

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING

URBANA PLAN COMMISSION

APPROVED

DATE: March 8, 2012

TIME: 7:30 P.M.

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

MEMBERS PRESENT: Carey Hawkins Ash, Andrew Fell, Tyler Fitch, Michael Pollock, Bernadine Stake, Mary Tompkins, Marilyn Upah-Bant

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Lew Hopkins, Dannie Otto

STAFF PRESENT: Robert Myers, Planning Manager; Jeff Engstrom, Planner II; Teri Andel, Planning Secretary

OTHERS PRESENT: Linda Bauer, Elaine Bottomley, Bryan Bradshaw, Caitlin Case, Rachel Cook, Alexandra Cuervas, Andrew Graumlich, HyeYeoun Ji, Darrel King, Dave Monk, Marco Munllo, Gary Olsen, Ethan Tabakin, Susan Taylor, Sarah Turubaugh

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

Chairperson Pollock called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m. The roll was called and a quorum was declared present.

2. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

Chairperson Pollock requested that the Plan Commission move Plan Case No. 2172-PUD-12 to be the first public hearing under New Public Hearings. There was no objection.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Stake moved that the Plan Commission approve the minutes from the February 9, 2012 meeting as presented. Mr. Fitch seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

4. COMMUNICATIONS

- Revised Site Development Plan regarding Plan Case No. 2172-PUD-12.

5. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were none.

6. OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

7. NEW PUBLIC HEARINGS

Plan Case No. 2172-PUD-12: A request by Verdant Prairies, LLC for approval of a Final Development Plan for the Verdant Prairies Condominiums Planned Unit Development at 704 East Windsor Road.

Robert Myers, Planning Manager, presented this case to the Plan Commission. He began by pointing out that the proposed final plan is in conformance with the previously approved preliminary plan. He stated the zoning, current land uses and future land use designations of the proposed site and of the surrounding adjacent properties. He referred to the Site Plan (Exhibit D in the written staff report) to show that the residential project provides multi-story buildings along Windsor Road and scales back to smaller buildings along the rear of the property.

He pointed out that the applicant made a change to the underground parking by raising it to be at ground level to keep it from flooding. He showed photographs of the proposed site and discussed the minor changes shown on the revised Site Development Plan that was handed out prior to the start of the meeting. The first change provides wider access drives, and the second change is to shorten the length of the driveway median. Both changes are proposed to better accommodate for fire truck access. He presented staff's recommendations and reviewed the three conditions and waivers that are being suggested by City staff.

Mr. Fell asked questions about the screening of the proposed project for surrounding properties. Mr. Myers referred to the applicant.

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

Gary Olsen, applicant, and Andrew Graumlich, of Olsen & Associates Architects, gave a brief PowerPoint presentation on the following: 1) one entrance into multiple level buildings and stairs going up to the upper levels; 2) third floor has mezzanine; 3) south facing roofs; 4) raise south end of buildings to keep underground parking from flooding; 5) planning to construct a club house; and 6) added 24 parking spaces for bicycles. He stated that they plan to survey the neighbors to find what buffering/screening they prefer. He does not plan to remove any of the existing trees unless they interfere with the construction of the buildings. They do intend to plant additional trees throughout the property.

Bryan Bradshaw, of Phoenix Consulting Engineers, Ltd., clarified that they only plan to raise the front buildings two feet over approved preliminary plans rather than three as stated by Mr. Myers. He talked about proposed green solutions for the site falling under the following components: 1) stormwater best management practices; 2) bioswale/bioretenion; 3) proper maintenance of pervious concrete, and 4) education of the condominium residents.

Mr. Fell questioned if an oil separator was required for the parking areas under the buildings. Mr. Bradshaw explained that the parking areas would drain to a trench drain outside of the buildings and that by raising the elevation of the parking, they will have a gravity feed to a storm sewer system along Windsor Road. They will only install an oil separator if necessary to meet City codes and regulations.

