



Planning Department





From the Director.....

September 2011

Greetings and thank you for your interest in the activities of the City of Champaign Planning Department. This report summarizes the work of the Department for the FY2010-2011 period. It also introduces the talented individuals that are behind the many accomplishments.

The role of the Planning Department is an important one for the City. Planners help residents envision the future of their community. Smart planning today means that residents of Champaign can continue to enjoy a high quality of life tomorrow.

I'm proud of the imprint planning is making on our community and look forward to continued success in the future.

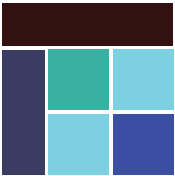


Bruce A. Knight, FAICP
Planning Director
City of Champaign

The City of Champaign Planning Department provides both long-range planning services as well as development review and zoning administration. The Department is organized into two divisions called "Advance" and "Current" Planning. Advance Planning prepares the City's Comprehensive Plan which sets a vision for the future growth and development of the community. Advance Planning also prepares neighborhood plans and transportation studies and oversees the activities of Downtown and Campustown.

The Current Planning Division reviews development proposals to ensure compliance with the City's Subdivision Code and Zoning Ordinance. This includes the negotiation of annexation agreements. The Department provides support to three boards and commissions. These include the Plan Commission, the Zoning Board of Appeals and the Historic Preservation Commission.

NOTE: The Annual Report also includes the *Champaign Tomorrow* poster and the report on the implementation of the City's Transportation Master Plan, called *Champaign Moving Forward*. Both are attached.



Meet the Planning Department Staff



Bruce A. Knight, FAICP
Planning Director
Areas of Focus:
Department leadership, development negotiations, Plan Commission, City Council, Capital Improvement Plan
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Rob Kowalski, AICP
Assistant Planning Director
Areas of Focus:
Long-range planning, department administration, Plan Commission
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Land Development Manager
Areas of Focus:
Annexation Agreements, preliminary subdivision plats, development review.
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Kevin Phillips
Zoning Administrator
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Implementation Planner (Planner II)
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Jeff Marino, AICP
Planner II
Areas of Focus:
Preliminary and final subdivision plats, zoning ordinance amendments, special use permits.
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Lacey Rains Lowe
Planner II
Areas of Focus:
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Mishauno Woggon
Planner II
Areas of Focus:
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Lisa Hempel
Secretary II
Areas of Focus:
Lead Department secretarial support, all Boards and Commissions
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Thank you for your service!!

Due to budget challenges faced by the City this past fiscal year, the Planning Department had to say good bye to two highly valued members of the Department.

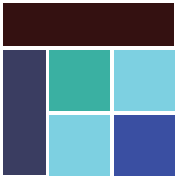
Both Zeba Aziz and Cassandra Wentz made significant contributions that advanced the goals of the Department and the profession. They both exemplified the core values of the City of Champaign organization. They will both be missed.



Cassandra Wentz
Secretary I / 11 years



Zeba Aziz, AICP
Planner II / 5 years



Champaign Plan Commission

The Plan Commission acts in an advisory capacity for the City Council. It discusses and reviews various land use, zoning and development issues. The Commission considers preliminary subdivision plats, zoning changes, annexation agreements and amendments to the Champaign Zoning Ordinance. The Commission also considers amendments to the Comprehensive Plan. The Commission consists of seven members and two alternates that are appointed by the Mayor and approved by City Council. Members serve three year terms.



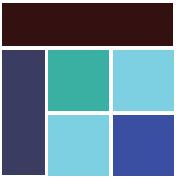
2010-2011 Plan Commission

- Terry Dudley, Chair
- Paul Cole, Vice-Chair
- Leonard Heumann
- Brian DeMuyneck
- Laurie Reynolds
- Robert Miller
- Mark Darling *
- John Dodson *

* Long Time Plan Commissioners Recognized

In June 2011 Mark Darling and John Dodson were recognized for their tenure on the Commission. Both Darling and Dodson left the Commission with a combined 26 years of service. During that time Mark chaired the Commission twice and John once. They were both involved with the adoption of two Comprehensive Plans, a Downtown Plan and many prominent development projects in Champaign.





Champaign Plan Commission

Plan Commission Activity

Annexation Agreements

Annexation agreements specify the terms for unincorporated land to be annexed into the city. Annexation agreements are negotiated between land owners and the City. The Plan Commission is responsible for considering annexation agreements when they contain implications for zoning and land use.

