

A Regular meeting of the Oxford City Council was called to order by Mayor Kevin McKeehan on Tuesday, March 4, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. Those members present were Bob Blackburn, Richard Keebler, Kate Rousmaniere, Mike Smith and Edna Southard. Steve Snyder was excused.

Staff members present: Mr. Doug Elliott, City Manager; Mr. Mike Dreisbach, Service Director; Mr. Joe Newlin, Finance Director; Mr. Bob Holzworth, Police Chief; Mr. Jung-Han Chen, Community Development Director; Ms. Gail Brahier, Parks and Recreation Director; Mr. John Detherage, Fire Chief; Mr. Steve McHugh, Law Director, and Ms. Mary Ann Eaton, Clerk of Council.

ADJOURN TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Blackburn moved to adjourn to Executive Session immediately in accordance with Ohio Revised Code Section 121.22 (G) (2) and (3) for the purpose of discussing pending litigation and property acquisition. Mr. Keebler seconded. The motion passed by the following roll call:

AYE: Mr. Keebler, Ms. Rousmaniere, Mr. Smith, Ms. Southard, Mr. Blackburn,
Mayor McKeehan (6)

NAY: None (0)

ABS: None (0)

RETURN FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Blackburn moved to adjourn from Executive Session at 7:28 p.m. Ms. Rousmaniere seconded. The motion passed 6-0-0.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor McKeehan requested the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. Southard moved to approve the agenda. Mr. Smith seconded. The motion passed 6-0-0.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Ian Sugarman, 300 E. Spring Street #223, referred to Section 725.09 of the Oxford Codified Ordinances and asked for an exception to the regulation that taxi drivers in Oxford must be at least 21 years of age. Mr. Sugarman noted he wanted to start a taxi cab business in Oxford and he would turn 21 in June. Mr. Sugarman advised he wanted to offer students a better and less expensive transportation option. Mr. Sugarman noted he filed for and received approval for a vendor's license from the county and all he needed was approval from the City to start operating his business.

Mr. Sugarman advised Oxford Taxi called him to Emerson Hall and cornered him with their vehicles and threatened him. Mr. Sugarman advised Oxford Taxi owners/employees insinuated physical harm to him if he started a taxi cab business. Mr. Sugarman advised he would like some degree of protection from the owners/employees of Oxford Taxi.

Mayor McKeehan inquired if Mr. Sugarman filed a police report regarding the incident and Mr. Sugarman replied, not a formal one.

Mr. Keebler suggested that Mr. Sugarman discuss the age regulation for a Taxi Cab driver with the City Manager who could report back to Council. Mr. Keebler advised the complaint regarding Oxford Taxi was a police matter and a police report should be filed regarding the incident. Mr. Blackburn added that since the incident occurred on Miami's property, a police report should also be filed with the Miami University Police Department.

CONSENT AGENDA

MINUTES

Minutes of the February 18, 2014 City Council Meeting. (Donna Heck, Acting Clerk of Council)

REPORTS

Report regarding the February 11, 2014 Planning Commission Meeting. (Jung-Han Chen, Community Development Director)

Report regarding the February 12, Historic and Architectural Preservation Commission Meeting. (Jung-Han Chen, Community Development Director)

Ms. Rousmaniere moved to approve the consent agenda. Mr. Blackburn seconded. The motion passed 6-0-0.

RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION

OXFORD BIKE & PEDESTRIAN SAFETY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

A Resolution No. 4815 of City Council accepting the Planning Commission's recommendation and approving the implementation of the Oxford Bike and Pedestrian Safety Improvement Plan and incorporating the same into the Transportation Chapter of the Oxford Comprehensive Plan. (Jung-Han Chen, Community Development Director)

Mr. Chen advised in October, 2012, staff prepared a concept plan as a result of an initiative from Miami University to comprehensively review and make recommendations to the on-campus circulation master plan and an IES student's study entitled 'Shifting Gears – A Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan for Oxford'.

