

A Regular meeting of the Oxford City Council was called to order by Mayor Kevin McKeehan on Tuesday, June 3, 2014 at 7:30 p.m. Those members present were Bob Blackburn, Kate Rousmaniere, Mike Smith and Edna Southard. Richard Keebler and Steve Snyder were excused.

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor McKeehan requested the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Smith moved to approve the agenda. Ms. Rousmaniere seconded. The motion passed 5-0-0.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

PROCLAMATION **'CHARLIE COLES DAY'**

Mayor McKeehan read the Proclamation and advised it would be read again and presented to family members on Thursday in the Uptown Park prior to the Music Festival.

NOTICE TO **LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY**

Notice to Legislative Authority – Transfer from Stadium Club of Oxford Inc. DBA Stadium Club 16 S. Poplar Street and Patio Oxford, Ohio 45056 to Poplar 16 LLC 16 S. Poplar Street and Patio Oxford, Ohio 45056.

Chief Holzworth noted Mr. Kyger was out of town but left him some very good notes on the liquor permit transfers. Chief Holzworth advised the recent sale of the 16 S. Poplar Street property included the liquor licenses for the site and Poplar 16 LLC was a real estate firm and did not plan to use the permits. Chief Holzworth noted Poplar 16 LLC was transferring the permits into their name and would place them in 'Safekeeping' with the State of Ohio while the property at 16 S. Poplar Street was being redeveloped. Chief Holzworth advised once the site was redeveloped, the owner of the permits may sell them to the eventual commercial user of the site, or may sell them to another user at another entity.

Ms. Rousmaniere moved to accept the notice without comment. Mr. Blackburn seconded. The motion passed 5-0-0.

**NOTICE TO
LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY**

Notice to Legislative Authority – Transfer from First Round Draft Inc. DBA O Pub 10 West Park Place First Floor Oxford, Ohio 45056 to LFT Inc. DBA Left Field Tavern 12 W. Park Place Oxford, Ohio 45056.

Chief Holzworth advised this was a transfer of a permit which was currently in ‘Safekeeping’ with the State of Ohio. Chief Holzworth noted in 2013, the Taj Mahal restaurant on Locust Street went out of business and Ted Wood purchased the liquor permits for use at a restaurant he was developing at 12 W. Park Place. Chief Holzworth advised because the restaurant at 12 W. Park Place was not ready and he was required to use the permits immediately, Mr. Wood transferred the Taj Mahal permits to O Pub and placed the existing O Pub permit into Safekeeping. Chief Holzworth noted with the restaurant at 12 W. Park Place opening this summer/fall, the O Pub permit was being transferred out of Safekeeping to the new restaurant.

Mayor McKeehan noted a representative from the business was in attendance and asked Ms. Wood if she had any comments. Ms. Wood noted she felt the summary provided by Chief Holzworth was correct.

Ms. Rousmaniere inquired if liquor permits could be transferred between properties and if they were purchased. Chief Holzworth advised yes, and money changed hands depending on the nature of the transfer. Ms. Rousmaniere inquired if a legislative review took place with transfers. Chief Holzworth advised that was what Council was doing now and the Ohio Division of Liquor Control was fully aware of the transfer. Mr. McHugh advised the statute provided that Council could adopt legislation and take certain actions if they deemed upon review that a particular establishment had significant problems with underage drinking, violence, fights, etc. and it would fall to the Law Director to file an appeal. Mayor McKeehan noted he felt correct in saying that Mr. Wood’s other establishments had a good record and Chief Holzworth noted that would be accurate.

Mr. Blackburn moved to accept the notice. Ms. Southard seconded. The motion passed 5-0-0 .

