



Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes

The City of Kent, Ohio
Wednesday, April 7, 2021

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting was held virtually using the Zoom platform and was live streamed on the City of Kent YouTube Channel.

Mayor Fiala called the Committee of the Whole of Kent City Council to order at 6:59 p.m.

PRESENT: Mr. Jack Amrhein; Mr. Michael DeLeone; Mr. John Kuhar; Ms. Gwen Rosenberg; Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish; Mr. Roger Sidoti; Ms. Tracy Wallach

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. Jerry T. Fiala, Mayor and President of Council; Mr. Dave Ruller, City Manager; Ms. Hope Jones, Law Director; Ms. Bridget Susel, Community Development Director; Ms. Melanie Baker, Service Administration Director; Mr. Jim Bowling, City Engineer; Ms. Rhonda Hall, Budget and Finance Director; Mr. Nick Shearer, Chief of Police; Mr. John Tosko, Fire Chief; Mr. Tom Wilke, Economic Development Director, Ms. Patti Long, Assistant to the City Manager; and Ms. Amy Wilkens, Clerk of Council.

ABSENT: Mr. Garret Ferrara; Mr. Robin Turner

There were two (2) items on the Agenda.

1. Board and Commission Applications

Mayor Fiala introduced the first item on the agenda, the review of applications for Boards and Commissions and asked Clerk Wilkens to review the list of candidates.

Ms. Wilkens stated the following Boards and Commissions have vacancies: Board of Zoning Appeals, Design and Preservation Committee, Fair Housing Board, Loan Review Board and Stormwater District Review and Appeals Board. There were two applicants for the Fair Housing Board; Jennifer Nichols and Kaleigh Veraldo Zuccherro.

Mayor Fiala added the applicants will be discussed during the Executive Session being held after the Committee Meetings. There were no questions from Council.

2. Civic Clerk Software Discussion

Mr. Ruller introduced the topic of adding Civic Clerk to the Civic Plus website tool. He reminded Council of the website being rolled out a year ago and of the modules that can be added to it, one being Civic Clerk Agenda and Minute Meeting Management. Mr. Ruller said everyone on the staff is excited about it and thinks it will streamline processes and improve transparency.

Ms. Wilkens referred Council to the memo dated March 25th in the packet along with the brochure outlining the uses of Civic Clerk. She highlighted the goal of streamlining agenda and minute preparation.

Ms. Rosenberg asked about citizen letters and if those could be uploaded in the portal for all to see. Ms. Wilkens and Ms. Long were not aware of this feature, and Ms. Long added we can upload documents to Civic Clerk so it may be possible. Ms. Wilkens noted this will be explored during implementation and Council will be notified if it can be done.

Mr. Sidoti was curious about what citizens will have access to and stated in order to improve transparency, any letters written to Council and anything Council would like to have on the portal is important. He added citizens would like to see what their fellow citizens are thinking.

Mr. Kuhar asked if the information in the system will be day one forward and if past information would be put in Civic Clerk.

Ms. Wallach asked if this is similar to social media where citizens can leave comments. She said she would hate to have this platform dominated by residents talking back and forth. Clerk Wilkens confirmed the City has control on how we would like it set up and can customize the different features. Ms. Wallach also asked about its affordability, which was confirmed by Mr. Ruller. Ms. Rhonda Hall, Budget and Finance Director, referred Council to review the memo in this evening's Budget Amendment, regarding the funding.

Seeing no further business or questions for this committee, it adjourned at 7:14 p.m.



Amy Wilkens
Clerk of Council

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

1) N/A



Community Development Meeting Minutes

The City of Kent, Ohio
Wednesday, April 7, 2021

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting was held virtually using the Zoom platform and was live streamed on the City of Kent YouTube Channel.

Chair Kuhar called the Community Development Committee of Kent City Council to order at 7:14 p.m.

PRESENT: Mr. Jack Amrhein; Mr. Michael DeLeone; Mr. Garret Ferrara; Mr. John Kuhar; Ms. Gwen Rosenberg; Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish; Mr. Roger Sidoti; Ms. Tracy Wallach

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. Jerry T. Fiala, Mayor and President of Council; Mr. Dave Ruller, City Manager; Ms. Hope Jones, Law Director; Ms. Bridget Susel, Community Development Director; Ms. Melanie Baker, Service Administration Director; Mr. Jim Bowling, City Engineer; Ms. Rhonda Hall, Budget and Finance Director; Mr. Nick Shearer, Chief of Police; Mr. John Tosko, Fire Chief; Mr. Tom Wilke, Economic Development Director, Ms. Patti Long, Assistant to the City Manager; and Ms. Amy Wilkens, Clerk of Council.

ABSENT: Mr. Robin Turner

GUESTS: Ms. Heather Malarcik, Executive Director of Main Street Kent, Ms. Leslie Sickie, Ms. Sage Culley, Mr. Eric Decker and Ms. Robin Spano.

There was one (1) item on the Agenda.

