



City of Kent
City Council Committee Meeting
319 S. Water St., Kent Ohio 44240

October 1, 2025

MINUTES

PUBLIC HEARING – DEMOCRACY DAY

Prior to the public hearing, President Pro Tem Jack Amrhein advised the audience of Mayor Jerry Fiala's passing, offered words of tribute, and led a moment of silence.

The following individuals spoke at the 2025 Democracy Day Public Hearing. Their comments are summarized and their written remarks are included with this document.

Mr. John Kuhar:
Glad Blvd, Kent

SUMMARY: Mr. Kuhar reflected on his history, including 17 years of involvement in local politics and activism from the 1960s and 70s. He described participating in nonviolent demonstrations and running a politically significant bar in the City. Mr. Kuhar emphasized the influence of major corporations on lifestyle and governance, advocating for the rights granted by the Constitution. He expressed the need for new ideas in political positions while maintaining core values, advocating for shared governance between the people and corporations.

Mr. Joe Cullum:
Stow St., Kent

SUMMARY: Mr. Cullum stated that he was a student here from 1968 to 1971 and later became a high school social studies teacher. He registered eligible students as new voters and noted that some were skeptical about the electoral process, influenced by multi-billionaire corporations. Supreme Court decisions like Buckley v. Valeo and Citizens United have emphasized the detrimental impact of money on voter influence, contributing to low voter turnout rates, which have remained around 60% in recent elections. Despite a high popular vote in 2024, many voters remained undecided, highlighting ongoing concerns about the validity of our government system.

Mr. Bill Wilen
Stonewater Ave., Kent

SUMMARY: By eliminating corporate personhood and treating money as non-speech, Kent, Ohio could enhance local democracy by allowing resident voices to be more prominent in elections and policy discussions. This shift would result in fairer local campaigns, requiring less fundraising from candidates and enabling everyday residents to participate more actively. It could lead to improved policy outcomes focusing on community interests like zoning and sustainability,

fostering a stronger local economy that supports small businesses. Ultimately, this change could increase transparency, accountability, and civic engagement within the community.

Mr. Greg Coleridge:
Somerton Rd.,
Cleveland Heights

SUMMARY: Mr. Coleridge expressed condolences on Mayor Fiala's passing, and discussed the persistent corrupting influence of large financial contributions in elections, highlighting the significant impact of super-rich donors during the 2020 Trump campaign. The current political environment reflects a troubling prioritization of corporate interests over human rights, as exemplified by billionaires profiting from political investments and policies favoring the corporate agenda. He called for a fundamental change in our democratic institutions, particularly advocating for the abolition of judicial doctrines equating money with free speech, as proposed in H.A.R. 54, the We the People Amendment. Local efforts to gather support for this change underscore the necessity of grassroots movements in challenging corporate power and reclaiming democratic rights.

Mr. Fred Pierre:
Longmere Dr., Kent

SUMMARY: Mr. Pierre highlighted issues contributing to the ongoing government shutdown, attributing it to illegal actions by the President concerning budgetary decisions and a growing wealth inequality. He emphasized the urgent need for policies like taxing billionaires, healthcare access for all, and ending the Citizens United decision, warning of severe societal problems otherwise. The discussion also touched on the situation in Russia under Alexei Navalny, championing free speech, and urging citizens to engage actively in democracy. Mr. Pierre invoked the necessity of compassion, resilience against corruption, and the potential for collective action to bring about change, ultimately expressing hope for rebuilding trust in society.

John Thomas:
Chadwick Dr., Kent

SUMMARY: Mr. Thomas reflected on his lifelong commitment to civil rights and democracy, emphasizing the historical significance of Kent as a beacon for these values. He recounted his experience participating in a pro-democracy march at a young age alongside his father, highlighting the importance of civil rights as integral to his identity. Mr. Thomas posed a metaphorical question about the status of democracy in the country, comparing it to a hypothetical "democracy clock," urging listeners to consider how close it is to "midnight," a time when democratic values may fade. He concluded with condolences for Mayor Fiala, a colleague he remembers from his appointment in 1984.

