the Urbana Free Library block (bounded by Race, Elm, Cedar, and Green Streets) and nearby areas for the benefit of the UFL and the citizens of Urbana. It is designed to complement the Annual Action Plan for Downtown Urbana.

This master plan is designed to guide the Library for the next twenty years. However, it should be reviewed and updated at approximately five-year periods.

Background

For many years the Urbana Free Library (UFL) Board, in cooperation with the City of Urbana, has planned to acquire the entire Library block for Library purposes. Demonstrating this intent, in 1989 they sent a letter to all property owners on the block, seeking the right of first refusal in the event that the property was available for purchase. On April 10, 2001 they adopted "Expansion Priorities and Necessary Fundraising for the UFL", which called for action to purchase and move the Fejes House, to purchase and demolish the Marro Building, and for eventual development of the whole block except for the Auler property.

Similarly, the UFL Foundation has recognized the value of acquiring properties to gain long-term control of the Library block, reiterating since its inception in 1997 that the Foundation's mission is to raise the funds necessary to expand the library and purchase additional properties on the block as they become available.

The Library Board, the Library Foundation, and the City of Urbana, in the first Cooperative Agreement for UFL Expansion (July, 1999), stated: "Intent of Parties, B1. For the purposes of this Agreement, the Improved Library shall be located in Urbana on the property bounded by Race Street, Elm Street, Cedar Street, and Green Street (site) ..."

While there has been agreement between the UFL Board and the Foundation on acquisition of additional property for Library purposes, the City has agreed only on the purchase of the Tepper Building, the demolition of the Winkelmann Building, and city control of parking. The only formal agreement between the three parties has been on the boundaries of the UFL block.

Implementation Strategies

1. Library Property

- a. The current library building, on completion of current expansion and remodeling, provides a basic library plan with a single visual theme and critically needed space. The building consists of three parts:
 - i. The original building was constructed in 1918 and has historic significance.
 - ii. The first addition was constructed in 1972-75.
 - iii. The addition of 2002-2004 is built with a knockout west wall for future expansion.
- b. The UFL is one of the busiest libraries in Illinois, and usage is expected to continue to grow. When it is agreed that the UFL should be expanded, it will expand toward the west, perhaps as far as Cedar Street.
- c. The UFL appears to be downtown's most visited site, and the view of the south facade of the Library as visitors enter from Green Street is an attractive vista which along with the east facing entrance should be maintained and enhanced.

2. Winkelmann Property and the Alley to its North

- a. The Winkelmann Building has been demolished and much of its function transferred to the Tepper Building
- b. Demolition of the Winkelmann Building:
 - i. Improves the view of the new south facade of the Library
 - ii. Prevents crowding of the new entrance
 - iii. Provides space that may serve as a Plaza which will be the site for a variety of outdoor activities. It will be suitable for amenities such as public art, seating, tables with umbrellas, wireless access, and landscaping and plantings; Library activities such as reading, book sales and children's programs; and community activities such as herb sales, and mime performances.
- c. Provides an attractive and protected way to pick up and drop off users
- d. Provides some parking lot improvements, but retains the downhill slope from Green Street to the south facade of the library.
- e. The MTD will install a heated bus stop on the east side of the Library Plaza

3. Tepper Property

- a. The UFL has remodeled this building for ancillary purposes, including archival storage.
- b. The parking spaces west of the Tepper Building as administered by the Urbana Municipal Parking System will provide important long term parking
- c. Demolition would provide essential long-term expansion space from the west end of the existing building to Cedar Street.

4. Fejes Property

- a. The Fejes house is a historic 1872 building that originally faced Green Street, but was rotated ninety degrees and moved north to its present site. As of this writing, it is occupied by its owner, who does not wish to be disturbed. Purchase of the property, however, would be part of a long term plan for the library.
- b. The Library recognizes the historic value of the Fejes House. It should be preserved and not moved unless the three signatory bodies agree that the need to do so is compelling.

5. Marro Property

- a. The Marro Building was originally a filling station but has been modified and expanded to include additional space. There are possible EPA implications if the past removal of buried fuel tanks was not done to current standards. Title by the library should be acquired only upon proof of environmental compliance.
- b. Until 2017, this site will be available for use by the City in ways specified in the Second Cooperative Agreement and which are complementary to the appearance or use by the UFL. In 2026, (or earlier, if the Foundation pays the City a scheduled amount of money), title shall vest in the library.

6. Auler Property

- a. Control of this property is not prerequisite to the expansion of the library as the site is small and the parking lot can be successfully reconfigured without this building. Purchase of the property, however, would be part of a long term plan for the library.
- b. Efforts should be made to work with the owners of the building to integrate library landscaping and traffic patterns with those of the Auler Building including the possibility of working on shared parking arrangements.

7. Adjoining Areas

- a. In accordance with the downtown master plan and the Green Street MOR district, the portions of the south side of Green Street and the west side of Cedar Street which face the Library Block should be reserved for appropriate development or redevelopment to take advantage of the tree-lined Library vista, extending the mixed use concept across these two streets.
- b. Parking needs for the library and adjoining uses will be reevaluated as the Master Plan is revised. Creative methods for addressing adjacent parking needs should be explored with owners of surrounding properties.