

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING

URBANA PLAN COMMISSION

APPROVED

DATE: December 20, 2001
TIME: 7:30 P.M.
PLACE: Urbana City Building
400 South Vine Street
Urbana, IL 61801

MEMBERS PRESENT: Christopher Alix, Alan Douglas, Randy Kangas, Gerrit Knaap, Joseph Rank, Bernadine Stake

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Michael Pollock, Marilyn Upah-Bant

STAFF PRESENT: Libby Tyler, CD Director/City Planner; Rob Kowalski, Assistant City Planner/Planning Manager; Tim Ross, Planner; Teri Hayn, Clerk-Typist

OTHERS PRESENT: April Getchius, Dave Monk, Russ Rybicki, Kelly Strube, Bill Volk

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

Mr. Knaap moved to have Randy Kangas act as chairperson in the absence of Chair Pollock. Mr. Alix seconded the motion. The motion was passed by unanimous vote. The meeting was then called to order at 7:30 p.m., the roll call was taken, and a quorum was declared.

2. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

There were none.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Stake moved to approve the minutes from the December 6, 2001 meeting. Ms. Rank seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

4. COMMUNICATIONS

- Letter from the League of Women Voters of Champaign County
- Letter from Helen C. Peterson

- Letter from David & Betty Lazarus
- Email from Jerry M. Landay
- Email from List Treul
- Letter from John & Beth Chato
- Letter from Amy Kummerow
- Letter from the League of Women Voters of Champaign County
- Letter from Susan C. Stone
- Email from Deborah C. Rugg
- Letter from Don & Jean Burkholder

5. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were none.

6. OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

7. NEW PUBLIC HEARINGS

Plan Case 1807-T-01, Request by Zoning Administrator to amend the text of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance to establish the CCD, Campus Commercial District Zoning District.

Rob Kowalski, Assistant City Planner/Planning Manager, presented the staff report. He gave a brief introduction and background of the East Campus Commercial Center. He stated that the purpose and intent of the proposed CCD District was to create a district to provide opportunities for development of a commercial center to serve the east-central University of Illinois campus and neighboring residential areas. Furthermore, he discussed the issues of permitted uses, parking requirements, development regulations, and existing districts and their regulations, especially the B-3U and B-4E Zoning Districts. He summarized the staff findings. He reviewed the options of the Urbana Plan Commission and stated the staff recommendation, which was as follows:

Staff recommended that the Urbana Plan Commission forward a recommendation of APPROVAL to the Urbana City Council of the presented text amendments as outlined in the staff report.

Mr. Alix asked what was a university or college use? Mr. Kowalski answered that staff would interpret that a university or college use would be similar to a type of university business office or classroom related use. It would typically be left to an interpretation.

Mr. Alix questioned if the University of Illinois (U of I) was not bound by the City of Urbana's Zoning Ordinance? The land that the University of Illinois owns could be developed as the U of I deems appropriate. Mr. Kowalski replied that was correct. Mr. Alix inquired if this proposal was being required for private development in cooperation with the U of I? Mr. Kowalski

responded that the CCD Zoning District could be used for any proposed development in the east-central University campus area whether owned by the U of I or a private developer.

Mr. Alix stated that he was having trouble understanding the rationale behind having an area developed that basically would fit into the B-3U Zoning District classification but with more restrictive requirements. It seemed that there were two possibilities, which are as follows: 1) the U of I owns the land, in which case, the zoning would be almost immaterial and 2) the U of I does not own the land, in which case, there does not seem to be any reason to impose restrictions beyond those that are listed in the B-3U zoning classification. Mr. Alix asked who would be protected by restricting what could be developed in the CCD beyond what could be developed in the B-3U zoning classification?

Ms. Tyler responded to the first comment regarding the U of I complying with the City of Urbana's Zoning Ordinance. She stated that stance was debatable. She believed that the U of I should be subject to local zoning regulation. Instead of testing it in any formal fashion, the U of I has agreed to build and design consistent with the City of Urbana's zoning regulations.