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Prue Dana, 6314 Fairfield Road, advised she wanted to speak to Council regarding Oxford Habitat for Humanity noting 2 years ago she worked on a faith build with 8 churches from June to October and two houses were built on Carter Circle off of Hester Road. Ms. Dana advised last year 2 houses were built with the help of Miami University students, and this year Habitat of Greater Cincinnati (which Oxford is part of) was building 2 more houses. Ms. Dana advised Butler County was funding the houses with a request that they be finished by November. Ms. Dana noted she was approaching entities including the City, United Way, realtors, etc. to recruit workers to work on Saturdays over the summer. Ms. Dana advised 4 City employees expressed interest in working July 12th or July 26th or both and this opportunity was open to Council members, members of Boards or Commissions and employees. Ms. Dana noted Ron Overly was the site director and tools were provided for the work day which was 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. with lunch being provided.

Ms. Dana advised Habitat homes were not given away, families were selected, they had to be working and able to pay a mortgage that paid for the materials and work on their house which was called sweat equity. Ms. Dana noted she would keep Council updated on the progress and encouraged people affiliated with the City to put July 12th or July 26th on their calendar and come out for a day of working together.

Mayor McKeehan thanked Ms. Dana for the report.

Mr. Steve Dana, 6314 Fairfield Road, advised as Council knew, Miami University was engaged in the creation of east and west bike lanes on Spring Street between Campus Avenue and Patterson Avenue. Mr. Dana noted it was extremely important to accommodate bicycle riders for the area of Spring Street going from east to west that met Campus Avenue to also have bike lanes. Mr. Dana described biking across the intersection of College Avenue and Spring Street going east and noted the road was like a modest bubble, to the right was a trough, and beside that was the sidewalk. Mr. Dana advised biking along there you are very close to the cars and if you go into the trough and skid, you'll go right against the curb. Mr. Dana noted sharrows won't cut it. Mr. Dana advised it was essential for safety to have bike lanes and asked Council to strongly consider what was necessary for safety along Spring Street.

Mr. Wright Gwyn, 505 W. Chestnut Street, advised he was speaking to Council as a resident and a homeowner in Oxford. Mr. Gwyn stated he had been very frustrated especially over the last couple of days. Mr. Gwyn noted he wondered if his frustration was due to the rumored intentions of the City Manager to recommend that bike lanes not be installed on Spring Street noting he hoped that was just a rumor considering all of the work that had gone into it. Mr. Gwyn noted he wondered if his frustration was because a community effort had taken place over a 20 year period incorporating several bike and pedestrian studies, countless meetings and a recently approved comprehensive plan and we still did not have tangible progress on this one project. Mr. Gwyn advised he watched other communities and universities across the country develop cadillac plans and thinking far into the future to develop a community based on this mode of travel and when he sees what we're doing over the last 20 years that was frustration. Mr. Gwyn inquired if it was so difficult to provide a safe and healthy environment for people to ride bikes. Mr. Gwyn noted David Prytherch once said he had a family, young kids, and he needed those bike lanes. Mr. Gwyn advised if we were going to develop something for the community we needed to think about bike lanes for the protection of bicyclists, pedestrians, kids and families. Mr. Gwyn noted he was the Environmental Manager for the City of Forest Park and he constantly read about these programs and felt they were a 'win-win' for the community, the environment, for residents, for businesses and for landlords. Mr. Gwyn advised he was frustrated because he was beginning to see history repeat itself and if we start throwing roadblocks in these plans, if we pick them apart and don't think of them as a comprehensive program on a long term scale then we were going to revisit what we've been revisiting for the last 20 years. Mr. Gwyn implored City Council and staff not to give up as this because it was a great project noting even though it was difficult it was worthwhile and beneficial. Mr. Gwyn thanked City Council and staff for their time.

