



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: January 4, 2007

SUBJECT: Presentation of Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Neighborhood Plan – Prepared by the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Association

Introduction

The Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Association (HEUNA) has submitted the attached neighborhood plan for presentation and consideration by the Urbana Plan Commission and City Council. As stated by HEUNA, the purpose of the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Association Neighborhood Plan (HNP) is to “facilitate discussion regarding the history, present use and future of the portion of Urbana in which we live.” Additionally, the plan is a statement of what is important to the neighborhood.

While the HNP is not a formal City-sponsored neighborhood plan, it does provide a vision for the neighborhood and can be used by the City as an informational tool for future community development efforts. In preparing this plan, HEUNA did conduct a process of collecting input from residents, holding discussions about the plan, and submitted a draft document to the City for staff review and input. The HCP details a number of concerns, including preservation of neighborhood character, property maintenance standards, infrastructure needs, brick sidewalk restoration, incompatible infill development, and the lack of bicycle trails through the neighborhood. The plan specifically states how such concerns are impacting the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood and provides recommended solutions.

Since the HNP has been submitted as a statement of what is important to the neighborhood, not as a formal plan, staff is simply asking the City Council to review the document and decide whether or not the City Council should accept the plan as an informational tool for future community development efforts in the neighborhood.

HEUNA Neighborhood Plan

The HNP was drafted with the intent of supplementing the goals, objectives, and implementation strategies of the 2005 Urbana Comprehensive Plan. HEUNA started work on their plan in late 2004 by gathering input from members, collecting data, and holding general discussions. A draft plan was formulated by December 2004, and a final draft was submitted to the Planning Manager and the

Community Development Services Department in late January 2005 for review and comment. The City was concurrently completing work on the 2005 Urbana Comprehensive Plan, which included a number of recommendations for the east Urbana neighborhood. In mid 2006, the Planning Division asked HEUNA to submit an updated version of the HNP that could serve as an informational tool for future planning efforts in the neighborhood. HEUNA once again collected member input and submitted a revised final draft to the City in November 2006. It is this revised document that is attached for consideration.

Trends and Issues

A number of specific trends and issues for the neighborhood are presented in the plan. The plan is summarized below, and is available in its full form in the attached HNP (see Exhibit A).

“Wear Down and Tear Down.” Poor upkeep of single-family residential properties may lead to their eventual replacement with higher density development that is inconsistent with a “small neighborhood aspect.” HEUNA advocates for both regulations and incentives that will prevent the spread of this problem.

Incompatible Zoning. Properties north of Green Street are currently zoned for higher-density residential development. This zoning is inconsistent with the majority of properties in the area which are single-family homes and encourages incompatible development.

Incompatible New Development. The result of several identified trends and issues is new development that is inconsistent with the existing character of the neighborhood.

Property Maintenance. A significant number of homes, especially in the northern part of the neighborhood, are in need of repairs. Such repairs would require investment from both residents and the City, and may include funds from federal, state, and local programs. Some properties also have general maintenance issues, such as overgrown vegetation or household articles strewn about the yard. The neighborhood supports consistent code compliance and enforcement.

Infrastructure Needs. There is a significant need for infrastructure improvements, including storm sewers, curbing and sidewalks. A number of areas lack effective storm sewers resulting in hazardous conditions during winter months. HEUNA supports upgrading curbs, gutters, street lights, and sidewalks on all streets. Additionally, the preservation of brick sidewalks is a major issue for the neighborhood.

Vision

The HCP details a vision for the neighborhood, and includes a number of initiatives to address current and future needs. Each of the elements of the vision is discussed below, and relevant existing City plans, programs and policies are also discussed.

Neighborhood Identification Signs. HEUNA has successfully raised money and coordinated with Public Works to install signs at the entrances to the neighborhood.

Neighborhood Conservation Districts. The HNP promotes the use of neighborhood conservation districts (NCDs) in the east Urbana neighborhood. According to the HNP, the NCD ordinance should include design review similar to the MOR Zoning District and property upkeep standards.

As directed by the City Council as part of a larger report on neighborhood preservation, Planning staff is currently drafting a NCD enabling ordinance. This ordinance will establish the procedure through which neighborhoods may petition the City to establish individual NCDs. Under the proposal, the City will provide technical assistance to help craft a specialized NCD that will address the specific needs and desires of each participating neighborhood. A draft version of the ordinance should be presented to the Plan Commission and City Council in early 2007.

Incentives. As part of a NCD, the HNP supports a property tax rebate for participating owners. However, all properties in a NCD must comply with the specialized regulations.

Planning staff will create educational materials that will complement a NCD application to ensure that all property owners are aware of the potential impacts. Any tax incentives would require extensive fiscal analysis to determine the impact on the City as a whole and approval by the City Council.

Neighborhood Commercial Development – The HNP recognizes that there are limited opportunities for in-neighborhood commercial uses. Commercial zoning currently exists along the periphery of the neighborhood, and any future development should be compatible with surrounding properties. Properties along the north side of East Main Street are zoned B-3, General Business, while there is additional B-3 and B-1, Neighborhood Business zoning at the corner of Washington and Philo. A number of successful businesses are located in the neighborhood, including a restaurant, several auto-oriented operations, an animal hospital, a bakery outlet, and an auto repair facility.

Brick Sidewalk Restoration. A number of brick sidewalks exist in the east Urbana neighborhood, and the City along with HEUNA has already undertaken successful restoration efforts. The HNP advocates for measurable yearly progress in additional restoration and maintenance by Urbana Public Works.

The Urbana Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) identifies existing brick sidewalks that are protected by City ordinance. Brick sidewalks located adjacent to properties zoned R-1, R-2, or R-3 must be replaced with brick. Brick sidewalks in other areas may be replaced by either concrete or brick as requested by the adjacent property owner. The CIP identifies a number of sidewalks in the east Urbana neighborhood north of Green Street that will be replaced in the next five years. The proposed zoning study (see below) may impact which sidewalks will be required to be replaced with brick per City ordinance.

Infrastructure Improvements. A number of streets in the east Urbana neighborhood are without curb and gutter, which creates problems with stormwater runoff/flooding and improper parking. The HNP recommends that the City accelerate the construction schedule for improvements, especially north of California Avenue. The CIP indicates a number of projects that will take place in the east Urbana neighborhood within the next ten years. This includes repairing the main storm sewer line that runs through the neighborhood, as well as a number of storm sewer installations. Green Street will be reconstructed, and will include new sanitary and storm sewers.

Bicycle Paths and Greenways. The HNP promotes the development of bicycle trails and walkways through the neighborhood. The *Champaign County Greenways and Trails Plan* largely focuses on the construction of paths in the developing parts of the community. There are very few formal bicycle trails in the older portions of the City. This issue has been raised by a number of City Council members, and helped spur the creation of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee. One of the tasks assigned to this group will be to create a bicycle master plan focusing on the creation of in-city trails and paths.

Pocket Parks. The HNP advocates for the expansion of public parks through the creation of “pocket parks” on vacant lots purchased by the City. In general, there are a minimal number of vacant lots in the City. There are also limited funding opportunities for lot purchases, most of which are supported by HUD programs. When lots are purchased, the City typically works with affordable housing developers to increase the number of such units within the City. The Urbana Park District does not support mini-parks or parks below 5-10 acres in size.

Public Art Placement. HEUNA supports adding public art in the neighborhood. The City has recently hired a public arts coordinator, who is in the process of identifying areas where art could be integrated into the community.

Tree Preservation. The HNP advocates for the preservation of large oak trees in the neighborhood. The City’s Arbor Division has a number of programs aimed at helping residents plant, grow, and maintain landscaping. Additional protection measures as necessary can be discussed between the City Arborist and HEUNA.

Waste Hauling. This service is privately contracted by residents, and any changes would need to be initiated by the neighborhood with service provider cooperation.

Existing City Plans, Programs, and Policies

A variety of plans, programs, and policies are related to the recommendations of the HCP. An overview of the plans, programs, and policies and how they related to the HNP is below.