1. Main Street Kent Year in Review

Mr. Kuhar introduced Main Street Kent's Executive Director, Heather Malarcik, to review the Main Street Kent 2020 Year in Review (**Attachment #1**). She reviewed the following activities: February, Chocolate Walk; March Rainbow Weekend, with proceeds from the bar crawl going towards the LGBTQ+ Emergency Fund; Glad to See You Campaign, showcasing altered business models that included online classes, curbside delivery and ways businesses were trying to make customers feel comfortable. The Locals Love Locals campaign was next with a shift hyper local for ways to support local businesses. Next was the Locals Shop Locals campaign and Adopt A Spot and Tulips with positive messaging. Dan Smith Community Park became a popular outdoor destination, so volunteers were recruited to assist with daily park cleanup. Next came Better Days in Kent, which was a spirit lifting art project downtown. DORA was a hit for the entire business community and Kent residents. It has helped with keeping doors open, with excitement building during the pandemic. This helped form the Downtown Picnic Area which was supported by Main Street Kent. July brought the Wizardly Week and all of its activities enjoyed by all in a responsible manner. The back of the Hall Green building was redecorated with a GROW Mural which will continue to phase in more community ideas. Mike Lewis was nominated for Heritage Ohio's Volunteer of the Year and was selected out of the entire state. Story Walk: The Hallo-Weiner was celebrated by the community in business window during Halloween. The Historic Facades of Kent was published, documenting the buildings in the Downtown District, with the proceeds benefiting Main Street Kent and the Kent Historical Society. Employee Appreciation Programs were developed- Blue, Gold and Grateful for Kent State University Employees and Tree

City Thankful for City of Kent Employees. Both programs generated approximately \$37,000 in funds to downtown businesses. Home for this Holiday was created to record a digital concert where people could buy "tickets" to view the concert. The Chamber of Commerce then took the lead with an Adopt a Snowman program; Elf Hits Downtown Kent was introduced; the City offered months of free downtown parking. MSK partnered with Sibling Reverly Brewery to create New Year Ale.

Ms. Malarcik continued by highlighting all of the Friends of Main Street Kent who contribute anywhere from \$500-\$10,000 +, all of the MSK Volunteers with 1400 hours of support which is the equivalent of \$36,000 of assistance.

The Board is very appreciative of continued support, especially during this past year. This year they are operating under a conservative budget with not many events. They are moving slow and steady, taking the advice of the City staff and the Governor and making plans when its safe to do so. They are focusing on getting people out and about and getting people moving.

Ms. Shaffer Bish asked if the Kent Rainbow Weekend will be continuing as an annual event.

Ms. Malarcik said it was not possible to pull this off this year and are planning on continuing it next year.

Mr. DeLeone commented on the book "The Facades of Kent" which he was not able to put down once he began reading it. He said it was a very interesting, good book.

Mr. Sidoti referenced a news story on NPR about non-profits trying to get volunteers back. He asked if the national Main Street organization is providing the local Main Street Kent with ideas about how to get volunteers back. Ms. Malarcik replied she does not see this as a problem for MSK, with a lot of volunteers asking for ways they can help. Comfort levels will steadily increase as things improve.

Seeing no further business, the Community Development Committee Meeting adjourned at 7:37p.m.



Amy Wilkens
Clerk of Council

ACTION RECOMMENDED: N/A

MAIN STREET KENT

2020 Year in Review



► Chocolate Walk



► Rainbow Weekend



FRIDAY

🎵 Entertainment

5-7pm Kickoff & Welcome and DJ Dive @ Venice Cafe
 7-8pm Festivities Terrace Rainbow @ Zephyr Pub
 7-9pm Diana Chittenden @ Briscoe
 7-9pm Candlelit Judy Gold @ Kent Stage (S)
 8-9:30 Kevin Redden @ 3rd Floor Zephyr Pub
 8-10pm Open Mic: Poetry & Prose @ Lane Rain Books
 10pm & midnight Proud to Be Queer Drag Show @ Venice Cafe
 10:30-2am DJ Dive @ Water Street Tavern
 midnight Lucky Horror Picture Show @ Kent Stage (S)

🎨 Art & Activities

6:30am-9pm Jerica Danach Exhibition @ Scribbles Coffee
 6:30am-9pm Rainbow Tree Community Art Project @ Tree City Coffee
 6:30am-7pm Coloring Center @ Best Tree Coffee
 1-4pm Free Mini Rainbow Body Art @ Empire
 4-7pm Circle and her Magic Exhibition @ FJ Klack Gallery
 5-7pm Line of Sight 2020 by artist Laurie King Exhibition @ Troppan Projects
 5:30-7:30pm Rainbow Paint & Sip Class @ Handcrafted (S)
 5-8pm Dance in the Wilderness Exhibition by Jessica Renner @ McKay Bricker
 6-9pm The Dances of a New Gay Consciousness and Freedom Exhibition by Danny Liber @ Squared City Jewellery

