
DATE: Monday, July 06, 2026
TIME: 7:00 p.m.
PLACE: 400 S. Vine Street, Urbana, IL 61801

The City Council of the City of Urbana, Illinois, met in special session Monday, July 6, 2026, at 7 p.m.

ELECTED OFFICIALS PHYSICALLY PRESENT: DeShawn Williams, Mayor; Darcy Sandefur, City Clerk; CM Maryalice Wu, CM Christopher Evans, CM Shirese Hursey, CM Verdell Jones III, CM Stephanie Cockrell, CM Grace Wilken*, CM James Quisenberry

***CM PRESENT REMOTELY**

ELECTED OFFICIALS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT: Bourema Ouedraogo, Chris Kalter, Evan Alvarez, Olivia Jovine, Larry Boone, Mike Cervantes, Darius White

OTHERS PRESENT:

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

With a quorum present, Mayor Williams called the meeting of the Urbana City Council to order at 7 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

None.

3. Additions to the Agenda

None.

4. Presentations and Public Input

a. Public Input

Chris Birdy spoke in opposition to Ordinance No. 2026-05-013 regarding the Planned Unit Development (PUD) at 413-419 West Main Street due to the threat of having the R2 zoning change to R5. Expressed the developers should find another location in downtown Urbana. Raised concern regarding Andrew Fell's position on the Planning Commission and his connection to this development. Stated this development does not create affordable housing.

Alen Romero spoke in opposition to Ordinance No. 2026-05-013 and in support of publicly owned housing. Expressed the development does not serve the interests of the renters and small landlords of Urbana, and it unhouses the people currently living in the existing homes on the property. Called on Urbana to create and operate publicly owned, affordable housing.

Adani Sanchez spoke in support of Ordinance No. 2026-05-013 as it creates 32 new homes in downtown Urbana without expanding sprawl. Stated Urbana has a shortage of housing across all levels of affordability. Requested Urbana pass ordinances to incentivize development, create affordable housing, hold neglectful landlords accountable, and create community land-trusts. Emphasized the need to address housing scarcity in order for current residents to access acceptable housing conditions and create housing availability for the generations to come.

a. Public Input (Continued)

Gabriel spoke in support of Ordinance No. 2026-05-013 as people across the entire local community struggle to find housing. Requested Council to support the creation of all forms of housing types. Stated all perspectives of the community should be considered, including the community members who are student renters. **Cyrus Dochow** questioned why the PUD in Ordinance No. 2026-05-013 includes its proposed amount of parking and spoke in support of it returning to Plan Commission for revision. Stated the parking spaces should be replaced due to the proximity of the property to downtown and public transit options. Expressed support for the density of the housing development and suggested the design should be reimaged without parking spaces. **Mark Nilges** spoke in opposition to Ordinance No. 2026-05-013. Stated the high-density residential development is inappropriate for the area as it is intended for residential use and zoned R2 instead of R5. Expressed the design violates the quiet character of the neighborhood and is more appropriate for other parts of Urbana. Noted the development does not create affordable housing and does not support Boneyard Creek. Spoke on how apartments in West Urbana create difficulties in parking and create a need for the Urbana Police Department (UPD) to remove improperly parked cars from the driveways of homeowners. Expressed fear of being forcibly removed from their home by future housing developments and having their home improvement investments invalidated. Stated people will lose trust in Urbana and find housing elsewhere if more high-density housing, similar to Campustown, is developed. **Elizabeth Nichol** spoke in opposition to Ordinance No. 2026-05-013 as it disrespects the lines set in the Imagine Urbana Comprehensive Plan. Echoed the statements regarding how the development does not create affordable housing. Recounted how the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign's advertisement and recruitment efforts highlighted the neighborhood character of West Urbana. Stated the development defiles the West Urbana neighborhood. **Dennis Roberts** recounted the development process of apartments on 200 South Vine Street in Urbana and how the development plan changed from its initial proposal due to feedback from the City administration. Requested Council consider taking similar action for the development proposal in Ordinance No. 2026-05-013 to protect the high quality of housing in the historic West Urbana neighborhood. Stated homeowners of West Urbana are concerned about living near high-density housing. Echoed the concerns for zoning, how the development does not create affordable housing, and how it defies the Imagine Urbana Comprehensive Plan.

