



HISTORIC EAST URBANA
NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

-Neighborhood Plan-

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November 15, 2006

Forward

The following text is submitted by HEUNA to the Urbana Community Development department (UCD). Its purpose is to facilitate discussion regarding the history, present use and future of the portion of Urbana in which we live.

We are deeply grateful to staff within UCD who have asked for and encouraged this most recent edition.

We also wish to show appreciation to all City Staff, as well as the City Council and Mayor, for all they do for our city.

Finally, the editors thank the many members of HEUNA who have offered suggestions and support throughout this process.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

Adopt planning guidelines for areas on the north and east boundaries of the HEUNA neighborhood along major traffic arteries. These are most likely to see redevelopment as the downtown continues to grow and expand, and which currently have commercial use or are zoned for high density residential. These areas are directly adjacent to single family homes on the 100, 200, and 300 blocks of East Elm Street and to the west side of the 100, and 200 blocks of South Urbana Street. They constitute areas of potential conflict with current use. (refer to "Existing Land Use Map" Appendix C, Urbana Comprehensive Plan 2005.) Explore adopting city-established design and planning guidelines, such as the Mixed Office and Residential (MOR) status for this transitional area. Discuss proper buffering strategies to allow future commercial or high-density apartment development without degrading the quality of life in the neighborhood. Consider other areas where commercial in-fill development may be appropriate.

TRANSPORTATION CONCERNS

Bike Routes

Develop bike paths on appropriate streets in the HEUNA neighborhood, identifying strong connections from Philo Road to downtown Urbana through the HEUNA neighborhood. Evaluate East Illinois, East Main, East Washington, Anderson and North Cottage Grove Streets as potential main bike paths.

Walking Paths and Greenways

Develop a continuous multi-use path/handicap accessible sidewalk on the north side of East Green Street from Vine Street to Hartle Street. This would connect the downtown to the Solo Cup area and offer accessibility to pathways created in Victory Park. Promote the conversion of the east-west rail line just north of Main Street to walking paths and bike trails which connect to the East Urbana neighborhood and the shopping area at Schnucks Crossing.

Curbs and Gutters

Identify those streets north of Illinois Street and directly east of City Hall, which currently do not have curbs and storm gutters and designate these areas for future capital improvements for installing these amenities.

NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION STRATEGIES

Neighborhood Conservation District

Work with HEUNA members, residents at large and City staff to create and establish a Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Conservation District. This

should be based on useful models from such districts in other communities outlined in the report “Neighborhood Conservation Study” by Planning Staff intern Rebecca Bicksley. Define such a District as it may be specifically applicable to East Urbana, where incomes are moderate, housing stock is modest, and where construction compatibility guidelines and appropriate zoning are important to preserve the quality of the community.

Demolition Review

Work with City Staff to adopt an appropriate review policy for single family home demolitions which allows for redevelopment while preserving the historic and unique buildings within East Urbana.

Rebuild Urbana Program

Promote a program of city grant money and/or city property tax incentives for restoration efforts made by property owners who improve older homes. Significant and appropriate remodeling efforts may deserve property tax incentives such as those used in the “Build Urbana” Program.

Brick Sidewalk Conservation

Continue to work with the Planning staff and the Public Works Department on the upgrade and eventual total restoration of our historic brick sidewalks, including full removal and relaying of all such walks on an ongoing schedule, as financially possible. Dedicate one side (south) of Green Street for extensive brick sidewalk restoration during the repaving and new curb installation project. Continue the annual herbicide program to check vegetative growth on brick sidewalks, and extend this service to brick walks north of Green Street including all brick streets just north of Main Street.

Historic Landmark Designations

Identify all historic homes, buildings, businesses, trees, sites, birthplaces, and pathways in the Historic East Urbana neighborhood. Prepare a map locating such designations, for the benefit of residents and as a matter of historic record. Work with the City and Mayor’s office to establish a policy for marking these sites, through brass markers or plaques, as may be found appropriate.

HOUSING

Home and Yard Maintenance

Work with Urbana Public Works and Community Development to assure that all applicable ordinances are enforced. In addition, develop an outreach plan to contact property owners whose property is degrading or creating a maintenance issue. HEUNA should participate actively in the city’s Trash Haul Day programs; lending assistance at pick-up points, using yard signs to advertise the date, and contacting households.

Down-zoning

Identify areas where assigned zoning is inconsistent with current use, and work with the City Zoning Commissioner to re-evaluate these areas. Promote down-zoning some areas to better protect the single family and double family occupancy desired in the East Urbana neighborhood.

In-fill development

Promote in a manner that sustains a wide range of commercial uses as well as home styles and affordability. Promote projects that 1) allow greater ownership diversity, 2) use sustainable construction methods, 3) reduce utility costs, 4) reflect building choices that blend with the existing housing stocks architectural detail, and 5) provide green space.

