

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING**

**URBANA PLAN COMMISSION**

**APPROVED**

**DATE:** October 4, 2012

**TIME:** 7:30 P.M.

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

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**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Tyler Fitch, Lew Hopkins, Michael Pollock, Marilyn Upah-Bant

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:** Carey Hawkins-Ash, Andrew Fell, Dannie Otto, Bernadine Stake, Mary Tompkins

**STAFF PRESENT:** Robert Myers, Planning Manager; Aditi Kambuj, Planner I; Teri Anel, Planning Secretary; Scott Tess, Environmental Sustainability Manager

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Gary Cziko, Carol McKusick, Susan Taylor

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

Chairperson Pollock called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. The roll was called, and he declared that there was not a quorum of the members present.

**2. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA**

There was none.

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Due to a lack of quorum, Chair Pollock forwarded the minutes from the September 6, 2012 meeting to the next regular Plan Commission meeting.

**4. COMMUNICATIONS**

- Newly approved ordinances to add to the Urbana Zoning Ordinance for reference:
  - Ordinance No. 2012-05-049 approving the split of the Industrial Zoning District into IN-1, Light Industrial/Office, and IN-2, Heavy Industrial, Zoning Districts.
  - Ordinance No. 2012-08-084 establishing standards for “Firearm Store” and “Private Indoor Firing Range”.

- Letter from Susan Tappan Flickinger regarding City boundaries and urban sprawl

Robert Myers, Planning Manager, introduced Aditi Kambuj as a new planner for the City of Urbana.

## **5. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS**

There were none.

## **6. OLD BUSINESS**

There was none.

## **7. NEW PUBLIC HEARINGS**

There were none.

## **8. NEW BUSINESS**

### **Plan Case No. 2191-PR-12: Review and comment on the draft Climate Action Plan**

Aditi Kambuj, Planner I, introduced Scott Tess, Environmental Sustainability Manager for the City of Urbana. She began her presentation by explaining how the Climate Action Plan came about. She stated that the plan is intended to provide a basis for policies and programs which would be most effective in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and energy use while maintaining quality of life and economic development for Urbana citizens. She talked about the following:

- 2005 City Council Common Goals Initiative
- 2007 U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement
- 2008 Sustainability Advisory Commission (SAC)
- Timeline
- Providing a basis for implementing City Council goals and City of Urbana policies
- Public input
- Plan making
  - Community-wide in scope
  - Principles: inform, motivate, participation
  - Plan priorities: transparent and readable
  - Plan structure
- Urbana's sustainability vision
- Urbana's climate action focus
- Plan development using five steps
  - I. Inventory of existing sources and levels of greenhouse gases created on behalf of Urbana
    - 2007 Baseline gas emissions report by sector
    - 2007 Emission by source
    - 2007 Baseline emissions rank by source and sector

- II. Forecast future emissions
  - 2020 Greenhouse gas emissions projections
  - 2007 Baseline emissions and projected 2020 increase in emissions under a business as usual scenario by sector and source
- III. Create targets for reduced emissions
  - 25% below 2007 levels by 2020 and 80% below 2007 levels by 2050
- IV. Create goals and action steps
  - Focuses on mitigating the largest emissions sectors
  - Focuses on the most achievable actions
  - Includes actions for more complex sectors and adaptation actions to climate change impact
  - 5 Goals : 15 Actions
    1. Reduce emissions from building energy consumption
    2. Reduce emissions from gasoline consumption
    3. Formulate strategies to reduce emissions from rental and industrial sectors
    4. Prepare for climate change impacts
    5. Pursue coordination and outreach
- V. Create the most effective strategies to implement goals

Ms. Kambuj stated that she would answer questions from the Plan Commission. Comments and questions were as follows:

Has the United States ever officially recognized and approved the Kyoto Protocol? Ms. Kambuj said no, not as a nation. However, the US Mayors Protection Agreement stems from the belief that local action can help. Communities across the United States are already making progress by signing onto the US Mayors Protection Agreement, which calls for communities to meet or beat the Kyoto Protocol.

Do projections for 2020 included in Table 2 assume no changes in the direction we are headed? Ms. Kambuj replied yes. These are “business as usual” projections based on moving forward with current standards and processes.

The University of Illinois campus and the remainder of Urbana are so intertwined. Is the University of Illinois included in the greenhouse gas calculations provided Table 2? Ms. Kambuj answered that the University’s building energy consumption is not included in the totals in Table 2 because, as they have their own power plant, their energy usage is not included in the Ameren utility data used as the basis for these figures. However, the estimates for transportation and solid waste disposal in Table 2 include all of Urbana, including the campus.

As an institution, is the University of Illinois addressing these questions in the same way that the City of Urbana is? Ms. Kambuj responded yes. The University of Illinois has its own climate action plan and has joined with other university campuses to reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. The University’s goal is to be carbon neutral by 2050.