CALL TO ORDER

President Pro Tem Jack Amrhein called the meeting to order at 6:34pm.

Present: Mr. Jack Amrhein; Ms. Melissa Celko; Mr. Jeff Clapper; Mr. Michael DeLeone; Mr. Chris Hook; Ms. Gwen Rosenberg

Also Present: Ms. Kathy Coleman, Clerk of Council; Mr. Dave Ruller, City Manager; Ms. Hope Jones, Law Director; Ms. Bridget Susel; Community Development Director; Ms. Dominique Bollenbacher, Community Outreach Coordinator; Ms. Melanie Baker; Service Director; Ms. Angela Manley, Parks & Recreation Director; Ms. Rhonda Hall, Budget and Finance Director; Mr. Jim Bowling, City Engineer; Mr. Jamie Samels, Fire Chief; Joan Seidel, Health Commissioner

Motion to excuse Ms. Shaffer Bish, Mr. Sidoti, and Mr. Turner was made by Ms. Celko, seconded by Mr. Hook, and carried by unanimous voice vote.

COMMITTEES

Committee of the Whole – Chair Amrhein

Sustainability Month Proclamation

Ms. Coleman read a proclamation signed by Mayor Fiala declaring October to be Sustainability Month (attached).

Departmental Updates

Fire Department: Chief Samel presented a Fire Chiefs Award for Citizenship and Courage to 13-year-old Destiny Tolbert, in recognition of her actions during her mother's recent medical crisis.

Engineering: Jim Bowling provided an update on the East Main Street project. He reported that the contractor is currently focused on the underground work, with two crews operating and coordinating effectively with local utilities, including First Energy and AT&T. Progress includes ongoing monitoring of traffic signals and adjusting the system to minimize delays during construction. There have been some technical issues, particularly with a device related to fire vehicle signals, but efforts to enhance communication through email updates and social media are ongoing, reaching over 100 subscribers. Concerns regarding the timing of construction coinciding with the school year have been addressed, with explanations about earlier planned start dates being hindered by funding and bidding challenges. Adjustments have also been made to construction message boards to improve clarity for drivers.

Service Department: Melanie Baker reported that during the recent severe weather, the water plant faced a power loss due to an issue with the backup generator, causing operational challenges. The plant managed to operate for 45 minutes before the power was completely lost. A unique situation arose when a dual feed lost power at 5 AM and did not regain it until 12:05 AM, affecting regulatory compliance for water flow. Smaller generators were brought in

to assist during the violation period, which extended into the afternoon. Additional personnel were brought in and the crew focused on flushing and maintaining overall system functionality during this period. Ms. Baker also reported that the City would be using a new product called GeoMelt for winter operations.

Community Development Committee-Chair Rosenberg/Vice-Chair Clapper

Sustainability Coordinator Update

Julie Morris presented a PowerPoint and discussed the initial meeting with the team which was focused on introducing a new tool that aims to enhance communication and efficiency within building operations. Participants expressed excitement about the potential for integrating new design elements while analyzing energy usage in relation to the facilities. The discussions emphasized the importance of feedback and collaboration, reflecting an ongoing evaluation of a related project, particularly concerning survey data related to the electric field and the East Main Street project. Over the past few days, data has shown a consistent use of charging stations, which has contributed to sustainable practices and improved information gathering. The collaborative efforts have led to invitations to the Innovation Hub, highlighting the involvement of students and further initiatives. A timeline for continued training and attention to efficiency reduction was also presented, indicating a long-term vision for the project.

Brimfield-Kent JEDD Income Tax Agreement Renewal and Amendment

Bridget Susel discussed an agreement involving the city of Kent's Budget and Finance department collaborating with the JEDD board. The draft agreement presented was approved and includes new language permitting the JEDD board to vote on using RITA for future income tax collections.

MOTION TO approve the Brimfield-Kent JEDD income tax agreement with the emergency clause was made by Mr. Clapper, seconded by Mr. Hook, and carried by unanimous voice vote.