Rental Housing

Support the concept of an aggressive rental owner registry and inspection program which blends public safety and neighborhood aesthetic concerns. The goal should be a yearly inspection cycle.

PARKS IMPROVEMENTS

Continue to work with the Urbana Park District (UPD) on the improvements to Victory Park. Recent grant monies have been received for the second phase development of new park facilities. Specifically; the addition of community gardens, a walking trail and new shelter are planned. Market the Victory Park area as a destination on the Hartle to Vine "Green Street Corridor". Explore the concept and location of other "pocket parks" with UPD.

Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Association Neighborhood Plan(HEUNA-NP)

I. BACKGROUND AND PROCESS

The Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Association (HEUNA) is a formally chartered State of Illinois non-profit corporation which seeks to serve its community by direct action, capacity building and neighborhood advocacy.

The stated mission of HEUNA:

- To preserve the historic nature of East Urbana as a family-oriented neighborhood.
- To maintain, conserve, and improve East Urbana for families by promoting retention of current owner-occupied homes and encouraging the upkeep of rental properties.
- To address street parking and sidewalk repair issues.
- To promote rehabilitation of older homes.
- To strengthen HEUNA by encouraging neighbors' involvement and participation.
- To welcome new residents and homeowners.

PLAN GOAL STATEMENT

The goal of the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Association Neighborhood Plan is:

1. To augment and amplify the City of Urbana's 2005 Comprehensive Plan (U-CP);
2. To define a vision for the future of the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood,
3. To identify commercial growth potential within the Historic East Urbana neighborhood;
4. To define problems needing attention within the Historic East Urbana neighborhood;
5. To propose guidelines for development within the Historic East Urbana neighborhood; and
6. To propose a Neighborhood Conservation District within the Historic East

Urbana neighborhood.

7. To identify areas within the HEUNA neighborhood where assigned zoning is inconsistent with current use, to work with the City Zoning Administrator to re-evaluate these areas, and to down-zone appropriate properties.
8. To identify and promote capital improvement projects necessary to maintain and upgrade all areas of Historic East Urbana.
9. To identify and resolve nuisance problems and property maintenance issues within Historic East Urbana.
10. To define a vision for planning, development and property management for areas of the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood adjacent to downtown on Vine Street and along East Main Street.

II. COMMUNITY PROFILE

Geographic Area

The HEUNA area of service is bounded by Vine St. to Hartle St. (East-West) and Main St. to Washington Ave. (North-South). This area lies completely within Urbana City Council Ward 5 and is a United States Census Target Track area Number 53. The area is defined as low to moderate income in (U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development) Community Development Block Grant Entitlement Program Regulations 24CFR570.

Sources of Input

Ideas developed in the HEUNA-NP originate from public discussion, HEUNA membership meetings, HEUNA email discussion, HEUNA Block Party input, attendance of members at agency and organization meetings and forums, and neighborhood survey results.

Steps to Plan Completion

1. Membership input and information gathering -- to 11/04
2. General discussion - 11/04 to 12/04
3. Draft Plan document - 12/04
4. Final Plan document - 1/27/05
5. Submittal of Plan to Office of Planning and Development. 1/27/05
6. Final Revision - 11/15/06

Housing

The Plan area contains multiple family apartments, duplexes, and single family homes. The housing stock quality is mixed with little potential for Historic District status. However the area has many good examples of vernacular carpenter-built homes ranging in age from 100+ years to 50 years. There is some opportunity for in-fill development and lot arrangement is of a notably random pattern which most likely results from multiple 'informal' lot divisions prior to City zoning

activities. The nearly 95% built-up level present today was probably achieved in the mid 1900's.

Zoning

The HEUNA-NP area contains the following Zoning groups:

R-2/3 : Single and Two Family Residential : East side of Glover; All homes south of Green to Washington, Maple St. east to Glover.

R-4 : Medium Density Multiple Family Residential : Grove St. — Glover St. between Main St. and Green St. (north side).

R-5 : Medium High Density Multiple Family Residential : 300—500 blocks of E. Green St. (north side) and Elm St.; 300 block of S. Urbana St.; 100 block of S. Grove.

R-6 : High Density Multiple Family Residential : 300 block of S. Vine St.; 300 block of E. Main St.; and 200 block of S. Urbana St.

B-1 : Neighborhood Business : Fairfield Automotive at Cottage Grove and Green St.; and Baha'i Temple, Green St. and Lynn; Skully's Fish & Chicken, Philo and Washington Streets, Butterfly Beads, Washington Street and Cottage Grove Street.

