
DATE: Monday, February 3, 2025
TIME: 7:00 p.m.
PLACE: 400 S. Vine Street, Urbana, IL 61801

The City Council Committee of the Whole of the City of Urbana, Illinois, met in regular session Monday, February 3, 2025, at 8:53p.m.

ELECTED OFFICIALS PHYSICALLY PRESENT: Diane Wolfe Marlin, Mayor; Darcy Sandefur, City Clerk; CM Maryalice Wu, CM Christopher Evans, CM Shirese Hursey*, CM Jaya Kolisetty, CM Chaundra Bishop, CM Grace Wilken, CM James Quisenberry

***CM PRESENT REMOTELY**

ELECTED OFFICIALS ABSENT: None.

STAFF PRESENT: Bourema Ouedraogo, Marcus Ricci, Demond Dade, Will Kolschowsky, Steve Doggett, Tal Prendergast, Seok Hyun Cho, Matt Roeschley, Carol Mitten, John Zeman, Larry Boone, Dave Smysor

OTHERS PRESENT: Andrew Fell, Owner of Andrew Fell Architecture & Design

Chair: *Grace Wilken, Ward 6*

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

With a quorum present, Chair Wilken called the meeting of the Urbana City Council to order at 8:53p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

None.

3. Additions to the Agenda

Mayor Marlin moved Ordinance No. 2025-02-005 to the next Committee of the Whole as the presenters are ill today and could not attend.

4. Presentations and Public Input

Written Public Input in support of Ordinance No. 2024-12-042 were received from the following individuals and read by Chair Wilken: Jane McClintock, David Young, Lilah Leopold, and Rohn Koester. Written Public Input in support of Ordinance No. 2024-12-042 were received from the following individuals, but not read: Sarah Roper and Sana Saboowala.

5. Staff Report

None.

6. Old Business

- a. **Ordinance No. 2024-12-042:** An Ordinance Establishing Approval, Policy, and Reporting Requirements for Policing Surveillance Technology and Databases – CM’s Wilken and Kolisetty

Introduction provided by Mayor Marlin. The Ordinance requires and clarifies the process for procurement and use of policing technology and databases that can be used to monitor, track, and identify specific individuals or groups. The Ordinance codifies the public approval process for specific surveillance technologies or databases; it does not dictate the use of any given technology (that would be voted on by Council). Mayor Marlin provided updates on the City Staff review of the Ordinance and technologies used by the Urbana Police Department (UPD). Stated the information can be found within the packet under the staff memos and asked if any further background information can be gathered before Council continues their deliberations. Stated a question was recently raised regarding Cellebrite and a presentation will be coming specifically on that tool. Relayed City Staff requests for the Ordinance to focus on surveillance technologies and not investigative technologies. Questions and discussion followed.

Motion to keep in Committee of the Whole by CM Wu, seconded by CM Quisenberry.

Voice Vote:

AYE: Wu, Evans, Hursey, Kolisetty, Bishop, Wilken, Quisenberry

NAY: None.

7. New Business

- a. **Ordinance No. 2025-02-004:** An Ordinance Approving a Major Variance (Bui Porch Stair Front Yard at 501 West Washington Street / Case No. ZBA-2024-MAJ-03) – CD

Presented by Marcus Ricci, Planner II with Andrew Fell, Owner of Andrew Fell Architecture & Design present for questions. The Ordinance approves of a major variance to reduce the required front yard from 15 feet to 10 feet to allow construction of porch stairs on a home addition at 501 West Washington Street, in the R-2 (Single-Family Residential) Zoning District. Marcus Ricci stated the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) reviewed this case on January 15 and unanimously voted to recommend the approval of the variance.

Stated City Staff recommended a denial of the variance as the legal criteria of having a special circumstance regarding the parcel or structure has not been met and variances have not been granted without the criteria being met. Stated neither staff, the ZBA, and the applicant have been able to produce a special circumstance or practical difficulty regarding the parcel or structure. Stated despite the variance being more visually appealing than the alternative and there being no harm to the neighborhood, granting a variance is not the method in which City Staff would recommend achieving the desired outcome. Stated the Ordinance, in its current state, does not have a special circumstance listed and is not legally sufficient to grant the variance.