Ms. Upah-Bant inquired about the maintenance of the native plants. Mr. Bradshaw said that it would similar to landscape type plantings that will not require mowing or burning of prairie grass.

Ms. Tompkins wondered how they planned to vent the underground parking. Mr. Olsen stated that there will be vents on the sides of each building.

Linda Bauer, of 709 Scovill Street, lives directly north of the proposed development. She is encouraged by the plans and believe this will be a positive development. However, she expressed concern with the drainage. She looks forward to talking with the applicant about the screening.

Darrel King, of 705 Scovill Street, stated that he has concerns with the drainage. Drainage is already an issue for the neighbors. He mentioned that he did not see any fire hydrants located on the plans. He would also like to see the landscape plans. He and some of his neighbors are concerned about a sidewalk being located close to their backyards allowing pedestrians to look onto their properties. He hoped the applicant would take precautions to insure their privacy. He likes the development overall but these are several concerns to be addressed.

Mr. Bradshaw and Mr. Olsen re-approached the Plan Commission to address the concerns expressed by the neighbors in the audience. Mr. Bradshaw indicated on the overhead screen where the three fire hydrants would be located throughout the proposed development. He mentioned that the City's Fire Chief approved these locations. He then talked more about the drainage plan. He pointed out that the drainage plan is set up so that the flow of stormwater would go into the proposed site and not away from it. The stormwater will stay within their boundaries and be filtered through their stormwater system.

Mr. Olsen addressed the issues of screening. He stated that the proposed development will not be a gated community. He does not plan to close off the sidewalk to the west of the property.

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

Chair Pollock asked about the development process. If the City Council approved the proposed final plan what are the next steps? Mr. Myers replied that the applicant would submit construction plans that would be reviewed and approved administratively so long as plans conform with the City Council-approved Planned Unit Development. Any major changes would require further Plan Commission and City Council review.

The Plan Commission discussed screening and privacy for the neighbors. Mr. Fell expressed concern that obligating the applicant to negotiate with each neighboring property owner and install the screening that each prefers could become a real burden for the applicant. What if each adjoining home wants a different screening treatment? The City should only require that the applicant provides screening that will conform to the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance. Other members said that if the applicant is the one who is asking for flexibility to provide what each neighbor prefers, within reason, as screening, then Condition 2 is intended to provide that flexibility.

Following discussion, Mr. Ash moved that the Plan Commission forward Plan Case No. 2172-PUD-12 to the Urbana City Council with a recommendation for approval including the approval of the waiver and conditions as recommended by City staff. Ms. Stake seconded the motion. Roll call was as follows:

Mr. Fell	-	Yes	Mr. Fitch	-	Yes
Mr. Pollock	-	Yes	Ms. Stake	-	Yes
Ms. Tompkins	-	Yes	Ms. Upah-Bant	-	Yes
Mr. Ash	-	Yes			

The motion was approved by unanimous vote. Mr. Myers pointed out that this case would be forwarded to the Urbana City Council on April 2, 2012.

Plan Case No. 2170-CP-12: A request by the Urbana Zoning Administrator to adopt the 2012 Downtown Urbana Plan as an element of the 2005 Urbana Comprehensive Plan.

Jeff Engstrom, Planner II, presented this case to the Plan Commission. He discussed the planning process involved in creating the proposed plan. He explained that there are seven major components of the 2012 Downtown Urbana Plan. They are as follows: 1) Background; 2) Planning Process; 3) Trends and Issues; 4) Vision and Goals; 5) Design Concepts; 6) Redevelopment Sites and 7) Implementation. He then gave a brief summary of each component.

He spoke about the following components in greater detail:

Vision Statement

Mr. Engstrom read the vision statement after pointing out that it was created from public input and the aid of the Downtown Plan Steering Committee putting the language together.

Goals & Objectives

Mr. Engstrom read the goals and gave a brief explanation of the thoughts of the Downtown Plan Steering Committee as they created the objectives for each.