Finance Committee – Chair DeLeone/Vice-Chair Celko

Funding Considerations to support the Kent Parks and Recreation Department

Angela Manley discussed the five-year capital needs and operating budget for Parks and Recreation, emphasizing the importance of user fees and small tax levies that have not increased. She highlighted the challenges of rising operating costs and the need for affordable programs. She introduced Megan Johns, the recreation specialist noting her experience, and the increasing behavioral issues among children post-COVID. The need for a dedicated behavior coordinator is identified to improve support for families and manage behavioral conditions effectively. The proposed full-time position would streamline operations and reduce projected expenses. Ms. Manley mentioned efforts to secure grants and the planning for capital projects in the upcoming budget discussions.

Health & Public Safety Committee-Chair Amrhein/Vice-Chair Sidoti

No business.

Land Use Committee-Chair Shaffer Bish/Vice-Chair Hook

Update on Zoning Overlay District Concept

Bridget Susel gave a detailed history of properties which the City had remediated to industrial standards, highlighting the cost and lengthy time involved, typically between 3 and 10 years. Noting that improving the site to residential standards would cost more and take longer, she summarized by saying she would not recommend Council approve the overlay district. Rather, the City would work with Hometown Bank to acquire the \$1.3 land bank grant, with both the City and Hometown providing half of the match, and work on remediating the site to commercial industrial standards.

Audience members Gabrielle Navasquez of Cascade Boulevard and Zane Hawkins of Ridgecrest Drive spoke on this issue, and the Clerk read a statement from Roger Thurman, who was unable to attend the meeting.

MOTION TO ABANDON EXPLORATION OF THE OVERLAY DISTRICT CONCEPT was made by Mr. Clapper; seconded by Mr. Hook, and carried by unanimous voice vote.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE CITY PAYING HALF OF THE MATCH FOR THE GRANT was made by Mr. Clapper; seconded by Mr. DeLeone, and carried by unanimous voice vote.

Streets, Sidewalks, and Utilities Committee-Chair Sidoti/Vice-Chair Clapper

No business.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 8:17pm, a motion was made by Mr. Clapper to move into Executive session to consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, or compensation of a public employee or official, and property acquisition. The motion was seconded by Ms. Rosenberg, and carried by unanimous roll call vote.

RETURN TO REGULAR SESSION AND ADJOURN

There being no further business, a motion to return to regular session and adjourn was made by Mr. Hook, seconded by Mr. Clapper, and carried by unanimous voice vote. The meeting was adjourned at 9:08pm.



City of Kent Clerk of Council

NAME 17YRSINTEREST LATE 60 AND 70S

PARTICIPATE IN NON VIOLENT DEMONSTRATION
WASH.DC, SELMA, COLUMBUS, BERKLEY, KENT

BAR US BOILING POT, WALTERS FRIED STUDY CORP.
SHOW DIAG.GE , DUPONT, BIG 3, STANDARD OIL
1000 S SMALL CORP CONTROLLED ECONOMY AND HOW WE
LIVE.

I BELIEVE IN CONSTITUTION,BILL OF RIGHTS AND LIVE IN A
COUNTRY WITH A GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE,BY THE
PEOPLE AND FOR THE PEOPLE.

I STAYED INVOLVED TO PROTECT OUR CONSTITUTION, FREEDOM
OF ASSEMBLY, FREEDOM OF SPEECH.

TO MAKE SURE GOV. IS WORKING FOR US AND NOT FOR WHO
HAS THE MOST MONEY.

WHEN I WAS ASKED TO RUN FOR COUNCIL THE FIRST TIME I
TOOK THE CHALLENGE.

NOW I AM RUNNING FOR COUNCIL AT LARGE: WE NEED PEOPLE
WHO CAN LOOK

TO THE FUTURE AND THINK OUT OF THE BOX, WE ALSO NEED
PEOPLE WHO ARE OLD

SCHOOL AND USE COMMON SENSE. WE NEED PEOPLE WHO
UNDERSTAND

STRUGGLE AND HARD WORK AND ARE WILLING TO FIGHT
FOR WHAT IS RIGHT. PEOPLE WHO DO NOT WASTE. I am one
of those people and I ask you to support me in November as I
have supported you when I was on council.

