



DATE: Tuesday, November 12, 2024
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 Tuesday, November 12, 2024, at 7 p.m.

ELECTED OFFICIALS PHYSICALLY PRESENT: 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: Diane Wolfe Marlin, Mayor

STAFF PRESENT: Bourema Ouedraogo, Kevin Garcia, Seok Hyun Cho, Carmen Franks, Larry Boone, Elizabeth Hannan, Carol Mitten, Matt Roeschley, Tim Cowan

OTHERS PRESENT: Angela Bradley, CEO of HeartStrong Meals; Susan Burgstrom, Planning Manager at Champaign County Regional Planning Commission; J.D. McClanahan, Planner II at Champaign County Regional Planning Commission; Kate Swinford, Central Illinois Regional Leader at Lochmueller Group

Chair: *Christopher Evans, Ward 2*

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

With a quorum present, Chair Evans called the meeting of the Urbana City Council to order at 8:12p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

a. 10-14-2024 City Council Minutes

b. 10-21-2024 Committee of the Whole Minutes

Motion to approve by CM Wu, seconded by CM Hursey.

Voice Vote:

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

NAY: None.

3. Additions to the Agenda

Chair Evans added a third presentation from Angela Bradley, CEO of HeartStrong Meals regarding the potential for a grocery store in Ward 3.

4. Presentations and Public Input

a. CUUATS Long Range Transportation Plan 2050 – RPC

Presented by Susan Burgstrom, Planning Manager at Champaign County Regional Planning Commission. Provided background and overview on the federally mandated process for developing a Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). Stated the 5 goals for the LRTP were to address: safety, reliability, sustainability, equity & quality of life, and connectivity. Shared the parallels between the City of Urbana’s Strategic Plan for 2024-2025 and the LRTP’s goals and strategies. Emphasized that the RPC has researched the plans made by the City of Urbana and collaborated with its staff to ensure coherence between the plans of the LRTP and the City of Urbana. Shared the LRTP contains sections providing information on the following topics: the status of LRTP 2045, future projects, scenario modeling, funding, and implementation. Spoke on upcoming projects impacting the City of Urbana. Provided information regarding the following regionally significant projects with the likelihood of occurring within the next 5 years: North Lincoln Avenue from Wascher to Killarney Improvements; Florida Avenue from Wright Street to Hillcrest Drive Improvements; and Vine Street from Main Street to California Avenue Improvements. Stated 58 projects within the LRTP are described as “Illustrative Projects” with currently no guarantee on meeting funding requirements. Detailed public outreach rounds conducted throughout 2023 and 2024. Spoke on outreach conducted within the City of Urbana through public events such as the Marathon Expo 2023 & 2024, Jazz Walk at Meadowbrook Park 2023, Urbana Market at the Square 2023 & 2024, Jettie Rhodes Neighborhood Day 2023 & 2024, Climate Action Celebration at Crystal Lake Park 2023, and Urbana Park District Neighborhood Nights at Crestview Park 2024. Shared next steps involving finishing presentations, compiling comments received, holding the final Steering Committee meeting #8 on the 22nd of November, and approval of the plan by the Champaign Urbana Area Transportation Study (CUUATS) Technical and Policy Committees in 2024 before being sent to the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) by the end of December 2024. Questions and discussion followed.

b. Lincoln Avenue Corridor Study – RPC

Presented by Carmen Franks, Assistant City Engineer; J.D. McClanahan, Planner II at Champaign County Regional Planning Commission; and Kate Swinford, Central Illinois Regional Leader at Lochmueller Group. Carmen Franks provided background on the importance of the corridor study due to the number of crashes, safety concerns, and condition of the roadway in the recent years. J.D. McClanahan shared information regarding the development of the project, funding received from IDOT, and the scope of the study. Spoke on the current state of Lincoln Avenue, its context within the City of Urbana, and the demographics of the areas surrounding the avenue. Stated the average daily traffic recorded ranges from 10,000 to 13,000 vehicles per day across the corridor. Stated the average Pavement Condition Index score for the study area is 29/100 with no segments across the entire roadway going over 40/100. Stated the morning and afternoon rush hours for segments of the corridor are currently rated at a E, indicating heavy traffic conditions on a scale from A to F. Stated the intersection of Lincoln and Pennsylvania have a traffic condition rating of F during afternoon rush hours with all other intersections along Lincoln ranking at D or higher. Noted Lincoln Avenue and Ohio Street as an area of focus due to the high number of crashes occurring in the corridor. Shared maps displaying gaps in bicycle infrastructure, varying conditions & accessibility levels of sidewalks, and bus routes.

Spoke on successes and levels of engagement seen throughout the outreach processes during Fall 2023, Spring 2024, and Fall 2024. Shared the following common responses seen through

the first round of public feedback from Fall 2023: desire to see a strong emphasis on improving bike & pedestrian infrastructure; simplifying road design & clarity; and calming automobile traffic. Detailed travel forecasting conducted in addition to the consideration of roundabouts. Shared the following proposed scenarios for the implementation of a bike path: on-street bike lanes for the entire length of the corridor; on-street bike lanes from Green to Iowa, a shared-use path from Iowa to Pennsylvania, then on-street bike lanes from Pennsylvania to Florida; and on-street bike lanes from Green to Iowa, then a shared-use path from Iowa to Florida.

Motion to extend presentation time by 5 minutes by CM Wu, seconded by CM Wilken.

Voice Vote:

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

NAY: None.

Stated the following changes were consistently included across scenarios: pedestrian crossings, intersection controls, vehicle access to Lincoln, and general roadway design. Stated once the final round of public input has been completed and the feedback has been incorporated into the development of the design, the finalized plan will be presented to City Council in the beginning of 2025.

Kate Swinford spoke on the final proposal for the corridor, where Scenario 1 has been chosen to move forward with. Stated the proposal for continuous on-street bike lanes throughout the corridor is projected to reduce crashes by 32% and explore the implementation of vertical separation for the bike lane in a configuration similar to Green Street on campus. Further stated the implementation of a horizontal separation for the bike lane was found to be not feasible due to the right of way constraints. Stated the proposal will convert the corridor into a three-lane section which begins between Green and Nevada, slated to reduce crashes by up to 47% in impacted segments. Stated roundabouts were considered during the planning process, but were not further developed due to projected negative impacts on traffic in this scenario. Elaborated on the signal optimizations being developed to allow for improved pedestrian movement as well as improving the flow of traffic. Shared graphics displaying proposed changes to intersections throughout the corridor to improve vehicle flow, reduce crashes, and improve crosswalks. Stated the Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District (MTD) stops between Iowa and Ohio are being slightly moved to avoid creating conflicts between both bicycle riders and cars. Stated the northbound MTD stop near the intersection of Lincoln and Oregon has been slightly relocated to allow for a mid-block crossing point. Stated proposed side street closures will have minor impacts on traffic and does not significantly prevent access to the corridor. Questions and discussion followed.

c. Grocery Store in Ward 3 – HeartStrong Meals

Introduction provided by Chair Evans. Presented by Angela Bradley, CEO of HeartStrong Meals. Angela Bradley spoke on her experiences and feedback heard throughout her 18 years of combatting food insecurity in the Champaign-Urbana community. Stated community input directly influences the programs she has created to best meet their needs. Stated the initiative for a grocery store in Ward 3 comes from community calls for action to address the food desert in Ward 3 that have been ongoing for at least 7 years in addition to being aligned with the Council & Mayor Strategic Goals for 2024-2025. Stated she also seeks to improve accessibility for people using SNAP or WIC as well as improve access to healthy and fresh produce for the community. Shared successes from a recent study she had conducted on providing a mealkit that is centered around a Mediterranean diet and hoped to continue that

concept of making healthy food accessible with the grocery store by connecting with local farmers, local chefs, and the community. Stated she has contacted the Siebel Center for Design at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign to reimagine the traditional grocery store layout to better promote healthy choices. Expressed the goals of the grocery store are to eliminate the food desert, be WIC & SNAP friendly, provide locally grown food to low-income families, and provide engaging education opportunities to encourage healthier meal options.

Stated the Illinois Grocery Initiative from the Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity would be the major source of funding with awards ranging from \$160,000 to \$2,400,000. Stated a funding match of 25% and a letter displaying the ability to provide the match is required to apply. Listed the following location requirements for eligibility: the store must be located in a food desert; the store must have less than 30% of revenue coming from alcohol and tobacco sales; the store must be classified as a supermarket or grocery retailer; the store must accept SNAP and WIC; and the store must contribute to the diversity of fresh foods available within their community. Emphasized the proposed grocery store will offer neither alcohol or tobacco. Stated the 2nd of December at 5:00p.m. is the deadline for applications for the second round of funding. Stated due to the scale of investment from the State, technical assistance and consultants are provided for grant applicants and their service is extended further if the application is accepted to ensure the long-term success of the grocery store.

Shared findings from a feasibility study using a hypothetical grocery store located at the intersection of Bradley and Lincoln Avenue which hopes to capture 15% of the \$32,700,000 spent annually on food for consumption at home. Shared the estimated operational cash flow in this scenario would have \$4,910,676 in sales, \$3,514,080 in costs of the goods, \$1,329,811 in operating expenses, which totals to \$66,785 in net profit. Stated the funds required to operate the grocery store is estimated to be over \$4,000,000, but it all begins with applying for the grant. Detailed how the application is projected to be high scoring because of its location, her own credibility through her years of service to the community, and it requires a community match from the City of Urbana.

Requested the City of Urbana commit to a match of 25%, up to \$800,000, in funding for the grocery store. Questions and discussion followed.

d. Public Input

Joanne Budde asked City Council if City staff have sufficiently published notice for a Public Hearing regarding the amendment to the Urbana zoning ordinance in Ordinance No. 2024-11-034. Urged City Council to vote against the Ordinance due to its potential impact on the character of neighborhoods in Urbana and its potential negative impact on the democratic process. **David Huber** stated his application to amend the Urbana zoning ordinance is a moderate proposal. Spoke on the current state of duplex development in R-2 and R-3 zoned districts and the lot area and width requirements in R-3 zoning. Voiced support for eliminating the additional lot area and width requirements for duplex development due to the 60ft width requirement being set without any particular reason. **Michael Plewa** stated West Urbana has been able to be a highly welcoming and diverse area of Urbana due to the actions of those that live there, in spite of City planners, landlords, and developers. Stated the proposed amendments to the zoning ordinance eliminate public input on the development of duplexes in the R-2 and R-3 districts in addition to contributing to the erosion of democracy. Stated the current process for developing duplexes is sufficient and does not need any modification, urging City Council to vote against the proposal.

