

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES



Planning Division

m e m o r a n d u m

TO: Laurel Lunt Prussing, Mayor

FROM: Elizabeth H. Tyler, FAICP, Director, Community Development Services

DATE: June 3, 2010

SUBJECT: An Ordinance Approving a Text Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Urbana, Illinois (Article XI, Section 15.J.1, To Create the East Urbana Design Review Overlay District – Plan Case No. 2126-T-10)

An Ordinance Adopting East Urbana Design Guidelines (Plan Case No. 2126-T-10)

Introduction

On January 20, 2009, the Urbana City Council established a Design Review Board to administer design review in designated areas. The City currently has one design review district, the Lincoln-Busey Corridor, created at the same time as the Design Review Board.

The Urbana Zoning Administrator is now requesting to amend Section XI-15.J.1 of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance to create a new design review district in the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood and to adopt the East Urbana Design Guidelines as a stand alone document. This memorandum is intended to address both related ordinances. The proposed design review district is a transition area of multi-family zoning located between downtown and the predominantly single-family residential Historic East Urbana Neighborhood. Design review is intended to ensure that future development in the district would be compatible with the adjacent neighborhood.

At its May 20, 2010 meeting, the Urbana Plan Commission voted 6 ayes and 0 nays to forward the Zoning Ordinance text amendment to the City Council with a recommendation for approval. At that same meeting the Plan Commission voted 5 ayes and 1 nay to forward the draft design guidelines to the City Council with a recommendation for approval. At that meeting, the Commission discussed the merits of requesting that two properties in the 500 block of East Elm Street be added to the proposed district but decided that doing so should be a separate case. In order to provide for proper noticing the Zoning Administrator expects to make this amendment at a future date this summer.

Background

The basis for the East Urbana Design Guidelines can be found in the 2005 Comprehensive Plan as well as in the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Association (HEUNA) Neighborhood Plan, accepted by

the Urbana City Council on January 8, 2007.

2005 Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan includes two goals for Urbana's established neighborhoods that support design review in the East Urbana Design Review District:

- 1) *Preserve and enhance the character of Urbana's established residential neighborhoods, and*
- 2) *New development in an established neighborhood will be compatible with the overall urban design and fabric of that neighborhood. (Page 33)*

Specifically for Historic East Urbana, Future Land Use Map #10 (attached) lists the following strategies for neighborhood stability:

- 1) *Preserve unique character of neighborhood*
- 2) *Determine compatible zoning for neighborhood*
- 3) *Improve existing infrastructure*
- 4) *Improve existing housing stock*
- 5) *New development to respect traditional physical development patterns*

Future Land Use Map #10 encourages development close to the downtown core that identifies compatible growth opportunities while preserving the low-density residential quality of the neighborhood. The boundaries of the proposed design review district are based on the northwest boundary of the Historic East Urbana neighborhood as identified in the Future Land Use Map. (See attached.)

2007 Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Plan

The HEUNA Neighborhood Plan, in the Trends and Issues Neighborhoods section, identifies 'incompatible redevelopment' as an issue:

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. (Page 14)

To address incompatible redevelopment, the Neighborhood Plan includes as a goal of developing design guidelines for new in-fill construction and remodeled structures within the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood. The goals would be to encourage compatible style and materials (page 19).

2008 Rezoning

In 2008, as an implementation action of the Comprehensive Plan, 162 properties in the Historic East

Urbana Neighborhood were rezoned from multi-family residential to single- and two-family residential. The purpose was to protect the predominantly single-family character of the neighborhood. The rezoning resulted in the majority of parcels in Historic East Urbana being zoned R-3 (Single- and Two-Family Residential). According to the Urbana Zoning Ordinance, the R-3 Zoning District is intended to “provide areas for low-density residential development, including single-family attached and detached dwellings and two-family dwellings.” The rezoning was a critical step in preserving and enhancing the character of the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood.

Proposed District Boundaries

The proposed design review district boundaries were created based on the future land uses identified in the Comprehensive Plan. The district covers the northwest corner of the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood, which is identified as Residential-Urban Pattern on Future Land Use Map #10 in the Comprehensive Plan. According to the Comprehensive Plan,

“Residential Urban Pattern: Residential areas contain primarily single-family residential housing but may also include a variety of compatible land uses such as duplexes, town homes, civic uses, institutional uses, and parks where zoning is appropriate.” (Comp Plan page 56)

The northwest corner of the neighborhood contains multi-family residential zoning districts, which allow for higher density infill development. The proposed district boundaries are to ensure development in this area that is compatible with the single-family residential character of the neighborhood to the east. Three properties on the north side of Elm Street between Maple and Grove Streets are included in the district due to a recent amendment to the Comprehensive Plan (Ordinances 2008-09-115 and 208-09-116).

Public Input

City staff met with the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Association Board on September 9, 2009 to discuss the neighborhood’s concerns for this area. Draft design guidelines were then created with input from HEUNA representatives.

On March 30, 2010, the City held an open house to solicit neighborhood input on the draft design guidelines. Eleven people attended the meeting. The comments received at the meeting were generally supportive. Two suggestions were given at the meeting and taken into account for the draft presented to the Plan Commission.

On April 15, 2010, City staff gave a presentation on the proposed design guidelines to the Urbana Design Review Board and submitted copies of the draft design guidelines for review and comments. The Board recommended changing some of the photos used as examples in the document and clarifies that the document that the proposed design guidelines were intended for future multi-family development in the district and not single-family development. City staff incorporated both of these suggestions into the attached draft design guidelines.

Discussion

Design Review Procedures

The Design Review Board was created to administer design review in designated design review districts. Per Section XI-15 of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance, the Board reviews the design of new construction to ensure compatibility with the neighborhood's visual and aesthetic character through the use of adopted design guidelines. Currently, the City has one design review overlay district: the Lincoln-Busey Corridor. The City also has a zoning district, Mixed Office Residential (MOR), which includes design review as part of the zoning district. The proposed East Urbana Design Review District would be a design review overlay district and would not affect the underlying zoning designations.

Once an application has been received, the Zoning Administrator and Chair of the Design Review Board would determine whether the project requires review by the Design Review Board, administrative review, or is an exempt project. When a project will not result in a substantial change to the appearance of an existing building, the project would undergo administrative review rather than require full review by the Board. City staff would review minor projects using the adopted design guidelines for the district.

The Design Review Board would review all applications for:

- 1) Construction of a new principal structures;
- 2) Increase in the building footprint of an existing principal structure greater than 15%;
- 3) Increase in the floor area ratio of an existing principal structure by more than 15%;
- 4) Installation or enlargement of a parking lot; or
- 5) Substantial change in the appearance and/or scale of an existing building, as determined by the Zoning Administrator in consultation with the chair of the Design Review Board.

Once determined to require Board review, the Secretary would schedule a public hearing for the Board to consider the request. Following the public hearing, the Design Review Board would review the application according to the criteria listed in Section XI-15.K of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance. The Design Review Board will apply the adopted design guidelines for the area and consider any testimony given at the public hearing. The Board may then approve the application, approve with conditions, invite the applicant to resubmit the application, or deny the application. Any decision made by the Design Review Board or the Zoning Administrator may be appealed to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Zoning Ordinance Text Amendments

To implement the proposed design guidelines, the Urbana Zoning Administrator is requesting a text amendment that will amend Section XI-15 of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance (see attached) to establish the East Urbana Design Review Overlay District. This overlay district will not affect the underlying zoning of any parcels in the district, but will be indicated on the City's official zoning map.

As stated earlier, the boundaries of the East Urbana Design Review District are established based upon the 2005 Comprehensive Plan. The Plan Commission in their deliberations discussed the addition of two properties in the 500 block of East Elm Street, but decided that the best course of action would be to make that addition as a separate request. This separate request will be made at a future date.

Design Guidelines Overview

The proposed design guidelines contain five chapters. (See attached.) The Introduction contains the purpose and intent of the design guidelines, as well as the proposed district boundaries. Chapter II is a list of definitions. Chapter III, Character of the District, provides the context of existing conditions. This context includes current City regulations and policies (existing zoning and future land use), ownership and existing land use patterns, existing building types, and the character of district. This chapter defines the existing character for comparison and analysis of new projects.

Chapter IV, Review Process, describes the creation of the Design Review Board, referencing Section XI-15 of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance. This section also contains a description of the types of projects that will require review by the Design Review Board, which types may undergo administrative review, and which projects are exempt.

Chapter V, Design Guidelines, contains the design standards. The Design Review Board and City staff will use this section to evaluate applications. The guidelines are intended to be used as design principles rather than as a checklist of items for compliance. Each design element has specifications, identified as Mandatory, Appropriate and Inappropriate. The following are the design aspects to be considered when evaluating applications:

- *Façade Zone.* The façade zone is the building wall and visible roof facing a public street. The greatest emphasis for design review should be on the façade zone. Facades with street frontage must contain window openings and a front door. Blank facades are not appropriate in the façade zone.
- *Massing & Scale.* Massing is the height, width, and depth of a building. Scale is the proportion of a building relative to its surroundings. This design aspect generally is concerned with compatibility, with recommendations such as the height-to-width ratio and scale of proposals being similar to those currently found on the block. Inappropriate changes in scale, height and/or roof line are discouraged.
- *Building Orientation.* Building orientation refers to the building's location on the site, and its relationship to the street and other buildings on the block. Having the front entrance to the building face the street is a key design principle, along with using a porch or stoop to clearly define the entrance. New sideways-oriented buildings would be prohibited.
- *Window & Door Openings.* Windows and doors are another important design aspect in a building. Their arrangement, materials, and detailing are important to the style of a building. The proportion of window and door openings to solid surfaces in the façade zone should be compatible with those found on the block. Large wall expanses without openings are strongly discouraged. New front building façades must contain a minimum of at least two windows per story and a front entry door.
- *Landscaping.* Good landscaping can help soften the mass of a large building and help new construction "blend" with the existing neighborhood. Mature trees should be retained whenever possible. Invasive and dangerous species should be avoided.

- *Parking.* The East Urbana design review district follows a traditional neighborhood layout in terms of parking location. Generally, parking is located behind the principal structure. Parking for new construction should be located behind the main structure or below ground. Buildings elevated to allow visible parking at grade are strongly discouraged.

These guidelines also provide a section on sustainability which is intended as “best practices” rather than being prescriptive. The City recently established a Sustainability Commission which is now preparing a community-wide sustainability plan.

Summary of Findings

1. The Urbana City Council on April 11, 2005 adopted Ordinance No. 2005-03-050, the Urbana Comprehensive Plan, which plan identifies the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood as a sensitive area needing development protections.
2. The Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Association Neighborhood Plan, accepted by the Urbana City Council on January 8, 2007, identified incompatible redevelopment as an issue and includes as a goal developing design guidelines for new in-fill construction and remodeled structures within the Historic East Urbana.
3. On January 20, 2009, the Urbana City Council passed Ordinance No. 2009-01-005 to amend the Urbana Zoning Ordinance to enable design review and create the Design Review Board.
4. On March 30, 2010, the City held an open house to solicit neighborhood input on draft design guidelines within a portion of the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood.
5. On April 15, 2010, the Design Review Board reviewed and provided comments on the proposed design guidelines.
6. A Zoning Ordinance text amendment enacting design guidelines for a portion of the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood, along with proposed design guidelines for the district, were presented to the Urbana Plan Commission as Plan Case 2126-T-10.
7. After due publication in accordance with Section XI-7 of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance and with Chapter 65, Section 11-13-14 of the Illinois Compiled Statutes (65 ILCS 5/11-13-14), the Urbana Plan Commission held a public hearing and reviewed the proposed text amendment and design guidelines on May 6, 2010 and May 20, 2010.
8. The Urbana Plan Commission voted 6 ayes and 0 nays on May 20, 2010 to forward Plan Case 2126-T-10 to the Urbana City Council with a recommendation for approval of the Zoning Ordinance text amendment.

Options

The City Council has the following options in this application.

Zoning Ordinance text amendment

Concerning the proposed Zoning Ordinance text amendment the City Council may:

- a) Approve as presented,
- b) Approve with specific changes, or
- c) Deny the request.

Design Guidelines

Concerning the proposed East Urbana Design Guidelines, the City Council may:

- a) Approve as presented,
- b) Approve with specific changes, or
- c) Deny the request.

Recommendation

At their May 20, 2010 meeting the Urbana Plan Commission forwarded Plan Case No. 2126-T-10 to the Urbana City Council with a recommendation to **APPROVE** both the Zoning Ordinance text amendment (with a vote of 6 ayes and 0 nays) and proposed design guidelines (with a vote of 5 ayes and 1 nay). City staff concurs with these recommendations.

Prepared by:

Robert Myers, AICP
Planning Manager

Attachments: Zoning Ordinance text amendment ordinance
 East Urbana Design Guidelines ordinance
 Draft East Urbana Design Guidelines
 Proposed design review district map with addresses
 2005 Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map #10
 Sign In Sheets from Open House
 Minutes of April 15, 2010 Design Review Board Meeting
 Minutes of the May 6, 2010 and May 20, 2010 Plan Commission meetings

ORDINANCE NO. 2010-06-044

**An Ordinance Approving a Text Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance of the City
of Urbana, Illinois**

(Article XI, Section 15.J.1, To Create the East Urbana Design Review Overlay
District - Plan Case No. 2126-T-10)

WHEREAS, the Urbana City Council on April 11, 2005 adopted Ordinance No. 2005-03-050, the Urbana Comprehensive Plan, which plan identifies the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood as a sensitive area needing development protections; and

WHEREAS, The Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Association Neighborhood Plan, accepted by the Urbana City Council on January 8, 2007, identified incompatible redevelopment as an issue and includes as a goal developing design guidelines for new in-fill construction and remodeled structures within the Historic East Urbana; and

WHEREAS, on January 20, 2009, the Urbana City Council passed Ordinance No. 2009-01-005 to amend the Urbana Zoning Ordinance to enable design review and create the Design Review Board; and

WHEREAS, on March 30, 2010, the City held an open house to solicit neighborhood input on draft design guidelines within a portion of the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood; and

WHEREAS, on April 15, 2010, the Urbana Design Review Board reviewed and provided comments on the proposed design guidelines; and

WHEREAS, a Zoning Ordinance text amendment enacting design guidelines for a portion of the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood, along with proposed design guidelines for the district, were presented to the Urbana Plan Commission as Plan Case 2126-T-10; and

WHEREAS, after due publication in accordance with Section XI-7 of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance and with Chapter 65, Section 11-13-14 of the Illinois Compiled Statutes (65 ILCS 5/11-13-14), the Urbana Plan Commission held a public hearing and reviewed the proposed text amendment on May 6, 2010 and May 20, 2010; and

WHEREAS, the Urbana Plan Commission voted 6 ayes and 0 nays on May 20, 2010 to forward Plan Case 2126-T-10 to the Urbana City Council with a recommendation for approval of the Zoning Ordinance text amendment; and

WHEREAS, after due and proper consideration, the Urbana City Council has deemed it to be in the best interests of the City of Urbana to adopt a Zoning Ordinance text amendment to enact the East Urbana Design Review District in conjunction with the East Urbana Design Guidelines as adopted by Ordinance No. 2010-XX-XXX.

