
DATE: Tuesday, April 5, 2022
TIME: 5:30 p.m.
PLACE: 400 S. Vine Street, Urbana, IL 61801

The City Council of the City of Urbana, Illinois, met in a listening session Tuesday, April 5, 2022, at 5:30 p.m.

ELECTED OFFICIALS PHYSICALLY PRESENT: Diane Wolfe Marlin, Mayor; CM Maryalice Wu, CM Christopher Evans, CM Shirese Hursey, CM Chaundra Bishop

STAFF PRESENT: Darcy Sandefur, Bourema Ouedraogo, Carol Mitten, William Kolschowsky, Lemond Peppers, Andrea Ruedi

OTHERS PRESENT: David Michael Moore, Ashlee McLaughlin and J.D. McLanahan of the Champaign County Regional Planning

1. Call to Order

With a quorum present, Lemond Peppers the Community Engagement Coordinator for the City of Urbana called the listening session to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. Introduction

Mr. Peppers shared housekeeping items and introduced the listening session representatives from the City of Urbana and Regional Planning. Mr. David Michael Moore will be illustrating the public input as a graphic visual artist in real time. Peppers then explained the purpose for the listening session and explained how to participate and options for providing public input.

The City is interested in hearing more about: Which one of the following priorities is/are the most important? 1) Sustainable Infrastructure 2) Human Rights and Social Services 3) Public Health and Safety 4) Adequate and Affordable Housing 5) Economic Recovery and Development. What are the outcomes that you would like to see from the use of ARPA funds? Do you have specific ideas for funding projects or programs related to the priority areas?

Each speaker will be allotted five minutes to speak and should state their name and organizational affiliation for the record. Mr. Peppers asked that community members who have other commitments be allowed to speak first.

3. Public Input

**Denotes speaker asked for written submission to also be included in record. See attached.*

-Dr. Ivory Tatum (Urbana School District) thanked City for opportunity and residents for providing input. Spoke in support of a program that aligns with strategic area Public Health and Safety known as “Plan for U”. This program address mental health for youth and address community violence.

**Full remakes are attached via written submission.*

-Dr. Kim Chanute (University of Illinois) spoke on behalf of the Urbana Park District and their efforts to meet the service needs of all residents. Shared support for the Park District Health and Wellness Center.

-Robert Lewis (Former Urbana Alderperson) spoke on the strategic area Sustainable Infrastructure and in support of infrastructure improvements to the Dr. Ellis subdivision to correct historic inequities. Hopes to see further conversations regarding this and funding being used to ease the burden on residents.

-Maurice Hayes (HV Neighborhood Transformations) spoke in support of the Park District Health and Wellness Center and the importance of having a mental health resource for youth in a high hope area. Feels this facility would serve to help HVNT in its mission to address community violence.

-Jean Paily (Urbana Park District) urged council to provide support for the Urbana Health and Wellness Center to promote public health and safety. Shared that this project is ideal for one time use funding and would address many of the strategic areas.

-Ethel Reed spoke on strategic area sustainable infrastructure and specifically the Dr. Ellis subdivision. Shared her experiences as a resident of that subdivision and the hardships regarding infrastructure inequities.

-Karen Medina shared three areas for ARPA investment: invest in community itself, invest in connections within community, and invest in the youth and future resilience. Spoke against utilizing ARPA funds being used to purchase policing technology. Suggested building a skatepark.

*Full remarks are attached via written submission.

-Aaron Ammons (County Clerk) spoke in support of Urbana Park District Health and Wellness Center. Spoke to the importance of connecting youth to electoral engagement and vote by mail. Advised against utilizing ARPA funds for policing technologies.

-Kelsey Beccue (Urbana Park District) spoke in support of the Urbana Park District Health and Wellness Center and shared an organizational based history of this project. Identified how this project meets four of the five strategic areas and how this project would be a worthwhile one time investment of funds.

-Ashley Whitters (Community Choices) spoke about how barriers like transportation for the disabled community accessing community resources in Champaign could be alleviated by having a facility in Urbana like the Urbana Park District Health and Wellness Center. Spoke about other benefits that moving forward with this project would provide.