Mr. Chen noted City Council, based on positive recommendations from the Planning Commission, directed staff to undergo a technical analysis to develop a specific improvement plan for bikes and pedestrians for future consideration. Mr. Chen advised staff members from the Community Development, Police and Service Departments met in subsequent months to review recommendations from 'Shifting Gears' and Miami's on-campus circulation master plan to make changes based upon technical data and professional expertise. Mr. Chen noted the outcome of the analysis was presented to the Planning Commission at their October 2013 meeting. Mr. Chen advised in November, 2013 the draft plan was submitted to the Planning Commission Subcommittee on Alternative Transportation to further develop the phased improvement schedule and to coordinate a public input session at the beginning of 2014 to solicit public comments for consideration. Mr. Chen noted the effort of promoting biking and walking expanded and collaborated with other efforts including the Safe Routes to School initiative and the Oxford Areas Trail System's recreational trail project. Mr. Chen advised staff continued to collaborate with Miami University on the upcoming resurfacing project on Spring Street, from Patterson Avenue to Campus Avenue and noted Miami planned to move forward with dedicated on-street bike lanes on Spring Street and signage improvements at SR 73 and US 27 and Spring Street during the summer of 2014. Mr. Chen advised the Oxford Bike and Pedestrian Safety Improvement Plan was developed as a planning document to guide the discussion, formation and public engagement of all components of the plan and the process started with the specific goals and objectives that were presented to Council in 2012. Mr. Chen noted the goals and objectives were to improve the safety and convenience of all modes of transportation, to promote a safe, integrated bicycle and pedestrian network and to create a City of Oxford Bicycle and Pedestrian plan that worked concurrently with the Miami University Circulation Master Plan. Mr. Chen advised based on the goals and objectives, staff analyzed the relevant adopted policy/plans of the City and the similar plans/documents from the university and other generally available resources to be used as reference documents. Mr. Chen noted using the findings and recommendations from 'Shifting Gears' staff further analyzed the recommendations based on technical reasoning and developed another set of recommendations which the Alternative Transportation Subcommittee of the Planning Commission prioritized and developed a phased improvement plan. Mr. Chen advised a public outreach and input session took place on January 11, 2014 in the LCNB Community Room to unveil the plan and solicit public comments. Mr. Chen noted many positive comments about the effort to create a bike and pedestrian network with emphasis on safety impediments to bicyclists and pedestrians were provided by the public and were on file in the Community Development Department. Mr. Chen advised the Oxford Bike and Pedestrian Safety Improvement Plan was a planning document that would enable the Planning Commission and staff to update the progress and monitor the implementation status of the plan and it would serve as a guiding reference for the City to move forward with the Complete Street concept. Mr. Chen referred to page 12 of the agenda and discussed the Near Term (0-2 year) recommendations of the plan, the Medium Term (3-5 year) recommendations of the plan and the Long Term (6-10+ year) recommendations of the plan. Mr. Chen advised the Planning Commission recommended that Council approved the implementation of the Oxford Bike and Pedestrian Safety Improvement Plan and that the plan be made an attachment to the Transportation Chapter of the Oxford Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Chen referred to page 18 of the agenda and noted the Planning Commission voted 6-0-0 to recommend approval of the plan to City Council, not 3-3-0 as was printed in the report. Mr. Chen offered to answer any questions and noted Dr. David Prytherch, Planning Commission Chair, was also in attendance.

Ms. Rousmaniere referred to a slide shown by Mr. Chen and also presented on page 14 of the agenda and inquired what the red circles designated. Mr. Chen advised they were intersection improvements such as the installation of a crosswalk at the intersection of Central Avenue and Campus Avenue.

Mayor McKeehan inquired if shared roads were designated by street markings or signage and Mr. Chen advised the streets would be marked per the Uniform Traffic Control Device Manual.