Written Public Input in opposition to Ordinance No. 2024-11-034 were received from the following individuals and read by Council: Kara McKinn, Michael Plewa & Elizabeth Wagner Plewa, C.K. Gunsalus & Michael Walker, Meredith Blumthal, Florence Caplow, Eric Sacks, Becky Mead, Heather Grossman, Paul Debevec, Paul & Jennifer Hixson, L.K. Bergeron. Written Public Input regarding Ordinance No. 2024-11-034 were received from the following individuals, but were not read: Caitlin Clarke, Cope Cumpston, Carol Leff, Barbara R. Beshers, Dr. Don Pakey, Peggy Patten & Todd Kinney, Emily Peterson, Liz Cardman, Albert J. Valocchi, Esther Patt, Beverly Fagan, Sarah McEvoy & Huseyin Sehitoglu, Joanne Budde, Deborah Katz-Downie, Tiffanie Bui & Matt Freund, Beverly Rauchfuss, Stephanie Nevins, and Tucker Schroeder.

5. Staff Report

None.

6. New Business

- a. **Ordinance No. 2024-11-034:** An Ordinance Amending the Urbana Zoning Ordinance (Update Section VI-3 for Clarity and to Remove Additional Lot Area and Width Requirements for Certain Uses / Plan Case No. 2493-T-24) – CD

Presented by Kevin Garcia, Principal Planner & Zoning Administrator. The Ordinance approves a zoning ordinance text amendment to remove additional lot area and width requirements for duplexes in the R-2 (Single-Family Residential) and R-3 (Single- and Two-Family Residential) zoning districts, remove additional lot area requirements and simplify lot width requirements for common-lot-line dwellings in all districts, simplify language regarding the reuse of existing lots, and amend other parts of Section VI-3 to make it easier to understand. Kevin Garcia stated a legal notice was published in the News-Gazette on the 4th of September for the initial Public Hearing for this case which was held on the 19th of September at the Plan Commission. Noted the Plan Commission received 4 emails in support and 2 emails against the proposal before the meeting on the 19th of September. Stated the Plan Commission requested City staff investigate Section VI-3 of the zoning ordinance and report back, with the report being shared on the 17th of October at a Plan Commission meeting. Stated the report generated an expansion upon the original request, but the items in the expansion were not of significant substance, simplifying language without changing the meaning of it. Stated the intent of the original proposal was to remove additional requirements for certain lots in the R-2 and R-3 districts which, as per the zoning ordinance, should allow duplexes to some degree. Stated duplexes in R-2 districts will still require conditional use permits, which requires a hearing before the Zoning Board of Appeals. Stated the R-3 district, titled and defined as “Single and Two-Family Residential”, has 40% of its units unable to meet the additional requirements for a duplex and the goal of the amendment is to remove the additional requirements in the R-3 district. Elaborated on the process to develop a duplex on lots in the R-2 and R-3 districts that do not meet the additional requirements and the high standard for variance requests for a duplex caused by the presence of the additional requirements. Stated the amendment meets the goals of the current and draft comprehensive plans. Stated in making zoning decisions, renters and students cannot be discriminated against. Further stated the amendment does not introduce any new practices, but it seeks to match the intent of the district to its regulations. Questions and discussion followed.

**Motion to extend the meeting to 11:00p.m. by CM Wilken, seconded by CM Kolisetty.*

Voice Vote:

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

NAY: None.

Motion to defer the item to the next Committee of the Whole meeting by CM Quisenberry, seconded by CM Wilken.

Voice Vote:

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

NAY: None.

- b. Resolution No. 2024-11-072R:** A Resolution Approving an Increase in the Number of Liquor Licenses in the Class A Designation for Fuentes 10 LLC d/b/a El Patron Ballroom, 1006 North Cunningham Avenue – Exec

Presented by Matt Roeschley, City Attorney. The Resolution seeks to approve an increase in the number of Class A liquor licenses in the City of Urbana. Matt Roeschley stated the business concept is for a public and private event space and the Class A liquor license is for the sale and consumption of alcohol solely on the premises. Questions and discussion followed.

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

Voice Vote:

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

NAY: None.

- c. Resolution No. 2024-11-073R:** A Resolution Estimating the Tax Levy (Fiscal Year 2024-2025) – HRF

Presented by Elizabeth Hannan, HR & Finance Director/CFO. The Resolution establishes an estimated property tax levy of \$12,100,696 for 2024 to begin the property tax levy process. Elizabeth Hannan shared a chart displaying the 2023 property taxes and how they are distributed. Shared an image detailing the major revenue sources for the General Fund, noting 3.91% of the General Fund revenue is sourced from Corporate Levy Property Taxes and 9.31% of the General Fund is sourced from property taxes, but immediately goes toward pensions. Stated over recent years, the estimated assessed value of properties in the City of Urbana have been steadily rising. Shared a table illustrating the City's property tax rate for properties valued between \$100,000 to \$250,000, noting that a property valued at \$180,000 will pay \$729 in solely City Property Taxes. Stated Mayor Marlin recommended maintaining the current tax rate of \$1.3499. Stated the City levies taxes for police pensions, firefighter pensions, library operations, and "corporate purposes" which pays for City services through the General Fund. Stated The Urbana Free Library is dependent on property tax revenue and the levy for the Library of \$4,367,838 is based on the City Council approved budget for FY2025, which is an increase of 6.4% from the current tax levy. Stated the police & firefighter pensions are the next largest share of the levy at \$4,012,688 and is based on funding policy approved by City Council in May of 2018 with the goal of having the pensions 100% funded by 2037, noting an increase of 3.4% from the 2023 tax levy. Elaborated on the "Corporate" Levy, stating it funds expenditures from the General Fund such as public safety and public works. Stated the levy amount for the "Corporate" Levy is \$3,720,000 and is an estimated 72% increase from the current tax levy with the final number

still to be determined. Stated the increase is due to historic decreases to make room for pension requirements, but is now increasing within the self-imposed limits. Outlined the steps to complete the Tax Levy process beginning with the approval of the Estimated Levy in the 11-18-2024 City Council, having a Public Hearing on the 2nd of December, and forwarding the final Tax Levy ordinance to the 12-09-2024 City Council. Questions and discussion ensued.

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

Voice Vote:

AYE: Wu, Hursey, Kolisetty, Bishop, Quisenberry

NAY: Evans, Wilken

7. Council Input and Communications

CM Wilken requested further financial information from the Executive Department to be provided regarding the proposal for matching funding for a grocery store in Ward 3. Shared 2,083 pounds of pumpkins were collected through the Pumpkin Smash event held by the Landscape Recycling Center on November 2nd and stated the event is expected to occur annually the first Saturday after Halloween. Expressed hope for further environmental initiatives to arise from The Sustaining Urbana Neighborhoods (SUN) Grant Program. **CM Kolisetty** addressed concerns regarding the Cunningham Township ballot questions, stating there exists a unique process for residents to directly put forward advisory questions to be placed on the ballot. Reiterated the City of Urbana is a Sanctuary City and requested everyone to consider what that means when the next federal administration enters office. Emphasized the commitment from the City to people who are undocumented and residing in the City of Urbana. Stated the initial intent behind the funding for the alternate response study was solely to evaluate alternate response options and if that does not occur, it will be a gross misuse of taxpayer funds. Stated the importance of having the Alternate Response Task Force convening to fulfill its original purpose. **CM Wu** stated zoning is not intended to discriminate against specific groups of people as a variety of building types exist to the East of Lincoln Avenue. Stated labelling residents, that have single-family homes, who share their concerns as “anti-student” is inappropriate as there are many opportunities for students to find affordable housing in the West Urbana area. **CM Hursey** expressed empathy to the concerns being shared by the residents of West Urbana, citing her previous negative experiences with the Plan Commission and having the issues from Ward 3 be ignored. Requested further information regarding the details as to why this zoning issue was raised at this moment and what the motivations are behind it.

8. Adjournment

With no further business before the committee of the whole Chair Evans adjourned the meeting at 11:00 p.m.

Seok Hyun Cho

Deputy City Clerk

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

Minutes approved: 11/25/24

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Kara McKinn <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, November 8, 2024 9:58 AM
To: !City Council
Subject: Planning Commission

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

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Hello City Council!

I have only been in West Urbana since 1996, but the issue where the zoning folks on staff want to add more rental housing in the neighborhood has been going on since time immemorial.

Regardless of what happens in reality, our city staff, be it Libby or these new folks, seem to have it out for our neighborhood as they appease whichever shiny big, or "local nice guy" developer wants to make a buck off of Urbana this year.

Meanwhile, I visited Ithaca, NY a few weeks ago and their entire college town is similar to West Urbana and their town seems to value the unique mix of families, students, and folks from all walks of life who live in big and small houses in the neighborhood next to the university.

However, here it feels like our planning staff ignores the reality of available rental units and acts like they are caring for the lower-income folks in Urbana by trying to increase development. As Esther said, that's a farce.

Additionally, an enrollment cliff is coming, there are just not as many students coming into the admissions pools. (From Chronicle of Higher Ed: By now, you no doubt know what awaits most of higher education: a significant multiyear decline in the number of traditional-age college students. It's a trend that's become so well known it's been given its own shorthand — the enrollment or [demographic cliff](#). The consensus view is that America will hit a peak of around 3.5 million high-school graduates sometime near 2025. After that, the college-age population is expected to shrink across the next five to 10 years by as much as 15 percent. For many colleges, like those in regions of the country that have experienced decades of declining birth rates, the [fallout](#) has [been](#) painfully [self-evident](#) for [years](#).)

It makes no sense to increase the availability of more land for student housing. Why does the planning committee act like the rest of us do not have access to the stats that go against every argument they put forth?

