

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC SAFETY

November 22, 1993

Committee Members Present:

James Hayes, Michael Pollock, Marya Ryan, Clifford Singer (Chairman), John Taylor and Joseph Whelan (arrived at 7:35 p.m.)

Committee Members Absent:

None

Staff Members Present:

Bruce Walden, Jack Waaler, April Getchius, Joe Smith, Bill Gray, Bruce Stoffel, Phyllis Clark and Mayor Satterthwaite

Others Present:

Paul Joffe, Debbie Nelson, Ray Kempel, Les Johnson, Michael Madonick, Gloria Cross, Peggy Shaw, Robbie Berg, Robert Drew, Jim Reed, Robert Naiman, Rachel Geshee, Ann Hull
Members of the News Media

Meeting Location:

Urbana City Council Chambers

There being a quorum, Chairman Singer called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.

Additions to the Agenda and Staff Report

Mr. Taylor moved the orders of the day. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hayes and carried by a voice vote. Ms. Ryan moved to amend the motion to allow public input until 8:30 p.m. due to the number of speakers. There were no objections by the mover or seconder. Chairman Singer stated that the Informational Memo - Update on Railroad Right-Of-Way is not ready and asked that it be deleted from the agenda as a part of the motion. There being no objections, the motion, as amended, carried by a voice vote.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

Mr. Hayes moved to approve the minutes of the October 25,

1993 regular meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Ryan and carried by a voice vote.

Petitions and Communications

Paul Joffe, 505 West Main Street, addressed the Committee to protest the proposed parking lot between McCullough Street and Orchard Street stating his desire to protect the historic neighborhood.

Debbie Nelson, 505 West Main, addressed the Committee to protest the building of a parking lot between McCullough Street and Orchard Street and read the following paragraph from the Downtown To Campus Plan, which the planners wrote when recommending the down zoning to R-2 of large portions of the neighborhood that is being discussed:

"Although these areas still contain a variety of residential uses, this fundamental change has been recommended for several reasons. First, it will provide stability and protection for the many single family and two family homes that still remain along these streets. Second, it will encourage more renovation of older buildings, including the reconversion of some back to single family homes. Third, it will limit the development of large apartment buildings and the traffic and infra structure impacts that result from such development. Finally, it will protect the overall character and appearance of the neighborhood."

This is one of the primary objectives of the Downtown to Campus study. Ms. Nelson stated that there has been a petition of 106 names from this neighborhood of people who are in opposition to this parking lot for one reason or another. Ms. Nelson further stated that the historic value contributes to the neighborhood's unique environment.

Ray Kempel, Attorney for Les Johnson, and Stephen A. Kurth, architect for Les Johnson, stated their support for Mr. Johnson's request to build a parking lot on his property located between McCullough Street and Orchard Street.

Les Johnson, 1701 West Springfield, addressed the Committee in defense of his request to build a parking lot on his property located between McCullough Street and Orchard Street. He presented pictures of the "buffer zone". These pictures were taken in March 1990 and the area looks like a junk yard. Mr. Johnson stated that when he purchased the property he wasn't sure

what he would do with it, but has considered a parking lot or garages.

Michael Madonick, 506 West Main; Gary Wszalek, 302 North Orchard; Evelyn Yauk, 310 North Coler; and Ginny Kovatch, 303 North Orchard; addressed the Committee with their concerns and opposition to a parking lot on Les Johnson's property located between McCullough Street and Orchard Street.

Gloria Cross, representing H.S. Grindley Co., addressed the Committee to question whether Mr. Johnson actually holds title to the abandoned railroad property located between McCullough Street and Orchard Street and in opposition to the parking lot to be located there.

An Ordinance Requesting Rezoning Of Abandoned Railroad Right Of Way Between McCullough Street And Orchard Street From IN Industrial To R-5 Medium High Density Multi-Family Residential (Les Johnson) and Ordinance Requesting Special Use Permit To Establish A Parking Lot On Abandoned Railroad Property Between McCullough Street And Orchard Street (Les Johnson)

Mr. Pollock asked City Attorney Jack Waaler what effect there would be on this rezoning and development if there was no specific title on this property? Mr. Waaler stated that he did not feel that is the situation in this instance.

Community Development Director/City Planner stated that the issue is that the Comprehensive Plan, the Downtown To Campus Plan which was completed a few years ago, designates the area as medium and high density use and it adjoins higher density zoning, backed also by a railroad. R-3, which is single and two family, is not a logical progression.

Ms. Ryan asked the differences in density between R-4 and R-5 and if R-4 zoning would conflict with the Downtown To Campus Plan.

Ms. Getchius responded that the designation on this property is somewhat split by the Comprehensive Plan and it is classified as medium and medium high density. R-4 is closer to that than R-3, it is geared to apartment type dwellings. In terms of development, one measure of intensity is the floor area ratio. In R-4 the floor ratio is .5 as opposed to .9 in R-5.