Stated City Staff are interested in amending the Zoning Ordinance to revise the setback requirements to allow for encroachment onto a minimum required yard and allowing adjustments for adherence to current building code standards. Shared pictures of the existing porch and the proposed porch. Questions and discussion ensued.

Motion to approve to the regular agenda by CM Wu, seconded by CM Quisenberry.

Voice Vote:

AYE: Wu, Evans, Hursey, Bishop, Wilken, Quisenberry

NAY: Kolisetty

Motion to extend the meeting to 11:00p.m. by CM Wu, seconded by CM Quisenberry.

Voice Vote:

AYE: Wu, Evans, Hursey, Kolisetty, Bishop, Wilken, Quisenberry

NAY: None.

- b. ~~**Ordinance No. 2025-02-005:** An Ordinance Approving a Special Use Permit (809 W. Green St. / Plan Case No. 2496-SU-24 – Dutch Bros Coffee) – CD~~

Item moved to the next COW during Additions to the Agenda.

- c. **Ordinance No. 2025-02-006:** An Ordinance Amending Schedule A of Section 23-62 of the Urbana Local Traffic Code Increasing State Speed Limits in Certain Zones (Correcting Errors and Omissions in Schedule A for Various Streets) – PW

Presented by John Zeman, City Engineer. The Ordinance corrects errors and omissions in Schedule A of the Urbana Local Traffic Code for various streets. John Zeman shared a map of speed limits in Urbana displaying the errors and omissions across various streets. Stated due to the local traffic code being replaced a few times across its history, errors and omissions have slowly accumulated but have now been located in the code for revision. Stated the Ordinance mostly aligns the speed limits in the traffic code with the ones currently in use across the streets. Proposed a reduction in the speed limit for Lincoln Avenue from Bradley Avenue to Anthony Drive from 40 miles per hour down to 35 miles per hour. Questions and discussion followed.

Motion to approve to the consent agenda by CM Bishop, seconded by CM Quisenberry.

Voice Vote:

AYE: Wu, Evans, Hursey, Kolisetty, Bishop, Wilken, Quisenberry

NAY: None.

- d. **Resolution No. 2025-02-013R:** A Resolution Approving a License Agreement with New Lincoln Square, LLC (Six Total Signs Adjacent to Lincoln Square Mall) – PW

Presented by John Zeman, City Engineer. The Resolution authorizes the Mayor to execute a license agreement with New Lincoln Square, LLC to allow for construction, maintenance, operation, and repair for multiple above-ground Lincoln Square Mall signs (five existing and one proposed) within the public rights-of-way and property adjacent to Lincoln Square Mall in Urbana.

John Zeman stated the Resolution is to formalize the sign placement for Lincoln Square Mall as they have been in public rights-of-way without an agreement. Stated there is currently a desire to move the sign at Race and Green Street into the median on Green Street. Stated the agreement includes an annual licensing fee based on the total square footage of the signs. Questions and discussion followed.

Motion to approve to the consent agenda by CM Wu, seconded by CM Quisenberry.

Voice Vote:

AYE: Wu, Evans, Hursey, Kolisetty, Bishop, Wilken, Quisenberry

NAY: None.

- e. **Resolution No. 2025-02-014R:** A Resolution Approving the Equity and Quality of Life (EQL) Program for Fiscal Year 2025 – PW

Presented by John Zeman, City Engineer. The Resolution approves the EQL Program for Fiscal Year 2025. John Zeman spoke on the development of the second EQL Program which used the community needs survey from the Grants Division to identify the most desired improvements to the infrastructure. Stated the Public Works Department also collaborated with the UPD to identify low-income areas with elevated rates of crime that improvements to infrastructure could help lower crime rates. Stated Silverwood was identified as an area where improved street lighting could help reduce crime as the current streetlights do not provide uniform light coverage due to their spacing. Stated sidewalks are also planned for development on East Harding Drive in the area where it connects with Vawter Street to address the sidewalk gap there. Stated curb ramp developments and repairs are also planned for areas where they are missing on South Cottage Grove Avenue to improve connectivity while also attempting to calm traffic on the avenue. Stated the top three improvements requested are for pedestrian facilities, streetlights, and addressing speeding in neighborhoods. Proposed the funds allocated by Council in the Capital Improvement Plan for the EQL program be distributed in the following manner: 50% to pedestrian facilities, 33% to streetlights, and 17% to traffic calming. Noted the other traffic calming areas identified within the City were found through speed studies conducted where there were significant amounts of speeding seen. Stated Public Works is interested in exploring cost-effective traffic calming methods such as using vertical plastic posts in intersections and mid-block crossings to act as a psychological barrier against speeding without impacting the necessary area of movement required for turning. Stated Broadway and Kerr Avenues were identified as areas for traffic calming as they have long segments without any sort of stop control for pedestrians hoping to cross the road. Questions and discussion followed.