Mr. Alix commented that he assumed that the issue was not that there was a higher education use, but that the land was owned by the State of Illinois. Ms. Tyler replied that the argument for exemption from local zoning is that the U of I has a higher purpose being education. It would be the same argument that a church would use. They have another purpose that should not be subject to local government regulation. The City of Urbana is not giving up their authority whether for a public school, for the State of Illinois, for a university, or for a church.

Mr. Alix re-asked who was being protected by not making this a B-3U zoning district? Mr. Kowalski answered that instead of trying to protect a certain area or entity, CCD would allow a private developer some benefits of reduced parking for commercial uses. It would give the private developer another option how to develop the land.

Mr. Rank inquired if every lease signed (other than a university use) would require a special use permit? Mr. Kowalski responded that the special use permit would review the initial request of the building, the number of leaseable spaces in the building, and how the building was designed and laid out.

Ms. Stake questioned why "university or college related uses" were not defined? This was very vague. The U of I could claim that any use they deem appropriate could be a "university or college related use". Mr. Kowalski replied that the Zoning Administrator has the authority to interpret that meaning. However, it could be defined more clearly. Ms. Stake commented that the University of Illinois is complex, and the CCD Zoning could be interpreted many ways. Mr. Knaap added that a clearer definition could be useful to make a distinction among ownership more than use. Mr. Kowalski mentioned that the item, "institution of an educational nature", already existed in the Table of Uses. He stated that that term could be used in place of "university or college related uses". Mr. Knaap questioned if the U of I would be allowed to build a commercial use under the term "institution of an educational nature"? Mr. Kowalski answered that a commercial use could fall under "university or college" in the Table of Uses. Ms. Stake added that definition could be improved as well.

Mr. Rank asked if a developer on behalf of the U of I applies for a special use permit for a certain use that requires one parking space per every 600 square feet, then subsequently, another business with a different parking requirement wants to use that same space, would the second business have to apply for a special use permit? Mr. Kowalski answered that if the proposed change effects the original special use approval, then the proposed change would have to apply for a special use permit.

Mr. Knaap asked why the parking restrictions would be tighter for multi-family residential and looser for commercial? Mr. Kowalski answered that this area would be zoned for commercial and would be a highly pedestrian trafficked area. Therefore, the U of I would expect less auto traffic. A reduction in the parking requirements for commercial would be appropriate. Mr. Knaap inquired if there was any data to support the assumption regarding pedestrian traffic being the commercial clientele? Would there be transit access? Mr. Kowalski responded that he did not know what the transit routes were. The evidence is there that the level of pedestrian activity is high for the proposed area.

Ms. Stake questioned that there have not been any in depth studies regarding pedestrians walking and not driving? Mr. Kowalski replied that there have been studies regarding the number of cars that students are bringing and the number of apartment buildings on campus. The .75 spaces per bedroom are accurate for what the demand is for multi-family residential areas on campus. Ms. Tyler mentioned that the University of Illinois had conducted a census/count regarding the number of students and workers in the proposed area. April Getchius from the office for Project Planning and Facility Management for the University of Illinois could address any questions about that census/count.

April Getchius commented that the University of Illinois is exempt from local regulations, because it is a State of Illinois authority. It is a sovereign issue. The U of I builds institutional buildings, not buildings that are typically commercial.

In regards to the term "university or college related uses", it is a term that is pulled from the City of Urbana's Zoning Ordinance. It had never been defined. It was included in the proposal since it is a university campus.

One element that is confusing is that the proposed Zoning Ordinance amendment would not regulate the University of Illinois; however, the CCD Zoning District would regulate the developer. The underlying land in the proposed area owned by the U of I would be leased to the developer. What the developer does on that land would be subject to the Urbana Building Codes and Zoning Ordinances. The U of I will have control from the University's standpoint and will also have a developer's agreement. However, the University of Illinois does not own all the land in the proposed area, and a private developer could come in without this scrutiny and develop something that may be less than positive for the West Urbana neighborhood and for the campus environment. This is the reason that the additional scrutiny was introduced.

Ms. Getchius went on to discuss the modifying of the special use. She stated that as long as the developer maintains the list of uses, then the developer would not need to have a modification of the special use permit approved. The Urbana Plan Commission and City Council would only need to review the initial proposal. The list of commercial uses was trimmed down significantly

from the uses allowed in the General Business Zoning Districts to control the list of uses allowed in the proposed area.

