



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES
Planning Division

m e m o r a n d u m

TO: Bruce Walden, Chief Administrative Officer

FROM: Elizabeth H. Tyler, AICP, Director

DATE: May 30, 2002

SUBJECT: Case No. 1821-SU-02, Request by the Unitarian Universalist Church for a special use permit to establish a temporary church office and meeting space at 310 W. High Street.

Introduction

The Unitarian Universalist Church is currently remodeling and slightly expanding their church facility located at 311 W. Green Street. The church owns the adjacent single-family residence located at 310 W. High Street. While the church facility is being remodeled, representatives of the church have requested that the house at 310 W. High Street, which is owned by the church, be temporarily used as office space to replace the space under renovation. The use of the property for this purpose is considered an expansion of the church onto that lot. The lot is zoned R-2, Single Family Residential and church uses are permitted in that district with a special use permit. Church officials indicate that the office and meeting space would be temporary until the church renovation is complete in August 2003. At that time the house would return to a residential use.

On May 23, 2002, the Plan Commission voted 7 to 0 to recommend approval of the request with the three conditions outlined in the staff memorandum. There was limited public testimony at the public hearing. The two residents that spoke were generally concerned about the issue of taxes and the potential loss of another single-family home in the neighborhood. For more information regarding this case, please refer to the May 17, 2002 staff memorandum to the Plan Commission and to the minutes of the May 23, 2002 Plan Commission meeting.

Background

Description of the Site and Surrounding Properties

The surrounding neighborhood is primarily single-family residential although there is a mixture of institutional, multi-family, office and some commercial in close proximity. The church is located north of the lot and the church parking lot is located directly west of the house.

310 W. High Street is located on the north side of High Street between Cedar Street and Birch Street. The lot is approximately 58 feet wide and 121 feet deep. It contains a one-story, single-family structure of approximately 60 years of age. The approximately 900 square foot house contains a living room, kitchen with a small dinette, two bedrooms, one bathroom and a sunroom addition on the west side. There is no garage or driveway associated with the house.

Proposal

The church currently rents the home at 310 W. High Street. Church representatives indicate that the remodeling of the church will be starting immediately and will affect the office and meeting space within the church. The home is currently rented but the lease expires on June 15, 2002. The proposal is to temporarily relocate the office functions into the living room of the house and utilize the sun porch as a small conference room for special, small meetings of no more than 10 people. The living room is approximately 285 square feet. The sun porch is approximately 150 square feet. The office functions would consist of one full-time and two part-time staff members or the equivalent of two full-time staff members.

Church officials indicate that the interior of the home will not be remodeled to accommodate the office functions and that the home is intended to be leased again for residential purposes once the renovations to the church are complete. The acting Building Safety Division Manager for the City of Urbana indicated that the use of the home for the office purposes and conference room as described would not require any additional improvements to the home to meet any special building codes or ADA requirements.

Discussion

Requirements for a Special Use Permit

According to Section VII-6 of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance, an application for a Special Use Permit shall demonstrate specific criteria. On May 23, 2002 the Urbana Plan Commission considered the following:

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

The proposed temporary relocation of the church office and meeting room is conducive to the public convenience at this location. The ability to locate the office in the home will allow the church and its

congregation to continue operation at their location while improvements to the main facility are made. The office and meeting room is only proposed to be temporary as the church is remodeled.

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

The temporary office and meeting space is designed so that it will be incidental to the area. Neither the interior nor exterior of the home will be altered for the temporary use thus keeping the appearance of a single-family home. The use will not contain more the equivalent of two full-time employees at any one time and would have occasional meetings of no more than 10 individuals.

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

The proposed temporary use will be compliant with all development standards of the zoning ordinance and will not require any additional building code improvements. Since the home is not proposed to be altered and the use is only temporary, the essential character of the neighborhood will be preserved.

Summary of Findings

At the May 23, 2002 hearing, the Plan Commission adopted the following findings:

1. The proposed use is conducive to the public convenience at this location. It would allow the church to provide more space for parishioners, and to provide recreation and youth development services for the community.
2. The proposed church facility would not pose a detriment to the district in which it is proposed to be located. Drainage and access considerations have been addressed, and should not create problems for surrounding properties.
3. The proposed church facility meets all applicable standards and regulations of the district in which it is located. A church is an appropriate use in Residential zoning districts.
4. The proposed church facility is consistent with the intent of the zoning designations of the subject site and the surrounding area.
5. The proposed church facility is generally compatible with the existing land use pattern of the subject site and the surrounding area

Options

The City Council has the following options regarding Plan Case No. 1821-SU-02:

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

Recommendation

For the reasons articulated above, the Plan Commission and staff recommend that the City Council **APPROVE** the requested special use permit with the following **CONDITIONS**:

1. The structure at 310 W. High Street shall be solely used for the temporary location of the church office and an associated meeting room during the renovation of the Unitarian Universalist Church.
2. The temporary use of 310 W. High Street for the purpose of an office and meeting room associated with the Unitarian Universalist Church shall only be permitted until August 31, 2003. Should the renovation of the church not be complete by this date and the temporary office and meeting room not be relocated back into the church, the applicant shall re-apply to the Urbana Plan Commission to amend the provisions of the special use permit.
3. There shall be no signs or other obvious indication from the street that structure at 310 W. High Street is used for office purposes.