Mr. Keebler inquired if property owners were notified that the City may eliminate parking spaces on streets such as Spring Street and McGuffey Avenue to accommodate the shared road concept and Mr. Chen advised no, although many public meetings were held. Ms. Rousmaniere noted there were no set dates or final plans for the implementation of shared roads. Mr. Keebler inquired if by accepting the recommendations Council was agreeing to each recommendation without further input. Mr. Chen advised it was up to Council to accept the recommendations or modify them. Mayor McKeehan noted if Council accepted the recommendations the plan would move forward without Council input and Mr. Chen advised that was correct. Ms. Rousmaniere inquired if it was protocol to notify property owners of a change to their street once a date was set. Mr. Keebler advised it was not a legal requirement but he felt it was the right thing to do. Mr. Keebler noted he did not see how a bicycle lane could be extended through the College Avenue intersection given the width of the street and the fact there was a turn lane that was already tight. Mr. Chen advised it would be a dedicated bike lane and shared road. Mr. Blackburn inquired if residents would receive assistance from the City to create parking spots in a back yard for example if they lost on street parking and Mr. Chen advised yes. Mr. Blackburn noted there was a bike lane on Spring Street 20 years ago and Mr. Keebler stated it didn't work. Mr. Elliott advised the intersection improvements would not impact property owners and City staff would likely go ahead with them and noted Spring Street was critical and staff would like Council's input on Spring Street safety improvements. Mr. Keebler noted concern with the intention for College Avenue and advised he did not want to see the turn lanes go away. Mr. Keebler noted Spring Street narrowed from Main Street west and inquired how that would affect the plan. Ms. Rousmaniere noted Council was being asked to accept the recommendation of the Planning Commission and approve the implementation of the Bike and Pedestrian Safety Improvement Plan and incorporate it in the Transportation Chapter of the Oxford Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Rousmaniere stated the Comprehensive Plan was an implementation and planning document without specific details and Council should leave it to staff to determine how to deal with College Avenue and turn lanes and other problematic areas. Mr. Elliott advised he would like to focus on Spring Street and possibly send a letter to property owners regarding what was being considered such as painting lines and eliminating parking spaces. Mr. Keebler inquired if Council was being asked to approve the plan as simply a planning document or approve all the recommendations as specified in the plan in which case Council did not have enough information. Mr. McHugh advised the plan would be incorporated into the Transportation Chapter of the Oxford Comprehensive Plan and while it was not the zoning code it did have elevated guidance as to what should be done. Mr. McHugh noted the plan would not be codified like the zoning code was but it would provide guidance. Mr. Keebler advised how he would vote on the proposed Resolution would depend on if this was a planning document with specific changes that would come back to Council individually or if it was a green light to implement the plan based on the map presented.

Mr. David Prytherch, 6195 Contreras Road, Planning Commission Chair, noted he wanted to offer thanks and advised this process had been going on for a long time and an incredible number of people had been involved in sorting out the challenging issues. Mr. Prytherch advised the Planning Commission and Miami's Institute for Environmental Sciences did a variety of studies in the 1990s and early 2000s on multi-use paths, bike lanes and the feasibility of alternative transportation. Mr. Prytherch thanked the OATS group and the Oxford Parks and Recreation department for moving forward with thinking about a route around town which was incorporated in the Thoroughfare Plan. Mr. Prytherch thanked Paul Brady and former Planning Commission members for their efforts regarding the Thoroughfare Plan. Mr. Prytherch thanked John Seibert and Vincent Cirrito for creating the Miami University Circulation Master Plan with the assistance of consultants, the Police Chief and the City Manager. Mr. Prytherch noted the Planning Commission met with City Council a few years ago and made bike and pedestrian safety a priority for the Planning Commission. Mr. Prytherch thanked planning commissioners, Anna Dragovich, the Environmental Commission and the Parking and Transportation Board for providing input and thanked Council and staff for their support in analyzing the feasibility of the recommendations. Mr. Prytherch noted the Planning Commission was prepared to go forward with a broad overall plan but there were questions on how to implement the plan and thanked staff members Sam Perry, Jung-Han Chen, Perry Gordon, Victor Popescu, Mike Dreisbach and Alan Kyger for their efforts. Mr. Prytherch advised the Talawanda School District collaborated closely and Safe Routes to School initiatives were incorporated into the plan and thanked Superintendent, Kelly Spivey, Treasurer, Mike Davis, Health and Wellness Coordinator, Amy Macechko, Principals Jason Merz and Mike Malone and parents who walked the streets to identify pedestrian safety issues in and around the schools. Mr. Prytherch also thanked the Talawanda School Board for their support. Mr. Prytherch thanked Jessica Greene of the Oxford Visitors Bureau, Larry Frimerman of Oxford Township, Butler County Metro Parks, former OATS members and all of the citizens who provided input and useful feedback at the public meetings. Mr. Prytherch thanked Planning Commission members Kate Rousmaniere and Robert Bell for serving on the subcommittee and thanked City Council for their consideration of the plan.