2005 Urbana Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan includes a number of goals and objectives that are related to neighborhood preservation, Urbana’s unique character, utilities, and community development programs. Many of the same issues the goals and objectives address are outlined in the HNP:

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| Goal 1.0 | Preserve and enhance the character of Urbana’s established residential neighborhoods |
| Goal 2.0 | New development in an established neighborhood will be compatible with the overall urban design and fabric of that neighborhood |
| Goal 12.0 | Preserve the characteristics that make Urbana unique |

- Goal 13.0 Capitalize on Urbana’s unique heritage as a community with a mix of urban and small-town features.
- Goal 33.0 Provide maximum service and dependable utilities
- Goal 39.0 Seek to improve the quality of life for all residents through community development programs that emphasize social services, affordable housing and economic opportunity
- Goal 40.0 Make affordable housing available for low-income and moderate-income households
- Goal 43.0 Provide for the distribution of social services to Urbana residents with diverse needs

Future Land Use Map #10 encompasses the “Historic East Urbana” area and largely identifies future land uses that reflect current land uses (see Exhibit B). The Comprehensive Plan recognizes the desirability of neighborhoods adjacent to downtown Urbana, and the need to determine appropriate zoning and regulations in these areas that will encourage desirable development as determined by the neighborhood. Additionally, various areas that have inconsistent zoning and land uses, particularly north of Green Street, should be addressed. Planning staff has begun a zoning study, as discussed below that will address both issues.

HEUNA developed their neighborhood plan concurrently with the Comprehensive Plan which involved extensive public involvement. Accordingly, the HNP and Comprehensive Plan identify many of the same issues and present similar strategies for mitigating neighborhood concerns.

Community Development

The Community Development Services Department is undertaking a number of initiatives related to neighborhood preservation both city-wide and in the east Urbana neighborhood that pertain to implementation of the Comprehensive Plan and will help achieve the objectives of the HNP. These initiatives are discussed as follows:

Neighborhood Conservation Districts. At the direction of the City Council, the Planning Division is currently preparing a draft NCD enabling ordinance. Under the proposal, City staff can provide assistance to neighborhoods that wish to propose a NCD.

Zoning Study. As identified in the 2005 Urbana Comprehensive Plan and the HNP, there are a number of areas north of Green Street in the east Urbana neighborhood that have inconsistent zoning and land uses. The majority of properties north of Green Street are currently zoned for multi-family residential, although most properties are used for single-family homes. The Planning Division has begun to study the possibility of rezoning properties to reflect their current uses and the future land use identified on Future Land Use Map #10. This study is anticipated to be completed in 2007. The study will include extensive public participation to ensure that property owners are supportive of any zoning changes.

Housing Investment Corporations. As part of a larger study on neighborhood preservation, the City Council directed staff to investigate the potential for private, non-profit housing investment corporations (HICs). Initiated, funded, and maintained by private citizens, HICs are a grassroots effort to achieve a specific outcome, such as historic preservation or increased owner-occupied housing. The Planning Division hosted one workshop on HICs in November 2006, and will hold another in early 2007. Staff plans to provide technical assistance to neighborhoods wishing to set up HICs, including help establishing non-profit corporations.

Rental Registration Program. The City Council is currently holding hearings on a proposed rental registration ordinance. This program would require all rental properties, including single-family housing, to register with the City. A small fee would be assessed that would fund additional housing inspectors to increase the frequency of rental property inspections. Similar programs in other cities have been shown to have a noticeable impact on the upkeep of rental properties.

Grants Programs. The majority of the east Urbana neighborhood is located in a community development target area, as determined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The determination is based on the percentage of low- to moderate-income residents located in a Census block group. Residents in target areas are eligible for a variety of social service and housing programs. Select programs are defined below:

Whole House Rehabilitation: Targeting homes that are in need of significant repairs, this program provides a grant/loan up to \$25,000 to qualified homeowners. City building inspectors determine all necessary repairs required to meet current building codes, and the Grants Management Division coordinates contractor bidding. There is currently a two to three year waiting list for this program.

Emergency Grant Program: This program is available to very low-income homeowners in need of repair of health or safety items, such as defective mechanical equipment, electrical or plumbing problems, building components and surfaces. A maximum of \$5,000 is available per household, and applications are subject to funding availability.

Senior Repair Services: Senior citizens 62 years or older may take advantage of this program that offers up to \$850 from a non-repayable grant. The program offers “handyman” services, such as repairs to furnaces, plumbing, porches, or steps.

Community Development Block Grants: The CDBG program is administered by HUD and is intended to benefit low- and moderate-income residents. The City has the flexibility to design its own program objectives and procedures for program administration and to develop criteria for selection of grant subrecipients. The City has decided to focus its activities to those that principally benefit extremely low- and low-income persons. The City’s CDBG program is intended to supplement the efforts of organizations in initiating and/or engaging in a community development purpose. Recent projects have included stormwater infrastructure improvements in the Scottswood neighborhood (in cooperation with multiple local government agencies) and the installation of streetlights on Webber Street in the east Urbana neighborhood.

Public Works

The Public Works Department has several programs that benefit the east Urbana neighborhood. These are described as follows:

Property Maintenance. The Environmental Control Division is tasked with enforcing exterior property maintenance standards in the City Code. In addition to specific standards, maintenance issues that cause “visual blight” can be considered violations, though require extensive documentation. The enforcement process is detailed below.

1. Observation/citizen complaint received
2. First notice sent to property owner (7 days to comply)
3. If the violation is not address, Urbana Public Works will hire a contractor and charge the property owner the cost of cleanup
4. If the cleanup bill is not paid within 30 days, the case is forwarded to the Urbana Legal Department

Infrastructure Improvements. The CIP identifies a number of projects in the east Urbana neighborhood slated for completion in the next 10 years. This includes sanitary and storm sewer improvements throughout the neighborhood (especially in the northern portions) and sidewalk restoration/replacement.

Sidewalks are addressed as part of the annual CIP, which identifies a number of brick and concrete sidewalks in the east Urbana neighborhood that will be restored or replaced. Restoration of brick sidewalks is discussed above.

Options

The Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Association Neighborhood Plan has been submitted as a statement of what is important to the neighborhood, and not for adoption as a formal City-sponsored plan. As such, staff is asking the City Council to review the plan and consider whether or not to accept it as a tool for future City-initiated community development efforts in the neighborhood.

The City Council has the following options.

1. Accept the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Association Neighborhood Plan.
2. Do not accept the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Association Neighborhood Plan.

Recommendation

The Plan Commission reviewed the attached HNP and recommended that the City Council **ACCEPT** the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Association Neighborhood Plan as an informational tool for the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood. Staff concurs with this recommendation

Prepared by:

Matt Wempe, Planner II

Attachments: Exhibit A: Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Association Neighborhood Plan (HNP)
Exhibit B: Future Land Use Map #10 – 2005 Urbana Comprehensive Plan
Exhibit C: Draft Resolution of Support

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RESOLUTION NO. 2007-01-002R

RESOLUTION REGARDING THE HISTORIC EAST URBANA NEIGHBORHOOD
ASSOCIATION DOCUMENT ENTITLED "HISTORIC EAST URBANA NEIGHBORHOOD
ASSOCIATION NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN"

WHEREAS, The Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Association is a private not-for-profit neighborhood group, whose goals are to preserve the historic nature of East Urbana as a family oriented neighborhood, promote retention of current owner-occupied homes, encourage upkeep of rental properties, preserve a low density housing environment, and promote rehabilitation of older homes; and

WHEREAS, the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Association has prepared a document entitled "Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Association Neighborhood Plan", the purpose of which is to facilitate discussion regarding the history, present use and future of the historic East Urbana neighborhood, augment and amplify the City of Urbana's 2005 Comprehensive Plan, and define a vision for the future of the neighborhood; and

WHEREAS, the goals and recommendations set forward in the "Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Association Neighborhood Plan" are consistent with the City's 2005 Comprehensive Plan policies and strategies for the East Urbana area to preserve the unique character of the neighborhood, determine compatible zoning, improve existing infrastructure and housing stock, and to respect the traditional physical development pattern for new development; and

WHEREAS, the Urbana Plan Commission reviewed the "Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Association Neighborhood Plan" and recommended that the Urbana City Council accept the plan as an informational tool for future community development efforts in the neighborhood; and

WHEREAS, the Urbana City Council desires to express its support for many of the concepts outlined in the document entitled "Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Association Neighborhood Plan" and supports the efforts of the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Association to bring these important issues to the attention of the City of Urbana.

