

April 2, 2010

Land Use Committee

1. Amendment to Include Civil Infraction Language to Sec. 1111.12

Gary Locke and Jen Barone have requested Committee time to discuss a text amendment to the zoning code to include civil infraction language. Council recently adopted civil infraction language for use in certain other types of code violations, e.g., snow blocking the sidewalk, and this text change would allow civil infractions to be used in cases of zoning violations as well. The Planning Commission held a public hearing on the proposed amendment and they voted 3-0 to recommend Council's support for the change. (attachment)

Administrative Recommendation

I recommend support of the requested changes to Section 1111.12 as presented by the staff.

Council Action

Amend section 1111.12 of the City Zoning Code.

Work Session

2. Interviews for City Boards and Commissions

The City Clerk has arranged for Council interviews of applicants interested in serving in vacant positions on City Boards and Commissions.

3. Update the Pending List

The staff have reviewed the pending list items and we would like Committee time to review the status of those items and request Council's consideration to remove completed items where appropriate. (attachment)

Administrative Recommendation

Review the pending list items and authorize the modifications to the list as presented by staff.

Council Action

Authorize and amend the pending list as appropriate.

Finance Committee

4. Façade Loan Program Funds

Gary Locke has requested Finance Committee time to discuss the status of funds deposited in an inactive City bank account dating back to 1983. Specifically Gary is requesting Council consideration to transfer the inactive funds into an active CDBG program fund that would allow the funds to be used to assist in the façade improvement program for downtown Kent. (attachment)

Administrative Recommendation

Rather than letting the funds sit idle in an inactive account I would encourage Council's support to transfer the funds into an active account.

Council Action

Authorize the fund transfer as presented.





Community Development Committee

5. Semi-Annual EDA Revolving Loan Fund Certification

Twice a year the City is required to submit a report of the activities performed with the revolving loan fund that were capitalized with EDA funds. Gary Locke has requested Council official verification that the program lending conforms to the EDA standards and criteria. (attachment)

Administrative Recommendation

The City has effectively used EDA revolving loan funds to support new business investment in Kent. Council certification of the Loan Fund is a semi-annual procedure that is required by the Ohio EDA and I would urge Council's adoption.

Council Action

Approve and certify the EDA Revolving Loan Fund report.

6. Down-Payment Loan Conversions & Housing Rehab Administration

Gary Locke has requested Committee time to discuss a recommendation to amend the down-payment requirements applied to loans provided through the CDBG program. In particular, Gary is suggesting that given the high rate of delinquent loans it might be prudent to consider converting the amortized loans to a deferred loan format whereby the loan funds would be reimbursed at the time of the property sale. Gary will also update Council on some changes he is pursuing in the administration of the Housing Rehab program. (attachment)

Administration Recommendation

Loan delinquency rates are often high in low to moderate income loans and as a result traditional lenders often decline to make housing loans to these high risk groups -- which is why the City initiated the loan program. However, in managing the loans it's become apparent that we might reduce the loan failure rates by converting the amortized loans to a deferred loan. I recommend Council's support to make this loan conversion.

Council Action

Authorize staff to convert the amortized loans to a deferred loan.

7. Clean Ohio Grant Funds

Dan Smith and Gary Locke have been working with the Brownfield Restoration Group to secure funding to assist a Kent industrial company perform an environmental assessment of their property. Clean Ohio funds are provided by the State to public entities for this purpose and Dan is recommending that the City make an application for those funds on behalf of the local company to complete a Phase II environmental assessment of their property. (attachment)

Administrative Recommendation

The staff is pursuing the Clean Ohio funds to help keep a longstanding company in Kent and I would encourage Council's authorization to proceed with the grant.

Council Action

Authorize staff to pursue the Clean Ohio grant.



Streets, Sidewalks, and Utilities Committee

8. Dominick's License to Occupy Request

Gene Roberts has requested Committee time to discuss Dominick's request for a License to Occupy the public right-of-way. Dominick's has made this request for the purpose of remodeling their building façade. The work will encroach no more than five inches into the public right-of way. (attachment)

Administrative Recommendation

The staff has reviewed the work and have found no issues or concerns. In addition, this will help support a business and is an investment in Kent. I would encourage Council's authorization to proceed with the approval.