B-4 : Central Business : 300—500 block of E. Main St.; 100—400 block of S. Vine St.

CRE : Conservation, Recreation, and Education : Victory Park

IN : Industrial : Solo Cup Factory East of Hartle St.

Economic Development

The Plan area has many opportunities for commercial economic development. Although only four properties are zoned B-1 in the neighborhood area, these should be evaluated and augmented if possible. The Central Business core areas on Main Street east and Vine Street provide ample opportunity for business growth as can be attested by the recent growth of the Schnucks Crossing and AutoZone expansions. The new retail development at Five Points is a valuable addition to the area. This new area might benefit from the addition of an upscale clothier catering to business and university professionals. Efforts to revitalize Lincoln Square Village and the Philo Road business district should continue as a centerpiece of economic development in Urbana.

Transportation

Automobile

Access by auto is provided on all streets in the Plan area. The streets in the target area all double as bike and often walking paths due to the variable condition of the sidewalks. They range in material and condition from some fairly recent concrete streets to rehabilitated brick streets (most notably East Illinois Avenue) and old tar and chip streets with no curb and gutter treatment.

MTD

The HEUNA-NP area is connected with other areas of the City through service by the MTD. Routes serving the area or bordering on the area include: 5 Green, 6 Orange, 7 Gray, 8 Orchard Downs, 10 Gold, 25 Loop, and the Urbana Employee Shuttle.

Bike Routes

No bike paths are located in the HEUNA-NP area. Bike riders use the main arteries of Illinois Avenue and Green Street to connect to bike paths nearer campus, which is approximately ½ mile to the west, or take these streets to the downtown area.

Walking Paths and Greenways

No walking trails or greenways are located in the HEUNA-NP area. The sidewalks in the area are of mixed quality and material, either old unkept or owner kept brick or poured concrete of average quality. The lack of curbs and gutters means some walks are not handicapped accessible, and many of the brick sidewalks are in very poor condition. Most maintenance of the brick sidewalks is on an ad-hoc and infrequent basis. Public works has improved several areas often with home owner participation, and a rehabilitation program is progressing. Still, the unsatisfactory conversion of historic brick to concrete threatens the distinctive character of the neighborhood.

Parking

Curb parking is common on all streets. No curbs and gutters exist on streets north of California with few exceptions. In these areas parking results in large amorphous muddy areas near the roadside.

Utilities

Sewers, Sanitary, Water, Gas, Electric, and Telephone

The Plan area resides within an old, established section near downtown Urbana. All major services and utilities are connected and provided. Some systems are old and require individual property owner and City maintenance. Storm sewers are not well developed in the area between California and Green Street and from Lynn to Urbana. This inadequate removal of surface flow results in standing water and potentially hazardous conditions during the winter months. Electric and telecommunications lines are overhead and thus susceptible to weather and conflict with tree growth. Underground installation is recommended if large scale renovation or improvement projects are considered.

Technology Services

Cable access are allowed in utility rights-of-way and proper easements. These services must be arranged through private carriers and providers. The area is not served by a wireless Internet provider or cable modem service.

Street Lighting

The HEUNA-NP area has recently seen an upgrade in street lighting, the removal of old street lamps, and the installation of control boxes (above and below ground), new lamp posts, and lamps in much of its area. Notable are High, Cottage Grove, Illinois, and California Streets. Improvements are currently planned for the 700-800 blocks of South Anderson, Webber and Lynne Streets.

Parks and Recreation

Victory Park, administered by the Urbana Park District, is the only city park in the HEUNA-NP area. Prior to the expansion of the Urbana municipal building parking area another rather informal “pocket park” was located on the 200 block of South Urbana St. Concurrent with City expansion much of the park was lost and has not been replaced. This area now has an informal and attractive planting with a mixed prairie motif. This valuable area should be preserved and enhanced. The new fountain sculpture area north of the city building is an attractive area and could be incorporated into a pocket park.

Schools

The neighborhood is served by Leal Elementary School, Prairie School, Urbana Middle and High Schools, as well as Parkland College and the University of Illinois, The Marilyn Queller Child Care Center on the 200 block of South Webber Street provides educational and social opportunity for younger children. These well known institutions make HEUNA an affordable place to live with easy access to good educational opportunities.

Emergency Services

In general the area benefits from it's close proximity to both the main city fire station and police station. There is some trade-off in this context vis-a-vis the noise from departing emergency responders, testing of sirens on police vehicles during shift changes and testing of emergency warning systems and back-up generators.

Police

The Police Department main headquarters is located on the western perimeter of the HEUNA-NP neighborhood area.

Fire Department

The Fire Department main headquarters is located on the western perimeter of the HEUNA-NP neighborhood area.