Ms. Amy Macechko, 37 Jeffrey Drive, Health and Wellness Coordinator for the Talawanda Schools, noted it was her pleasure to be in attendance this evening to thank all of the staff the school district had worked with and for the collaboration regarding the Safe Routes to School initiative. Ms. Macechko advised the school district was excited to embark upon the project as a community as there were many benefits including environmental, sustainability and overall health benefits for Talawanda youth and families. Ms. Macechko noted many audits and a survey took place and parents wanted their children to walk and bike to school but there were some barriers. Ms. Macechko advised the school travel plan that was recently approved looked at infrastructure and educational enforcement strategies to encourage and support the safe walking and biking of young people to school. Ms. Macechko noted Talawanda's Treasurer and CFO, Mike Davis could not be in attendance this evening but he had been intimately involved in the project and was very supportive of it. Ms. Macechko thanked everyone for partnering with the school district noting it was an exciting opportunity and the collaboration spoke highly to the community's value of this work.

Mayor McKeehan inquired of the word 'implementation' in the Resolution locked Council into constructing the Bike and Pedestrian Safety Improvement Plan. Mr. McHugh advised the intent was to implement the plan using it as part of the Oxford Comprehensive Plan for guidance.

Mr. Blackburn inquired if Council could accept the plan as a work in progress with changes such as on Spring Street coming back to Council with an exact plan including notification to property owners if parking spaces were to be eliminated. Mr. Blackburn noted Council would 'get the heat' if people didn't like the plan. Mr. Blackburn advised he agreed with the plan but could not give it a blanket approval.

Ms. Rousmaniere advised she felt it was Council's job to 'take the heat' and encouraged Council members to think about approving a vision of health, safety and wellness for the City of Oxford instead of approving specific individual plans. Ms. Rousmaniere noted what Mr. Prytherch and Ms. Macechko talked about was the years of discussion people have had about changing the way the City looked and acted for safety, health and environmental awareness. Ms. Rousmaniere referred to the US 27 North and South improvement projects that Council approved and noted Council had long discussions about how the end result would look but the rest was left to staff. Ms. Rousmaniere advised the point of a Comprehensive Plan was to set direction and Council would approve or not approve a direction that would lead to changes being made over a ten year period. Ms. Rousmaniere noted if someone complained she would take the heat. Ms. Rousmaniere encouraged Council to think about a broader vision of the plan as it was not just bike lanes and crosswalks it was about safety issues for kids going to school, problematic intersections and dealing with residential and commercial construction that changes roads and how people were driving, walking and biking on those roads.

Mr. Elliott referred to page 17 of the agenda and advised the City was already planning to implement some of the items including the Bonham Road bridge replacement and on-shoulder bike lanes on 27 South. Mr. Elliott noted according to the plan, the City had 10 years to build the OATS trail but there was no funding for it although the Visitors Bureau was working on ways to obtain other sources of funding. Mr. Elliott advised the big ticket items in the plan would require appropriations from Council. Mr. Elliott noted concern with the word implementation in the Resolution as he didn't want Council members to be disappointed if all of the items were not implemented due to budgeting or other constraints. Mr. Elliott referred to the proposed changes on Spring Street and advised he wanted to come to Council after property owners were contacted and let Council know a Public Hearing was needed and should occur this year.