University of Illinois Employees Credit Union Annexation Agreement

Location: 2201 South First Street

Size: 4.26 acres

Description: This agreement facilitated the annexation of the existing UofI Employees Credit Union building on South First Street. The agreement stipulated zoning and allowances for a freestanding sign. The site was already surrounded by the City of Champaign.

Raufeisen / Christie Clinic Annexation Agreement

Location: Northwest quadrant of the Curtis Road and Interstate 57 Interchange

Size: 57.6 acres

Description: This annexation agreement established zoning and land use for a 57.6-acre development to be called "Wellness at Prairie Village." The development approval was for a large medical clinic as an anchor with a mix of residential and commercial uses on the remainder of the tract. The proposed development was reviewed for compatibility with the Curtis Road Interchange design guidelines and incorporated many of the provisions that are now a part of the Zoning Ordinance for the area.

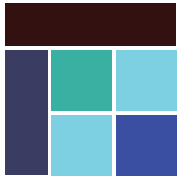


Jacobs Landing / Judah Christian Annexation Agreement Amendment

Location: Northeast corner of Kirby Avenue and Rising Road

Size: 80 acres

Description: The Jacob's Landing Subdivision was originally approved for an 80-acre residential development. This amendment revised the northern 50 acres of the tract to become a private high school.



Plan Commission Activity cont.

Special Use Permits

Special Use Permits can be considered for proposed land uses that are not specifically allowed in certain districts but may be appropriate considering the location and the circumstances of the proposal.

Bickford Cottage Special Use Permit Amendment

Location: 1007 South Staley Road

Size: Approximately 8,800 square foot addition

Description: Bickford Cottage is an existing senior assisted living facility originally approved in 2001. This amendment allows the addition of 13 units to the existing 28 units at the facility.



Round Barn Drive IGA

Location: 2010 Round Barn Road

Size: Approximately 43,695 square foot building

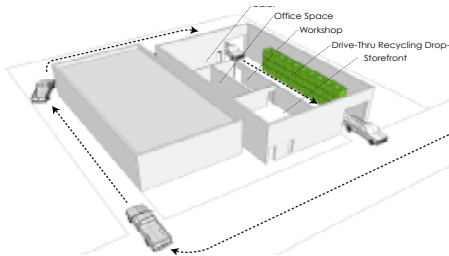
Description: This Special Use Permit allowed a portion of the former Jerry's IGA grocery store to be used for an indoor self-storage facility.



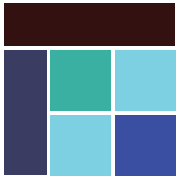
Reuseanomics - Recycling Drop Off

Location: 807 Pioneer Drive

Size: Approximately 5,500 square foot building



Description: This Special Use Permit allowed the use of a vacant building in the CI, Commercial-Industrial Zoning District for a recycling drop off facility.



Champaign Plan Commission

Plan Commission Activity cont.

Zoning Ordinance Text Amendments

The Champaign Zoning Ordinance regulates specific aspects of the use of land in the city. The Plan Commission makes recommendations to the City Council on amendments to the text of the Zoning Ordinance.

Subdivision Sign Identification Text Amendment

This case amended the Zoning Ordinance Sign Regulations to establish provisions for residential subdivision identification signs. The purpose was to require permits for subdivision signs as well as to regulate signage materials, size and location.



Curtis Road Interchange Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment

This case adopted tailored land use and development regulations for the four tracts of land surrounding the Curtis Road and Interstate 57 Interchange. The amendment established three new zoning districts focusing on residential, commercial and corporate office land uses. The district strives to achieve a mix of land uses and an urban design that will provide high-quality development at the interchange for years to come.

Telecommunication Towers Ordinance Text Amendment

This case clarified the existing Telecommunication Towers Ordinance to specify when towers are considered commercial and when they are non-commercial.

Right-of-Way Enforcement Text Amendment

This case adjusted the provisions for the enforcement of signs placed in the public right-of-way. The amendment clarified the ability for the Zoning Administrator to issue citations.

Outdoor Advertising Sign Structure (OASS) Text Amendment

This case proposed to extend the boundary of the OASS Overlay District two blocks to the north of downtown. The Overlay District was created in part to help regulate the placement of electronic billboards in the City. This text amendment passed Plan Commission but was referred back to Staff by City Council.



Plan Commission Activity cont.