Democracy Day

I'm a retired high school Social Studies teacher. For the majority of my career, I taught Government and Economics to seniors. Since many of my students were 18 or soon to be 18, I worked with the county Board of Elections to register these eligible students as new voters. Some students were hesitant to register for fear of being called for jury duty. Others simply stated that they doubted that their vote mattered because of all the billionaires and corporations had already determined the outcome of national elections. I had a difficult time making the case that all votes are important since 2 Supreme Court decisions, *Buckely v Valeo* and *Citizens United v FEC*. undermined my argument.

These 2 decisions have determined that money is speech and corporations are persons . My belief is that this sentiment that the choice of the voters is undermined by the influence of corporations and billionaires shows itself in the dismal voter turnout rate that we see in the United States. In 2024 Donald Trump had the highest popular vote total in history with 77.5 million votes which might seem to be something to celebrate if 89 million eligible voters hadn't decided not bother voting at all. The voter turnout rate has hovered in the 60% range for the past 4 presidential elections. The turnout rate in the midterm congressional elections has been in the area of 50%.

I am reminded of the response attributed to Benjamin Franklin when he was asked after the Constitutional Convention what kind of government had been created. He was said to have responded " A republic, if you can keep it." The evidence is piling up that we may not be able to keep a government by for and of the people. One step in keeping it would be the passage of the 28th Amendment.

Bill Wilen — Organizer and speaker

Democracy Day — 10/1/2025

DD is all about advocating for the passage of a 28th Amendment to the Constitution. This "We the People Amendment" is about ending corporate constitutional rights and making it clear that money is not speech.

Here's the question I used for my information source: "How can the city of Kent OH benefit if money is not considered speech and corporations are not considered people?" (Chat GPT)

1. More Representative Local Democracy
2. Fairer Local Elections
3. Better Policy Outcomes for Residents
4. Stronger Local Economy
5. Greater Community Trust in Government

Application Specifically to in Kent

1. Student Housing and Neighborhood Balance
2. Downtown Kent Development
3. Cuyahoga River and Environmental Protections
4. Kent State University's Economic Role
5. Fairer Elections for City Council and Mayor

Current Initiatives in Kent

1. Rezoning of Industrial Land to Residential (Grey Fox Capital's Proposal)

1. More Representative Local Democracy

- Equal voice for residents: Without large corporations or wealthy donors treating money as "speech," Kent residents' voices would carry more weight in local elections, town halls, and policy debates.
- Less influence of outside money: Corporate PACs or wealthy individuals from outside Kent would have less sway over city council campaigns or ballot initiatives.

2. Fairer Local Elections

- Lower campaign costs: Candidates would not need to raise massive sums to compete, making it easier for everyday

Kent residents (teachers, small business owners, community leaders) to run for office.

- More issue-driven campaigns: Debates would focus more on community needs—zoning, housing, infrastructure, sustainability—rather than donor interests.

3. Better Policy Outcomes for Residents

- Development decisions: Zoning and land-use choices (like the industrial-to-residential rezoning recently debated) would be shaped by public input rather than corporate developers' campaign contributions.
- Environmental protections: Local ordinances on clean water, green space, and renewable energy would be harder for corporate lobbyists to block.

4. Stronger Local Economy

- Support for small businesses: With less corporate dominance, Kent could encourage policies that favor local entrepreneurs, coops, and independent businesses that reinvest profits locally.
- Fair competition: Corporate "personhood" often allows big companies to use lawsuits or lobbying to push out smaller competitors. Without it, Kent's small business ecosystem could thrive.

5. Greater Community Trust in Government

- Transparency and accountability: Residents would see that local government decisions are based on community needs, not hidden donations or lobbying.
- Higher civic engagement: People are more likely to vote, volunteer, and participate when they feel their voice matters as much as a corporation's.