Mr. Keebler advised he would like to see a specific recommendation for Spring Street and noted concern for property owners on McGuffey Avenue and Chestnut Street if parking spaces were eliminated as they would have no parking for guests. Mr. Keebler noted concern that there might not be enough people utilizing bike lanes on a daily basis. Mr. Keebler advised a long time ago Spring Street had bike lanes and they did not work and in some ways there were more bicyclists then than there were now. Mr. Keebler referred to the Maple Street intersection and advised he would rather see a traffic light there instead of stop signs. Mr. Keebler noted at class change cars would never get through the intersection with stop signs. Mr. Keebler advised he had specific concerns and he wanted Council to weigh in on the implementation of major changes.

Mr. Dreisbach noted staff needed a policy determination from Council and Council felt they didn't have all of the information they needed.

Mr. Dreisbach suggested removing the dedicated bike lanes on the west side of town for further consideration while staff implemented the rest of the plan. Mr. Dreisbach noted staff needed a decision on Spring Street from Patterson Avenue to Campus Avenue as it did not impact private property owners. Mr. Dreisbach advised three new buildings and a dining hall would open soon on western campus and there would be floods of pedestrians and bikes coming into that intersection. Mr. Dreisbach noted if the dedicated bike path was the hang-up for Council he would ask that it be removed for further consideration and if Council wanted a public hearing for impacted property owners he was sure they would say don't do it. Mr. Dreisbach advised this was public right-of-way not the property owners parking space in front of their property it was for public use and it would be difficult for Council to decide what the best use of the space was.

Mr. McHugh referred to Section 305.01 of the Codified Ordinances which provided that the City Manager was also the Director of Safety and had the authority to place traffic control devices and markings which were valid until rescinded or voted on by a motion of Council. Mr. Elliott advised if it came to eliminating parking spaces he would bring the matter to Council for direction.

Mr. Keebler advised he would like to see the proposed legislation pass with the assurance that any major changes to intersections or the implementation of dedicated bike lanes came back to Council individually for resolution and with that assurance the plan could be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan.

Ms. Southard asked Council to think about the plan in larger terms and not intersection by intersection. Ms. Southard noted she felt it was a vision of what Council would like the City to be like. Ms. Southard advised she felt once the City was more accessible for people walking and biking they would do it more.

Mr. Smith inquired if Council could ask staff for a more detailed implementation plan and bring the matter back in 60-90 days. Mr. Dreisbach advised staff was looking for policy guidance and did not want to spend time on detailed plans and engineering for something Council might not want to do.

Ms. Rousmaniere suggested that Council approve the plan as a policy document and stay in touch with staff regarding its progress.

Mr. Chen noted every year staff updated Council with regard to Comprehensive Plan accomplishments and staff could update Council on the Bike and Pedestrian Safety Improvement Plan semi-annually if Council wished.

Ms. Rousmaniere moved to adopt Resolution No. 4815. Mr. Keebler seconded. The motion passed 6-0-0.

ORDINANCES
FIRST READING

ORDINANCE
AMENDING ORDINANCE
NO. 3147

An Ordinance To Amend Ordinance No. 3147 Regulating The Rates And Charges To Be Charged And Collected And The Services To Be Rendered By Glenwood Energy Of Oxford, Inc. Its Successors And Assigns, For Gas And Gas Service Furnished To All Of Its Customers Within The Corporate Limits Of The City Of Oxford During The Period Ending April 30, 2019 By Authorizing Glenwood Energy Of Oxford, Inc. To Implement A Rider To Recover The Costs Of Moving A Pipeline Associated With The U.S. 27 South Improvement project. (Mike Dreisbach, Service Director)

Mr. Dreisbach advised the City was moving forward with improvements to 27 South of Chestnut Street and ODOT awarded the contract and construction would commence later this month. Mr. Dreisbach noted utilities needed to be relocated and updated including the gas main which was privately owned by Glenwood Energy. Mr. Dreisbach advised this was a collectible expense for Glenwood Energy as the City could not ask them to relocate the gas main without a way to pay for it. Mr. Dreisbach noted the City Manager, staff, Mr. McHugh and the City's utility attorney worked on an agreement to add a rider to the rate charged for natural gas which would be 24 cents in addition to the existing rate for every 1,000 cubic feet of gas purchased. Mr. Dreisbach advised the fee was only allowed to be collected for approximately 5 years or until the company recuperated their costs. Mr. Dreisbach noted Mr. McHugh and the City's utility attorney reviewed the rate and believed it to be appropriate.