Mr. Larry Rankin, 610 French Drive, noted during the next few months the school district's plans for constructing the new Kramer School would significantly advance. Mr. Rankin advised unlike the district's other 4 schools which were built in open fields out of the City, the new Kramer School would be built at the current Kramer School site surrounded by City neighborhoods. Mr. Rankin noted while construction takes place the current Kramer School will continue to operate. Mr. Rankin advised the overall management of the construction would be shared between the school district and the State of Ohio and he felt appropriate City officials should offer their expertise to the district's planners during this critical phase especially regarding the safety and security of the children and others during the construction itself and while the old school was demolished. Mr. Rankin inquired if the City could improve the vehicular traffic control at the school's limited access points at the intersection of W. Sycamore and N. Locust Streets and noted vehicles included: teachers and parent's cars, school buses, supply trucks, construction vehicles and heavy equipment. Mr. Rankin noted his related safety concern had to do with improving the children's access to the school whether they were walking or bicycling to and from the school. Mr. Rankin suggested we work together now to make the wise decisions necessary to complete this project as safely as possible and provide a new school that the community would be proud of and which would protect all of its occupants in the best possible way. Mr. Rankin thanked Council for their time.

CONSENT AGENDA

Ms. Rousmaniere requested removal of item C. HAPC Report for discussion.

MINUTES

Minutes of the May 20, 2014 City Council Meeting. (Mary Ann Eaton, Clerk of Council)

REPORTS

Report regarding the May 14, 2014 Board of Zoning Appeals Meeting. (Jung-Han Chen, Community Development Director)

Mr. Smith moved to approve the consent agenda items A. and B. Mr. Blackburn seconded. The motion passed 5-0-0.

REPORT

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

Ms. Rousmaniere referred to the report on page 23 of the agenda regarding a construction plan for 48-56 E. Park Place also known as the Sigma Chi Foundation Building. Ms. Rousmaniere asked Mr. Chen to explain what the HAPC decided at their last meeting regarding the plan.

Mr. Chen advised the applicant filed the HAPC application to demolish the back portion of the Sigma Chi building noting the museum and the Community Foundation office would stay intact and only the back portion facing Park Place would be demolished.

Mr. Chen advised the applicant was proposing to build a small addition to accommodate existing occupants of the building. Mr. Chen noted before the Special Meeting 2 members of the HAPC walked through the portion that was the subject of the application and based on the walk through they made a presentation to the rest of the HAPC members. Mr. Chen advised based on the criteria the HAPC could not find two criteria required to approve the demolition request. Mr. Chen noted the HAPC agreed on the cost of upgrade but could not find other criteria to satisfy the application requesting demolition. Ms. Rousmaniere noted that because it was a historic building it needed special approval to be demolished. Mr. Chen advised any building in the Historic District needed HAPC approval for demolition. Ms. Rousmaniere inquired what options the application had. Mr. Chen noted the applicant could appeal the HAPC decision to the Board of Zoning Appeals in 21 days or they could revise the plan.

Mr. Smith moved to accept the HAPC report. Mr. Blackburn seconded. The motion passed 5-0-0.

RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION **OVERLAY DISTRICT** **PETITION**

A Resolution No. 4836 of Council accepting the petition to establish a Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District as set forth on Exhibit "A" attached hereto and referring the petition to the Oxford Planning Commission for recommendations to City Council. (Jung-Han Chen, Community Development Director)

Mr. Chen advised approximately 6 months ago Council heard a similar petition for the first Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District for the area of James, Joseph and Dick Streets. Mr. Chen noted this would be the second one encompassing 17 parcels and there were 10 signatures on the petition. Mr. Chen advised the first step in this process was for Council to accept the petition and forward the request to the Planning Commission for their recommendations to Council. Mr. Chen noted this was a neighborhood driven petition to try to preserve the character and attractiveness of the neighborhood by limiting residential properties to be rented to no more than 2 unrelated individuals. Mr. Chen advised this process included one more step than the typical zoning map amendment. Mr. Chen noted the petitioner, Allan Winkler was in attendance.

Mr. Allan Winkler, 925 Cedar Drive, advised he lived on Cedar Drive in the neighborhood Mr. Chen just mentioned and he had lived there for 28 years. Mr. Winkler noted he was one of the older residents of the neighborhood that was developed by David Scotford years and years ago. Mr. Winkler advised during the course of that time it had functioned as a real neighborhood with children growing up and playing in the streets. Mr. Winkler noted the neighbors usually had 3 block parties each year and it had been good for everyone living there. Mr. Winkler noted a house across from him was being advertised as a rental and the petition was an effort to preserve the neighborhood as the residents knew it and have enjoyed.