Council Action

Authorize staff to approve the request to occupy public right-of-way.



Health and Safety Committee

9. Architectural Analysis of the Police Station

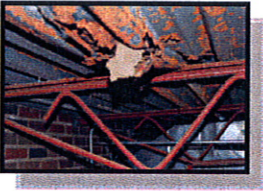
Bill Lillich and Chief Peach have requested Committee time to review the findings of the architectural analysis of the Police Station. The discussion is intended to begin to identify the building deficiencies so that the staff can work with Council to develop a strategy to either repair or replace the building. (attachment sent separately)

Administrative Recommendation

Receive the staff report and provide guidance on next steps.

Council Action

Provide staff guidance as appropriate.



Information Items

1. Income Tax Report

Dave Coffee has provided a summary of income tax collections thru the end of February 2010. Overall the City income tax collections are down 4.3% (\$78,144) from February 2009. Kent State University's collections for January are up 8.6% (\$59,798). (attachment)

2. Fire Statistics

Chief Williams has forwarded his January and February 2010 Fire Statistics reports. Total calls for service for the year are down for both for fire incidents (-11%) and emergency medical service (-4%). (attachment)

3. Monthly Permit and Zoning Reports

Gary Locke has provided a copy of the monthly zoning and permit violations report from March 2010. The total number of permits issued in March was down 49% from last year and the corresponding revenues were down 73% (\$44,607). Troy had 15 action items in March and 6 were snow violation notices. (attachment)

4. Traffic Engineering and Safety Meeting

Bill Lillich has provided copies of the minutes from the March 19, 2010 Traffic Engineering and Safety meeting. There were 6 items up for discussion including: pager availability for emergencies, street lights in the Olympus/Athena area, downtown parking, Fairchild Bridge project, the traffic lanes at S. Water & Summit, and downtown traffic. (attachment)

Information Items (continued)

5. Sales Cleaner Property Demolition

Jim Silver notified me that Eric Fink got the Judge's signatures on Court orders this week that will let the City tear down the old dry cleaner building at 1002 Franklin Ave., and the old house at 223 Harris St. Gary and Bridget are looking to secure the funds so that the demo work can begin as soon as possible.

6. Plum Creek Park Dam Removal

Jim Bowling, dropped me a note on the status of the Plum Creek Restoration project this week and I thought it would be helpful to share it. Jim reports that the Dam was removed on February 19, 2009 and some people may be wondering why no work is being done at this time. No work is currently being done in order to allow time for the sediment to dry. This also allows us the ability to get more accurate measurements on the amount of sediment that needs to be removed. The contractor has installed an orange safety fence around the entire work area to keep people from getting stuck in the exposed sediment while it is drying. The contractor will mobilize in the beginning of April, and by mid April work will resume at the site.

7. Main Street Repairs

Jim Bowling advised the senior staff this week that the Portage County Engineer's Office has advised the City that they are planning to make repairs to the Main Street bridge in 2012. Jim explained that the repairs would be focused on the east end of the bridge in the section that carries vehicle traffic over the railroad tracks. Jim will work with the County to coordinate the Main Street bridge repairs with the completion of the Crain/Fairchild Avenue bridge repairs.

8. State of Ohio 3rd Frontier Technology Fund Awards

Dan Smith pointed out that Kent companies once again faired very well in the most recent distribution of State 3rd Frontier funds. Out of a statewide distribution of \$5.7 million two Kent companies received \$1 million each – Alpha Micron and Kent Displays – or put another way, Kent tech firms obtained 35% of the total State funds. That's an impressive statement on the state of high tech in Kent and portends well for future economic growth.

9. Declaration of Collective Intent for the Downtown Project

I am pleased to report that all 6 parties (City of Kent, Kent State, PARTA, Kent School System, Pizzuti Companies and Fairmount Properties) have signed the Declaration of Collective Intent (DCI). Although the DCI is not legally binding it still represents a significant milestone in the development of the downtown project as it provides the basic terms upon which the legal agreements will be built. We have already started drafting the legal agreements around the terms of the DCI and we hope to bring drafts of the legal agreements in to Council in the next couple of months. (attachment)