Ms. Ryan inquired of Jack Waaler if there is any legal obstruction to down zoning to either R-3 or R-4? Mr. Waaler responded that the legal problems would arise if a court concluded

that is was arbitrary and capricious to rezone it.

Mayor Satterthwaite questioned what was done then the Downtown To Campus Plan was developed to help protect the historic nature of that neighborhood?

Ms. Getchius stated that the area along Main Street was rezoned from R-4, R-5 to R-2, which is single family residential.

Ms. Ryan moved to hold these ordinances in Committee. The motion died for lack of a second.

Mr. Taylor moved to send to Council for approval An Amendment To A Part Of The Zoning Ordinance Of The City Of Urbana And The Zoning Map Of Urbana, Illinois (Abandoned Railroad Right Of Way Between McCullough and Orchard Streets). The motion was seconded by Mr. Hayes.

Mr. Singer stated that he will not take a position on this issue since he owns nearby property.

Following debate, the motion to send to Council for approval An Ordinance Requesting Rezoning Of Abandoned Railroad Right Of Way Between McCullough Street And Orchard Street From IN Industrial To R-5 Medium High Density Multi-Family Residential (Les Johnson) carried by a voice vote.

Mr. Hayes moved to send to Council An Ordinance Granting A Special Use Permit (To Allow Lester Johnson To Locate A Parking Lot On Abandoned Railroad Right-Of-Way Between McCullough And Orchard Streets). The motion was seconded by Mr. Taylor and carried by a voice vote.

CATV - Public Educational and Government (PEG)

Mr. Pollock stated that he put this item on this agenda as a means of educating this Council to what local cable public access channels do and what types of programming and efforts are involved.

Barbara Gladney, representing Cable Community/PEG Channel, stated that PEG cable access channels are important to the community and the decisions made now will have a long term effect and make a difference in the quality of life in the community. PEG channels unite Urbana and Champaign.

Ms. Gladney introduced the following people, who spoke in support of Ms. Gladney's statement and reiterated the importance of the PEG cable access channels to the community and their plans for

this project:

Peggy Shaw, Educational Television Consortium, Parkland College
Robbie Berg, President, Urbana PTA Council
Robert Drew, Urbana High School TV Production
Jim Reed, Director of Distance Education, Parkland College
Robert Naiman, Community Media Coalition
Rachel Geshee, Community Media Coalition
Ann Hull, Child Care Resource Service

Chairman Singer stated that it is his opinion that if the PEG channels are going to succeed, the support of both Champaign and Urbana will be needed, and they will need to cover the broadest possible base. He urged that a complete entire comprehensive package be put together as soon as possible for both Champaign and Urbana Councils as to what an endowment would fund.

Mr. Taylor inquired of Ms. Gladney, other than the role that the Council will have in the refranchising agreement and how that relates to the PEG channels, is there any other commitment you are asking from this Council, financial or otherwise?

Ms. Gladney responded that she sees the Council's role as seeing that the requests of the group are in the draft franchise, such as adequate channel space for local channels, the equipment or funding for that equipment provided by the cable company, and operating funds.

Mr. Pollock stated that it is his understanding that the Cable Commission asked Parkland Community College to look into what would be involved in acting as the lead agency - what their vision of this entity would be in the future and their part in it.

Chairman Singer stated that if Parkland is interested in being the lead agency they should bring a proposal to the mayors and city staffs of Champaign and Urbana.

Alley Vacation (Between Mathews And Goodwin And Park And University Avenue

Chief Administrative Officer Bruce Walden stated that there are two ordinances attached to this alley vacation; one is An Ordinance Vacating An Alley South Of Park Street And North Of University Avenue Between Goodwin Avenue And Mathews Avenue; the second, An Ordinance Authorizing The Mayor To Execute A Reconveyance Agreement Between The City of Urbana, Illinois And University Hotel.

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The first ordinance, which addresses the alley vacation, is the same alley that was in the Development Agreement Between The City Of Urbana And Corridor Properties, Inc. related to the Hampton Inn development.

The reason for the second ordinance, which is the reconveyance agreement, was to have the property reconveyed back to the City of Urbana in the event of a default by the development partnership.

Mr. Pollock moved to send to Council An Ordinance Vacating An Alley South Of Park Street And North Of University Avenue Between Goodwin Avenue And Mathews Avenue, and An Ordinance Authorizing The Mayor To Execute A Reconveyance Agreement Between The City Of Urbana, Illinois And University Hotel. The motion was seconded by Mr. Whelan and carried by a voice vote.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee, Chairman Singer declared the meeting adjourned at 9:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine Taylor
Secretary

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