-Bill Gray (Urbana Park Foundation Trustee) spoke in support of the Urbana Park District Health and Wellness Center. Shared the importance of intergovernmental partnerships and cooperation and provided examples of other projects that were the result of joint efforts.

-Amani Ayad (Urbana Park District) spoke in support of the Urbana Park District Health and Wellness Center. Spoke about how this project addresses many of the outlined strategic areas and how this facility would draw in additional community revenue. Shared

-Allan Max Axelrod (CU-DSA) acknowledged that there are going to be worthwhile ideas that can't be funded at this time. Shared idea from County which was to fund a full time grant manager specifically to apply for grants that the municipality would not otherwise be able to apply for. Asked about expanding additional IStops for increased accessibility. Spoke in solidarity with the Dr. Ellis subdivision infrastructure inequities. Spoke in support of increasing funding for SWFT program.

-Heather Rose (youth representative) shared difficulties educators have had with students/youth because of trauma and unhealed wounds. Spoke in support of H3 model. Encouraged taking a more holistic approach to addressing community violence and increasing availability of mental health services. Hopes we can leave an impact on youth.

-Giovanna Dibenedetto (Silver Hearts Community) Spoke in support of Urbana Park District Health and Wellness Center. Shared conversations with her daughter and the importance of having a place for kids to go to be safe. Discussed issues of food deserts and the importance of having more resources in underserved areas.

-Eddie Pratt Jr. (CU-DSA) spoke in solidarity with Dr. Ellis subdivision and asked for the City to correct the infrastructure inequities. Shared that the ARPA funds are a great opportunity to right a wrong and correct the historic infrastructure gaps. Encouraged City to consider supporting expansion of the SWFT program.

-Fiona Munro (CU-DSA) spoke on strategic area sustainable infrastructure and in support of infrastructure improvements to the Dr. Ellis subdivision to meet basic needs. Shared support for expanding the SWFT program.

-Elderess Melinda Carr (Dr. Ellis Subdivision Committee) spoke in support of Dr. Ellis subdivision infrastructure improvements. Explained the sense of community that was previously present within Urbana and hopes to see that restored.

-Carly McKay (Champaign County Economic Development Corp.) spoke on strategic area for Economic Development and Recovery. Shared what the Champaign County Economic Development Corp. is doing to work with local businesses to help them grow like micro-lending. Hopes to gain support to help continue to provide financial support to small businesses with partnership of Justine Peters.

-Julie Watkins spoke in support of improving infrastructure in Dr. Ellis subdivision to right the wrong. Encouraged City to support expansion of SWFT program to invest in community future. Shared that skateparks seem to be a good resource for youth.

Facilitator Lemond Peppers asked if anyone else wished to address the body.

-Ashley Moore (UPDAC) spoke in support of Urbana Park District Health and Wellness Center. Shared Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and the importance of community gardens in proximity to other community resources like the proposed Park District Health and Wellness Center. Expressed support for Dr. Ellis subdivision infrastructure improvements and investing in programs to help youth.

4. Adjournment

Lemond Peppers made closing remarks and the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 PM.

Darcy Sandefur
Recording Secretary

This meeting was video recorded and is viewable on-demand [HERE](#).

Minutes approved: 05-02-2022

Good Evening, Mayor Marlin and City Council Members,

First, let me thank you for the opportunity to address the Council. As a long-time Urbana resident and community member, I applaud your efforts to collect input from all stakeholders. I also appreciate that you are looking for programs that will have a long-lasting and far-reaching impact on our community for years to come and will also specifically address the needs of our youth.

I shared a programming proposal with the Council that the District believes aligns well with your goals and falls into the Public Health eligible use APRA category (specifically addressing behavioral health, mental health, and preventing and responding to violence). This program will also address the impact on our historically underserved, marginalized, or disproportionately impacted groups.

In the materials you've posted online, I noted that this idea would also fall under the ARPA Federal Regulations for COVID-19 Public Health provisions, as Disproportionately impacted groups are eligible for capital investments or property improvements through ARPA.

