
DATE: Monday, November 18, 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 Monday, November 18, 2024, at 8:38p.m.

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

***CM PRESENT REMOTELY**

ELECTED OFFICIALS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT: Bourema Ouedraogo, Kevin Garcia, Seok Hyun Cho, Nick Olsen, Carol Mitten, Matt Roeschley, Elizabeth Hannan, Scott Tess, Tim Cowan, Larry Boone, Will Kolschowsky

OTHERS PRESENT: Angela Bradley, CEO of HeartStrong Meals;

Chair: *Maryalice Wu, Ward 1*

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

With a quorum present, Chair Wu called the meeting of the Urbana City Council to order at 8:38p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

None.

3. Additions to the Agenda

None.

4. Presentations and Public Input

a. Public Input

Eric Sacks spoke in opposition to Ordinance No. 2024-11-034, stating the specific requirements for duplexes in the zoning ordinance were set with the intention of protecting residents from exploitative housing. Stated developers have options already available to them if they wish to develop a duplex in these areas. Expressed the ordinance would bring changes that would not have any positive impact on housing affordability and has no evidence to support the claim that it would. Urged City Council to carefully consider the costs and benefits of this proposal. *David Huber* recounted the discussions at the Planning Commission meetings regarding the zoning ordinance amendment and stated all discussions were held publicly and democratically through publicly accessible processes. Stated the duplexes will not be established through the demolishing of livable houses as it is

economically unsound, but can occur through segmenting already existing houses into two units. Stated rental rates are cheaper for duplexes than single-family homes. *Carmen Blubaugh* stated affordable housing should be prioritized, but should not come at the cost of replacing smaller, affordable homes on small plots with duplexes. *Adani Sanchez* stated more housing options need to be created in order to further open the communities of the City of Urbana and the City of Champaign to prospective residents that would not be able to afford the housing costs in neighborhoods such as West Urbana. Expressed the search for affordable housing in Urbana is a difficult process and affordable housing options need to exist for those who cannot afford single-family homes. Stated excluding multi-family housing options signals that a neighborhood is discriminating against those who cannot afford to live there.

Written Public Input were received from the following individuals and read by Council: Melinda Carr, Miriam Keep, Susan Appel. Written Public Input in opposition to Ordinance No. 2024-11-034 was received from the following individuals, but were not read: Eric Sacks, Joanne Budde, and Deborah Katz-Downie.

5. Staff Report

a. U-Cycle Options

Presented by Scott Tess, Sustainability & Resilience Officer and Tim Cowan, Public Works Director. Tim Cowan provided an overview of the topics to be covered, stating Council direction is required for U-Cycle rate adjustments. Scott Tess asked City Council what level of service should the City maintain for curbside recycling and how should the rates be adjusted to pay for the desired level of service for curbside recycling.

Stated three options for the rate adjustments where the rate is adjusted to immediately match the increased cost, the rate is incrementally increased over three years and subsidized by a fund balance, or the rate is incrementally increased slightly with a subsidy from a plastic bag fee. Provided an overview of the weekly curbside recycling service maintained since the 1990's and stated the cost of service is considered relatively very affordable. Stated the volume of recyclables has increased significantly since the 1990's and a reduction in curbside service frequency could lead to dissatisfied customers and more recyclables being landfilled, but could save money. Tim Cowan presented the cost projections for each option in both cases of maintaining weekly curbside service or changing to curbside service every other week with the additional inflationary increases included after the incremental increases are completed. Stated the options presented additionally maintain a 10% fund balance across the fiscal years. Noted the contract for the recycling services are going to be a 5-year term with potential for rate changes in the future. Stated the goal of the inflationary adjustments is to maintain a steady rate for customers.

Scott Tess stated the recommendations are to maintain the current level of weekly service and pursue the rate increase option of smaller increments subsidized by the plastic bag fee in addition to the 2.5% inflationary adjustments after the increases have completed. Stated not many plastic recyclers accept plastic bags anymore and the subsidy should be able to be implemented by FY 2026 after being developed beginning in January 2025. Elaborated that many other cities in Illinois have similar ordinances regarding plastic bag fees to pattern after which have a rate of \$0.10/bag and is only applicable to retailers above 5,000 square feet with many exceptions. Stated the bag fee is expected to impact less than 100 businesses in the City of Urbana and the estimated revenue in the first year is \$250,000 with diminishing returns in following years after disincentivizing single-use plastic bags.

Tim Cowan outlined the next steps and requested Council approve a Budget Amendment of \$300,000 to maintain weekly curbside recycling services through the end of FY25 using available U-Cycle fund balances from outside of the current fiscal year's budget. Additionally requested Council provide direction on which rate increase option to move forward with and pass an ordinance to amend the recycling taxes beginning January 1, 2025. Questions and discussion followed.

A majority of Council spoke in favor of maintaining weekly curbside recycling service and implementing small, incremental rate increases for U-Cycle subsidized by a plastic bag fee.

