



Finance Committee Meeting Minutes
The City of Kent, Ohio
Wednesday, May 5, 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 7:39 p.m.

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

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. Jerry T. Fiala, Mayor and President of Council; Mr. Dave Ruller, City Manager; Ms. Hope Jones, Law Director; Mr. Jim Bowling, City Engineer; Ms. Rhonda Hall, Finance Director; Ms. Melanie Baker, Public Service Director; Police Chief Nick Shearer; Fire Chief John Tosko; Mr. Gary Bishop, IT Manager, Ms. Joan Seidel, Health Commissioner; Ms. Angela Manley, Parks and Recreation Director; Mr. Tom Wilke, Economic Development Director and Ms. Amy Wilkens Clerk of Council.

There were three (3) items on the Agenda.

1. West Side Fire Station Roof

Mr. DeLeone said the first item on the agenda is a discussion on a pitched versus flat roof on the West Side First Station.

Mr. Ruller said we are back to talk tonight about the roof, a topic that was first discussed six years ago. He wants all to know there has been a lot of thought and discussion in all aspects of this and doesn't want anyone to think this has been a rushed job. The prominent issue related to the roof is related to its historical relevance. He said the City is a big fan of historic preservation and is proud of the fact it's one of a select few communities in Ohio that has gone through the certification process and its efforts to save buildings. In no part are we in any way trying to diminish these. There are three areas that needed to be addressed as staff: 1) historical value, 2) stewardship of public dollars and 3) the functional value of the structure to those who live and work in the building. All three of these factors were considered in total which led to the decision of constructing a pitched roof.

Ms. Melanie Baker said she was marked this evening to go over the history of the decision-making process that went into this decision. She provided a detailed account of those involved in the initial and ongoing discussions over the past six years. A request was made to Council in 2016 for funding approval, and approximately \$450,000 was approved for the project, and a contract was entered into with Corcoran as the architect. From the very beginning, a sloped roof was requested by staff and designed by the architect. Long term maintenance and the needs of

the fire fighters were key considerations in making the decision on the design. The peaked roof would also provide space for the HVAC units, which currently sit outside on top of the current flat roof. In 2017 we changed architects, and in 2019 received Building Department approval. November 5, 2019 opened the bids, only received one bid which was over the estimate and were unable to award. We reviewed the cost of the project, went back to Council for approval for more funding and was approved. In February 2020 the Architecture Review Board requested to look at this and a motion was made to preserve the original architecture of the building with a flat roof. She took this information back to the Fire Chief, staff and architect to review. An environmental study was conducted regarding the excessive moisture in the living space of the station. After a lengthy review of the needs of the personnel, the cost of the roof and additional expenses of a change in design plus added expense for a new HVAC system it was agreed by the Chief, the Department and those involved that staying the course was the most financially response to save tax payer dollars and the health and safety of its personnel. March 2020 it was put on hold due to the COVID 19 pandemic and in 2021 the drawings were finalized. A redesign of the roof would cost the City an additional \$12,000-15,000. March 2021, we went out to bid and received a bid which was approximately 5% less than the architects estimate. A very serious consideration of what was proposed by the Architectural Review Board was given but we do feel that due to the financial responsibility to the residents, we need to look at using the pitched roof.

Fire Chief Tosko added he appreciates all points of view but speaks specifically for his firefighters and the stewardship of the budget. A fire department has very specific needs to be housed in, including location and function. It has to be low maintenance and durable. Maintenance of the station has been in every conversation since the beginning and is one of his concerns. The station is in a heavily treed residential location with a lot of leaves and branches landing on the roof which require removal by hand. Ice and snow build up in the winter which requires removal to help with drainage. There is a high rate of mold in the building due to high moisture levels. There are issues with constant leaking in the building and there is asbestos present in the flat roof assembly. He is worried about continued leakage in the flat roof to affect the asbestos and enter in the atmosphere. He needs to look at the overall picture to make it as maintenance free and durable as possible for the health and safety of the firefighters.

Mr. Kuhar asked Ms. Baker if there is any expansion to the perimeter of this project. Ms. Baker said there is, in the rear a small pushout is planned to meet the needs of the firefighter's gear maintenance. Right now, they do not have proper ventilation to get rid of carcinogens as well as a safe and secure area for the medical equipment they carry.

Mr. Kuhar asked if the bids received for the pitched roof were designed in a way not to increase due to increase cost of building materials. Ms. Baker said they are locked in until May 18, 2021. Mr. Kuhar asked if they were aware that most building material has gone up at least 30-40% in the last three to four months. Ms. Baker said they are aware of that.