Written Public Input regarding Ordinance No. 2026-06-016 were received from the following individuals and read by Council: Sarah Yamaguchi, Becky Mead & Tim Stelzer, Luke Bial, Lois Steinberg, Valerie Holton, and the Brashear family.

Written Public Input regarding Ordinance No. 2026-06-016 were received from the following individuals but were not read: Dennis Roberts, Derek Brashear, Alen Romero, Alexander Rushing, G. Brewster.

Mayor Williams called for a temporary recess due to technical difficulties at 7:34 p.m. With a quorum present, Council reconvened from recess at 7:35 p.m.

5. Council Input and Communications

None.

6. Unfinished Business

- a. **Ordinance No. 2026-05-013:** An Ordinance Approving a Preliminary & Final Development Plan for a Planned Unit Development at 413-419 West Main Street (Plan Case No. 2519-PUD-25) – CD

The Ordinance approves the preliminary and final approval of a residential Planned Unit Development at 413-419 West Main Street.

~~Motion to approve by CM Jones, seconded by CM Hursey.~~ Discussion followed.

- i. Motion amended by CM Jones and CM Hursey to defer to the July 13, 2026, City Council meeting.

Motion to defer to the July 13, 2026, City Council meeting by CM Jones, seconded by CM Hursey.

Roll Call Vote:

AYE: Wu, Evans, Hursey, Jones, Cockrell, Wilken, Quisenberry

NAY: None.

7. Reports of Standing Committees

None.

8. Reports of Special Committees

None.

9. Reports of Officers

None.

10. Adjournment

With no further business before the Urbana City Council, Mayor Williams adjourned the meeting at 7:37p.m.

Seok Hyun Cho

Deputy City Clerk

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

Minutes approved: 8/10/26

Public Input:

From Melissa Brashear [REDACTED]
Date Thu 7/2/2026 10:18 AM
To City Council <CityCouncil@Urbanall.gov>

 1 attachment (2 MB)
DMCB Properties-.pdf;

*** Email From An External Source ***

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Hello Mr Mayor, Council Members, City Clerk, and Mr Administrator:

We humbly submit our letter to you for background on who we are and what we hope to accomplish concerning the Planned Unit Development, along with the timeline that has brought us to this point.

We appreciate your time and willingness to give your best concentrated effort to gain understanding of our intent to bring another housing option to downtown Urbana. Thank you!

We volunteer annually at a kids camp in Georgia every July. Unfortunately we will be away for the next council meeting on the 6th. We will be back on the 13th and hope to see you all then.

Have a great 4th of July! us

Respectfully,
Missy & Derek Brashear



DMCB Properties:

Brashear Family - **Who we are:**

Derek - Resident of C-U since 1990

Melissa - Lifelong resident of Champaign-Urbana. . . I love this town! We have seen the growth and potential that this area provides. And we continue to appreciate the close-knit community of Urbana. Its supporters encourage the best the city has to offer to both its neighbors and its visitors from other nations!

Real Estate broker since 1993 in C-U and graduate of U of I in Urban and Regional Planning.

Caleb - Student, lover of all things sports, acting, and real estate.

Why invest in this area?

I am a second generation developer. My dad, Carl Hill, spent most of his life developing 365 lots for families in SE Urbana, finishing Myra Ridge and then South Ridge Subdivisions located off Philo Rd in Urbana. He dedicated South Ridge Park to the City of Urbana and Brashear Park was developed for the residents in Brashear Commons HOA (this includes over 4000 feet of bike trails). He also worked with the a volunteer group as volunteer construction coordinator to build Prairie Play at Meadowbrook Park in 1995 (the wooden structure lasted 25 years). They are great amenities. After decades of watching Carl and my mother, Jane Hill, help families find housing, I developed a love for helping others through housing myself. I went on to become a City Planner by education from the University of Illinois... My love for people and houses grew through real estate and I have had the fortune of being a real estate broker for 33 years. I look for potential in houses and properties. I see what could be and try to serve others with something both useful and beautiful.

What are our hopes for this area?

This project will provide a pedestrian connection to local downtown retailers and restaurants. We also want see our small project help alleviate some of the housing shortage, by providing another option for renters. It keeps our local cities competitive on the national scale for employment by bringing options and amenities. This location also provides an opportunity to be the beginning of the fulfilled desire of the City of Urbana's bike trail along the Boneyard Creek area.