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

Section 1. That Section XI-15 (Design Review Overlay Districts and Adopted Design Guidelines) of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance is amended to read as follows:

J. Design Review Overlay Districts and Adopted Design Guidelines

1. Design review overlay districts with their associated design guidelines shall be adopted under separate ordinances. The City of Urbana's Community Development Services Department shall make design guidelines available for public review and distribution. A design review overlay district shall be created by adopting a design guidelines manual for a specific geographic area.

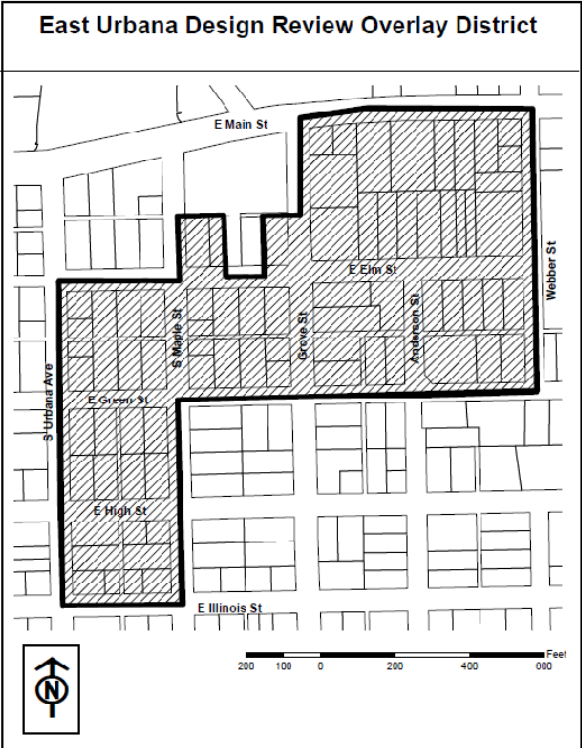
"Adopted design guidelines" as referred to herein are the design guidelines associated with a design review overlay district, as adopted by ordinance.

The following, adopted under separate ordinances, are the design overlay districts in the City of Urbana and have adopted design guidelines manuals:

A. Lincoln-Busey Corridor Overlay District. Bounded by Illinois Street to the north, Busey Avenue to the east, Pennsylvania Avenue to the south, and Lincoln Avenue to the west. The Lincoln-Busey Corridor Design Overlay District was created by Ordinance No. 2009-01-005. The Lincoln-Busey Corridor Design Guidelines were adopted, on January 20, 2009, under Ordinance No. 2009-01-004.

B. East Urbana Design Review Overlay District. Generally bounded by South Urbana Avenue, East Elm Street, Grove Street,

East Main Street, South Webber Street, East Green Street, South Maple Street, and East Illinois Street, as more particularly illustrated below. The East Urbana Design Review Overlay District was created by Ordinance No. 2010-XX-XXX, and the East Urbana Design Guidelines were adopted under Ordinance No. 2010-XX-XXX.



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).

This Ordinance is hereby passed by the affirmative vote, the "ayes" and "nays" being called of a majority of the members of the City Council of the City of Urbana, Illinois, at a regular meeting of said Council on the ____ day of _____, 2010.

PASSED by the City Council this ____ day of _____, 2010.

AYES:

NAYS:

ABSTAINED:

Phyllis D. Clark, City Clerk

APPROVED by the Mayor this _____ day of _____, 2010.

Laurel Lunt Prussing, 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 _____, 2010, the corporate authorities of the City of Urbana passed and approved "**An Ordinance Approving a Text Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Urbana, Illinois** (Article XI, Section 15.J.1, To Create the East Urbana Design Review Overlay District - Plan Case No. 2126-T-10)" 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 _____, 2010, 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 _____, 2010.

ORDINANCE NO. 2010-06-045

An Ordinance Adopting East Urbana Design Guidelines

(Plan Case No. 2126-T-10)

WHEREAS, the Urbana City Council on April 11, 2005 adopted Ordinance No. 2005-03-050, the Urbana Comprehensive Plan, which plan identifies the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood as a sensitive area needing development protections; and

WHEREAS, The Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Association Neighborhood Plan, accepted by the Urbana City Council on January 8, 2007, identified incompatible redevelopment as an issue and includes as a goal developing design guidelines for new in-fill construction and remodeled structures within the Historic East Urbana; and

WHEREAS, on January 20, 2009, the Urbana City Council passed Ordinance No. 2009-01-005 to amend the Urbana Zoning Ordinance to enable design review and create the Design Review Board; and

WHEREAS, on March 30, 2010, the City held an open house to solicit neighborhood input on draft design guidelines within a portion of the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood; and

WHEREAS, on April 15, 2010, the Design Review Board reviewed and provided comments on the proposed design guidelines; and

WHEREAS, a Zoning Ordinance text amendment enacting design guidelines for a portion of the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood, along with proposed

design guidelines, were presented to the Urbana Plan Commission as Plan Case 2126-T-10; and

WHEREAS, after due publication in accordance with Section XI-7 of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance and with Chapter 65, Section 11-13-14 of the Illinois Compiled Statutes (65 ILCS 5/11-13-14), the Urbana Plan Commission held a public hearing and reviewed the proposed design guidelines on May 6, 2010 and May 20, 2010; and

WHEREAS, the Urbana Plan Commission voted 5 ayes and 1 nay on May 20, 2010 to forward Plan Case 2126-T-10 to the Urbana City Council with a recommendation for approval; and

WHEREAS, after due and proper consideration, the Urbana City Council has deemed it to be in the best interests of the City of Urbana to adopt the "East Urbana Design Guidelines" as attached as Exhibit A, in conjunction with Ordinance No. 2010-XX-XXX, a Zoning Ordinance text amendment enacting the East Urbana Design Review District.

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

Section 1. The attached Exhibit A: "East Urbana Design Guidelines" is hereby approved and adopted for the East Urbana Design Review District as designated by the Urbana City Council by Ordinance No. 2010-XX-XXX.

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).

This Ordinance is hereby passed by the affirmative vote, the "ayes" and
"nays" being called of a majority of the members of the City Council of the
City of Urbana, Illinois, at a regular meeting of said Council on the ____
day of _____, 2010.

PASSED by the City Council this ____ day of _____, 2010.

AYES:

NAYS:

ABSTAINED:

Phyllis D. Clark, City Clerk

APPROVED by the Mayor this _____ day of _____, 2010.

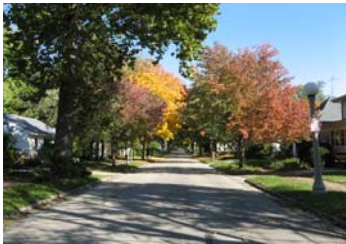
Laurel Lunt Prussing, Mayor

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 _____, 2010, the corporate authorities of the City of Urbana passed and approved "**An Ordinance Adopting East Urbana Design Guidelines** (Plan Case No. 2126-T-10)" 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 _____, 2010, 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 _____, 2010.

East Urbana Design Guidelines



City of Urbana, Illinois
Community Development Services
Adopted on
Ordinance No.

Acknowledgements
Adopted Month XX, 2010

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City Council

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I. Introduction

Purpose & Intent

The *East Urbana Design Guidelines* are intended to assist property owners and designers as they plan changes to all buildings other than single-family residences, such as multi-family residential, duplexes, commercial, and institutional buildings, in the East Urbana Design Review District and to provide the Design Review Board with a framework for making consistent decisions in its review of projects. The guidelines have been developed to recognize and preserve the unique character of the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood. The design review district will act as a transition between the Central Business District (downtown) and the residential neighborhood abutting it.



In cases where the overall design goals can be achieved by alternative means, circumstances may allow for projects to deviate from the guidelines.

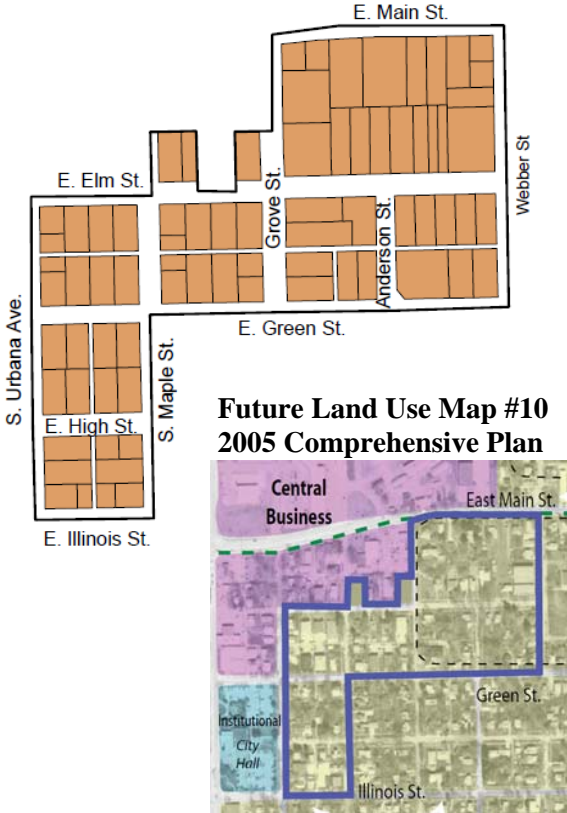
The overall intent of the design guidelines is to ensure that future construction in the district is compatible with desirable traditional design aspects identified for the neighborhood.

District Boundaries

The district is generally bounded by South Urbana Avenue, East Elm Street, Grove Street, East Main Street, South Webber Street, East Green Street, South Maple Street, and East Illinois Street.

The East Urbana Design Review District, shown in the map to the right, generally follows the boundaries of the northwest corner of the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood as defined in the 2005 Comprehensive Plan. The three properties on the north side of Elm Street between Maple and Grove Streets are included in the district due to a rezoning and an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan.

East Urbana Design Review District



II. Definitions

Definitions

Balcony A platform projecting from the wall of an upper story, enclosed by a railing or balustrade, with an entrance from the building and supported by brackets, columns, or cantilevered.

Compatible Visual balance between adjacent and nearby buildings and the immediate streetscape, in terms of materials, building elements, building mass, and other constructed elements of the urban environment, such that abrupt or severe differences are avoided.

Courtyard An open area that is partially or fully surrounded by one or more buildings, walls, and/or fences that is intended for use by more than one dwelling.

Divided Light Glass in a window or glazed door that is divided into smaller panes by secondary framing members (muntins).

Façade The façade is the front or principal face of a building. Façades typically face a street or other open space.

Façade Zone The façade zone includes the façade plus that portion of the lot separating the façade from a street or public open space. A corner lot has two façade zones.

Massing The three-dimensional bulk of a structure: height, width, and depth.

New Construction New structures, building additions visible from a public street, and exterior remodels on the front façade that will significantly alter the appearance of the façade.

Orientation The placement of a structure on its lot with regard to other structures on the block face and the direction the structure is “facing”.

Patio A level surfaced area directly adjacent to a principal building at or within two feet of the finished grade, intended as an

outdoor living area for the use of one dwelling, and not covered by a permanent roof.

Porch A roofed, open area, which may be screened, attached to or part of a building, and with direct access to or from a street or sidewalk.

Roof Pitch The degree of slope or inclination of a roof.

Wall to roof ratio The ratio of the front wall surface to the perceived height of the roof as viewed from a public way. This ratio can be measured from a photograph taken of a building, by measuring the front wall from grade to the roof and from the lowest part of the roof to the highest.

Scale The relationship of the perceived size, height, and bulk of a building to that of neighboring buildings as it appears from the public way.

Setback The distance between the building and any lot line.

Solid-to-Void Ratio The recurrent alternation of structure to open space and/or the percentage of wall area composed of window and door openings.

III. Character of the District

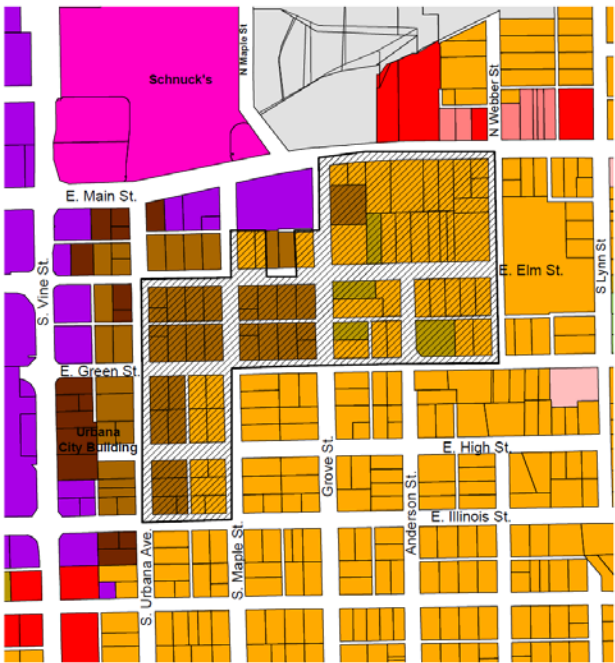
Current Zoning

The purpose of this section is to identify the existing character of the East Urbana Design Review District and define what design values are at stake in future development.

Although the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood is mostly zoned R-3, Single- and Two-Family Residential, the design review district is zoned medium- and medium high-density multi-family residential.