6. Unfinished 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 and David Huber, Applicant. 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 provided further detail regarding the proposal in relation to the Imagine Urbana Comprehensive Plan, stating the staff report and recommendation did not use Imagine Urbana as it is still in draft form and referred to the previous 2005 Comprehensive Plan to support the text amendment. Stated the current draft Imagine Urbana Comprehensive Plan would support the text amendment. Shared a chart highlighting the differences between the current and proposed regulations for duplexes in the R-2 and R-3 districts. Stated the main difference is that it eliminates minimum lot size and width requirements for existing lots and changes the requirements for duplexes on new lots to be a minimum of 6,000 square feet and 60 feet wide, with current development regulations being unchanged. Emphasized zoning regulations do not directly cause development, but provides the framework for development to occur. Displayed maps illustrating the 3,558 R-2 zoned parcels, the 1,743 parcels that currently allow duplexes with a conditional use permit, the 1,427 parcels within the 1,743 that are currently single-family homes, and the 49 duplexes that exist within the R-2 parcels. Stated of 768 R-2 zoned parcels in the West Urbana neighborhood, 307 of those parcels allow a duplex with a conditional use permit, 266 of those 307 parcels contain single-family homes, and 20 within the 307 contain duplexes. Clarified the text amendment is not to set duplexes as an allowed use as they are already marked as an allowed use in the zoning ordinance, but it is about allowing duplexes on smaller lots. David Huber spoke on the current conditions of developing a duplex and shared an example of an existing duplex in Urbana that would not have been able to be built under the current regulations. Shared pre-approved housing plans from the City of South Bend, Indiana and the gap between the minimum required lot width of 37.5 feet for a 22 feet wide two-family dwelling to meet development regulations compared to the current lot width requirement of 60 or 80 feet. Stated duplexes do not inherently create a larger building compared to a single-family dwelling. Questions and discussion followed.

Motion to keep in Committee of the Whole by CM Kolisetty, seconded by CM Wilken. Questions and discussion followed.

Voice Vote:

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

NAY: None.

7. New Business

- a. **Resolution No. 2024-11-074R:** A Resolution Authorizing Acceptance of a DCEO Community Development Block – Coronavirus Grant (CDBG-CV) – CD

Presented alongside Resolutions No. 2024-11-075R, 2024-11-076R, 2024-11-077R, and 2024-11-078R by Nick Olsen, Community Development Coordinator. This Resolution authorizes the City to accept a \$1,200,000 grant from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) for the Hope Village Tiny Homes Project. Nick Olsen stated the items are regarding accepting grants from the DCEO and authorizing subrecipient agreements. Provided background on the award of \$1,200,000 from the Community Development Block Grant CARES Act to help fund initiatives that addressed homelessness. Stated the City applied to assist funding the Hope Village project after a public hearing and comment period held earlier in the year and the City was notified in September that the application was approved. Stated Resolution No. 2024-11-074R is to accept the grant funds of \$1,200,000 and Resolution No. 2024-11-075R approves a subrecipient agreement with Hope Village Inc. to utilize those funds. Stated Resolution No. 2024-11-076R and Resolution No. 2024-11-077R are regarding another grant from DCEO for \$250,000 to assist with construction costs for the Hope Village project. Stated Resolution No. 2024-11-078R is regarding a \$250,000 grant from the State of Illinois' General Revenue Fund to support a pilot fleet electrification project for the Public Works Department. Stated the funds would be used to cover facility upgrades to support electric vehicle charging and replacing gas vehicles in the Public Works' fleet with electric vehicles after a vehicle's normal lifespan. Stated the staff recommendation is to accept all awarded grant funds and approve the related subrecipient agreements. Questions and discussion followed.

Motion to omnibus Resolutions No. 2024-11-074R through 2024-11-077R by CM Wilken, seconded by CM Bishop.

Voice Vote:

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

NAY: Hursey

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

Voice Vote:

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

NAY: Hursey

- b. **Resolution No. 2024-11-075R:** A Resolution Approving a CDBG-CV Subrecipient Grant Agreement with Hope Village Inc. – CD

Presented alongside Resolutions No. 2024-11-074R, 2024-11-076R, 2024-11-077R, and 2024-11-078R by Nick Olsen, Community Development Coordinator. This Resolution approves a subrecipient grant agreement between the City and Hope Village Inc. *Approved in omnibus, see item a.*

- c. **Resolution No. 2024-11-076R:** A Resolution Authorizing Acceptance of a DCEO Grant (Hope Village) – CD

Presented alongside Resolutions No. 2024-11-074R, 2024-11-075R, 2024-11-077R, and 2024-11-078R by Nick Olsen, Community Development Coordinator. This Resolution authorizes the City to accept a \$250,000 grant from the DCEO for the Hope Village Tiny Homes project. *Approved in omnibus, see item a.*

- d. **Resolution No. 2024-11-077R:** A Resolution Approving a Subrecipient Grant Agreement with Hope Village, Inc. – CD