Ms. Shaffer Bish asked if once the bid is accepted if they will be able to complete the project within a reasonable time frame. Ms. Baker said they should be able to begin immediately once

the necessary documents are signed and bonds are verified as being in place. They anticipate construction to start mid-June with a four to five-month time period to complete.

Ms. Shaffer Bish asked if a flat roof is done, how much time that would take. Ms. Baker said they would have to go back and have the drawings redone and anticipate that being at least a two-month process with the changes that would be needed.

Mr. Ruller asked Chief Tosko to provide input to the importance of timing in regards to the needs of the firefighters.

Chief Tosko said things slow down when school is not in session, so they were hoping to have construction start in June. There may be times where the station would need to be temporarily closed when all the equipment is moved. If this project is pushed back into the Fall, they will begin to get busier, and the current timeline with construction starting in June would be preferred.

Ms. Wallach asked why we keep using flat roofs if they are not good. She asked if there will be a flat roof on the new City Hall. Ms. Baker said they are looking at putting a slight pitch on the roof of the new City Hall where it can be done.

Ms. Wallach asked if the duct work would need to be replaced whether there is a pitched roof or a flat roof and if the inside duct work is less expensive. Ms. Baker said outside duct work would need to be designed to be self-insulating. If inside, it would be protected from the elements.

Mayor Fiala added the view from his office in the Police Station is overlooking its flat roof. Right now, there is a pool of water on the roof that doesn't drain properly and is something he sees when it rains.

Mr. Sidoti asked when the last time the roof was replaced. Ms. Baker did not have that information. He asked if there are metal trusses with a roof placed on top and how we would know if structurally those things are still good. Ms. Baker said they would not know if its condition unless everything is removed.

Mr. Turner asked what the life expectancies of a flat and a pitched roof. Ms. Baker said they looked at the cost of a pitched roof of \$98,000 and a flat roof costing between \$94,000 and \$113,000. A pitched roof can last anywhere from 25-50 years. The flat roof of the police department is supposed to last 20-25 years.

Mayor Fiala said this building was built in the style of its time and was a joint building between the township trustees and the City of Kent. Right now, there is a plaque with the architect and the history of the building to commemorate it. Streetsboro, Shalersville and Cuyahoga Falls all have a pitched roof on their fire stations.

Ms. Baker commended Council for taking a look at this and is impressed with their concern for historic preservation. She added they looked long and hard at this to make sure they were doing

what was right for the city as a whole. She thanked them for the opportunity to present this to them tonight.

Mr. DeLeone went to the public in the audience and called first on Mr. Doug Fuller.

Mr. Fuller thanked Council and asked them to think of preserving the historic nature of the building. He wished the community would have been approached when this was originally discussed and a partnership could have developed to work together. He added many things presented tonight were a “worse case scenario”. He wanted them to consider that this would be a win for the city if it were to remain in its historic form, with many lessons to be learned. He said keeping the flat roof could save money over the long term. A full redraw of the building should not be necessary and could be done rapidly. This was brought up eighteen months ago and the City said they would get alternate pricing and would possibly bring back to Council. He added we would not be here tonight if city administration did what it said it was going to be doing and logical decisions could have been made. He added Mr. Sommers comments about not putting a pitched roof on the way it was done. He said the original line that would have required architectural review included this site, but was changed six years ago. He hopes they will consider what was presented tonight and say to the City “let’s do it right”. He said it’s part of the fabric of the city and to start to lose smaller buildings would be a loss of architectural integrity.

Mr. DeLeone then introduce Ms. Paula Treckel from the audience.

Ms. Treckel thanked the administration for discussing a functional fire station on the west side. She was struck by the historical responsibility, stewardship of tax payers funding and the functionality all being mentioned this evening. She said perhaps the best solution would be to build a new fire station for the west side. If the building is in such bad condition then perhaps we need a new fire station and this building could be preserved. The preservation of the building might mean change and perhaps this is the solution. She asked Chief Tosko if this is what is needed.

Mr. Ruller said Ms. Treckel is spot on long term. This project was started in 2015 when a levy for a new police station was being looked at, a new city hall as well as the west side fire station. The Chief at the time wanted something to get them through the next twenty to thirty years. The community’s expectation is a professional fire department and there is only so many projects they could take on at one time.

Chief Tosko added there are deficiencies in the west side station, but one of the biggest things we need to look at would be its location. We would need to do a study to see where the best location would be. If the studies show it should be in its current location, Council would then need to decide what to do with the current building.

MOTION made to move forward with a pitched roof made by Mr. Ferrara, SECONDED by Ms. Rosenberg and CARRIED by a voice vote of 8-0-1 with Mr. Amrhein abstaining.

