



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Planning Division

m e m o r a n d u m

**TO:** The Urbana Plan Commission

**FROM:** Marcus Ricci, Planner II

**DATE:** February 2, 2018

**SUBJECT:** **Plan Case 2328-SU-18:** A request by Frat Life, LLC, represented by its Manager and Sole Member Jonah Weisskopf, on behalf of The Church In Champaign, represented by two of its Directors, Kenneth Mooney and Nehemiah Tan, for a Special Use Permit to operate a Church at 713 West Ohio Street in the R-7, University Residential Zoning District.

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**Introduction**

Frat Life, LLC, represented by its Manager and Sole Member Jonah Weisskopf, has applied for a Special Use Permit to adaptively reuse the existing dormitory at 713 West Ohio Street as a church and rooming house. The Urbana Zoning Ordinance requires a Special Use Permit to allow the proposed church use in the R-7, University Residential Zoning District. The rooming house use is permitted by right in the R-7 District. The church would operate in one part of the principal structure, while the rooming house would operate in another part. The applicant is the current owner of the property; it is applying for the Special Use Permit on behalf of The Church in Champaign, represented by two of its Directors, Kenneth Mooney and Nehemiah Tan.

The Plan Commission must review the Special Use Permit application, hold a public hearing, and make a recommendation to the Urbana City Council. The Urbana City Council must then approve, approve with certain conditions, or deny the application.

*\*Note: this request is identical to Plan Case 2324-SU-17, which had been made by Ken Mooney and Nehemiah Tan as representatives of the prospective buyer, The Church in Champaign, and withdrawn prior to being heard by the Plan Commission. It is now being submitted by the current property owner, Frat Life, LLC.*

**Background**

**Description of the Site and Surrounding Properties**

The property is located at the southeast corner of West Ohio Street and South Busey Avenue, and is currently the site of the Delta Kappa Epsilon fraternity house (see Exhibit A). The site is 22,302 square feet (0.511 acres) and includes the two-and-1/2-story, 5,986 square foot house and a 25-space, 8,400-square-foot parking lot. There are currently 18 tenants in the 21-bedroom house. The parking lot has two access drives off of South Busey Avenue. The south access drive is used as a parking space by a

tenant of the apartment building to the south; this use will end at expiration of that tenant’s lease in August of 2018.

The surrounding land uses are varying intensities of residential, including single-family, duplex, and medium- and high-density apartments. The following chart identifies the current zoning, existing land uses, and Comprehensive Plan future land use designations of the site and surrounding properties (see Exhibit B). There are also three group homes – fraternities, sororities, dormitories, etc. – on this block of Ohio Street, plus an additional seven group homes in the adjacent blocks (see Exhibit C).

<b>Direction</b>	<b>Zoning</b>	<b>Existing Land Uses</b>	<b>Future Land Use</b>
Site	R-7, University Residential	Group home	Residential
North	R-7, and R-2 Single-Family Residential	Group homes; single- and multi-family residential	Residential
East	R-2 Single-Family Residential	Single- and multi-family residential	Residential
South	R-2 Single-Family Residential	Single- and multi-family residential	Residential
West	R-7, and R-2 Single-Family Residential	Group homes; single- and multi-family residential	Residential and University Residential

The two-and-½-story Tudor Revival fraternity house was constructed in 1927 and, according to a City of Urbana Historic Resources Survey, has always operated as a sorority or fraternity house, or “chapter house”: Phi Omega Pi sorority (1930-1946), Sigma Kappa sorority (1946-1969), Delta Tau Delta fraternity (1969-2000), Phi Sigma Pi sorority (2000-2015), and Delta Kappa Epsilon (current tenant). The survey listed its integrity as “unaltered” and condition as “excellent”; the only major exterior alteration has been the enclosure of the western porch.

Until recently, the chapter house was listed with the University of Illinois’ Private Certified Housing Office and was rated by that office for occupancy up to 40 persons. Occupancy has been slowly dropping from a recent high of 22 residents (2010-2011) to 10 residents (2015-2016). The occupancy increased to 18 residents this past year when the building changed owners and left Certified Housing status.

This is another example of an older, larger chapter house experiencing decreasing occupancy rates. Some chapter houses are able to maintain occupancy rates and continue as a chapter house recognized by the University; others lose occupancy and change uses. Some uses include fraternal organizations not recognized by the University, or rooming houses owned by private entities. Several chapter houses in the Urbana-Champaign area are either vacant, have been demolished, or may experience relocation of their chapter, including:

- the former Zeta Psi House, 803 West Oregon Street, was sold in March of 2017; it is currently vacant while repairs are made.
- the former Zeta Tau Alpha House, 1404 South Lincoln Avenue, has been vacant since 2009.

- the current Kappa Delta House, 1204 South Lincoln Avenue, is an occupied sorority chapter house which was sold in August of 2017; the chapter may move to a new building in Champaign.
- the current Delta Zeta House, 710 West Ohio, is an occupied sorority chapter house; the chapter may move to a new building in Champaign.
- the former Delta Phi House, Fourth Street (Champaign), vacant since 2009, was demolished in 2018.
- the former Alpha Delta Phi House, 310 East John Street (Champaign), was vacant from 2015 to 2017, then demolished in 2017.
- the former Chi Psi House, 912 South Second Street (Champaign), was demolished in 1994.

For the subject property, adaptive reuse as a combination church/rooming house would better utilize the building and keep it fully occupied and maintained. A recent example of adaptive reuse was the former Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority House, a local historic landmark, which has been vacant since 2009 and in disrepair, especially the interior. Recently, this landmark has been given a second chance by Pierre Moulin, who will adaptively reuse the House – with minimal alteration of the structure’s historic features – as an 18-unit apartment building named the Chateau Normand.

### **Proposed Use**

The applicant plans to maintain tenant occupation until it sells the property to The Church In Champaign. The prospective buyer plans to reduce tenant occupation when they take possession of the building, renting ten of the existing bedrooms to individual tenants starting in August of 2018. This rooming house use is permitted by right in the R-7 District. The rest of the building would be used as a church, which requires a Special Use Permit in the R-7 District. Church renovation is projected to begin in late 2018. This will include converting several rooms into the assembly seating area, converting rooms to office and meeting spaces, and installing two bathrooms. Exterior changes will be minimal and will be completed prior to conducting any church services. These include installing an accessibility ramp from the parking lot to the southwest door, removing the eastern fire escape, repairing and restriping the parking lot, and installing screening fences and shrubbery.