Zoning Ordinance Text Amendments cont.

Sign Ordinance Text Amendment (Feather Flags)

This case was forwarded to the Plan Commission from the Zoning Board of Appeals. The text amendment updated the Zoning Ordinance to recognize an emerging trend in sign advertising, the "feather flag". Feather flags have a design that blends the look of a traditional flag with the effect of a waving pennant. They are typically affixed vertically and they most often have been placed at the property line to attract the attention of passing traffic. The ordinance was updated to allow them as a temporary signs only and specified the amount of time they can be displayed.



Religious Institutions in the I-1 Zoning District Text Amendment

This case amended the chapter of the Zoning Ordinance that specifies allowable land uses in each zoning district. The change was to permit religious institutions in the I-1, Light Industrial Zoning District. The nature of the I-1 district has changed over time to become more warehousing and light manufacturing. Considering this change, allowing a lower-intensity use such as religious institutions was considered appropriate.

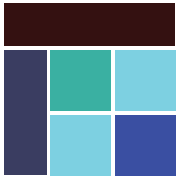


Subdivision Regulations (Streets and Sidewalks) Text Amendment

The purpose of this case was to amend the Subdivision Ordinance as it pertains to streets and sidewalks. The most significant change in this amendment was to require sidewalks on both sides of a street in all cases. Previously, sidewalks were only required on one side of the street in industrial developments.

Cat Kennel Text Amendment

This case amended the definition and requirements for "kennels" in the Zoning Ordinance. The existing regulations definition kennels as places to board dogs and cats. The proposed amendment created a category of kennel for cats only and allowed them to be located in closer proximity to residential uses.



Plan Commission Activity cont.

Subdivision Plats. Subdivision plats are created for the purpose of dividing land into separate parcels and for establishing the construction of public infrastructure in the land development process. The Plan Commission reviews Subdivision Plats against the requirements of the Subdivision Code.

Wellness at Prairie Village Preliminary Plat

Northeast corner of Curtis Road and Staley Road / 57.6 acres

This plat allowed for the development of a portion of the Curtis Road Interchange for a new medical clinic and other commercial and residential uses. The plat would have further advanced the annexation agreement previously adopted for the parcel. As of summer 2011 this development has been placed on hold by the owner and developer.

Ameren First Preliminary Plat

1 East Ford Harris Road / 3 acres

This plat creates a lot for Ameren to establish an additional electrical substation.

Will's Trace Revised Preliminary Plat

East of Rising Road just north of Porter Family Park / 38.85 acres

This plat reduced the width of 20 residential lots to allow smaller house sizes to be developed.

Champaign Village Preliminary/Final Plat

Northeast corner of Country Fair Drive and Church Street / 14 acres

This plat facilitates the reuse of the former Hobby Lobby building. The subdivision also provides for the installation of a sidewalk along the frontage of Church Street and Country Fair Drive.



Sarus Galleria Preliminary/Final Plat

2106 and 2202 S. Neil Street (between Devonshire and Knollwood Drive) / 1.19 acres

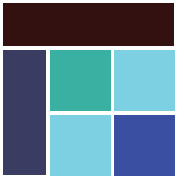
This plat facilitates infill development on a narrow strip of land between Neil Street and the Canadian National Railroad tracks.

Zoning Map Amendments

710 & 804 North Neil Street Rezoning

This case rezoned these two properties from the CI and CO districts to the CG, Commercial General Zoning District. The change allows the properties to redevelop with commercial and residential uses instead of industrial or office uses.





Plan Commission Activity cont.

Comprehensive Plan Amendments. The Plan Commission is responsible for maintaining a Comprehensive Plan. This plan establishes a vision for the future growth and development of the City. It provides a vision, guiding principles and maps illustrating intentions for land use and development. Over time, several additional plans may be “amended” to the Comprehensive Plan as plan elements. The Plan Commission considered the following Comprehensive Plan Amendments in FY2010-2011.

Champaign Tomorrow, Comprehensive Plan Update. On February 16, 2011 the Champaign Plan Commission recommended approval of the City’s seventh Comprehensive Plan since 1926. The adoption of *Champaign Tomorrow* followed several study sessions with the Plan Commission and public input opportunities in the community. A summary poster of the plan is attached to this report.

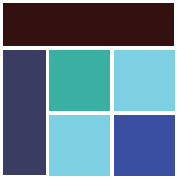


Bristol Park Neighborhood Plan.