Please, in the spirit of common sense, stop the love affair between the planning commission and these developers who want to use our neighborhood for their gain. We are their constituents, not developers looking to capitalize on what makes our neighborhood attractive while simultaneously taking whatever they can and degrading it each time they put up another crappy expensive building for some kid from Naperville.

with gratitude,
Kara McKinn

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Plewa, Michael Jacob <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, November 8, 2024 10:23 AM
To: !City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT November 12, 2024 meeting

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

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Ordinance No. 2024-11-034: An Ordinance Amending the Urbana Zoning Ordinance (Update Section VI-3 for Clarity and to Remove Additional Lot Area and Width Requirements for Certain Uses.

November 8, 2024

Re: Plan Case No. 2493-T-24

Honorable Members of the Urbana City Council:

We oppose the request by David Huber to amend Article VI of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance to eliminate lot width and area requirements for two family dwelling in the R-2 (Single Family Residential) and R-3 (Single- and Two Family Residential) Zoning Districts.

The Plan Commission approved this request before obtaining or thoughtfully considering public input. The Plan Commission does not represent the people; the City Council is the elected representative of the people. We ask the City Council to represent the people and not the vested interests of corporate landlords and developers who have little interest in the quality of life in Urbana.

The lot sizes in the West Urbana neighborhood are small as compared to most single-family residential lots in Urbana and Champaign. On West Iowa Street the lot width is 55 feet. These beautiful older homes zoned as R-2 are already close together. Eliminating the lot width and area requirements would cause an extreme increase in density and would not be in the best interest of the homeowners and other residents. This proposal only benefits developers who wish to enhance their greed at the expense of this wonderful neighborhood.

The West Urbana neighborhood is a unique asset to the City of Urbana in that it is one of the few affordable, national award-winning residential neighborhoods that is adjacent to a major university. In 1978 when I was hired as an Assistant Professor at the University of Illinois my wife and I chose to live in West Urbana because we wanted to be able to walk to our laboratory and reduce our energy consumption. We purchased our home, that was built in 1939, and we are the second owners. Over the years we have enhanced the energy efficiency of our home and carefully restored the building. If you wish to attract professionals, faculty and staff at the University, the City Council should reject the Plan Commission's efforts to undermine the protections inherent in R-2 single family residential zoning. The current proposal would effectively eliminate R-2 single family residential zoning. New families would avoid buying in West Urbana. If you implement this change, you will send many families to Southwest Champaign, Savoy, Mahomet or other areas where they can purchase homes as truly single-family residences.

As our Elected Representatives the City Council Should Protect the Unique Residential Neighborhood in West Urbana. West Urbana is unique because of its fine homes, mature trees, diverse population, and proximity to campus. By implementing this change to the R-2 zoning ordinance you will severely reduce single-family, owner-occupied housing and the result will be upscale student housing. This trend has continued throughout the years due to poor city planning, and collusion with developers which leads to housing that even many students cannot afford. Indeed, students are the business of this town, but what makes this neighborhood such a great place to live is that those working for the largest

employer in town – the University of Illinois – can have an extremely sustainable and comfortable lifestyle – walking or biking to work, raising a family -- enjoying all the benefits such a town can offer. Further, with a commitment to living here for decades, there is a populace that is engaged in local issues and pays taxes to support schools, parks, the library and other city services for the benefit of all.

Members of the City Council, we urge you to focus on the characteristics of neighborhoods like West Urbana and to reject the proposed amendment to the R-2 zoning ordinance. You should join with the residents that makes West Urbana one of the 10 best neighborhoods to live in the nation.

Michael Plewa
Elizabeth Wagner Plewa
[REDACTED]
Urbana, IL 61801
[REDACTED]

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Plewa, Michael Jacob <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Saturday, November 9, 2024 4:23 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: FW: PUBLIC INPUT November 12, 2024 meeting

*** Email From An External Source ***

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED] On Behalf Of Plewa, Michael Jacob
Sent: Saturday, November 9, 2024 4:19 PM
To: ! Evans, Christopher <[REDACTED]>
Cc: WUNA-Main <[REDACTED]>
Subject: [WUNA-Main] RE: PUBLIC INPUT November 12, 2024 meeting

Hi Christopher,

If a developer wishes to petition for a variance to build a duplex on a single R-2 zoned lot then they can do so before the Zoning Board of Appeals. However, Mr. Huber proposes to overturn all R-2 lot size restrictions. This would be a global change to the Zoning Laws rather than a thoughtful review on a case-by-case project. An approval by the City Council would generate a massive benefit for the interests of corporate landlords and developers at the expense of individual home owners and indeed all residents. We purchased our homes based on a stable zoning environment that protects the owners, maintains the diversity of our population within the West Urbana neighborhood, as well as providing the city a stable tax base of long term residents. This proposal, if granted, is a serious transfer of value from citizens to corporate landlords. The loss of stable neighborhoods, the flight of families to other municipalities (as documented in the last census), and the loss of the quality of life in the City of Urbana will be the result if this proposal is approved. The City Council should be devoted to the people and not to corporate landlords and developers.

I also am upset that the Plan Commission makes their recommendations prior to holding a public meeting for citizen input into the record. How can the Commission make an unbiased recommendation without formally considering input from the citizens? This is a serious issue in our democratic process that the City Council should correct.

Sincerely,
Michael

Michael Plewa
[REDACTED]
Urbana, IL 61801
[REDACTED]

-----Original Message-----

From: ! Evans, Christopher <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Saturday, November 9, 2024 12:10 PM
To: Plewa, Michael Jacob <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Re: PUBLIC INPUT November 12, 2024 meeting

Mr. Plewa,

Thanks for your input.

Is what's pictured below a "two family dwelling" that developer Huber seeks to build?

[cid:0af247b9-cfa0-4d8c-94d3-b3d817786293]

From: Plewa, Michael Jacob <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, November 8, 2024 10:23:21 AM
To: !City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT November 12, 2024 meeting

*** Email From An External Source ***

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The West Urbana neighborhood is a unique asset to the City of Urbana in that it is one of the few affordable, national award-winning residential neighborhoods that is adjacent to a major university. In 1978 when I was hired as an Assistant Professor at the University of Illinois my wife and I chose to live in West Urbana because we wanted to be able to walk to our laboratory and reduce our energy consumption. We purchased our home, that was built in 1939, and we are the second owners. Over the years we have enhanced the energy efficiency of our home and carefully restored the building. If you wish to attract professionals, faculty and staff at the University, the City Council should reject the Plan Commission's efforts to undermine the protections inherent in R-2 single family residential zoning. The current proposal would effectively eliminate R-2 single family residential zoning. New families would avoid buying in West Urbana. If you implement this change, you will send many families to Southwest Champaign, Savoy, Mahomet or other areas where they can purchase homes as truly single-family residences.

As our Elected Representatives the City Council Should Protect the Unique Residential Neighborhood in West Urbana. West Urbana is unique because of its fine homes, mature trees, diverse population, and proximity to campus. By implementing this change to the R-2 zoning ordinance you will severely reduce single-family, owner-occupied housing and the result will be upscale student housing. This trend has continued throughout the years due to poor city planning, and collusion with developers which leads to housing that even many students cannot afford. Indeed, students are the business of this town, but what makes this neighborhood such a great place to live is that those working for the largest employer in town - the University of Illinois - can have an extremely sustainable and comfortable lifestyle - walking or biking to work, raising a family -- enjoying all the benefits such a town can offer. Further, with a commitment to living here for decades, there is a populace that is engaged in local issues and pays taxes to support schools, parks, the library and other city services for the benefit of all.

Members of the City Council, we urge you to focus on the characteristics of neighborhoods like West Urbana and to reject the proposed amendment to the R-2 zoning ordinance. You should join with the residents that makes West Urbana one of the 10 best neighborhoods to live in the nation.

Michael Plewa
Elizabeth Wagner Plewa
[REDACTED]
Urbana, IL 61801
[REDACTED]

Under the Illinois Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), any written communication to or from City of Urbana employees, officials or board and commission members regarding City of Urbana business is a public record and may be subject to public disclosure.

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The opinions expressed on this moderated list do not necessarily reflect those of the WUNA Steering Committee. To post to this group, send email to [REDACTED] To read the WUNA-Main Policies and Procedures, visit [REDACTED] or navigate elsewhere on our website to learn about WUNA, how to join, and for resources about the neighborhood and city.

Questions about WUNA's Google Groups can be sent to [REDACTED]

You received this message because you are subscribed to the Google Groups "WUNA-Main" group.
To unsubscribe from this group and stop receiving emails from it, send an email to [REDACTED].

To view this discussion visit [REDACTED].

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Plewa, Michael Jacob <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, November 11, 2024 12:51 PM
To: !City Council
Cc: WUNA-Main
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT November 12, 2024 meeting

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

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Ordinance No. 2024-11-034: An Ordinance Amending the Urbana Zoning Ordinance (Update Section VI-3 for Clarity and to Remove Additional Lot Area and Width Requirements for Certain Uses.

Honorable Members of the Urbana City Council:

As so well stated by Esther Patt, “The question is whether a developer should have to request a variance to build a duplex on a 6,000 square foot lot — as is currently the case — or if the city council should grant an across-the-board variance to every property in Urbana by reducing the required lot width and lot area from 80 feet and 8,000 square feet to 60 feet and 6,000 square feet for duplex development. Those of us who oppose this change just want to retain the chance to testify to ZBA about specific locations where two households on one tiny lot might not be appropriate. Then the members must listen to the public before they decide.”