Services for The Church In Champaign are currently held at the Illini Union (1401 West Green Street, Champaign). Increasing attendance levels have prompted church leaders to search for a site near the university where they could move their congregation. The ideal site would be one where the church would fit into a residential setting, as the second use of the church building would be as a rooming house. In addition to scheduled services, the church would propose to be open to the community as a study space. Services times as proposed by the prospective buyer are as follows (see Exhibit D):

- Sunday, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.: Main service, 70-80 participants
- Sunday, 8:00-9:00 p.m.: Ladies prayer time, 10-15 participants
- Monday-Friday, 8:30-11:30 a.m.: Meeting of “Christians on Campus” staff, 6-10 participants.
- Monday, 7:00-8:00 p.m.: Meeting of “Christians on Campus” core team members for prayer and planning, 15 participants.
- Monday, 8:00-10:00 p.m.: Meeting of church elders and deacons, 15 participants.
- Tuesday, 7:30-8:30 p.m.: Church prayer meeting, 40 participants.
- Wednesday, 8:00-9:30 p.m.: “Christians on Campus” Bible study, 35 participants.

- Friday, 6:00-9:30 p.m.: Group meetings with dinner and Bible study, up to 30-45 participants.
- Saturday, 6:00-9:30 p.m.: Student meeting, 40 participants

The site plan in Exhibit E shows the proposed access ramp, off-street parking lot reconfiguration, parking lot landscaping and screening, and parking lot shade trees. The north access drive to the parking lot would be widened to allow two-way traffic; the south access drive would not be used and would be screened. The parking lot would be screened from the rights-of-way and adjacent properties by new and existing fences and shrubbery.

The plan proposes 22 parking spaces, which exceeds the parking requirement for the combined uses. If overflow parking is ever required, church patrons can park two blocks away at Lot F11 at the McKinley Health Center, which is located at 1109 South Lincoln Avenue (at West Indiana Avenue) on the University campus. Maria McMullen, with University Parking Services, has confirmed that the lot is open to the public from Friday at 5:00 p.m. to Monday at 6:00 a.m. If overflow parking is needed outside of those times, church attendees can use the metered spaces in the lot.

Brad Bennett, Assistant City Engineer, assessed the public services available at the site and estimated the proposed use's impacts to their remaining capacity. The water used and the wastewater generated will be reduced by an estimated 30 percent, and the 8-inch sanitary sewer line on South Busey Avenue has sufficient capacity for the projected sanitary sewage load. The stormwater generated should not increase, and the eight-inch storm sewer line running from the storm sewer inlet on the property has sufficient capacity for the projected load. The 22-space parking lot could generate up to 132 trips per day. The peak hourly trip generation of 22 trips yielding a three-car-per-minute ingress/egress frequency during a church-related event will not add to congestion. Therefore, the traffic impact at this location will be nominal with modest additional traffic on South Busey Avenue or West Ohio Street when events end.

On December 12, 2017, at 7:30 p.m., over 20 people attended a public meeting organized by the prospective buyer at the Urbana Civic Center regarding the proposed use. Church representatives Mooney and Tan invited the neighborhood to participate. Mr. Mooney provided background on the church's mission, its activities, and its future goals. The Church would like to move its current services to the proposed site to better serve the current members and to better reach university students. The Church's parent organization's growth pattern is not to increase the size of any one congregation, but to increase the numbers of small congregations established in local communities. It currently has congregations in Normal, Peoria, the United Kingdom, and Germany. One of its primary missions is to provide support to students: that is why members want to be located close to campus, why they work with the Christians on Campus Registered Student Organization, and their plans to host several students as residents. If the Church is permitted to establish the church at the property, it would change the name to "The Church In Urbana."

Attendees asked why they needed to establish it as a church, and Mr. Mooney responded that the planned number of attendees and services required them to formalize their use as a church and not simply as residents and visitors having frequent informal meetings. The proposed site would also allow them to provide the residential use of the house.

During the meeting, Jonah Weisskopf stated, as the current owner of the property, that the proposed church and rooming house uses would be a less intense use than the current use as an 18-person



fraternity house. One neighbor stated the Delta Zeta fraternity house (710 West Ohio Street) was planning to move to Campustown and that the proposed use was a good way to keep a large fraternity house in use. Several attendees expressed concerns regarding potential over-occupancy of the church assembly hall; city staff responded that this could be addressed by including a condition in the Special Use Permit limiting occupancy of the assembly hall to 80 persons. Another concern expressed was potential light trespass from exterior lighting. In addition to the opinions expressed during the meeting, ten city residents have submitted letters of support for the proposed use, one with a recommended condition (Exhibit F).

## **Requirements for a Special Use Permit**

According to Section VII-4.A. of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance, an application for a Special Use Permit shall demonstrate the following:

1. *That the proposed use is conducive to the public convenience at that location.*

The proposed church is conducive to the public convenience at this location due to its proximity to Lincoln Avenue and to the University. The property is located in a residential neighborhood near the University and one block from Lincoln Avenue, is served by sidewalks on both sides of the street, and is within walking distance for their primary audience of interest: University students. Over two-thirds of the current congregation are students; the church is the meeting place for the University's "Christians on Campus" Registered Student Organization. There is a public transit stop less than two blocks away and proposed parking for ten bicycles on site, reducing the need to drive to the church. The site's proximity to Lincoln Avenue reduces the depth of incursion into the neighborhood by people driving to the church, and increases its connectivity to a greater population base with direct access to inter-city minor arterial roads.

2. *That the proposed use is designed, located, and proposed to be operated so that it will not be unreasonably injurious or detrimental to the district in which it shall be located, or otherwise injurious to the public welfare.*

The proposed church will not be unreasonably injurious to the public at this location. The church would relocate its services from the Illini Union to this property. The most-attended service (Sunday morning 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.) occurs between the two services at Twin City Bible Church, which is two blocks away, which begin at 9:00 a.m. and 10:45 a.m. The staggered service times should minimize traffic, except for the final service dismissal. Other planned service times do not appear to conflict with Twin City Bible Church or other nearby houses of worship.

The proposed church will provide one off-street parking more than is required. All services should be finished by 10:00 p.m. The applicants state there will be no alcohol consumption, no late-night parties, and no loud music. A "quiet time" will be imposed for residents, and all non-residents will have to leave the building by 11:00 p.m. A "house coordinator" will be designated among the residents to keep order, and the church elders and deacons will oversee the building's operation.