What is this new program and model called "Plan for You?"

"Plan for U" will be a restorative, therapeutic space for grades 6-12 students that will focus on the whole child through an equity-centered wrap-around, social-emotional, trauma-informed service delivery model.

We envision this program as a collaboration between the City of Urbana and the Urbana School District to enhance youth development and mitigate the academic and social skills lost during the pandemic and 15 months of remote learning. The District hopes that through the relationships built with students

and families and the therapeutic and restorative approaches used, we might collaboratively re-establish relationships, wrap around families, and at the same time reduce gun violence in our community through intervention and prevention. We are committed to breaking the current trends we are seeing by putting systems in place to support youth at an earlier age (grades 6-8) while also re-engaging those that may be struggling with the traditional school model in grades 6-12.

We can build our community resiliency together through a trauma-informed approach. As a District, we are not looking for a cookie-cutter, one-size-fits-all solution but more a “trauma-informed” approach. This model will involve a complete paradigm shift from deficit thinking to trauma-informed practices within our community. We will need to strengthen our knowledge, perspective, attitudes, and skills to find more intentional ways to connect with our youth most connected to gun violence, most disengaged with school, and those most traumatized by the events happening in our community.

The intent of this model is not to exclude students or send them to other programs but to continue to support their needs in the District so that they can remain in our schools. Our first step in this process is to hire a Director who will be working with a team of educators, staff, and community partners to build this program from the ground up. We are currently writing several grant proposals to help support training and staffing. The planning team will finalize the model and curriculum and develop an implementation plan. We are also exploring after-school grants that will hopefully provide a space for youth to keep them involved in programs after school from 3:30-8:00 p.m., connected to constructive activities until we can deliver them



safely home.

Space is a premium need in our District and an area that our current COVID relief dollars cannot fund as our dollars are much more specific to COVID mitigations. We have allocated our current district ESSER funds for facility upgrades and capital improvements that increase physical distancing, improved ventilation, and academic and social-emotional programs that address learning renewal and learning recovery.

We have seen firsthand the direct results of gun violence and its impact on our students, families, and community. We can no longer continue to talk about this problem, but we now need to take action to support our youth and deal with the root causes of gun violence; however, we can repair the harm. I do not want to attend one more funeral for a young person due to the result of gun violence. The time is now! With our combined efforts, we, the Urbana School District, and the City of Urbana can work together to reverse this trend and the adverse effects in an intentional and equitable way to help the Urbana communities that continue to suffer the most.

Thank you for your time and for the opportunity to address the Council.

Dr. Ivory-Tatum,
Superintendent of Schools
Urbana School District

Sandefur, Darcy

From: Karen Medina
Sent: Tuesday, April 05, 2022 5:12 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: ARPA -> invest in the community / a skateboard park as an example of building community

***** Email From An External Source *****

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear Urbana City Council Members,

The correct way to spend the ARPA money:

- * invest in the community itself (our strongest asset),
- * build resiliency through interpersonal connections

I would like to share an article about how an investment in building a skateboard park is a real investment in multi-generational community building.

- * Young people need things to do and places where they are free to be themselves within our city
- * "As a gathering place for dedicated youth, the skatepark provides the forum for young and old, beginning and skilled, to meet and share experiences and advice about skateboarding and life in general. For many skateboarding youth, the skatepark becomes a home-away-from-home, where the younger ones learn (life) lessons from the older ones, reaching from basic injury tips, over becoming more aware and responsible for their own health & life and additionally gain confidence to test their limits"
- * "Reclaiming public spaces help people to feel like they are part of a caring and secure community. The busier the place, the more appealing for the youth and the more 'included' and valued people feel. An important psychosocial benefit of creating a skate park is that it allows community members to 'feel safe again.'"

Article: "Why cities & communities should support skateboarding and public skateparks" by Daniel Gluche / Sep 5, 2019

(approximately a 10 minute read) https://medium.com/@daniel_stories/why-cities-communities-should-support-skateboarding-and-public-skateparks-6e23ba5da3fb

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Karen Medina