 In short: Kent would likely see fairer elections, more community centered policies, a stronger local economy, and greater trust in government if money weren't speech and corporations weren't people.

One initiative in Kent that demonstrates how the people benefit over corporate interests: rezoning of industrial land to residential.

My data sources described the Grey Fox Capital's proposal to use 2 parcels of land on Franklin Ave to build a large rental development bordering the railroad tracks. Kent's Planning Commission unanimously rejected the rezoning citing concerns about contamination, traffic and affordable housing. Council also agreed but also passed a motion to explore overlay zoning that would allow residential construction under certain conditions in the future. No decision has been made at this time.

Kent Democracy Day Public Hearing

October 1, 2025 | Kent, Ohio

Testimony of Greg Coleridge, Co-Director, National Move to Amend Coalition

The seasons change. The years change. Political administrations change. But the power of corporations to rule and the corrupting influence of big money in elections from the super rich have not changed. Ok – maybe of degree or magnitude, but not of kind. Legalized bribery is alive and well – and it’s bipartisan.

The Harris political campaign outraised the Trump campaign in the 2024 elections – both over \$1 billion. However, SuperPAC and dark money political contributions (more like investments) to independent organizations were massive – which favored Trump. Billionaires and industries – like those peddling cryptocurrencies – favored Trump.

If anything stands out this time around, it’s the clear, flagrant and boastful return on political campaign investments. More billionaire donors than ever are in the Trump Cabinet. Billions in federal contracts flowed to SpaceX, run by mega Trump supporter Elon Musk, while DOGE vacuumed up massive amounts of personal data from federal agencies for profit to Musk. The crypto industry, which poured millions into the Trump effort, now boasts a strategic bitcoin reserve and a national digital asset stockpile. The private prison industry has cashed in on the corporatization of immigrant detention and deportation policies. Cuts to Medicare and SNAP have been paired with likely backdoor reductions to Medicare – opening the door to further health care corporatization – to the delight of insurance corporations that funded Trump. Corporate campaign cash has yielded the ending of over 100 DOJ criminal investigations or enforcements of corporations. And a Trump Executive Order has allowed \$12 trillion in workplace retirement funds to be steered into private equity firms and cryptos. The list goes on, but I’ve only got five minutes.

Corporate entities have hijacked constitutional rights intended exclusively for human beings that goes well beyond the so-called right of corporations to donate money in elections. Corporations now wield the First Amendment right not to speak, Fourth Amendment search and seizure protections, Fifth Amendment takings rights, and Fourteenth Amendment due process and equal protection rights. You want to talk about authoritarianism? Try doing anything that fundamentally asserts the power of people or communities—or that ensures a livable world—and watch what happens: corporations claim their “constitutional rights” are being violated. Those claims routinely override the rights of residents and the duty of public officials to protect health, safety, and welfare. At present, we have zero recourse.

Nothing will change – ever – if all we’ve concerned about is changing elected officials, laws or regulations – not our fundamental undemocratic rules. Good luck trying to treat unhealthy leaves, branches or trunk of a tree if the roots are rotten. We must democratize our undemocratic constitution and Supreme Court decisions. There are many, but a key one is to abolish the judge-made doctrines that assert “money equals

free speech” and “a corporation is a person.” The one and only proposal that achieves both these doctrines is HJR54, the We the People Amendment.

Voters of Kent were wise in 2015 when 64% of voters called for Congress to abolish these undemocratic doctrines. That was an excellent start. But we all must do more. For our part, it's to gather more signatures, collect more organizational endorsement and seek more local resolutions. I ask this Council to reach out to your peers in adjoining communities to join the 26 other political jurisdictions in Ohio – cities, towns and villages – to pass a resolution..

The history of this country is crystal clear – nothing fundamental changes for the good unless there is a people's movement behind it. Just look at the growing street actions supporting democracy – which in part includes opposing corporate power and big money in elections. We are part of that movement. But so are you. We continue to take action to broaden and deepen the growing awareness that human rights, people's rights and community rights are more sacred than corporate rights. We are doing our part. We ask you to do yours.

