



COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
April 23, 2007

Committee Members Physically Present:

Lynne Barnes, Brandon Bowersox, Danielle Chynoweth, Robert Lewis, Dennis Roberts (Chair), Charlie Smyth, and Heather Stevenson

Committee Members Absent:

None

Other Elected Officials Present

Mayor Laurel Prussing and City Clerk Phyllis Clark

Staff Members Present:

Planning Intern Rebecca Bird, Assistant Police Chief Pat Connolly, Public Works Director Bill Gray, Fire Chief Rex Mundt, Planning Department Manager Robert Myers, Assistant City Attorney Ronald O'Neal, Community Development Director Libby Tyler, and Chief Administrative Officer Bruce Walden.

Others Present:

Brian Adams, Carolyn Baxley, George Carlisle, Frank Dinovo, Jeff Edwards, Scott Hockman, and Members of the Media

Meeting Location:

Urbana City Council Chambers

There being a quorum, Chair Roberts called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Additions to the Agenda and Staff Report

There were none.

Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Ms. Stevenson moved to approve the minutes of the April 9, 2007 regular

meeting of the Committee of the Whole. The motion was seconded by Ms. Barnes. Mr. Bowersox requested the following amendments:

Change the spelling of "Bambuch" to "Bambenek" in OTHERS PRESENT and under #5.

In #5, paragraph 2; change "in opposition to" to "with concerns about aspects of".

In #7, add at the end of the paragraph "and requested City support for placing solar panels in the set back of her yard."

There were no objections. The minutes were approved as amended.

Public Input

George R. Carlisle, 406 E. Green Street, addressed the Committee in opposition to any change in the ordinance banning smoking in public places.

Carolyn Baxley, 510 W. Main Street, addressed the Committee to congratulate the Committee for considering historic preservation and urge a moratorium on demolitions.

Brian Adams, 412 W. Elm Street, addressed the Committee strongly supporting historic preservation incentives.

Presentation: Big, Small, All

Frank Dinovo, representing Regional Planning Commission presented the Committee with an update on the big, small, all. project which is a collective effort of the people of Champaign County to consider what the future should be. The project was designed as a community-wide dialogue focused on a specific outcome: an articulated vision of the future vision of the future of the community.

Mr. Dinovo presented the progression of the project and the people involved. Debate followed the presentation.

No action was required on this item.

Presentation: Convention & Visitors Bureau

Jeff Edwards and Scott Hockman, representing the Champaign County Visitors Bureau made a brief presentation reviewing past achievements and the plans for the future. No action was required on this presentation.

Presentation: Urbana Bicycle Plan Public Workshop

Mr. Bowersox announced that there will be an Urbana Bicycle Plan Public

Workshop on Thursday, May 3, 2007, from 6:00-8:00 p.m. in the Urbana Middle School Cafetorium at 1201 South Vine Street, in Urbana.

The purpose of the workshop is to map which roads people like to bike on, receive comments on bicycling conditions, learn more about the planning process and find out how to stay involved. RSVP is requested but not necessary.

Mr. Bowersox urged all bicyclists to attend this workshop.

No action was required on this item.

Ordinance No. 2007-04-035: An Ordinance Amending Schedule J of Section 23-183 of the Urbana Local Traffic Code Prohibiting Parking at All Times on Certain Streets (Race Street)

Public Works Director Bill Gray presented staff report. This ordinance prohibits parking at all times on the east side of Race Street, south of Florida Avenue. This change was requested by a resident who noticed that cars parked along the street were constricting the flow of traffic at the intersection of Race Street and Florida Avenue.

The Traffic Commission is recommending that the turn bay length be increased by fifty (50) feet to bring it to current City standards.

Mr. Smyth moved to forward **Ordinance No. 2007-04-035: An Ordinance Amending Schedule J of Section 23-183 of the Urbana Local Traffic Code Prohibiting Parking at All Times on Certain Streets (Race Street)** to Council with a recommendation for approval. The motion was seconded by Ms. Chynoweth and carried by a voice vote.

Historic Preservation Incentives

Planning Manager Robert Myers introduced Planning Intern Rebecca Bird who presented staff report. The City of Urbana has five local listed landmarks, two local listed historic districts, 27 properties that are listed in the national Register of Historic Places, and two properties designated as National Historic Landmarks. The landmarks and districts are recognized with historic plaques that have been designated by the Urbana Historic Preservation Commission.

The City currently has both Federal and State incentives available for historic properties. Both types of incentives are for the costs involved in the rehabilitation of an historic property. The State incentives are for owner-occupied properties while the Federal incentives are for income-generating properties.

Ms. Bird reviewed the following communities offering incentives: Bloomington, Plainfield, Chicago, and Carbondale in Illinois, and Eugene Oregon.

Committee Member Roberts presented a Historic Preservation Incentive Resolution. The purpose of the resolution is to encourage preservation of historic properties within the City.

Incentive items included in this resolution are as follow:

1. Property Tax Difference Rebate – The City would rebate that portion of tax equal to the difference between the property tax paid to the City, as assessed by the County Tax Assessor, and that amount of tax which would be paid to the City of Champaign for the identical tax assessment value, for a period of 5 years, and there after the property tax rebate incentive would terminate and the assessment to the property would resume at the level indicated at the time of initial entry to the Historic Landmark Designation Tax Incentive Program.
2. Tax Reduction – The City would rebate that amount of tax equal to 50% of that portion of property tax paid annually to the City as the City's share of annual property tax levy due (16%), as assessed by the County Assessor, for a period of 5 years, after which the property tax incentive discount would terminate.
3. Additional Funding – The City would secure and set aside a total of 40% of all monies received from the payment of demolition permits issued by the City, into a fund for the expressed purpose of funding historic landmark designation incentives for properties designated for Historic Landmark or Historic District status.

Following debate, Mr. Smyth moved to direct staff to look at ways of building up the education program, to examine the incentive programs discussed at this meeting, and investigate the involving loan program used in Eugene, Oregon. The motion was seconded by Ms. Chynoweth.

Following debate, the motion carried by a voice vote.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee, Chair Roberts declared the meeting adjourned at 10:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine Taylor
Recording Secretary

*This meeting was taped.

**This meeting was broadcast on cable television.

Minutes approved: May 14, 2007