3. *That the proposed use conforms to the applicable regulations and standards of, and preserves the essential character of, the district in which it shall be located, except where such regulations and standards are modified by Section VII-7.*

The character of the R-7, University Residential District, will be preserved if the proposed Special Use Permit is granted. The property has been used as a fraternity or sorority since the late 1920s, with as many as 40 residents, and with recent occupancies of more than 20 residents. Nearby residents have become accustomed to activity outside the home, many cars in the parking lot, and traffic to the house. The proposed use would limit the number of full-time residents to ten. Although Sunday services may bring additional traffic for a short period of time, the applicants believe, based on their experience at the Illini Union, that many attendees will walk, bike, or take the bus to services. They will provide more than the required number of bicycle and automobile parking spaces, and will fully screen the parking lot as required. The proposed development would conform to applicable regulations for the R-7, University Residential District.

The Plan Commission shall determine whether the reasons set forth in the applications, and the evidence adduced during the public hearing, justify the granting of the Special Use Permit, and whether the proposed uses will be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Ordinance, and will not be unreasonably injurious or detrimental to the district in which it shall be located, or otherwise injurious or detrimental to the public welfare.

In addition, the Plan Commission shall make a recommendation to the City Council for or against the proposed Special Use, and may also recommend such additional conditions and requirements on the operation of the proposed uses as are appropriate or necessary for the public health, safety, and welfare, and to carry out the purposes of this Ordinance, including but not limited to conditions that:

1. Regulate the location, extent, and intensity of such uses;
2. Require adherence to an approved site plan;
3. Require landscaping and the screening of such use by means of fences, walls, or vegetation;
4. Stipulate a required minimum lot size, minimum yards, and maximum height of buildings and structures;
5. Regulate vehicular access and volume, and the design and location of parking and loading areas and structures;
6. Require conformance to health, safety, and sanitation requirements as necessary;
7. Regulate signs and outdoor lighting; and
8. Any other conditions deemed necessary to affect the purposes of the Zoning Ordinance.

Staff proposes two conditions that are designed to address two of the concerns that arose at the neighborhood meeting on December 12. The first is regarding concern over limiting the occupancy of the assembly room; the second is regarding spillover lighting in the parking lot. In addition to limiting occupancy as a condition of the Special Use Permit, occupancy can be limited by including an occupancy limit for the main assembly hall on the Certificate of Occupancy. Violation of the Permit's condition may result in revocation of the Permit, while violation of the Certificate's occupancy limit may result in revocation of the Certificate. Either revocation would require termination of the use as a church; revocation of the Certificate may result in vacation of the portion of the building in violation. In addition to the required screening fences and landscaping, Section VI-8 of the Zoning Ordinance addresses light trespass and nuisances. VI-8.D. states that "Lighting shall be aimed or shielded so as not to cause a nuisance to the public or nearby properties" and C.3. allows the Zoning Administrator to order removal of light fixtures found to be a nuisance or causing

excessive glare. Staff recommend a condition to limit the height of new exterior lighting fixtures to 12 feet.

## Summary of Findings

1. Frat Life, LLC, represented by its Manager and Sole Member Jonah Weisskopf, requests a Special Use Permit to allow The Church in Champaign to operate a Church at 713 West Ohio Street in the R-7, University Residential Zoning District.
2. The proposed use is conducive to the public convenience at this location due to its proximity to both the University where the majority of its congregants live, and to public transit and bicycle parking.
3. The proposed use would not be unreasonably injurious or detrimental to the R-7 district in which it shall be located due to both the coordination of service times to minimize traffic conflicts, and to provision of more than the required number of off-street parking spaces.
4. The proposed use meets the regulations and standards of, and preserves the essential character of, the R-7 district in which it shall be located by limiting the number of church assembly hall occupants as well as boarders, providing more than the required number of off-street parking spaces, and screening the parking lot from adjacent properties.

## Options

The Plan Commission has the following options for recommendations to the City Council in Case No. 2328-SU-18:

1. Recommend approval of the Special Use Permit without any additional conditions.
2. Recommend approval of the Special Use Permit with any conditions deemed appropriate or necessary for the public health, safety, and welfare, and to carry out the purposes of the Zoning Ordinance.
3. Recommend denial of the Special Use Permit.

## Recommendation

Based on the evidence presented in the discussion above, and without the benefit of considering additional evidence that may be presented at the public hearing, staff recommends that the Plan Commission forward Plan Case No. 2328-SU-18 to the Urbana City Council with a recommendation for **APPROVAL with the following CONDITIONS:**

1. Construction must be in general conformance with the attached site plan entitled “Church Ramp – Ramp Construction – 713 W. Ohio” and dated January 26, 2018.
2. The occupancy of the main church assembly room will be established and placarded by the Building Official and Fire Marshal to not exceed 80 persons.

3. Church events conclude by 11:30 p.m.
4. Any future exterior lighting fixtures may be no taller than 12 feet.
5. The use must conform to all applicable zoning, building, and development regulations.

Attachments: Exhibit A: Location and Existing Land Use Map  
Exhibit B: Zoning Map  
Exhibit C: Group Homes  
Exhibit D: Application for Special Use Permit  
Exhibit E: Site Plan entitled "Church Ramp – Ramp Construction – 713 W. Ohio"  
and dated January 26, 2018  
Exhibit F: Communications

CC: Frat Life, LLC, represented by Jonah Weisskopf  
The Church In Champaign, represented by Kenneth Mooney and Nehemiah Tan