Mr. Keebler inquired what the total construction cost estimate was for the pipeline relocation and Mr. Dreisbach advised approximately \$500,000. Mr. Keebler inquired if audits would be made to make sure collections did not exceed the construction cost. Mr. Dreisbach advised the City's utility attorney had an accountant who was very familiar with rates, tariffs and rules and the PUCO received the data as well. Mr. McHugh referred to the proposed Ordinance on page 25 of the agenda and noted 'the company shall provide documentation to the City Manager showing the calculation of the credit no later than 15 days prior to the date of the annual adjustment'.

Mayor McKeehan noted Glenwood Energy was permitted to collect this fee by the PUCO but Council had some say so because the contract was local. Mr. Dreisbach noted Council awarded the franchise and Council controlled the rate being charged.

Ms. Rousmaniere noted for 5 years all customers in Oxford who used Glenwood Energy would have a 4% rate increase and Mr. Dreisbach advised yes, on the general service rate. Ms. Rousmaniere inquired if the customer's bill would indicate what the increase was for. Mr. Dreisbach advised it would be shown on the bill as a pipeline relocation rider.

Mayor McKeehan noted he felt the rider was reasonable and justified.

ORDINANCE
OVERLAY DISTRICT

An Ordinance Accepting The Planning Commission's Recommendation And Granting A Zoning Map Amendment To Establish A Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District In A R-1A Single Family Low Density Residential District, For 29 Parcels Located On Contreras Road, James Road, Dick Drive, And Joseph Drive, In The City Of Oxford, Ohio. (Jung-Han Chen, Community Development Director)

Mr. Chen advised the proposed map amendment was to establish a Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District and the enabling legislation for this district was adopted by Council in 2012. Mr. Chen noted the petition to establish the district was filed with the Clerk of Council on November 8, 2013 and a resolution was adopted by City Council accepting the petition and forwarding the request to the Planning Commission for recommendations on December 3, 2103. Mr. Chen advised the Planning Commission reviewed the request on February 11, 2014 and several residents of the area were in attendance and spoke in favor of the overlay district. Mr. Chen noted the intent of this overlay district was to be a grass-roots effort which only altered one aspect of the permitted land uses (residential occupancy) and the base zoning regulations were retained. Mr. Chen advised without the overlay, a single dwelling unit could be rented to up to four unrelated persons and with the overlay, a single dwelling unit was limited to being rented to no more than two unrelated persons. Mr. Chen noted the Planning Commission recommended approval of the zoning map amendment having met the Decision Standards of Chapter 1146, and at least one Decision Standard of Chapter 1135. Mr. Chen advised 6 members of the Planning Commission were in attendance however, three were recused due to residency inside or within 200 feet of the subject area. Mr. Chen noted legal council confirmed that the three voting members with a vote of 3-0-0 constituted an approval of the recommendation to City Council.

Mayor McKeehan requested clarification on whether or not one of the parcels was inside or outside of the proposed overlay district based on a communication Council received earlier in the week. Mr. Chen advised the same person owned 6015 and 6005 Joseph Drive but only signed the petition for 6015 and therefore 6005 was not included in the proposed district.

Mr. Bill Fisher, 4883 James Road, advised he and Jennifer Blue brought the proposed petition to the Planning Commission. Mr. Fisher noted people in this neighborhood had talked about their concerns with rental properties for over 10 years. Mr. Fisher discussed previous attempts to deal with rental properties in this neighborhood that never came to fruition. Mr. Fisher noted now that procedures for an overlay district were in place he and Ms. Blue decided to move forward and obtain signatures for the petition.

Mayor McKeehan noted he appreciated the efforts of Mr. Fisher and Ms. Blue.

Mr. Vinny Cirrito, 4903 James Road, advised he lived within the proposed overlay district and the neighbors were excited about the map amendment. Mr. Cirrito noted his wife could not be in attendance but he wanted to express her thoughts. Mr. Cirrito advised his wife was from Oxford and used to live on Chestnut Street and watched Oxford change as students moved westward. Mr. Cirrito noted he and his wife wanted to live in the mile square but with the student population in the mile square it was too difficult to raise a family.