In terms of transit routes, there are lines that run down Nevada and down Goodwin to Gregory and Donner servicing the library, residential halls and Agricultural campus. There are also transit lines that run down Lincoln Avenue and Mathews as part of the whole campus loop.

The increase of the residential parking is due to the need, which was discovered in the City of Urbana's survey. Ms. Getchius stated that she had the population figures for this area, which shows the number of staff and faculty in various academic buildings. It shows the population of residents as well as the capacity of Krannert and Levis.

Ms. Getchius noted that the University of Illinois hoped to serve visitors as well as people who work and live in the area. She mentioned that the U of I restricts the building height to four stories.

Mr. Kangas asked if Ms. Getchius would comment on the definition of the term "university or college related uses"? Ms. Getchius stated that the intent in terms of the inclusion in this proposal was that this is University land. It has never been debated or defined before. It was lifted from current terminology that has been in the Urbana Zoning Ordinance for twenty-five years. Ms. Tyler added that it was a loose term.

Ms. Tyler went on to say that a good way to handle the changing of the initial special use permit would be to phrase the approval in a way such that tenant changes of a similar intensity could be permitted without a new special use permit approval.

Mr. Knaap presumed that the setback would be determined by the site plan. Ms. Getchius commented that, in terms of the project, there was much debate regarding the setback. Some argued that there should not be any setback because the proposed area is a very small parcel. In addition, it would ultimately be combined with Gregory Place as a pedestrian area. However, some setback needs to occur since the combining of Gregory Place will not take place as soon as it was hoped to be due to some complications. Mr. Knaap commented that it would be hard to get a sense of what the right setback would be without a site plan. A setback is important only in consistency. Ms. Getchius commented that the intent was to make this an urban development and maximize the land area that is actually very small.

Mr. Knaap felt that the transit should be built into the justification. Even if a study were done now regarding the pedestrian traffic, it would not tell much about the pedestrian traffic once this project is finished. Ms. Tyler stated that although this is important, more important would be the sheer volume of individuals who live in very close proximity and work in close proximity. Ms. Getchius added that we should not lose sight of the number of destinations there are in the area.

Mr. Alix questioned the sovereignty of the University of Illinois. He asked Ms. Getchius if she believes that the land which the U of I owns is exempted from local zoning requirements? Does the same apply to land that the U of I owns and leases out to a private developer or would the developer be bound by the City of Urbana's Zoning Ordinance regulations? Ms. Getchius commented that she could not debate the legalities of this issue. However, this was the

agreement made in the past, and it is the agreement that the U of I has talked about making with the City of Urbana. Mr. Kangas added that historically, the University of Illinois leasing out properties has not happened a lot. Mr. Alix stated that it seemed strange that since the U of I has contracted with another developer to develop the land, the U of I cannot consent on the developer's behalf to be bound by this proposal. The U of I could consent to be bound by this. Ms. Getchius stated that she would rather have legal counsel present if he wanted to get into this depth of this issue. She mentioned that this proposal was modeled from the agreements made between the U of I and the City of Champaign regarding the South Research Park. In that annexation agreement, it states that the City of Champaign does not have the right to impose zoning and the U of I does not ask to be subject to local zoning. Given that, the U of I promised to have the developer abide by zoning and get the necessary permits. Mr. Alix inquired if that was a covenant in the lease between the U of I and the developer? Ms. Getchius replied that it would be part of the development agreement between the U of I and the developer.

Mr. Alix asked if the University of Illinois would own the proposed land? Ms. Getchius answered that the University of Illinois owns the land to be developed in Phase I. Mr. Alix asked if future phases of this proposal would be developed by private developers on land that was not owned by the U of I? Was that the reason for the new zoning category being proposed? Ms. Getchius replied that the reason for the new zoning classification is because the U of I does not own all the property in the proposed area. If this area was zoned B-3U or B-4E, then a precedent would be set where it would be difficult to deny zoning to someone else. She stated that her opinion was that this area was not appropriate for the B-3U or the B-4E Zoning District classification, because it would allow a wide variety of uses. Without additional scrutiny of the site plan and allowable uses, developers may be able to build an inappropriate development. Mr. Kangas added that all of the proposed area is under the U of I's master plan. The intent under the master plan would be that the proposed area would be within the area of land that the U of I would be interested in purchasing if the money were available.