# Exhibit A: Location & Existing Land Use Map



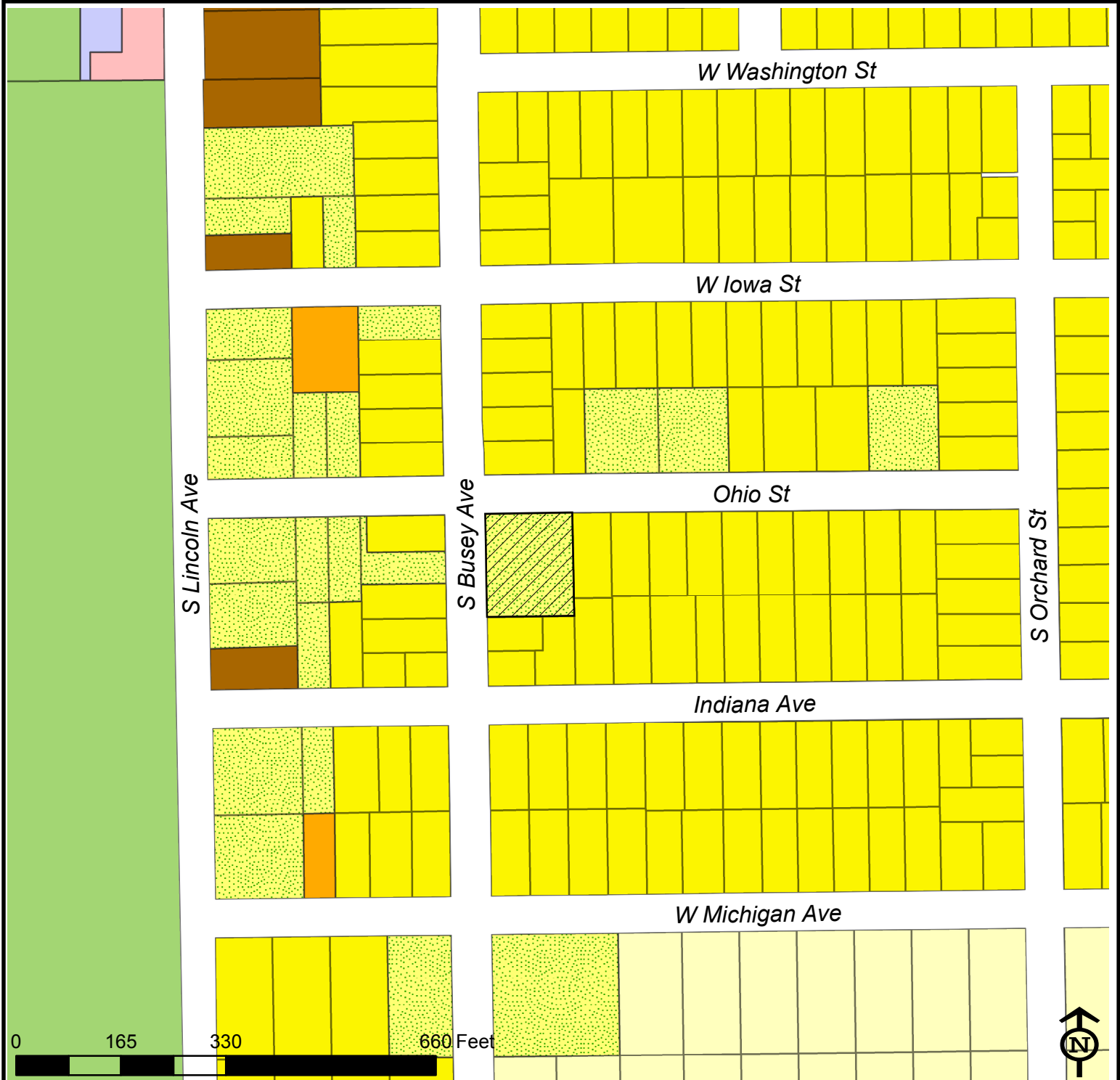
Case: 2328-SU-18  
 Subject: Special Use Permit  
 Location: 713 West Ohio Street  
 Petitioner: Frat Life, LLC  
 Jonah Weisskopf, Sole Member & Manager

 Subject Property


 Subject Property





# Exhibit B: Zoning Map



Case: 2328-SU-18  
 Subject: Special Use Permit  
 Location: 713 West Ohio Street  
 Petitioner: Frat Life, LLC  
 Jonah Weisskopf, Sole Member & Manager

 Subject Property

 B1	 B3U
 CRE	 R1
 R2	 R3
 R5	 R7

## Zoning

# Exhibit C. Group Homes



Case: 2328-SU-18  
 Subject: Special Use Permit  
 Location: 713 West Ohio Street  
 Petitioner: Frat Life, LLC  
 Jonah Weisskopf, Sole Member & Manager

 Group Home

# Exhibit D. Application



## Application for Special Use Permit

## PLAN COMMISSION

**The application fee must accompany the application when submitted for processing.** Please refer to the City's website at <http://www.urbanaininois.us/fees> for the current fee associated with this application. **The Applicant is also responsible for paying the cost of legal publication fees.** Estimated costs for these fees usually run between \$75.00 and \$225.00. The applicant will be billed separately by the News-Gazette.

### DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE - FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Request Filed 1/17/2018 Plan Case No. 2328-SU-18  
Fee Paid - Check No. waived Amount \$0.00 Date 1/17/2018

### PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION

A SPECIAL USE PERMIT is requested in conformity with the powers vested in the Plan Commission to recommend to the City Council under Section VII-4 of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance to allow *(Insert proposed use)* Church on the property described

below. Jonah Weisskopf is the sole agent and manager of Frat Life IIc

#### 1. APPLICANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Name of Applicant(s): Frat life IIc and Jonah Weisskopf Phone: 217-369-2150  
Address (street/city/state/zip code): 206 W Main Urbana, IL 61801 307 E Illinois Urbana IL 61801  
Email Address: jonahweisskopf@hotmail.com

#### 2. PROPERTY INFORMATION

Address/Location of Subject Site: 713 W. Ohio St., Urbana, IL 61801  
PIN # of Location: 93-21-17-307-031  
Lot Size: 137.6 feet by 162 feet  
Current Zoning Designation: R-7 - University Residential  
Current Land Use (vacant, residence, grocery, factory, etc): Dormitory (fraternal chapter)  
Proposed Land Use: Church (Special Use Permitted) and roominghouse (Permitted By Right)  
Legal Description (If additional space is needed, please submit on separate sheet of paper):

**"Lots 3,4 & 5 James Elmo Smiths Sub 162x137"**



# Exhibit D. Application

## 3. CONSULTANT INFORMATION

**Name of Architect(s):** Andrew Fell

Phone: 217-363-2890

Address (*street/city/state/zip code*): 515 Hickory St, Champaign, IL 61820

Email Address: andrewfell@comcast.net

**Name of Engineers(s):**

Phone:

Address (*street/city/state/zip code*):

Email Address:

**Name of Surveyor(s):**

Phone:

Address (*street/city/state/zip code*):

Email Address:

**Name of Professional Site Planner(s):**

Phone:

Address (*street/city/state/zip code*):

Email Address:

**Name of Attorney(s):**

Phone:

Address (*street/city/state/zip code*):

Email Address:

## 4. REASONS FOR SPECIAL USE PERMIT

Explain how the proposed use is conducive to the public convenience at the location of the property.