Mr. Cirrito advised his home on James Road afforded his family the ability to walk Uptown, to establishments on Lynn Street and to Kroger and they were in a nice single-family neighborhood. Mr. Cirrito noted the overlay district would allow neighbors to know that the neighborhood would not change and their fears could be put to rest. Mr. Cirrito advised he appreciated Council's consideration of the request.

Ms. Rousmaniere advised this process was laid out very carefully and it started with the Housing Advisory Commission. Ms. Rousmaniere noted it was a fairly complicated procedure and it was followed properly by the petitioners.

Mayor McKeehan noted the Housing Advisory Commission worked on this process for about two years and researched what other communities were doing and a lot of discussion took place. Mayor McKeehan noted he felt the overlay district would work well.

Mr. Keebler advised it was what Council intended when they adopted the enabling legislation and it made sense to approve the request.

Mr. Blackburn inquired if someone did not sign the petition and sold their property if they would have to go with the overlay district. Mayor McKeehan advised if there was already a rental permit it would not be affected. Mr. Blackburn noted Council had been approached by people who thought this was more like a taking because they were being told what they could and could not do with their property. Mr. Blackburn noted he felt it was good to preserve neighborhoods and inquired if legally Council was ok in doing this. Mr. McHugh advised the City attempted to put together a due process for citizens and if anyone was opposed to it they could have appeared tonight or at the Planning Commission hearing. Mayor McKeehan noted the enabling legislation contained a reversionary process. Mr. Keebler noted the overlay district could make a property more valuable not less valuable.

ORDINANCE **SECOND READING**

None.

DISCUSSION **ENERGY AGGREGATION**

Mr. Elliott referred to pages 53 and 54 of the agenda and noted the League of Women Voters of Oxford asked staff to look into the issue of energy aggregation for the City of Oxford. Mr. Elliott advised in Ohio local communities were allowed by law to join their citizens together to buy natural gas and/or electricity as a group and gain buying power to solicit the lowest price for the group's electric and/or natural gas needs. Mr. Elliott noted governmental energy aggregation for natural gas in Oxford was not possible as Glenwood Energy provided the natural gas service and the rate was not unbundled. Mr. Elliott advised he provided Council with a governmental aggregation fact sheet from the Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel which detailed the process for municipalities. Mr. Elliott noted his research indicated that most communities had adopted an 'opt-out' form of aggregation which automatically included all eligible consumers except for those who chose not to participate. Mr. Elliott advised Council would need to adopt legislation and the issue would be placed on the ballot for an opt-out program.

Mr. Elliott noted an opt-in program did not require a vote of the citizens and they would have to notify the City if they wished to be included in the program. Mr. Elliott advised presently Oxford consumers only had two choices (Duke Energy and the Electric Choice Program) for the generation component of their energy needs noting electric service was unbundled and included generation, transmission and distribution components. Mr. Elliott recommended that the City of Oxford moved forward with establishing a Governmental Electric Aggregation program and noted currently approximately 50% of Duke residential customers in Oxford had switched energy providers. Mr. Elliott advised if Council and the residents adopted an opt-out program the residents would benefit from a Governmental Aggregation Program rate. Mr. Elliott noted the downside was that the City would have to accept responsibility for establishing the program and any additional administrative costs although the additional administrative costs could be included in the negotiated consumer rate. Mr. Elliott advised if a resident used on average 1,000 kWh per month, a \$0.01 reduction in the electric generation cost would equal an annual savings of \$120.00. Mr. Elliott noted the League of Women Voters asked staff to refer this matter to the Environmental Commission for recommendations however, if Council wanted it in place for the November ballot legislation would need to be adopted in the near future.