As the chart below shows, 55 percent of the parcels in the district are zoned for single- and two-family residential and 44 percent are zoned for medium- and medium-high density multi-family. This is significant as properties zoned for greater residential densities allow infill development which could change the existing single-family residential character of the neighborhood.

Zoning Map



Current Zoning in East Urbana Design Review District

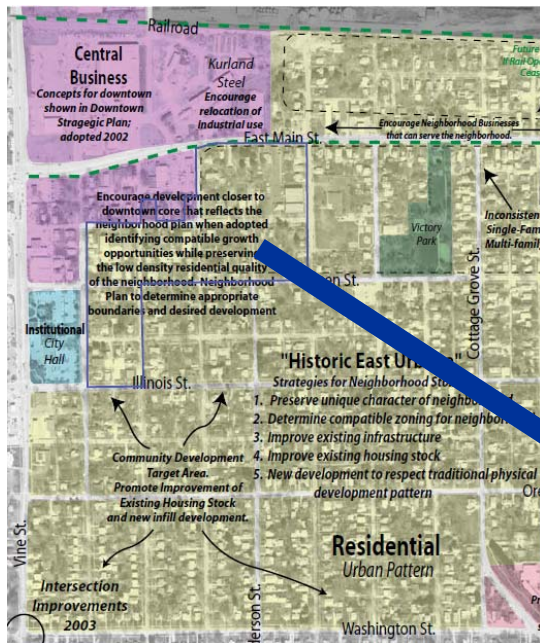
Zoning Category Description	Parcels	% of Total
R3 Single & Two Family Residential	42	55%
R4 Med. Density Multi-Family Res.	4	5%
R5 Med. High Density Multi-Family Res.	30	40%

- B3, General Business
- B4, Central Business
- B4E, Central Bus Expansion
- R3, Single & 2-Family Res
- R4, Med Density MF Res
- R5, Med-High Density MF Res
- R6, High Density MR Res
- Design Review District

Source: Official 2009 Zoning Map

City of Urbana 2005 Comprehensive Plan

Future Land Use Map #10



Source: 2005 Comprehensive Plan

The City of Urbana 2005 Comprehensive Plan: “Historic East Urbana” Strategies for Neighborhood Stability

1. Preserve unique character of neighborhood
2. Determine compatible zoning for neighborhood
3. Improve existing infrastructure
4. Improve existing housing stock
5. New development to respect traditional physical development pattern



The 2005 Comprehensive Plan includes two goals for Urbana’s established neighborhoods that support design review in the East Urbana Design Review District. The first is to preserve residential character and the second is to ensure that new development is compatible with the traditional design aspects of the neighborhood.

URBANA’S ESTABLISHED NEIGHBORHOODS

- 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.

Objectives

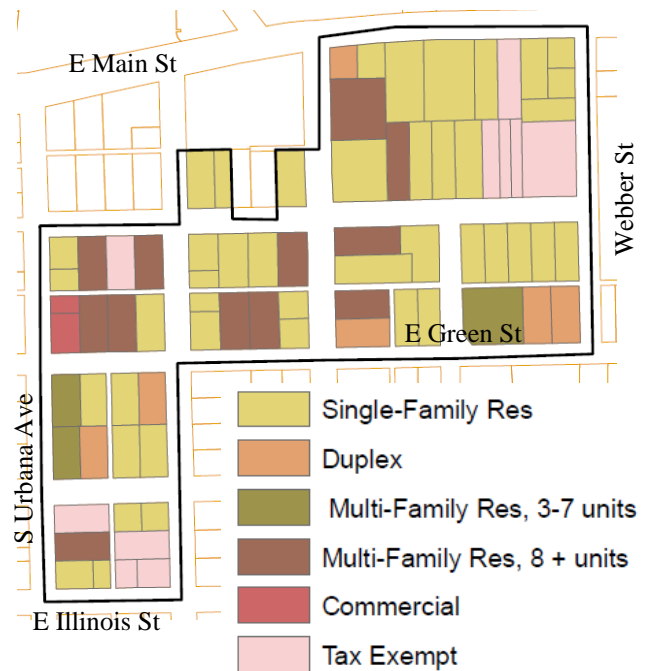
- Ensure that the site design for new development in established neighborhoods is compatible with the built fabric of that neighborhood.
- Encourage the use of landscape materials and ornamentation to improve the appearance and functionality of new developments.
- Use development and planning controls to minimize environmental and property damage from flooding and erosion.
- Promote development that residents and visitors recognize as being of high quality and aesthetically pleasing.

Ownership / Existing Land Use Patterns

According to the Cunningham Township Assessor's Office, the predominant land use in the East Urbana Design Review District is single-family residential, with 57% of total parcels. The second most common land use in the district is multi-family residential, with 20%. Duplexes make up 8% of the district. Commercial uses account for 3%. Ten parcels or 13% are tax exempt properties which include religious institutions, non-profit organizations, and governmental entities.. The map to the right and the chart below have further details on existing land use.

There are 33 owner-occupied single-family residences and one owner-occupied duplex in the district, which account for 45% of total parcels. There are ten rental single-family residences and five rental duplexes. Additionally, the 15 multi-family residences are rental properties. The rental properties account for 28% of total parcels.

Existing Land Use Map



Source: Cunningham Township Assessor's Office
Created February 10, 2010

Parcel Ownership

	Parcels	% of total Parcels
Owner-occupied		45%
Single-family	33	
Duplex	1	
Rental		28%
Single-family	10	
Duplex	5	
Multi-Family, 3-7 units	3	
Multi-Family, 8+ units	12	
Non-Residential/Tax Exempt	12	27%

Existing Land Use

	Parcels	% of total Parcels
Single-family	43	57%
Duplex	6	8%
Multi-family, 3-7 units	3	4%
Multi-family, 8 + units	12	16%
Commercial	2	2%
Tax Exempt	10	13%

Existing Building Types

Among the 76 parcels that comprise the East Urbana Design Review District, there are a variety of building types: houses, duplexes, apartment buildings and religious institutions. Most of the neighborhood was built during the first half of the twentieth century, but the subdivision of larger lots and infill development have broadened the predominant development era of the district.

Looking only at the built form without considering use or zoning, the most common building type in the corridor is the house. The East Urbana Design Review District consists of houses, apartment buildings, religious buildings, vacant lots, and parking lots.

Existing Building Types

	Parcels	% of total Parcels
House	56	73%
Apartment Building	13	17%
Religious Building	2	3%
Vacant	3	4%
Parking Lot	2	3%

Houses



Apartment Buildings



Religious Buildings



Existing Neighborhood Patterns

Grid Street Layout

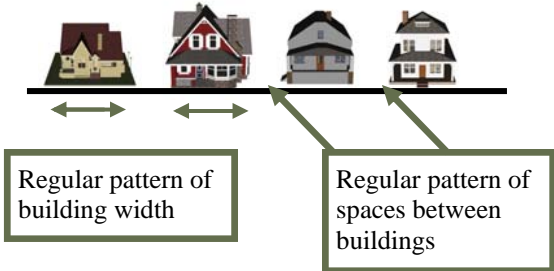
The existing grid street layout and lot platting in the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood imposes a pattern of building development which provides design principals for future development.

- Buildings are aligned to the street, often with front porches.
- Homes are generally placed in the middle of the lot, often with garages behind the house.
- Parking areas are generally located at the rear of the lot.
- Houses are generally similar in width. The spaces between the houses are generally similar in width. This creates a regular pattern of building and empty space on a block.

Aerial View Example



Streetscape View Example



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IV. Review Process

What is Subject to Review?

For all properties other than single-family residential, anyone applying to construct a new principal building, alter the exterior of any existing principal structure, or install a parking lot must submit a design review application to the Urbana Zoning Administrator for review and possible submittal to the Design Review Board for approval.

Under the enacting Ordinance for these guidelines, projects involving single-family residences within the East Urbana Design Review District are exempt from review.

What is the Process for Review?

Design Review Board

The Design Review Board is a Mayor-appointed body of citizens created for the purpose of reviewing projects in specified areas with adopted design guidelines. Section XI-15 of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance outlines the membership requirements for the Board, review procedures, and application review criteria.

Design Review Board Review

According to Section XI-15.G.4 of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance, the Design Review Board reviews all applications involving:

1. Construction of a new principal structure;
2. Increase in the building footprint of an existing principal structure greater than 15%;
3. Increase in the floor area ratio of an existing principal structure by more than 15%;
4. Installation or enlargement of a parking lot;

or

5. Substantial change in the appearance and/or scale of an existing building, as determined by the Zoning Administrator in consultation with the chair of the Design Review Board.

Administrative Review

The Zoning Administrator may administratively review applications for projects that are not to be reviewed by the Design Review Board and are not exempt, per Section XI-15.G.4.a of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance. The Zoning Administrator uses the applicable design guidelines to review applications.

Exempt Projects

Within the East Urbana Design Review District, the following projects shall be exempt from design review:

1. Projects involving single-family residences;
2. Projects requiring no building permit;
3. Projects involving no exterior construction or alteration; or
4. Projects involving existing and proposed local Historic Landmarks and properties within existing and proposed local Historic Districts.

Review Context

Project proposals will be reviewed in the context of the surrounding properties.

Building Safety Code and Zoning Ordinance

In addition to these guidelines, projects must comply with the development regulations of the Urbana Building Code, the Zoning Ordinance, and Subdivision and Land Development Code.

The Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision and Land Development Code can be referenced on the City of Urbana's website at www.city.urbana.il.us.

Locally Designated Historic Landmarks and Districts

Existing and proposed local Historic Landmarks and properties within local Historic Districts are not subject to these guidelines. Instead, projects for these properties must comply with the Historic Preservation Ordinance of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance (Article XII of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance).

For More Information

Please contact:

City of Urbana
Community Development Services
400 S. Vine Street
Urbana, IL 61801
Tel: 217-384-2440
www.city.urbana.il.us

Application Review Criteria

Proposals must be consistent with the intent of the applicable design guidelines. In reviewing proposals, the Design Review Board will consider the effects of the proposal on the surrounding properties. To determine compatibility, the Design Review Board will consider the following elements for proposals in the East Urbana Design Review District:

- **Façade Zone**
- **Massing & Scale**
- **Building Orientation**
- **Windows & Door Openings**
- **Landscaping**
- **Parking Areas**
- **Sustainability**

These guidelines are described on the following pages.

V. Design Guidelines

Intent

The overall intent of the design guidelines is to ensure that future construction in the district is compatible with the positive aspects of traditional design in the neighborhood.

The guidelines are intended to be used as design principles rather than a checklist of items for compliance. The design guidelines are also intended to facilitate both the application and approval of proposed projects subject to design review by:

1. Providing the owners of properties subject to design review some assistance in making decisions about the design of proposed projects, and
2. Providing the Design Review Board with a framework for evaluation of proposed projects.

Mandatory

New buildings are required to “face” the street. The design guidelines require new buildings, other than single-family residences, (1) be oriented toward the street, (2) have a front entry facing the street, and (3) have at least two windows on every level of the front façade. These requirements are further described on the following pages.



Although this is the front façade, this apartment building appears to be “facing sideways” as there are no windows or door facing the public street. In terms of design, this primary façade is treated like a side or rear elevation.



This duplex is “facing” the street, with the front door and large windows facing the public street. The door hood also helps orient the house towards the street.

Appropriate & Inappropriate

The remainder of the design guidelines are grouped together under *Appropriate* and *Inappropriate*. For each project proposal in the East Urbana Design Review District, satisfying the design guidelines will require the new development to “face” the street (as described above and on the Façade Zone, Building Orientation, and Window and Door Openings pages), but beyond that requirement, meeting the design guidelines will involve application of the overall guidelines for every project.

1. The Façade Zone

As with the “face” of a building, the façade zone is an area of heightened design consideration. The greatest emphasis for design review should be on the façade zone, as other elevations are secondary.

A *façade* is the exterior wall or face of a building parallel to a public street. The *façade zone* includes the vertical wall of the building with its architectural qualities and any other elements of the site that are located in front of the wall face and are visible from the public street. These elements can include windows, doors, signage, fences, garden sheds, landscaping, and various other site details.

The East Urbana Design Review District is part of a larger grid system of streets creating two types of lots: interior lots and corner lots. Corner lots are located at the intersection of streets and have two façade zones. Corner lots in the East Urbana Design Review District can choose one of their two street-facing facades to be the primary façade. The secondary street-facing façade should meet the design guidelines to the best extent possible.

Mandatory

- For interior lots, the front façade must contain a front entry and windows. For corner lots, one of the front facades must contain a front entry and windows, and the other façade does not need a front entry but must not be a “blank wall.”

Appropriate

- Facades with a focal point, interesting details and quality materials are appropriate.

Inappropriate

- The location of mechanical equipment (such as air conditioning units and mechanical pumps) in the façade zone.
- Parking should be located behind the principal structure and not in the façade zone.
- Blank façades are not appropriate as they are visible from a public right-of-way.

Interior Lot



The Façade Zone is the part of the building facing a public street. Interior lots typically have one façade zone.

Corner Lot



A corner lot typically has two façade zones, one for each public street.

Appropriate



The doors, windows, and trim are interesting details.

The projecting gable roofs add visual interest.

Inappropriate



This apartment building is sided with wood, a quality material, but faces sideways instead of facing front. The façade of the building is blank, which can have a negative impact on the neighborhood.

2. Massing & Scale

Massing is the three-dimensional bulk of a structure, including height, width, and depth. **Scale** is the perceived height and bulk of a building relative to that of neighboring buildings. Proper massing, scaling, and detailing are essential when blending any building into the district. The building mass should be broken up, using changes in wall planes, building height and rooflines, and by stepping back sections when new construction or a building addition is larger in height or volume than surrounding structures. The architectural design of a project should encourage compatibility and not cause a visual disruption along a block.

Combination of roof lines with varying roof heights and roof pitches add interest and break up mass.

Changes in the wall plane break up the mass of the building.



This new apartment building (outside of the district) makes use of changes in the wall plane, building height, and roofline to fit in with the smaller single-family residences nearby.

Appropriate

- The scale of a structure should be compatible with other structures on the block face. If existing structures are smaller than the proposed new development, the use of changes in wall plane, building height, and roof line should be used to help the new structure fit in.
- Use of various decorative details and exterior materials to add interest, scale, and dimension to a building.