Mr. Alix stated that his objection to this plan came from a general resistance to proliferating these Table of Use based zones. It would be worse than spot zoning. It would be a spot creation of zoning classifications. He asked why the University of Illinois was asking for this? Ms. Getchius stated that the U of I does not own all the land in the area. Ms. Tyler stated that it was the zoning pattern that was a concern. Once one business zone is established, then it would be hard to argue for a different type of business zone. The CCD Zoning District would establish this zone in this area if it were adopted and approved. Other nearby business areas would make more sense to be zoned CCD than MOR, B-4, or B-3U. It is one of the LaSalle criterias to look at the zoning patterns to see what would make sense. Mr. Kowalski added that by creating the CCD Zoning District, it was not being proposed that large massive land in that area is rezoned to CCD.

Ms. Stake questioned if the CCD Zoning District would jump across Lincoln Avenue to the west side? Ms. Getchius replied that it would not. Mr. Kangas added that the border on the Campus Master Plan was Lincoln Avenue, which would prevent the CCD Zoning District crossing over to the west side. Ms. Tyler stated that there is also the Downtown to Campus Plan that is quite clear on the zoning and plan designations that would need to be honored as well.

Ms. Stake commented that this proposal seems like an experiment. She would like to continue the case before voting on it to get a better definition of “university or college related uses”.

Mr. Knaap asked if the CCD Zoning District was designed to exclude alcohol? Ms. Getchius replied that it was not. The U of I would like to see a restaurant that would face Krannert. However, it does exclude taverns.

Dave Monk, of 115 North Market, stated that he supported the concern for the transit lines. He would like to know how the proposal would affect the transit lines.

Mr. Alix commented that his objection was the same. He felt that an additional problem with the proposal was proliferation of special use and conditional use permits. The City of Urbana would appear to be saying that we do not want to impose use-by-use control over what is developed in this area; however, we do not trust our Zoning Ordinance enough to ensure that the uses which would go in this area would be compatible with what the City of Urbana and U of I want. He felt that it would go against the goal of zoning, which is to encourage development of land and surrounding development of land in the way that the people would know what they would be getting into. He could not see why this area could not be zoned B-3U or B-4E. By creating the new zone of CCD for the proposed area, it would not serve anyone’s best interest. It would be adding another zoning category, which would make the map even more spotty and confusing. It would be adding more Tables of Uses and more planned obsolescence into the zoning code. It would be putting more reliance on special use and conditional use permits. He would be inclined to vote against it.

Ms. Stake stated that the CCD zoning classification would give flexibility in an area that would need flexibility. The City of Urbana could tailor the CCD zoning classification to this area, and if another area were to be developed that was as difficult to zone, then another classification could be made to fit that area as well. The proposed area would be small enough that if the new zoning classification did not work, then it could be changed. Ms. Stake had one concern of having a better definition of the term “university-college related uses”.

Mr. Kangas understood Mr. Alix’s concerns. He mentioned that he liked the idea that the University of Illinois was trying to improve the quality of student/faculty life in the area and keep control on it. The second concept that he was in favor of was that the University of Illinois and the City of Urbana were working together. Finally, he liked that this was unique in the sense that the U of I was trying to work directly with the private sector. The campus owns the land, and the developer would be building and taking the risks.

Ms. Stake moved to forward this plan case with a recommendation for approval of the proposed text amendment to the Urbana City Council with a more extensive definition of the term “university-college related uses”. Mr. Knaap seconded the motion.

Mr. Knaap commented that a comprehensible definition would be useful. The CCD Zoning District would allow the City of Urbana to have more scrutiny over the development in that area. However, without a clearer definition of the term “university or college related uses”, then a private land developer could claim that his future development would be university or college related. As a result, it would defeat the purpose of creating a new zoning district.