However, I wish to put before you a related issue that is important especially during the current political climate. The current zoning ordinance does not prevent a developer or corporate landlord from requesting a variance. However, they must at least try to demonstrate that the resulting alteration of a single-family zoned lot also may result in some public good. The issue is removing the people’s voice in this decision. This proposal would further diminish the democratic process by which the people can voice their opinion to their elected officials. We should be alarmed by the loss of our democratic culture both internationally and nationally. The corrosive forces against our democratic culture operate by small increments. Any action in which elective representatives remove the voice of the electorate is a deterioration of the democratic process. This concern is echoed throughout our history. During the U.S. Constitutional Convention in 1787, when asked about the nature of the proposed government, Benjamin Franklin stated, “A republic if you can keep it.” Although this was a response to a query of our national government it applies throughout our society. In 1982 Tip O’Neill, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, stated that “All politics is local.” We now arrive at the local level. By approving this proposal, the City Council will limit the access of the people to interact with their elected officials. I do not mean to be hyperbolic, but should you vote to limit the input by the public to these local issues you damage our democratic culture. Tyranny progresses at the pace of a snail.

Sincerely,

Michael Plewa
[REDACTED]
Urbana, IL 61801

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: C. K. Gunsalus <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, November 11, 2024 4:25 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT PLEASE READ: Ordinance No. 2024-11-034

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

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear Members of the Urbana City Council,

We ask you to vote against Ordinance No. 2024-11-034: An Ordinance Amending the Urbana Zoning Ordinance (Update Section VI-3 for Clarity and to Remove Additional Lot Area and Width Requirements for Certain Uses.

This proposal—put forward by a developer, not as part of the planning process and with no demonstrated need—is ill considered and ill timed.

Urbana has a comprehensive plan revision underway that is, we understand, considering zoning for the city's future. Please do not vote piecemeal on a provision that reduces public input and will affect neighborhoods across the city before that plan is complete.

Urbana is in a situation right now where many of the generic arguments for measures to increase density and housing affordability do not apply, and particularly not in the immediate near-campus West Urbana neighborhoods.

Note that the vacancy rate in rental housing in Urbana vastly exceeds national and state averages. **According to census data, the vacancy rate for rental properties in Urbana is 11.5% -- twice the state-wide rental housing vacancy rate.**

US Census Bureau data indicates that

- 70% of housing units in the U.S. are owner-occupied
- 67% of housing units in the Illinois are owner-occupied.
- **33% of housing units in Urbana Illinois are owner-occupied.**

67% of housing units in Urbana are rentals. That is twice the percent statewide.

Urbana faces choices going forward about its neighborhoods. Reducing the opportunity for neighbors to weigh in via a process through the ZBA on proposed waivers, and thus disenfranchising community voices, seems untimely, unwarranted, and unsupported.

C.K. Gunsalus and Michael Walker
[REDACTED]

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: meredith blumthal <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, November 11, 2024 8:35 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT PLEASE READ: Ordinance No. 2024-11-034

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

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear Members of the Urbana City Council,

I ask you to vote against Ordinance No. 2024-11-034: An Ordinance Amending the Urbana Zoning Ordinance (Update Section VI-3 for Clarity and to Remove Additional Lot Area and Width Requirements for Certain Uses.

This change would reduce community input by eliminating residents' ability to voice their concerns.

As a resident at [REDACTED], I have firsthand experience with the importance of community involvement. When the owner of a condemned rental property across from my house sought both major and minor variances for a duplex, the zoning board process allowed neighbors to express their concerns. While current zoning laws do not prevent owners/landlords from requesting variances, they do require consideration of public benefit, preserving residents' voices. This ordinance threatens to erode the ability of residents to participate and weigh in this important process.

Kind regards,

Meredith Blumthal

[REDACTED]

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Florence Caplow <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, November 10, 2024 10:48 AM
To: !City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT November 12, 2024 meeting, text change to Zoning Ordinance

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

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

I urge you to vote NO on this zoning change. I live in West Urbana.

One of the reasons that I love living in Urbana is knowing that it is one of the few places in the country where people working ordinary jobs, for instance as administrative staff at the University, or a manager at a store, or even early career faculty, can actually buy a home. I know people who have been able to do that. I was able to do that. It's those small homes, like mine, that are most affordable, and have the lowest property taxes. I don't want them demolished and replaced with more luxury student apartments that won't even be affordable to ordinary working people.

It was clear to me even before I moved here that the high cost of rentals here makes no sense for working people. It's all about investment opportunities and students whose families can afford to pay those high rents. Some of the wealthiest and most influential people in this town are the major landlords and developers.

Our neighborhood was designated one of the great places in America by the American Planning Association. <https://www.planning.org/greatplaces/neighborhoods/2007/westurbana.htm>. I agree. Why on earth would you squander that? And can you honestly say that making it easier for developers to tear down small houses to replace with student housing is going to improve our beautiful neighborhood?

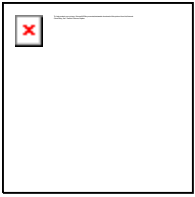
Although in general I support more dense zoning, if it means tearing down small owner occupied or rental houses to build more luxury apartments for students, even with an already high vacancy level of such apartments, that makes no sense to me. I don't know how that creates a more sustainable and diverse community. If you are serious about sustainability and diversity, please think about how to continue to have affordable housing in this community (thank you for the policies about Airbnb, though I know these policies are not always honored). Please vote no.

Sincerely,

Florence Caplow
[REDACTED]

--

Website: [REDACTED]



Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Erik Sacks <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, November 8, 2024 12:27 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT-12 Nov 2024 Council Meeting

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

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Please include the written comments below in the record of Public Input

Dear Councilmembers,

I kindly request that you vote to reject the proposed ordinance No. 2024-11-034: An Ordinance Amending the Urbana Zoning Ordinance (Update Section VI-3 for Clarity and to Remove Additional Lot Area and Width Requirements for Certain Uses.

This proposed ordinance is a giveaway to developers at the expense of current homeowners and to the detriment of future generations of would-be homeowners in our city. The proposed changes would allow wealthy developers to reduce the inventory of the most affordable houses in our neighborhoods, which are the types of houses that are the entry point for most first-time home-buyers. In the past few years, I can think of at least two such houses in West Urbana that were previously rentals and were sold to young first-time homeowners. We should be encouraging more of this in our neighborhoods, not less. As home-ownership has historically been key to the building of wealth for many in this country, we should support the entry of young people into the housing market, and not give away those opportunities to the wealthy developers who need it least. If we are serious about improving equity, we must support opportunities for home-ownership by those who aspire to it.

Moreover, the city of Urbana cannot prosper without a steady base of homeowners. Homeowners are the City's most important long-term investors. Our neighborhoods depend on it. Our businesses depend on it. And the very existence of our schools depends on it. If developers are allowed to degrade the R1-R3 neighborhoods for short term gain, the City will diminish because the long-term homeowners will be forced to move to more stable single-family residential areas, like the suburbs of Champaign and Savoy or the towns of St Joseph or Mahomet. And if you think that can't happen in neighborhoods like West Urbana, consider the residential area just on the other side (west) of Lincoln Ave and bounded by University Ave to the north. At one time, much of that area was composed of single-family houses occupied by homeowners but now there are almost none.

Lastly, the proposed ordinance would encourage developers to reduce the inventory of the smaller and least expensive houses in our single-family zoned neighborhoods and replace these with new duplexes that would be rentals for students. But our city already has an excess of student housing relative to demand. Furthermore, the new duplexes will not address the need for low-income housing because such housing is unprofitable to build without government subsidies. In fact, the proposed ordinance would exacerbate wealth-inequality in our community, the exact opposite of what we want.

Please vote to preserve our single-family residential neighborhoods by upholding current zoning protections. I ask that you remember our petition from West Urbana a few years ago, and recall that there are many who feel strongly about preserving the integrity of our neighborhoods.

Respectfully,

Erik Sacks
[REDACTED]

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Becky Mead <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, November 11, 2024 5:11 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT PLEASE READ: Ordinance No. 2024-11-034

*** Email From An External Source ***

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear Members of the Urbana City Council, I ask you to vote against Ordinance No. 2024-11-034.

This proposal, put forward by developers, is not for the benefit of Urbana as a community but for the benefit of developers with specific agendas.

Wholesale increasing density without discussion wherever it is proposed makes no sense. You should be allowing for public input and discussion, taking the time to consider variances to zoning on a case by case basis as is currently the practice. We have a beautiful city, and should be thoughtful about preservation, planning and development to make the most of what we have.

Please reject this proposed change.

Becky Mead

[REDACTED]

Urbana

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Heather Grossman <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, November 11, 2024 10:41 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT PLEASE READ: Ordinance No. 2024-11-034

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

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear Members of the Urbana City Council,

I urge you to vote no on Ordinance No. 2024-11-034: An Ordinance Amending the Urbana Zoning Ordinance (Update Section VI-3 for Clarity and to Remove Additional Lot Area and Width Requirements for Certain Uses. There is a need to further analyze and stipulate the type of any multiple-unit buildings that might be developed in Urbana: there is a great deal of expensive student housing available that is unsuitable for non-student renters (having been a long time renter in Urbana prior to purchasing my first home here this past summer, I know this all too well). The proposed ordinance does not take fully into consideration what type of multi-unit buildings might be constructed and who they would serve and what needs they would meet. In addition, the ordinance threatens to disrupt the historic nature of our neighborhoods and their earlier twentieth-century domestic architecture, only to be replaced by generic multi-unit buildings of little design value.

Best,
Heather Grossman
Architectural historian
[REDACTED]

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Debevec, Paul T <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, November 10, 2024 9:37 AM
To: !City Council
Subject: THIS IS FOR PUBLIC INPUT Ordinance No. 2024-11-034

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

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THIS IS FOR PUBLIC INPUT

Dear City Council and Mayor Marlin,

City Council should reject Ordinance No. 2024-11-034, which proposes changes in the current zoning ordinance.

Currently the public has a right to offer comments to the Zoning Board of Appeals on a request for a variance from a property with R-2 zoning (single-family residential) to construct a duplex. The proposed ordinance would rescind the right of the public to comment.

City Council has an admirable acceptance of public comment in its meetings, and it would be inconsistent with this acceptance to rescind the ability to comment at the Zoning Board of Appeals. Scanning the 25-year history of my neighborhood listserv, I find that the public has exercised this right many times.

Urbana is in the process of producing a new comprehensive plan. Changes in land use and zoning could well be part of the new comprehensive plan. Thus, absent the new comprehensive plan, it is inappropriate to approve this piecemeal ordinance.