Presented alongside Resolutions No. 2024-11-074R, 2024-11-075R, 2024-11-076R, and 2024-11-078R by Nick Olsen, Community Development Coordinator. This Resolution approves a subrecipient grant agreement between the City and Hope Village, Inc. *Approved in omnibus, see item a.*

- e. **Resolution No. 2024-11-078R:** A Resolution Authorizing Acceptance of a DCEO Grant (Urbana Pilot Fleet Electrification Program) – CD

Presented alongside Resolutions No. 2024-11-074R, 2024-11-075R, 2024-11-076R, and 2024-11-077R by Nick Olsen, Community Development Coordinator. This Resolution authorizes the City to accept a \$250,000 grant from the DCEO for the Pilot Fleet Electrification Project to be undertaken by Public Works.

Motion to approve to the consent agenda by CM Wilken, seconded by CM Hursey.

Voice Vote:

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

NAY: None.

- f. **Ordinance No. 2024-11-036:** An Ordinance Revising the Annual Budget Ordinance (Budget Amendment #2 – Omnibus) – HRF

Presented by Elizabeth Hannan, Human Resources & Finance Director / CFO. This Ordinance seeks to amend the FY2025 Annual Budget to provide additional funding for the City's recycling programs, reallocate funds for the Community Engagement Team Pilot Program, allocate grant funds for Hope Village, and fund a study on fire protection services in the campus area. Elizabeth Hannan stated Council previously discussed many of the grants included in the budget amendment and the \$300,000 increase in the U-Cycle fund to continue weekly curbside recycling services. Stated \$56,100 is requested from the General Fund for consulting services regarding fire service in the campus area in accordance with an intergovernmental agreement with the City of Champaign and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign with a reimbursement of \$34,000 to come from the other partners. Stated the budget amendment also includes corrections to the budget for the Community Engagement Team to data-entry errors, with no change to the actual program itself. Stated the amendment also includes rebudgets for the Capital Replacement and Improvement Fund for facility projects. Also noted the amendment would also update the revenue from the Local Motor Fuel Tax to reflect the reduced revenue by -\$200,000. Further stated the amendment includes corrections to VERN items that came from reconciliation errors. Questions and discussion followed.

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

Voice Vote:

AYE: Evans, Kolisetty, Bishop, Wilken, Quisenberry

NAY: Wu, Hursey

- i. Motion to divide the question to consider the budget for the Community Engagement Team by CM Wilken.

Motion to approve the Community Engagement Team portion of the budget amendment to the regular agenda by CM Bishop, seconded by CM Evans.

Voice Vote:

AYE: Wu, Evans, Hursey, Bishop, Quisenberry

NAY: Kolisetty, Wilken

8. Council Input and Communications

CM Wilken expressed willingness to further have conversation and listen regarding the Hope Village grant acceptance as there was not full consensus on the item.

9. Adjournment

With no further business before the committee of the whole Chair Wu adjourned the meeting at 10:38 p.m.

Seok Hyun Cho

Deputy City Clerk

This meeting was video recorded and is viewable [on-demand HERE](#). **Minutes approved: 12/16/24**

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Esther Patt <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Saturday, November 16, 2024 8:47 AM
To: !City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT - Nov. 18 Regular City Council Meeting - budget amendment

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

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Please read my message during public input for the Nov. 18 city council meeting.

Dear Mayor Marlin and Urbana City Council Members:

Please vote to approve the \$800,000.00 budget amendment to provide the 25% local match for the Illinois Grocery Initiative grant for Heart Strong Meals to establish a grocery store in northwest Urbana.

For more than four decades, people who live in northwest Urbana have been asking city officials to help get a proper grocery or supermarket in the neighborhood. Those of you who are older might remember that in 1990, Wal-Mart announced it would open its first store in our community at Lincoln and Bradley. Mayor Markland and his staff worked diligently on that project. But then Wal-Mart backed out and chose a Champaign location instead because it was close to both I-57 and I-74.

When you drive on Lincoln Avenue, you might notice that the Onyx apartment complex on the west side of the 1300 block north is set very far back from the street. The reason is that in 1997, when the complex was developed as a TIF project, city officials were still trying to get a grocery or supermarket in the neighborhood and set aside that land for that purpose.

Here we are, 27 years later, and finally someone has a viable plan to leverage state funds for our community to open a grocery store in northwest Urbana. I know you face so many compelling needs for money but please consider how very long the people of the neighborhood have had to wait to shop for groceries near their homes.

Thank you for your service and the incredible amount of time you spend sitting through long meetings.

Esther Patt
[REDACTED]

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Caitlin Clarke <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Saturday, November 16, 2024 1:33 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: Public Input Fwd: [WUNA-Main] Grocery store for northwest Urbana neighborhood

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

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Dear Council Members,

I write to note that I fully support the effort to build a new grocery store in north west urbana. This is desperately needed for our community's health and wellbeing. I support city council matching funds to support the development.