Mr. Knaap stated that in general he agreed with Mr. Alix regarding the proliferation of zoning definitions. Performance zoning is something that a lot of people would like to see. Performance zoning would be just as hard in regards to identifying what the performances would be in terms of traffic generation, etc. However, he felt the proposed area was unique unlike downtown Urbana or other commercial areas. He felt the new zoning for the proposed area was a good idea with a more understandable definition of “university-college related uses”.

Mr. Rank questioned if the definition of “university-college related uses” would apply to this site only or to the university wide? Mr. Kowalski stated that the definition would be used throughout the Zoning Ordinance. Mr. Rank commented that if the definition applied to the university wide, then it would have to include animal facilities, research facilities, and laboratory facilities. He felt that the definition should apply to the CCD zoning classification. Mr. Kowalski stated that it could be done either way.

Mr. Alix made a final comment regarding his previous comments. He never meant to imply that his objection was based on the fact that he was spiteful that the City of Urbana had not converted all of the zoning to performance-based codes. His objection was that given the U of I has specific concerns about uses that are undesirable in this district. He would like to see those concerns codified more in terms of performance-based language instead of table of uses. Mr. Alix would also like to see the statement of intent to explain what is unique about the proposed area to clarify the proximity to transit routes, housing density in the area, or the fact that the intended clients are expected to be primarily pedestrians rather than businesses. The CCD Zoning District might apply to other areas in the city as well now or in the future. He could support this if it was more general.

Mr. Knaap asked why there was a list of allowable uses if a special use permit would be needed? Mr. Kowalski replied that the site plan would have to specify what kinds of uses would be allowed in the spaces. Ms. Tyler added that the list was not complete. There were more uses listed on the business zoning classification Table of Uses. Mr. Knaap asked what if a developer wanted an internet café, and it was not on the list? Ms. Tyler answered that there would be a zoning interpretation that it would really be a café. Mr. Knaap asked why have a list if a special use permit would be needed anyway? Ms. Tyler replied that the point was a use not on the list would not be allowed even with a special use permit. The Table of Uses was a base of the Zoning Ordinance that staff has to work with. A comprehensive update of the Zoning Ordinance is due, but this cannot be done until the Comprehensive Plan is complete. Ms. Getchius added that the intent of the list was to exclude certain uses that were agreed upon to be inappropriate. Until there is an update of the Zoning Ordinance, a lot of uses will be not listed. Therefore, it would be up to the Zoning Administrator to make an interpretation.

The roll call was taken as was as follows:

Ms. Stake	-	Yes	Mr. Rank	-	Yes
Mr. Knaap	-	Yes	Mr. Kangas	-	Yes
Mr. Douglas	-	Yes	Mr. Alix	-	No

The motion was passed by a 5-1 vote.

Plan Case 1808-M-01, Request by Zoning Administrator to rezone properties at 703 South Gregory Place, 705 South Gregory Place, 1101 West Oregon, 1103 West Oregon, and 1102 West Nevada from R5, Medium High Density Multiple Family Residential to CCD, Campus Commercial District.

This case was continued to the next Plan Commission case to be held on January 10, 2002.

Plan Case 1810-T-01, Request by the Zoning Administrator to amend Article IX of the Zoning Ordinance as it relates to Outdoor Advertising Sign Structures (OASS's).

Tim Ross, Planner, presented the staff report. He gave an introduction and a detailed background including a summary of recent billboard moratoria and amendments and the current Interim Development Ordinance. He discussed the current regulations by stating the definition of OASS and reviewing the legislative intent and findings. Mr. Ross noted the members of the OASS Task Force and the issues considered by that Task Force, which included spacing requirements, buffering from residential zoning districts, entryway corridors, location of billboards, "cap and replace", and height and size of OASS's. He stated the changes presented to the regulations on OASS's through the proposed text amendment. He reviewed the settlement agreement between the City of Urbana and C & U Poster (rights transferred to Adams Outdoor Advertising). Mr. Ross summarized the staff findings. He read the options of the Urbana Plan Commission and gave the staff recommendation, which was to recommend approval of the amendment.

Ms. Stake asked how much the City of Urbana would pay in attorney's fees if an amendment were passed that was too restrictive? Mr. Ross replied that the amount was approximately \$10,000.