**See Attachment for Question #1**

Explain how the proposed use is designed, located and proposed to be operated, so that it will not be unreasonably injurious or detrimental to the district in which it shall be located, or otherwise injurious or detrimental to the public welfare.

**See Attachment for Question #2**

Explain how the proposed use conforms to the applicable regulations and standards of and preserves the essential character of the district in which it shall be located.

**See Attachment for Question #3**

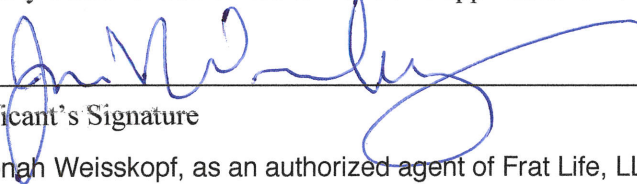
# Exhibit D. Application

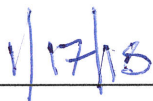
**NOTE:** *If additional space is needed to accurately answer any question, please attach extra pages to the application.*

*By submitting this application, you are granting permission for City staff to post on the property a temporary yard sign announcing the public hearing to be held for your request.*

## CERTIFICATION BY THE APPLICANT

I certify all the information contained in this application form or any attachment(s), document(s) or plan(s) submitted herewith are true to the best of my knowledge and belief, and that I am either the property owner or authorized to make this application on the owner's behalf.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant's Signature

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

I, Jonah Weisskopf, as an authorized agent of Frat Life, LLC, am making this application on behalf of The Church in Champaign, as represented by Kenneth Mooney & Nehemiah Tan. The Church desires to purchase the property at 713 West Ohio Street, contingent upon issuance of the requested Special Use Permit.

## PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM ONCE COMPLETED TO:

City of Urbana  
Community Development Department Services  
Planning Division  
400 South Vine Street, Urbana, IL 61801  
Phone: (217) 384-2440  
Fax: (217) 384-2367

# Exhibit D. Application

***Note: These answers were originally submitted with the application submitted by Kenneth Mooney & Nehemiah Tan for Plan Case 2324-SU-17. As the current applicant is request a Special Use Permit with the identical conditions, and is applying on behalf of the original applicants, the answers are being used for the current application for Plan Case 2328-SU-18.***

*Question #1: Explain how the proposed use is conducive to the public convenience at the location of the property.*

The proposed use of the property is to be a church assembly hall of about 70 to 80 persons, and a dormitory for a maximum of 10 persons. It will also be used during the week by the registered U of I student organization "Christians on Campus." There are approximately 25 parking spaces on the property, which will be adequate for the intended use. There is a first-floor meeting space that is easily adequate for 70 to 80 persons according to the present building code. There are 19 bedrooms in the building, of which we will use ten for boarders. To meet ADA requirements a ramp will be added externally on the west side of the building for wheel chair access. Two rest-rooms will be added on the first floor to meet the ADA requirements for wheel chair access.

Because the site is one block east of Lincoln Avenue, on the corner of Busey and Ohio, there is good access to the site. Regardless of whether someone is walking from the campus dormitories to the site, riding a bicycle, taking public transportation, or driving a vehicle it is easy to get to. Currently, 67 % of our congregation is students, so this location is very convenient for them. For example, to get to this facility is an easy 11-minute walk from Illinois Street Residence Hall. Then for those taking a bus, there is a bus stop at 1004 S. Lincoln, 3-minute walk away from the site.

Operating this site as a church assembly hall will benefit the community because the site will be frequented by students and community members whose interest is to study the Bible and worship God according to the way New Testament believers did in the early days of the church. There will be no consumption of alcohol on the property. There will be no late-night parties, or loud and boisterous music to disrupt the community. Our students and community members are quiet, well-mannered people who will fit well into the community.

Another benefit to the community is that residents will have the opportunity to visit our services and see how we endeavor to follow the early churches in their way of worship. I anticipate that some will be attracted to this simple form of worship. If we keep meeting in the Student Union Building on Green St., it is more difficult for the near-by residents to attend. In addition, this site will allow us to have proper facilities for Sunday School for children. Having a proper Sunday School is beneficial for the current members with children, as well as members who desire to participate with us in our worship.

An additional benefit to the community for the proposed use of this property is that we desire to operate it as an open study area during the week days. Students who do not meet with us or with the Christians on Campus Club would be welcome to come and study and eat lunch.

# Exhibit D. Application

*Question #2: Explain how the proposed use is designed, located and proposed to be operated, so that it will not be unreasonably injurious, or detrimental to the district in which it shall be located, or otherwise injurious or detrimental to the public welfare.*

The largest regular meeting will be on Sunday morning from 10:00AM to 12:00PM. The property is one block east of Lincoln Avenue, and is on a corner lot with easy ingress and egress for automobiles and bicycles, or pedestrians. On a typical Sunday morning there will be on average of one car coming into the parking lot every 90 seconds from 9:30AM to 10:00AM. There is nearly no other traffic on the streets at this time, so there is no danger of a traffic jam. From 12:15PM to 12:45 PM on average there will be one car every 90 seconds exiting the property. Again, this amount of traffic will not negatively impact the neighborhood traffic pattern.

Below is a list of other potential regular meetings:

- Sunday night, 8:00 to 9:00 PM—Ladies prayer time with 10 to 15 participants
- Monday to Friday 8:30 AM to 11:30 AM—Meeting of Christians on Campus staff members with 6 to 10 participants.
- Monday night 7PM to 8PM—Meeting of Christians on Campus core team members for prayer and planning with about 15 participants.
- Monday night from 8PM to 10PM—Meeting of the elders and deacons of the church with about 15 participants.
- Tuesday night from 7:30PM to 8:30PM—church prayer meeting of about 40 members.
- Wednesday night from 8:00 PM to 9:30 PM is a Christians on Campus Bible study with about 35 participants. This is often held in the ISR dorm, but may be held sometimes on this site.
- Friday night 6:00PM to 9:30PM—Group meetings with dinner and a Bible study. There may be on occasion up to 3 groups meeting with sizes approximately 10 to 15.

Additional details of how the property will be managed:

- There will be a quiet time beginning at 11:00 PM, and a curfew at 11:30 PM, and all remaining nonresidents of the building will need to leave by 11:30 PM.
- There will be a house coordinator designated among the live-in residents whose function will be to keep order.
- The elders and deacons of the church will oversee the building's operation.
- We plan to have the building open during the week days for students to come and eat lunch, hang out, and study academics or Bible topics.