Regards, Paul Debevec

[REDACTED]

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Paul Hixson <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Saturday, November 9, 2024 8:58 PM
To: !City Council
Cc: Paul C Hixson; Jennifer Hixson
Subject: For PUBLIC INPUT at the Nov. 12, 2024 City Council meeting - re Ordinance No. 2024-11-034

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

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear members of the City Council,

We write to you to urge you to stop the ill conceived proposed change to the Zoning Ordinance that is on the city council committee agenda next Tuesday, November 12.

We have written you several times over the past few years about the need to protect the treasure that the West Urbana Neighborhood represents to our community. We are long term residents who bought our home at 209 W. Indiana Ave in fall 1977 and have lived happily here ever since. We bought in this location because it represented a unique space which contained a mixture of housing styles, located on an interesting, beautiful tree-lined street, and a place from which Paul could walk or bike to work on campus and Jennifer could bike or take a short car drive to the Urbana schools she worked at during her career. This was the place where we raised our children (now long out of the nest) because they could walk to school or the library, or to downtown Urbana on an occasional family outing. In short, it has been a wonderful location to live in — and that's why we've stayed in this neighborhood and worked over the years to make ongoing improvements to our home. Some of you may even remember the series of photos that Paul sent the council a year or two ago attempting to show the beauty and charm that this gem of a neighborhood offers to its residents.

However, over the past decade or so, we have felt that the city planning process has been less supportive of this unique neighborhood that sits directly between the University campus and downtown Urbana (aka the County Seat). Instead, we now find a series of fairly aggressive efforts from city planners and the city plan commission to convert this lovely neighborhood away from the mixture of housing styles it currently offers and make it filled with more and more duplexes that are essentially aimed at student renters.

We believe strongly that such efforts are not in the best long term interests of the City of Urbana. So, we were very grateful when WUNA resident and former City Council Member, Esther Patt shared some very interesting and relevant information about this topic that spoke directly to why this is such a bad idea. We're going to quote directly and extensively from Esther's recent email to the WUNA listserv because we believe she has truly hit the nail on the head.

*The agenda item is **Plan Case No. 2493-T-24**, which will reduce the required lot width (80 to 60 feet) and lot area (from 8,000 to 6,000 square feet) for duplexes in the R-2 and R-3 zoning districts.*

The Plan Commission findings included the statement that this change would "preserve and enhance the character of established residential neighborhoods" and "ensure that new land uses are compatible with and enhance the existing community."

The case was actually proposed by a developer, David Huber; the Plan Commission unanimously recommended it for approval with some amendments. Details of the case can be found on-line Friday at <https://urbana-il.municodemeetings.com/>

City planners assert that Urbana has a shortage of rental housing. Here are the actual facts (source: U.S. Census Bureau):

70% of housing units in the U.S. are owner-occupied

67% of housing units in the Illinois are owner-occupied.

33% of housing units in Urbana Illinois are owner-occupied.

Yes, 67% of housing units in Urbana are rentals. That is twice the percent statewide. The vacancy rate for rental properties in Urbana is 11.5% -- twice the state-wide rental housing vacancy rate.

Three weeks before school started in August, when U of I Housing Division announced it had over-booked the residence halls by 1,000 students, the University solved the problem by leasing groups of un-leased apartments in 7 buildings very close to the residence halls.

In Urbana these locations were chosen: 804 W. Illinois, 805 W. Green and 901 W. Western which are all within 2 blocks of the dining hall at Illinois Street Residence Hall.

Fifteen years ago, there would have been no vacancies that close to campus at the end of the summer. But with all the new construction since 2010, the rental vacancy rate has grown – even very close to campus.

Yet city planners claim we have such a shortage of rental opportunities that the greater good would be served by encouraging the conversion of small houses to duplex rentals. They call the result "affordable housing."

*Here are the **starting** rents for 2-bedroom apartments at four of the new buildings in Urbana. Compare these monthly rents to the **\$921 median monthly rent** for Champaign County and the **\$1,561 median monthly mortgage payment** by homeowners in Champaign County and ask, "is this affordable housing?"*

901 Western - \$1,650

200 S. Vine St - \$1,675

707 W. Springfield - \$1,775

1010 W. University - \$2,200

Exclusionary zoning is a real issue in communities like Northbrook, Illinois where 87% of households are owner-occupied and median home value is \$621,000. Urbana has 33% owner-occupied with median home value of \$175,000. Those lower valued homes are a magnet for developers. Even without any changes to the Zoning Ordinance or Comprehensive Plan there will be more rental housing developed in Urbana.

Successful cities need a mixture of housing styles and a mixture of home ownership and rental opportunities. That is all true, but who do the developers and the members of the City Planning Commission think they are fooling when they claim they are only trying to increase "affordable housing". That

claim is laughable on face value. They are trying to make a buck by expanding the number of student off-campus living opportunities in a market that is overly saturated with precisely what they are proposing.

What Urbana is, unfortunately, not flooded with is affordable owner-occupied family housing. And we have some of the best examples of affordable owner-occupied family housing in the area they are hoping to make easier to convert into more duplexes.

We urge the City Council to soundly defeat this proposed change to the Zoning Ordinance presented in Plan Case N. 2493-T-24, and instead instruct city planners to redirect at least some of their efforts toward supporting and strengthening viable family-friendly neighborhoods in Urbana.

Sincerely,

Paul and Jennifer Hixson



Urbana, IL

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Louis Bergeron <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2024 1:42 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT PLEASE READ: Ordinance No. 2024-11-034

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

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear Members of the Urbana City Council,

Please vote against **Ordinance No. 2024-11-034**: An Ordinance Amending the Urbana Zoning Ordinance (Update Section VI-3 for Clarity and to Remove Additional Lot Area and Width Requirements for Certain Uses / Plan Case No. 2493-T-24).

This proposal appears to be a calculated effort by a developer to alter existing zoning regulations in the R-2 and R-3 districts so as to routinely allow construction of duplexes on properties currently deemed too small to accommodate such dwellings.

It is my understanding that this ordinance would also serve to eliminate any formal opportunity for public input regarding whether a duplex is an appropriate structure at a given location.

I fail to see how removing the opportunity for public input would be of benefit to the public. Rather it would seem to primarily benefit developers, since addressing the concerns of the public takes time and would thus slow the process of funneling profits into the pockets of duplex developers.

I understand that there is concern about the amount of housing available for lower income residents of Urbana, but I fail to see how this proposal would in any way be an effective remedy,

Since moving to Urbana in 2016, I have witnessed a truly stunning amount of construction of new housing, particularly in the area around University Avenue and Lincoln Avenue, as well as on the periphery of Urbana's downtown area, and I find it difficult to believe that the local housing shortage is so severe that we must begin demolishing single family residences so that duplexes can replace them. That approach to solving our local housing "crisis" seems cumbersome and slow, even if the proposed revisions are passed, when compared to the speed with which multi-story apartment buildings are being constructed locally.

If speed is truly of the essence in addressing the purported "housing crisis" in Urbana, may I suggest that the Planning Commission and City Council explore the proliferation of houses that have been taken off the regular rental market because they have been turned into short term rental units through Airbnb. Without making any effort to research this trend, I have become aware of two houses in the West Urbana neighborhood that are neither owner-occupied nor available for long term rental, but rather are only available for short term rental via Airbnb, thus effectively removing them from the stock of housing available to those who would seek to be longer term residents of Urbana. I doubt these two are the only such houses in the whole of our city.

Bringing such houses back into the available long term rental housing stock does not require destruction of existing houses, or construction of new houses and, when such houses are identified, they could be returned to the pool of available rental housing at a dizzying speed when compared to any other method of producing additional housing.

I thank the Urbana City Council for their consideration of my letter and again, I urge all of you to vote against Ordinance No. 2024-11-034.

L.K. Bergeron



Urbana

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Caitlin Clarke <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, November 7, 2024 10:37 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT November 12, 2024 City Council Meeting Fwd: [WUNA-Main] Is single family zoning bad for Urbana?

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

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to share the concerns that I have regarding the plans to potentially change zoning within Urbana for increased development of multi family units. While I am in favor of affordable housing, the concerns raised in the email thread below are very real. Specifically, developers will not be likely to choose to develop affordable housing. Instead, we will be increasing high rent options primarily aimed at students. Furthermore, our rental property rate is 67%, more than double the National and State average.

What options do we have instead that could actually help our community members who need affordable housing and could make use of the frequently vacant high rent units that already exist? And how can we encourage local banks to approve financing for first time home buyers in the area - especially lower income first time buyers?

Thanks for your consideration of my concerns.

Best,

Caitlin Clarke
[REDACTED]

Sent from Gmail Mobile

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Cope Cumpston <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, November 8, 2024 9:11 AM
To: !City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT November 12 2024

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

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

I firmly oppose reducing lot width and area in the R-2 and R-3 zoning districts under **Plan Case No. 2493-T-24**. I firmly oppose making it easier for developers to become distant landlords for presumably the student population; what they build, even if for duplexes, is priced over what is most needed for housing in Urbana. Students are well provided for. It is lower income local residents who need access to smaller lots for single family housing in the city.

Please protect our residential neighborhoods from more developer housing, which destroys the nature of the population able to live here. It is important to keep the more affordable housing that exists on single lots, for younger families who cannot afford the rents that students are charged.

Cope Cumpston
[REDACTED]

Urbana

Copenhaver Cumpston
[REDACTED]

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Carol Leff <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, November 8, 2024 11:10 AM
To: !City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT November 12 2024 meeting

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

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As you know, there is considerable public concern about the benefits of Ordinance No. 2024-11-034 Area and width requirements. So without expecting this to be read out loud, but at least in the record, I want to add my questions and concerns

You will have seen how many Urbana residences are already overwhelmingly rentals, and I assume the developers plan to build still more, not for longterm residents who can't yet afford a home but for whom?

Is it the case that there are many rental vacancies now? If so, who benefits from more of them. I have lived in a WUNA home of my/our own since 1986/1991. My wonderful neighbors are already cheek by jowl, and that is an asset in many ways. But they are longterm neighbors. And the students in my immediate neighborhood are also great, but they will move on leaving more rental property behind them.