Ms. Stake commented that with this proposal, the City of Urbana would have billboards in places where billboards have not been allowed previously. Mr. Ross replied that the Task Force was looking at striking a balance. The proposed text amendment was a result of various interests coming together that the Task Force agreed to put forward. The proposed text amendment will be a trade-off to slow down billboard growth in some areas where they are currently allowed and open up billboards in other certain areas.

Ms. Stake asked if the City of Urbana would have a lot of billboards if every year companies could build new billboards? Mr. Ross responded that other than the moratorium, the City of Urbana does not currently have control over the number of permits. This text amendment would be an additional restriction on the number of billboards built per year.

Mr. Alix asked if Mr. Ross had an idea of the number of potential billboard sites in the City of Urbana as a result of the approval of this text amendment? Mr. Ross replied that would be hard to say since the City of Urbana does not have access to all the intricacies of how the billboard companies operate their businesses. Mr. Alix asked that based on the geometry of the requirements, how many billboards could fit on the map? Mr. Ross stated that there might be roughly ten more spaces available. Mr. Alix questioned if that number was based without the consideration of future growth of the City of Urbana? Mr. Ross stated that was correct.

Mr. Alix inquired as to how many billboards the City of Urbana currently has? Mr. Ross replied that there were approximately thirty structures. Mr. Alix asked if at the rate of four billboards a year, then after two and half years, no more billboards will be allowed? Mr. Ross answered that effectively if old billboard structures were tore down, then new billboard structures could be built. Also, as the City expands, then more billboards could be built.

Mr. Alix commented taking into consideration that if the City of Urbana would not expand in the future and there are only approximately ten more spaces available to build more billboard structures, then the restriction of four billboard structures built per year would not have much of an impact. He asked where the restriction of four billboards per year came from? Mr. Ross responded that the Task Force took the stance that most of the work was going to be done in revising the regulations to reflect the goals of the sign ordinance. Ms. Tyler added that other communities experienced huge numbers of applications being submitted over short amounts of time. The restriction of four per year is intended to prevent that same proliferation from occurring here in Urbana.

Mr. Alix questioned what the opinion of the public was surrounding the legal restrictions of billboards? Mr. Ross answered that the Task Force and the City of Urbana has not taken it to that level yet. The intent of the proposed amendment is to comply with the terms of the existing settlement agreement. Once the existing settlement agreement is lifted, then that would be the time to consider some of those issues. Mr. Alix stated that if the City felt that this would serve the best interest of the community and that this would be our policy indefinitely, then the legal climate would not be an issue. On the other hand, there is clearly going to be community objection to anyone building a single additional billboard. If the feeling of the public is to put additional restrictions on billboards as soon as 2004 comes around, then what are we going to do after the existing settlement agreement has been lifted in 2004? Mr. Ross responded that it is hard to tell what issues will prompt another lawsuit. The City of Urbana is not entering into discussions about what will happen then.

Mr. Alix inquired how this compared to Champaign? Mr. Ross replied that in the previous study Champaign passed an ordinance that is an incentive zoning approach. There is a point system that if a billboard is located in certain places as opposed to others or if there is landscaping treatment, then credits are given. He stated that he does not understand all the details to Champaign's ordinance and point system. Mr. Alix commented that the City of Urbana's compatibility with the other communities sign ordinances was one of the justifications for imposing a moratorium. Mr. Ross felt that the City of Urbana was compatible enough. He stated that he would take a further look into this concern.

Mr. Knaap asked if the Task Force had looked at restrictions of other communities in the State of Illinois? Mr. Ross replied that the Task Force had researched this, and other communities have passed moratoriums and altered regulations. There are some communities that have greater spacing requirements.

Mr. Knaap commented that the City of Urbana should not worry too much about the \$10,000. An important consideration is that there are a lot of people who have pretty strong feelings about this issue. In the Chicago metropolitan area there are more restrictive ordinances with respect to design control. He felt that if there was one thing that Urbana could do to distinguish itself from

its sister community, it would be in the restrictions as to the design control and location of the billboards. Mr. Ross responded that the Task Force did their best to address as many issues as possible regarding billboards. He felt that Urbana was ahead of the game with respect to design requirements (catwalks and landscaping requirements). Ms. Tyler added that although \$10,000 does not seem like a large amount, it is significant in that it is an indicator as to the agreement of the industry with where the City of Urbana is heading. It is an opportunity cost or an avoidance of much greater fees, pain and agony associated with another lawsuit. The intent or staff goal was to try to craft an amendment that would not be challenged.