Ambulance

The HEUNA-NP area is serviced by the City and County emergency response vehicles, including Carle Foundation Hospital and Provena Covenant Medical Center.

Waste Management

Several private waste-haulers serve the HEUNA-NP area neighborhoods. There is some neighborhood interest in cooperatively limiting the number and controlling the timing of hauling services.

Human Services

The HEUNA-NP area is supported by the human resource services of the City of Urbana, including Urbana's Community Development Services Department, Grants Management Division, and social services programs.

Grants

HEUNA has been the recipient of 2 Community Development Block Grants. These Neighborhood Organization Grants (NOG), which are administered by City Community Development staff, have assisted capacity building, provided educational workshops, and created greater community identity. The NOGs have been crucial in HEUNA capacity building efforts. HEUNA also received a grant for the Preservation And Conservation Association (PACA) for a commemorative plaque for Victory Park.

Equal Opportunity and Housing

The HEUNA-NP area promotes equal opportunity and is under the City and State's Equal Housing Authority guidelines for nondiscrimination. Specifically, HEUNA supports the rights of both home owners and renters and consciously works to advocate for them on an equal basis.

Natural History

The area containing HEUNA is part of The Big Grove complex of prairie savannah, and although this area is discontinuous, there are single specimen remnants of Burr Oak (*Quercus Macrocarpa*) which are very prized by the community and deserve protection. Some of the remaining under story vegetation common to savannah remnants are present in a few yards.

III. TRENDS AND ISSUES

The HEUNA-NP area is affected by some of the same influences and conditions affecting the City of Urbana as a whole. The HEUNA neighborhood offers some additional challenges due to the low median income and more transient nature of some of its residents. Specific areas of concern include the following: lack of public park space and the relatively high occurrence of older, sub-standard single resident housing stock which is being converted into multi-family, aesthetically unpleasing two-story rental properties.

Growth and Development

“Wear-Down and Tear Down”-Poor Rental Maintenance Results in Loss Of Quality Housing

Of particular concern to the HEUNA neighborhood is the pattern of poor upkeep and eventual removal of single family homes and their replacement by duplexes and multiple family structures. This “wear-down/ tear-down” tactic is particularly evident on East Elm Street. Its results include the destruction of the small neighborhood aspect of the area and a complete visual reconfiguration of the block fronts. HEUNA advocates the use of zoning and ordinance rules to prevent the spread of this syndrome. Single family home owners should be assisted by services or funding to enable the proper upkeep of property. Incentives should not be granted to those who wish to tear down old single family structures and replace them with high-density housing developments. Specific problems include; adequacy of plan review, lack of parking, increased noise levels, and security concerns of some residents.

Down Zoning

HEUNA members have voiced support for down zoning of some of the R-5 and R-6 areas. Mostly due to the activities mentioned above, the replacement of long time residences with massive fronted “quick build” structures causes concerns about the stability of the neighborhood. Some HEUNA members suggest that city planning be changed to be more appropriate for a small town like Urbana. This conversion to large multi-family structures is not consistent with our neighborhood.

Lot Green Space Preservation

HEUNA is concerned that current city ordinance allows the use of almost the entire lot area for construction. The use of up to 80% of the lot area for buildings is not consistent with the character of the neighborhood and ordinances should be structured to preserve that character, not allow maximum building space.

Sustainability

New development and rehabilitation should be keyed to sound land-use and ecological principles. The human ecology should not be ignored. Planning should seek to combine all necessary social, business and recreational resources into easily accessible areas which promote community. There is concern about the availability of quality jobs in the HEUNA-NP area.

Commercial and Industrial Use

The commercial climate in the HEUNA-NP is mixed. Some areas near arterial streets have had significant development in the last 10 years. Residents are open to further small scale commercial development as long as it doesn't adversely impact the small town feel of the area. Small businesses which provide necessities, such as grocery stores are desirable. The HEUNA-NP should consider both the Industrial zoned areas on the most eastern edge of its boundary as well as the business opportunities on the major arterial streets. Projects requiring zoning adjustments on South Glover have come to the attention of the HEUNA membership. In addition HEUNA members have followed the Aldi development near Berringer Commons, the recent Wal-Mart build-out and the possible addition of a Menards with interest. The definition of "Neighborhood Business" needs to be clarified.

Zoning

Due to the varied zoning districts found in the northern section of the HEUNA neighborhood and the concern about the tear down of many small houses, there is interest in what zoning changes the U-CP 2005 may require or stimulate. Small sections of the neighborhood are being targeting by individuals for down-zoning.

Mobility

Alternative Transportation

The HEUNA-NP area residents support alternative transportation modes and have discussed this issue at membership meetings. The existing arterials of Green Street and Illinois Avenue (East and West) and Vine Street and Cottage Grove (North and South) seem to be logical areas which are highly traveled for expansion of alternative transport modes such as formal bike paths or local rail lines.

