

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING

URBANA PLAN COMMISSION

APPROVED

DATE: December 4, 2003
TIME: 7:30 P.M.
PLACE: Urbana City Building
400 South Vine Street
Urbana, IL 61801

MEMBERS PRESENT: Laurie Goscha, Lew Hopkins, Randy Kangas, Michael Pollock, Bernadine Stake, Marilyn Upah-Bant, Don White
MEMBERS EXCUSED: Christopher Alix, Alan Douglas
STAFF PRESENT: Rob Kowalski, Planning Manager; Teri Andel, Secretary
OTHERS PRESENT: None

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

The meeting was 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

Mr. White moved to approve the minutes from the November 20, 2003 meeting as presented. Mr. Kangas seconded the motion. The minutes were then approved as presented by unanimous voice vote.

4. COMMUNICATIONS

Chair Pollock announced that the next scheduled meeting of the Plan Commission set for Thursday, December 18, 2003 would be cancelled.

5. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were none.

6. NEW PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were none.

7. OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

8. NEW BUSINESS

Plan Case # 1839-S-02: Request for Preliminary and Final Subdivision Plat Approval for Sunny Estates Subdivision located at 2506 East Washington Street.

Rob Kowalski, Planning Manager, introduced the case to the Plan Commission. He gave a brief background and discussed the land use, zoning and Comprehensive Plan designations of the site and its surrounding properties. He talked about access, drainage, and utilities for the proposed development. He explained the waiver requests by the developer from the Subdivision and Land Development Code, which were as follows:

1. Waiver from Table A to allow the reduction of the pavement for Sunny Lane to be 28 feet instead of 31 feet.
2. Waiver from Section 21-43 requiring all utilities to be placed underground and to allow power service connection to be above ground

Mr. Kowalski read the options of the Plan Commission and stated staff's recommendation for this case, which was as follows:

Staff recommended that the Plan Commission forward this case to the City Council with a recommendation to approve the Preliminary and Final Plats of Sunny Estates Subdivision along with the requested waivers.

Mr. Hopkins asked if the area just west of the site labeled as "unimproved walkway" would be stubbed off on the adjacent parcel? Mr. Kowalski replied that a sidewalk is not being proposed to be connected through. He would need to check with someone at the Champaign County level to see if there were any plans to vacate it.

Mr. Hopkins felt it would be reasonable to vacate it, given the protection of the right-of-way for Illinois Street to the north. Mr. Kangas questioned if the City was under any obligation to finish the walkway? Mr. Kowalski replied no.

Mr. Kangas asked if anyone was concerned about the type of curb to be used in this development? Will it match the other curb types in the area? Mr. Kowalski answered by saying that the curbs would not match, because the developer would use barrier curbs, which is the type of curb that the City encourages developers to use. Most of the Scottswood Subdivision has mountable curbs, which are not as desirable.

Mr. Kangas commented that if he were buying a house, he would prefer the utility lines to be buried underground. Ms. Stake felt that this would be a good opportunity to start burying the utilities underground. Otherwise, the next area to be developed, which would probably be the trailer park to the north, would want to waive this as well. She did not want to start waiving underground utilities. Mr. Kowalski responded by saying that this was a very unique example in that the requirement would not be to bury the existing power poles along the rear back property lines. It would only include the service connections to come down from the poles and be buried to the house. Although it was a unique request, he did not feel that this would likely be continuously requested with other proposals. He mentioned that it would be quite a long time before the mobile home park was redeveloped. It is a well-kept mobile home park and is quite full.

Ms. Stake inquired if power poles would be located along the ditch? Mr. Kowalski noted that the power poles would be east of the ditch. Ms. Stake asked if the ditch was between the homes in the Scottswood Subdivision and the proposed development. Mr. Kowalski pointed out that the lots on the east side of Sunny Lane are deeper than the ones on the west side of Sunny Lane. This was because on the Far East side of those lots, there was about 20 feet from the property line to where the ditch would be. Therefore, these lots would have a little more area in the backyards. He added that none of these lots are very large, and the homes are proposed to be affordable.

Ms. Stake questioned if the ditches would be hazardous for children? Mr. Kowalski replied no. They would be wider than other lots on the west side.