Our aspirations for this property are to fill a void in the downtown, and off campus markets.

Our direct desire is to provide the opportunity for downtown retailers, restaurants, and local businesses to thrive by creating over 60 plus potential customers and clients within walking distance.

How did you get to the PUD decision?

Looking for a place to build, we are builders and investors in our community.

Found two vacant lots for sale by Darryl Foste in February, 2024.

Bought the vacant lots and began researching what would be the best use of these lots which are in a flood plain.

Discussed our plans for improving the lots with the City. We discovered a flood study was needed and met with the City engineers.

Met with an architect, and made a decision with input from city planners that our best approach with respect to time and cost would be to purchase the corner lot to meet the PUD's minimum area square footage requirement. Then we would be eligible to place a large enough structure on the land to absorb the cost of the feasibility studies as well as meet the size requirement of land required by the PUD.

Invested in engineering and water studies through Farnsworth, sold my car to afford the cost of these due diligence studies. Both studies, along with FEMA requirements, allowed for the structure to be built at this particular site, with this particular building.

(Timeline attached)

Timeline for Main St Project:

2-7-24 Signed agreement to buy two vacant lots in the flood-zone on Main St, Urbana.

2-14-24 Started due diligence conversations with city planners.

2-15-24 Engaged Andrew Fell as architect for this project.

3-7-24 Purchased land from Darryl Foste.

3-8-24 Discussed Boneyard Creek and the possibilities for construction on the empty lots.

To build a single family house in a flood-zone is cost prohibitive because of engineering requirements.

Determined a PUD was possible for a larger rental, but would need more than half an acre to qualify.

Considered purchasing the corner lot for a total 0.585 acres.

4-4-24 Learned owner of 419 W Main would sell.

Decided to make an offer to move forward.

4-24-24 City acknowledged the Boneyard Creek provisions would allow for a multi-family dwelling and for additional FAR in exchange for land donation for a bikeway along the Boneyard.

8-6-24 thru 12-8-24 Started the design process with Andrew Fell to determine possibilities of the 2 vacant lots and corner lot.

1-3-25 Seller of 413 W Main St agrees to sell.

1-15-25 Purchased 419 W Main St.

1-30-25 City engineer and planners helped to determine that a flood study and architectural renderings are needed as next steps.

4-7-25 thru 8-20-25 Architectural feasibility study and drawings begin (design had to be complete enough for a flood study to be done).

8-28-25 Engage Farnsworth for flood study results and FEMA/City of Urbana approvals.

1-9-26 Sold car to pay Farnsworth study.

1-19-26 Farnsworth Flood study complete.

1-23-26 Bought an option to purchase 413 W Main St.

4-30-26 Open House for Main St project.

5-5-26 City Meeting - Approval

5-6-26 Looked at the Historical aspect of the area and did not see how our project could negatively affect the West Urbana community. The architecture and land use in this area is quite diverse so we decided that this development will work well to add character and much needed housing.

Do we want to help the City of Urbana with more housing options? **Our hope is to be a part of the solution.**

Thank you sincerely,



The Brashears
DMCB Properties

Please add to city council packet

From Dennis Roberts [REDACTED]

Date Thu 7/2/2026 1:50 PM

To City Council <CityCouncil@UrbanalL.gov>; Darcy Sandefur <Darcy.Sandefur@UrbanalL.gov>

 1 attachment (1 MB)

Message to City Council re PUD Design.pdf;

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [REDACTED]. [Learn why this is important](#)

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

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Hello Darcy,

Would you please add the attached PDF file message to the City Council packet for next Monday night? I agree with the neighborhood members who oppose allowing what is an R-5 project in an area zoned Neighborhood-1 in the recently adopted Comprehensive Plan "Imagine Urbana" (an R-2 zoning district).

It would normally be public comment, but I also want to offer images to better illustrate what I believe the City Council should look for when discussing this large PUD project to be built at 413-419 West Main Street. Besides being too large physically for the neighborhood at this location (by at least one floor), I believe the **style or design** offered by the architect is simply inharmonious for the period architecture seen a block away along North McCoullough and West Main Streets. This also goes against the mandates of our new Comprehensive Plan. These points are best presented by images.

