

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC SAFETY

February 22, 1993

Committee Members Present:

Michael Pollock, Charles Smyth (Chairman), Bonnie Tarr
and Joseph Whelan

Committee Members Absent:

Joan Barr, Lonnie Clark and Clifford Singer

Staff Members Present:

Bruce Walden, Jack Waaler, Chief Schlieter, Rodney
Fletcher, April Getchius, William Gray, Charles Gordon,
Mayor Markland

Others Present:

Raymond Norton, David Monk, Ralph Trimble, Ward Barcus,
James Payne, Dodie Crawford, Bill and Karen Knight,
Marc Payne, John Otten, Matthew Snyder, Carolyn
Trimble, Karl and Linda Smith and Members of the News
Media

Meeting Location:

Urbana City Council Chambers

There being a quorum, Chairman Smyth called the meeting
to order at 7:37 p.m.

Additions to the Agenda and Staff Report

There were none.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

Ms. Tarr moved to approve the minutes of the January
25, 1993 regular meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Whelan
and carried by a voice vote.

Railroad Right-of-Way Discussion

City Planner/Community Development Director April
Getchius addressed the Committee to explain the content of her

memorandum of February 17, 1993 (copy attached), which addressed the Disposition and Use of Railroad Right-of-Ways Between Washington Street and Florida Avenue. Ms. Getchius stated that while staff is supportive of bike trail development, perhaps the problems involved in pursuing a trail in this neighborhood are too great.

Raymond Norton, 1214 Lanore, and Ward Barcus, 1507 East Fairlawn, addressed the Committee requesting that attention be returned to the original request of the citizens whose land is directly adjacent to the abandoned Norfolk & Southern Railway between Washington Street and Florida Avenue. The request was to assist those residents to secure ownership of the right-of way. Mr. Norton and Mr. Barcus also voiced opposition to a rails-to-trails project on that property.

David Monk, 115 North Market, Champaign, Ralph Trimble, and James Payne, representing the Conservation Group of Champaign County, addressed the Committee in support of rails-to-trails stating the benefits of such a project.

Chairman Smyth stated that the following people had completed Public Input sheets but did not wish to speak:

Mark Payne, 103 South Lincoln, Carolyn Trimble, 404 West Iowa, John Otten, P.O. Box 577, and Matthew Snyder, 203 South Poplar, indicated support of a rails-to-trails conversion.

Karl and Linda Smith, 1614 Fairlawn, Dodie Crawford, 1607 Lincolnwood, and Bill and Karen Knight, 1605 Lincolnwood, indicated opposition to a rails-to-trails conversion.

Following a debate of the advantages and disadvantages of a bike trail and the original request of the residents for help in securing the property, Mr. Pollock stated the residents along the right-of-way are the primary concern and requested that staff clarify the Illinois Power easement; does there have to be an alley? Can there be a fence across the easement?

Ms. Getchius stated that she is not aware of the character of the easement. A fence could probably be built across it. The concern would be that it be something that is easily removed.

Mr. Pollock also questioned the possible 80% State funding to pay for a rails-to-trails program. Would there be a commitment from the State prior to beginning the program? Ms. Getchius responded that there would be advance commitment from the State.

Mr. Pollock said that the railroad has stated that it will only sell this right-of-way as a whole. The property will not be sold individually by lot.

City Attorney Jack Waaler stated that the railroad does not own the property, only the right-of-way. This is applicable only to the Busey grant, which is most of the property in the city limits. It is possible that the Busey heirs could have a valid claim on the property. It would still be possible for the railroad to quit claim the property to the City.

Mr. Pollock stated that unless there is agreement on the part of the residents of this neighborhood for any plan regardless of what it is, it is not going to happen. Whatever is done, it needs to be done uniformly. Possibly the issues could be discussed at a neighborhood meeting. Ms. Tarr and Mr. Whelan agreed with Mr. Pollock.

Mr. Whelan restated the events leading to this discussion; the original petition requesting the City to help the residents to secure title to the property presently held by the railroad and the second petition stating that those residents do not want a bike trail on that property. Mr. Whelan further stated that it might be advantageous for the residents to consider the trail project; however, whatever the residents in the neighborhood want is what he will support.

Mr. Whelan moved that city staff try to verify how title to the stretch of abandoned right-of-way from Washington Street to Florida Avenue is held and what it would take to have that title transferred to the adjacent landowners and further requested that staff determine the cost of surveying and improving the property to include regrading and drainage as required. It should be kept in mind that the railroad, Illinois Power, the City of Urbana and the adjacent landowners may be considered as parties to this transferal. After this information has been reviewed by committee, a neighborhood meeting including the adjacent landowners and interested proponents of the trailways, should be held to provide for an open discussion of the issue. The motion was seconded by Mr. Pollock.