Motion to approve to the regular agenda by CM Wu, seconded by CM Kolisetty.

Voice Vote:

AYE: Wu, Evans, Kolisetty, Bishop, Wilken, Quisenberry

NAY: None.

8. Council Input and Communications

None.

9. Adjournment

With no further business before the committee of the whole Chair Wilken adjourned the meeting at 10:53 p.m.

Seok Hyun Cho

Deputy City Clerk

This meeting was video recorded and is viewable [on-demand HERE](#). **Minutes approved: 3/10/25**

Rafael Cho

From: Jane McClintock [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, February 3, 2025 6:27 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Public Process Ordinance

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

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Good evening, Council.

Please read my comments into the public record if time permits.

I am writing to encourage you continue the effort to create a public process around the acquisition and use of police surveillance technology. I appreciate council member Wilken's thoughtful response to council concerns with the language from Boston's resolution.

If there are still outstanding concerns from staff or council members, I encourage the council to direct staff to amend the lists of excluded and included technologies to something they are comfortable with for review by the public and council.

This ordinance (as it is currently drafted) would not exclude any technology from use and would not apply to technology that is not in use. It simply requires the police department to provide a policy and track how surveillance technology is used. This is something I would hope they are already doing.

Transparency and clear policies are crucial to maintaining fairness while reducing bias and liability for the City. In addition, transparency is the best investment we can make in "community engagement" to improve the image of the police department.

Please don't let the hard work on this ordinance go to waste - let's get this done.

Thanks,
Jane McClintock

Rafael Cho

From: David Young <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, February 3, 2025 6:07 PM
To: City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT: February 3, 2025 Committee of the Whole

*** Email From An External Source ***

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Urbana City Council members,

Please enter my words into the public record. Feel free to skip over the lengthy URLs.

I want to make sure that council members have read the same articles that Urbana citizens have read about Flock Safety's automatic license plate readers. Flock Safety supplies many of the plate readers in surrounding communities, and Urbana has previously considered hosting Flock plate readers. The articles that I mention below speak to a pattern of poor judgment and law-breaking at Flock. They cast doubt on the safety and legality of hosting its plate readers. I support Ordinance No. 2024-12-042 to establish city council approval of police surveillance technology like Flock plate readers.

The city of Norfolk, Virginia, is being sued in federal court on Fourth Amendment grounds over their use of Flock Safety. The complaint states that the city "has installed a network of cameras that make it functionally impossible for people to drive anywhere without having their movements tracked, photographed, and stored in an AI-assisted database that enables the warrantless surveillance of their every move."

Previous court decisions have found this type of persistent, warrantless surveillance unconstitutional. Norfolk's use of Flock Safety may be found unconstitutional on similar grounds. Read more:

<https://arstechnica.com/tech-policy/2024/10/lawsuit-city-cameras-make-it-impossible-to-drive-anywhere-without-being-tracked/>

A 2022 story in The Guardian explores how Flock's license plate readers can be used by law enforcement to stalk women who seek abortions across state lines. Read more:

<https://linkprotect.cudasvc.com/url?a=https%3a%2f%2fwww.theguardian.com%2fworld%2f2022%2foct%2f06%2fhow-expanding-web-of-license-plate-readers-could-be-weaponized-against-abortion&c=E,1,WuGzVi--u9gS9lhPm8Xao3ekv00GqVKEI48HK1dZvJXWpxzTYLmQSLCRJi1agGPOZIBqanHS37CnR4F1K1HhtD8oeXgUBFcOrgD2TGWIHdgfQ94-0Me2vg,,&typo=1>