Inappropriate

- Buildings with blank wall faces unbroken by changes in wall plane, building height, etc.
- Abrupt changes in scale.
- Extreme changes in height and/or roofline.

3. Building Orientation

Building orientation refers to the manner in which a building relates to the street, to other structures on the site and to adjacent properties. The entrance to the building plays a major role in the orientation of a building. The Historic East Urbana Neighborhood follows a traditional neighborhood layout. The streets are on a grid, and the buildings are oriented towards the street. New construction should respect this traditional layout.

Mandatory

- Orient the primary entrance to the building toward the street. The primary entrance on a corner lot may be oriented towards either street.

Appropriate

- Buildings should have a clearly defined entrance on the front façade. The primary entrance should be emphasized, using such architectural details such as a door surround, door hood, pediment, front stoop or porch, or transom or fanlights.
- Buildings on corner lots are appropriate (but not required) to have entrances on both façades.

Inappropriate

- Buildings that are not oriented towards the street.
- Buildings that create “blank walls” on the front façade(s).
- Buildings without a defined primary entrance.
- A faux entry on the front façade is not appropriate, but may be appropriate in certain circumstances.

Appropriate



The primary entrance of this apartment building is oriented toward the street. The door hood and sidewalk focus attention on the entrance.

Inappropriate



This apartment building has a blank wall facing the street and is not allowed in the design review district.

Inappropriate



This building façade, while not presenting a blank wall, is not oriented toward the street and is mostly blank. This building is on a corner lot, so a primary entrance is not necessary, but this near blank wall is inappropriate.

4. Window & Door Openings

Openings refer to the windows and doors on a structure. Openings and their arrangement are important to a structure's visual aesthetic. Materials, construction, and detailing of the openings are also important to the style of a building. Proposals within the district should be cognizant of the rhythm and patterns of openings on the façade. Height-to-width ratios for windows should encourage compatibility with the architectural style of the building as well as with the other styles found throughout the neighborhood.

Mandatory

- The front façade must contain a minimum of a front entry door opening and at least two window openings per story. For corner lots, the secondary street-facing façade must contain at least two window opening per story.

Appropriate

- The proportion of window and door openings to solid surfaces in the façade zone should be compatible with that of the traditional Historic East Urbana residential neighborhood.
- An ideal ratio of openings to solids is approximately 1:3 for the front façade.
- Large wall expanses in the façade zone should be visually interrupted by windows in a balanced rhythmic pattern, unless the architectural style calls for an irregular pattern.
- A consistent rhythm of openings on the façade.

Inappropriate

- Large wall expanses without openings.
- Irregular patterns of windows and doors.
- Openings that are too small in proportion to the wall expanse.



This apartment demonstrates an ideal pattern of window and door openings. These guidelines are striving to achieve this ideal pattern.

Appropriate



The ratio of openings to solids here is visually appealing, as is the consistent rhythm of openings. The architectural details and vertical orientation of the windows add further appeal.

Inappropriate



The ratio of openings (i.e., windows and doors) to solids in this building is inappropriate.

5. Landscaping

Landscaping is an important design element when blending any building or parking area into the neighborhood. Landscaping can soften the mass of a building as well as accentuate its features. Preservation of mature trees, adding visual interest to individual properties, and providing effective methods of landscaping are important. The City Arbor Division should be used as a resource for existing trees and to determine the appropriate size and species of future tree plantings.

Appropriate

- Retain mature trees within the parkway and other public rights-of-way.
- Retain mature trees on private property where feasible.
- Plant new trees on private and public property to replenish the urban canopy.
- Protect mature trees from root damage during construction, both on the site and on adjacent properties.
- Use evergreens, dense deciduous shrubs, masonry walls, and/or berms to screen mechanical equipment such as utility meters, air conditioners, etc.
- Design landscaping to ensure safe pedestrian and automobile traffic circulation on and off private property.
- Diversify tree species.
- Mix annuals and perennials to encourage all-season landscape color accents.

Inappropriate

- Invasive species.
- Astro turf.
- Avoid extensive use of paving materials instead of landscaping.
- Avoid monotonous expanses of turf without accent plantings.
- Loss of or damage to healthy mature trees.
- Unscreened mechanical equipment.



The mature tree and evergreen bushes in front of this apartment building help break up the monotony of the front façade.



Historic East Urbana is home to a thriving urban forest whose canopies shade the streets with rich green hues and excite the neighborhood with spring pastels and fall brilliance.



The evergreen shrubs and mature trees planted in front of this apartment building complement the architecture of the building and add visual interest to the block.

6. Parking Areas

The district retains the scale and patterns of a traditional neighborhood in terms of the grid street layout. Vehicular access onto properties must meet engineering and safety standards and be appropriately incorporated into the site design. While parking areas are integral to many uses, softening their visual impact to adjacent properties and from the public street is essential.

Appropriate

- To the extent possible, locate parking behind the main structure or below ground.
- Parking at grade should be screened.
- Locate single-family garages behind or recessed from the façade of the main structure.
- Use screening of parking areas to reduce visual impact from adjacent properties.
- Use hedges, wood fences or masonry walls to screen parking areas from adjacent properties.
- Consider use of permeable pavements.

Inappropriate

- Elevated buildings that allow visible parking at grade.
- Avoid parking in the façade zone.
- Avoid extensive parking areas.
- Avoid excessive paved areas.

Note: Parking must also meet Article VIII of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance.

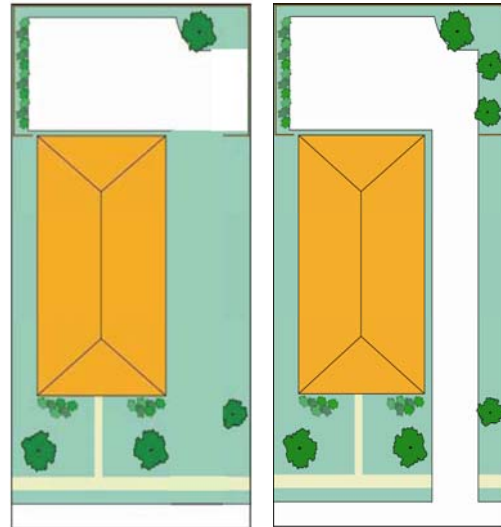


Parking on ground floor should be screened and not in the façade zone



Parking is on ground floor, but is screened and not visible in the façade zone

Recommended Parking Configuration



Multi-Family on a corner lot

Multi-Family on an interior lot

7. Sustainability

The City of Urbana is committed to reducing Urbana’s environmental footprint. Including a sustainability component in the East Urbana Design Guidelines works towards that goal. As this document is concerned with design and not building techniques, this section should be considered advisory best practices rather than being considered integral to the evaluation of the design of a project.



Sustainable Urbana
A Place to Work, Live and Grow



Source: Sustainable Cities, Environmentally Sustainable Urban Development.

Appropriate

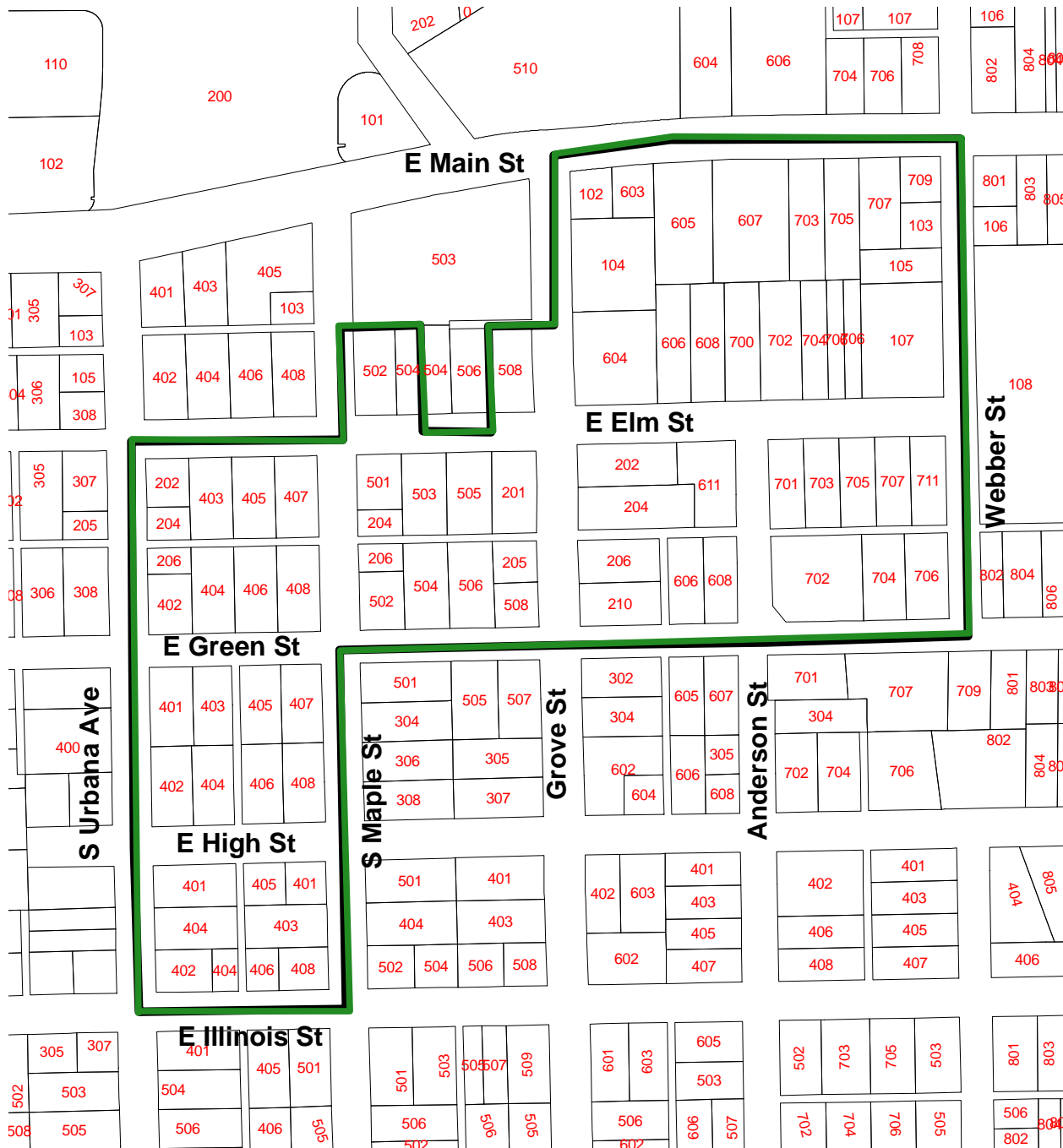
The use of best practices in green building techniques, including but not limited to:

- Re-use of buildings and building materials
- Permeable surfaces for drainage
- Cisterns for irrigation
- Use of solar panels
- Use of renewable energy
- Use of low-level and full cut-off lighting
- Attainment of LEED standards
- Use of green roofs
- Installation of geothermal, passive solar building design, or straw bale construction
- Landscaping to lower heating/cooling costs
- Native or drought-resistant landscaping
- Provide bicycle facilities

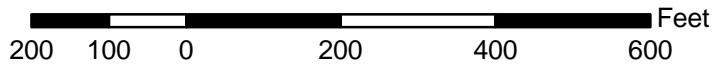
Inappropriate


- Wastefulness in building practices
- Excessive paved areas
- Intensive or wasteful lighting
- No provision for pedestrian and/or bicycle transit

Proposed East Urbana Design Review Overlay District Map

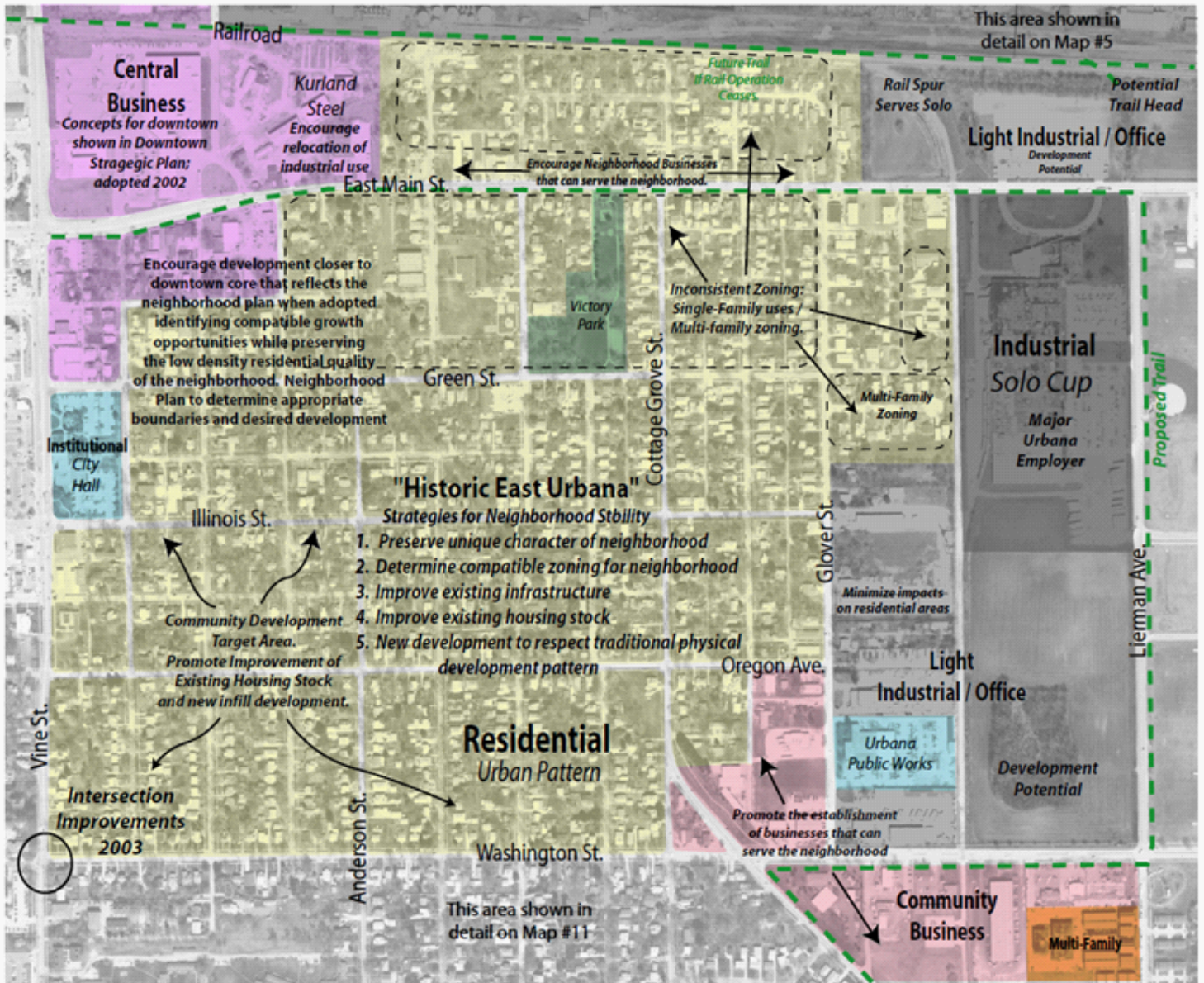


F



 Proposed East Urbana Design Review Overlay District

Future Land Use Map #10





Sign-In Sheet

East Urbana Design Guidelines

Date: Tuesday, March 30, 2010

Place: Urbana City Building, Council Chambers

Please **PRINT** your name, address, and telephone number below for the public record. Thank You!