Housing

Public Housing Facilities / Affordable Housing

The HEUNA-NP area has privately owned affordable housing and rental choices within its boundaries to serve the needs of Urbana citizens. The area supports City programs for first time homeowner loans and low cost repair loans for residents. Rental properties often appear to violate logical setback provisions (for example the 200 Block of S. Grove and the 500 block of S. Urbana) where

single family dwellings about multiple family dwellings with very little clearance.

Renovation Needs of Substandard housing

There are more than a few homes in the neighborhood, particularly toward the North and East, that appear to need significant repairs. Some of those properties may violate city building and safety codes in some ways. The U-CP should directly address the issue of substandard housing. It's one of the most critical issues the HEUNA faces. Will such housing remain substandard? Under what circumstances will it be repaired or replaced? Repair or replacement of substandard homes requires investment, which may be most likely to come from developers, who may seek to build high-density units in order to maximize returns. HEUNA supports quality single- and two-family homes. Financial support for housing improvement using US HUD monies passed by the City is good, and several residents have taken part in the Low Interest Loan Programs using US HUD monies. These should be continued and expanded if possible and other programs to repair or replace substandard housing should be investigated..

Home/yard maintenance and enhancement

HEUNA members feel the U-CP should contain discussion and incentives for property maintenance and enhancement. Vegetation overrunning the sidewalk, and household articles strewn about the yard are not acceptable. The HEUNA-NP supports consistent code compliance and enforcement.

Abandoned Housing

There is nothing more damaging to the long term health of any neighborhood than the sight of buildings boarded and abandoned. HEUNA residents (the majority of whom take care of their properties) grow to resent these abandoned buildings and their owners. City staff time and ordinances should be used to force those owners to improve or formally yield these few select properties.

Public Safety

Speeding

Motorists frequently travel at high speeds through many of our East-West streets. (It may not be quite as big a problem on most of the North-South streets, many of which have stop signs at frequent intervals. East-West, the only stopping point appears to be Anderson on most streets.) Speeding in a residential neighborhood is dangerous on many levels, not least because HEUNA has much bicycle and pedestrian traffic, especially in warm weather months. HEUNA supports the addition of traffic control signage and structure where logical, with the goal of traffic calming and speed reduction.

Infrastructure

Sewers / Storm Water Detention

The HEUNA-NP area has identified numerous problems with sewer and storm water control; current conditions are inadequate for the needs of the neighborhood. Storm sewers are not effective in draining the area between California and Green Street and from Lynn Street to Urbana Street. This inadequate removal of surface flow results in standing water and potentially hazardous conditions during the winter months in both yards and streets. HEUNA members recognize the high cost of such infrastructure development; however, some areas of the neighborhood become impassable after accumulation of frozen precipitation or meltwater, especially at intersections. Development (either business, multiple or single family residence) should be held to a high standard of compliance regarding drainage issues.

Downtown

Vitality of the Downtown Area

Adjacent to the Downtown, the HEUNA-NP area is vitally interested in the success of the continued redevelopment of the Downtown Urbana area. Neighbors have attended many of the instructional workshops and discussions concerning the fate of various downtown buildings and projects, including the Urbana County Courthouse expansion, the new Urbana Free Library expansion and the Lincoln Square Mall redevelopment. We patronize and support downtown businesses.

Lincoln Square Mall

The continuing redevelopment of Lincoln Square Village is of great interest for HEUNA-NP area residents. HEUNA members regularly shop in and visit this area, support the Market at the Square, and show support for the plans increase its commercial potential.

Historical and Cultural Significance

The HEUNA-NP area is strongly aware of the importance of maintaining the aesthetic properties of the Urbana Downtown and of preserving the historical details of the area. To this end the HEUNA membership sponsored a highly successful Brick Sidewalk Restoration Workshop in June and July, 2003. For this effort HEUNA (jointly with the City) was recognized with the 2004 Landscape Preservation Award by the Preservation and Conservation Association. Areas in downtown and near HEUNA may be valid candidates for Historic District status and we support that concept in general.

Improvement of Public Infrastructure

The HEUNA-NP area is supportive of the upgrade of City streets infrastructure, including curbs, gutters, street lights and sidewalks. Specifically, the program for

the maintenance of the old brick sidewalks in East Urbana is a project on which the HEUNA membership has placed considerable effort and attention.

Neighborhoods

Preservation

Maintaining the unique historic features of the East Urbana neighborhoods will add to the desirability and value of HEUNA neighborhood property. HEUNA recognizes the “multiplier effect” of renewal and supports both City staff and our members in their efforts to maintain and refurbish structures and landscapes within the neighborhood.