I hope you would place them into the packet, so the community at large could think about this as the City Council debates and advises the applicant. We were told by recent Urbana Planner Marcus Ricci that the architect, Mr. Fell, stated in conversation during public discussion that he, or the developers, were OPEN to making changes to the appearance of the project, but that NO ONE HAD AS YET MADE A SUGGESTION TO HIM. I therefore wish to make such a suggestion and back it with illustrations using various examples, both local and regional.

I believe there is very good precedent for any Council member to request a more appropriate and responsive treatment of the project's design and appearance, if it comes to a decision by Council which allows this project to proceed. It needs to be conditional on having further input and adjustment, and to actually be responsive to the voice of the public.

Yours,
Dennis Roberts

Guiding Development to Harmonize with the Surrounding Area

What should the City require of a developer seeking to build a Planned Unit Development (PUD) apartment complex at the entrance to the most significantly historic street in Urbana? The guidelines for an appropriate PUD project listed in the Urbana Zoning Ordinance, *Section XIII-3, C: Goals*, lists the following directives:

2. To promote infill development in a manner consistent with the surrounding area;
7. To coordinate architectural styles, building forms and building relationships within the development and the surrounding neighborhood; and
9. To conserve, to the greatest extent possible, unique and natural features, environmentally sensitive areas, or historic resources, and to utilize such features in a harmonious fashion.

Looking at the site and architecture of the the houses and buildings near this proposed development, can we say that the above requirements for a successful PUD have been met? Do they follow the guidance of the recently adopted Comprehensive Plan?

IT IS WITHIN THE POWER of the Urbana City Council to advise the developer adjust the design of the building to more clearly meet these requirements before granting project approval. *(Per the City's interaction with Green Street Realty Development for a PUD project proposed for 200 S. Vine Street. The City rejected the the original design following staff review and adverse public input from East Urbana residents.)*

The Homes in the Historic West Main Street Neighborhood

* Asterick indicates Bicentennial Home



201 S. McCullough



*505 W. Main St.



* 506 W. Main St.



507 W. Main St.



*508 W. Main St.



602 W. Main St.



605 W. Main St.



610 W. Main St.



The size of the proposed PUD dwarfs the cottage that is directly across from it on McCullough. It also fills a large park-like area that would serve as a community park along the Boneyard Creek.



Preferred Building Forms Near Historic Neighborhoods

Brick with Stone Details – Apartment Buildings



New construction should be in harmony and reference design styles found on Urbana's downtown buildings—renewed in modern formats and materials. Appropriate mass and building shape. Symmetry of general design. Aligned windows. Façades mainly of brick and stone. Cornices, detailing around windows, and window framing—simplified but not absent.



(Without garages facing the street, of course)



What NOT to Build Near Historic Neighborhoods



Buildings with awkward angles, arbitrary, unrelated elements, large cantilevered balconies, inconsistent application of a style, garish colors, boring repetition, and “decorated” boxes are to be avoided in historic districts and neighborhoods.



PUBLIC INPUT - TO BE READ ALOUD - July 6, 2026 - City Council Special Meeting - Ordinance No. 2026-05-013: PUD at 413-419 West Main Street

From Luke Bial [REDACTED]
Date Sun 7/5/2026 12:46 PM
To City Council <CityCouncil@UrbanaIL.gov>

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [REDACTED]. [Learn why this is important](#)

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

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Note to Clerk: My home address is [REDACTED] Urbana. I am submitting these written comments for inclusion in the record of Public Input for the July 6, 2026 City Council meeting. I respectfully request that these comments be read aloud into the record during the Public Input portion of the meeting.

-

Dear Mayor and City Council,

My name is Luke Bial, and I am a resident of Ward 2 in Urbana. I am writing in strong support of the Planned Unit Development at 413-419 West Main Street.

I want to focus on why this project is such an exciting, sensible opportunity for our city's future, particularly regarding the physical constraints of this site and the great public benefit it offers.

First, this location sits right on the edge of downtown, making it a perfect transition zone. The surrounding blocks already contain a diverse mix of housing, including the 118-unit Element complex directly across the street. Right now, the character of these lots is being defined by the aging, non-conforming rental units and the two vacant lots. Replacing them with 32 new housing units will create a better experience for Urbana residents, bringing much-needed life to neglected land and improving the character of our growing city.