The Bristol Park neighborhood encompasses three adjoining residential areas, Bristol, Garwood and Shadowwood. This neighborhood plan outlines strategies to promote reinvestment in the neighborhood as well as actions that can be taken to make the neighborhood more safe and attractive. An emphasis is also placed on providing resources for community development including establishing a Family Resource Center.

Champaign Trails Plan. This plan is a joint effort between the City and Park District and establishes a vision for the construction of a connected recreational trail system throughout the community. The plan defines “multi-use”, “railtrail” and “greenway” trails and maps their intended locations. The plan also establishes an implementation strategy which specifies responsibilities for construction, ownership and maintenance.



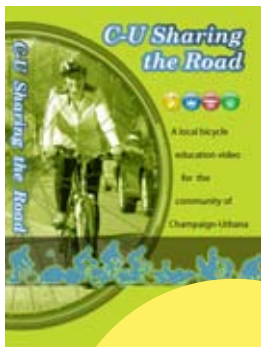


Plan Commission Activity cont.

Study Session Items

Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map (July 2010)

This study session presented the Plan Commission with the draft Future Land Use Maps for the Comprehensive Plan. The maps divided the City into sections and established a system of three tiers that indicate the ability to grow. The maps are also annotated to describe intentions for future growth and development. The future land use map is one of the most important tools of the Comprehensive Plan.



Recognized by the Illinois American Public Works Assoc. as "Project of the Year" 2010

C-U Sharing the Road Video (Oct. 2010)

C-U Sharing the Road is a local bicycle education video for the community of Champaign-Urbana. Filmed on the streets of C-U, Champaign staff teamed-up with Urbana staff to create the video. The 15-minute video introduces the public to the bicycle infrastructure that is being installed around both cities and to teach motorists and bicyclists how to interact with each other on the road. The video has been distributed widely through the City of Champaign website and on YouTube. It is also regularly broadcast on Champaign Public Television. The DVD has also been distributed to public school driver's education teachers. C-U Sharing the Road was recently recognized with a "Project of the Year" award by Illinois American Public Works Association for presenting the story of a public works issue that projects a positive image in a broadcast medium.

Champaign Tomorrow Draft Plan (Nov. 2010)

This study session presented the Plan Commission and City Council together with the final draft of the Comprehensive Plan which included the guiding principles, actions, future land use maps and an implementation chapter. The draft plan was the result of several years of community outreach facilitated by the Planning Department and Plan Commission.

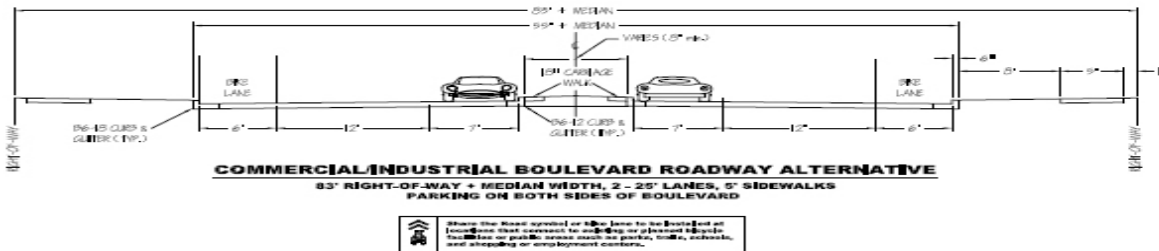


Plan Commission Activity cont.

Study Session Items cont.

Street Design Cross Sections (Dec. 2010)

One of the first implementation actions from *Champaign Moving Forward* was to revise the City’s existing street design standards. The existing standards did not include provisions for bicycles and in some cases, allowed sidewalks on just one side of the street. Additionally, they promoted wide roadway widths in order to accommodate on-street parking. However, in many low-density residential developments parking is provided off-street thus leaving unnecessarily wide roadways that promote speeding. The new standards provide flexibility for providing on-street parking depending on the development plan and other factors.



Public Input for *Champaign Tomorrow* (Feb. 2011)

The purpose of this study session was to update the Plan Commission on the public input effort for the update to the Comprehensive Plan, *Champaign Tomorrow*. This effort included multiple public meetings, presentations to service organizations and public meeting workshops with the Plan Commission and City Council. The most significant public outreach effort was the online preference survey, called PLACES. This survey gauged perceptions about the different places residents live, work, shop and play. The survey was taken by nearly 800 people.