Incompatible Redevelopment

The quality of the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood requires that remodels and new construction remain compatible with the older residences in exterior architectural style and character wherever possible. HEUNA residents support thoughtful planning and harmonious architectural design for all remodeled structures in the HEUNA property area. HEUNA supports down-zoning to bring future redevelopment into line with the existing family oriented zoning that is found in most of the area boundaries. HEUNA supports discussion on the possibility of aesthetic review of new development. Recent builds on Elm Street could have easily included basic and inexpensive design elements such as those found in the City’s MOR design guidelines to improve the blending of these structures into the existing neighborhood.

Privacy

Changes to the housing stock should not only take into account the massing, facade zone and opening criteria as stated in the MOR guidelines. Of equal importance is how any new development effects the privacy and usability of existing structures. The appropriate use of setbacks, expanded setbacks, privacy fencing and design review should assure that the use of an individual's property not be compromised by adjoining developments.

IV. VISION

The following specific projects and issues are designated as active priorities by the HEUNA-NP neighborhood :

Identifying signage

As a result of HEUNA's advocacy of unique signage to define neighborhood boundaries and welcome residents, potential residents, and visitors to the area, the City of Urbana erected new welcome signs at key entryways to the CP area in Spring 2006. A sign design contest was held in Spring 2005, and HEUNA list users chose an original design by a HEUNA residents that features an oak tree and proclaims HEUNA's "neighbor to neighbor" philosophy of community improvement. Consistent with the City's Entryway Sign Policy passed in Fall 2005, the City installed and maintains the signs, but HEUNA is responsible for initial and replacement purchase. Funds for the initial signs, plus two spare signs, were provided by neighborhood businesses and residents through donations of cash and items for a neighborhood rummage sale. HEUNA believes the signs will strengthen neighborhood identity, and is committed to replacing them as needed and as funds permit.

Neighborhood Conservation Districts

The HEUNA-NP area promotes the concept of NCD's within its boundaries. The purpose of this Plan is to promote the adoption of compatible construction and remodeling styles with those seen in the community, which preserve the residential quality of the old neighborhood. Details of the preferred design plans might conform closely to the guidelines and design criteria adopted by the City for the MOR (Mixed Office and Residential) development areas of West Urbana. The City should continue to offer and accelerate incentives to keep families in housing which may currently be in poor condition. Rental properties should be held to a high state of compliance with all ordinances.

Tax Increment Financing

The East Urbana neighborhood would like to see a property tax rebate incentive established for qualifying property owners who participate in a Neighborhood Conservation District. Property owners who remodel or carry out new construction within the HEUNA-NP district which follow the guidelines of the NCD may receive a 15% rebate on their property taxes for 3 years as an incentive for following design criteria.

Neighborhood Commercial Development

The HEUNA-NP area is interested in the stability and growth of the City tax base. Commercial development potential in the HEUNA area is somewhat limited, but HEUNA may identify areas within its boundaries where careful and thoughtful commercial development friendly to the interests and consistent with the

appearance of the neighborhood can be found. The zoning for and creation of in-neighborhood shopping options can be considered compatible with the long range goals of property use at the edges of the HEUNA residential district. Currently only three property zones within the HEUNA boundary exist that have commercial use. HEUNA recommends the improvement and upgrading of present commercial businesses to comply with the design objectives of a Neighborhood Conservation District plan. Development within the Industrial Zoned properties at the edge of the HEUNA-NP area should be compatible to the interests and needs of the neighborhood. Environmental pollutant sources, noise abatement, traffic density, delivery schedules, and property upkeep are concerns of the neighborhood and will be addressed through appropriate City agencies as occasions arise. Business development should be of a quality which will provide "living wage" employment to residences.

Non-Commercial, Non- Residential Development

The presence and growth of private, non-profit organizations, churches, or educational facilities is supported by the HEUNA-NP area community vision.

Brick Sidewalk Restoration

Building on the success already initiated by HEUNA during the 2003 Brick Sidewalk Restoration Workshops, HEUNA residents continue to advocate for the removal, base establishment and brick relaying methods as prescribed by the Urbana Public Works department. All of the historic brick walkways in the HEUNA area should be prioritized. The City has begun a 10 year plan to address this issue; the HEUNA neighborhood advocates measurable progress be maintained during each year to assure the full restoration and function of the neighborhoods brick sidewalks. In addition, Public Works should continue its weed and grass control program on an annual basis.