🍷 Food & Drink

6:30pm-7pm Rainbow Turtle Mocha & Rainbow Cookies @ Best Tree Coffee
 7:30am-9pm Food & Drink Features @ Tree City Coffee
 11am-9pm Dive in Donuts @ GRABZEEZ
 4pm-12am Food & Drink Features @ Franklin Hotel Bar
**Proceeds from the sale of these items will benefit the Kent State LGBTQ Center Emergency Fund*

SATURDAY

🎵 Entertainment

11am-1pm Miss Queens Drag Brunch @ Venice Cafe (S)
 5pm Rainbow Weekend Bar Crawl (S)
 5pm-2am DJ Dive @ Venice Cafe
 5pm-2am DJ Dr. Precious @ Water Street Tavern
 8-10pm Open Mic: Poetry & Prose @ Lane Rain Books
 9pm-2am Drag Karaoke: Self Expression & Celebration @ Zephyr Pub

🎨 Art & Activities

7:30am-9pm Jerica Danach Exhibition @ Scribbles Coffee
 7:30am-9pm Rainbow Tree Community Art Project @ Tree City Coffee
 8am-5pm Coloring Center @ Best Tree Coffee
 10am-4pm Peace in the Wilderness Exhibition by Jessica Renner @ McKay Bricker
 11am-3pm Make a Rainbow Wind Wand @ Red Letter Day
 12-1pm Rainbow Workshop: Visual Mixing @ Troppan Projects (S)
 12-3pm Paint a Rainbow Rock @ Squared City Jewellery
 1-3pm Rainbow Paint & Sip Class @ Handcrafted (S)
 1-4pm Free Mini Rainbow Body Art @ Empire
 2-5pm Rainbow Workshop: Line @ Troppan Projects (S)
 4-7pm Circle and her Magic Exhibition @ FJ Klack Gallery

🎓 Education

11am Family Story Time @ Kent Free Library
 11am-12pm The Role of Mental Health in LGBTQ+ Community @ Glyphix (S)
 1-3pm Rainbow Across the Way @ Glyphix (S)
 2-4pm Safe Space Ally Training @ Kent Police Department (R)

🍷 Food & Drink

8am-7pm Rainbow Turtle Mocha & Rainbow Cookies @ Best Tree Coffee
 8am-9am Food & Drink Features @ Tree City Coffee
 11am-9pm Dive in Donuts @ GRABZEEZ
 4pm-12am Food & Drink Features @ Franklin Hotel Bar

► Rainbow Weekend



► Glad to See You



► Locals Love Local

► Locals Shop Local



SPEND \$20 GET \$5 ON US!

Shop at participating businesses to earn your reward!
Merchandise only; dining/carryout/beverage purchases
DO NOT qualify. One gift card may be earned per purchase,
while supplies last! Spend your reward by Nov. 30, 2020.

Participating Businesses:

Bent Tree Coffee | Empire | Handcrafted | Kent Cheesemonger
Kent Cycle | Kent Natural Foods CoOp | McKay Bricker Framing
Off the Wagon | Popped! | Red Letter Days | Scribbles Coffee
Squirrel City Jewelers | UniversiTees | Woodsy's Music

H **Homelown** Bank. mainstreetkent.org/kent-up-close/support-our-locals

DESIGN

► Adopt A Spot & Tulips



► Dan Smith Community Park Clean Up Volunteers



► Better Days in Kent



► DORA



► Downtown Picnic Area Support

Enjoy Our Public Seating Area

 **Masks Required**
Unless seated consuming food/beverage

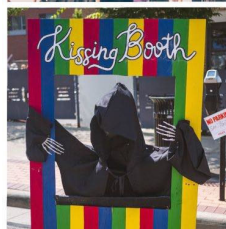
 **Sanitize Tables**
Supplies available @ sanitation station

 **Clean Up**
Dispose of trash & Recycle DORA cups

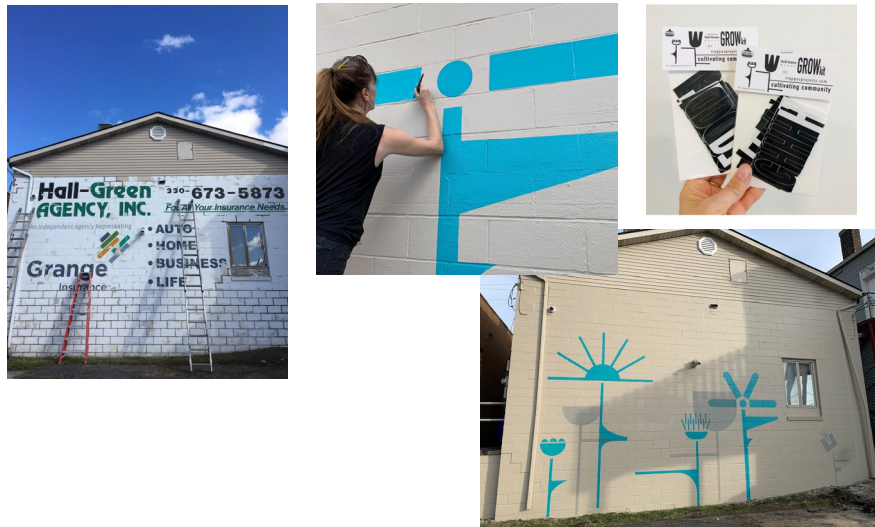
Thank you for supporting local business!