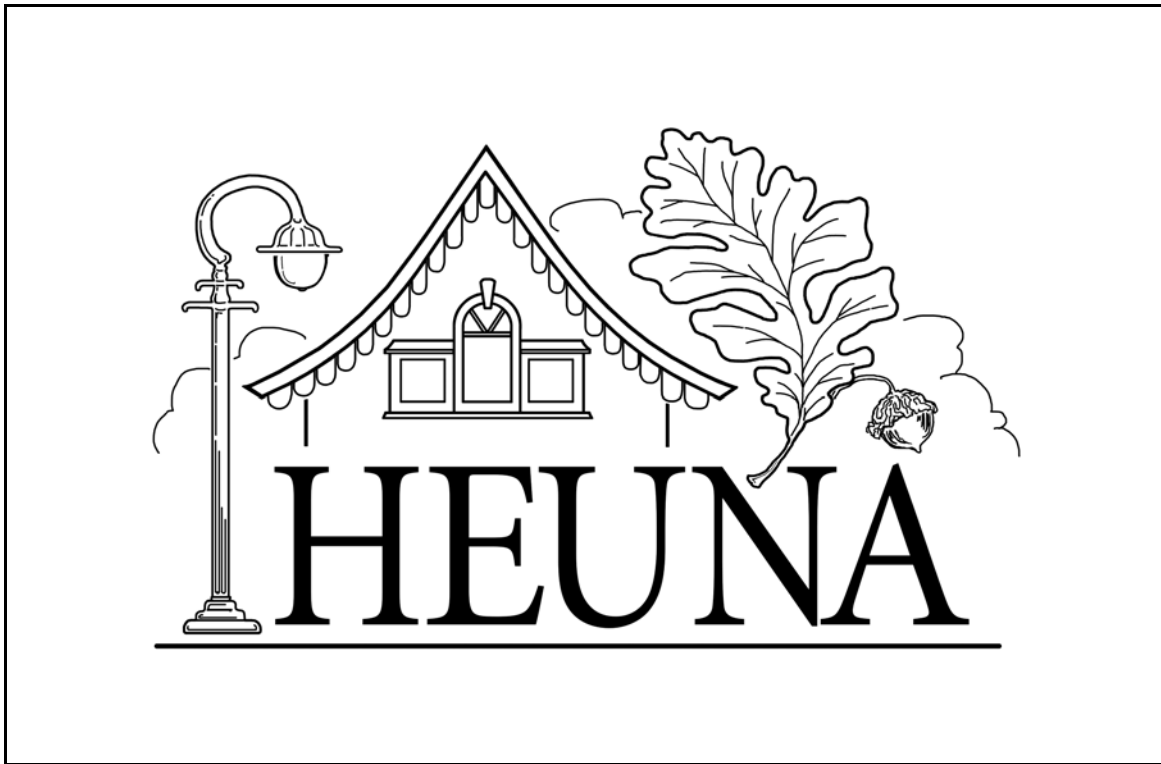
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the members of the City Council of the City of Urbana; do hereby recognize the document entitled "Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Association Neighborhood Plan" as a position statement of the historic East Urbana Neighborhood and directs the staff to continue to work with the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Association to implement the "Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Association Neighborhood Plan" where consistent with official City plans and policies.

PASSED by the City Council this ____ day of January, 2007

Phyllis D. Clark, City Clerk

APPROVED by the Mayor this ____ day of _____, 2007

Laurel Lunt Prussing, Mayor



HISTORIC EAST URBANA
NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

-Neighborhood Plan-

Scott Dossett , Tyler Fitch, Dennis
Roberts, Chris Stohr (editors)

November 15, 2006

Forward

The following text is submitted by HEUNA to the Urbana Community Development department (UCD). Its purpose is to facilitate discussion regarding the history, present use and future of the portion of Urbana in which we live.

We are deeply grateful to staff within UCD who have asked for and encouraged this most recent edition.

We also wish to show appreciation to all City Staff, as well as the City Council and Mayor, for all they do for our city.

Finally, the editors thank the many members of HEUNA who have offered suggestions and support throughout this process.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

Adopt planning guidelines for areas on the north and east boundaries of the HEUNA neighborhood along major traffic arteries. These are most likely to see redevelopment as the downtown continues to grow and expand, and which currently have commercial use or are zoned for high density residential. These areas are directly adjacent to single family homes on the 100, 200, and 300 blocks of East Elm Street and to the west side of the 100, and 200 blocks of South Urbana Street. They constitute areas of potential conflict with current use. (refer to "Existing Land Use Map" Appendix C, Urbana Comprehensive Plan 2005.) Explore adopting city-established design and planning guidelines, such as the Mixed Office and Residential (MOR) status for this transitional area. Discuss proper buffering strategies to allow future commercial or high-density apartment development without degrading the quality of life in the neighborhood. Consider other areas where commercial in-fill development may be appropriate.

TRANSPORTATION CONCERNS

Bike Routes

Develop bike paths on appropriate streets in the HEUNA neighborhood, identifying strong connections from Philo Road to downtown Urbana through the HEUNA neighborhood. Evaluate East Illinois, East Main, East Washington, Anderson and North Cottage Grove Streets as potential main bike paths.

Walking Paths and Greenways

Develop a continuous multi-use path/handicap accessible sidewalk on the north side of East Green Street from Vine Street to Hartle Street. This would connect the downtown to the Solo Cup area and offer accessibility to pathways created in Victory Park. Promote the conversion of the east-west rail line just north of Main Street to walking paths and bike trails which connect to the East Urbana neighborhood and the shopping area at Schnucks Crossing.

Curbs and Gutters

Identify those streets north of Illinois Street and directly east of City Hall, which currently do not have curbs and storm gutters and designate these areas for future capital improvements for installing these amenities.

NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION STRATEGIES

Neighborhood Conservation District

Work with HEUNA members, residents at large and City staff to create and establish a Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Conservation District. This

should be based on useful models from such districts in other communities outlined in the report “Neighborhood Conservation Study” by Planning Staff intern Rebecca Bicksley. Define such a District as it may be specifically applicable to East Urbana, where incomes are moderate, housing stock is modest, and where construction compatibility guidelines and appropriate zoning are important to preserve the quality of the community.

Demolition Review

Work with City Staff to adopt an appropriate review policy for single family home demolitions which allows for redevelopment while preserving the historic and unique buildings within East Urbana.

Rebuild Urbana Program

Promote a program of city grant money and/or city property tax incentives for restoration efforts made by property owners who improve older homes. Significant and appropriate remodeling efforts may deserve property tax incentives such as those used in the “Build Urbana” Program.

Brick Sidewalk Conservation

Continue to work with the Planning staff and the Public Works Department on the upgrade and eventual total restoration of our historic brick sidewalks, including full removal and relaying of all such walks on an ongoing schedule, as financially possible. Dedicate one side (south) of Green Street for extensive brick sidewalk restoration during the repaving and new curb installation project. Continue the annual herbicide program to check vegetative growth on brick sidewalks, and extend this service to brick walks north of Green Street including all brick streets just north of Main Street.

Historic Landmark Designations

Identify all historic homes, buildings, businesses, trees, sites, birthplaces, and pathways in the Historic East Urbana neighborhood. Prepare a map locating such designations, for the benefit of residents and as a matter of historic record. Work with the City and Mayor’s office to establish a policy for marking these sites, through brass markers or plaques, as may be found appropriate.

HOUSING

Home and Yard Maintenance

Work with Urbana Public Works and Community Development to assure that all applicable ordinances are enforced. In addition, develop an outreach plan to contact property owners whose property is degrading or creating a maintenance issue. HEUNA should participate actively in the city’s Trash Haul Day programs; lending assistance at pick-up points, using yard signs to advertise the date, and contacting households.