◆◆◆◆ **PLEASE PRINT** ◆◆◆◆

<u>NAME</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>PHONE</u>
Meg Miller	581 E. High	367 5812
Tyler Fitch	503 E. California	417-4148
Christopher Stohr	405 E. High St	328-407,
Tom BERNIS	405 EAST main ST.	384-1144
George R. Carlisle	1304 E. Green	365-0419
Scott Wyatt	204 S. Grove St.	344-8428
Scott Donata	501 E. Herb	778-8982



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East Urbana Design Guidelines

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◆◆◆◆ **PLEASE PRINT** ◆◆◆◆

NAME

ADDRESS

PHONE

Alice Englebretsen	501 E. California	367-7344
Tracy Datterthwaite	602 E High St.	649-5768
Marianne Downey	503 E California Ave	4174305
Rick Schattwill	508 E. Illinois	312-4893002

MEETING MINUTES

URBANA DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

DATE: April 15, 2010

DRAFT

TIME: 7:30 p.m.

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

MEMBERS PRESENT: Alice Englebretsen, Michael McCulley, Shirley Stillinger,
Art Zangerl

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ben Grosser, Kevin Hunsinger

STAFF PRESENT: Robert Myers, Planning Manager; Rebecca Bird, Planner I;
Teri Andel, Planning Secretary

OTHERS PRESENT: Chris Stohr

1. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, AND DECLARATION OF QUORUM

Chair Zangerl called the meeting to order at 7:37 p.m. Roll call was taken and a quorum was declared present.

2. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

There were none.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINTUES

The minutes from the April 16, 2009 meeting were presented for approval. Ms. Englebretsen moved to approve the minutes as presented. Mr. McCulley seconded the motion. The minutes were then approved by unanimous voice vote.

4. COMMUNICATIONS

- Revised Page 12 and Page 15 of the proposed East Urbana Design Guidelines.

5. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were none.

6. OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

7. NEW PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were none.

8. NEW BUSINESS

Review and Discussion of the Proposed East Urbana Design Guidelines

Rebecca Bird, Planner I, presented this topic to the Design Review Board. She began by explaining how the proposed East Urbana Design Guidelines came about. She mentioned that the Future Land Use Map #10 from the 2005 Comprehensive Plan is provided in the written staff report. It lists several strategies for neighborhood stability in the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood. One of the strategies listed is *“New development to respect traditional physical development patterns.”* One way to do this is to have design guidelines.

She discussed the proposed district boundaries and noted the zoning of the properties in the district and of adjacent areas. She reviewed the concerns expressed by the Board of the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Association (HEUNA). Their biggest concern is that new buildings should be oriented toward the street – that it has a front entryway and windows. They were also concerned about having design guidelines that are too restrictive that would prevent people from maintaining and upgrading their homes, so they are not interested in having design guidelines on single-family residences.

Ms. Bird stated the types of applications about which the Design Review Board would review and approve. She briefly talked about the open house held on March 30, 2010. She mentioned that City staff is looking for the Design Review Board to review and provide input on the draft design guidelines. She then explained the process for getting the proposed design guidelines reviewed and hopefully approved by the City Council.

She gave a presentation on the proposed design guidelines and discussed the following:

- III. Character of the District
 - Current Zoning
 - City of Urbana 2005 Comprehensive Plan
 - Ownership/Existing Land Use Patterns
 - Existing Building Types
 - Design Principles – Grid Street Layout
- IV. Review Process
 - Design Review Board Review

- Administrative Review
- Exempt Projects
- Building Safety Code and Zoning Ordinance
- Locally Designated Historic Landmarks and Districts
- Application Review Criteria
- V. Design Guidelines
 - Divided into three sections
 - Mandatory
 - Appropriate
 - Inappropriate
 - The Façade Zone
 - Massing & Scale
 - Building Orientation
 - Window & Door Openings
 - Landscaping
 - Parking Areas
 - Sustainability

She then asked if there were any questions for City staff.

Ms. Stillinger asked what the rationale is for exempting single-family residential when it is 57% of the existing land use in the proposed district. It hardly seems worth it to create design guidelines for 43% of a district. Ms. Bird explained that when City staff met with the HEUNA board, the members were clear that they really want to try to avoid any more apartment buildings built sideways and have a blank wall facing the street. They do not want the proposed design guidelines and overlay district to prevent maintenance and upgrading of single-family homes. By exempting single-family houses they would not put an extra layer of regulations on the homeowners that might discourage them from upgrading their homes.

Ms. Stillinger said that if a single-family homeowner wanted to remodel and have a house like the one in the picture at the bottom of Page 12 with a solid wall with no windows or doors facing the street then they would be allowed to. However, an apartment owner would not be allowed to do so. It seems to be defeating the purpose of the proposed design guidelines to only deal with half of the properties in the district. Ms. Bird said that City staff will take another look at this. Single-family homes are not the problem in this area. Ms. Stillinger said that it could be in the future though. The proposed design guidelines are planning for the future and not meant to change existing conditions.

Robert Myers, Planning Manager, stated that when discussing this with the members of the HEUNA board, City staff inquired if they would allow a property owner to enclose a porch on a single-family home. The majority of the Board said that would be okay. The HEUNA design guidelines express different values than guidelines for the Lincoln-Busey Corridor in the West Urbana Neighborhood. Ms. Stillinger questioned if there was anything in the proposed design guidelines that would keep single-family homes, if they were included in the proposed guidelines, to keep the property owners from enclosing their porches. Mr. Myers said no. Ms. Stillinger felt that this is not a good example of the reason to exempt single-family homes. Mr. Myers clarified that enclosing a porch is an extreme example of a change on a single-family home often addressed by design guidelines. But

HEUNA Board members thought this sort of major change to single-family residences was acceptable.

Mr. McCulley remarked that if City staff intends for this to be guidelines for multi-family residential, commercial, and institutional properties, then City staff should limit it basically to areas that are multi-family residential, commercial and institutional and label the document as such. When he looked through the written staff report and attachments he realized that a significant portion of the proposed overlay district is exempt due to being single-family homes, and the guidelines are intended for the multi-family residential, institutional, and commercial areas. However, when you look through the proposed design guidelines, many of the photo examples show single-family homes. The document sends a mixed message. He suggests that City staff take photos of buildings outside of the proposed district to show appropriate and inappropriate examples rather than using single-family homes.

He stated that City staff needs to either make the design guidelines apply to the whole area, including single-family homes, or limit them to the properties that are multi-family residential, institutional and commercial. Ms. Bird stated that City staff discussed this, and it would cause problems to “cookie cut” a district. Also, a single-family homeowner may request to rezone his/her property to a higher residential use. Mr. McCulley responded that he does not mean that City staff should change the overlay district but rather state in the proposed design guidelines that they apply to properties that are zoned or used as multi-family residential, institutional and commercial. Ms. Bird said that City staff could take new photos outside of the district and replace some of the ones in the proposed design guidelines. She explained that the reason they used photos of single-family residential is to show what is in the district the guidelines are trying to achieve, and there are not many examples of this inside the proposed district. Another reason is to show that new development or redevelopment needs to be compatible with the single-family homes in the area.

Mr. McCulley noted that most of the text reads fine. The examples are very confusing. He recommended that instead of saying that the proposed design guidelines do not apply to single-family housing, City staff should say what the guidelines do apply to.

Mr. Myers said that some of the photos may illustrate multi-family even though the building may appear to be single-family. That’s part of the point of the guidelines, to be compatible with the single-family character when buildings are converted or constructed.

Chair Zangerl asked for clarification regarding the lots that are zoned single-family or duplex. A number of these lots are not used as single-family homes or as a duplex. They have been grandfathered. Ms. Bird said that is correct. There are single-family houses that have been divided into apartments. These buildings would fall under the proposed design guidelines because of the use.

Mr. McCulley commented that there could be a single-family house that violates all the proposed design guidelines located next to an apartment building that is the same size and appears on the outside to be a house, which would be regulated by the proposed design guidelines. Ms. Stillinger said that she did not understand why single-family residential was not included in design review.

Ms. Bird explained that City staff used the Lincoln-Busey Design Guidelines as a guide to create the proposed design guidelines. City staff and the HEUNA board went through each design criteria to come up with what HEUNA wanted for their neighborhood. When they discussed materials, the HUENA board said they did not want any regulations on materials used because it is not a higher income neighborhood. They did not want to make the regulations so restrictive that property owners in the neighborhood would not be able to maintain or upgrade their homes. Non-owner occupied properties are the issue. City staff could include single-family houses in the proposed design guidelines; however, a simple project might cause an extra layer of review which could be onerous.

Mr. McCulley reiterated that when you start reading the proposed design guidelines, initially you get the impression that it is an overall design guideline plan because so much of the discussion and so many of the examples show single-family residential.

Ms. Englebretsen asked if it would be possible to include language that if a single-family homeowner rebuilds, then they would have to follow some guidelines that fit the character of the neighborhood. Ms. Bird said that they could include some language on new construction of single-family homes. Ms. Englebretsen remarked that some properties look like they are on a rebuild status where the property owners might want to tear them down and rebuild their homes. Ms. Bird asked if since she lives in the neighborhood if she got the understanding that this is an issue for other people living in the area. Ms. Englebretsen replied that so far the rebuild thing has not happened, but one could always hope. When it does it would be good to have some design guidelines in place to keep them from putting up a metal building.

Mr. Zangerl noted that there are some older neighborhoods in the City of Urbana where there are some very modern houses that have no windows on the façade. Ms. Stillinger commented on a house that is partly underground on Florida Avenue. She recalled that the single-family homes were not the problem for the Lincoln-Busey Corridor either. Ms. Bird responded that in that corridor there is much greater development pressure. Ms. Stillinger said that the development pressure is not on single-family. The main problem is R-7, University Residential, or duplex.

Ms. Stillinger commented that she also did not want to force regulations on a neighborhood that does not want them. However, it seems to her to be short-sighted not to include single-family homes because if someone wants to remodel, rebuild or expand their single-family house then they can do whatever they want.

Chair Zangerl felt this was an interesting discussion. The districts that are coming under review by the City are identified as problems by their respective neighborhoods. They are seeking a solution, and this is a response to something that the community wants to have. He agrees with Mr. McCulley to a large extent in that there is a single-family model for multi-family residential, commercial and institutional uses. It is obvious what prompted the request for design guidelines in the Historic East Urbana area. The examples are there. So to him the question is whether or not the proposed design guidelines are the solution. He believes to a large extent it probably is. He mentioned that the Lincoln-Busey Corridor does have the issue of protecting single-family on Busey Avenue. Ms. Stillinger stated that she owns a single-family home in that area, and she never thought that the design guidelines should not apply to her property.

Ms. Stillinger wondered if the Lincoln-Busey Design Guidelines actually call for expensive materials. Ms. Bird replied that those guidelines recommend that “high quality” materials be used.

Mr. McCulley asked if a duplex is considered multi-family or single-family. Ms. Bird explained that a duplex is allowed by right in the R-3, Single and Two-Family Residential Zoning District. In the design guidelines a duplex is considered multi-family residential. So the proposed design guidelines would apply to it.

Mr. McCulley commented that it seems that citizens have difficulties with large buildings that have blank facades and such, but that they are less concerned with small buildings having some of the design problems. The picture on the bottom of Page 12 appears to be a single-family home where someone removed the front porch and the windows on the façade. Ms. Bird pointed out that the picture is a sideways facing apartment building. The photo may not translate because it lacks a scale to judge the size of buildings.

Mr. Zangerl said that any single-family home could be converted into a duplex and fall under the proposed design guidelines, correct? Ms. Bird said yes. Mr. Zangerl commented that every property in the district is then eligible for review depending upon the use.

Ms. Englebretsen commented that it almost appears that they need to focus the proposed design guidelines on multi-family residential with a subset of less items in it for single-family residential if they are rebuilt. Ms. Bird commented that this might be difficult to administer. Ms. Englebretsen replied that then maybe design guidelines are not the avenue for this then and maybe it should be done through zoning or building permits.

Mr. McCulley wondered if they should apply the proposed design guidelines on duplexes. Duplexes fall between categories because they can be considered multi-family or its own type of residential use. A building can be converted back and forth between duplex and single-family use several times. Ms. Bird noted that it is quite expensive to convert because there has to be a firewall separation between the units of a duplex. There also needs to be separate kitchens and self-contained units, etc. Mr. McCulley said that with the way the proposed design guidelines are written, exempting single-family is not calling a duplex as multi-family. It does say that the design guidelines would apply to duplexes.