► Wizardly Week



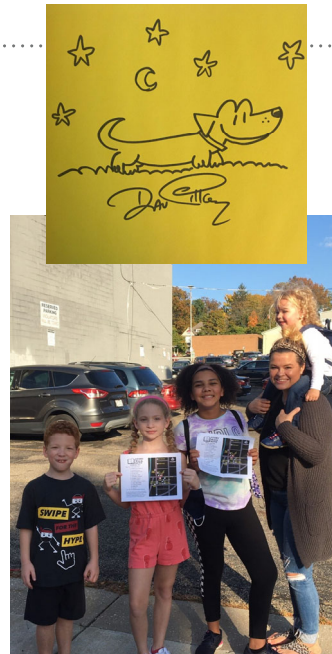
► GROW Mural



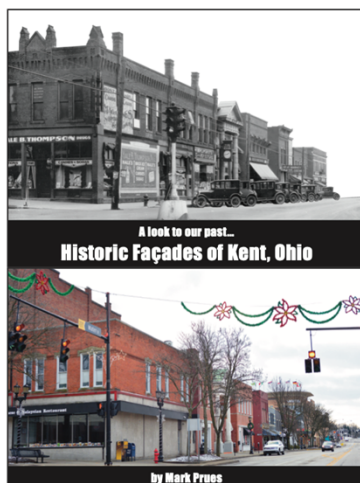
► Heritage Ohio's Volunteer of the Year



► Story Walk: The Hallo-Wiener



► Historic Facades of Kent



► Employee Appreciation Programs

- Blue, Gold & Grateful
- Tree City Thankful



► Home for this Holiday



► Make it Merry! Make it Kent!



► Holiday Window Decorating Contest



► MSK New Year Ale



► Friends of Main Street Kent



► MSK Volunteers

► 1,400+ hours = \$36,000+ in support



THANK YOU





Land Use Committee Meeting Minutes

The City of Kent, Ohio
Wednesday, April 7, 2021

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting was held virtually using the Zoom platform and was live streamed on the City of Kent YouTube Channel.

Chair Ferrara called the Land Use Committee of Kent City Council to order at 7:38 p.m.

PRESENT: Mr. Jack Amrhein; Mr. Michael DeLeone; Mr. Garret Ferrara; Mr. John Kuhar; Ms. Gwen Rosenberg; Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish; Mr. Roger Sidoti; Ms. Tracy Wallach

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. Jerry T. Fiala, Mayor and President of Council; Mr. Dave Ruller, City Manager; Ms. Hope Jones, Law Director; Ms. Bridget Susel, Community Development Director; Ms. Melanie Baker, Service Administration Director; Mr. Jim Bowling, City Engineer; Ms. Rhonda Hall, Budget and Finance Director; Mr. Nick Shearer, Chief of Police; Mr. John Tosko, Fire Chief; Mr. Tom Wilke, Economic Development Director, Ms. Patti Long, Assistant to the City Manager; and Ms. Amy Wilkens, Clerk of Council.

ABSENT: Mr. Robin Turner

There was one (1) item on the Agenda.

1. Proposed Zoning Code Updates

Ms. Susel prefaced her presentation by stating the zoning code update has been a group effort, giving credit to Jen Barone, Heather Phile and Eric Fink along with consultants that assisted. She added this code is practical and is one that can be used by developers, residents and staff.

Ms. Susel referred to her memo/handout regarding the summary of the changes made to the over 200-page document. They would work on changes in work sessions, take those changes to the Planning Commission to review and then take back to work sessions. It was a slow and methodical process with some delays due to the transition of staff, losing three of primary consultants and then a pandemic.

The code has been rewritten but not the Appendix. The Design Guidelines were not a part of this update. Design Guidelines are a separate project because they are extensive and need reviewed. The plan is to hire a consultant in the future with this process.

Ms. Susel said the new code looks different from the table of contents through to the way the text is laid out. The previous code and all the updates made to it was done by tweaking what they currently had or taking language from other communities, some of which did not translate well to the college town because of the transient nature of

student housing and the unprecedented growth between 2012 and 2016. This new code does contain hyperlinks and an extensive number of tables, images and charts.

Chapter 1102 removed antiquated language and updated legalities arising from court cases. Some improvements were made by using bullets and lists instead of paragraph form. Figures were used for areas where the public were confused, such a “buildable lot”. Depicting this in an image will help anyone new to the zoning code.

Chapter 1103, which is the zoning district land use section, is where the specifications for uses and setbacks per zoning district are listed. These are now listed in tables.