# Exhibit D. Application

*Question #3: Explain how the proposed use conforms to the applicable regulations and standards of and preserves the essential character of the district in which it shall be located.*

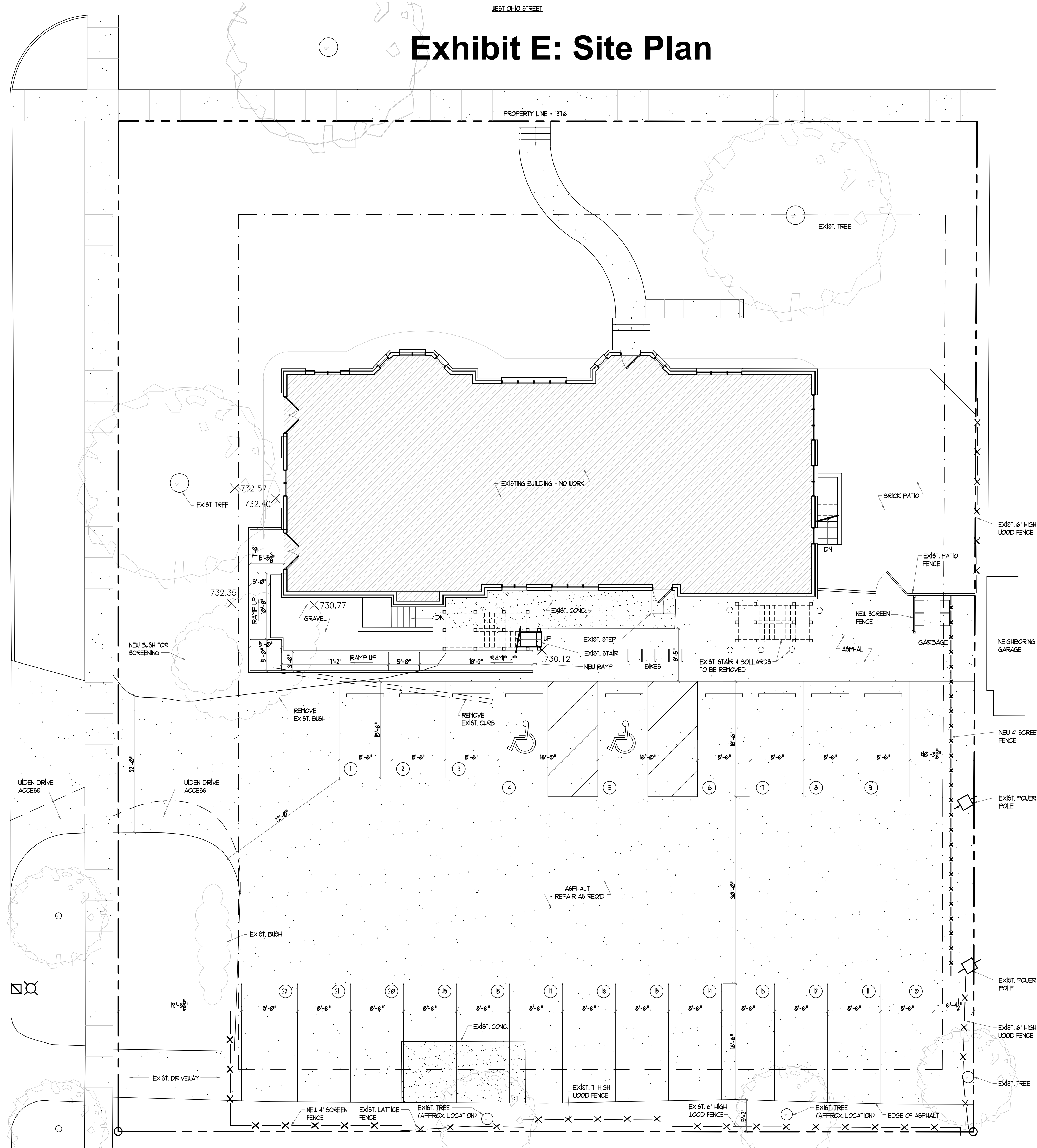
The size of the primary meeting space is about 800 square feet. City regulations state that there needs to be 7 square feet per person for a church assembly hall. With our planned use there will be 10 square feet per person if there are 80 persons in attendance. Also, current city regulations state that there needs to be one parking space for every two single bedrooms, and one parking space for every 5 meeting attendants. Therefore, with ten boarders, we need 5 parking spaces, and for 80 meeting attendants we would need 16 parking spaces ( $80/5=16$ ). Therefore, we would need 21 parking spaces, and the property has 25 spaces. If on special occasions we may have extra visitors, there are over 40 empty spaces available at the McKinley Health Center on a Sunday morning. Another Christian group uses McKinley for their overflow parking. We would probably need at most 5 to 10 of these spaces. McKinley is easy five-minute walk from the proposed property.

The surrounding area of the proposed church assembly hall has a mixture of some R-2 and some R-7 properties. The current use of the property is as a fraternity hall with about 19 residents. We will still use a portion of the current building as a dormitory, similar in use to the current fraternity, but with fewer residents, and no consumption of alcohol, thereby promoting a calmer environment.

The new use of this property should fit well into the current residential environment surrounding it because there will be specific guidelines about how and when to use the property. There will be no rowdy gatherings, and the coming and going of the participants will be quiet and organized.

In mid-September one of the deacons and I were standing on the pavement alongside the building on Busey avenue. We remarked about how calm and peaceful and pleasant the environment around the building was during that mid-day time frame. We said this is the type of environment we want for our meeting hall. We like the residential and calm environment of the area around 713 W. Ohio, and we plan to operate the building to keep it that way.

# Exhibit E: Site Plan



PROJECT # 170109  
 DATE: 2017 JAN 20  
 REV/NOY/:

**ANDREW FELL**  
 ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN  
 615 NORTH HICKORY STREET, SUITE 101  
 CHAMPAIGN, ILLINOIS 61820  
 WWW.ANDREWPELL.COM  
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These drawings and specifications are the property and copyright of Andrew Fell, Architecture and Design and shall not be used on any other project without the agreement with the Architect. Only written dimensions shall be used. Do not scale drawings. Dimensions shall be verified on the job site. Any discrepancy shall be brought to the notice of the Architect prior to the commencement of any work.