Chair Zangerl talked about the mandatory requirements on windows and door openings. It seemed to him that a person could add one door and one window on the structure on the bottom of Page 15 and it would not help a lot. Mr. McCulley pointed out that on the bottom of Page 14 there is a perfect example of what Mr. Zangerl is talking about. Chair Zangerl felt that the proposed design guidelines for Window and Door Openings did not solve the problem. Even most single-family houses have two windows per floor. Ms. Bird mentioned that she at first tried to mandate the number of windows and window area but that it became a very complicated formula. It did not make sense so she removed it as a requirement. She said that she could continue to work on this section.

Mr. Myers commented that City staff included some mandatory elements that are the most essential elements of compatible design. But then “appropriate” design elements farther. For example on Page 15 they included the following, “An ideal ratio of openings to solids is approximately 1:3 for the

front façade.” City staff did not want to specify that a building must have a 1 to 3 solid to void ratio because occasionally there are some wonderfully designed homes that do not meet this requirement.

Therefore, they set a minimum standard as the bare essence but then encourage more openings than that. Ms. Bird showed an example. The picture at the top of Page 14 shows a building that does not meet the ideal 1:3 ratio; however, it does satisfy the intent of what they are trying to achieve.

Ms. Stlinger wondered about the picture in the middle of Page 14. Is it a single-family home? Ms. Bird replied no. Mr. Myers explained that the building is turned sideways. Ms. Stlinger remarked that someone could have a single-family home that looks like this building. Mr. Myers said yes.

Chair Zangerl prefers to recommend two windows per floor. Are there any conventional facades in the proposed district with less than two windows per floor? Ms. Bird answered no. After thinking about it, Chair Zangerl said that he could see where they might get into trouble recommending two windows on the second floor, so he said that there should be at least two windows on the first floor.

Mr. McCulley felt that the language under “Appropriate” for Window and Door Openings is more informative than the language under “Mandatory.” A person could have two windows next to each other so it appears to only be one window and would still meet the requirements. Ms. Bird stated that this is the problem of writing language for “Mandatory”, which is why the Lincoln-Busey Corridor Design Guidelines does not have any Mandatory requirements. City staff felt that in the proposed East Urbana District there is something very specific that they are trying to prevent. In the Lincoln-Busey Corridor there were a whole host of things that they tried to prevent by creating the design guidelines for that area, so there was not an easy way to write about mandatory requirements. So, the “Appropriate” section of this issue makes it much easier and makes much more sense. City staff can rework the “Mandatory” paragraph out if it is not useful.

Mr. McCulley pointed out that when you target multi-family, commercial and institutional uses, then the audience is going to be architects. Most architects will be able to read the proposed design guidelines and understand the intention of the City in this document. Single-family residential and duplex is a different audience because an architect is not required to do simple revisions and/or additions. A carpenter or builder could do the work. An architect could look at this document and see what the City wants and relay that back to the property owner.

He believes the 1:3 ratio is appropriate in conveying that the City wants the new structure or renovation project to look like the surrounding area. Mr. Zangerl commented that the 1:3 ratio does not ensure that there would be more than one window. A person could have one window and two doors. Ms. Bird noted that she originally had sizes of windows in the language, but it became too complicated so she took them out. Chair Zangerl stated that this is why the pictures are so important, because it shows what is appropriate and what is not. Mr. McCulley reiterated that is why he feels it is necessary to take pictures of appropriate buildings outside of the district to show what the City considers ideal.

Mr. McCulley believes that the proposed area does not have the density represented in the bottom right photo on Page 17 so he recommended replacing this picture.

With no further questions, Chair Zangerl opened the agenda item to public input.

Chris Stohr, 405 East High Street, stated that he lives the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood. There is a good example across the street from the City building to show why they encouraged the City to create design guidelines to help protect the neighborhood. Property values are driven down by the “wear down, tear down” cycle and replacement with a sideways fitting apartment building. This discourages homeowners from investing in their homes. HEUNA is not proposing design guidelines for the remarkable, architectural gems constructed in the neighborhood, if that is what the Board is concerned about limiting with the design guidelines. The proposed design guidelines are to prevent the poorly designed buildings seen in the neighborhood again and again. He encourages the Design Review Board to recommend that the City Council adopt the proposed design guidelines. He thanked the City’s Planning staff for working closely with the neighborhood to try to develop design guidelines that will offer some protection in an area of their neighborhood that is likely to be redeveloped. They can tell this area will be redeveloped by the condition of the existing homes and by the fact that many of the properties are not owner-occupied. These properties are in an area which could easily be redeveloped under the right economic circumstances. The neighborhood association would like redevelopment to be compatible with the neighborhood.

With no further comments or questions for the Board, Chair Zangerl closed the public input portion of the case and opened it for discussion by the Design Review Board.

Mr. McCulley commended City staff and felt it is a very good draft. He feels that City staff should change some of the examples shown in the document to reflect what they want and to leave out the single-family residential examples, even if it means taking photos of structures outside the district and possibly even outside the City. They could go round and round about the “Mandatory” section. However, he did not feel this was important as long as the “Appropriate” section is well defined and provides adequate guidance. He also suggested that City staff clarify in the beginning that this document is for multi-family residential, commercial and institutional uses. With the proper examples it would be more clear that the guidelines are not for single-family residences.

Chair Zangerl asked City staff if they need a formal motion. Mr. Myers responded by that since the Board is being asked to comment on an item which is not an official Design Review Board case then they don’t need to make a formal motion. City staff has captured the Board’s ideas on how to improve the proposed guidelines. Board members’ comments seems to be in agreement with Mr. McCulley’s last stated concerns so that provides clear direction on how staff can proceed.

Mr. Myers explained that it would take some time to incorporate the changes that were recommended by the Board. City staff expect to take the proposed design guidelines to the Plan Commission on May 6, 2010. That will give staff time to incorporate the changes discussed tonight.

9. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

There was none.

10. STAFF REPORT

There was none.

11. STUDY SESSION

There was none.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. McCulley moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Englebretsen seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 8:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Myers, AICP, Secretary

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING

URBANA PLAN COMMISSION

DRAFT

DATE: May 20, 2010

TIME: 7:30 P.M.

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

MEMBERS PRESENT: Andrew Fell, Tyler Fitch, Ben Grosser, Dannie Otto, Michael Pollock, Marilyn Upah-Bant

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Jane Burris, Lew Hopkins, Bernadine Stake

STAFF PRESENT: Robert Myers, Planning Manager; Lisa Karcher, Planner II; Teri Andel, Planning Secretary

OTHERS PRESENT: Sara Metheny

1. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL AND DECLARATION OF QUORUM

Chair Pollock called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m., roll call was taken, and a quorum was declared present.

2. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

There were none.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There were no minutes available for review and approval.

4. COMMUNICATIONS

There were none.

5. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS

Plan Case No. 2126-T-10: A request by the Zoning Administrator to amend Section XI-15.J.1 of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance to create the East Urbana Design Review Overlay District and to adopt the East Urbana Design Guidelines for that district.

Robert Myers, Planning Manager, presented an update for this case to the Plan Commission. He stated that the Plan Commission had two main issues with the proposed text amendment during the previous meeting. The first issue concerned the landscaping requirements for signage. The second issue was about the proposed boundary of the design review district. The Zoning Administrator is the applicant in this case. She views the boundary as generally following the Future Land Use Map in the Comprehensive Plan, but granted a design review district is not the same as a zoning district. If the Plan Commission wants to leave the boundary as proposed, then they could forward the case to the Urbana City Council, or if they want to make a change to the boundary to include the two additional properties, then City staff could bring a revised boundary back to the Plan Commission.

There are several ways to view how the district boundaries should be laid out. One way is that the Design Review standards are mainly written for residential uses to make sure that future residential multi-family developments are compatible with the rest of the neighborhood. The two properties of concern on Elm Street are still shown in the Comprehensive Plan as being part of the Central Business District. At some point, these two properties could very well be developed for downtown uses so would the Design Guidelines really be applicable to downtown business? On the other hand, the properties are still zoned multi-family residential. So, the property owners could demolish the existing buildings and rebuild apartments. This is exactly what the guidelines would address.

Mr. Myers pointed out several changes to the design guidelines as recommended by the Plan Commission at the previous meeting. Staff reviewed adding landscaping requirements for signage, but felt it would be too complicated legally given what has been learned about First Amendment sign issues and discretionary design review.

Mr. Fitch asked about the membership of the Design Review Board. Will there be a new member appointed to the Board to represent the East Urbana Design Review District? Mr. Myers said that was his recollection. When the Ordinance was written creating the Design Review Board, the Comprehensive Plan points to two design review districts – one is for the Lincoln-Busey Corridor and the second is the East Urbana Design Review District.

Mr. Grosser asked why the two properties on Elm Street were not included in the East Urbana Design Review District. Mr. Myers explained that 506 East Elm Street is currently used as multi-family residential and 504-1/2 is used as single-family residential. The entire north side of the block was previously designated in the Comprehensive Plan as being Central Business. When the City completed the large-scale rezoning for more than 100 properties in the neighborhood, two property owners in that same block requested that their properties be rezoned to residential, which is why they are included in the proposed district. Lisa Karcher, Planner II,

added that the two properties not included are zoned R-5, Medium-High Density Multiple Family Residential.

Mr. Grosser asked if there are any objections to the Design Review Guidelines or the Plan from owners or residents in the proposed district. Mr. Myers said no. City staff notified property owners and residents, placed an ad in the newspaper, and posted signage in the area. They held an open house and a meeting with the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Association as well. They have not heard much feedback on the proposed design guidelines.

Mr. Otto questioned if they leave the two properties on Elm Street out of the district, then the property owners could build apartments by right in a way that could be inappropriate to the neighborhood. Mr. Myers said that is correct. They would be under the same zoning standards and building code standards that any other property would and they would not undergo design review.

Mr. Fell commented on the two properties on Elm Street not included in the proposed district. As an overlay district the City disregards zoning and the comprehensive plan, correct? He feels it does an injustice to the other properties on the block if the two properties were not to be included.

Mr. Myers replied that the original thought was to exclude the two properties because the standards are written for residential properties. The future land use of those two properties, in following the Comprehensive Plan, could be downtown business. There are not any setback requirements in the downtown business district. Central Business District zoning allows construction right up to the property line three stories tall. On the other hand, what is the likelihood of this happening? The two properties are still zoned residential so the owners would have to rezone the properties.

Mr. Fell remarked that he understands this. However, as an overlay district, the City does not care what the zoning is or what the Comprehensive Plan designates for properties, so this is almost irrelevant in the discussion. Mr. Myers said that the zoning and Comprehensive Plan are pertinent because the permitted uses dictate the building type – whether it is residential or commercial. Because the standards for the district are written for residential, City staff thought it would be appropriate to follow the zoning district boundaries.

Mr. Fell stated that the whole idea for creating design guidelines is to protect the neighborhood. By excluding the two properties on Elm Street, the City is negating everything around them. Doing so defeats the purpose of everything that surrounds the properties in the overlay district.

With no further questions for City staff from the Plan Commission, Chair Pollock opened the hearing for public input.

Sara Metheny, 502 East Elm Street, commented that she would like to see the proposed design guidelines and design review district approved. The City can go back and make an amendment to include the other two properties into the proposed district. She expressed concern about the properties at 503 and 505 East Elm being for sale.

With no further comments from the audience, Chair Pollock closed the public input portion of the hearing and then opened the hearing up for Plan Commission discussion and/or motion(s).

Mr. Fitch stated that at the previous meeting he had made a motion to forward this case to the Urbana City Council with the recommendation for approval with the condition that they include the two properties on the north side of Elm Street. The motion was defeated. He wondered if it would be legitimate to make the same motion again. Chair Pollock responded that any motion addressing what to do with the case is appropriate.

Mr. Grosser questioned whether they would have to send the case back to City staff to have it re-noticed to include those two properties instead of forwarding it on to the City Council. Chair Pollock answered that if the Plan Commission wanted to forward the case as is, they could do so. If they want to change the boundaries, then they would need to send it back to City staff to re-notice the case.

Mr. Otto wondered how long it would take to send it back to staff to re-notice the case. Mr. Myers said it would take about four weeks to re-notice it and bring it back to the Plan Commission for review. If approved, then it would go before the City Council in approximately six weeks.

Mr. Otto asked how long it would take for the Ordinance to go into effect once City Council approves it. Mr. Myers replied that it would take effect immediately unless the Ordinance states otherwise.

Mr. Otto expressed his concern about 503 and 505 East Elm Street being for sale. If they send this back to City staff and it takes at least six weeks before City Council can approve the Ordinance creating the design review district, then the properties could be sold and a developer could apply for building permits. Mr. Myers stated that although it is possible, it does take a while for plans to be drawn up and building permit applications submitted.

Mr. Fell stated that he had understood that building permit applications for 503 and 505 E Elm Street could be ready the day after they sell.

Chair Pollock recommended that if this is a real concern of the Plan Commission, then they could forward the case to the City Council with a recommendation for approval to protect those two properties, and ask staff to bring an amendment to the boundary district back to the Plan Commission in the near future.

Mr. Otto asked who would take the initiative to alter the boundary of the district. Mr. Myers said that the Plan Commission could pass a motion requesting that the Zoning Administrator amend the proposed boundaries. Chair Pollock stated that if the Plan Commission forwards this case as recommended to the City Council at this meeting, he wanted to make sure that the minutes reflect the Plan Commission's desire to amend the boundaries in a future amendment.

Mr. Fitch moved that the Plan Commission forward Plan Case No. 2126-T-10 to the Urbana City Council with the recommendation for approval of the East Urbana Design Review District as currently defined. Mr. Otto seconded the motion. Roll call on the motion was as follows:

Mr. Fitch	-	Yes	Mr. Grosser	-	Yes
Mr. Otto	-	Yes	Mr. Pollock	-	Yes
Ms. Upah-Bant	-	Yes	Mr. Fell	-	Yes

The motion was passed by unanimous vote. Mr. Myers stated that this case will go to the Urbana City Council on June 7, 2010.

Mr. Fitch moved to request that the Zoning Administrator amend the East Urbana Design Review District boundaries to include the two properties at 504 [504 ½] and 506 East Elm Street, and for City staff to begin the notification process. Mr. Otto seconded the motion. Roll call on the motion was as follows:

Mr. Fitch	-	Yes	Mr. Grosser	-	Yes
Mr. Otto	-	Yes	Mr. Pollock	-	Yes
Ms. Upah-Bant	-	Yes	Mr. Fell	-	Yes

The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Mr. Fitch moved that the Plan Commission forward the East Urbana Design Guidelines referenced in Plan Case No. 2126-T-10 to the Urbana City Council with a recommendation for approval. Ms. Upah-Bant seconded the motion.