Second, we must look at how time and the environment have physically changed this property. We know that neighbors worked hard to establish the R-2 zoning for this area 33 years ago during the 1993 Comprehensive Amendment. However, in 2013, FEMA updated its floodplain map and compliance regulations for the Boneyard Creek. These lots now sit almost entirely in the floodplain.

Today, to safely build on these lots, developers must undertake massive civil engineering efforts to meet FEMA regulations, including elevating the structure on a concrete stilt foundation to avoid flood damages. Because of these incredibly expensive infrastructure costs, building anything under R-2 zoning is not financially viable, which may explain why two of these lots have been sitting vacant for so many years. High-density development is the only viable way to pull these lots out of stagnation while safely absorbing these modern environmental mitigation costs. R-2 zoning is simply no longer suitable for these lots under today's conditions.

Finally, this PUD paves the way for a great public amenity. By approving this development, Urbana secures a 20-foot public easement along the Boneyard Creek at zero cost. If we miss this chance, this land remains locked in private hands and could otherwise cost the city hundreds of thousands of

dollars to acquire. This PUD hands us the exact land needed for our future greenway path, plus a \$10,000 seed fund to help apply for construction grants.

Please vote yes. This project is a clear win-win that improves neglected land, supports Urbana's growing population, helps our local economy, and banks beautiful public greenspace for the entire city to enjoy.

Thank you,

Luke Bial

Please read aloud at council meeting 7-6-26:

From Melissa Brashear [REDACTED]
Date Mon 7/6/2026 2:40 PM
To City Council <CityCouncil@UrbanalL.gov>
Cc Olivia Jovine <Olivia.Jovine@UrbanalL.gov>; Evan Alvarez <Evan.Alvarez@UrbanalL.gov>

 1 attachment (2 MB)

Dear Mr Mayor, Council Members, City Administrator, City Clerk, and....pdf;

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from [REDACTED]. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

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Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Please read this letter for the public when it's appropriate.

Many thanks for your help tonight 😊



Dear Mr Mayor, Council Members, City Administrator, City Clerk, and beloved attendees,

We humbly submit our letter to you for background on who we are and what we hope to accomplish concerning the Planned Unit Development, along with the timeline that has brought us to this point.

We appreciate your time and willingness to give your best concentrated effort to gain understanding of our intent to bring another housing option to downtown Urbana. Thank you!

We volunteer annually at a kids camp in Georgia every July. Unfortunately we will be away for the next council meeting on the 6th. We will be back on the 13th and hope to see you all then.

Respectfully,
The Brashear Family

Who we are:

Derek - Resident of C-U since 1990

Melissa - Lifelong resident of Champaign-Urbana. . . I love this town! We have seen the growth and potential that this area provides. And we continue to appreciate the close-knit community of Urbana. Its supporters encourage the best the city has to offer to both its neighbors and its visitors from other nations!

Real Estate broker since 1993 in C-U and graduate of U of I in Urban and Regional Planning.

Caleb - Student, lover of all things sports, acting, and real estate.

Why invest in this area?

I am a second generation developer. My dad, Carl Hill, spent most of his life developing 365 lots for families in SE Urbana, finishing Myra Ridge and then South Ridge Subdivisions located off Philo Rd in Urbana. He dedicated South Ridge Park to the City of Urbana and Brashear Park was developed for the residents in Brashear Commons HOA (this includes over 4000 feet of bike trails). He also worked with the a volunteer group as volunteer construction coordinator to build Prairie Play at Meadowbrook Park in 1995 (the wooden structure lasted 25 years). They are great amenities. After decades of watching Carl and my mother, Jane Hill, help families find housing, I developed a love for helping others through housing myself. I went on to become a City Planner by education from the University of Illinois... My love for people and houses grew through real estate and I have had the fortune of being a real estate broker for 33 years. I look for potential in houses and properties. I see what could be and try to serve others with something both useful and beautiful.

What are our hopes for this area?

This project will provide a pedestrian connection to local downtown retailers and restaurants. We also want see our small project help alleviate some of the housing shortage, by providing another option for renters. It keeps our local cities competitive on the national scale for employment by bringing options and amenities. This location also provides an opportunity to be the beginning of the fulfilled desire of the City of Urbana's bike trail along the Boneyard Creek area.

Our aspirations for this property are to fill a void in the downtown, and off campus markets.

Our direct desire is to provide the opportunity for downtown retailers, restaurants, and local businesses to thrive by creating over 60 plus potential customers and clients within walking distance.