Mr. Rank mentioned that he recalled the Urbana Plan Commission forwarding a plan case to City Council, which kept the existing corridors and had strong design criteria. The economics of the OASS industry are based on traffic count. The billboard companies sell the billboards to advertisers based on the number of impressions that they get. Those traffic counts come from major arteries. It does not make economic sense to the billboard industry to open up areas where the traffic count is not high. Mr. Ross commented that the Task Force discussed this issue quite a bit. Ultimately, the Task Force tried to find a balance.

Mr. Alix inquired as to whether Champaign County had restrictions on billboards built in the County? Mr. Ross replied that the County does have regulations on billboards. Ms. Tyler added that the Illinois Department of Transportation has a distance requirement on billboards as well. She mentioned that Mr. Rank was correct on the traffic volumes, that the county roads without a lot of volume will not have the demand for billboards. Mr. Alix stated that he was thinking about Routes 45, 150 and 130. He wondered to what extent the issue of billboards along entrance ways was an issue by itself. Ms. Tyler responded that was an issue debated by the Task Force. Savoy currently has a moratorium and is interested in this hearing.

Mr. Knaap asked if a notice requirement would be mailed to the proposed neighborhoods? Mr. Ross replied that would not be required, because this is a text amendment.

Mr. Kangas inquired if the four permits were assigned to specific spots? Mr. Ross stated that was correct. Mr. Kangas then asked what the cost was for a permit? Ms. Tyler answered that the cost is on a per square footage basis, and is no more than \$200.00. Mr. Kangas asked if these permits were on a first come-first serve basis? Mr. Ross replied yes. Mr. Kangas commented that an individual who strongly opposed billboards could purchase all four permits and not build any billboards to keep anyone else from building the billboards as well. Mr. Ross responded that was correct; however, no permit would be issued unless the applicant could demonstrate all zoning and building codes.

Kelly Strube, with Adams Outdoor Advertising, mentioned that she sat on the Task Force. One of the concerns that the Task Force discussed greatly was the concern for the congestion of the billboards in the areas where they are currently located. In the past, this was a concern because Kip Pope (of C & U Poster) was restricted to where he could put billboards, which caused congestion. Unlike the methodology that Mr. Pope used to sell his advertising, Adams Outdoor Advertising tries to teach their clients a better way by selling them better showings and spreading out their advertisements. It would be valuable to Adams Outdoor Advertising to be able to spread out the available locations for billboards to areas that have been closed before.

Ms. Strube commented that limiting the number to four structures per year would restrict a large company from out of town. She stated that Adams Outdoor Advertising would continue to be a part of this community. They will not build a sign unless it is demanded by an advertiser. None of their billboards will be empty. There are obviously people who like the signs, because people are advertising on them every single day.

Ms. Strube noted that the City of Urbana's spacing requirements would be greater than Champaign's. Monticello and Rantoul do not have moratoriums. However, Savoy does have a moratorium and is not sure what route they will take. Savoy is waiting to see what Champaign and Urbana decide.

Ms. Strube spoke in regards to the size of billboards. Juniors are no longer being built by Adams Outdoor Advertising. They are not asking to increase the size of billboards. However, they are asking the City to not decrease the size requirements.

Mr. Knaap asked what the range of restrictions were in the State of Illinois? Ms. Strube responded that there are some communities with no restrictions at all, and some communities are more restrictive. Spacing is a real issue with most communities. She felt that the City of Urbana's spacing requirement would protect the City a lot.

Ms. Strube commented that it was not easy to get a leasing agreement to be able to build a billboard structure. Since Adams Outdoor Advertising will not lease any land without a ten-year contract, they find it difficult to find areas to lease.

Ms. Stake asked if Adams Outdoor Advertising owns all the billboards in the Champaign-Urbana area? Ms. Strube replied that they own about 99% of the billboards. Ms. Stake asked if Adams Outdoor Advertising would have a monopoly? Ms. Strube replied that there was not anyone who could compete with Adams Outdoor Advertising.