Curbs and Storm Sewer Gutter Improvement

The HEUNA-NP area advocates accelerated progress on the construction of curb and storm sewer gutters for the streets north of California Street that are without these improvements. South Urbana Street and East High Street, for example, a short block away from City Hall and used for the ingress and egress of emergency vehicles, have yet to receive these improvements. Curb installation integrates with the district interest in correcting conditions of improper parking in front of duplex and multiple family residences where inadequate parking often exists. Proper storm water run-off can be guaranteed by providing sufficient gutter and curb improvements.

Bike Paths and Greenways

HEUNA promotes the development of bike trails and walkways for alternate travel within the neighborhood. The opportunity to make the old railroad track right of way, which cuts through HEUNA from the southeast to northwest, into a bike or pedestrian path may have passed; but the possibility of other areas being

used for this purpose has support. A bike route through the neighborhood is sorely needed.

Pocket Parks

HEUNA advocates the expansion of public parks through the creation of Pocket Parks. Adding to the recreational areas within the HEUNA-NP district is favored by HEUNA membership. Pocket Parks may be created within the district at choice locations as individual homes come onto the marketplace or when demolition of dilapidated structures is required by the City. HEUNA advocates the City use funds to purchase such properties for the creation of small parks in the neighborhood.

Victory Park

In Winter 2005, HEUNA and the Urbana Park District (UPD) began a partnership to discuss improvements to Victory Park . Bounded by Cottage Grove Avenue and Green, Main, and Lynn Streets in the neighborhood's northwest corner, Victory Park is the only formal park in the CP area. Based on the HEUNA/UPD discussions, as well as a survey of neighborhood residents in Summer 2005, a master plan for renovation was created. Major features of the plan include a new play structure relocated to the south end of the park near Green Street; new concrete pathways throughout the park; a formal area near Main Street with a commemorative plaque funded by a grant from the Preservation and Conservation Association (PACA), a new and enlarged picnic shelter; new lighting; refurbished tennis courts; and community garden plots similar to those in Meadowbrook Park, which will serve not only as a valuable community resource, but as a living reminder of the sacrifice and spirit shown by residents who tended Victory Gardens in the Park area during World War II. On September 30th, 2006, the UPD, HEUNA, area business and individual sponsors, and community volunteers came together to build the new play structure, which appears to have led to increased park usage. Working with the UPD, neighborhood residents, and the larger community, HEUNA is committed to helping implement the plan, and has arranged for Spanish language outreach to Hispanic neighbors near the Park. An Open Space Lands Acquisition Development Grant has been obtained to help fund planned improvements, and an application for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds is anticipated for water lines to the community gardens. Based on success of those grants and continued commitment of UPD funds, major renovations are targeted for completion by 2008. HEUNA will provide stewardship over Park resources, and will work to promote the gardens to neighborhood residents.

Art in Public Places

Locate sites in East Urbana, such as Victory Park, pocket park areas, along parkways, at the entrance streets to the neighborhood, where public art may be displayed, located, or designed as a part of a capital improvement project, under the Art in Public Places Program now under consideration by City Staff. This may

include public fountains, decorative pathways, mosaic materials at curbs or pathways, decorative archways at park entrances, etc., etc.

Community Events and Celebrations

Promote greater neighborhood community and sharing through public gatherings and fun events. Including: the annual HEUNA Picnic, Street Parties , Art Fair in the Park, create Neighborhood walks / map of historic places, Community Gardens (Victory Park), Music nights in the park, Movies in the Park

Service to Others

HEUNA should continue to pursue activities to benefit the community. These might include: assisting in Trash Haul Days, Brick Sidewalk clearing parties where grass or vegetation is uncontrolled, Participation in Food Drives, Co-sponsor a Habitat for Humanity home build in East Urbana

Preservation of Large Oak Trees

HEUNA desires that the remaining large oak trees in the area be conserved. Development strategies should be pursued which enable the retention of such trees. Some of the more massive specimens should be recognized as arboristic heirlooms and given some official designation fitting their historical significance.

Waste Management

Because of the large number of private waste-haulers currently serving the HEUNA-NP area neighborhoods, there is some local interest in cooperatively limiting the number and controlling the timing of hauling services. Given that the City has adopted a competitive approach to waste removal, appropriate nuisance and noise ordinances should augment the rights of individuals to be free from excess noise and pollution from haulers.

V. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The following are a list of topics cited as the Goals and Objectives of the HEUNA-NP district:

Investment in Housing Stock

1. To develop a program that encourages investment in the HEUNA to renovate substandard homes or replace them with high-quality single- and two-family homes.
2. To support good home/yard maintenance and enhancement and work with City staff to accomplish sensitive enforcement of all pertinent ordinances and rules.