Mr. Fell stated that on principle he opposed design guidelines because they are trying to legislate in good design and legislate out bad design which he feels they cannot do. Although he sympathizes with the residents in the neighborhood, he believes that when people purchase homes they should be aware of the zoning around their properties. If it is the City's wish to legislate out multi-family developments, then the City should rezone properties.

Mr. Grosser expressed some sympathy for Mr. Fell's concerns. However, one thing he likes about the proposed design guidelines is that they are light handed. They don't legislate too much about the design of a development other than keeping development from being tremendously ugly - buildings with no windows or entrances on the front façade or buildings that are way out of proportion for the neighborhood size. There are other design guidelines in the City of Urbana that are more comprehensive that he would not necessarily want on his own house. In this particular case, there were no objections by the people who live or own properties in the proposed district. Therefore he will support the motion.

Mr. Fell stated that he agreed with Mr. Grosser's comment to a point. If the design guidelines were all listed as what is deemed as "appropriate" and "inappropriate" as opposed to what is mandatory, then it would be a different issue. Mr. Fitch replied that the only mandatory requirements are the orientation of the façade zone and that there are windows and an entrance

on the front. Mr. Myers added that one more mandatory regulation is that parking at ground level needs to be screened to prevent buildings on stilts.

Mr. Pollock commented that they cannot legislate taste. He likes that the people in the neighborhood recognize that it is a changing neighborhood and there are going to be a mix of uses. They do not want to rezone everything to prevent the reuse of older buildings or improving the neighborhood. Doing this in such a way that it protects the stock of buildings in the neighborhood that exist is not a bad idea. He will support the motion.

With no objection from the Plan Commission members, Chair Pollock re-opened the public input portion of the hearing.

Ms. Metheny re-approached the Plan Commission to say that when she bought her home it was zoned R-3, Single and Two Family Residential as well as many other people in the neighborhood.

Chair Pollock closed the public input portion of the hearing and asked for a vote on the motion. Roll call on the motion was as follows:

Mr. Grosser	-	Yes	Mr. Otto	-	Yes
Mr. Pollock	-	Yes	Ms. Upah-Bant	-	Yes
Mr. Fell	-	No	Mr. Fitch	-	Yes

The motion was passed by a vote of 5-1. Mr. Myers stated that this case would go to the City Council on June 7, 2010.

6. OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

7. NEW PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were none.

8. NEW BUSINESS

CCZBA-664-AT-10: Request by the Champaign County Zoning Administrator to amend the Champaign County Ordinance concerning shadow flicker and the number of concurring votes needed for ZBA decisions.

Lisa Karcher, Planner II, presented this case to the Plan Commission. She gave a brief introduction and background information on the purpose of the proposed text amendment to the County Zoning Ordinance. City staff recommends that the Plan Commission forward this case to the City Council with a recommendation to defeat a resolution of protest.

Chair Pollock asked if there are only five members on the County Zoning Board of Appeals, would they still have to have four votes? Ms. Karcher stated that she would have to look at the County Zoning Ordinance to find out what the Board's by-laws state.

Ms. Upah-Bant wondered why they were looking at text amendments in the extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ) area. Ms. Karcher stated that it is the City of Urbana's right as a municipality to review County Zoning Ordinance text amendments.

Mr. Fell inquired as to how they would use landscaping to block shadow flicker from a 100-foot wind turbine. Ms. Karcher replied that shadow flicker changes with the height of the sun and where it is at in the season, so she would guess that they could change the shadow flicker by locating the wind turbine even further away or maybe a strategically placed tree would work. It will be up to the consultant that does the shadow flicker study.

Mr. Fell wondered if the wind turbine is built first before a home that will be affected by a shadow flicker. Will the wind turbine be forced to provide landscaping for the owner of the home? Ms. Karcher said that there are some specific siting standards for constructing a wind turbine next to a vacant lot. She assumed that these standards would help to mitigate those circumstances.

With no further questions from the Plan Commission and with no comments or questions from the public audience, Chair Pollock opened the case to Plan Commission discussion and/or motion(s).

Mr. Grosser moved that the Plan Commission forward Case No. CCZBA-664-AT-10 to the Urbana City Council with a recommendation to defeat a resolution of protest. Mr. Fitch seconded the motion. Roll call on the motion was as follows:

Mr. Otto	-	Yes	Mr. Pollock	-	Yes
Ms. Upah-Bant	-	Yes	Mr. Fell	-	Yes
Mr. Fitch	-	Yes	Mr. Grosser	-	Yes

The motion was passed by unanimous vote. Ms. Karcher noted that this case would go before the Urbana City Council on June 7, 2010.

9. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

There was none.

10. STAFF REPORT

Mr. Myers reported on the following:

- ✚ Joint Sustainability Advisory Commission/Plan Commission/City Council meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 9, 2010.
- ✚ Plan Commission Meeting scheduled for Thursday, June 10, 2010 will be cancelled.

- ✚ Downtown Strategic Plan Update – Steering committee was formed with stakeholders, property owners, business owners, elected officials and others with an interest in the downtown area. Mr. Pollock has been asked to serve on the committee. At some point, he expects that the Downtown Strategic Plan Update will come before the Plan Commission for review and discussion. The next meeting of the Downtown Strategic Plan Update Steering Committee is scheduled for May 24, 2010 at the Urbana Civic Center.
- ✚ High-Speed Rail Presentation was held on May 19, 2010 that he attended. He talked about interesting highlights from the presentation.

11. STUDY SESSION

There was none.

12. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

The meeting was adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Myers, AICP, Secretary
Urbana Plan Commission

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING

URBANA PLAN COMMISSION

DRAFT

DATE: May 6, 2010

TIME: 7:30 P.M.

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

MEMBERS PRESENT: Andrew Fell, Tyler Fitch, Lew Hopkins, Dannie Otto, Michael Pollock

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Jane Burris, Ben Grosser, Bernadine Stake, Marilyn Upah-Bant

STAFF PRESENT: Robert Myers, Planning Manager; Rebecca Bird, Planner I; Connie Eldridge

OTHERS PRESENT: Scott Dossett, Sara Metheny, Jason Reedy, Dennis Roberts, Christopher Stohr, Susan Taylor

1. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL AND DECLARATION OF QUORUM

Chair Pollock called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m., roll call was taken, and a quorum was declared present.

2. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

There were none.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Fitch moved to approve the minutes of the April 22, 2010 regular meeting as presented. Mr. Hopkins seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

4. COMMUNICATIONS

- Email from Lynn Canfield
- Revised Page 9 of the East Urbana Design Guidelines
- Planning Commissioner’s Journal – Spring 2010

5. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were none.

6. OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

7. NEW PUBLIC HEARINGS

Plan Case No. 2126-T-10: A request by the Zoning Administrator to amend Section XI-15.J.1 of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance to create the East Urbana Design Review Overlay District and to adopt the East Urbana Design Guidelines for that district.

Rebecca Bird, Planner I, presented this case to the Plan Commission. She stated that the reason for creating a design review district in the East Urbana neighborhood is to help in the transition between two distinct neighborhoods – the Downtown Business District and the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood.

Section I, which is the Introduction, outlines the district, the proposed boundaries as well as the purpose and the intent. Section II gives definitions for some of the key terms used in the proposed Design Guidelines.

Section III (Character of District) deals with the background of how the proposed district and design guidelines came into being. She reviewed the zoning and future land use designations of the properties in the proposed district. She reviewed the ownership and existing land use patterns, the existing building types, and existing neighborhood pattern.

Section IV (Review Process) explains what is subject for review. She mentioned that single-family residential would be exempt for review in the proposed district. The Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Association (HEUNA) expressed their concerns in a previous meeting about multi-family buildings not having the same relationship to the public space to the street that the single-family residences have. HEUNA also did not want the design guidelines to be so restrictive that they prevent property owners from maintaining and improving their homes. Ms. Bird went through the review process and reviewed the process and criteria.

Ms. Bird discussed the open house that city staff held to solicit neighborhood input. She stated that city staff gave a presentation to the Design Review Board and took their comments.

She talked about the proposed amendment to Section XI-15. She explained that a separate ordinance would be required to adopt the design guidelines, which would serve as a stand alone document. They would not be part of the Zoning Ordinance.

Each design element listed in the proposed design guidelines document are divided into mandatory, appropriate and inappropriate. Very few elements that are mandatory but include requirements for buildings being oriented towards the street by having a front door and windows facing the street. Each project is reviewed individually as to whether or not a project's design is

appropriate or inappropriate. She then briefly reviewed the elements of the design guidelines, including: The Façade Zone, Building Orientation, Window & Door Openings, Landscaping, Parking Areas and Sustainability.

Ms. Bird read the options of the Plan Commission and presented staff's recommendation, which is as follows:

The Plan Commission forward Plan Case No. 2126-T-10 to the Urbana City Council with a recommendation to approve the East Urbana Design Guidelines and the East Urbana Design Review Overlay District.

She pointed out that the Plan Commission should make separate motions and take separate votes on these two items.

Mr. Fitch inquired about the two emails that they received from Lynn Canfield, of 202 South Urbana Avenue. Ms. Bird explained that Ms. Canfield wrote the first email after receiving a letter notifying her of the public hearing for the proposed text amendment. The letter did not include a copy of the Design Guidelines so she did not fully understand what they were proposing. She thought the proposed text amendment would make it impossible for her to sell her house. Ms. Bird spoke with Ms. Canfield and explained that her property is zoned R-5, Medium-High Density Multiple Family Residential, and that the proposed Design Guidelines would not affect the zoning. They are simply design guidelines. After speaking with Ms. Canfield, she no longer seemed upset about the proposed text amendment and then wrote the second email.

Mr. Fitch referred to Page 10 of the Design Guidelines under "*Application Review Criteria.*" It states, "*In reviewing proposals, the Design Review Board will consider the effects of the proposal on the other properties on the block face.*" He wondered if this conflicted with the language on Page 9 of the design guidelines under "*Review Context*", which states, "*Project proposals will be reviewed in the context of the surrounding properties.*"

Ms. Bird responded that the reason City staff was moving away from using "*the block face*" is because some of the blocks only have two properties on them. So if you only compare with one other property, it doesn't really give a representation of what is actually going on in the area. City staff could change the language to say "*on the other properties on the block face and other surrounding properties.*" This would ensure that they include the block that the property is located on as well as what properties are around it. Properties across the street will have greater impact than properties at the other end of the block.

Mr. Fitch stated that there seemed to be more specific requirements in the Lincoln-Busey Corridor Design Guidelines. Ms. Bird said that this is correct. It was a much easier district to describe because all of it was higher intensity on the west side and lower intensity on the east side. Consequently it was very easy to draw a line down the middle and create Zone 1 and Zone 2 areas. It has very clear language regarding block face and surrounding properties. With the proposed East Urbana Design Guidelines it is not as easy to explain how to take into account surrounding properties. By being more general in the language, it would allow for the different situations depending on where the actual project is located.

Mr. Fitch asked if there would be any detrimental effect to taking a more specific approach. Ms. Bird replied that without describing each property, it would be difficult to explain what its context is. One area is more cohesive than another. They could have a minimum number of properties to include in the block face.

Robert Myers, Planning Manager, pointed out that they would need to consider the context of each property. It would be hard to write language for this. He wondered if part of the concern came from a misunderstanding that design guidelines will set what the future development potential is for a property. This is set by the underlying zoning which will not be change by the design guidelines. For instance, if there is a single-family home on a lot and it is zoned for multi-family, then at some point in the future a multi-family apartment could be built on that lot.

Mr. Fitch asked if Ms. Bird would talk about the recent rezoning of the northwest portion of the proposed district. There is a “notch” of two properties (in the 500 block of E. Elm Street) that are not included in the proposed district. Ms. Bird responded that originally the line used the street as the boundary. When the City rezoned many of the properties in the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood, three property owners where the “notch” is now located requested to be rezoned from Central Business District to R-5, Medium High Density Multiple Family Residential. The two properties in question, although in the middle of the block, are still shown as part of the Central Business District in the Comprehensive Plan. The boundaries of the proposed East Urbana Overlay Design Review District follow the Comprehensive Plan designations.

With no further questions for City staff, Chair Pollock opened the case up for public input.

Scott Dossett, 501 East High Street, stated that he does not live in the proposed district but has been active in the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Association for many years. He thanked City staff for putting together the proposed text amendment.

He stated that approximately 60% of the properties in the HEUNA area are rental properties. One of the main concerns is the “wear down-tear down” issues in their neighborhood. The neighborhood fully anticipates economic development in the proposed area of the neighborhood. However, they would like to maintain the quality of life that they have in their small single-family craftsman built kind of homes.

Another issue they have is buildings having blank walls facing the street. This is detrimental to the neighborhood. The proposed design guidelines address this issue. He believes that the proposed design guidelines will not be discriminative against rental property owners or owners of R-4 and R-5 properties. Instead it will help benefit these owners by requiring them to develop properties that fit into the character of the neighborhood. This in turn will help them to retain their property values. The people in the neighborhood have nothing against rental properties or tenants living in the neighborhood. In fact, renters are some of the finest neighbors in the neighborhood.

He showed a PowerPoint presentation of some of the residential homes depicting the issues such as a blank wall facing the street, etc. He hopes that the Plan Commission forwards the proposed text amendment to the City Council with a recommendation for approval.

Mr. Otto wondered how Mr. Dossett felt about being more specific in the proposed design guidelines about the type of materials allowed for development/redevelopment projects.

Ms. Bird pointed out that the proposed design guidelines as they are currently written do not have criteria for materials. The neighborhood recognizes that it is not a high income neighborhood, and they would rather have vinyl siding than to have a property owner allow their property to continue to deteriorate and later be demolished due to lack of finances.

Mr. Dossett responded that materials are really hard to talk about in terms of what is considered historical or neighborhood appropriate and how they may or may not reflect the character of the neighborhood. He was not concerned with the lack of criteria for materials in the proposed design guidelines.