How did you get to the PUD decision?

Looking for a place to build, we are builders and investors in our community.

Found two vacant lots for sale by Darryl Foste in February, 2024.

Bought the vacant lots and began researching what would be the best use of these lots which are in a flood plain.

Discussed our plans for improving the lots with the City. We discovered a flood study was needed and met with the City engineers.

Met with an architect, and made a decision with input from city planners that our best approach with respect to time and cost would be to purchase the corner lot to meet the PUD's minimum area square footage requirement. Then we would be eligible to place a large enough structure on the land to absorb the cost of the feasibility studies as well as meet the size requirement of land required by the PUD.

Invested in engineering and water studies through Farnsworth, sold my car to afford the cost of these due diligence studies. Both studies, along with FEMA requirements, allowed for the structure to be built at this particular site, with this particular building.

Do we want to help the City of Urbana with more housing options? ... Our hope is to be a part of the solution.

Thank you sincerely,



The Brashears
DMCB Properties

Public Input - July 6, 2026 Special City Council Meeting

From Lois Steinberg [REDACTED]
Date Mon 7/6/2026 3:46 PM
To City Council <CityCouncil@Urbanall.gov>
Cc WUNA-Main [REDACTED]

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [REDACTED]. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear City Council Members,

Please read into the record my statement:

I am opposed to the Planned Unit Development in the 400 block of Main St, Urbana. It is a violation of the zoning ordinance and comprehensive plan and sets a precedent that will destroy the fabric of a genuine neighborhood, including homeowners and long-term renters/residents who enjoy living in a neighborhood of people who are here for more than the 32 weeks of the academic year. The PUD is only a glorified student housing of low quality construction and appliances.

The CURbanism Club members that have come to these meetings need to name the enemies that are not our fellow regular middle class renters and homeowners here. The demonization of renters and homeowners over private equity et al., is a poor strategic choice.

Regardless, the landlords/would-be developers of these properties have many other options regarding their property: (1) repair/rehabilitate/renew the houses; (2) each parcel can be newly built into a duplex similar to the outstanding designed ones on East Washington Street in Urbana; or (3) build an apartment similar to the one across the street from the Park District that long-term renters would prefer.

Please vote down the PUD.

High Regards,
Lois Steinberg

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Lois Steinberg, Ph.D., CIYT Level 4, C-IAYT
Director, Iyengar Yoga Champaign Urbana
www.loissteinberg.com, www.yoga-cu.com

Public Input - July 6, 2026 Special City Council Meeting

From Alen Romero [REDACTED]

Date Mon 7/6/2026 4:19 PM

To City Council <CityCouncil@Urbanall.gov>; WUNA-Main [REDACTED]

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from [REDACTED]. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

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Dear City Council Members,
Please read into the record my statement:

Urbana Plan Commission 6-6-2026 - Residential Planned Unit Development
at 413-419 West Main Street

To: The Plan Commission, City of Urbana

On May 13th of last year (2025), the Cunningham Township Supervisor's Office May 13 report to the City Council had an urgent message:
"Urbana-Champaign is experiencing a housing and homelessness crisis".

It is in the context of this crisis that I urge the City Council to
reject the planned unit development at 413-419 W Main St.

Someone must stand here and credibly speak for the rights of Urbana citizens who are currently experiencing homelessness and whose interests are at odds with the big capitalist builders and developers.

The plan, as I understand it, is for this developer to tear down existing occupied units that it already owns in order to build higher density housing.

The crucial question at hand is this: whose interests does this plan serve? It does not serve the interests of the tenants in Urbana, the renter class, nor does it serve the interests of the small landlords who must compete for tenants with the big builders and developers. And more to the point - shouldn't building and developing in Urbana serve the interests of the majority of its citizens? I doubt anyone would seriously argue that tenants don't make up the majority of Urbana's voters.

So here is the obvious solution: socialized housing. We must endeavor to create financial levers and incentives to promote renovation - and if we want lower rents - we must build for ourselves.

Since space is so limited in Urbana I recommended that the Plan Commission reject the proposal and begin to explore seriously the creation of decent, affordable, secure and appropriate publicly owned housing.