Mr. Winkler advised the residents were encouraged that another neighborhood was successful in this effort and he and his neighbors were asking for the opportunity to be successful in the same way.

Ms. Rousmaniere inquired what the timeline was for this matter to go before the Planning Commission. Mr. Chen advised it would be August as any case going before the Planning Commission involved a 45 day notification process. Ms. Rousmaniere inquired what would happen if a rental permit was issued before then. Mr. Chen advised nothing could be done but if the rental permit expired the property could be reverted back to single-family. Mr. Winkler noted the residents were concerned with the timeline and approached an attorney regarding when a rental permit could be issued and what happened if there was legislation pending and they had no firm answers yet. Mr. Blackburn advised if the property could only be rented to 4 unrelated people the owners may not be able to make that work financially. Mr. Blackburn encouraged Mr. Winkler to proceed with the overlay district process and let it take its course as they may or may not end up with a rental property on Cedar Drive. Mayor McKeehan inquired about rental property on Chestnut Street.

Ms. Christine House Shumway, 1000 Cedar Drive, advised the house at the corner of Chestnut and Cedar used to be a divided duplex and she was told by a renter that the owner came to the City and had it rezoned for 8 tenants and he was able to do that because it had originally been two houses. Ms. House Shumway noted she had no knowledge about the property next to the cemetery.

Mayor McKeehan commended Mr. Winkler and the residents for their efforts and wished them luck in retaining their neighborhood.

Ms. Rousmaniere moved to adopt Resolution No. 4836. Ms. Southard seconded. The motion passed 5-0-0.

RESOLUTION

MUTUAL AID AGREEMENT

A Resolution No. 4837 authorizing the City Manager to enter into the updated Hazardous Materials Mutual Aid Agreement with other political subdivisions in Butler County. (Doug Elliott, City Manager)

Mr. Elliott advised for the past year, the Hazardous Materials Cooperative Board had been meeting to discuss the current Hazardous Materials Mutual Aid Agreement between the Butler County jurisdictions and the Butler County Hazardous Materials Response Units. Mr. Elliott noted the original agreement was signed in 1991 and the Co-Op Board felt it was necessary to update the current agreement to reflect current capabilities and response in hazardous materials incidents. Mr. Elliott advised the Hazardous Materials Co-Op Board worked with response units, the Butler County EMA and the Prosecutor's Office to update the agreement. Mr. Elliott noted the proposed Resolution authorized the City Manager to sign an updated hazardous materials mutual aid agreement with other political subdivisions in Butler County and he recommended adoption of the Resolution.

Mayor McKeehan inquired if there were any comments from the public and there were none.

Mayor McKeehan inquired if Chief Detherage was in favor of the new agreement and Mr. Elliott advised yes.

Ms. Southard inquired if this Resolution was done each year. Mr. Elliott advised no, and noted the last Resolution was adopted in 1991.

Mr. Smith moved to adopt Resolution No. 4837. Mr. Blackburn seconded. The motion passed 5-0-0.

ORDINANCE
FIRST READING

ORDINANCE
2015 TAX BUDGET

An Ordinance Authorizing The Tax Budget For The Year 2015 And Directing That The Same Be Transmitted To The Butler County Auditor. (Joe Newlin, Finance Director)

Mr. Newlin advised this was the beginning of the budgeting process for 2015 and noted the tax budget had to be passed and sent to the Butler County Auditor by July 20, 2014. Mr. Newlin advised the auditor wanted to make sure municipalities had enough property tax revenue to meet their general obligation debt. Mr. Newlin noted he mirrored last years budget for the tax budget with some exceptions. Mr. Newlin advised he increased income tax receipts in the General Fund by 1.5%. Mr. Newlin noted the advance to the Capital Improvement Fund was a lot less last year because the City had been advancing money for the purchase of right-of-way on 27 South. Mr. Newlin advised he increased the amount of money for RITA's retainer and the amount of refunds was based on the 1.5% increase. Mr. Newlin noted the Park Debt Service increased \$2,500. Mr. Newlin advised in the past there was general obligation debt in the Water Fund and that was getting paid off this year which would free up \$890,000 going forward that could be used to pay cash for improvements.