Chapter 1104 concerns the Overlay District which covers the Certificate of Appropriateness which the Architecture Review Board Issues. The map is the same, but the boundaries are clearer. The preservation alternate is included again but is much easier to use. The acreage was decreased to two acres and allows for attached housing now.

Chapter 1105 is the Conditions chapter which can be challenging to understand, so a great deal of time was spent on this chapter. Conditions that were difficult to apply were removed and included in a section called “Potential Concerns” for the Planning Commission to be aware of. It would not be a condition that would force a developer to comply with if it isn’t something that affects the project.

Chapter 1106 General Provisions are covered in this chapter such as substandard lots, line of sight, pools, fences, and accessory buildings. This chapter was organized in a more user-friendly fashion including a lot of figures and images to help with confusion. An issue recently presented itself regarding using a tarp as a fence, so a sentence would be added to this stating it is up to the discretion of the Community Development Department. Solar and wind energy systems were added for the first time to this chapter.

Chapter 1107 did not include a lot of changes, but it was organized better with diagrams of how things can be laid out. IT did include for the first time ever allowing for compact cars.

Ms. Wallach asked if areas around the city would allow for compact cars but are now not allowing and if this was considered. Ms. Susel stated this is for on-site parking to allow for those types of smaller vehicles, such as in a parking deck.

Mr. Kuhar asked about solar and wind regulations and if there are provisions for free standing solar racks. Ms. Susel said they are called ‘ground mounted’ and ‘roof mounted’ in the code, and there are requirements in regards to maximum heights. Ms. Susel will look at the code to verify height requirements. Mr. Fink confirmed height dimensions.

Ms. Shaffer Bish asked if they approve this tonight, if they are approving new regulations. She would like more time to read through these changes.

Ms. Susel continued discussing the Landscape Buffering. This part of the code was improved by updating and adding more landscape requirements, making clearer the number of allowed trees and bushes for site plans.

Chapter 1109 is the chapter on signage in which they used a lot of images to help explain square footage on odd shaped signs. There were not a lot of new definitions added but they organized it in a way where signs are defined. They grouped together prohibited signs and updated the political sign language which reflects the current law. Mr. Fink added that court case law has made it clear that political speech cannot be regulated as far as the content, but limited the timing. Regulations go more toward the condition of the signage. Some challenges in the past were with the use of sheets as signs and this has been updated to say signs made from bed linens, tarps or wood would be prohibited as well as 'feather' signs.

Chapter 1110 deals with Non-Conformity, a condition created once the zoning code is adopted. Language was clarified in this section as well as where it applies.

Mr. Kuhar asked about limitations of mounting solar panels. He would like to bring this up at a different time, but stated ground mounted solar panels are an inefficient use of land that could produce more electricity but take up less space. He would like to show how others are doing this without taking up a lot of space. He asked if this would be allowed to be considered at a later date.

Ms. Susel said absolutely, the code has been amended multiple times and anticipates it will continue. A zoning code is never a static document so it can be amended as needed.

Chapter 1111 covered the Administration of Boards and Commissions. They reviewed the Board of Zoning Appeals and the Architecture Review Board, organizing them into a more consistent manner.

Chapter 1112 was an update to administrative procedures where they cleaned up antiquated language and standards.

Chapter 1113 involved clarifying language in regards to violations and penalties.

Ms. Rosenberg asked about Chapters 1104 and 1111 and said there didn't seem to be many substantive changes made. She has received several complaints from businesses and people in the arts community that the process of getting a Certificate

of Appropriateness is very challenging and too subjective, particularly in regards to public art works. She asked if this has been addressed or how it can be addressed.

Ms. Susel said the Appendix was not a part of this update and provided some historic context. She reviewed how the Design Guidelines were created. She also reviewed the 2012 initiative for historic preservation proposals to establish a district but there were no willing property owners that were willing to do so. This resulted in it being driven by the property owner needing to come in and seek a local designation as historic. This was occurring during the development of downtown and many of the projects were new or were not in a historic preservation initiative. She added it may be worth having staff review these guidelines and address these concerns and come back to Council with ideas.

Ms. Rosenberg asked if we are applying historic guidelines but not in an historic district. Ms. Susel said that is correct. Ms. Rosenberg continued by asking if someone does not get the Certificate of Appropriateness, they cannot proceed. Ms. Susel said this is correct, if they are located in the Overlay District. Ms. Rosenberg said this seems dated to her, with Kent having an eclectic downtown. She did not want to hold up voting on the code tonight but asked if it were possible for staff to come back to Council and amendments could be made regarding some guardrails on some decisions.

Ms. Susel said more time will be needed to discuss all of the zoning changes with Council. She would like to delay approval, and take the time for everyone to review and make recommendations.

Mr. Ferrara asked if they would be approving the Zoning Code tonight but also asking for future committee time to amend what was approved.