Down-zoning

Identify areas where assigned zoning is inconsistent with current use, and work with the City Zoning Commissioner to re-evaluate these areas. Promote down-zoning some areas to better protect the single family and double family occupancy desired in the East Urbana neighborhood.

In-fill development

Promote in a manner that sustains a wide range of commercial uses as well as home styles and affordability. Promote projects that 1) allow greater ownership diversity, 2) use sustainable construction methods, 3) reduce utility costs, 4) reflect building choices that blend with the existing housing stocks architectural detail, and 5) provide green space.

Rental Housing

Support the concept of an aggressive rental owner registry and inspection program which blends public safety and neighborhood aesthetic concerns. The goal should be a yearly inspection cycle.

PARKS IMPROVEMENTS

Continue to work with the Urbana Park District (UPD) on the improvements to Victory Park. Recent grant monies have been received for the second phase development of new park facilities. Specifically; the addition of community gardens, a walking trail and new shelter are planned. Market the Victory Park area as a destination on the Hartle to Vine "Green Street Corridor". Explore the concept and location of other "pocket parks" with UPD.

Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Association Neighborhood Plan(HEUNA-NP)

I. BACKGROUND AND PROCESS

The Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Association (HEUNA) is a formally chartered State of Illinois non-profit corporation which seeks to serve its community by direct action, capacity building and neighborhood advocacy.

The stated mission of HEUNA:

- To preserve the historic nature of East Urbana as a family-oriented neighborhood.
- To maintain, conserve, and improve East Urbana for families by promoting retention of current owner-occupied homes and encouraging the upkeep of rental properties.
- To address street parking and sidewalk repair issues.
- To promote rehabilitation of older homes.
- To strengthen HEUNA by encouraging neighbors' involvement and participation.
- To welcome new residents and homeowners.

PLAN GOAL STATEMENT

The goal of the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Association Neighborhood Plan is:

1. To augment and amplify the City of Urbana's 2005 Comprehensive Plan (U-CP);
2. To define a vision for the future of the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood,
3. To identify commercial growth potential within the Historic East Urbana neighborhood;
4. To define problems needing attention within the Historic East Urbana neighborhood;
5. To propose guidelines for development within the Historic East Urbana neighborhood; and
6. To propose a Neighborhood Conservation District within the Historic East

Urbana neighborhood.

7. To identify areas within the HEUNA neighborhood where assigned zoning is inconsistent with current use, to work with the City Zoning Administrator to re-evaluate these areas, and to down-zone appropriate properties.
8. To identify and promote capital improvement projects necessary to maintain and upgrade all areas of Historic East Urbana.
9. To identify and resolve nuisance problems and property maintenance issues within Historic East Urbana.
10. To define a vision for planning, development and property management for areas of the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood adjacent to downtown on Vine Street and along East Main Street.

II. COMMUNITY PROFILE

Geographic Area

The HEUNA area of service is bounded by Vine St. to Hartle St. (East-West) and Main St. to Washington Ave. (North-South). This area lies completely within Urbana City Council Ward 5 and is a United States Census Target Track area Number 53. The area is defined as low to moderate income in (U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development) Community Development Block Grant Entitlement Program Regulations 24CFR570.

Sources of Input

Ideas developed in the HEUNA-NP originate from public discussion, HEUNA membership meetings, HEUNA email discussion, HEUNA Block Party input, attendance of members at agency and organization meetings and forums, and neighborhood survey results.

Steps to Plan Completion

1. Membership input and information gathering -- to 11/04
2. General discussion - 11/04 to 12/04
3. Draft Plan document - 12/04
4. Final Plan document - 1/27/05
5. Submittal of Plan to Office of Planning and Development. 1/27/05
6. Final Revision - 11/15/06

Housing

The Plan area contains multiple family apartments, duplexes, and single family homes. The housing stock quality is mixed with little potential for Historic District status. However the area has many good examples of vernacular carpenter-built homes ranging in age from 100+ years to 50 years. There is some opportunity for in-fill development and lot arrangement is of a notably random pattern which most likely results from multiple 'informal' lot divisions prior to City zoning

activities. The nearly 95% built-up level present today was probably achieved in the mid 1900's.

Zoning

The HEUNA-NP area contains the following Zoning groups:

R-2/3 : Single and Two Family Residential : East side of Glover; All homes south of Green to Washington, Maple St. east to Glover.

R-4 : Medium Density Multiple Family Residential : Grove St. — Glover St. between Main St. and Green St. (north side).

R-5 : Medium High Density Multiple Family Residential : 300—500 blocks of E. Green St. (north side) and Elm St.; 300 block of S. Urbana St.; 100 block of S. Grove.

R-6 : High Density Multiple Family Residential : 300 block of S. Vine St.; 300 block of E. Main St.; and 200 block of S. Urbana St.

B-1 : Neighborhood Business : Fairfield Automotive at Cottage Grove and Green St.; and Baha'i Temple, Green St. and Lynn; Skully's Fish & Chicken, Philo and Washington Streets, Butterfly Beads, Washington Street and Cottage Grove Street.

B-4 : Central Business : 300—500 block of E. Main St.; 100—400 block of S. Vine St.

CRE : Conservation, Recreation, and Education : Victory Park

IN : Industrial : Solo Cup Factory East of Hartle St.

Economic Development

The Plan area has many opportunities for commercial economic development. Although only four properties are zoned B-1 in the neighborhood area, these should be evaluated and augmented if possible. The Central Business core areas on Main Street east and Vine Street provide ample opportunity for business growth as can be attested by the recent growth of the Schnucks Crossing and AutoZone expansions. The new retail development at Five Points is a valuable addition to the area. This new area might benefit from the addition of an upscale clothier catering to business and university professionals. Efforts to revitalize Lincoln Square Village and the Philo Road business district should continue as a centerpiece of economic development in Urbana.

Transportation

Automobile

Access by auto is provided on all streets in the Plan area. The streets in the target area all double as bike and often walking paths due to the variable condition of the sidewalks. They range in material and condition from some fairly recent concrete streets to rehabilitated brick streets (most notably East Illinois Avenue) and old tar and chip streets with no curb and gutter treatment.

MTD

The HEUNA-NP area is connected with other areas of the City through service by the MTD. Routes serving the area or bordering on the area include: 5 Green, 6 Orange, 7 Gray, 8 Orchard Downs, 10 Gold, 25 Loop, and the Urbana Employee Shuttle.

Bike Routes

No bike paths are located in the HEUNA-NP area. Bike riders use the main arteries of Illinois Avenue and Green Street to connect to bike paths nearer campus, which is approximately ½ mile to the west, or take these streets to the downtown area.

Walking Paths and Greenways

No walking trails or greenways are located in the HEUNA-NP area. The sidewalks in the area are of mixed quality and material, either old unkept or owner kept brick or poured concrete of average quality. The lack of curbs and gutters means some walks are not handicapped accessible, and many of the brick sidewalks are in very poor condition. Most maintenance of the brick sidewalks is on an ad-hoc and infrequent basis. Public works has improved several areas often with home owner participation, and a rehabilitation program is progressing. Still, the unsatisfactory conversion of historic brick to concrete threatens the distinctive character of the neighborhood.

Parking

Curb parking is common on all streets. No curbs and gutters exist on streets north of California with few exceptions. In these areas parking results in large amorphous muddy areas near the roadside.

Utilities

Sewers, Sanitary, Water, Gas, Electric, and Telephone

The Plan area resides within an old, established section near downtown Urbana. All major services and utilities are connected and provided. Some systems are old and require individual property owner and City maintenance. Storm sewers are not well developed in the area between California and Green Street and from Lynn to Urbana. This inadequate removal of surface flow results in standing water and potentially hazardous conditions during the winter months. Electric and telecommunications lines are overhead and thus susceptible to weather and conflict with tree growth. Underground installation is recommended if large scale renovation or improvement projects are considered.

