



Life outside the lines.

Public Hearing

The City Clerk has scheduled a public hearing to allow for comment on the "Renewal Application" for farmland in an Agricultural District. This request comes from Carter Lumber for farmland they own in Kent off of Howe Road and Sunnybrook Road.

Committee of the Whole

The City Clerk has scheduled Committee time for the Committee of the Whole for Council to interview prospective candidates for vacancies on City boards and commissions.

Community Development Committee

1. Gender Identity Laws Discussion

Council requested Committee time to review the status of the gender identity and sexual orientation protection laws, particularly related to housing discrimination. The definitions for protected classes are set by Federal and State law. Currently, gender identity and sexual orientation are not specifically defined as protected classes for federal and state agency enforcement. Although not explicitly stated in the law, the staff believes that those cases could be filed under the broad federal and state category prohibiting "sex discrimination." In addition, some cities in Ohio have adopted more specific gender identity and sexual orientation language that carry local fines for violations. (attachment)

Administration Recommendation

Initially the staff and I had reservations with passing legislation that would use the more specific gender identity and sexual orientation protection language because it was outside the purview of the City to enforce, and it didn't meet the requirements of the enforcement agencies. However, we believe that the combination of using the existing broad category of "sex discrimination" along with a local fine system could provide reasonable methods to ensure better human rights protections, and I recommend Council's support for modifying our Code.

Council Actions

Receive the staff report and direct the staff accordingly.

2. Farmland Use Renewal Designation for Carter Lumber Property

Jim Silver has requested Committee time to request Council's authorization to renew the farmland use designation in the Agricultural district for the Carter Lumber property located on Howe Road and Sunnybrook Road. (attachment)

Administration Recommendation

Ohio law affords certain benefits to farmland property owners that maintain the farmland use designation I recommend Council's support.

Council Actions

Authorize the renewal of the farmland use designation for the Carter Lumber property located on Howe Road and Sunnybrook Road.



Community Development Committee (continued)

3. Haymaker Farmer's Market



Bridget Susel has requested Committee time for Council to consider the renewal of the City's sublease with the Farmer's Market for the property that the City leases from the railroad along Franklin Avenue for the 2017 season. The sublease has been provided for \$1 per year and Bridget is recommending renewing that sublease again for 2017. (attachment)

Administration Recommendation

The City has historically provided the Farmer's Market with a lease to host the weekly Farmer's Market on the land along Franklin Avenue at a nominal fee and I recommend Council's support to renew that sublease.

Council Action

Authorize the renewal of the sublease for the Farmer's Market.

4. Authorization of Loan & Purchase Agreements on Gouger Avenue



Jim Silver, Bridget and Tom have requested Committee time for Council to consider the final authorization of the loan and purchase agreements prepared for the City land sale as part of the LN Gross Building restoration. The land sale is for \$200,000 with a 7 year City loan to the buyer at a rate of 75% of prime paid annually with a final balloon payment due on November 1, 2023. (attachments)

Administration Recommendation

The City is selling 6 parcels so that they can be converted to parking lots to support the daytime parking needs for the new businesses in the LN Gross building and public parking on weekends and after hours for river and trail access. I recommend Council's support.

Council Action

Approve the loan and purchase agreements and authorize staff to execute them.

5. Parks and Recreation Community Facility Report



John Idone has requested Committee time to present the final Kent Health and Wellness Concept Plan. The Concept Plan has been presented to the Parks Board and they have recommended it for City Council acceptance and approval. John and the consultant firm will distribute the Report and provide an overview of the contents at the meeting, and then he would like to schedule work-session time at the Regular Council on April 19th to answer any more detailed questions that you might have after reading the report and the proposed facility. (attachment)

Administration Recommendation

Receive the Parks and Recreation report.

Council Actions

Receive the Parks and Recreation report.

Health & Safety Committee

6. Kent Fire Annual Report and Strategic Planning Update



Chief Tosko and his senior staff have completed their 2016 Annual Report and he has requested Committee time to present the year-end report and update Council on the status of the department's strategic planning work. (attachment)

Administration Recommendation

Receive the staff report.

Council Action

Receive the staff report. No action is necessary.

Health & Safety Committee (continued)

7. SR261 Traffic Safety Update



Jim Bowling and Jon Gianquinto have requested Committee time to review their findings and recommendations related to the traffic safety concerns that Council referred to the Administration for further study. (attachment)

Administration Recommendation

Receive the staff report.

Council Action

Receive the staff report. No action is necessary.

Information Items

1. Income Tax Report

Dave Coffee has provided a summary of income tax collections thru the end of February 2017. Overall the City income tax collections are up 2.07% (\$46,671) from February 2016. Kent State University's collections thru the end of December are up 3.45% (\$27,840). (attachment)