Mr. Kangas questioned why it would be economically feasible to accept the restriction of four new billboard structures per year, and not for another company? Ms. Strube replied that it was easier for Adams Outdoor Advertising because they have most of the other locations and the company is local. They are here to maintain the signs.

Ms. Stake inquired as to where the main office was located for Adams Outdoor Advertising? Ms. Strube replied that it was located in Atlanta.

Mr. Alix questioned why Adams Outdoor Advertising would not want to maximize the number of people who view the billboards? Ms. Strube responded that Daily Effective Circulations (DEC) are important to them. However, an advertiser would not want all of their advertisements located in one area. An advertiser would want those advertisements spread out where more people could see them. Mr. Alix commented that it would seem that this ordinance would push the billboards away from the corridors. He felt that it would decrease the value of the billboards. Ms. Strube stated that this was a give-take situation. Adams Outdoor Advertising agreed to support the corridor issue if other commercial and industrial areas could be opened up to billboard placements.

Mr. Alix questioned if Adams Outdoor Advertising looked at Champaign and Urbana as two separate markets? Ms. Strube stated that if a national company wanted to advertise in this area, then Champaign and Urbana would be considered one market. On the other hand, there are some businesses in Urbana who want to advertise on billboards just in Urbana, and likewise in Champaign.

Mr. Alix asked if Ms. Strube had experience in Illinois with communities that have imposed specific design restrictions? Ms. Strube replied no. Her first experience with even the landscaping was with Champaign.

Mr. Douglas asked how many billboards were in Urbana that are owned by Adams Outdoor Advertising? Ms. Strube replied that there are about 28 billboards in Urbana.

Russ Rybicki, of 2803 Myra Ridge Drive, opposed the proposed billboard text amendment. He stated that there are other areas that could be more useful than on Windsor and Philo Roads. He felt after hearing Ms. Strube's testimony that Adams Outdoor Advertising plans to have a billboard in every corner of Urbana. He believed that would not add character to the community. Urbana does not have to sell what Chicago does.

He commented that if there are ten billboards being leased at \$200.00 per month, then that would be \$2000.00 a month. It would not be the little businesses that need help advertising. It would be bigger companies. He does not see why the City of Urbana should be invested in helping Adams Outdoor Advertising, since the local businesses would not benefit from the billboards. He believes that the City's character is what the City should use to sell the community. However, if the billboards have to be built, then he agreed with having the design restrictions.

Mr. Alix asked whether the limit of ten potential locations was applied citywide? Mr. Ross replied that was correct. Mr. Alix asked how many signs would be allowed on a minor corner of Urbana? Mr. Ross responded that one structure with a billboard sign on each side would be allowed every 750 feet. Mr. Alix asked for clarification as to whether ten structures or ten billboards would be allowed? Mr. Ross answered that ten structures with a billboard on each side would be permitted. Mr. Alix questioned if a wall-mounted structure would fall into the same category regarding spacing? Mr. Ross replied that was correct.

Mr. Ross mentioned that there was a small pocket of B-3 zoning on the south edge of the B-4 Zoning District bounded by Illinois, California, Broadway and Race Streets. Due to its proximity to residential, it was included in the prohibited area.

Mr. Rank asked if the relocation of the billboard on the Elite Diner site would be grandfathered? Mr. Ross replied that if a permit were issued during the course of the moratorium, the billboard would be legally non-conforming.

Mr. Kangas suggested that staff research how many signs would be permitted and their specific locations. He suggested that this plan case be continued to the next Plan Commission meeting to be held on January 10, 2002.

8. NEW BUSINESS

There was none.

9. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

There was none.

10. STAFF REPORT

Mr. Kowalski stated that the presentation on the Downtown Strategic Plan could be postponed until the next meeting of the Plan Commission on January 10, 2002.

Ms. Tyler gave a staff report on the following:

- ✓ The two subdivisions were approved at the City Council.
- ✓ TIF #4 was adopted as well some medical office buildings for Provena, which was in TIF #3.

11. STUDY SESSION

There was none.

12. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

The meeting was adjourned at 10:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rob Kowalski, Secretary
Urbana Plan Commission