Mr. Ferrara said it speaks to everyone's commitment to maintaining Kent's historic value in its buildings. What it boils down to is efficient use of space, time, money and safety. We clearly need a new fire station building and realistically won't see a new building there for five to ten years. To ask firefighters to sleep in its current conditions is disgraceful. We need to give them the best we can in a cost-efficient way and take this action right now. He has had many conversations with many people and believes this is the best decision.

Ms. Rosenberg thanked the city staff for putting together the comprehensive presentation on this decision. She appreciates the efforts to be great stewards for tax payers. The community priority is tax payer dollars and we need to make sure our first responders are in safe and dry conditions and to get moving on this right away.

Mr. Kuhar added the first change was done to the original building years ago, it is no longer the original building and he looks at it like an upgrade. He said there is no question that it needs a new roof. He said it has historical significance but believes they are making the right decision for the tax payers.

Mr. Sidoti added he went into the fire station to look at it and his first reaction was that it needs torn down and a new one built. He said we can't afford to build a new station now and we do not have the land. He respects the local architects, but in the end the fire station needs to be functional and believes we need to move forward.

Mr. Turner thanked Mr. Fuller for making us think of things we might not have thought of, but at the end of the day it comes down to efficiency and safety. He agrees with Mr. Ferrara and Mr. Sidoti that the building is deficient as it is now. He wonders if a pitched roof might actually fit in the neighborhood better. He said this is a tough decision but have to do what is best for the community and believes this is the most logical avenue to take at this time.

Mr. Kuhar said we may be saving more than we know by having the price locked in. Steel and lumber prices have increased significantly and we don't know what the new bids would look like.

2. City Property for Auction and Trade In

Mr. Ruller said this is the annual time when the surplus property list is brought to Council by the Service Director and asked for authorization to trade it in or sell it.

Ms. Baker said they will probably do this again in the fall, as what they are doing right now is trying to get large equipment in and have several trade ins to do so, and only two are going to auction.

There were no questions from Council or the public.

MOTION to approve the sale or trade in of city property made by Mr. Kuhar, SECONDED by Mr. Amrhein and CARRIED by a voice vote of 9-0.

3. Extension of the Park Fee Moratorium

Ms. Hope Jones said they had met with the outside attorney regarding the moratorium ordinance and they said it was constitutional, but a couple of changes need to be made. They are requesting the moratorium stay in place until August 30th to enable these changes to be completed.

MOTION to extend the park fee moratorium until August 30, 2021 was made by Mr. Sidoti, SECONDED by Ms. Shaffer Bish and CARRIED by a voice vote of 9-0.

Seeing no further discussion of this committee, it adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Amy Wilkens

Amy Wilkens
Clerk of Council

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

- 1) **Proceed with the project of a pitched roof on the West Side Fire Station.**
- 2) **Authorize the surplus City property sale at auction or trade in**
- 3) **Extend the moratorium on the City match on development fee through August 30, 2021**



Community Development Meeting Minutes
The City of Kent, Ohio
Wednesday, May 5, 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 8:43 p.m.

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

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. Jerry T. Fiala, Mayor and President of Council; Mr. Dave Ruller, City Manager; Ms. Hope Jones, Law Director; Mr. Jim Bowling, City Engineer; Ms. Rhonda Hall, Finance Director; Ms. Melanie Baker, Public Service Director; Police Chief Nick Shearer; Fire Chief John Tosko; Mr. Gary Bishop, IT Manager, Ms. Joan Seidel, Health Commissioner; Ms. Angela Manley, Parks and Recreation Director; Mr. Tom Wilke, Economic Development Director and Ms. Amy Wilkens Clerk of Council.

There was one (1) item on the Agenda.

1. Designated Outdoor Refreshment Area (DORA) Update

Mr. Kuhar introduced the Economic Development Director, Mr. Tom Wilke.

Mr. Wilke reminded everyone about the establishment of the DORA in July 2021 and that it will stay in effect until Council acts to do something different. There have been no negative incidents in relation to the DORA as reported by the Health Department or Police. There has been no disorderly conduct associated with DORA drinks. Businesses still had financial hardship but having the DORA did generate additional revenue. There were over \$300,000 of additional sales that would not have occurred if people did not have the opportunity to purchase a DORA drink. Businesses do not have to go through the process of putting a fence up or going to liquor control to extend their liquor license.

He continued by adding there has not been any large events since this was put in place, so we don't know what will happen when we do have one, but we have had a couple of small events. This Friday is when Franklin Avenue will be closed and having the DORA will really enhance the outdoor dining experience. He has not received any negative feedback.

They have made some small changes which include more durable recycle containers and insulated cups for hot beverages. They will also be introducing a larger cup, as many establishments asked for an increase from 12 to 16 oz. for beer sales.

