



**DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

*Planning Division*

**m e m o r a n d u m**

**TO:** Urbana Plan Commission

**FROM:** Jeff Engstrom, Planner I

**DATE:** October 17, 2008

**SUBJECT:** **Plan Case 2088-CP-08**, a request to adopt the Crystal Lake Neighborhood Plan as an element of the 2005 Urbana Comprehensive Plan.

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At the October 9, 2008 meeting of the Plan Commission, a member of the North Broadway Neighbors group requested that the Commission defer discussion on the Crystal Lake Neighborhood Plan until the group had a chance to provide additional comments regarding the plan. City staff met with ten members of the group on October 14, 2008 to discuss any concerns. The discussion centered on the proposed goals and implementation strategies related to infrastructure along Broadway Avenue.

The first topic discussed was sidewalks. Implementation Strategy M6 calls for missing sidewalks to be installed. These sidewalks are shown on the Plan Concepts Map, including along the east side of Broadway Avenue, north of Oakland Avenue. This strategy came out of comments collected at the Visioning Workshop held last summer, as well as from responses to a resident survey. Residents at the October 14<sup>th</sup> meeting expressed concerns about the potential of installing a sidewalk along the eastern right-of-way of Broadway. They felt that other projects should take higher priority, such as repairing the brickwork on Broadway Avenue. They also were concerned that a sidewalk would take away green space from their yards, and could be placed too close to homes. However, the majority agreed that installation of sidewalks along with curbs and gutters would improve the appearance of the area, improve drainage, and increase property values. Overall, residents concluded that the long-term goal of installing sidewalks is not objectionable, as long as street parking is maintained and local property owners are not assessed a fee to pay for the improvements.

A related discussion focused on the proposed multi-use path running north along the western side of Broadway Avenue and west along Country Club Road. This path is shown in the Park District's Crystal Lake Master Plan, as well as the City's Bicycle Master Plan. The residents fully support this path. They had questions about how it would be funded, but saw the project as very beneficial.

Street lighting was another major topic discussed at the meeting. Objective 13.4 calls for street lighting to be installed along the east side of Broadway Avenue. Residents collectively did not agree with this objective. They felt the existing street lighting along the west side of the street provided more than adequate illumination and do not want any more light trespass onto their property. Staff recommends that Objective 13.4 be removed from the Crystal Lake Neighborhood Plan.

### **Plan Commission Comments**

At the October 9, 2008 Public Hearing regarding the Crystal Lake Neighborhood Plan, the Plan Commission inquired about Implementation Strategy M12. This strategy calls for the creation of a bicycle path along Lincoln Avenue. Consultation of the Urbana Bicycle Master Plan has revealed that this strategy is in conflict with existing plans, and would not be feasible. Instead, the plan calls for the neighborhood to be connected to the campus via a path along Fairview to the existing path on Goodwin Avenue. Staff recommends replacing strategy M12 with the following: “Create safe bicycle path towards the U of I campus along Fairview and Goodwin Avenues, as shown in the Urbana Bicycle Master Plan”.

Another item discussed by the Plan Commission was Implementation Strategy H1, which encourages Carle to support one-to-one replacement housing for any units lost to the expansion of hospital and clinic uses in the neighborhood. Commissioners discussed whether Implementation Strategy H1 should be amended to "require" (rather than "encourage") Carle Hospital to support one-to-one replacement housing. Following discussion, City staff recommends maintaining the current wording. Carle Hospital indicates they understand that this is an important goal for the City and have committed to assisting in its achievement. However, because Carle is not a housing developer, the terms of this support will need to be determined in response to any future request for expansion of the MIC district, by means of an evaluation or amendment of the existing development agreement between the City and Carle Hospital.

### **Recommendations**

City staff recommends the Plan Commission forward the Crystal Lake Neighborhood Plan to City Council with a recommendation for approval, with the following changes:

- Remove Objective 13.4 from the Plan.
- Amend Implementation Strategy H3 to read “Encourage investment in existing rental properties such as apartments at Lincoln and Fairview”.
- Amend Implementation Strategy M12 to read “Create safe bicycle path towards the U of I campus along Fairview and Goodwin Avenues, as shown in the Urbana Bicycle Master Plan”.