

MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING

URBANA PLAN COMMISSION

APPROVED

DATE: July 2, 2013

TIME: 7:30 P.M.

PLACE: Urbana City Building
Executive Conference Rooms
Second Floor
400 South Vine Street
Urbana, IL 61801

MEMBER PRESENT: Andrew Fell, Tyler Fitch, Bernadine Stake, Marilyn Upah-Bant

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Carey Hawkins-Ash, Lew Hopkins, Dannie Otto

STAFF PRESENT: Rebecca Bird, Planner II

OTHERS PRESENT: Carol Ammons, J. H. Kuypers, Carol McKusick, Susan Taylor,
Howard Wakeland

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

Tyler Fitch served as Acting Chair. He called the meeting to order at 7:36 p.m. The roll was called, and he declared that there was a quorum of the members present.

2. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

There were none.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Upah-Bant moved that the Plan Commission approve the minutes from both the June 6, 2013 and the June 20, 2013 meetings. Mr. Fell seconded the motion. The minutes were then approved by unanimous vote.

4. COMMUNICATIONS

There were none.

5. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS

Plan Case No. 2210-M-13: A request by Howard Wakeland to rezone an area totaling 0.689 acres located at 906, 908 and 910 West Church Street and 701 North Lincoln Avenue from R-2, Single-Family Residential Zoning District, to B-2, Neighborhood Business - Arterial Zoning District.

Rebecca Bird, Planner II, presented the staff report for this case to the Plan Commission. She briefly talked about previous related plan cases in which the petitioner attempted to rezone various combinations of the properties he owns in the immediate area. She stated the properties in the proposed rezoning are 906, 908 and 910 West Church Street and 701 North Lincoln Avenue. She talked about the current land uses and zoning of the proposed sites. She discussed the advantages and disadvantages of approving the proposed rezoning request. She reviewed the options of the Plan Commission and presented staff's recommendation.

Mr. Fitch recalled from a previous case that the maintenance building would be considered an ancillary use to the office use because it is being rezoned to B-2, Neighborhood Business – Arterial. Is this still accurate? Ms. Bird replied that City staff has not seen any plans to build on the proposed properties. At such time, staff would review any development plans and if a special use permit is required for both uses, then it would come before the Plan Commission for approval. If plans are allowed by right and meets the City's development regulations, then it would not go before the Plan Commission.

Mr. Fell asked if the petitioner would be required to provide a buffer from 705 North Lincoln Avenue because it is still zoned residential. Ms. Bird said yes. The petitioner would also need to provide a buffer for 703 North Lincoln Avenue as well.

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

Howard Wakeland, petitioner, spoke to the Plan Commission regarding his request to rezone the four properties mentioned above. He showed an illustration of a development plan for the lot adjacent to Beckman Institute. He explained that he could not rezone the property to a zoning district which would allow construction of the development so he sold the land to the University of Illinois. He talked about the down zoning of properties on the west side of the City and about the creation of the B-3U, General Business – University Zoning District. Then, he talked about his previous attempts to rezone properties fronting on Church Street, Lincoln Avenue and Hill Street. He spoke about the success of his business and how it benefits the City of Urbana in property taxes received. He stated that he cleaned up the proposed area when he purchased the lots in the area by demolishing poorly maintained houses where some criminal activity occurred. If he does not get approval of the proposed zoning, then he will make plans to move his business out of the City of Urbana. He talked about the 2005 Comprehensive Plan and how it is supposed to be a guide for the Plan Commission and the City Council to use in making decisions about the rezoning of properties. He discussed his plans to move his office, which is currently located in the Hedgerow Building on the corner of Lincoln and University Avenues, to the proposed site.

Carol Ammons, City Councilmember for Ward 3, asked the Plan Commission to continue the proposed rezoning case to the next regularly scheduled meeting. Since the proposed lots are

located in her Ward, she asked for time to learn more about the request, to research the history of the proposed properties, and to speak to the neighbors.

Mr. Fell stated that the Plan Commission has heard the reasoning for rezoning the proposed lots several times now, and he does not feel that they need more time to make a recommendation to City Council. If Ms. Ammons needs more time, he suggested that she make the request to continue the case at the City Council level. Ms. Stake agreed that the Plan Commission should continue the case to the next regular meeting so that the adjacent neighbors have notice of when the meeting is being held. She did not feel that they had adequate notice of this special meeting. Ms. Bird explained that the public hearing was being held at a special meeting due to the lack of a quorum at the previous regularly scheduled Plan Commission meeting and explained the notification process. She also pointed out that anyone who attended the June 20th meeting or phoned in with concerns or questions about the proposed case were notified of the special meeting.

Susan Taylor, of 606 West Michigan Avenue, stated that as a business person she can understand the petitioner's desire to rezone the proposed four lots. She talked about living on a quiet residential street with no churches or commerce around. She spoke on behalf of Viola Bradley Bias, a property owner adjacent to the proposed four lots. Ms. Bias is not in favor of the proposed rezoning. She has expressed her opposition at previous meetings regarding similar requests in the past. She agrees with Ms. Bias that the neighborhood should remain zoned residential.

Mr. Fell asked Mr. Wakeland how he felt about the possibility of continuing the case to the next scheduled Plan Commission meeting. Mr. Wakeland replied that it would be okay. He has been working on rezoning the proposed properties for several years now, and it is not urgent. However, he noted that he has tried to soften his request by limiting the rezoning to four properties so the two other property owners on the block feel less threatened.

With no further public input, Acting Chair Fitch opened the hearing up for Plan Commission comments and/or motions.

Ms. Stake moved to continue the case to the next regular meeting of the Plan Commission. Ms. Upah-Bant seconded the motion.

Mr. Fitch	-	Yes	Mr. Fell	-	Yes
Ms. Stake	-	Yes	Ms. Upah-Bant	-	Yes

The motion to continue was approved by unanimous vote.

6. OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

7. NEW PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were none.

8. NEW BUSINESS

There was none.

9. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

There was none.

10. STAFF REPORT

There was none.

11. STUDY SESSION

There was none.

12. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

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

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Myers, AICP, Secretary
Urbana Plan Commission