Technology Services

Cable access are allowed in utility rights-of-way and proper easements. These services must be arranged through private carriers and providers. The area is not served by a wireless Internet provider or cable modem service.

Street Lighting

The HEUNA-NP area has recently seen an upgrade in street lighting, the removal of old street lamps, and the installation of control boxes (above and below ground), new lamp posts, and lamps in much of its area. Notable are High, Cottage Grove, Illinois, and California Streets. Improvements are currently planned for the 700-800 blocks of South Anderson, Webber and Lynne Streets.

Parks and Recreation

Victory Park, administered by the Urbana Park District, is the only city park in the HEUNA-NP area. Prior to the expansion of the Urbana municipal building parking area another rather informal “pocket park” was located on the 200 block of South Urbana St. Concurrent with City expansion much of the park was lost and has not been replaced. This area now has an informal and attractive planting with a mixed prairie motif. This valuable area should be preserved and enhanced. The new fountain sculpture area north of the city building is an attractive area and could be incorporated into a pocket park.

Schools

The neighborhood is served by Leal Elementary School, Prairie School, Urbana Middle and High Schools, as well as Parkland College and the University of Illinois, The Marilyn Queller Child Care Center on the 200 block of South Webber Street provides educational and social opportunity for younger children. These well known institutions make HEUNA an affordable place to live with easy access to good educational opportunities.

Emergency Services

In general the area benefits from it's close proximity to both the main city fire station and police station. There is some trade-off in this context vis-a-vis the noise from departing emergency responders, testing of sirens on police vehicles during shift changes and testing of emergency warning systems and back-up generators.

Police

The Police Department main headquarters is located on the western perimeter of the HEUNA-NP neighborhood area.

Fire Department

The Fire Department main headquarters is located on the western perimeter of the HEUNA-NP neighborhood area.

Ambulance

The HEUNA-NP area is serviced by the City and County emergency response vehicles, including Carle Foundation Hospital and Provena Covenant Medical Center.

Waste Management

Several private waste-haulers serve the HEUNA-NP area neighborhoods. There is some neighborhood interest in cooperatively limiting the number and controlling the timing of hauling services.

Human Services

The HEUNA-NP area is supported by the human resource services of the City of Urbana, including Urbana's Community Development Services Department, Grants Management Division, and social services programs.

Grants

HEUNA has been the recipient of 2 Community Development Block Grants. These Neighborhood Organization Grants (NOG), which are administered by City Community Development staff, have assisted capacity building, provided educational workshops, and created greater community identity. The NOGs have been crucial in HEUNA capacity building efforts. HEUNA also received a grant for the Preservation And Conservation Association (PACA) for a commemorative plaque for Victory Park.

Equal Opportunity and Housing

The HEUNA-NP area promotes equal opportunity and is under the City and State's Equal Housing Authority guidelines for nondiscrimination. Specifically, HEUNA supports the rights of both home owners and renters and consciously works to advocate for them on an equal basis.

Natural History

The area containing HEUNA is part of The Big Grove complex of prairie savannah, and although this area is discontinuous, there are single specimen remnants of Burr Oak (*Quercus Macrocarpa*) which are very prized by the community and deserve protection. Some of the remaining under story vegetation common to savannah remnants are present in a few yards.

III. TRENDS AND ISSUES

The HEUNA-NP area is affected by some of the same influences and conditions affecting the City of Urbana as a whole. The HEUNA neighborhood offers some additional challenges due to the low median income and more transient nature of some of its residents. Specific areas of concern include the following: lack of public park space and the relatively high occurrence of older, sub-standard single resident housing stock which is being converted into multi-family, aesthetically unpleasing two-story rental properties.

Growth and Development

“Wear-Down and Tear Down”-Poor Rental Maintenance Results in Loss Of Quality Housing

Of particular concern to the HEUNA neighborhood is the pattern of poor upkeep and eventual removal of single family homes and their replacement by duplexes and multiple family structures. This “wear-down/ tear-down” tactic is particularly evident on East Elm Street. Its results include the destruction of the small neighborhood aspect of the area and a complete visual reconfiguration of the block fronts. HEUNA advocates the use of zoning and ordinance rules to prevent the spread of this syndrome. Single family home owners should be assisted by services or funding to enable the proper upkeep of property. Incentives should not be granted to those who wish to tear down old single family structures and replace them with high-density housing developments. Specific problems include; adequacy of plan review, lack of parking, increased noise levels, and security concerns of some residents.

Down Zoning

HEUNA members have voiced support for down zoning of some of the R-5 and R-6 areas. Mostly due to the activities mentioned above, the replacement of long time residences with massive fronted “quick build” structures causes concerns about the stability of the neighborhood. Some HEUNA members suggest that city planning be changed to be more appropriate for a small town like Urbana. This conversion to large multi-family structures is not consistent with our neighborhood.

Lot Green Space Preservation

HEUNA is concerned that current city ordinance allows the use of almost the entire lot area for construction. The use of up to 80% of the lot area for buildings is not consistent with the character of the neighborhood and ordinances should be structured to preserve that character, not allow maximum building space.

Sustainability

New development and rehabilitation should be keyed to sound land-use and ecological principles. The human ecology should not be ignored. Planning should seek to combine all necessary social, business and recreational resources into easily accessible areas which promote community. There is concern about the availability of quality jobs in the HEUNA-NP area.

Commercial and Industrial Use

The commercial climate in the HEUNA-NP is mixed. Some areas near arterial streets have had significant development in the last 10 years. Residents are open to further small scale commercial development as long as it doesn't adversely impact the small town feel of the area. Small businesses which provide necessities, such as grocery stores are desirable. The HEUNA-NP should consider both the Industrial zoned areas on the most eastern edge of its boundary as well as the business opportunities on the major arterial streets. Projects requiring zoning adjustments on South Glover have come to the attention of the HEUNA membership. In addition HEUNA members have followed the Aldi development near Berringer Commons, the recent Wal-Mart build-out and the possible addition of a Menards with interest. The definition of "Neighborhood Business" needs to be clarified.

Zoning

Due to the varied zoning districts found in the northern section of the HEUNA neighborhood and the concern about the tear down of many small houses, there is interest in what zoning changes the U-CP 2005 may require or stimulate. Small sections of the neighborhood are being targeting by individuals for down-zoning.

Mobility

Alternative Transportation

The HEUNA-NP area residents support alternative transportation modes and have discussed this issue at membership meetings. The existing arterials of Green Street and Illinois Avenue (East and West) and Vine Street and Cottage Grove (North and South) seem to be logical areas which are highly traveled for expansion of alternative transport modes such as formal bike paths or local rail lines.

Housing

Public Housing Facilities / Affordable Housing

The HEUNA-NP area has privately owned affordable housing and rental choices within its boundaries to serve the needs of Urbana citizens. The area supports City programs for first time homeowner loans and low cost repair loans for residents. Rental properties often appear to violate logical setback provisions (for example the 200 Block of S. Grove and the 500 block of S. Urbana) where

single family dwellings about multiple family dwellings with very little clearance.

Renovation Needs of Substandard housing

There are more than a few homes in the neighborhood, particularly toward the North and East, that appear to need significant repairs. Some of those properties may violate city building and safety codes in some ways. The U-CP should directly address the issue of substandard housing. It's one of the most critical issues the HEUNA faces. Will such housing remain substandard? Under what circumstances will it be repaired or replaced? Repair or replacement of substandard homes requires investment, which may be most likely to come from developers, who may seek to build high-density units in order to maximize returns. HEUNA supports quality single- and two-family homes. Financial support for housing improvement using US HUD monies passed by the City is good, and several residents have taken part in the Low Interest Loan Programs using US HUD monies. These should be continued and expanded if possible and other programs to repair or replace substandard housing should be investigated..

Home/yard maintenance and enhancement

HEUNA members feel the U-CP should contain discussion and incentives for property maintenance and enhancement. Vegetation overrunning the sidewalk, and household articles strewn about the yard are not acceptable. The HEUNA-NP supports consistent code compliance and enforcement.