Christopher Stohr, 405 East High Street, stated that he lives in the proposed design review overlay district. He is also Chair of HEUNA. HEUNA has promoted the concept of design review guidelines for the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood. He wondered if they could include some restrictions on billboard-type signs mounted on apartment buildings.

Mr. Myers replied that the Sign Ordinance does address apartment signage more specifically. A recent Sign Ordinance amendment dealt with the issues of size, height, and lighting. They also changed the definitions for signs and types of signs to make sure that they are content neutral. "For Sale or For Rent signs" can only be displayed if a property is for sale or there is a unit available to rent.

Mr. Stohr said that the main thrust of HEUNA is to preserve the quality of owner-occupied homes in the neighborhood. Having a house torn down and replaced with something that detracts from the neighborhood decreases everyone's property values and it discourages people from maintaining their homes.

He noticed that there are people actively doing repairs on their homes which is a sign of real vitality in the community. This is also a good motivation to help those home owners by establishing the proposed design review overlay district and adopting the proposed design guidelines.

Dennis Roberts, of 507 East Green Street, stated that he serves on the Urbana City Council. He has not participated in the neighborhood meetings concerning the creation of the proposed text amendment. He commended the effort of HEUNA and thanked City staff for focusing their attention on this area. He feels that the large-scale rezoning of the properties on the northern area of the neighborhood was one of the most significant things that happened in the last year. It really does save the neighborhood from a serious degradation and a high density within the residential corner of the near-downtown neighborhood. The neighborhood is not afraid of having some significant development along Vine Street because it seems to be a logical place to widen the city's business district and mixed residential and office use. How it impacts the edge of the older part of the neighborhood and the single-family residence section is of significance to the neighborhood. The proposed design review guidelines and overlay district will help at least modify how the buildings that are constructed look and how they blend into the neighborhood.

The HEUNA group put a lot of energy and support into the Neighborhood Conservation District discussion that happened about two-and-a-half years ago. The City accepted the concept of neighborhood conservation districts. However, the bar for the conditions for establishing such a conservation district were set so high that probably no conservation districts would be created. The rezoning that recently occurred last year and the proposed design review text amendment are both very positive and a more integrated plan. Therefore, he is supportive of the proposed text amendment.

One of the most sensitive parts is the transition along Urbana Street and how it evolves. He wondered if it would be appropriate to include aspects concerning fencing around apartment buildings and landscaping around parking lots that might be built on an R-5 lot that was once a single-family residence.

Ms. Bird replied that fencing and screening of parking is addressed in the Urbana Zoning Ordinance in Article VIII – Parking and Access. It discusses the screening of parking, in particular, with the higher density zoning district adjoining a lower density zoning district. The Plan Commission could include more language about landscaping though in the proposed design review guidelines.

With no further input from the audience, Chair Pollock closed the public input portion of the case. He, then, opened it up for Plan Commission discussion and/or motion(s).

Mr. Hopkins stated that he his concern is that the definition of the district itself is not explicit. It indicates that the boundaries are as defined in the 2005 Comprehensive Plan, which he feels should be deleted as a definition of the property. The reasons being are that when he looks at his copy of the 2005 Comprehensive Plan, the boundaries are different because they have been amended. The second reason is because the boundaries could be amended again in the future. Therefore, he feels that this chunk of the draft ordinance ought to explicitly define the boundaries perhaps by explicit reference to the Zoning Map. In other words, he believes the definition needs to explicitly define independent of other actions what the boundaries of the overlay district are and the definition should be entirely within the Zoning Ordinance.

Chair Pollock recommended that if there are many sections that the Plan Commission wants City staff to make changes to, then the Commission should mention those changes and have City staff make changes and bring the case back to the Commission at a later date rather than trying to work on tuning the language during this meeting.

Mr. Fell stated that he does not feel it is possible to legislate good and bad design. In trying to do this they are limiting creative solutions to design problems. For example, the Erlanger House would never have been possible to be built under any of the proposed design guidelines. The Erlanger House is a gem in the community. The intent of the proposed design guidelines is admirable and noble, but he cannot stand behind trying to legislate good design.

Mr. Otto responded that he was offended by the Erlanger House until he figured out it was a University of Illinois property. It is a unique building, but there would be a problem with a neighborhood full of buildings like this. The proposed design guidelines do not address single-

family homes anyway. Without design guidelines, there will be developments nibbling away at the neighborhood. Someone could argue that the photos of blank walls represent a particular time and place and ought to be preserved even though the neighbors living near these types of places find them very offensive. So he feels that they need to have the minimal guidelines as proposed in the text amendment.

Mr. Hopkins went on record to say that he would adamantly oppose such guidelines in his own neighborhood. His house would not meet the proposed guidelines. He values the Erlanger House. He mentioned that there are at least three other houses in Urbana south of Pennsylvania that also would not meet the criteria in the proposed design guidelines. The reason he is willing to support the proposed text amendment is because it is a very small area. It is pretty easy to add three small windows and put the door on a blank wall.

Mr. Fitch stated that he looked at the section on Parking Areas and it does address screening. He recommended adding "landscaping" to the list of acceptable materials to use to screen a parking lot to help soften this section. Regarding signage, he suggested that they add language possibly in the Landscaping section to say that it would be appropriate to provide landscaping elements to signage. On Page 12, he suggested that City staff add language regarding dumpsters and other less desirable items, such as garbage cans, being inappropriate to be located in the façade zone.

Mr. Fell believed the location of dumpsters is already addressed in the Urbana Zoning Ordinance. Mr. Myers noted that some of this appears to fall under code enforcement, so if anyone has a particular property in mind, City staff can determine if they are conforming to the current standards.

Mr. Fitch moved that the Plan Commission forward Plan Case 2126-T-10 to the Urbana City Council with regards to the Design Review Overlay District for approval with the following modifications: 1) eliminate the notch along the north side of Elm Street so that the boundary line goes straight across the north side of the properties on the 400 Block of Elm Street and 2) fold in language expressing the concerns about specific references to actual boundaries of the district. Mr. Hopkins seconded the motion for purposes of discussion.

Mr. Fitch explained the reason he believes the two properties in the 500 block of East Elm Street should be included in the Design Review Overlay District is because there are currently apartments on these two properties. If they exclude these two properties, then they basically have an erosion of the buffer between the commercial properties on Main Street and the residential properties into the neighborhood. The notch is a wedge into the rest of this contiguous area. By including these two properties, it would make continuity to the area as a whole and would provide an important buffer to Main Street.

Ms. Bird pointed out that the properties on the north side of Elm Street that are included in the proposed district were identified in the 2005 Comprehensive Plan as being part of the Central Business District. If they had not been rezoned last year, the boundary line would be straight across with no properties on the north side of Elm Street included in the district. Since staff wants to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, the three properties recently rezoned were included. It is not that they want to exclude the two properties in the middle.

Mr. Fitch replied that if they include the two properties in the middle in the overlay district it does not mean that they cannot be part of the commercial designation on the Future Land Use Map. The proposed design guidelines overlay district is not specifying what the properties can be used for. There is a greater chance if these two properties are not part of the overlay district that something could be built that is out of character and be detrimental to the whole area and to the concept of the area.

Chair Pollock agrees that if you leave some properties out it is clear that you are asking for someone to come in and develop something that would not be keeping with the rest of the block.

Mr. Hopkins felt this might be tricky. He wondered if the owners of these two properties had commented on the proposed text amendment. Ms. Bird answered that City staff has not spoken with these two owners. Mr. Hopkins expressed concern in that these two property owners were sent notices about the proposed text amendment and probably saw that their properties were not included in the overlay district so they did not voice any concerns. Therefore, he feels that the Plan Commission should forward this case to the next meeting to allow City staff time to contact the two owners and inform them that their properties might be included and to get feedback from them.

Mr. Hopkins also felt it is important to know what the two properties are being used as. If they are both multi-family apartment buildings then they will be a long-term non-conforming use. If they are not multi-family apartment buildings then the proposed design guidelines could have immediate effect on the two properties.

Another thing to keep in mind is the way a plan backs zoning changes, which is accumulation of historic record. So, this little blip cannot be fixed simply by straightening it. The history is already there. He would oppose this change without an additional public hearing with the two property owners notified about the change.

Roll call on the motion was as follows:

Mr. Fell	-	No	Mr. Fitch	-	Yes
Mr. Hopkins	-	No	Mr. Otto	-	No
Mr. Pollock	-	No			

The motion failed by a vote of 1 ayes to 4 nays.

Mr. Hopkins felt that the Plan Commission should give City staff some direction on the motion that was just defeated before they move on to discussing the Design Review Guidelines. City staff needs to create language to define the boundaries of the overlay district.

Chair Pollock added that the second part is to have staff look at what steps are necessary to make the change to include the two properties on the north side of Elm Street. At the next meeting, the Plan Commission can discuss whether they want to hold another public hearing and bring the whole case back or whether they should drop that particularly proposal, take the change in language that they asked for to define the boundaries and approve it at the next meeting. This is almost a great proposal, and he does not want to mess it up with small details.

Mr. Myers reviewed the Commission's options for tonight's meeting.

Mr. Otto stated that since the Plan Commission's request is requiring certain considerations in design, should they also add the south half of Elm Street to Urbana Avenue and the west half of Urbana Avenue so that even the block that the City wants to redevelop would require design review? He suggested that City staff add language saying that the redevelopment that should be done along there has to face the residential side because it serves as the transition between the residential and the business district. It should be reviewed for building design and landscape design so that it preserves the residential character of the street.

Mr. Fitch commented that he might be amendable to this suggestion. However, the problem with including the west side of Urbana Avenue is that many of the properties on the west side of Urbana Street may front onto Vine Street.

Chair Pollock stated that while he is willing to consider including the notch in the boundary of the district, he takes the recommendation of City staff seriously. He does not want to just keep going down the block and keep including more properties. He does not feel comfortable with that.

Mr. Myers mentioned that the properties on the west side of Urbana Avenue are considered part of the Central Business Zoning District in the Comprehensive Plan. Different standards will be held for these properties. They consider this as the transitional zone between the business district and the residential neighborhood.

Design guidelines are created for specific areas in a neighborhood rather than for an entire neighborhood. Many of the properties in the proposed overlay district are zoned for multi-family and used as single-family so they have potential for redevelopment. Over the last five years, City staff has been working on livability for neighborhoods in Urbana. Part of this is the rezoning of over 100 properties last year from multi-family to single-family residential to protect the single-family character of the neighborhood. The proposed overlay district is different because it has a lot of higher zoning so it can transform. Yet it is different from the Central Business District to the west and to the northwest, so they did not include any properties that are in the Central Business District.

Mr. Otto wondered what control the City has over the Central Business District to avoid future problems. Mr. Myers explained that there is not an overall design review for properties in the Central Business District. The block discussed tonight (west of Urbana Avenue and north of the City Building) the City has options to purchase these properties. As the property owner, the City would have control on what could be built. The City would enter into an agreement with a developer and whatever would be built would have to meet the public's expectations.

Mr. Fitch pointed out that most of the lots in the Central Business District are not big enough to permit a "big box" development. Mr. Otto replied that there could be a strip mall with a 20 foot high wall. Chair Pollock commented that the western part of this is zoned B-4, and the idea of the B-4 Zoning District is to build to the street and allow a higher height density. If a developer is going to do that in town then this is the place to do it. The zoning is different on the eastern

portion of this block. Chances are that future development would be a planned unit development, which would require review by the Plan Commission and approval by the Urbana City Council.

Chair Pollock inquired about re-noticing the meeting. Mr. Myers explained that if the Plan Commission decides to continue discussion on the proposed text amendment, then City staff will not need to renote the meeting. However, if the Plan Commission wants to change the boundary, then City staff will need to renote the text amendment.

Chair Pollock continued the discussion of this case to the next scheduled meeting on May 20, 2010. Mr. Fitch thanked City staff for doing a fantastic job in the East Urbana neighborhood. In his opinion, this is a great plan with just a few details to work out.

8. NEW BUSINESS

There was none.

9. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Scott Dossett believes that the north side of Elm Street should have never been included in the Downtown Business Plan. It is discreetly different in its character. There are four houses facing one apartment building. Just because the 2005 Comprehensive Plan is in error, it does not mean it has to continue to be in error if there is a better plan.

Chris Stohr commented that the reason for the proposed design review guidelines and overlay district is because the neighborhood has been fighting some very ugly apartment designs. If someone wants to build an Erlanger design house, then he would stand up and cheer. Chair Pollock remarked that under this plan regardless of what form it is in, if someone wants to come into this neighborhood and build it, then they can because there are not any design guidelines for single-family homes. Mr. Hopkins noted that it would not be permitted under these design guidelines if it were not a single-family home.

Mr. Myers responded that this is one of the trade-offs that people have to review when adopting design guidelines. Design guidelines are really about having a predictable range of design. The good part is the predictability of the outcome, and the bad part is that some building design may not conform. Again, the issue in the Historic East Urbana has not been that Frank Lloyd Wright-caliber homes are being built in the neighborhood. It is minimum design standards to protect the character of the neighborhood.

Dennis Roberts stated that in the discussion of the preservation of the nature of the neighborhood, HEUNA identified that the most endangered street is the 500 block of East Elm Street, the very block where the notch occurs. It was a mental decision by City staff to exclude the two properties. He felt it was a mistake for the preservation of the nature of the transitional area for the neighborhood. The owners of the three properties along the north side of Elm Street that were included in the rezoning showed that the people who live on the block consider this to be the line where crucial thinking needs to take place. So he encouraged the Plan Commission to consider Mr. Fitch's recommendation to include those two properties in the overlay district.

Ms. Bird addressed a comment about the design guidelines stifling creativity. She stated that very few of the design guidelines are required. Something more modernistic with high quality design can still be built.

10. STAFF REPORT

Mr. Myers reported on the following:

- ✚ Wisley Inn Subdivision Waiver for Sidewalks was approved by the City Council with the sidewalk connections to neighboring properties as recommended by the Plan Commission.
- ✚ University Avenue Corridor Plan has been accepted by the Urbana City Council as recommended by the Plan Commission.
- ✚ Bike to Work Day was successful with 700 to 750 people participants community wide.

11. STUDY SESSION

There was none.

12. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

The meeting was adjourned at 9:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Myers, AICP, Secretary
Urbana Plan Commission