I also encourage council members to connect with JR Lill (IPLAN coordinator) and Illinois Extension staff as these folks helped work on the Champaign county food summit. Their data may provide additional insight into helping ensure this project is successful.

In addition to our permanent residents in north west urbana, many university students live in that area without access to a grocery store. As faculty in Health & Kinesiology, I am keenly aware of food security issues among University students. Having both affordable housing and an accessible grocery store are critical for ensuring their wellbeing and academic success. In my mind, this project would significantly benefit numerous groups within our community.

Best,
Caitlin Clarke

Sent from Gmail Mobile

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Esther Patt <[REDACTED]>
Date: Sat, Nov 16, 2024 at 7:48 AM
Subject: [WUNA-Main] Grocery store for northwest Urbana neighborhood
To: wuna list <[REDACTED]>

I write to share information about a vote on Monday night's city council agenda to provide matching funds for a grocery store in northwest Urbana.

If you wish to share your opinion with city council members before Monday night's meeting, please send your message to citycouncil@urbanaininois.us. The subject line of the email must **include the words "PUBLIC INPUT" and the meeting date**. If you want your comments read out loud, state that in your message. To see the whole November 18 city council packet go to [Agendas/Minutes | City of Urbana Illinois Meetings](#)

Description of the Issue: The following is quoted from Chris Evans' memo to the mayor and city council in the packet for the meeting.

"The northwest portion of Urbana used to have an IGA grocery store that serviced the area residents. IGA closed over 40 years ago and since that time has left the area a 'food desert.' Ward 3 has long been in need of economic development with jobs and services. Attracting a capable developer to build a grocery store has proven difficult thus far.

During the course of debating another development in northwest Urbana, residents complained that what was needed most in their neighborhood is access to healthy food. Numerous residents of Ward 3 have given public input at past council meetings that the City Council should do things through a lens of equity and consider all people in its deliberations.

On August 18, 2023, the **State of Illinois adopted Public Act 103-0561, the Illinois Grocery Initiative**, that has a component of the New Stores in Food Deserts program to combat food insecurity by offering competitive grants administered by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity to support the establishment of new grocery stores in food deserts.

Urbana resident and CEO of HeartStrong Meals, Angela Bradley, has applied for an Illinois Grocery Initiative grant to establish a new grocery store in City of Urbana Ward 3 area. Ms. Bradley has been advised by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity that **\$2.4 million dollars would be available for this project if the applicant can provide 25% of the project cost, or \$800,000.**

Throughout Council 's Strategic Priorities & Goals adopted in April of 2022 and March 2024, Council has made a grocery store in northwest Urbana a strategic goal. An \$800,000 contribution toward a "North End Grocery Store" is well overdue and would give Ward 3 a needed economic stimulus. It would be right for the City to invest in the employment and nutritional needs of working people.

Fiscal Impact: The new estimated fund balance in the General Operating Fund would be \$11,053,625."

Although this is not a proposal for our neighborhood, it is an issue about neighborhoods and the needs of people who live in them. Cities providing local match to leverage state and federal funds is just as important as cities providing economic incentives to businesses to leverage higher tax revenue (in my humble opinion).

Esther Patt

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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 <https://westurbana.org/wuna-main-listserv/> 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 <https://groups.google.com/d/msgid/wuna-main/SJ0PR84MB15787F8E93613CED524422A5C3252%40SJ0PR84MB1578.NAMPRD84.PROD.OUTLOOK.COM>.

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Derek Briles <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, November 17, 2024 9:19 AM
To: !City Council
Subject: Support for Budget Amendment #3

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

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Please read my comment aloud into the record.

Hello! My name is Derek Briles and I am a resident of Urbana ward 4. I am writing in support of the ordinance to amend the budget to free up \$800,000 in order to receive state funding to build a geocery store in ward 3.

Over the years, I have seen this council allocate funds to many things that seem to have little to no positive impact on the working people of Urbana, particularly the Black working class. While the UPD, who historically over polices the Black community, receives millions and still asks for more, precious little funds are allocated to proactively improve the material conditions of those with the greatest need.

According to US Census Bureau data, 27.7% of Urbana lives in poverty and the average household income is less than \$42,000. The poverty rate in Illinois is 11.6% and the *median* household income is roughly \$80,000. I hope you find these numbers embarrassing because I certainly do. I think we can all agree that it is far past time that we address the systemic inequalities extant in our community.

While I do understand that you have spent down the budget considerably throwing money at the gaping, hungry maw that is the police force and wasted a fair amount on a consultant that turned tail and ran when the people demanded transparency, an inadequate amount of funds have been allocated to the working people of this city who are pushed further and further to the margins.

Here, you have a chance to fund something that could be helpful. I'll go on the record saying that I am skeptical of ventures such as these, as I fear it will result in an exploitative company price gouging our underserved Black neighbors. But I still believe this is a project worth funding.

I'm proud to see my alderperson's name attached to this ordinance and, as a member of her constituency, it has my support.

Thank you.