Mr. Keebler inquired what the administrative costs consisted of other than the cost for the bid process. Mr. Elliott advised residents would need to be notified of the program by letter, an Ordinance would have to be drafted for the ballot issue, public hearings would need to take place and the City had to provide information to the PUCO to certify the City as an aggregator. Mr. Elliott noted the largest expense would be for negotiating the contract. Mr. Keebler advised he wanted to know what the effect on staff was because residents could sign up for the program now on their own.

Mayor McKeehan inquired if staff had talked with similar communities who participated in an aggregation program and Mr. Elliott advised yes, and their experiences had been positive.

Ms. Southard noted not everyone had access to a computer or the time or energy to evaluate the program and Council needed to protect those citizens who did not have the time, energy or resources to negotiate this on their own. Ms. Southard noted she felt the City should offer this program to the community.

Mayor McKeehan noted an opt-out situation was not always accepted as a positive trait. Mr. Elliott advised there would be an educational process for citizens and noted the City of Forest Park had the issue on their ballot and it failed.

Mr. Wright Gwyn, 505 W. Chestnut Street, advised he worked for the City of Forest Park which was one of the few cities that declined to participate in Governmental Energy Aggregation. Mr. Gwyn noted it had been on Forest Park's ballot twice and failed. Mr. Gwyn advised there was little promotion or education the first time the issue was on the ballot and the second time there was more education and it failed. Mr. Gwyn noted many residents of the Forest Park community did not like 'Big Government' or the government meddling with their utility bills. Mr. Gwyn advised he didn't like the program at first but now he felt there were a lot of good reasons to explore it and there were positive aspects of the program.

Ms. Rousmaniere referred to the League of Women Voter's letter on page 53 of the agenda which stated they wanted to better understand Ohio's goal of having a Renewable Energy Portfolio that would account for 25% by 2025. Ms. Rousmaniere noted the City of Cincinnati accepted the concept of Governmental Energy Aggregation in 2012 and their proposal opted for 100% of its supply to be from renewable sources. Ms. Rousmaniere advised in terms of garnering support and providing education she had concerns about the impact on staff. Ms. Rousmaniere noted the renewable aspect could attract a lot of people to promote Governmental Energy Aggregation in ways that might help out.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Elliott advised he met with Chief Detherage and Councilor Keebler today on the Fire Station addition project and the architect was getting close to completing the plans. Mr. Elliott noted a supplemental appropriation Ordinance would be on the next Council agenda so funds were in place for the project when the bids were received. Mr. Elliott advised once the bids were received a Resolution for the construction of the project would come before Council.

Mr. Dreisbach noted he was looking forward to warm weather. Mayor McKeehan thanked Mr. Dreisbach and the Service Department staff for their great work during this trying winter season.

Mr. Smith commended Chief Detherage and Chief Holzworth noting they did a great job of handling the train incident on the 21st. Mr. Smith stated he felt the traffic management and moving a fire truck to the west side of town was very proactive.

Ms. Rousmaniere advised former Councilor Kate Currie was getting ready for the Oxford Kinetics Festival which would take place in April. Ms. Rousmaniere noted on Sunday from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Oxford Community Arts Center a Kinetic Picture Show was planned with the screening of a number of very short independent movies about bikes from around the world. Ms. Rousmaniere advised there would be a pot-luck dinner and encouraged everyone to bring food, beverages, cocktails or snacks. Ms. Rousmaniere noted the event was free of charge but donations would be appreciated.

Ms. Southard thanked the League of Women Voters for bringing the aggregation issue forward noting she felt it was a good thing to do for the community. Ms. Southard noted the 2014 Government Services Directory published by the League of Women Voters was available at local banks and other places all over town. Ms. Southard noted Nixle was a great information source and encouraged everyone to sign up for the service. Ms. Southard advised she was attending the Oxford Citizen Police Academy which was very informative and a wonderful program for citizens to get involved in.

Mr. Blackburn thanked Mr. Prytherch and Mr. Chen and all involved for their work on the Oxford Bike and Pedestrian Safety Improvement Plan noting he felt it was good for the community. Mr. Blackburn thanked the Service Department for keeping the 'White Death' away.

ADJOURN

Mr. Keebler moved to adjourn at 9:26 p.m. Mr. Blackburn seconded. The motion passed 6-0-0.