I would like a good reason why and in what way the developer intends to displace the existing housing, and whether any thought has been given to access for low income housing in Urbana, whether rental or bought. I see that the planning commission has just approved this. I hope the City Council will be thoughtful. I worry that a short-term financial windfall, if that is the point the Planning Committee were focused on, doesn't erode our Urbana community longrun.

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, November 8, 2024 11:36 AM
To: !City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT November 12, 2024 meeting-Plan Case No. 2493-T-24

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

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Ordinance No. 2024-11-034: An Ordinance Amending the Urbana Zoning Ordinance (Update Section VI-3 for Clarity and to Remove Additional Lot Area and Width Requirements for Certain Uses.

Re: Plan Case No. 2493-T-24

Honorable Members of the Urbana City Council:

We oppose the request by David Huber to amend Article VI of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance to eliminate lot width and area requirements for two family dwelling in the R-2 (Single Family Residential) and R-3 (Single- and Two Family Residential) Zoning Districts.

The Plan Commission approved this request before obtaining or thoughtfully considering public input. The Plan Commission does not represent the people; the City Council is the elected representative of the people. We ask the City Council to represent the people and not the vested interests of corporate landlords and developers who have little interest in the quality of life in Urbana.

The lot sizes in the West Urbana neighborhood are small as compared to most single-family residential lots in Urbana and Champaign. On West Iowa Street the lot width is 55 feet. These beautiful older homes zoned as R-2 are already close together. Eliminating the lot width and area requirements would cause an extreme increase in density and would not be in the best interest of the homeowners and other residents. This proposal only benefits developers who wish to enhance their greed at the expense of this wonderful neighborhood.

The West Urbana neighborhood is a unique asset to the City of Urbana in that it is one of the few affordable, national award-winning residential neighborhoods that is adjacent to a major university. In 1978 when I was hired as an Assistant Professor at the University of Illinois my wife and I chose to live in West Urbana because we wanted to be able to walk to our laboratory and reduce our energy consumption. We purchased our home, that was built in 1939, and we are the second owners. Over the years we have enhanced the energy efficiency of our home and carefully restored the building. If you wish to attract professionals, faculty and staff at the University, the City Council should reject the Plan Commission's efforts to undermine the protections inherent in R-2 single family residential zoning. The current proposal would effectively eliminate R-2 single family residential zoning. New families would avoid buying in West Urbana. If you implement this change, you will send many families to Southwest Champaign, Savoy, Mahomet or other areas where they can purchase homes as truly single-family residences.

As our Elected Representatives the City Council Should Protect the Unique Residential Neighborhood in West Urbana. West Urbana is unique because of its fine homes, mature trees,

diverse population, and proximity to campus. By implementing this change to the R-2 zoning ordinance you will severely reduce single-family, owner-occupied housing and the result will be upscale student housing. This trend has continued throughout the years due to poor city planning, and collusion with developers which leads to housing that even many students cannot afford. Indeed, students are the business of this town, but what makes this neighborhood such a great place to live is that those working for the largest employer in town – the University of Illinois – can have an extremely sustainable and comfortable lifestyle – walking or biking to work, raising a family -- enjoying all the benefits such a town can offer. Further, with a commitment to living here for decades, there is a populace that is engaged in local issues and pays taxes to support schools, parks, the library and other city services for the benefit of all.

Members of the City Council, we urge you to focus on the characteristics of neighborhoods like West Urbana and to reject the proposed amendment to the R-2 zoning ordinance. You should join with the residents that makes West Urbana one of the 10 best neighborhoods to live in the nation.

Sincerely,

Barbara R Beshers

[REDACTED]

Urbana IL 61801

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Don Pakey <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, November 8, 2024 3:51 PM
To: !City Council
Cc: Donald Dean Pakey
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT November 12, 2024 meeting

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

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Honorable Members of the Urbana City Council:

I strongly support the statement (below) by Michael Plewa and Elizabeth Wagner Plewa opposing the request by David Huber to amend Article VI of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance.

Re: Plan Case No. 2493-T-24

Honorable Members of the Urbana City Council:

We oppose the request by David Huber to amend Article VI of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance to eliminate lot width and area requirements for two family dwelling in the R-2 (Single Family Residential) and R-3 (Single- and Two Family Residential) Zoning Districts.

The Plan Commission approved this request before obtaining or thoughtfully considering public input. The Plan Commission does not represent the people; the City Council is the elected representative of the people. We ask the City Council to represent the people and not the vested interests of corporate landlords and developers who have little interest in the quality of life in Urbana.

The lot sizes in the West Urbana neighborhood are small as compared to most single-family residential lots in Urbana and Champaign. On West Iowa Street the lot width is 55 feet. These beautiful older homes zoned as R-2 are already close together. Eliminating the lot width and area requirements would cause an extreme increase in density and would not be in the best interest of the homeowners and other residents. This proposal only benefits developers who wish to enhance their greed at the expense of this wonderful neighborhood.

The West Urbana neighborhood is a unique asset to the City of Urbana in that it is one of the few affordable, national award-winning residential neighborhoods that is adjacent to a major university. In 1978 when I was hired as an Assistant Professor at the University of Illinois my wife and I chose to live in West Urbana because we wanted to be able to walk to our laboratory and reduce our energy consumption. We purchased our home, that was built in 1939, and we are the second owners. Over the years we have enhanced the energy efficiency of our home and carefully restored the building. If you wish to attract professionals, faculty and staff at the University, the City Council should reject the Plan Commission's efforts to undermine the protections inherent in R-2 single family residential zoning. The current proposal would effectively eliminate R-2 single family residential zoning. New families would avoid buying in West Urbana. If you implement this change, you will send many families to Southwest Champaign, Savoy, Mahomet or other areas where they can purchase homes as truly single-family residences.

As our Elected Representatives the City Council Should Protect the Unique Residential Neighborhood in West Urbana. West Urbana is unique because of its fine homes, mature trees, diverse population, and proximity to campus. By implementing this change to the R-2 zoning ordinance you will severely reduce single-family, owner-occupied housing and the result will be upscale student housing. This trend has continued throughout the years due to poor city planning,

and collusion with developers which leads to housing that even many students cannot afford. Indeed, students are the business of this town, but what makes this neighborhood such a great place to live is that those working for the largest employer in town – the University of Illinois – can have an extremely sustainable and comfortable lifestyle – walking or biking to work, raising a family -- enjoying all the benefits such a town can offer. Further, with a commitment to living here for decades, there is a populace that is engaged in local issues and pays taxes to support schools, parks, the library and other city services for the benefit of all.

Members of the City Council, we urge you to focus on the characteristics of neighborhoods like West Urbana and to reject the proposed amendment to the R-2 zoning ordinance. You should join with the residents that makes West Urbana one of the 10 best neighborhoods to live in the nation.

Dr. Don Pakey
Eastern Illinois University
Physics Department
[REDACTED]

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Peggy Patten <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, November 8, 2024 4:42 PM
To: !City Council
Cc: Todd Kinney
Subject: Planning Case #2493-T-24

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

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear Members of Urbana City Council & Mayor Marlin:

We understand that you will be discussing Planning Case # 2493-T-24 which will reduce the required lot width (80 to 60 feet) and lot area (from 8,000 to 6,000 square feet) for duplexes in the R-2 and R-3 zoning districts. It appears that this change would allow developers to demolish small homes on small lots and replace them with duplex rentals.

We would see the wisdom of this proposal if Urbana had an overabundance of owner-occupied homes and too few available rental units. According to the U.S. Census Bureau that is not the case:

70% of housing units in the U.S. are owner-occupied

67% of housing units in Illinois are owner-occupied.

33% of housing units in Urbana Illinois are owner-occupied.

We were surprised to learn that 67% of housing units in Urbana are rentals -- twice the percent statewide. Most importantly, the vacancy rate for rental properties in Urbana is 11.5% which is why three weeks before school started in August the University was able to find rental units for the 1,000 students they could not accommodate in the residence halls. Many of these rental units were in Urbana.

Relaxing development requirements to make this property more attractive to developers who compete with prospective owner-occupants to acquire this housing will not "preserve and enhance the character of established residential neighborhoods" and "ensure that new land uses are compatible with and enhance the existing community" as stated in the Plan Commission's findings.

Requiring individual variance requests for these new developments would give the people who live in the neighborhood an opportunity to share with the ZBA their opinion about whether the proposed change enhances the character of their neighborhood and whether the new use would be compatible with the existing community. If this Planning Case were to pass, it would eliminate any public input about the appropriateness of new duplex rentals.

Please oppose the request made by Planning Case # 2493-T-24.

Thank you for your service.

Peggy Patten

Todd Kinney

[REDACTED]
Urbana

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Emily Peterson <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Saturday, November 9, 2024 11:06 AM
To: !City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT November 12, 2024 meeting

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

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Re: Plan Case No. 2493-T-24

Urbana City Council Members,

I oppose the request by David Huber to amend Article VI of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance to eliminate lot width and area requirements for two family dwelling in the R-2 (Single Family Residential) and R-3 (Single- and Two Family Residential) Zoning Districts.

This is a desirable neighborhood for homeowners who want to live in a community of longer term neighbors and close to the University. Additionally, it offers affordable smaller lot options that make living here accessible. We already have a healthy amount of multi-family rentals. Ones that are frankly being left to fall into disrepair. Developers seeking property in this area can work within the confines of our zoning ordinance with lots already zoned for multi-family use. There is no compelling argument to increase density. Doing so only benefits developers trying to capitalize on student housing for which there is sufficient supply already. I request you support retaining the character of this neighborhood and oppose Plan Case 2493-T-24.

--

Emily Peterson
[REDACTED]
Urbana, IL 61801

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: E R Cardman <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Saturday, November 9, 2024 1:31 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: Plan Case No. 2493-T-24: PUBLIC INPUT, Nov 12, 2024

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

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear City Council Members:

I ask that you do not approve the proposed changes to zoning laws, as put forth in Plan Case No. 2493-T-24 Ordinance No. 2024-11-034: An Ordinance Amending the Urbana Zoning Ordinance (Update Section VI-3 for Clarity and to Remove Additional Lot Area and Width Requirements for Certain Uses.