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Erik Sacks <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, November 17, 2024 7:08 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT-18 Nov 2024 Council Meeting

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

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

Dear Councilmembers,

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) is not merely a clarification of the current code, but rather it is a large and substantive change to zoning that will negatively impact our City.

The current Zoning Ordinance requires duplexes to be on larger and wider lots than single-family homes, but the proposed ordinance would eliminate lot area and width requirements for building on all existing lots (see page 18 Section VI-3-B of: <https://mccmeetings.blob.core.usgovcloudapi.net/urbanail-pubu/MEET-Packet-bfed3417e14d4526bb4958f35db46337.pdf>). City staff's stated goal of the proposed ordinance is to allow duplexes to be built on all R2 and R3 lots, regardless of the lot's size. This is a huge change from long-standing precedent.

For more than 50 years, our zoning ordinances have specifically prohibited the building of duplexes on small lots. In 1970, Urbana's third Zoning Ordinance established lot area and width requirements for new duplex lots as 9,000 square feet/80 feet. The 1990 amendment, our current regulation, requires 6,000 square feet/60 feet. These specific lot size minimum requirements for duplexes were intentional. It was understood that housing too many people on too small of a lot would be disadvantageous to the residents of the duplexes and to the broader community.

Last week, you heard many residents of Urbana tell you that the proposed ordinance is bad and that they do not want this change. I and many others believe that the proposed ordinance would greatly reduce affordability of housing, especially home ownership, in Urbana. Moreover, this comes at a time when affordability of housing is a serious issue locally. Given the large number of lots that would be affected by the proposed ordinance, 38% in R3 and 51% in R2, the changes it would bring can be expected to be large. Thus, the proposed ordinance would allow and encourage R2 and R3 neighborhoods to be radically altered, and not for the better. Moreover, Urbana's older neighborhoods with the smaller lots and houses will be disproportionately affected. Notably, the proposed ordinance is inconsistent with Goal 1 of the Comprehensive Plan: Preserve and enhance the character of Urbana's established residential neighborhoods. Yet no cost-benefit analysis has been presented and indeed staff described no compelling benefits to the City or its residents.

During the previous meeting on 12 November, Council asked City staff for more data on how the other remaining zoning requirements, such as floor area ratio, set backs and parking, might limit the proportion of existing R2 and R3 lots on which duplexes could be built under the proposed ordinance. While such data will be interesting to consider, it may be a moot point. Given that City staff clearly stated that their new goal is to allow duplexes on all existing R2 and R3 lots, it is only logical that in the future, we can expect new requests to change requirements for floor area ratio, set backs and/or parking, until their goal is fully achieved. As a matter of process, Council would be ill-advised to make major changes to zoning in a piecemeal fashion and without a clear consensus as to what are the goals, and what are the benefits, and without carefully considering what is the cost to benefit ratio.

Lastly, on an entirely different topic, I wish to strongly endorse Ordinance No. 2024-11-037: An Ordinance Revising the Annual Budget to Invest in a Grocery Store in Ward 3 (Budget Amendment #3). The absence of a grocery store in

northwest Urbana has been a major problem for decades. With State funding on the table for a large portion of the project, it is a unique opportunity. Moreover, it is great to see someone local develop a solution to a longstanding local problem. The matching funds that this ordinance would provide are a critically important, yet modest investment in our community.

Respectfully,

Erik Sacks



Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Joanne Budde <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, November 17, 2024 9:08 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT - November 18, 2024 - 2024-11-034

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

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear City Council members:

Once again, I urge you to vote NO on this proposed ordinance to allow duplexes on smaller lots that don't meet the current requirements.

It appears that the planning staff is trying to accommodate the wishes of one specific builder/developer in town.

But, if that specific builder is trying to build a rental stream of income, then I suggest he build or re-build single family homes and rent them out. He can have a steady rental income, not just with duplexes, but with single family homes.

This will "preserve the essential character of the district in which it shall be located...." and still allow the developer to accomplish his goal of creating ongoing rental income.

The city planning staff don't seem to have a handle on what it means to preserve the essential character of the neighborhood. A perfect example is a year ago, they supported putting 5 self-storage buildings less than 20 feet from residential condos. This most certainly would NOT preserve the character of the neighborhood.

Even if this change will still allow public input, and still require a conditional use permit (in some cases), it would drastically change the fabric of the neighborhoods, and create more rental property when we already have a glut of rentals - enough to accommodate even the students in town.

Thank you for your consideration,

Joanne Budde
Beringer Commons

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Ingrid Melief <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, November 17, 2024 10:16 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT Nov. 18,2024

*** Email From An External Source ***

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This message can be read out loud at the meeting:

Dear members of the City Council,

I am writing to ask you to provide the 25% local match for the organization that is trying to establish a good grocery store in the Urbana Ward 3 area. Food deserts are a national disgrace and as a city we should do all we can to make sure they do not exist in our neighborhoods.