Mayor McKeehan inquired if there were any comments from the public or from Council and there were none.

ORDINANCE
SECOND READING

ORDINANCE
SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET

An Ordinance No. 3274 Amending Ordinance No. 3249. Supplemental Budget Ordinance Number 4 To Make Supplemental Appropriations For Fiscal Year 2014. Joe Newlin, Finance Director)

Mr. Newlin referred to page 55 of the agenda and discussed a change he made since the first reading of the proposed Ordinance.

Mayor McKeehan inquired if there were any comments from the public or from Council and there were none.

Ms. Rousmaniere moved to adopt Ordinance No. 3274. Mr. Blackburn seconded. The Ordinance was adopted by the following roll call:

AYE: Ms. Rousmaniere, Mr. Smith, Ms. Southard, Mr. Blackburn, Mayor McKeehan (5)

NAY: None (0)

ABS: None (0)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Elliott advised some comments were made earlier this evening about bike lanes and noted Council adopted a Bike and Pedestrian Safety Improvement Plan in March of this year. Mr. Elliott advised there was some discussion about adding bike lanes on Spring Street and he shared with Council that staff would make a recommendation on that issue at a later date. Mr. Elliott noted he also shared with Council that he wanted to notify property owners about the possibility of eliminating the parking spaces on Spring Street from Campus Avenue to College Avenue. Mr. Elliott advised a survey was sent to the property owners and he provided Council with the results noting the property owners that did respond were not in favor of eliminating the parking spaces which was not a surprise to anyone. Mr. Elliott noted he spent a lot of time thinking about the issue of bike lanes on Spring Street and discussed it with staff on several occasions. Mr. Elliott advised last week he sent an email to Council recommending that we shared the road with bicyclists and not eliminate parking. Mr. Elliott noted Council had busy schedules this summer and would be absent from some meetings so he and Ms. Rousmaniere decided to have a discussion tonight regarding bike lanes and Council could vote on it at a later date by Resolution. Mr. Elliott advised that would also be the time for the public to speak on the matter. Mr. Elliott noted he had been the City Manager since 2007 and he tried to do things deliberately and tried to balance all of the interests for bicyclist's safety, property owners and residents so he recommended sharing the road and not eliminating parking. Mr. Elliott advised he and Mr. Dreisbach would present what he felt was a 'middle of the road' approach that might preserve parking and improve bicycle safety. Mr. Elliott suggested painting bike lanes on Spring Street from Campus to Main on the north side of the street where parking was so there would be parking as well as a 4' bike lane and signage for sharing the road on the south side of the street. Mr. Elliott noted Mr. Dreisbach would give more details and show a slide of this proposal.

Mr. Dreisbach advised the issue was the fate of 41 parking spaces noting the road in most places was not wide enough to accommodate 2 travel lanes, dedicated bike lanes and parking and at some point we needed to choose what we were going to do. Mr. Dreisbach noted the decision was being driven based on the City's paving contract and advised Spring Street was being rebuilt in places and resurfaced from Patterson Avenue to Main Street and staff needed a decision on how to stripe and sign the roadway to the west of Main Street from Main Street to College Avenue. Mr. Dreisbach advised the first 2 blocks west of Campus Avenue were about 37' wide between curbs and currently there was no parking on the south curb and 1 lane of parking on the north curb.