Abandoned Housing

There is nothing more damaging to the long term health of any neighborhood than the sight of buildings boarded and abandoned. HEUNA residents (the majority of whom take care of their properties) grow to resent these abandoned buildings and their owners. City staff time and ordinances should be used to force those owners to improve or formally yield these few select properties.

Public Safety

Speeding

Motorists frequently travel at high speeds through many of our East-West streets. (It may not be quite as big a problem on most of the North-South streets, many of which have stop signs at frequent intervals. East-West, the only stopping point appears to be Anderson on most streets.) Speeding in a residential neighborhood is dangerous on many levels, not least because HEUNA has much bicycle and pedestrian traffic, especially in warm weather months. HEUNA supports the addition of traffic control signage and structure where logical, with the goal of traffic calming and speed reduction.

Infrastructure

Sewers / Storm Water Detention

The HEUNA-NP area has identified numerous problems with sewer and storm water control; current conditions are inadequate for the needs of the neighborhood. Storm sewers are not effective in draining the area between California and Green Street and from Lynn Street to Urbana Street. This inadequate removal of surface flow results in standing water and potentially hazardous conditions during the winter months in both yards and streets. HEUNA members recognize the high cost of such infrastructure development; however, some areas of the neighborhood become impassable after accumulation of frozen precipitation or meltwater, especially at intersections. Development (either business, multiple or single family residence) should be held to a high standard of compliance regarding drainage issues.

Downtown

Vitality of the Downtown Area

Adjacent to the Downtown, the HEUNA-NP area is vitally interested in the success of the continued redevelopment of the Downtown Urbana area. Neighbors have attended many of the instructional workshops and discussions concerning the fate of various downtown buildings and projects, including the Urbana County Courthouse expansion, the new Urbana Free Library expansion and the Lincoln Square Mall redevelopment. We patronize and support downtown businesses.

Lincoln Square Mall

The continuing redevelopment of Lincoln Square Village is of great interest for HEUNA-NP area residents. HEUNA members regularly shop in and visit this area, support the Market at the Square, and show support for the plans increase its commercial potential.

Historical and Cultural Significance

The HEUNA-NP area is strongly aware of the importance of maintaining the aesthetic properties of the Urbana Downtown and of preserving the historical details of the area. To this end the HEUNA membership sponsored a highly successful Brick Sidewalk Restoration Workshop in June and July, 2003. For this effort HEUNA (jointly with the City) was recognized with the 2004 Landscape Preservation Award by the Preservation and Conservation Association. Areas in downtown and near HEUNA may be valid candidates for Historic District status and we support that concept in general.

Improvement of Public Infrastructure

The HEUNA-NP area is supportive of the upgrade of City streets infrastructure, including curbs, gutters, street lights and sidewalks. Specifically, the program for

the maintenance of the old brick sidewalks in East Urbana is a project on which the HEUNA membership has placed considerable effort and attention.

Neighborhoods

Preservation

Maintaining the unique historic features of the East Urbana neighborhoods will add to the desirability and value of HEUNA neighborhood property. HEUNA recognizes the “multiplier effect” of renewal and supports both City staff and our members in their efforts to maintain and refurbish structures and landscapes within the neighborhood.

Incompatible Redevelopment

The quality of the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood requires that remodels and new construction remain compatible with the older residences in exterior architectural style and character wherever possible. HEUNA residents support thoughtful planning and harmonious architectural design for all remodeled structures in the HEUNA property area. HEUNA supports down-zoning to bring future redevelopment into line with the existing family oriented zoning that is found in most of the area boundaries. HEUNA supports discussion on the possibility of aesthetic review of new development. Recent builds on Elm Street could have easily included basic and inexpensive design elements such as those found in the City’s MOR design guidelines to improve the blending of these structures into the existing neighborhood.

Privacy

Changes to the housing stock should not only take into account the massing, facade zone and opening criteria as stated in the MOR guidelines. Of equal importance is how any new development effects the privacy and usability of existing structures. The appropriate use of setbacks, expanded setbacks, privacy fencing and design review should assure that the use of an individual's property not be compromised by adjoining developments.

IV. VISION

The following specific projects and issues are designated as active priorities by the HEUNA-NP neighborhood :

Identifying signage

As a result of HEUNA's advocacy of unique signage to define neighborhood boundaries and welcome residents, potential residents, and visitors to the area, the City of Urbana erected new welcome signs at key entryways to the CP area in Spring 2006. A sign design contest was held in Spring 2005, and HEUNA list users chose an original design by a HEUNA residents that features an oak tree and proclaims HEUNA's "neighbor to neighbor" philosophy of community improvement. Consistent with the City's Entryway Sign Policy passed in Fall 2005, the City installed and maintains the signs, but HEUNA is responsible for initial and replacement purchase. Funds for the initial signs, plus two spare signs, were provided by neighborhood businesses and residents through donations of cash and items for a neighborhood rummage sale. HEUNA believes the signs will strengthen neighborhood identity, and is committed to replacing them as needed and as funds permit.

Neighborhood Conservation Districts

The HEUNA-NP area promotes the concept of NCD's within its boundaries. The purpose of this Plan is to promote the adoption of compatible construction and remodeling styles with those seen in the community, which preserve the residential quality of the old neighborhood. Details of the preferred design plans might conform closely to the guidelines and design criteria adopted by the City for the MOR (Mixed Office and Residential) development areas of West Urbana. The City should continue to offer and accelerate incentives to keep families in housing which may currently be in poor condition. Rental properties should be held to a high state of compliance with all ordinances.

Tax Increment Financing

The East Urbana neighborhood would like to see a property tax rebate incentive established for qualifying property owners who participate in a Neighborhood Conservation District. Property owners who remodel or carry out new construction within the HEUNA-NP district which follow the guidelines of the NCD may receive a 15% rebate on their property taxes for 3 years as an incentive for following design criteria.

Neighborhood Commercial Development

The HEUNA-NP area is interested in the stability and growth of the City tax base. Commercial development potential in the HEUNA area is somewhat limited, but HEUNA may identify areas within its boundaries where careful and thoughtful commercial development friendly to the interests and consistent with the

appearance of the neighborhood can be found. The zoning for and creation of in-neighborhood shopping options can be considered compatible with the long range goals of property use at the edges of the HEUNA residential district. Currently only three property zones within the HEUNA boundary exist that have commercial use. HEUNA recommends the improvement and upgrading of present commercial businesses to comply with the design objectives of a Neighborhood Conservation District plan. Development within the Industrial Zoned properties at the edge of the HEUNA-NP area should be compatible to the interests and needs of the neighborhood. Environmental pollutant sources, noise abatement, traffic density, delivery schedules, and property upkeep are concerns of the neighborhood and will be addressed through appropriate City agencies as occasions arise. Business development should be of a quality which will provide "living wage" employment to residences.

Non-Commercial, Non- Residential Development

The presence and growth of private, non-profit organizations, churches, or educational facilities is supported by the HEUNA-NP area community vision.

Brick Sidewalk Restoration

Building on the success already initiated by HEUNA during the 2003 Brick Sidewalk Restoration Workshops, HEUNA residents continue to advocate for the removal, base establishment and brick relaying methods as prescribed by the Urbana Public Works department. All of the historic brick walkways in the HEUNA area should be prioritized. The City has begun a 10 year plan to address this issue; the HEUNA neighborhood advocates measurable progress be maintained during each year to assure the full restoration and function of the neighborhoods brick sidewalks. In addition, Public Works should continue its weed and grass control program on an annual basis.

Curbs and Storm Sewer Gutter Improvement

The HEUNA-NP area advocates accelerated progress on the construction of curb and storm sewer gutters for the streets north of California Street that are without these improvements. South Urbana Street and East High Street, for example, a short block away from City Hall and used for the ingress and egress of emergency vehicles, have yet to receive these improvements. Curb installation integrates with the district interest in correcting conditions of improper parking in front of duplex and multiple family residences where inadequate parking often exists. Proper storm water run-off can be guaranteed by providing sufficient gutter and curb improvements.