Thank you for your consideration,

Ingrid Melief

[REDACTED]
Urbana

Sent from my iPhone

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Sana Saboowala <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, November 17, 2024 10:45 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: Public Comment 11/18

*** Email From An External Source ***

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Dear Urbana City Council,

Please read my comment into public record.

My name is Sana Saboowala, I live in Urbana. I strongly support spending city money to pay the \$800,000 portion necessary for the Illinois Grocery Initiative to match with \$2.4 million to open a grocery store. Eliminating a food desert by creating a local space for people to get groceries is, in my opinion, an excellent use of city funds. This will positively impact ward 3 residents. It's a human rights issue. People deserve access to food. Through the Illinois Grocery Initiative, getting people this access is even easier. I urge the council to take the necessary steps to allow for the opening of a grocery store in ward 3.

Thank you

Best,
Sana Saboowala

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Susan Appel <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, November 18, 2024 10:28 AM
To: !City Council
Cc: ! Wu, Maryalice; ! Hursey, Shirese; ! Evans, Christopher; ! Kolisetty, Jaya; ! Bishop, Chaundra; ! Quisenberry James; ! Wilken, Grace; Marlin, Diane
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT FOR NOVEMBER 18, 2024 - PLEASE READ

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

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

To: The Urbana City council

From: The Advocacy committee of the Preservation and Conservation Association of Champaign County (PACA)
Concerning: *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*
Date: November 18, 2024, an update for PUBLIC INPUT, PLEASE

At first blush, the notion of fixing up a few dilapidated properties in the East Washington Street area seems welcome, an aid to the City's tax base and the neighborhood, as the developer has worked in this area for some time. A quick leap was made, however, from Washington street to the entire city, where R-2 and R-3 zoning exist, to cast an eye on any lot, in any neighborhood which is smaller than 60' wide.

From Savannah Green to Landis Farms and Dorrie Miller Drive, any lot which had seemed protected from the increased density of a duplex (8 unrelated dwellers) could be subject to developers' scrutiny. Many narrow lots were platted as a response to a very real post-WWII housing shortage. More recently, smaller lots have expressed our desire for more affordable home ownership, a toehold on the path to equity stakes.

A commercial loan is a different animal from a traditional home loan. If you have one commercial loan, it is easier to get another, and so on. A developer can move more nimbly than a family seeking a first home loan through a bank. Many families are frustrated by the disappearance of opportunities, as the "fixer-upper" is snatched away by those with a large line of credit.

City staff contends they present this language to the Council at the unanimous behest of the Plan Commission, but in the past few weeks, staff has asserted that you should ignore unanimous decisions of the Plan Commission when they do not suit the staff's desires.

Without local reporting to newspapers, newscasts, social media outlets, and neighborhood listserves, it is difficult for the citizenry to keep tabs on the decisions of those elected and appointed to office. Discussion of this proposal should have begun at the Plan Commission meetings. Without the activism of one of the WUNA list members, this case might have sailed through the Council unnoticed outside of these walls.

PACA asks you again to postpone a decision this evening to allow time for public and official discussion. A common concern voiced to PACA and at last week's meeting of the Council Committee of the Whole has been the lack of illustrations - specifically, examples of duplexes and shared lot line dwellings on small lots. While such illustrations are expected at this current meeting, neither the public nor the Council members have had advanced exposure to those, to contemplate them before a decision is made. **But there need be no rush.** Time is, in fact, plentiful to consider what could make a strong impact on the character of the City of Urbana. Doesn't the city deserve that? For that reason, **we seek time for public and Council education and input before any final decision is made. Please table this proposal tonight and come back to it when more complete evidence has been made available.**

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Carmen Blubaugh <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, November 18, 2024 11:13 AM
To: !City Council
Subject: PUBLIC INPUT

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

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Greetings,

I would like to voice support for a local match for a state grant to establish a grocery store on Urbana's North end. While corporate grocery developers may not agree that all people deserve walkable access to healthy food, I know that many in our community do. Ms. Bradley has a long list of partners and suppliers that will make Heartstrong Grocery a lynch pin in the local food community, and provide new access to healthy produce that does not currently exist anywhere in Urbana. I would be proud to mobilize Urbana community members, U of I students, and extension resources to support the long-term prosperity of a new local grocery store. Heartland Grocery will improve long-term food access on the North End and will also establish new market shares for current and aspiring farmers in Central Illinois. This is a core part of the land-grant mission and I expect that many of my colleagues in the College of Agriculture will share my commitment to expanding food access in our hometown.

I plan to attend tonight's meeting, and hope to make my voice heard there in-person.

--

Carmen Blubaugh

[REDACTED]
Urbana, IL

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Lilah Leopold <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, November 18, 2024 12:48 PM
To: !City Council; Marlin, Diane
Subject: Public Comment 11/18/2024

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

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

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

Please read the following at public comment. My name is Lilah Leopold and I live in Ward 4. I write to add my voice to those who stand in support, in the strongest possible terms, for a grocery store in Ward 3.