Ms. Wallach asked if the North Water Brewery was in the original boundaries for the DORA. Mr. Wilke said it was.

Mr. Wilke said they may come to Council to ask for an expansion of the DORA in the future to include the Bell Tower Brewery on Gougler Avenue.

Ms. Wallach added the Bike Shop on N. Water Street would like to be included in the district as well.

Mr. Wilke said we will not have the same large events this year as we have in the past, but a couple are coming up, one being the Blue's Festival in July. Main Street Kent has been in discussion with the Health Department about a Wizardly World event possibly being held at the end of July. The Craft Beer Fest and October Fest are also being considered.

He said he is assuming there will be a post pandemic time, and they will need to consider if the DORA will continue. The business owners he talked to have indicated even when occupancy levels go back to where it was before, they would like for it to continue.

He said the great news of the DORA is that there has been very little news and it has been mostly an enhancement to downtown.

Ms. Shaffer Bish asked if there has been any official encouragement of "pop up" musicians.

Mr. Wilke said they have not been discouraging musicians but have not been actively encouraging them based on advice from the Health Department because it does encourage congregation.

Ms. Rosenberg said she spoke with Heather Malarcik of Main Street Kent who said she has hired local teens from Kent Roosevelt High School to clean up Franklin Ave and that there was a lot of interest and high schoolers who applied.

Mr. Ruller said the Governor will leaving it up to communities to apply any restrictions and the Health Department is talking with community leaders regarding the future of festivals.

Mayor Fiala said he went downtown during the "Putt Around Downtown" Event and saw many families walking around with their DORA beverages and it worked out really well. He agreed that bigger cups are needed to accommodate beverages. He stated there will not be a Heritage Festival this year, but there will be fireworks on June 26, 2021.

Mr. Amrhein said he received a notification that the Heritage Fest would occur with music. Mayor Fiala said there is no Festival whatsoever, but they are working with Woodsy's Music to have music downtown during the fireworks.

Mr. Ferrara said residents are being careful and socially responsible. It comes down to the fundamental question of whether government tells people what to do or does it give them the

framework within to work. He thinks it should be the latter. We need to support our businesses and make the downtown inviting. He said a local band did a pop up this past weekend and he noticed people being socially responsible. He said everyone can get vaccinated right now and has a choice to do so. If you choose not to vaccinate, it should not restrict me or anybody else who wants to be responsible. The less rules the City tries to impose on its residents, the better off we are going to be.

Seeing no further business, the Community Development Committee Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Amy Wilkens

Amy Wilkens
Clerk of Council

ACTION RECOMMENDED: N/A



Streets, Sidewalks & Utilities Committee Meeting Minutes
The City of Kent, Ohio
Wednesday, May 5, 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 9:00 p.m.

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

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. Jerry T. Fiala, Mayor and President of Council; Mr. Dave Ruller, City Manager; Ms. Hope Jones, Law Director; Mr. Jim Bowling, City Engineer; Ms. Rhonda Hall, Finance Director; Ms. Melanie Baker, Public Service Director; Police Chief Nick Shearer; Fire Chief John Tosko; Mr. Gary Bishop, IT Manager, Ms. Joan Seidel, Health Commissioner; Ms. Angela Manley, Parks and Recreation Director; Mr. Tom Wilke, Economic Development Director and Ms. Amy Wilkens Clerk of Council.

There was one (1) item on the Agenda.

1. Franklin and Erie Street Licensing Agreement

Chair Sidoti introduced Mr. Jim Bowling to talk about the first agenda item.

Mr. Bowling said the developer of the property on the corner of Franklin Avenue and Erie Street, is asking for an outdoor patio they will operate and maintain and will be putting in a curb extension and improved the pedestrian walkability. The plans were reviewed and they do not see any problems with the request.

Ms. Wallach asked if it will go into the street or make any turns harder.

Mr. Bowling said it would not, as it is currently excess pavement and compared it to how the patio on the corner of Erie and Depeyster Streets sits.

Ms. Wallach asked if any parking spaces would be lost, and Mr. Bowling replied there would not.

MOTION to approve Franklin and Erie Street Licensing Agreement, with an emergency clause, made by Ms. Shaffer Bish, SECONDED by Mr. Amrhein and CARRIED by a voice vote of 9-0.

Ms. Shaffer Bish added this is consistent with what other businesses have been permitted to do and would be perhaps a way to have a safer crossing.

Seeing no further business or questions for this committee, it adjourned at 9:07 p.m.

Amy Wilkens

Amy Wilkens
Clerk of Council

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

- 1) Authorize the license agreement for outdoor seating at 211 Franklin Avenue**