Prepared by:

Rob Kowalski, Planning Manager

Attachments: Draft Ordinance to Approve a temporary Special Use Permit
Minutes of the May 23, 2002 Plan Commission meeting
Additional Photos

c: Jeff Ford, UU Church

ORDINANCE NO.2002-06-059

An Ordinance Approving A Special Use Permit
(Request to establish a temporary church office in the R-2, Single-Family Residential Zoning District - Plan Case No. 1821-SU-02)

WHEREAS, the subject property, 310 W. High Street, is zoned R-2, Single-Family Residential and a church is allowed only as a Special Use in an R-2 zone.

WHEREAS, the Unitarian Universalist Church has petitioned the Urbana Plan Commission in Case No. 1821-SU-02 to consider a request for a special use permit to allow a temporary church office and meeting space in the existing residential structure located at 310 W. High Street; and

WHEREAS, the location of the office and meeting space is proposed to be temporary while the Unitarian Universalist Church renovates their existing facilities located at 311 W. Green Street; and

WHEREAS, the conditions placed on the approval in Section 1 herein should minimize the impact of the proposed development on surrounding properties; and

WHEREAS, after due publication, a public hearing was held by the Urbana Plan Commission on May 23, 2002 concerning the petition filed by the petitioner in Plan Case No. 1821-SU-02; and

WHEREAS, on May 23, 2002, the Urbana Plan Commission voted 7 ayes and 0 nays to forward the case to the Urbana City Council with a recommendation to approve the request for a Special Use Permit, subject to the conditions as outlined in Section 1 herein; and

WHEREAS, the approval of the Special Use Permit, with the condition set forth below, is consistent with the requirements of Section VII-6 of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance, Special Use Permit Procedures, and with the general intent of that Section of the Ordinance; and

WHEREAS, the findings of the Plan Commission indicate that approval of the special use permit would promote the general health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the public.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF URBANA, ILLINOIS, as follows:

Section 1. A Special Use Permit is hereby approved to allow the temporary establishment of a church office and meeting space in the existing residential structure at 310 W. High Street with the following conditions upon approval:

1. The structure at 310 W. High Street shall be solely used for the temporary location of the church office and an associated meeting room during the renovation of the Unitarian Universalist Church.

2. The temporary use of 310 W. High Street for the purpose of an office and meeting room associated with the Unitarian Universalist Church shall only be permitted until August 31, 2003. Should the renovation of the church not be complete by this date and the temporary office and meeting room not be relocated back into the church, the applicant shall re-apply to the Urbana Plan Commission to amend the provisions of the special use permit.

3. There shall be no signs or other obvious indication from the street that structure at 310 W. High Street is used for office purposes.

LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

Lot 46 in James T Roe's Second Addition to the town of Urbana, as per plat recorded in Deed Record "D" at page 189, situated in the City of Urbana, in Champaign County, Illinois.

Section 2. The City Clerk is directed to publish this Ordinance in pamphlet form by authority of the corporate authorities. This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage and publication in accordance with the terms of Chapter 65, Section 1-2-4 of the Illinois Compiled Statutes (65 ILCS 5/1-2-4).

PASSED by the City Council this ____ day of _____, 2002.

AYES:

NAYS:

ABSTAINS:

Phyllis D. Clark, City Clerk _____

APPROVED by the Mayor this ____ day of _____, 2002.

Tod Satterthwaite, Mayor _____

CERTIFICATE OF PUBLICATION IN PAMPHLET FORM

I, Phyllis D. Clark, certify that I am the duly elected and acting Municipal Clerk of the City of Urbana, Champaign County, Illinois.

I certify that on the _____ day of _____, 2002, the corporate authorities of the City of Urbana passed and approved Ordinance No. _____, entitled "An Ordinance Approving A Special Use Permit (Request to establish a temporary church office in the R-2, Single-Family Residential Zoning District - Plan Case No. 1821-SU-02)" which provided by its terms that it should be published in pamphlet form. The pamphlet form of Ordinance No. _____ was prepared, and a copy of such Ordinance was posted in the Urbana City Building commencing on the _____ day of _____, 2002, and continuing for at least ten (10) days thereafter. Copies of such Ordinance were also available for public inspection upon request at the Office of the City Clerk.

DATED at Urbana, Illinois, this _____ day of _____, 2002.

Photos of 310 W. High Street



South Side view from High Street



South Side view from High Street



West Side view from Parking Lot



South Side view from High Street



West Side view from High Street