Design Concepts

Mr. Engstrom talked about the Concept Map on Page 70 defining four areas shaded in orange, purple, brown and gray. He mentioned that the individual detailed concept maps on the next few pages of the proposed plan show key public improvements and key redevelopment sites. Red arrows show key connections from various points of interest to Downtown Urbana.

Redevelopment Sites

Mr. Engstrom talked about the Redevelopment Opportunities Map on Page 76. The stars show four key redevelopment sites, which are 1) Broadway Avenue, 2) Goodyear Block, 3) University Avenue & Vine Street, and 4) Race Street.

Implementation and Implementation Table

Mr. Engstrom stated that this section mentions the major projects, some of which implementation will begin this spring.

Mr. Engstrom reviewed the options of the Plan Commission and presented staff's recommendation.

The Plan Commission expressed the following concerns:

- * Vision Statement does not mention economic development. Although economic development is discussed throughout the proposed plan, it could be mentioned in the Vision Statement as well.
- * The proposed plan does not mention specific changes to the Lincoln Square Mall, which are much needed.
- * Concept Map on Page 70 – Consider an arrow coming from the east towards the Downtown area.
- * Consider including cost estimates for some of the major projects mentioned in the Implementation section.
- * Discussion of the importance of having a Post Office located in the downtown area and whether or not the Post Office should remain where it is currently located in Downtown Urbana.

Chair Pollock opened the hearing to public input.

David Monk, of 115 North Market Street in Champaign, IL, stated that the City is getting an interesting variety of businesses to locate in the downtown area. The Food Co-op and the Independent Media Center are successful. He likes the proposed improvements to the Boneyard Creek. He liked the idea of including some cost estimates for the redevelopment projects. He recommended that they take caution with the railroad right-of-ways. He supports the proposed 2012 Downtown Urbana Plan.

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

The Plan Commission continued this case to the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Plan Commission.

8. NEW BUSINESS

Plan Case No. 2173-M-12: 2012 Official Zoning Map

Jeff Engstrom, Planner II, presented this case to the Plan Commission. By state and local requirement, the City Council must approve an official zoning map before April 1 of each year. He briefly reviewed the cases that were approved during 2011 that created changes to the Zoning Map. He reviewed the options of the Plan Commission and presented staff’s recommendation.

With no questions from the Plan Commission members for City staff, Chair Pollock opened the case up for public comment. There was none, so Chair Pollock closed public input and opened the meeting to Plan Commission discussion and/or motion(s).

Ms. Upah-Bant moved that the Plan Commission forward Plan Case no. 2173-M-12 to the City Council with a recommendation for approval. Ms. Tompkins seconded the motion. Roll call was as follows:

Mr. Fitch	-	Yes	Mr. Pollock	-	Yes
Ms. Stake	-	Yes	Ms. Tompkins	-	Yes
Ms. Upah-Bant	-	Yes	Mr. Ash	-	Yes
Mr. Fell	-	Yes			

The motion passed by unanimous vote. Mr. Myers noted that this case will be forwarded to the Urbana City Council on March 19, 2012.

9. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

There was none.

10. STAFF REPORT

Mr. Myers reported on the following:

- Hotel/Motel Tax Amendment was approved by the City Council.
- Annexation and Rezoning for Mervis Industries was approved by the City Council. It will not be annexed into the City until their property to the north of the site is developed.
- APA State Conference will be held from March 22 to March 23 in Decatur, IL.
- Upcoming text amendment and rezoning of Industrial Zoning District into IN-1 (Light Industrial/Office) and IN-2 (Heavy Industrial). City staff will hold an Open House on March 14, 2012 from 6:00 p.m. until 7:30 p.m. at the Urbana Civic Center.

11. STUDY SESSION

There was none.

12. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

The meeting was adjourned at 9:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Myers, AICP, Secretary
Urbana Plan Commission