Mr. Pollock suggested that while staff is investigating the cost of acquiring the title, regrading and drainage they also investigate how this can be paid for.

Ms. Getchius stated that she does not recommend this as a trail site as the situation is very problematic. The residents do not want a trail and there is a design problem. If the

residents should approve of a trail as a way to get the improvements done, she would investigate the cost of design. At this point there has been no investigation into that area.

Following debate the motion to verify how title to the stretch of abandoned right-of-way from Washington Street to Florida Avenue is held carried by a voice vote.

Mr. Smyth moved that staff investigate funding for future economic development for a broader bike trail plan. The motion was seconded by Mr. Pollock and carried by a voice vote.

Review of Social Services Funding Process

Mr. Pollock moved to send the new forms entitled City of Urbana, Illinois and Cunningham Township Application For Funding For Social Service Agencies Fiscal Year 1993-94 to the Cunningham Town Board and Urbana City Council for approval. After approval, the new forms would be sent to requesting agencies, and the series of hearings previously held would be eliminated unless there is a request from an agency or a Member of the Council to hold such a hearing. The motion was seconded by Ms. Tarr.

Following debate, Mr. Smyth offered a friendly amendment that a reasonable facsimile with page number and title be accepted in lieu of any page. Mr. Pollock accepted the amendment.

Following further debate, the motion as amended carried by a voice vote.

The Committee recessed at 9:45 p.m. and reconvened at 9:55 p.m. with all members previously in attendance still present.

An Ordinance Amending Chapter 3 Of The Urbana City Code ("Alcoholic Liquors") To Prohibit Consumption Of Alcoholic Liquor On Public Property

Mr. Smyth asked Chief Schlieter whether the Police Department is equipped to deal with problems of alcohol consumption on the Fourth of July. Chief Schlieter responded that due to the intertwining of police agencies that work the security for the Fourth of July parade and the extra police officers, those problems have been relieved over the past few years.

Ms. Tarr requested clarification on how the Police

Department feels about alcohol being consumed along the parade route as it was her understanding that the Police Department was opposed to it.

Chief Schlieter stated that is true. Some of the police supervisors have requested that it be prohibited.

Mayor Markland addressed the Committee with a suggestion that the ordinance be sent to Council as drafted.

Following further debate on the alcoholic liquors ordinance, Mr. Smyth stated that no committee action on this item was necessary and this ordinance would appear on the agenda of the City Council meeting of March 1, 1993.

Budget Amendment - Recycling Drop-off Centers

On March 31, 1993 the commitment of the Intergovernmental Solid Waste Disposal Association to the two existing drop-offs, one at Jerry's IGA on Philo Road and one at Jerry's IGA on Kirby and Neil in Champaign will come to an end. Staff input on how to handle this issue was requested.

Matt Snyder, the Director of Community Recycling Center, was asked what happens at the drop-off centers on March 31. He responded that CRC will try to keep them going and would appreciate the help of the cities. At present the ISWDA contribution covers almost 60% of the cost.

Mr. Pollock stated that the cost to keep the Urbana recycling drop-off until the end of the fiscal year would be \$6,300, but there needs to be a discussion of how the program would be funded for the next year.

Mr. Smyth stated it is important to keep the program going until the end of the year.

Chief Administrative Officer Bruce Walden stated that monies are available in the Environmental Management Fund, partly because of savings in the processing as a result of switching from Illini Marco to Community Recycling Center. The City could keep spending everything from the Environmental Management Fund until it is down to zero, but it is not known what will happen in the future regarding recycling programs. There is need to consider what will happen after July 1. The City needs to be careful with its resources. Staff's recommendation is to consider what is going to happen long term.

Mr. Pollock asked Mr. Fletcher what are the possibilities of getting ISWDA to fund the drop-off centers short term?

Mr. Fletcher responded that ISWDA's budget runs through April 30, 1993. There will be a meeting with the staff of the Champaign County Board to negotiate what will be done with the ISWDA organization. If ISWDA were to fund these drop-off centers, a new budget would have to be prepared with agreement from both the other agencies to fund this particular item.

Mayor Markland addressed the committee to urge that this ordinance be sent to council.

Mr. Smyth moved to send An Ordinance Revising The Annual Budget Ordinance (Recycling Drop-off Costs) to Council. The motion was seconded by Mr. Whelan and carried by a voice vote.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 10:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine Taylor
Secretary

*This meeting was taped.
**This meeting was broadcast on cable television.