Mr. Dreisbach noted the next 2 blocks were 30' so 7' of roadway was lost between curbs. Mr. Dreisbach advised the choices boiled down to the parking lane and a decision needed to be made. Mr. Dreisbach noted Miami University purchased the former high school on Chestnut Street and they were committed to building a new surface lot there that could potentially accommodate displaced vehicles. Mr. Dreisbach advised if Council wanted to keep a parking lane on Spring Street we could accommodate a dedicated bike lane on the north side of the road and a shared use on the southern lane to Main Street. Mr. Dreisbach noted from there the road was 30' and wouldn't accommodate that. Mr. Dreisbach advised if the parking lane was retained the only choice would be to have sharrows in both directions and if parking was eliminated there could be 2 travel lanes and 2 bike lanes.

Mr. Elliott noted there were some options and he would present a Resolution to Council which they could vote for or against or make changes to it.

Ms. Rousmaniere inquired if the Resolution would come before Council on August 5th and Mr. Elliott advised he would like to do it sooner but he also wanted to respect everyone's schedule.

Mr. Blackburn inquired if the paving project would be delayed and Mr. Dreisbach advised the paving project was scheduled to begin July 21st and he would like to have Council's decision a few weeks ahead of time.

Ms. Rousmaniere advised this was an issue she had been very involved with and she had a long statement to make and afterward she would email it to the clerk for the record. Ms. Rousmaniere noted she wanted people to have this information because it was not an opinion, it was data regarding the work that had been done the last 3-20 years on this issue. Ms. Rousmaniere read the following into the record:

"I'm so happy to see the topic of the implementation of one phase of the City of Oxford Bike and Pedestrian Safety Improvement Plan raised at tonight's meeting. This is what the *Oxford Press* called a few months ago "the long gestating" Bike and Pedestrian Safety Improvement Plan.

I am disappointed in the City Manager's recommendation to develop sharrows (share the road markings on the pavement) and not institute designated bicycle lanes or eliminate parking on Spring St.

For reasons that I explain below, I believe this is the perfect time to develop a designated bike lane on both sides of Spring St. and to eliminate parking on the north side of Spring St., between at least Campus Ave and Main St.

I have 3 main points and a recommendation below.

FIRST POINT: REVIEW I think it's worth reviewing our history here to see where we are. There has been significant community discussion about improving bicycle safety and pathways for the last 20 years.

Most recently:

1. Multiple IES (Institute for Environmental Sciences, Miami University) public service projects in 1990s and 2000s for the Oxford Planning Commission analyzed the need and support for bike safety improvements, and possible routes. (*Note: a 1997 IES report for the Planning Commission recommended designated bike lanes on Spring St.*)
2. In 2011, Planning Commission and Council agreed in a work session to make pedestrian and bike safety a priority.
3. The Planning Commission worked with IES student to set goals, analyze existing conditions, study best practices, and recommend improvements. Joint work sessions with Environmental Commission and Parking and Transportation Advisory Board were held to provide feedback, public comments solicited (all positive).
4. Spring 2012, the Draft "Shifting Gears" plan presented in PC public session, extensive public comments received (10+ all positive), presented and finalized Spring 2012.
5. Spring 2012, Planning Commission recommends "Shifting Gears" to Council for adoption as a planning document, along with set of identified priority corridors for further technical analysis. Public comments were received at Planning Commission. *Note* as part of the short term (0-2 years) plan of "Shifting Gears," "on-street bicycle lanes" are recommended on Spring Street from Patterson St. to McGuffey Ave (page 52).
6. City staff -- team from OPD, Comm. Dev., Service and Engineering -- spends 1 year analyzing priority corridors, reports back to Planning Commission in Summer 2013.
7. Planning Commission subcommittee works with staff to review and refine list of short and medium term recommendations. That year, the Pedestrian and Bike Plan was one of three agenda items for Planning Commission.
8. Recommendations presented in public input session in January 2014, more than 30 people attend, comments all positive.

Note: there was extensive publicity for this January 2014 event:
public announcement in Oxford Press
Council announcement
Great signs tacked around town—"Let's Get Rolling"
The opportunity for comments was posted on the City website.