Opening up Urbana to more rental units through less stringent zoning regulations regarding the construction of duplexes will NOT provide more affordable housing. It will merely open the floodgates to local developers [backed by national and international investors] who are eager to build new, build expensive, and build up their personal bank accounts. This is especially pertinent to West Urbana, which is the equivalent of 'beach-front' property because of its proximity to the UI campus.

Esther Patt, long-time advocate for tenants' rights and affordable housing, has researched the issue and states that Urbana does NOT have a shortage of rental housing. She notes:

70% of housing units in the U.S. are owner-occupied
67% of housing units in Illinois are owner-occupied.
33% of housing units in Urbana Illinois are owner-occupied.

Further, the percentage of rental units in Urbana is twice the percentage at the state level. The vacancy rate for rental properties in Urbana is 11.5% -- twice the state-wide rental housing vacancy rate.

Urbana does NOT need more rental units.

The market for single-family homes remains quite strong in this neighborhood. Homes -- from modest to relatively large -- continue to sell quickly, despite the overall sluggish real estate market. Let's maintain the stability of a unique, diverse neighborhood.

Thank you for your consideration,
Liz Cardman, Ward 1

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Al Valocchi <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Saturday, November 9, 2024 2:27 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT - Nov. 12, 2024

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

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear Urbana City Council and Mayor Marlin,

I have been an Urbana resident for more than 40 years. There are many reasons why I love living here, but for the sake of this discussion, I note the tree-lined neighborhood with a variety of housing types. There are many single families spanning generations, from young professionals, to families with children, to retirees. We also have rental units for both undergraduate and graduate students. I am very happy to be living in this diverse neighborhood.

I write to register my **OPPOSITION** to **Ordinance No. 2024-11-034**. Changing the required lot width and size for duplexes in R-2 and R-3 zoning districts will allow for small homes on small lots to be converted more easily to duplexes. In my opinion, this would have a negative impact on the character of our residential community. I believe that a stock of small “starter” homes allows first-time buyers to enter our community. Some of these smaller homes also house students who benefit from having the experience of living in a neighborhood rather than a large student apartment complex. Finally, all the data I have seen indicates that there is not a shortage of rental units in Urbana.

Thank you for your consideration.

Albert J. Valocchi

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Esther Patt <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Saturday, November 9, 2024 5:58 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT 11-12-2024

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

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear Urbana City Council Members:

I write to ask you to vote “NO” on **Ordinance No. 2024-11-034: An Ordinance Amending the Urbana Zoning Ordinance (Update Section VI-3 for Clarity and to Remove Additional Lot Area and Width Requirements for Certain Uses / Plan Case No. 2493-T-24)**

If you defeat this plan case, a property owner would still be able to build a duplex on a 6,000 square foot lot. They would just have to request from Zoning Board of Appeals variances for minimum lot size and lot width. It has happened before and it will happen again without this radical change in the law.

If you approve this plan case, you will be declaring that every small lot in the R-2 and R-3 zoning districts, without exception, is big enough for a 2-household rental. Are you confident that’s true?

The purpose of variances is to allow relaxing of a development regulation when doing so would be appropriate. The purpose of case-by-case decision-making by Zoning Board of Appeals or, in the case of a major variance, by the City Council, is to provide the neighbors an opportunity to tell you – rather than for you to tell the neighbors – whether the proposed development is appropriate at that site or compatible with the neighborhood.

The sole effect of this Plan Case would be to eliminate the public hearing and individual scrutiny of the specific location.

The worst part of this whole case is the false claim that Urbana has an **exclusionary zoning** problem and a serious shortage of rental housing opportunities that compel you to accelerate the conversion of single family homes to duplex rentals.

U.S. Census Data show the opposite is true.

Nation-wide, 70% of housing units are owner-occupied
Statewide in Illinois, 67% of housing units are owner-occupied
Urbana, Illinois 33% of housing units are owner-occupied

Two-thirds of all housing choices in Urbana are already rental. That's twice the percent state-wide. And the rental housing vacancy rate in Urbana is double the state and national rental housing vacancy rates.

We have so many apartments in Urbana that last August, when U of I Housing Division had over-booked the residence halls by 1,000 students, U of I found places for the students in apartment buildings very close to the residence halls. Of the seven buildings the University chose, the three Urbana locations were 804 W. Illinois,

805 W. Green and 901 Western – each less than two blocks from the dining hall at Illinois Street Residence Halls.

Exclusionary zoning is a problem in cities like Northbrook, IL where 87% of housing is owner-occupied and median home value is \$600,000. That's where the racial disparity in the housing market is greater and where low-wage workers have to commute long distances from home to work. Not true in Urbana.

Urbana does have an affordable housing problem. But new apartment construction, without government subsidy, has never, ever created affordable housing in Urbana. On the other hand, conversion of small, single-family homes to duplex rentals replaces affordable housing with new, high-priced housing.

For example, the rents for the new 2-bedroom apartments next to the city building start at \$1,675 per month. That's \$100 more than the median monthly mortgage payment by homeowners in Champaign County. A household would need annual income of \$72,000 to avoid being rent burdened if they rented at 200 S. Vine.

At age 69, it is very sad to me that when I look at the small homes in Urbana, I see places I might be able to afford when I become unable to walk up a flight of stairs; but developers and city planners only see opportunities to buy cheap homes to convert to duplex rentals.

I'm not asking you to stop development. I am asking you to preserve democracy, defeat this proposal and continue to require property owners to get special permission (i.e., variance) to build 2 households on one tiny lot.

Thank you for your service,
Esther Patt

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Beverly Fagan <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, November 10, 2024 3:49 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: Public input

*** Email From An External Source ***

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

The city council should reject Ordinance No. 2024-11-034 which proposes changes in the current zoning ordinance in Urbana.

Beverly Fagan

[REDACTED]
Urbana, Illinois

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Sarah McEvoy <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, November 11, 2024 10:22 AM
To: !City Council; Marlin, Diane
Subject: Reject Ordinance No. 2024-11-034

*** Email From An External Source ***

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear City Council of Urbana and Mayor Marlin,

City Council should reject Ordinance No. 2024-11-034, which proposes changes in the current zoning ordinance.

Currently, if a developer wants to build a duplex on a lot that is only 6,000 square feet, the developer needs to apply to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a variance for lot width and lot area. During public input, neighbors can express their concerns about a duplex on the specific lot in question.

The proposed text amendment essentially grants the lot width and lot area variances to every property owner and every location. It reduces, across-the-board for ALL properties, the required lot width for a duplex to 60 feet and required lot size to 6,000 square feet.

We do not believe the stated "findings" from the Plan Commission that at every location in the city where a lot is 6,000 sq. feet, that building a duplex on that lot will "preserve and enhance the character of the neighborhood," "be compatible with existing uses" and "will enhance the existing community."

We are your neighbors and constituents, not developers looking to capitalize on what makes our neighborhood attractive. Those developers, who most often do not live in Urbana, then degrade our neighborhood with an ugly, cheap building that we are stuck living with.

Please keep the power in the hands of Urbana residents and continue to open up our government to citizen input to the ZBA on a case by case basis.

Thank you,
Sarah McEvoy and Huseyin Sehitoglu
[REDACTED]

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Joanne Budde <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, November 11, 2024 3:06 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT - November 12, 2024 - Proposed Ordinance Amendment 2493-T-24

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

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear City Council members

I am urging you to vote NO on the proposed zoning amendment change that will allow for lot sizes, setbacks and other variances to be approved without going through the current channels. This amendment will also allow for duplexes to be built in single-family neighborhoods without obtaining any public input. Also, to allow duplexes to be built in single-family neighborhoods for the purpose of creating rentals is a flawed concept.

Homeowners who choose to RENT their homes, rather than selling them, create neighborhoods of people who don't care about the neighborhood and don't have any stake in keeping their lawns or homes maintained, since they are temporary residents and the owner is absentee. They also don't care about their neighbors or complaints from neighbors because they are merely renters.

At the September 19th meeting of the Plan Commission, Lew Hopkins pointed out "that it is not terribly difficult to create a duplex out of an existing building that is in good shape. If you create a duplex out of an existing building in the City of Urbana, you go from four unrelated renters to eight unrelated renters. This, again, will potentially change the character of the neighborhood."

The city staff does not seem concerned with preserving the character of the neighborhood and must feel that criteria is too subjective to be enforced.

This proposed change appears to be an attempt to eliminate public input from the process, and not allow neighbors to voice their opinions - good or bad - before a property can be changed to allow duplexes.

I realize this may streamline the process for the planning staff, but please don't let expediency get in the way of public input.

The person who brought this proposed amendment to the city is Dave Huber, who already owns five houses or lots in a three-block area of Washington Street.

Perhaps Dave Huber is proposing this because he wants to buy more property, and just can't wait for the current process as outlined in the ordinance. So, he has chosen to circumvent the entire process and just get the city to change the ordinance so he does not need approval from any city body nor would he need public input.

And city staff seem to already have circumvented the process and the ordinance because Article XI of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance, Section XI-10 states that

"At least 15 days, but no more than 30 days before a public hearing, notice of the time and place of the public hearing on any proposed conditional use permit, mobile home park, planned unit development, special use permit, waiver of parking, variance, amendment, annexation agreement proposing a rezoning, or combination thereof shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the City of Urbana. The notice of such hearing shall contain the common street address and property index number (PIN) of the property for which such action is sought, or a legal description if a street address is not available, as well as a brief description of the proposed action. The cost of such publication shall be paid by the petitioner, except in the case of an annexation agreement, and is in addition to the application fee."

If there was a notification published in the News-Gazette about this proposed amendment, I missed it, and there has been no mention of it in any of the staff reports or summaries of this proposal. If there was no notice, then this process has been flawed from the beginning. At the very least, since there is no specific property to reference, the proposed amendment change could and should have been published, with " a brief description of the proposed action."

This goes against the very basic tenet of the zoning ordinance.