She asked if Mr. Kowalski knew in terms of the “50-Year Flood” or the “100-Year Flood” of what the proposed drainage would hold? Mr. Kowalski believed that this project was engineered for a 100-Year Flood rain event. It would not be a continuous stream running in the ditch. In fact, it would be dry most of the time. In a very heavy rain event, it would have water in it. He noted that there had been a considerable amount of attention spent on the drainage, because this was a low-lying site.

Ms. Stake inquired about the power lines again. Since the main power lines were already there, the waiver was for the lines coming into the homes? Mr. Kowalski said that was correct. He added that currently on the east and west sides of the site there were power poles in the rear back yards of the houses in the Scottswood Subdivision. Those homes are all serviced by overhead service connections. Ms. Stake asked if these power lines served all of the Scottswood area? Mr. Kowalski replied yes.

Ms. Stake mentioned that she heard it was dangerous for kids to have those huge power lines close to where they live and play. Mr. Kowalski stated that there were many of them in town, and they were typically close to the side lot line and come across to connect to the back of the house.

Ms. Goscha noticed that one of the waivers was to reduce the width of the street from 31 feet to 28 feet. Did the Urbana Fire Department not have a problem with the reduction in the width? Mr. Kowalski said that was correct.

Mr. Pollock stated that the power lines were not major lines like the ones running down Windsor Road. Those were the type of power lines that Ms. Stake was referring to. When those power lines went in, there was discussion about the power and emanations coming off the lines that were considered to be unhealthy.

Mr. Pollock further commented about the drainage and stated that the same drainage situation did not exist on the west side of the proposed site. So, in terms of drainage issue and digging down deep, there would be no reason for the developer to not bury the lines to the west properties of the proposed development? Mr. Kowalski responded by saying that the developer's reasoning for not burying the lines on the west side probably had to do with saving costs rather than more of the hardship on the east side of having to dig underneath the ditch.

Mr. Pollock inquired if the ditch was part of the proposed property or was it right-of-way that was owned by the City of Urbana or by Champaign County? Mr. Kowalski noted that the ditch would be a utility easement on each of the lots. Therefore, individual property owners would own portions of the ditch, and it would be their responsibility to maintain their portion of the ditch as well.

Mr. Pollock discussed the stub at the end of the street. He wanted to know if the stub would allow turnarounds? Mr. Kowalski replied yes. It would be a hammerhead to allow turnarounds. Fire trucks would be able to maneuver the hammerhead with a little use of a driveway.

Mr. Pollock questioned if staff had heard of any plans to develop the land to the north? Mr. Kowalski replied no. A different person owned it.

Mr. White moved that the Plan Commission forward the case to the City Council with recommendation for approval of the proposed preliminary and final subdivision plats along with the request for waivers. Ms. Upah-Bant seconded the motion.

Ms. Stake pointed out that the professional engineer did not sign the drainage statement. Mr. Kowalski mentioned that staff gets the plans signed and recorded after they are approved. The City Engineer did approve the preliminary and final subdivision plats, as well as the drainage plans.

Roll call was as follows:

Ms. Goscha	-	Yes	Mr. Hopkins	-	Yes
Mr. Kangas	-	Yes	Mr. Pollock	-	Yes
Ms. Stake	-	Yes	Ms. Upah-Bant	-	Yes
Mr. White	-	Yes			

The motion was passed by unanimous vote.

9. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

There was none.

10. STAFF REPORT

Mr. Kowalski reported on the following:

- **MOR, Mixed-Office Residential Zoning District Text Amendment** – He mentioned that the text amendment was passed. The City Council did add in some stopgap design guidelines.
- **MOR Design Guidelines** are well underway to being created by Zach Borders, an Architecture student at the University of Illinois. The text was pretty much written out, and they will be adding illustrations and photos to that text. Staff will present this information to the Historic Preservation Commission on January 7, 2003, and then to the Plan Commission.
- **Verizon Wireless Cell Tower Update at 1501 South Maryland Drive** – He mentioned that the request for the Special Use Permit was approved by the City Council.
- **Golladay Tract Annexation Agreement** was approved as well. City Council upheld the Plan Commission’s recommendation for the additional landscaping on the south and west sides of the parking lot. City Council approved the agreement upon the additional condition that the developer would look further into connecting one of those in the single-family subdivision and stubbing it to a stub in the Eagle Ridge Subdivision.

11. STUDY SESSION

There was none.

12. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

Chair Pollock adjourned the meeting at 7:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rob Kowalski, Secretary
Urbana Plan Commission