For a company whose stated goal is to "eliminate crime," Flock breaks the law A LOT. In state after state, they have put their cameras on public property without getting the necessary permits. When an IDOT employee spoke to them about their error-filled permit applications, they allegedly threatened the employee with visits from "30 different police chiefs." Read more:

<https://jalopnik.com/license-plate-surveillance-startup-broke-the-law-while-1851289764>

Flock was recently in trouble with the Texas Department of Public Safety for operating without the private investigator's license that Texas law requires them to hold. Read more:

https://linkprotect.cudasvc.com/url?a=https%3a%2f%2fthetexan.news%2fissues%2fcriminal-justice%2ftexas-dps-sends-cess-and-desist-to-automatic-license-plate-reader-company%2farticle_dc313b6a-7b85-11ef-812e-4bd0cd869a6b.html&c=E,1,a_MZEA0cJ9-42I6DN7h1LONI4ZUMn8IZXS0IsjGWDTB6358gSfT5dLypd7imcRStRNpBJMRqPGH1msA4yRo_WC1LO_SUVklLWp8Pt1IsMOajuipfg,,&typo=1

In an eyebrow-raising move, Flock hired the mayor of a California city. Now he is suing Flock for improper termination. Flock allegedly asked him to use his office to benefit Flock. When he refused, the suit alleges that they retaliated by firing him. Read more:

<https://techcrunch.com/2025/01/08/flock-safety-quietly-hired-a-sitting-california-mayor-now-hes-suing-flock/>

Finally, the ACLU is unequivocal in its opposition to mass-surveillance technology, and they have this to say about Flock Safety's automatic license plate reader (ALPR) system, "If the police or government leaders are pushing for Flock ... in your community, we urge you to oppose it, full stop." They explain their position, "... there's no reason the technology should be used to create comprehensive records of everybody's comings and goings — and that is precisely what ALPR databases like Flock's are doing. In our country, the government should not be tracking us unless it has individualized suspicion that we're engaged in wrongdoing." Read more:

https://linkprotect.cudasvc.com/url?a=https%3a%2f%2fwww.aclu.org%2fnews%2fprivacy-technology%2fhow-to-pump-the-brakes-on-your-police-departments-use-of-flocks-mass-surveillance-license-plate-readers&c=E,1,i0iLSQIMhyUqnCc7QtneO72N_he1cD3GR2IOBnf4af7z_yV4wHUTNOHRsy61a9XWA5W_6_hph3fEko8ZBmv_8M7jpH0hKiaL38ARwxV8DO-zB5Q,&typo=1

David

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David Young

██████████ Urbana, IL ██████████

Rafael Cho

From: Lilah Leopold <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, February 3, 2025 1:15 PM
To: City Council; Diane Marlin
Subject: Public Comment 2/3/25

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

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear Mayor Marlin and Council Members Wu, Evans, Hursey, Kolisetty, Bishop, Wilken, Quisenberry,

I submit the below as Public Comment for tonight's council meeting. Please read aloud if time permits (thank you in advance!):

My name is Lilah Leopold and I am a resident of Urbana (Ward 4). I write in support of the Police Surveillance Technology Oversight Ordinance authored by Alderperson Grace Wilken of Ward 6. This seems in keeping with the kind of transparency that both Council and the Police have repeatedly said is incredibly important to maintaining trust in our community.

There also seems to be a mischaracterization of this Ordinance as going against best practices in public safety; therefore it seems worth stating that an Ordinance such as this one offers Council oversight of surveillance technology used by our police force---oversight should not be equated with outright denial. Oversight of police surveillance technology would not prevent the approval of technologies used. Council are beholden to members of our community are are responsible for taking care of the daily infrastructural components that effect us all--asking that links between Council and Police remain strong and transparent as more and more technologies are introduced into our community is a best practice.

A call for an ordinance it should not be taken personally as a comment on how any member of our public safety forces does their job. It seems like an incredibly reasonable ask especially given so many current technologies involve such a degree of non-human decision-making that will only increase. I hope all members of our Council and Police Force will see the Police Surveillance Technology Oversight Ordinance as a call for creating a safety net that preserves human decision-making between branches of our community leadership at an important historical moment, as we all learn more about the tools that enter our community, together.