Thank you.

Corporate Constitutional Rights

Key U.S. Supreme & Other Court Decisions Creating or Expanding Corporate Constitutional Rights

MOVE
TO
AMEND

1819 Dartmouth College v. Woodward

A corporate charter is ruled to be a contract and can't be altered by the government. The word "corporation" does not appear in the Constitution and this ruling gave the corporation a standing in the Constitution. It also made it difficult for the government to control corporations, so states began to write controls into the charters they granted. The Supreme Court had "found" the corporation in the Constitution.

1882 The Railroad Tax Cases

In one of these cases, *San Mateo County v. Southern Pacific Railroad*, it was argued that corporations were persons and that the committee drafting the 14th Amendment had intended the word person to mean corporations as well as natural persons. Senator Roscoe Conkling waved an unknown document in the air and then read from it in an attempt to prove that the intent of the Joint Committee was for corporate personhood. The court did not rule on corporate personhood, but this is the case in which they heard the argument.

1886 Santa Clara County v. Southern Pacific Railroad

"The court does not wish to hear arguments on the question whether the provision in the 14th Amendment to the Constitution, which forbids a State to deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws, applies to corporations. We are all of the opinion that it does." This statement by the Supreme Court before the hearing began gave corporations inclusion in the word "person" in the 14th Amendment to the Constitution and claim to equal protection under law. (The case was decided on other grounds.)

1889 Minneapolis & St. Louis Railroad Co. v. Beckwith

Supreme Court rules a corporation is a "person" for both due process and equal protection.

1893 Noble v. Union River Logging R. Co.

For the first time corporations have claim to the Bill of Rights as determined by the Supreme Court.. The 5th Amendment says: "... nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law."

1905 Lochner v. New York

"Lochner" became shorthand for using the Constitution to invalidate government regulation of the corporation. It embodies the doctrine of "substantive due process." From 1905 until the mid 1930s the Supreme Court invalidated approximately 200 economic regulations, usually under the due process clause of the 14th Amendment/

1906 Hale v. Henkel

Corporations get 4th Amendment "search and seizure" protection. Justice Harlan disagreed on this point: "the power of the government, by its representatives, to look into the books, records and papers of a corporation of its own creation, to ascertain whether that corporation has obeyed or is defying the law, will be greatly curtailed, if not destroyed."

1919 Dodge v. Ford Motor co.

Michigan Supreme Court says, "A business corporation is organized and carried on primarily for the profit of the stockholders. The powers of the directors are to be employed for that end." "Stockholder primacy" is established. This is still the leading case on corporate purpose.

1922 Pennsylvania Coal Co. v. Mahon

Corporations get 5th Amendment "takings clause": "... nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation." A regulation is deemed a takings.

1996 International Dairy Foods Association v. Amestoy

The U.S. Second Circuit Court of Appeals overturns a Vermont law requiring the labeling of all products containing bovine growth hormone. The right not to speak inheres in political and commercial speech alike and extends to statements.

1978 First National Bank of Boston vs Bellott

The free speech rights of corporations are defined for the first time as the United States Supreme Court held that corporations have a First Amendment right to make contributions to ballot initiative campaigns.

2010 Citizens United v. Federal Elections Commission (FEC)

Supreme Court expands the constitutional rights of corporations, specifically their First Amendment right to free speech related to political spending — in particular independent political expenditures. This decision overturned decades of campaign finance laws aimed at limiting the influence of corporate and union money in elections.

2014 Burwell v. Hobby Lobby Stores

A landmark decision allowing closely held for-profit corporations to be exempt from a law its owners religiously object to if there is a less restrictive means of furthering the law's interest. It is the first time that the Supreme Court has recognized a for-profit corporation's claim of religious belief. The decision is an interpretation of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) and does not address whether such corporations are protected by the free-exercise of religion clause of the 1st Amendment.