CHURCH RAMP  
 RAMP CONSTRUCTION  
 715 W. OHIO  
 URBANA, ILLINOIS 61801



## Exhibit F: Communications

Philip Fiscella  
701 West Ohio  
Urbana IL 61801  
217-840-9978

The Urbana Plan Commission  
City of Urbana  
400 South Vine Street  
Urbana IL 61801

January 12, 2018

Dear Sirs,

I am writing you today in regards to the Special Use Permit submitted for a former fraternity house located at 713 West Ohio Street. The planning case number for this permit application is 2324-SU-17. Unfortunately, I had a prior commitment for the evening of January 18<sup>th</sup>, and will be unable to attend the meeting of The Commission. Nevertheless, I wanted to be able to share my enthusiasm for the proposed project with you.

As you may be aware, I recently purchased and have been restoring a home at 701 West Ohio, just down the street from the subject property. As a preservationist and amateur historian focused on the history of structures, it is my opinion that the foremost challenge facing us today is that of finding economically feasible ways to preserve functionally obsolete historic structures. It is never difficult to find individuals who are excited about keeping the past alive. In a market economy, however, preservation without an economical vision for creative reuse simply relegates historic buildings to neglect and inevitably to their eventual demolition. As you are doubtlessly and painfully aware, there is no mechanism to restore and maintain a historic structure for free in the world that we live in.

The former fraternity house at 713 West Ohio is one of several ornate and irreplaceable homes in the neighborhood. Unfortunately, its future is in grave danger. Fraternities, under great pressure to adapt to the rapidly changing student housing market, have been moving away from traditional dormitory-style off-campus homes. Several fraternity houses in our neighborhood, including this one, have been sold by their Greek owners, and are now being used as overflow housing for different groups each year. These groups of renters are not the conscientious Greeks of yesteryear, with alumni boards and house mothers watching their behavior. Rather, this is a hard use on a building, causing rapid depreciation of the structure. Furthermore, it is tough on the neighbors. The house at 713 W Ohio has, in the warmer months, been host to dozens of late-night parties, and easily half a dozen late-night fire alarms. After a decade or so of such high-intensity use, is doubtful that even fraternities will be interested in renting the house. At that point, one could reasonably expect it to be written off and demolished to make room for new University-Certified Housing.



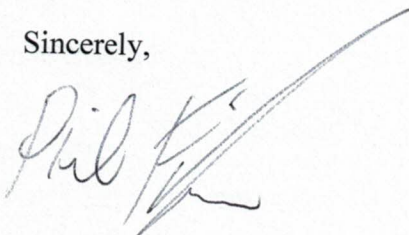
## Exhibit F: Communications

It is my opinion that the special use permit which you are considering tonight is a wonderful way to repurpose and preserve the structure at 713 West Ohio for future generations to appreciate. This seems like everything we could hope to see in a proposal: Bringing the building up to code, adding ADA accessibility for the entire first floor, and most importantly, creating a revenue stream that will allow the owners to pay for maintaining the building for years to come.

As a neighbor, I am not concerned about having a Church on the block. We have seen Ohio Street parking almost entirely unused these past few weeks with the students gone. I am of the opinion that the proposed change of use will benefit the street parking situation on Ohio immensely by eliminating some of the student-housing beds on the block. Currently, most of the cars parked on the street are sorority and fraternity members' cars, and are never moved for weeks on end. Sunday and weekday evening parking for a church should be far less intensive and far more transient. I also believe that it is reasonable to expect that the Christians will have fewer late-night alcohol-fueled parties than the Greeks have been having this past year.

I sincerely hope that you will thoughtfully consider the proposal before you and ultimately approve it. I look forward to being able to appreciate this wonderful cornerstone of our block for decades to come, and to welcoming our new neighbors.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Philip Fiscella". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Philip Fiscella



# Exhibit F: Communications

**From:** Grant Neal  
**To:** [Ricci, Marcus](#)  
**Subject:** 713 West Ohio  
**Date:** Wednesday, January 31, 2018 7:47:18 AM

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Hello Mr. Ricci,

My name is Grant, and I am a resident of 807 S. Busey in Urbana.

I am writing to you in support of allowing a conditional use permit for 713 West Ohio. As a student, I value having a neighborhood that is quiet, friendly, courteous, and conducive to a healthy social environment. I am also a Catholic and believe wholeheartedly in the value of social institutions like churches, which foster solidarity and community development. I believe that allowing a good church institution to operate out of 713 West Ohio is more in line with my values than the frat house which currently resides there. I firmly believe that the so-called 'Greek life' promotes a variety of social ills that hurt our community, including but not limited to excessive substance abuse and violence against women. A frat house is more likely than a church to be noisy, rowdy, and unresponsive to the neighborhood. I generally find fraternities to be institutions that hurt community values that we all wish to abide by. Please give this church a chance to find a home in my community.

# Exhibit F: Communications

**From:** Michael Kellner  
**To:** [Ricci, Marcus](#)  
**Subject:** Turning 713 West Ohio into a church space  
**Date:** Wednesday, January 31, 2018 5:22:42 PM

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Dear Mr. Ricci,

I hope this message finds you well.

I own 606 West Ohio and I support this conditional use permit for 713 West Ohio. I operate 606 West Ohio as a frat house and find it can be very difficult. Our current group has great alumni support but many do not. Anything from property damage, loud parties, and criminal activity can occur when frat parties get out of control. Ohio street often has little street parking because sorority and fraternity members from all the frat/sororities are spilling out into the street with their cars.

As long as the church does not use this property as a homeless shelter, I'm all for it.

Allowing this conditional use permit will cut down on the weekly parking congestion and diminish the amount of students that live on West Ohio. The church is saying that half the people will live in the building than the current group and there will be an onsite supervisor! I believe this conditional use permit will tone down the amount of Greek activity on the street and that's why I support it.

Best Regards,

Mike Kellner

Owner of 606 West Ohio and Kellner Rental Properties

## Exhibit F: Communications

**From:** Drew Livingston  
**To:** [Ricci, Marcus](#)  
**Subject:** Special use permit at 713 W. Ohio  
**Date:** Wednesday, January 31, 2018 8:32:30 PM

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Marcus,

This is Drew Livingston and I own an apartment at 1008 S Busey along with my business partner Lane Nicolette,

We know the owner, and have talked with the owner of 713 W Ohio about what is going on with the Special use permit request, and we think it will help the quality and character of the neighborhood. As small landlords we want to get grad students and young professionals wanting to live in this area. We think that allowing the special use permit at will help create a quieter neighborhood and will help us appeal to an older more mature tenant. We approve of the special use permit for 713 West Ohio.