Thank you,

Alen Romero

Public Input - July 6, 2026 Special City Council Meeting

From Valerie Holton [REDACTED]
Date Mon 7/6/2026 4:35 PM
To City Council <CityCouncil@Urbanall.gov>

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Dear City Council Members,

Please read into the record my statement:

Urbana Plan Commission 6-6-2026 - Residential Planned Unit Development
at 413-419 West Main Street

I'm writing in support of this project. This project will generate meaningfully higher property tax and potentially sales tax revenue than the current use — revenue that funds schools, roads, and city services for the whole city. With municipal budgets tight, that's a real reason to approve responsible density near the core of town.

More broadly, a lot of cities say they want more affordable housing while their own approval processes make it harder to build any housing at all. A handful of objections can end up outweighing the interests of everyone who isn't in the room including future renters, early career professionals, and people priced out of WUNA and the core of town. If Urbana wants to be a place where people at different income levels and life stages can actually live near its center, that has to show up in decisions like this one.

I share the concerns about construction quality, but those belong at the permitting and inspection stage, not as grounds to reject the project outright. The city already has codes for that.

Urbana needs more housing and more housing near its core. I'm asking the commission to approve this project.

Thank you,

Valerie Holton

Public Input - July 6, 2026 Special City Council Meeting

From Becky Mead [REDACTED]
Date Mon 7/6/2026 4:36 PM
To City Council <CityCouncil@Urbanall.gov>

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Dear City Council Members,
Please read my statement into the record:

I am writing to state our opposition to the large planned unit development in the 400 block of Main Street.

We are concerned that this development requires rezoning the area from R2 single family and duplex residential to R5 high density residential in violation of the comprehensive plan that was just passed! The project is huge and completely out of proportion with the neighborhood. It will dominate buildings near by—literally looming over immediate neighbors. It is in no way the appropriate incremental infill that is part of the comprehensive plan and would befit our historic multi-faceted and livable neighborhood. This project does not create or address low income housing—rather adds to the already flooded student housing market and benefits the developer. This huge development does not add real benefit to the neighborhood and community (as required of a PUD).

We are at a loss to why the City Council is giving this plan so much consideration and why they don't see value in protecting and preserving our beautiful historic neighborhood. The renters and homeowners who make up West Urbana deserve better.

Please vote "no".

Thank you for your consideration.

Becky Mead
Tim Stelzer
[REDACTED]

Support for Multi-Family Development

From Sarah Y [REDACTED]
Date Mon 7/6/2026 6:43 PM
To City Council <CityCouncil@Urbanall.gov>

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [REDACTED]. [Learn why this is important](#)

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To the City Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to share thoughts on the proposed multi-family development in downtown Urbana. Please include this in the public comment portion of tonight's discussion.

I would like to express my strong support for the project proposed. Urbana is a very desirable place to live, for reasons we are all familiar with and feel ourselves. We have seen what happens in communities where development is deferred until it is far too late and rents have risen beyond anything remotely possible for ordinary residents to sustain, pushing out people who are a valuable part of the community and have just as much right to live there as the wealthy homeowners. We have seen also what happens in communities where housing is built and maintained (see Jared Fritz's excellent opinion piece in Smile Politely).

Arguments against the project have struck me variously as classist, racist, or wishful thinking. Housing is not something we can afford to entertain emotion-based arguments against. It is a demonstrable fact that we do not have enough housing stock to meet projected needs. The City Council has the authority to approve exceptions for projects with good reason, at their discretion. Is preventing rents from increasing unduly not a good reason? Is welcoming more neighbors who want to share in our community not a good reason? Is supporting the resurgence of Downtown Urbana and Lincoln Square Mall with more foot traffic and thus business not a good reason? Are we so dedicated to protecting the interests of those who have already bought houses and "gotten theirs" that we are willing to uphold zoning law designed to enforce race and class boundaries instead of rethinking our approach and building a stronger community?

Urbana's strength is in its character and diversity. More neighbors will make us better, not worse. Thank you for your time.

Sarah Yamaguchi

Public Comment for 7/7/2026

From [REDACTED]
Date Mon 7/6/2026 6:47 PM
To City Council <CityCouncil@Urbanall.gov>

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from [REDACTED] Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

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Dear Urbana City Council,

I am a lifelong resident of Champaign-Urbana, living in Champaign. I am writing to once again express my support for the PUD at 419 W Main, as I spoke about at the previous council meeting. This PUD would allow for dozens to call Urbana their home, bringing new and vibrant neighbors, in a space where there are currently two empty lots and one house in poor condition. Furthermore, this development would slow the creation of a Boneyard greenway alongside the proposed apartments, a benefit to all.