How does the 100% renewable come to pass? Does the City actually buy the power and send it to Ameren? Or do they buy credits? Ms. Kambuj replied that it is both. The State of Illinois

mandates that an increasing percentage of electricity sold by Illinois' largest utilities (25% by 2025) must be produced directly from renewable energy sources. Additionally, through municipal aggregation, Urbana can require use of renewable energy credits which pays for renewable energy production in the Midwest.

Mr. Fitch commented that it is great how much traffic is reduced by people using MTD buses. However, he sees the extra damage done to streets and roads by the buses and asked if the City would set aside funds to cover these additional road maintenance costs. Robert Myers, Planning Manager, stated that the City of Urbana, the City of Champaign and MTD have been working together to apply for a Small Starts Grant from the US Department of Transportation (Federal Transit Administration) to rebuild infrastructure in the core of both cities to support transit. The grant application could be made for tens of millions of Federal dollars. This would be beyond the White Street-Springfield Avenue Corridor Study reviewed by the Plan Commission. Money could be used to reconstruct streets and install transit-supporting infrastructure.

What is the implication of calling this "Phase I"? Ms. Kambuj indicated that a timeline is included in the Climate Action Plan on Page 16. The idea is that Phase I will kick off implementation for sectors where we have a clear direction, and for other sectors set up two task forces and further engage the public. Phase II of the Plan will incorporate what we will learn over the next few years.

Mr. Hopkins commented that given the number of fairly concrete actions that the City is already taking, this set of implementation actions and sub-actions seem pretty vague and generic. He wondered if the City should be more specific in the Plan about what we are actually doing or intending to do.

How will the proposed Climate Action Plan directly affect what the Plan Commission reviews and considers in terms of land use, planning and zoning? Will analysis of development proposals coming before the Plan Commission include information on greenhouse gas emissions? Ms. Kambuj explained that there is an Outreach Action that will allow the Sustainability Advisory Commission to make a recommendation on City plans and policies. Mr. Myers added that he could see the proposed Climate Action Plan influencing development policies like the Comprehensive Plan. However, this Plan is not about red-line limits or mandates. If it were, he suspects that public reaction to the Plan would be very different. Instead, the Plan is about cooperation, public education, and finding common ground, as well as using incentives.

There was discussion about how to reduce energy use in rental properties. Tyler Fitch would like to see tenants have information on the true costs of the housing they are looking to rent, including utilities. Can someone like the City or Tenant Union create a form for students to use when speaking with potential landlords so they will ask the right questions to know the true housing costs, including electricity, garbage collection, and etc.? To be competitive, landlords advertise the lowest rent cost and hide the tenant paid utilities. Mr. Myers added that there are also transportation costs to be considered. The Center for Neighborhood Technology has prepared information for the Champaign-Urbana area showing housing plus transportation costs

by census tracts. And now the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission has calculated this at the block group level.

Mr. Myers asked if he could add that it may be helpful to know that most of Urbana's greenhouse gases indicated in the Plan are actually created outside the city but on behalf of Urbana. Greenhouse gases from production of commercial, residential, and industrial electricity used in Urbana, as well as from Urbana's solid waste, are created elsewhere.

Is the City of Champaign doing anything similar? Ms. Kambuj stated that the City of Champaign is completing a Sustainability Plan. Mr. Myers added that Champaign's plan is a broad sustainability plan which includes an aspect of greenhouse gas emissions. An informal Sustainability Practitioner's Group, including the City of Champaign, the University of Illinois, the City of Urbana and the Regional Planning Commission meet periodically to coordinate to the extent possible. Like air and water pollution, greenhouse gas emissions is a regional issue.

Mr. Fitch commented that the proposed plan was created well and the amount of work put forth in creating the plan is evident.

Mr. Myers noted that the Plan Commission's comments will be forwarded Committee of the Whole on October 8, 2012.

## **9. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

Carol McKusick, of 1907 North Cunningham Avenue, asked the Plan Commission to think about the following:

- Advantage Recycling Center of Mervis Industries Special Use Permit – Does the recycling justify the amount of truck traffic and road damage to Cunningham Avenue? Would it be better to take the recyclables to the landfill?
- 34% of our hope for reductions being attributable to the assumption we will have 100% renewable portfolio through our Municipal Aggregation Program. The City requiring renewable energy credits through municipal electrical aggregation does not really mean that Urbana used by City residents and businesses was produced from renewable sources.
- Consider asking the City Council to create a City-wide board of government information which would monitor all City boards and commissions' roles, communication processes and by-laws. Chairman Pollock suggested this suggestion would be best made to the Urbana City Council.

## **10. STAFF REPORT**

Robert Myers, Planning Manager, reported on the following:

- Bainbridge Development Special Use Permit will be forwarded to the City Council along with the variance requests for side and rear-yard setbacks on October 15, 2012.

**11. STUDY SESSION**

There was none.

**12. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Robert Myers, AICP, Secretary  
Urbana Plan Commission