Bike Paths and Greenways

HEUNA promotes the development of bike trails and walkways for alternate travel within the neighborhood. The opportunity to make the old railroad track right of way, which cuts through HEUNA from the southeast to northwest, into a bike or pedestrian path may have passed; but the possibility of other areas being

used for this purpose has support. A bike route through the neighborhood is sorely needed.

Pocket Parks

HEUNA advocates the expansion of public parks through the creation of Pocket Parks. Adding to the recreational areas within the HEUNA-NP district is favored by HEUNA membership. Pocket Parks may be created within the district at choice locations as individual homes come onto the marketplace or when demolition of dilapidated structures is required by the City. HEUNA advocates the City use funds to purchase such properties for the creation of small parks in the neighborhood.

Victory Park

In Winter 2005, HEUNA and the Urbana Park District (UPD) began a partnership to discuss improvements to Victory Park . Bounded by Cottage Grove Avenue and Green, Main, and Lynn Streets in the neighborhood's northwest corner, Victory Park is the only formal park in the CP area. Based on the HEUNA/UPD discussions, as well as a survey of neighborhood residents in Summer 2005, a master plan for renovation was created. Major features of the plan include a new play structure relocated to the south end of the park near Green Street; new concrete pathways throughout the park; a formal area near Main Street with a commemorative plaque funded by a grant from the Preservation and Conservation Association (PACA), a new and enlarged picnic shelter; new lighting; refurbished tennis courts; and community garden plots similar to those in Meadowbrook Park, which will serve not only as a valuable community resource, but as a living reminder of the sacrifice and spirit shown by residents who tended Victory Gardens in the Park area during World War II. On September 30th, 2006, the UPD, HEUNA, area business and individual sponsors, and community volunteers came together to build the new play structure, which appears to have led to increased park usage. Working with the UPD, neighborhood residents, and the larger community, HEUNA is committed to helping implement the plan, and has arranged for Spanish language outreach to Hispanic neighbors near the Park. An Open Space Lands Acquisition Development Grant has been obtained to help fund planned improvements, and an application for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds is anticipated for water lines to the community gardens. Based on success of those grants and continued commitment of UPD funds, major renovations are targeted for completion by 2008. HEUNA will provide stewardship over Park resources, and will work to promote the gardens to neighborhood residents.

Art in Public Places

Locate sites in East Urbana, such as Victory Park, pocket park areas, along parkways, at the entrance streets to the neighborhood, where public art may be displayed, located, or designed as a part of a capital improvement project, under the Art in Public Places Program now under consideration by City Staff. This may

include public fountains, decorative pathways, mosaic materials at curbs or pathways, decorative archways at park entrances, etc., etc.

Community Events and Celebrations

Promote greater neighborhood community and sharing through public gatherings and fun events. Including: the annual HEUNA Picnic, Street Parties , Art Fair in the Park, create Neighborhood walks / map of historic places, Community Gardens (Victory Park), Music nights in the park, Movies in the Park

Service to Others

HEUNA should continue to pursue activities to benefit the community. These might include: assisting in Trash Haul Days, Brick Sidewalk clearing parties where grass or vegetation is uncontrolled, Participation in Food Drives, Co-sponsor a Habitat for Humanity home build in East Urbana

Preservation of Large Oak Trees

HEUNA desires that the remaining large oak trees in the area be conserved. Development strategies should be pursued which enable the retention of such trees. Some of the more massive specimens should be recognized as arboristic heirlooms and given some official designation fitting their historical significance.

Waste Management

Because of the large number of private waste-haulers currently serving the HEUNA-NP area neighborhoods, there is some local interest in cooperatively limiting the number and controlling the timing of hauling services. Given that the City has adopted a competitive approach to waste removal, appropriate nuisance and noise ordinances should augment the rights of individuals to be free from excess noise and pollution from haulers.

V. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The following are a list of topics cited as the Goals and Objectives of the HEUNA-NP district:

Investment in Housing Stock

1. To develop a program that encourages investment in the HEUNA to renovate substandard homes or replace them with high-quality single- and two-family homes.
2. To support good home/yard maintenance and enhancement and work with City staff to accomplish sensitive enforcement of all pertinent ordinances and rules.

Preservation

1. To preserve and enhance the character of the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood.
2. To encourage the maintenance and upkeep of all properties and structures within HEUNA boundaries.
3. To assure that properties in the neighborhood should meet all applicable city codes, and that the codes should be enforced.
4. To publicly recognize property owners who contribute to the preservation and quality of the neighborhood through thoughtful design considerations when remodeling, upgrading, or commencing new construction.

Advocacy

1. To assure that the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Association continues to be a healthy and vital voice of communication and advocacy for the residents of East Urbana.
2. To encourage greater public participation in community decisions and events though the continuation of capacity building activities.

Growth Compatibility

1. To promote low density, single and double family occupancy zoning within the HEUNA boundaries.
2. To develop design guidelines for new in-fill construction and remodeled structures within the HEUNA district which encourage compatible style and material choices.
3. To reverse the trend of single unit rental properties being poorly maintained and eventually requiring demolition and subsequent replacement with larger massive front buildings. With this goal HEUNA requests that the city undertake to study, gauge the costs and public support for (and possibly put into City ordinances) aesthetic standards for new construction. Adequate accommodation for parking is an important part of this issue. Rules should be established so that a minimum of 2 parking spaces be required for each

individual unit. Current ordinance seems to require one assigned parking spot per unit.. This type of parking growth is unrealistic and results in land use incompatible with the surrounding neighborhood and excessive parking problems.

Conservation

1. To encourage environmentally friendly growth and ecologically sound use of HEUNA neighborhood resources.
2. To encourage home owners to adopt technologies and practices which will promote energy conservation and protect the local environment.

Landscaping and Parks

1. To encourage ornamental landscaping to enhance the neighborhood.
2. To encourage tree preservation, especially the large Big Grove oaks, and replacement to maintain the rich tree canopy of the neighborhood.
3. To care for and properly maintain the parks and open spaces located within the HEUNA area boundary.
4. To encourage area beautification projects and refuse clean-up in neighborhood parkways and city parks.
5. To promote whenever possible the creation and expansion of parks, greenways, bike paths, and walking trails for residents' use.
6. To advocate for the inclusion of open spaces and landscaping in new multi-family dwellings and developments within the HEUNA-NP district.
7. To advocate for "Art in The Park" type programs where visually interesting original art works might increase visitor interest and provide a dynamic and invigorating environment for residents.

Neighborhood Identity

1. To express the unique history, nature and quality of Historic East Urbana.
2. To promote the HEUNA area as an active and friendly section of the City.
3. To use printed materials and signage to identify the unique features of the Historic East Urbana neighborhood.

Quality of Life

1. To support and enhance the economic, social, civic, and natural environments enjoyed by the residents of the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood
2. To encourage the City to incorporate public art in area parks and public spaces as well as private residences within HEUNA.

Safety

1. To identify problems concerning public health and safety and address potential hazardous conditions within the HEUNA-NP boundary.
2. To work with the Fire and Police departments to promote neighborhood safety awareness.

3. To encourage uses of "alternative transportation."
4. To advocate for the installation of speed limit signs and/or other measures consistent with the plan to improve pedestrian safety.
5. To seek a special designation, "~Alternative Transportation Zone~", and call for a lower-than-normal speed limit (25 mph) on all but Cottage Grove, Main and Washington Streets, which are major thoroughfares.

Smart Growth

1. To promote smart growth policies in the City.
2. To advocate thoughtfully planned "in-fill" development that is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.
3. To work with City staff and HEUNA residents to find points of compatible commercial growth in the HEUNA-NP area. Due to its proximity to the state and federal structures in downtown, the Main and Vine Street areas should especially be considered.

Housing Diversity

1. To advocate for the creation of affordable housing in a wide range of housing styles, prices, and options for its residents, spread equitably throughout the City, and to encourage fair housing practices.