Thanks

Drew

# Exhibit F: Communications

**From:** Magdalena Casper-Shipp  
**To:** [Ricci, Marcus](#)  
**Subject:** letter for planning  
**Date:** Thursday, February 01, 2018 6:50:54 AM

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Dear Planning commission,

I am writing to support the special use permit for the church in Champaign to use the building at 713 w Ohio as a church space and associated private housing. While I am not necessarily pro-religion, I think that a church group using a large, corner lot for a house of worship on sundays and meeting space for their outreach to students is a much better way for the building to be a good neighbor. The leaders of the church seem to genuinely care about the project (I attended the informational meeting at the civic center), and the couple vocal detractors have what are quite frankly ridiculous concerns. I am afraid the vocal minority will outshout the rest of the people who live and work in our community and don't see the need for a fraternity house to retain the use as a dormitory.

Greek houses are plentiful in the strip of Urbana along campus, and allowing this project to go through sets a positive precedent as Urbana evolves. The "cool" place for undergrads is NOT west Urbana, and the majority of Greek houses are now on campus (and it seems like they are preferring to be in the champaign side of campus). We need to be future thinking about the number of large, beautiful building that have housed Greek chapters for decades - and most likely will NOT continue to do so indefinitely.

I urge the planning commission to think about the potential for the future of these structures as active parts of a vibrant, diverse community in Urbana - a church, while maybe not appropriate for each Greek house on the block to be converted to, is a good use for one on the corner, with a parking lot that is accessed directly from the street. If the special use permit is denied, as other Greek houses become vacant and likely get sold to private owners (as this one is - it is NOT owned by a national Greek organization), knowing that the planning commission is willing to allow adaptive reuse projects that fit the character and location of each structure will help ensure that these buildings continue to be used as part of our community, rather than turning into giant vacant shells.

Thank you for reading,

Magdalena Casper-Shipp

## Exhibit F: Communications

**From:** Johnny Robinson  
**To:** [Ricci, Marcus](#)  
**Subject:** 713 W. Ohio  
**Date:** Thursday, February 01, 2018 8:10:39 AM

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Mr. Ricci,

I am a home inspector and I frequently work in the neighborhood around the frat at 713 W. Ohio. ( I recently did a house on busey, within sight of the frat.) I am naturally concerned about the success of the neighborhood and the property values of my client's homes. It is my opinion that that neighborhood is under a lot of pressure from unruly behavior and trash associated with large student housing. It is a struggle for homeowners to maintain property value without sliding into "slumlord" student housing themselves.

I have become aware that the building is for sale to a church group and that would require a conditional use permit. I want to support that action. I believe it would be helpful for the homeowners in the area.

Johnny Robinson  
Robinson Home Inspection

217-714-2748  
[www.robisonhomeinspection.weebly.com](http://www.robisonhomeinspection.weebly.com)

# Exhibit F: Communications

**From:** Dilley Jacob  
**To:** [Ricci, Marcus](#)  
**Subject:** 713 west Ohio  
**Date:** Thursday, February 01, 2018 9:37:04 AM

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To whom it may concern,

My name is Dee Savariale and Jacob Dilley and we live at [1008 South Busey #2](#). We live two houses down from 713 West Ohio.

We support a conditional use permit allowing 713 West Urbana to operate as a congregational space.

We do not support Frat culture and we sometimes find the noise and partying intrusive. We would welcome a change for the better from that building and we think that a church will do better than the current Frat.

Thanks,

Jacob and Dee"

## Exhibit F: Communications

**From:** Craig Williams  
**To:** [Ricci, Marcus](#)  
**Subject:** Comment on Plan Case 2328-SU-18 (713 W. Ohio St.)  
**Date:** Thursday, February 01, 2018 10:05:35 AM

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Dear Mr Ricci,

A professor of Classics at the University of Illinois, I have been living in the West Urbana neighborhood for five years, the past three of them at 1108 S. Busey Ave. As a resident directly affected by this proposal for a Special Use Permit at 713 W. Ohio Street, I am writing with some brief comments.

The fraternity that has been housed in 713 W. Ohio St. for the past two years has proven to be a significant nuisance. Particularly disturbing are the periodic late-night parties with loud music, raised voices, and accumulations of rubbish afterwards; the regular traffic of unusually noisy cars (without mufflers and/or with enhanced exhaust systems) driving in and out of the parking lot directly adjoining 1108 S. Busey Ave. seven days (and nights) a week does not help. I know nothing about “The Church in Champaign” other than what is on their website, but it is my understanding that the small number of boarders would be subject to an alcohol ban and strict night-time quiet rules, and I would think that any sounds that might emanate from Sunday morning gatherings would be preferable to late-night dance music and other sounds of fraternity parties. For these reasons it seems to me as a neighbor that the proposed new use of 713 W. Ohio St. would be greatly preferable to its current use.

Yours sincerely,

Craig Williams

# Exhibit F: Communications

**From:** Dustin Kelly  
**To:** [Ricci, Marcus](#)  
**Subject:** Turning a frat into a church  
**Date:** Thursday, February 01, 2018 10:17:02 AM

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Hello Marcus,

I'm writing in support of the proposed plan for the special permit for 713 Ohio to operate as a church.

I believe a church / boardinghouse is a big improvement over a fraternity house. The noise and mess will be much reduced. The risk for violence or disruption of the peace will all greatly decrease. Yes, there will be an influx of members at certain times but so is there for a fraternity. I know the property well, knowing the owner, his workers, and walked it several times and I don't believe it would be economical to convert it to condos as some people may like. In addition, I live in the neighborhood with my family at 700 block of W Nevada, and I would welcome a church as a neighbor over the constantly devolving culture involved with a fraternity. I hope the city makes a wise choice for the long lasting peace and prosperity of This precious West Urbana neighborhood.

Dustin Kelly  
217 766 9228



## Exhibit F: Communications

**From:** Brazee, Richard J  
**To:** [Ricci, Marcus](#)  
**Subject:** Support for conditional use permit for 713 W. Ohio  
**Date:** Thursday, February 01, 2018 11:16:05 AM

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Subject to a condition, I support a conditional use permit to allow 713 W. Ohio to operate as a congregation gathering space. The condition is that size of all services be limited so that all congregants can either park on site at 713 W. Ohio or in parking spaces physically bordering on 713 W. Ohio.

If this condition is met, then I believe the congregation's footprint would be appropriate for the neighborhood, and the new residents of 713 W. Ohio could be welcomed into the neighborhood.

I live at 905 S. Busey about 1.5 blocks from 713 W. Ohio.

Sincerely,

Dick Brazee