Preservation

1. To preserve and enhance the character of the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood.
2. To encourage the maintenance and upkeep of all properties and structures within HEUNA boundaries.
3. To assure that properties in the neighborhood should meet all applicable city codes, and that the codes should be enforced.
4. To publicly recognize property owners who contribute to the preservation and quality of the neighborhood through thoughtful design considerations when remodeling, upgrading, or commencing new construction.

Advocacy

1. To assure that the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood Association continues to be a healthy and vital voice of communication and advocacy for the residents of East Urbana.
2. To encourage greater public participation in community decisions and events though the continuation of capacity building activities.

Growth Compatibility

1. To promote low density, single and double family occupancy zoning within the HEUNA boundaries.
2. To develop design guidelines for new in-fill construction and remodeled structures within the HEUNA district which encourage compatible style and material choices.
3. To reverse the trend of single unit rental properties being poorly maintained and eventually requiring demolition and subsequent replacement with larger massive front buildings. With this goal HEUNA requests that the city undertake to study, gauge the costs and public support for (and possibly put into City ordinances) aesthetic standards for new construction. Adequate accommodation for parking is an important part of this issue. Rules should be established so that a minimum of 2 parking spaces be required for each

individual unit. Current ordinance seems to require one assigned parking spot per unit.. This type of parking growth is unrealistic and results in land use incompatible with the surrounding neighborhood and excessive parking problems.

Conservation

1. To encourage environmentally friendly growth and ecologically sound use of HEUNA neighborhood resources.
2. To encourage home owners to adopt technologies and practices which will promote energy conservation and protect the local environment.

Landscaping and Parks

1. To encourage ornamental landscaping to enhance the neighborhood.
2. To encourage tree preservation, especially the large Big Grove oaks, and replacement to maintain the rich tree canopy of the neighborhood.
3. To care for and properly maintain the parks and open spaces located within the HEUNA area boundary.
4. To encourage area beautification projects and refuse clean-up in neighborhood parkways and city parks.
5. To promote whenever possible the creation and expansion of parks, greenways, bike paths, and walking trails for residents' use.
6. To advocate for the inclusion of open spaces and landscaping in new multi-family dwellings and developments within the HEUNA-NP district.
7. To advocate for "Art in The Park" type programs where visually interesting original art works might increase visitor interest and provide a dynamic and invigorating environment for residents.

Neighborhood Identity

1. To express the unique history, nature and quality of Historic East Urbana.
2. To promote the HEUNA area as an active and friendly section of the City.
3. To use printed materials and signage to identify the unique features of the Historic East Urbana neighborhood.

Quality of Life

1. To support and enhance the economic, social, civic, and natural environments enjoyed by the residents of the Historic East Urbana Neighborhood
2. To encourage the City to incorporate public art in area parks and public spaces as well as private residences within HEUNA.

Safety

1. To identify problems concerning public health and safety and address potential hazardous conditions within the HEUNA-NP boundary.
2. To work with the Fire and Police departments to promote neighborhood safety awareness.

3. To encourage uses of "alternative transportation."
4. To advocate for the installation of speed limit signs and/or other measures consistent with the plan to improve pedestrian safety.
5. To seek a special designation, "~Alternative Transportation Zone~", and call for a lower-than-normal speed limit (25 mph) on all but Cottage Grove, Main and Washington Streets, which are major thoroughfares.

Smart Growth

1. To promote smart growth policies in the City.
2. To advocate thoughtfully planned "in-fill" development that is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.
3. To work with City staff and HEUNA residents to find points of compatible commercial growth in the HEUNA-NP area. Due to its proximity to the state and federal structures in downtown, the Main and Vine Street areas should especially be considered.

Housing Diversity

1. To advocate for the creation of affordable housing in a wide range of housing styles, prices, and options for its residents, spread equitably throughout the City, and to encourage fair housing practices.

VI. FUTURE LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

Near Downtown Transitional Development

The HEUNA boundaries to the West (Vine Street) and North (Main Street) are appropriate locations for Mixed-Residential (Urban Pattern) development [pg. 55, City Comprehensive Plan]. This designation allows a transitional grouping of small business (B-1) (“Compatible Neighborhood Commercial”) development, R-5) Medium High Density Multiple-Family Residential, R-4 and R-3) Duplexes and R-2) Single and Two-Family Residential structures to be situated in a way compatible with the adjacent neighborhood. Property facing main streets and arteries shall blend with town houses, apartments and smaller family dwellings, while retaining the appropriate open feeling necessary to maintain the quality of near downtown residential life.

Down Zoning

The HEUNA-NP area advocates down-zoning residential properties from High Density and Medium High Density Multiple Family R-6 and R-5) to Single and Two-Family Residential R-3) zoning whenever possible within the HEUNA boundaries. It is the goal of HEUNA to maintain the more intimate, comfortable, family oriented quality of the East Urbana neighborhood.