I would also like to take this opportunity to reflect on the presentations given at the previous city council meeting. In particular, I would call attention to claims made during the presentation on rent stickiness. It was repeatedly emphasized during this presentation that landlords preferentially provide amenities instead of lowering rents, including, as an amenity, free first month's rent. I would point out that free first month's rent is a 1/12 decrease in annual rent, which is an 8% decrease. Similarly, even a change to included parking, where parking previously cost \$50/month, would be a substantial benefit to many.

All best,

Alexander Rushing

Public Comment in Support of Ordinance No. 2026-05-013

From grouchybirdman [REDACTED]
Date Mon 7/6/2026 6:51 PM
To City Council <CityCouncil@Urbanall.gov>

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

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Dear City Council,

Please accept these comments for the record and read them during the meeting. I am a resident of Ward 3, and I urge you to support Ordinance No. 2026-05-013.

I am not asking for your support because this development is perfect or because it will solve every housing need in our city. It will not end our housing shortage, remake the rental market, or perform sorcery. What this ordinance does is simple and necessary: it allows needed homes to be built on land that is, for the most part, vacant and too expensive to use for many other practical purposes.

I ask for your support because this ordinance is a necessary first step toward alleviating the chronic housing shortage in Urbana and the surrounding area. When housing is scarce, those with more resources will always outcompete those with less, even when subsidies are involved. Vouchers lose power when everyone is competing for the same limited inventory. Rent remains high when landlords face little competition. Housing quality also suffers when landlords do not have to compete for tenants.

I have loved working and living in Urbana for years. One thing I deeply regret is when the City Council appears to dismiss the concerns of its staff and residents in favor of well-to-do constituents in specific neighborhoods, often relying on flimsy information that basic fact-checking would expose. Urbana's landed gentry should not be given control of city government, and neither should any corporation.

Consider the facts. An apartment building on Central Avenue was converted into permanent housing for formerly homeless individuals with disabilities, using project-based vouchers to keep rents affordable. Residents began moving in late last year. Affordable housing is being created in this neighborhood and in this city. At the same time, former residents of that property were displaced and had to find new accommodations. That is precisely why we need more homes overall.

Furthermore, half of the proposed PUD site consists of vacant lots. These are not public green spaces; they are private property. The immediate surrounding area already includes diverse housing types, from the Element apartment building to duplexes and converted single-family homes for rent. This is in addition to the single-family homes — or, more accurately, manors — farther down Main Street.

During multiple Committee of the Whole and City Council meetings, I have heard fear, defamation, revisionist history, and what appears to be naked exclusion disguised as concern for the poor. I urge the Council to develop a serious plan to build more housing for the rich, the poor, the middle class, and everyone in between. Please rely on the data provided by staff and your hired experts to create real policy, rather than acting as a government HOA for the privileged in Urbana.

The Council needs to stand on business and begin working with city staff on a serious housing plan that includes both market-rate and affordable housing. This Council has shown that it can devote multiple meetings over many months to a police surveillance ordinance. If budgets are moral documents, then this Council's calendar should be held to the same standard, unless you want to be painted as the Urbana

wastrels. I do not believe that is who you are. I am asking you to give people hope by trying to be a little better every day.

My request is threefold:

First, approve this PUD so that Urbana can begin opening more units across the income spectrum, and continue approving similar projects.

Second, issue an RFP for the property on Race Street, working with community development and social service agencies to create a realistic plan to assist the poor, rather than perpetually funding variations of the same programs while the problem grows.

Third, research, develop, and implement a serious plan to encourage housing development in our community. I would like to see this study include both market-rate housing and affordable housing, with actual goals, strategies, realistic assessments of limitations and opportunities, and defined timelines for progress.

Personally, I would be interested in living in a development like this, which would allow someone else to access my current sub-\$500 apartment. Every new unit frees up existing affordable housing for others. As someone who works with people experiencing homelessness, both individuals and families, I know that any new availability creates opportunities for people to move and opens space for those in desperate need.

Choose love over fear and cynicism. I ask you to take Giant Steps and act with A Love Supreme.

Sincerely,

G. Brewster

Sent with [Proton Mail](#) secure email.