Draft Champaign Trails Plan (Feb. 2011)

This study session presented the draft Trails Plan prepared jointly with the Park District. The plan identifies fourteen different trails to be established throughout the community. The plan envisions multi-use trails, greenways and railtrails as the main trail types. The plan includes an implementation chapter for getting started.



Plan Commission Activity cont.

Study Session Items cont.

Champaign Tomorrow Implementation (Apr. 2011)

This study session presented the proposed implementation chapter of the Comprehensive Plan to the Plan Commission. The implementation chapter outlines the specific actions that will be undertaken in order to achieve the vision of the plan. The Plan Commission engaged in a discussion about priority and when certain actions should start and be finished.



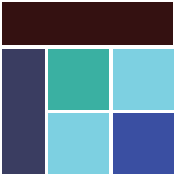
Midtown Zoning Update (Apr. 2011)

“Midtown” has been coined to describe the neighborhood between Downtown and Campustown. The area is now anchored by the new Boneyard Second Street Basin which provides a wonderful recreational amenity. The Midtown commercial district contains properties fronting on First Street and Springfield Avenue. This zoning update revised zoning standards in order to realize a more compact pattern of development with a higher-quality of urban design.

CU-MTD Corridors Analysis (Jun. 2011)

This study session presented a study by the Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District on creating high-frequency transit corridors in Champaign, Urbana and on campus. For Champaign this corridor would be White Street from Wright Street to Downtown. The analysis includes recommendations for promoting higher-density residential development which would assist in creating the demand for increased transit service.





Plan Commission Activity cont.

Study Session Items cont.

Bristol Park Neighborhood Plan (Dec. 2010)

One of the major project initiatives for the Planning Department in 2010 was completing a neighborhood plan for Bristol Park. This plan was completed in cooperation with the City's Neighborhood Services Department and dedicated individuals who live in the neighborhood. This study session presented a draft plan for the Commission to consider.



Stratton Elementary Safe Routes to School Grant (Mar. 2011)

The Safe Routes to School campaign aims to promote safe walking and bicycling to elementary schools. The program also promotes healthier lifestyles and promotes stronger neighborhoods through walking to school. This study session presented the efforts of Champaign staff in contributing to the SRTS campaign. In particular, a plan was drafted for Stratton Elementary identifying measures that could be taken to provide a safer environment for walking and bicycling. This includes improvements to Neil Street where kids must cross heavy volumes of traffic to reach the school grounds.





Champaign Zoning Board of Appeals

The Zoning Board of Appeals is a hearing board for appeals of decisions made by the City's Zoning Administrator. The Board is a quasi-judicial board and as such renders decisions regarding appeals. The Board also considers proposed variations to the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance where authorized. The Board has seven members that are appointed by the Mayor with the approval of Council for five-year terms.



2010-2011 Zoning Board of Appeals

Michael Zopf, Chair
Stasz Gorski, Vice Chair
Beth Morgan, Secretary
Brian Knox
Michael Sheppard
Dan Cothern

Zoning Board of Appeals Activity

The Zoning Board of Appeals met seven times between July 2010 and June 2011 and considered six cases. These cases were as follows:

1904 & 1509 Joanne Lane Variation

This case was a request for a variation to allow a carport to be placed within the front yard setback of a single-family home. Structures are not allowed to be placed within established yard setbacks. The Zoning Board of Appeals denied this request.

314 South Neil Street Variation

This case was a request for a major variation to allow the required parking for an apartment conversion on a neighboring lot. The development is located at the northeast corner of Neil Street and Springfield Avenue. The parking was proposed to be placed on a lot across an existing alley immediately east of the building. The case was approved by the Zoning Board of Appeals.



Champaign Zoning Board of Appeals

Zoning Board of Appeals Activity cont.

Appeal to an Interpretation of the Sign Ordinance

This case was an appeal to the determination by the Zoning Administrator that “feather flags” are subject to the requirements of the sign ordinance because they draw attention to a business. The example was located on Columbia Avenue east of Neil Street. The appeal argued that the flags are a decorative landscape element rather than a sign. The Zoning Board of Appeals upheld the Zoning Administrator interpretation but recommended changes in text of the Zoning Ordinance as well.