In the agenda packets of the City Council meetings, the following statement is made:

"The City of Urbana welcomes Public Input during open meetings of the City Council, the City Council's Committee of the Whole, City Boards and Commissions and other City-sponsored meetings. Our goal is to foster respect for the meeting process, and respect for all people participating as members of the public body, city staff, and general public. The City is required to conduct all business during public meetings. The presiding officer is responsible for conducting those meetings in an orderly and efficient manner."

Apparently, this is merely lip service.

Please vote NO and in favor of public input and a zoning ordinance that has been working quite well for a number of years.

Thank you,
Joanne Budde

Urbana, IL 61802

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Joanne Budde <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2024 1:30 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT - November 12, 2024 - Plan Case 2493-T-24

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

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

This was sent out by PACA (Preservation and Conservation Association - the group that helps preserve the history of Urbana and Champaign by rescuing bricks, doors, windows, etc from buildings that are being torn down. In some cases they have even purchased a home to save a historic home from destruction.

In case they did not send this to you, I am forwarding what they sent out today:

From: PACA <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, November 11, 2024 1:49 PM
To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Preservation alert!

Greetings everyone. We sincerely apologize for hitting you with this at the last minute, but as is the case with many preservation related situations in this area, we only just found out about it.

Enclosed you will find a copy of the preservation alert that we've been busy posting around Urbana. If you can show up to the council meeting, send an email, or call someone on the council we would appreciate it.

While this zoning change may be billed as a way to increase the number of overall 'units' in Urbana, the result will almost assuredly *decrease* the number of small, affordable single-family houses. It will fracture neighborhoods, create more parking problems, and further degrade the character of the community.

Please take a moment to make your voice heard.

Thank you

PRESERVATION ALERT!
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2024, 7 PM, CITY HALL
URBANA CITY COUNCIL MEETING

**Major Zoning Issue to be Voted On,
Unless Public Response Can Convince Council
to Postpone Consideration!**

**Should zoning regulations in R-2 and R-3 Residential Areas
be altered to allow duplexes to be built on smaller lots than now required?**

- Does this benefit developers or ordinary property owners and renters?
- Does this change really work to preserve the historic character of large expanses of Urbana's residential neighborhoods?
- How would the many blocks of mostly single-family residences change with contemporary duplexes scattered in?
- Will these changes actually provide more affordable housing?
Can the developer who proposed these changes provide evidence that such duplexes will really be more affordable?

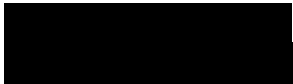
**Attend the Council Meeting, and/or
Contact Council Members to raise questions and express opinions!**

(See www.urbanainillinois.us/city-council for addresses)
See Meetings Calendar on that page, find 11/12/24,
Committee of the Whole Meeting, click for agenda/packet
with the text and attached explanation for **Ordinance No. 2024-11-034**)

This flyer created by the Advocacy Committee of PACA
(The Preservation and Conservation Association of Champaign County)
in the interests of historic preservation.

--

Thomas Garza, Executive Director
Preservation and Conservation Association of Champaign County



Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Deborah Katz-Downie <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, November 11, 2024 11:31 PM
To: !City Council
Cc: Deborah Katz-Downie; ! Wu, Maryalice
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT November 12, 2024 meeting

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

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear City Council and Mayor Marlin,

Ordinance No. 2024-11-034: An Ordinance Amending the Urbana Zoning Ordinance: Update Section VI-3 for Clarity and to Remove Additional Lot Area and Width Requirements for Certain Uses.

I strongly oppose the request by David Huber to amend Article VI of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance to eliminate lot width and area requirements for two family dwellings in the R-2 (Single Family Residential) and R-3 (Single- and Two Family Residential) Zoning District and I urge that City Council reject Ordinance No. 2024-11-034.

When an Urbana resident makes a request for a variance to construct a duplex on a property currently zoned R-2 single-family residential property, Urbana residents are allowed to give input to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

For example, the West Urbana Neighborhood has a variety of sized lots that together compose a unique, neighborhood with large and small homes alike. Together we make up a vibrant community with renters and homeowners living together with the ability to walk, ride a bike, or take a short bus ride to the University, our schools, downtown, etc. Residents invest in their properties to keep our neighborhood a welcoming community to all.

Voting for the Ordinance would allow every 6,000 ft property to construct a duplex. This blanket acceptance takes away the right of the neighbors, the neighborhood and the community to ask questions, provide insight, and bring to light potential unknown problems to the ZBA. It is imperative that the Ordinance is not passed. It is essential to maintain the ability of taxpaying Urbana residents to offer their input to the ZBA to ensure that structures are compatible with existing uses, that neighborhood property values will not decrease, and the character of the community is preserved for all.

Thank you for your time and careful attention to this matter,

Deborah Katz-Downie

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Tiffanie Freund <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2024 8:26 AM
To: !City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT November 12, 2024 meeting

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

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear Members of the Urbana City Council,

I am writing as an Urbana resident of 33 years asking you to vote against Ordinance No. 2024-11-034: An Ordinance Amending the Urbana Zoning Ordinance (Update Section VI-3 for Clarity and to Remove Additional Lot Area and Width Requirements for Certain Uses.

This change, approved by the Plan Commission without sufficient public input, would harm the character of the West Urbana neighborhood by increasing density in a way that benefits developers rather than local residents. Furthermore, the proposal seeks to remove the integral voices of residents from these discussions.

I urge the City Council to reject the amendment and continue working together with and for our Urbana community.

Thank you,
Tiffanie Bui and Matt Freund
[REDACTED]

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Beverly Rauchfuss <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2024 11:44 AM
To: !City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT Nov. 12

*** Email From An External Source ***

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear Urbana City Council Members and City of Urbana officials,

This email is to comment on:

Ordinance No. 2024-11-034: An Ordinance Amending the Urbana Zoning Ordinance (Update Section VI-3 for Clarity and to Remove Additional Lot Area and Width Requirements for Certain Uses / Plan Case No. 2493-T-24) – CD

Please vote no on this Ordinance Amendment. Removing public input for lot width and lot area variances for developers putting in duplexes is not good for neighborhoods. The people living in the area would have a better idea as to what is beneficial for their neighborhood and should be able to give voice to their views.

The idea that developers are going to alleviate the housing crisis for middle to low income families does not have much basis in fact. Construction costs at this time are very high and developers would have to charge high rents in order to make back their investments. Using the existing affordable house stock, rather than tearing it down is probably a more sustainable way of providing housing. There does not appear to be a need for new rental housing in Urbana as the vacancy rate for rental properties is 11.5% — twice the state-wide rental housing rate. Sixty seven percent of housing units in Urbana are rentals.

Thank you.

Beverly Rauchfuss
[REDACTED]
Urbana

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Stephanie Nevins <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2024 3:04 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: public input, 12 November 2024 meeting: vote NO on 2024-11-034

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re: Ordinance No. 2024-11-034: An Ordinance Amending the Urbana Zoning Ordinance (Update Section VI-3 for Clarity and to Remove Additional Lot Area and Width Requirements for Certain Uses

Dear City Council and Mayor Marlin,

I urge the City Council to **reject** Ordinance No. 2024-11-034, which proposes changes in the current zoning ordinance.

Urbana already has a high proportion rental units (double Illinois's average), and I think it's best that individuals retain the option to object when a developer intends to build something that would negatively impact their biggest investment (their home).

Best,

Stephanie Nevins

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Tucker <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2024 6:47 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT for whole meeting on 11/12/2024

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City Council Members,

I am 22 years old and have been a lifelong resident of south-eastern Urbana. I am writing to provide supportive commentary on the recently proposed amendments to the Zoning Ordinance removing additional lot area and width requirements for duplexes in the R-2, Single-Family Residential, and R-3, Single- and Two-Family Residential Zoning Districts.

Growing up in Urbana, I have seen much of the community and surrounding area change, and yet many things have remained the same. As developing communities grow and expand, both new development and re-development are necessary in order for a community to continue to meet the changing needs of its residents. The residents of a community will best know what these needs are.

One of the best ways to help fulfill these needs is to support small-scale development efforts. The current zoning ordinances set a standard of quality, but also create a bar of entry. This is because when larger lot sizes than currently available are required for re-development in a neighborhood, developers are required to purchase larger amounts of land simply to be able to re-develop it.

These large upfront costs of large-scale land purchases barr many community members from being able to participate in the re-development of their own community. Large-scale developments are usually the only way to recoup the costs of such endeavors. Large scale development is not necessarily bad, but really only provides efficiency.. Encouraging more small-scale development efforts would reduce the need for large scale developments and allow more local input in how our community is developed.

In addition to creating a bar of entry, the current zoning ordinances also create waste and over-disruption of surrounding areas. When larger lot sizes than currently available are required for redevelopment in a neighborhood, developers must develop more land than may be necessary in order to efficiently utilize its potential.

For example, a developer looking to create a duplex in a residential neighborhood of single family houses may need to purchase 2 existing lots in order to have enough land to meet the minimum required lot size for 1 new duplex lot. This creates wasted space, as the resulting lot will likely be larger than necessary.

Another example alternative may be for the developer to purchase 3 existing lots and resubdivide them into 2 new duplex lots. While this is a more efficient usage of space, it creates more disturbance to the existing neighborhood. Allowing new development to occur within existing lots would eliminate this problem, allowing for areas to be developed parcel by parcel, rather than block by block; a more gradual and less disruptive transition.

With this being said, many communities such as Urbana are now building more "middle" housing solutions (town homes, row houses, condos, duplexes, etc.). These developments meet a need for denser, more affordable housing that creates little to no impact to the surrounding areas, and provides a high standard of living.

Allowing developers to have the "tools" to create duplexes out of existing lots would likely not cause much disruption to existing residential developed areas, but would allow for duplexes to be built as part of small-scale re-developments in areas they are desirable, rather than more concentrated development of skyscrapers or apartment buildings.

In short, I believe that removing the minimum lot size for existing lot duplex re-development will help to provide the affordable housing our community needs, will allow the local input our residents deserve in how their community is developed, will help reduce disturbance caused to surrounding neighborhoods by new developments, and will allow for the development of duplexes in areas they are desired, rather than the development of more skyscrapers and apartment buildings.

Thank you for reading my comments,
Tucker Schroeder