Ms. Susel said you would ask for committee time to discuss a potential amendment from ideas generated by staff with the Planning Commission and the Architecture Review Board. Those recommendations would need to be looked at by staff, presented to the Architecture Review Board and Planning Commission and then come back to Council for discussion.

Ms. Susel added this does not need approval this evening, and any changes can be brought back to Council for approval in June or July. Ms. Rosenberg asked if it is preferable to hold off on voting and Ms. Susel agreed.

Mr. Kuhar asked if he was correct in his understanding that no one has looked at the finished product. Ms. Susel said this is the first discussion and a copy was sent via email. Mr. Kuhar would like another copy and Ms. Susel said she would forward the email again.

Mr. Sidoti asked if this should be tabled until everyone has had an opportunity to review the documents.

Mr. Ferrara asked, as Committee Chair, not to table this item, as everyone has the information and it shouldn't prevent the current discussion. He wants to keep it rolling.

Mr. Sidoti asked if they were going to approve it tonight to move it on to next two week's agenda. Mr. Ruller said they were not expecting approval this evening. In his email sent in regards to tonight's discussion, he even mentioned continuing the discussion in future meetings. He does not suggest it be tabled, though, and asked for Council to accept the report and have staff return with any changes in a couple of months. Ms. Susel added this is an important document and they definitely want Council to take their time with this.

Ms. Shaffer Bish added she read the two sections she was interested in and wondered if this could be provided to the community to read.

Ms. Susel added it is public record and would like to put a DRAFT watermark and clean up some of the hyperlinks prior to publishing it to the website. She clarified it is a working DRAFT and not a final and updated code yet.

Mr. Ferrara opened up the floor to audience members. There was one member in the audience who wished to speak.

Heather Malarcik, residing at 7685 West Lake Blvd, commented on the Architecture Review Board's issuing of Certificates of Appropriateness in regards to public art. She asked if other opportunities could be reviewed to run an efficient public art program and feels it is a very important continuing effort.

MOTION TO REVIEW AND CONTINUE THE TOPIC OF UPDATING THE ZONING CODE made by Mr. Kuhar SECONDED by Ms. Rosenberg and CARRIED by a voice vote of 8-0.

Seeing no further business, the Land Use Committee Meeting adjourned at 8:24 p.m.



Amy Wilkens
Clerk of Council

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

- 1) Continue discussion and updates to the Zoning Code prior to approval**



Streets, Sidewalks & Utilities Committee Meeting Minutes

The City of Kent, Ohio
Wednesday, April 7, 2021

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting was held virtually using the Zoom platform and was live streamed on the City of Kent YouTube Channel.

Chair Sidoti called the Streets, Sidewalks & Utilities Committee of Kent City Council to order at 8:24 p.m.

PRESENT: Mr. Jack Amrhein; Mr. Michael DeLeone; Mr. Garret Ferrara; Mr. John Kuhar; Ms. Gwen Rosenberg; Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish; Mr. Roger Sidoti; Ms. Tracy Wallach

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. Jerry T. Fiala, Mayor and President of Council; Mr. Dave Ruller, City Manager; Ms. Hope Jones, Law Director; Ms. Bridget Susel, Community Development Director; Ms. Melanie Baker, Service Administration Director; Mr. Jim Bowling, City Engineer; Ms. Rhonda Hall, Budget and Finance Director; Mr. Nick Shearer, Chief of Police; Mr. John Tosko, Fire Chief; Mr. Tom Wilke, Economic Development Director; Ms. Patti Long, Assistant to the City Manager; and Ms. Amy Wilkens, Clerk of Council.

ABSENT: Mr. Robin Turner

There were three (3) items on the Agenda.

1. Parking on Middlebury Road

Chair Sidoti introduced Melanie Baker, Jim Bowling and Hope Jones to discuss the topic.

Mr. Bowling stated there are currently no parking restrictions on Middlebury Road. Bike lanes were recently installed, and bridges and curves make it unsafe to have on street parking. They are requesting there to be no parking in this area.

Mr. Kuhar asked if there is pull in parking at the location where canoes were launched.

Mr. Bowling said right now they can drop off but parking is not recommended. This is part of the reason they are requesting this, as last year there were a significant amount of people parking on the roadway. Prior to last year there were no problems with this. He added they are working on long term measures to accommodate off the road parking to enable use of the boat ramp.

Ms. Shaffer Bish asked how the residents feel about this and if they have been informed.

Mr. Bowling said in this stretch there are only two residents and they brought the issue to City.

Ms. Wallach asked if it is for all of Middlebury Road or for a specific section. Mr. Bowling said they are requesting from the city limits to Akron Boulevard.

Mr. DeLeone asked if a portion of Akron Water Works is located here that people have been parking on.

Mr. Bowling said this is true and will be included.

MOTION to approve a parking restriction on a portion of Middlebury Road, with an emergency clause, made by Mr. Kuhar, SECONDED by Mr. Amrhein and CARRIED by a voice vote of 8-0.