703 South Willis Avenue

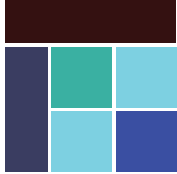
The homeowners at 703 South Willis Avenue requested this major variation to allow a detached garage to be reconstructed within the side and rear yard setbacks. This irregular shaped lot contained an older garage near the property line that the owner intended to replace. The variance would allow the garage to be built generally in the same location. The Zoning Board of Appeals granted the variance based on the findings presented.

Longhorn Steakhouse Sign Variation

Longhorn Steakhouse is building a new restaurant at 2101 North Prospect Avenue. As part of the new building, Longhorn Steakhouse proposed to include a logo of the business on the side of the building in addition to a sign on the same wall identifying the business. The sign ordinance only allows one sign on the frontage up to a specified square footage. The variance request was to allow two signs and for them to be greater than the square footage allowed. The Zoning Board of Appeals denied the request and found that the proposal adequately met the findings of fact.

Sarus Galleria Setback Variation

This case was a request for a setback variation for the redevelopment of land located at 2106 and 2202 South Neil Street. This irregular shaped parcel included other challenges for redevelopment including extensive powerline easements that cross the property. The proposal was the same as other similarly situation parcels along the tracks that have redeveloped in recent years. The variation was granted by the Zoning Board of Appeals.



Champaign Historic Preservation Commission

The Historic Preservation Commission identifies properties, structures, and areas that are historically significant. They also advise Plan Commission and City Council on the designation of Landmarks and Historic Districts. The Commission facilitates the protection of visual characteristics of the exterior architectural details of the community. The City of Champaign is recognized by the State of Illinois as a Certified Local Government for historic preservation.



**2010-2011
Historic Preservation
Commission**
Gary Olsen, Chair
Adam Smith, Vice Chair
Gregory Stock
Catherine Barbercheck
Douglas Milburn

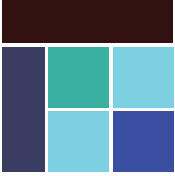
Historic Preservation Commission Activity

The Historic Preservation Commission met three times between July 2010 and June 2011 and considered the following topics:

George and Elsie Mattis House National Register Nomination

This case recommended the George and Elsie Mattis House, located at 900 West Park Avenue, be placed on the National Register of Historic Places. The George and Elsie Mattis House as it exists today is the result of a 1926 renovation of an 1895 Queen Anne style house that originally faced Prospect Avenue. It is an example of the Georgian Revival style and was designed by architect George Ramey and built by the English Brothers. The nomination was prepared by the property owners and supported by the Historic Preservation Commission.





Historic Preservation Commission cont.

315 East University Avenue Local Landmark

The building at 315 E. University Avenue is one of the few remaining examples of historic commercial architecture on University Avenue, east of Second Street. An exact date of construction is not known, but is estimated to be built in 1901. It was originally constructed as a sanitarium by Doctor Henry A. Haley of Chicago, IL with three stories and 29 patient rooms. Notably, it was larger than the original Burnham Hospital built in 1895 which was two stories tall and had 24 patient rooms.



The building did not have a long history as a sanitarium. The exact date that the building stopped being used as a healthcare facility is unknown. As stated in the history submitted by the property owner, "the building housed a pennant factory, bakery, candy store, lunch room, fruit stand, and tire vulcanizing shop. In 1917, it briefly re-entered service in healthcare at the height of the Spanish Influenza epidemic. Just prior to becoming a hotel, it was used by a series of fraternities and sororities while their permanent homes were being built on the U of I campus." As early as 1919, a lease indicates that the property was operated by Ms. Mary Dilavou as a rooming house. Following Dr. Haley's death in 1924, his son sold the property to Mr. Charles Walker, changing the name of the building to Hotel Walker. The exact date of this change is unknown, but the building was listed in the 1940 City Directory as the Ford Hotel. In 1969, building owner Norman Ryckman turned the business into Ginza Asian Grocery Store, which was present until 1987. Eventually, Mr. Ryckman's son, Bruce, transitioned the store into Ginza Flower Shop, which remained until 2008.



The Historic Preservation Commission recommended approval of local historic landmark status which was subsequently passed by the Plan Commission and City Council.



By the Numbers.....

Building Permits Reviewed for Zoning **495**

170 Sign Permits Issued

Outdoor Cafe Permits Issued **21**

9 Subdivision Plats Reviewed

Text Amendments to the Zoning Ordinance **9**

30 Board / Commission Meetings