Please, move forward with serious discussion of the Police Surveillance
Technology Oversight Ordinance.

Thank you,

Lilah Leopold

Rafael Cho

From: Rohn Koester [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, February 3, 2025 5:18 PM
To: City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT February 3, 2025

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

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[PLEASE READ THIS INTO THE RECORD.]

To the Mayor and City Council:

I write in support of the ordinance that establishes the council's governing authority over new police surveillance technology and databases. At a time when the power of the police is being amplified by technological innovations, we must be proactive in protecting the public's right to know and participate in decisions that affect public safety.

Notice that the ordinance is not about the Urbana Police Department and the officers who work there. It is not about the police chief and his policies. It is not even about the city council, nor any of the employees of the city. Rather, the ordinance is about good government and preserving the voice of the people.

As we witness daily the new Republican president's attempts to circumvent the power of congress to apply checks and balances to the executive branch, I urge us all to respond to a higher standard, by ensuring that the city council and the citizens of Urbana have a say in the surveillance tools used to police the city.

Respectfully,
Rohn Koester

[REDACTED]
Urbana

From: [REDACTED]
To: [City Council](#)
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT 2/3/25
Date: Tuesday, February 4, 2025 8:49:21 AM

***** Email From An External Source *****
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Dear City Council,

I am writing to express my support for Ordinance No. 2024-12-042: An Ordinance Establishing Approval, Policy, and Reporting Requirements for Police Surveillance Technology.

Now, more than ever, it is critical that we as a community have a clear understanding and say over how we are surveilled and what ultimately happens with that information. There are countless residents of Urbana who are at potential risk of severe harm if information collected about them is not carefully safeguarded and used with oversight. Additionally, there is a significant potential for abuse of surveillance data and so many unknowns that we face in the years ahead.

We have seen the political landscape change at a rapid pace over the past few years, and at an unbelievably rapid pace in just the past two weeks. It is undeniable that young women from other states who seek access to safe abortions in Illinois will be tracked by their state law enforcement agencies, hundreds (if not thousands) of our community members face the real threat of deportation in the months and years ahead, and trans members of our communities now fear for their lives.

This ordinance does not seek to block the responsible use of police technology and surveillance. It does however put some much needed guardrails in place and would allow the community to understand what information is being collected on them, how it is being used, and who it is being shared with. I recognize that the chief of police feels that this ordinance would be a burden and an inconvenience to his force. Perhaps more staff will be needed to comply with this ordinance, but the human cost of not passing this ordinance far outweighs any potential financial or emotional cost that passing it will have on the city or on Chief Boone.

I strongly urge you to stand with our local ACLU in supporting civil liberties, civil rights, and this ordinance.

Sincerely,
Sarah Roper

Rafael Cho

From: Sana Saboowala <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, February 3, 2025 6:05 PM
To: City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT FEB. 3 2025

*** Email From An External Source ***

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Please read my public input aloud:

Dear Urbana City Council,

My name is Sana Saboowala, I live in Ward 2, and I am a member of CU Muslim Action Committee. I'm writing to reiterate our support of the police surveillance ordinance.

The proposed ordinance is by no means radical, and it doesn't necessarily limit police power. This ordinance is an accountability measure. It is about requiring transparency, which is something our police department seems to care deeply about.

The ordinance would require city council approval of surveillance technology. It would mean before the police use surveillance technology, the city council would get a chance to discuss the pros and cons of the technology publicly. This transparency allows us, as a community, to keep the police accountable.

If, for whatever reason, some surveillance technology is necessary to keep our city functioning, then council can approve of that technology and it can be used. This ordinance creates space for more discussions about what surveillance technology gets used in Urbana, and those conversations are vital.

I'd love to live in a city that is actively working on how to best ensure the privacy, safety, and security of its residents are protected and to see methods of transparency codified here. City staff may need to tweak the ordinance to make it more specific to Urbana, but I think passing this ordinance with the basic idea that police couldn't use surveillance technology without council approval first (and building in some enforcement of that, probably through funding) would be an excellent step towards to transparency in the city.

Thank you for working on this important topic as a council.

Best,
Sana Saboowala
CU Muslim Action Committee