2. Proposed Outdoor Seating on Franklin Ave.

Mr. Bowling said in the desire to help downtown businesses, we are looking at different ways to help provide a chance to be successful during this difficult time. This Spring will be better than last Fall and as we were successful in some initiatives and some they were not. They are looking to learn from what was done before and try to bring more people downtown. They are requesting to close Franklin Avenue for an extended period from Erie Street to Main Street. They have identified ways to service the businesses during closure, provide emergency vehicle access and of keeping it clean and sanitized. Other measures to make it look like a park seating area have also been explored. Flexibility is important, as just last week the Governor was discussing changing restrictions due to Covid. The time frame being requested is May 7, 2021 until October 2021. It will be important to continue conversations with business owners to see how this is working with them. He added there is a lot of uncertainty but believe this is a way to help downtown businesses.

Mr. Kuhar asked if Franklin Avenue will be closed all the time. Mr. Bowling said that is correct. He also asked about provisions for the suppliers. Mr. Bowling said on the east side a clear lane will be provided with a moveable barricade to enable loading and unloading.

Ms. Baker said this is what was done last year when it was closed on Thursday afternoons. We are required to have emergency access for firetrucks and rescue vehicles, so they are working on that. They are going to create a nice space by getting nice barriers and planters. The sanitation stations purchased last year will be installed.

Mr. Ruller added Joan Siedel has been involved in these discussions and that safety of the public remains the top priority while trying to help businesses. He said from the City's perspective, the longer road closure will save a fair amount of overtime needed to adjust moving seating and barricades every week.

Ms. Shaffer Bish asked about smoking and trash removal.

Ms. Baker said they have increased trash pickup for the season starting in May to six times a week. A dumpster will be installed at the end of Franklin Ave. so there is direct access to empty trash cans. Cigarette butts will need to be watched. Backpack blowers were used in the past and may be used in future street cleaning.

Ms. Shaffer Bish suggested adding more receptacles.

Ms. Wallach asked if Franklin Avenue will be opened up again once the Covid-19 crisis has passed.

Mr. Bowling said there will be nothing made (structurally), that could not be changed in a day.

Mr. Ruller said even if COVID does not resolve itself as quickly as we hope, if it's not proving helpful to these businesses, it will be stopped. They have talked to the businesses, and they are all interested. If in some way, it takes away business or diminishes it, they will adjust.

Mr. Bowling added when instituting festivals coming back to town, they will need to evaluate how closing Franklin would impact those. It is not the intent to take away from festivals.

Ms. Rosenberg asked if we could have future City Council meetings there, which was an idea many liked.

Mr. Sidoti asked if anyone in the audience had any comments.

Ms. Heather Malarcik from Main Street Kent added that during 2020, the closing of Franklin Avenue was a good idea for businesses and the community. This pandemic is nowhere near over and she believes it is definitely appropriate to continue it but that flexibility and communication will be very important. The perception of the community is important as well. Keeping the thumb on the pulse and if changes are needed, they should be made. It should be considered a work in progress. The semi permanence of it is an important piece. She said for now this is the way to go and that it is what people need.

MOTION to approve the outdoor seating on Franklin Avenue with an Emergency Clause made by Ms. Shaffer Bish, SECONDED by Ms. Rosenberg and CARRIED by a voice vote of 8-0.

Ms. Shaffer Bish said it is so important to support the businesses but to also give people a gathering place. She is fully in favor as long as we keep checking in on businesses.

3. MSK Service Agreement

Ms. Susel said this is a housekeeping item and puts an endcap on the discussion that just occurred in regards to the closing of Franklin Avenue. This is for an agreement of Main Street Kent (MSK) for the maintenance of outdoor seating. After last year, it quickly became apparent we needed to deal with trash and sanitation. MSK worked with the Community Development Department to take care of on an interim basis. They will assist with high volume days of Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Several businesses have volunteered to keep an eye and alert us if attention is needed on the slower days.

MOTION to approve the Main Street Kent Service Agreement, with an Emergency Clause made by Ms. Shaffer Bish, SECONDED by Mr. Kuhar and CARRIED by a voice vote of 8-0.

Seeing no further business or questions for this committee, it adjourned at 8:48 p.m.

Amy Wilkens

Amy Wilkens
Clerk of Council

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

- 1) Authorize the proposed on-street parking restriction on Middlebury Road.**
- 2) Authorize the extended street closure for outdoor seating on Franklin Avenue.**
- 3) Authorize the maintenance agreement with Main Street Kent to support the extended outdoor dining on Franklin Avenue.**



Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

The City of Kent, Ohio
Wednesday, April 7, 2021

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting was held virtually using the Zoom platform and was live streamed on the City of Kent YouTube Channel.

Chair DeLeone called the Finance Committee of Kent City Council to order at 8:48 p.m.