VI. FUTURE LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

Near Downtown Transitional Development

The HEUNA boundaries to the West (Vine Street) and North (Main Street) are appropriate locations for Mixed-Residential (Urban Pattern) development [pg. 55, City Comprehensive Plan]. This designation allows a transitional grouping of small business (B-1) (“Compatible Neighborhood Commercial”) development, R-5) Medium High Density Multiple-Family Residential, R-4 and R-3) Duplexes and R-2) Single and Two-Family Residential structures to be situated in a way compatible with the adjacent neighborhood. Property facing main streets and arteries shall blend with town houses, apartments and smaller family dwellings, while retaining the appropriate open feeling necessary to maintain the quality of near downtown residential life.

Down Zoning

The HEUNA-NP area advocates down-zoning residential properties from High Density and Medium High Density Multiple Family R-6 and R-5) to Single and Two-Family Residential R-3) zoning whenever possible within the HEUNA boundaries. It is the goal of HEUNA to maintain the more intimate, comfortable, family oriented quality of the East Urbana neighborhood.

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING

URBANA PLAN COMMISSION

DRAFT

DATE: December 21, 2006

TIME: 7:30 P.M.

PLACE: Urbana City Building
400 South Vine Street
Urbana, IL 61801

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jane Burris, Ben Grosser, Lew Hopkins, Michael Pollock, Bernadine Stake, Marilyn Upah-Bant, James Ward

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Don White

STAFF PRESENT: Robert Myers, Planning Manager; Matt Wempe, Planner II; Jeff Engstrom, Planner I

OTHERS PRESENT: Greg Abbott, Sandy Bales, George Carlisle, Marianne Downings, Scott Dossett, Alice Englebretsen, Tyler Fitch, Rick Kallmayer, Dennis Roberts, Christopher Stohr, Susan Taylor

COMMUNICATIONS

Presentation of Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Comprehensive Plan – Drafted by the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Association

Matt Wempe, Planner II, began his presentation with a brief introduction of the Plan. He discussed the trends and issues, the vision for the neighborhood, and the existing City plans, programs and policies that are related to the recommendations of the Historic Comprehensive Plan. He read the options of the Plan Commission and presented staff's recommendation, which is as follows:

Staff recommended that the Plan Commission review the Historic Neighborhood Plan and recommend that the City Council accept the Historic East Neighborhood Association Neighborhood Plan as an informational tool for the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood.

Ms. Upah-Bant commented that the City just finished the Comprehensive Plan less than a year ago. She wondered whether the Plan Commission and the City Council were going to see this type of addendum from every neighborhood in the City. Mr. Wempe did not feel that it should be viewed as an addendum. The proposed plan and the City's Comprehensive Plan did happen

concurrently. The Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Association (HEUNA) did try to mimic the format of the City's Comprehensive Plan. There are many issues in the HEUNA Plan that expand on issues and ideas that are in the Comprehensive Plan as they specifically relate to the Historic East Urbana neighborhood. Having both the HEUNA Plan and the Comprehensive Plan is a good way for the City to say that we really know what the residents are thinking. The West Urbana Neighborhood Association (WUNA) has done a white paper on issues that are important to their neighborhood as well.

Ms. Upah-Bant inquired as to whether WUNA's Plan went to the City Council as well. Mr. Wempe explained that this is the first time City staff has followed this process for an unofficial neighborhood plan.

Scott Dossett, of 501 East High Street, representative of the HEUNA Plan approached the Plan Commission to give a more detailed presentation of the Plan. A good rationale for the Plan is that HEUNA has taken money and have tried to do work. Neighborhood Organization Grants really fueled HEUNA from the very beginning. The grants gave HEUNA a chance to do some capacity building and some outreach to the people in the community. As a result, HEUNA has developed good relations with the Urbana Park District as well. HEUNA is trying to interact with City staff in terms of things that the residents of Historic East Urbana Neighborhood believe would benefit the community that we live in.

Mr. Dossett gave a PowerPoint presentation on the HEUNA Plan. He discussed the following topics:

- HEUNA Neighborhood Plan Goal
- Who is HEUNA?
- Economic Development Priorities
- Transportation Concerns
 - Green Street Corridor
 - Curbs and Gutters
- Neighborhood Preservation Strategies
 - Neighborhood Conservation District
 - Demolition Review
 - Rebuild Urbana Program
 - Brick Sidewalk Conservation
 - Historic Landmark Designations
- Housing
 - Home and Yard Maintenance
 - Down-Zoning
 - In-Fill Development
 - Rental Housing Registration
- Park Improvements

Dennis Roberts, of 507 East Green Street and City Councilman for Ward 5, mentioned that he lives kitty-corner from the blue and white house shown in Mr. Dossett's presentation. He talked about the property and the buildings on the lot. He stated that it is one property that the residents

in the neighborhood would like to see more care given to it. There is also incompatible development adjacent to the property. This is one reason why HEUNA is interested in the Neighborhood Conservation concept.

He talked about the projects that Public Works has planned for the Historic East Urbana neighborhood, including new curbs and gutters and repaving of Green Street. These projects have been delayed partly due to the concern of the residents in the neighborhood about their brick sidewalks. He is a proponent for brick sidewalks, but he believes that the sidewalks should not be done in chunks, but rather they should be done in blocks.

Mr. Roberts believes that the HEUNA Plan is a well written plan. It is a neighborhood grass roots suggestion. The Historic East Urbana neighborhood is a tiny neighborhood which thinks deeply and worked well with the Urbana Park District to renovate Victory Park. HEUNA has done a lot in the five years since they started the neighborhood organization group.

Ms. Stake wondered if the City could look at brick sidewalks in that they last a long time. It would be really economical to replace them. Mr. Wempe noted that the City Council has already approved the Brick Sidewalk Plan as part of the Capital Improvements Plan. It identifies all the existing brick sidewalks throughout the City of Urbana. It is written so that if you have a property zoned R-1, R-2 or R-3, if the City comes in to repair the sidewalk and the existing sidewalk is brick, then it has to be maintained as a brick sidewalk. The problem is that there is split zoning along Green Street and that brick sidewalks on the south side are required to be preserved while they are not required on the north side. City staff has talked about the possibility of down-zoning. The Director of Public Works has been made aware of this issue, and he said to go ahead and rezone if it is the right thing to do.

Mr. Wempe agreed that brick sidewalks do last a long time and require about the same amount of maintenance as any other types of sidewalks would. However, the initial cost is about three times as much for brick sidewalks compared to concrete sidewalks. Public Works can do brick sidewalk restoration as they have done throughout the HEUNA neighborhood, and they have started to focus on the West Urbana and North Urbana neighborhoods.

He mentioned that HEUNA has helped in maintaining the brick sidewalks in the Historic East Urbana neighborhood. There are weed control issues that they have. Mr. Roberts added that part of the Brick Sidewalk Ordinance that was passed actually had an article in it about how the City would be maintaining them by clearing or cleaning them. The City comes out on an annual basis and sprays weed control on the sidewalks. The City has not come out and cleaned up the dead weeds though, so this is why it is mentioned in the neighborhood plan.

Mr. Myers clarified that City staff recommends that the Plan Commission forward this to the City Council to accept the HEUNA Plan. The City would then be able to use the Plan as a guide.

Chair Pollock stated that there are other neighborhood plans, such as the Woodlawn Park Area Plan. Is there a plan on the time table in the works for the Historic East Urbana neighborhood? Mr. Wempe commented that many of the issues that would come from a City neighborhood plan have already been started to be done, such as a Neighborhood Conservation District, Housing Investment Corporations, etc. Therefore, a plan would be redundant. One thing that has not

been addressed is the zoning study, which City staff plans to do. So, there would not be a City plan for the neighborhood. Mr. Myers added that to take a neighborhood's plan and turn it into a City's plan might lose some of the meaning that neighborhood wants it to have, and it would be a disservice to that neighborhood. So, in this case City staff would like to use HEUNA's Plan as a guide.

Mr. Ward moved that the Plan Commission forward the proposed plan to the City Council and recommend that the City Council accepts the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Association's Plan as an informational tool for the neighborhood. Ms. Stake seconded the motion. The Plan Commission passed the motion by unanimous hand vote.