Every penny of the \$800,000 potentially allotted by Council to match the \$2.4 million Illinois Grocery Initiative state grant would be well spent. The health, social, and financial benefits of access to fresh food, nearby, cannot be understated. Access to a nearby, community-focused supermarket should not be the privilege of any one zip code. Especially in a country in which healthcare is neither universal nor easily accessible (and this is not to diminish the incredible local initiatives and Public Health Department we have here), the ability to regularly, and easily access food nearby will collectively save residents untold health and pharmaceutical costs and be a very real, concrete step toward addressing health disparities across the community. And this is not even to mention the benefits of offering jobs, collaborative and innovative planning opportunities, and a place for community to gather in small and large ways around food on a daily basis.

We all need to eat, and all residents deserve to have a choice in what we feed ourselves and what we feed our families. This issue is at the heart of addressing systemic inequalities and one that when directly supported, has incredible potential to reverberate across Urbana and beyond. This is a chance to support very real community care and I am proud to live somewhere where such an initiative is up for a vote by council.

City money could not be better spent: Yes, yes, yes, to a grocery store in Ward 3!

Sincerely,

Lilah Leopold

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Deborah Katz-Downie <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, November 18, 2024 2:45 PM
To: !City Council; ! Wu, Maryalice
Cc: 'Deborah Katz-Downie'
Subject: Public Input 18 November 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.

Voting for the Ordinance would allow every 6,000 ft property to construct a duplex. If passed, many lots in Urbana, especially in the older neighborhoods with smaller lot sizes between larger lots could be purchased to build duplexes or purchased with adjacent properties to build larger or more than one duplex. This would eliminate the mixture of existing small homes that many desire for a single family home and the unique and diverse makeup of many Urbana neighborhoods.

I believe that property owners have a right to develop their property within the current zoning rules that maintains the diversity of our Urbana neighborhoods. Any weakening of the current zoning rules does not aide property owners to make informed decisions that affect the long term vitality of our diverse Urbana neighborhoods.

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

Deborah Katz-Downie

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Miriam Keep <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, November 18, 2024 5:36 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: Proposed zoning amendment to Remove Additional Lot Area and Width Requirements for Certain Uses

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

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Please read into the record at tonight's meeting:

I am writing in support of the proposed zoning amendment to allow duplexes on smaller lots. I am in favor of this measure that will increase the number of homes available, increase the diversity of housing options in a transit-friendly areas, and encourage infill development.

I moved to Urbana about a year and half ago to start a job at the university. My experience has been enriched by finding affordable rental housing in a neighborhood where I can easily walk and bike to the university and downtown amenities, which has enabled me to build a community here and get involved in community events and volunteer programs. The housing options were limited, but I got lucky, and I know many others who have struggled to find convenient housing.

For me, living in a transit-friendly, well-connected neighborhood has made Urbana great place to live. I want this experience to be available to others.

The proposal before the council is ultimately a very moderate measure to encourage more housing development. The demand for housing is clear, and I urge the Council to support this measure that is also aligned with the city's own goal to promote growth within the city's borders.

-Miriam Keep

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Adam <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, November 18, 2024 5:37 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: Public input for city council meeting 2024-11-18

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

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Please read my comments into the record.

I'm Adam Nichols and I've spoken out publicly about fiscal responsibility numerous times. Tonight I'm writing about the proposal related to funding a grocery store in Ward 3.

Although the proposal doesn't seem to use the word "grant" it appears that's what is on the table. Money provided for a specific purpose without any expectation of direct repayment.

A one time cost of \$800,000 may be small as compared to the annual recurring budgets for some departments, but that doesn't mean it should escape scrutiny.

The big questions are why should the city government step in here to spend taxpayer money on a private business?

The default option is for the city to do nothing. This could mean that the grocery store doesn't get opened, people have to continue to go further to get groceries, and things continue as we do today.

The alternative is to provide funding to a business being started by a local resident, so people can have better access to healthy food.

The pros:

1. People don't have to go as far to get healthy food
2. Another tax paying business in Urbana, and not one that will send the profits off to Wall Street investors or overseas to some tax haven
3. Local jobs would be created
4. The city is more walkable

The cons:

1. The people of Urbana pay roughly \$20 per capita (\$800K/40K residents)

It's not often I advocate for more government spending, but in this case, I think it's a smart move. It aligns with what the economic goals of the city, supports a local business and serves the needs of the residents. It's not a recurring cost and will likely pay for itself over time with the increased tax revenue.

Please vote to approve this ordinance. Lets take a chance on trying to end this food desert.