Source: Timeline of Personhood Rights and Powers by Jan Edwards et al. | <https://movetoamencl.org/timeline>

WHEREAS, the City of Kent recognizes the well-being of a community is directly linked to the health of our planet, and the Kent community has a long history of working to protect and enhance the environmental, health, and social well-being of those who live, work and play in the City; and

WHEREAS, cities across the nation are at the forefront of building a more resilient future by enacting initiatives related to renewable energy, energy efficiency, waste reduction, transportation, and urban green spaces that offer numerous benefits such as cost savings, improved public health, and enhanced quality of life for all residents; and

WHEREAS, the City of Kent is committed to implementing policies and practices designed to preserve and protect the Kent community through a commitment to ongoing, responsible, environmental stewardship; and

WHEREAS, to honor this commitment, the City of Kent, with the help and input of the community, adopted a Climate Action Plan (CAP) in April 2023 which identified strategies aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions, a key contributor to climate change; and the City of Kent, recognizes the importance of implementing these strategies and continuing to work together as a community to raise awareness of how individual and collective action can lead to a healthier, sustainable, and more resilient future,

Now, Therefore, I, Jerry T. Fiala, Mayor and President of the Kent City Council, in alignment with the Education and Outreach component of the CAP, do hereby proclaim the month of October 2025, as

"SUSTAINABILITY MONTH" in the City of Kent, Ohio. All residents, businesses, and organizations are urged to join this celebration by participating in activities that promote sustainable practices. Working together can create a brighter, more sustainable future for the City of Kent and beyond.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Official Seal of the City of

Kent to be affixed this 1 st day of October, 2025.

Jerry T. Fiala

Subject: Davey Drill Site Residential Development

Date: 10/1/2025 2:41 PM Eastern Daylight Time

From: rogluthier@aol.com

To: councilclerk@kentohio.gov

Kent City Council

A gathering met recently at the library to discuss the proposed 102 unit residential rental development at the former Davey Drill location. The 411 member group participates in the "Save the Old Kent Railroad Car Shop" on Facebook.. The few who were able to attend in person are passionately versed in and proud of Kent's rich history embodied by the surviving cut sandstone buildings built in 1865 by Marvin Kent for his Atlantic & Great Western Railroad which catapulted Franklin Mills, later Kent, into national and international renown. His son, William S. Kent, with impeccable timing donated the land that became Kent State University, which is a knowledge factory of incalculable value to this community.

The core 1865 Marvin Kent railroad buildings in question will be destroyed by the proposed development that is out of sync with the single family residences that characterize the pleasant South End neighborhood where I have lived and worked for over fifty years. We all recognize the classic enduring beauty of our 1876 triple arch stone bridge downtown spanning the Cuyahoga River. How did our little community at that time exert itself to construct at considerable expense, such a vital asset? Perhaps it saw the the Kent Mansion and the iconic train station and, yes, the beautiful and massive cut stone railroad maintenance edifices which are now covered by 1950s mundane industrial additions. Marvin Kent built with aesthetic style, vision and durability: the highest standards that are plainly evident to this day.

At our Kent History buffs meeting almost everyone spoke. People offered examples of other cities which created a successful development that preserved a historic structure at the center of attraction. Kent's A&GW railroad (later the Erie) is iconic to railroad history and that alone will attract outside interest and investment to encourage preservation. We're not anti-development. Finding a developer willing to rehabilitate and preserve the monuments as the centerpiece of an industrial or residential development is not unrealistic or fanciful. It has been done elsewhere. We don't want to have these valuable historic buildings destroyed because of an artificial hurry-up timeline detrimental to the community but very profitable for the bank and outside venture capital money. There is not the only venture capital money available, let's not forget. Let us consider this carefully and not render an awkward, hasty decision. Perhaps the present developer could be encouraged to rethink their plan. We all need to work together to arrive at a workable, creative outcome that does justice to Marvin Kent's enduring, defining vision for this community.

We are tilling the rich soil of Kent History.

Respectfully,

Roger Thurman