PRESENT: Mr. Jack Amrhein; Mr. Michael DeLeone; Mr. Garret Ferrara; Mr. John Kuhar; Ms. Gwen Rosenberg; Ms. Heidi Shaffer Bish; Mr. Roger Sidoti; Ms. Tracy Wallach

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. Jerry T. Fiala, Mayor and President of Council; Mr. Dave Ruller, City Manager; Ms. Hope Jones, Law Director; Ms. Bridget Susel, Community Development Director; Ms. Melanie Baker, Service Administration Director; Mr. Jim Bowling, City Engineer; Ms. Rhonda Hall, Budget and Finance Director; Mr. Nick Shearer, Chief of Police; Mr. John Tosko, Fire Chief; Mr. Tom Wilke, Economic Development Director; Ms. Patti Long, Assistant to the City Manager; and Ms. Amy Wilkens, Clerk of Council.

ABSENT: Mr. Robin Turner

There were three (3) items on the Agenda.

1. Council Salaries Aligning with OPERS

Ms. Rhonda Hall introduced the agenda item of adjusting Council salaries to coincide with the Ohio Public Retirement System (OPERS) to meet the minimum salary in order to receive a full year of service credit. She stated Council would need to implement a citizen committee to adjust. She is requesting the implementation of a citizen committee and to have the recommendations by this citizen committee be finalized by September.

Mayor Fiala stated in the past, Councilmembers submitted names and asked if this same process would be followed. He added there were five people on the committee with two alternatives and each Councilmember submitted names and they were pulled out of a box.

Mr. Ferrara suggested a group discussion over a list of names. Mr. DeLeone agreed this would be a good method. Mr. Ferrara asked if the discussion would occur during Executive Session.

Ms. Jones confirmed this can be discussed during Executive Session. She added Council should decide how many people they would like on the committee and an ordinance will be submitted. Resumes can be collected and discussed during Executive Session.

Mr. Ferrara asked about offering up the gathering of names publicly and then have the discussion during Executive Session. Ms. Jones replied "yes".

Mr. Ruller added it would be no different than other committees and if they have people they think would be well suited for the committee to encourage them to apply. He encouraged

councilmembers to let community members they think would be particularly good about this opportunity and to apply.

Mr. Sidoti asked if we have to advertise for this committee.

Ms. Jones said she thinks we should and encouraged all councilmembers to encourage people to come forward to sit on this committee.

MOTION made by Mr. Ferrara to have three people on the committee, SECONDED by Ms. Wallach and CARRIED by a voice vote of 8-0.

MOTION TO AMEND the first motion by Ms. Wallach to have three members and two alternates, SECONDED by Ms. Rosenberg and CARRIED by a voice vote of 8-0.

Councilmembers asked about an application, which Ms. Jones confirmed will be created and the committee will be advertised.

2. City/Franklin Township Fire Service Contract Renewal

Chief Tosko said the current contract with Franklin Township expired at the end of December and they are in negotiations currently. Around this time of year, the recalculation of the rate is done, so they are asking the current rate of \$1393 be extended for up to five months. He is confident a contract will be completed before then but would like to get extra time to finalize it.

MOTION to authorize the extension of the City's current fire service contract rates with Franklin Township with an emergency clause, made by Mr. Kuhar , SECONDED by Mr. Amrhein and CARRIED by a voice vote of 8-0.

3. 2021 Budget Appropriation Amendment

Ms. Hall submitted a budget amendment memo to Mr. Ruller dated March 26, 2021 and would like to request Council approve the submitted amendment with emergency.

MOTION to approve the 2021 budget appropriations amendments made by Mr. Kuhar, SECONDED by Mr. Ferrara and CARRIED by a voice vote of 8-0.

Seeing no further business or questions for this committee, Mr. Amrhein read the following statement to move into Executive Session:

MOTION to move into an Executive Session In accordance with ORC §121.22 Section G, Item (1): "To consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, or compensation of a public employee or official" made by Mr. Amrhein SECONDED by Ms. Rosenberg and roll call was taken. Present: Mr. Amrhein, Mr. DeLeone, Mr. Kuhar, Mr. Ferrara, Ms. Rosenberg, Ms. Shaffer Bish, Mr. Sidoti and Ms. Wallach. Absent: Mr. Turner.

MOTION to excuse Mr. Turner from the Executive Session made by Mr. DeLeone
SECONDED by Ms. Wallach and CARRIED by a voice vote of 8-0

MOTION to move back into Committee was made at 9:08 pm by Mr. Ferrara
SECONDED by Mr. Sidoti and CARRIED by a voice vote of 8-0.

Mr. Kuhar added the COVID pandemic is not over and that on the west side of Canada the variant has tripled in number and they are on lockdown for thirty days. He encouraged all to continue efforts to contain the virus.

A discussion between councilmembers occurred regarding how to get vaccinated.

Seeing no further discussion of this committee, it adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Amy Wilkens

Amy Wilkens
Clerk of Council

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

- 1) **Reconvene the Salary Review Committee to consider the latest OPERS guidance.**
- 2) **Authorize the extension of the City's fire service contract rates with Franklin Township.**
- 3) **Approve the 2021 budget appropriation amendments.**