Thank you,
Adam Nichols

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Melinda Carr <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, November 18, 2024 6:39 PM
To: !City Council
Cc: Richard Painter; Evelyn Underwood; Melinda Carr; Jackie Curry
Subject: "PUBLIC INPUT" - NOVEMBER 18, 2024 -- PLEASE READ THIS MESSAGE INTO THE RECORD

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

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Dear Mayor Marlin and Members of the Urbana Committee of the Whole:

I, Asst. Pastor Melinda Carr (Interim President of North End United), am writing on behalf of the North End United group including residents of Carver Park Subdivision and other surrounding neighborhoods which are historically African American. At tonight's meeting on November 18, 2024, the City of Urbana will be approving resolutions to accept two grants for Hope Village, Inc. (a tiny homes project for medically fragile individuals), from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) in the amounts of \$1.2 million and \$250,000. Housing for the homeless is a good cause!

What we oppose is that you did this without fully addressing concerns of neighboring residents, including a pending city of Urbana Human Relations Commission complaint, and an unresolved complaint with the Illinois Attorney General's Office. The neighboring residents of Carver Park Subdivision and other surrounding neighborhoods also tried filing a complaint with the Illinois Department of Human Rights and has filed a complaint with the city of Champaign Human Relations Commission.

Following is a summary of the issues the group has raised with governing bodies in both cities in opposition to the location and future programming of Hope Village. The group alleges the cities have failed in their most important role by relinquishing or giving up their fiduciary responsibilities to other entities instead of doing what is in the best interest of the residents.

- Lack of community involvement in the planning process and rejecting an alternative design plan to alleviate neighboring residents concerns, as outlined in the existing ordinance: [Ordinance 2023-07-023.pdf \(urbana.il.us\)](#) Page 4, Section 1, "#2. *"The site plan is responsive to the concerns of neighboring residents."*
- Prohibit intrusion into the existing infrastructure and allow access through the previously identified address--due to increased traffic and noise pollution, public safety risks surrounding the location of a Retention Pond, and other economic impacts.
- The Urbana Plan Commission publicly acknowledged the inadequate planning process. The Illinois Attorney General's Office is still reviewing a closed meeting held on December 7, 2023, as to whether it took place in violation of the Open Meetings Act (see the video starting at "39:44 mark" [Plan Commission Meeting](#) and article: [Plan Commission Holds Questionable Closed Meeting – Urbana, Illinois - Check CU](#)).



Plan Commission Holds Questionable Closed Meeting – Urbana, Illinois - C...

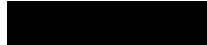
Check CU

Plan Commission Holds Questionable Closed Meeting – Urbana, Illinois

In light of these issues, we are asking the City of Urbana Committee of the Whole to postpone the decision to approve the resolutions until the next city council meeting out of respect for the regular process and include future allowances that will address the concerns of the neighboring residents in an equitable manner.

Best Regards,

Asst. Pastor Melinda Carr



Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Deborah Hollenberg <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, November 18, 2024 6:45 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: Public Comment about proposed grocery store

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

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Hi Council,

I have lived in Urbana for 10 years now. One of the things I love most about this city is how well our community cares for each other and the support programs available. I've never lived anywhere with so many food pantries and free meal programs! That said, food pantries are NOT a grocery store or anywhere equivalent to one. The fact that we have food apartheid, formerly called food deserts, in Urbana is frankly embarrassing.

Everyone deserves access to food and food autonomy. Having a grocery store in the north side of town will boost the community and health outcomes of residents. Research has shown that presence of grocery stores in food apartheid areas reduces alcohol dependence and crime rates.

Additionally, Urbana touts itself as a sanctuary city. What good are we as a sanctuary city when our own residents are suffering from systemic inaccessibility to basic human needs? We can do better. Y'all voted to pass the ceasefire resolution to end genocide and apartheid in Palestine, now let's end food apartheid at home.

Black Lives Matter. Prove yourselves by funding a grocery store in a predominantly Black part of town.

Sincerely,

Deborah Hollenberg

Cho, Seok Hyun 'Rafael'

From: Bryan Maxwell <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, November 17, 2024 12:49 PM
To: !City Council
Subject: Support for Ward 3 Grocery Store

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

Use caution when clicking on links or opening attachments.

Good afternoon, I'm writing in support of the city allocating funding for the proposed grocery store in Ward 3. Ward 3 has been a food desert for a long time, which is extremely harmful for the health and well-being of the community. Poor nutrition and food insecurity especially for children can have huge impacts on their well-being now and later in life. Eliminating these food deserts is important for addressing the legacies of racism in the US and Champaign-Urbana, as these food deserts disproportionately affect black communities.

While the council might have concerns about the cost and reducing the amount in the General Operating Fund, I would ask the council consider that

1) spending the \$800,000 will also be bringing in \$2.4 million into the city, which should be seen as an investment in the health and safety (numerous studies showing the link between proper nutrition and reduced crime) of Ward 3

2) it's rare that a private citizen (like Angela Bradley) is willing to step up and lead a major effort to improve their community like this. Supporting this kind of initiative from the community is important, and would set examples for other people in the community that they can be leaders for change and that the city of Urbana will stand behind them.

It would be a missed opportunity to make Urbana better to turn away such a large funding opportunity and committed member of the community. Please approve the funds for creating this grocery store in Ward 3.

Bryan Maxwell
Resident of Ward 5