Indeed, in the last 16 months there have been at least eight articles in the *Oxford Press* and *Hamilton Journal News* on the topic of the City of Oxford Bike and Pedestrian Safety Improvement Plan, plus letters to the editor, a League of Women Voters forum on the topic, attention to the topic by the Senior Center, and a Safe Route to School group. Also, some promotion and individual public comments at Council.

As a very public advocate of this initiative, I have been waiting for push back, and have heard none from Oxford citizens. They know how to reach me.

9. February 11, 2014. Planning Commission recommends to City Council to add the City of Oxford Bike and Pedestrian Safety Improvement Plan to the Comprehensive Plan, to be attached as part of the Transportation Chapter. Public input was received prior to vote. There was a specific request for Planning Commission to stay in communication with Council on the implementation of the Plan.

Oxford Parking and Transportation Advisory Board votes unanimously to recommend

removal of parking along Spring Street in support of pedestrian and bike safety plan.

10. In Spring 2014, Council passed a resolution to accept the Planning Commissions recommendation, and approves City of Oxford Bike and Pedestrian Safety Improvement Plan, incorporating the same into the Transportation chapter of the Oxford Comprehensive Plan.

There was much Council discussion here on what this acceptance means: the City of Oxford Bike and Pedestrian Safety Improvement Plan is not a zoning code, but it provides “elevated guidance” (according to City attorney)

The City of Oxford Bike and Pedestrian Safety Improvement Plan, with map, is posted on City website.

The City has a long history of commitment to improving bicycle safety and pathways. It is time to put the plan in motion to recognize the bicyclists rights by providing dedicated bike lanes on our City streets. Because the Spring St. is being reworked and repaved, this is the time to have dedicated bike lanes.

SECOND POINT: SAFETY

The topic under discussion here is a bike and pedestrian *safety* plan.

And in terms of safety- -Sharrows don’t help.

Sharrows—arrows painted on the road that indicate that bikes can ride there—are about the equivalent of the “Share the Road” signs that indicate to cars that bikes are here, but they don’t give bikes any actual, authorized place to be.

Bike lanes adjacent to parked cars are also a problem because there is significant danger of riding past a parked car and a car door opening out into the bike.

Bicyclists have the same legal rights and responsibilities as drivers of cars, but they do not have the protection of a large metal frame. Bicyclists, like pedestrians, need extra protection, especially on a busy thoroughfare.

Designated bike lanes provide a safe, contained location for bicyclists.

This is about safety: This is, I believe, a main reason why Miami University made their plan on Spring St.

THIRD POINT: PARKING

This issue of a bike lane on a few blocks of Spring St. comes to Council because some think this is a controversial decision because of the potential removal of 40 parking spaces on Spring St.

Let’s review the issues here.

1. Streets are public. They belong to the city. Private properties do not have a “right” to claim a designated parking space on a public street.

2. Street decisions are usually staff decisions—for example, the addition of meters on Campus Ave and Main St in recent years were not voted on by Council.
3. We do sometimes have public participation on street issues; for example over issues of
 - a. Safety (dangerous intersection and request for a stop sign or lowering speed limit)
 - b. Commerce—will a proposed change hurt the opportunity for economic development or the success of a business?
4. The City has instituted two designated bike lanes on city roads recently, and the process for that decision is instructive. Some years ago, the City created bike lanes on Bishop and University Drs, and abolished parking on one side of the street, with, as far as we can tell, no public discussion, forums, or Council approval. And these are both very high residential neighborhoods, with almost identical housing population as Spring St. (the streets may have also been turned into one-way street—the records are unclear, in part because there was no formal discussion)

Presumably, Spring Street is different, because here we are having this debate.

I agree that Spring St. *is* different in this way:

1. all but two of the houses on Spring St., between Campus and College, are rental properties
2. presumably all are rented to Miami University students
3. Spring St borders on and cuts *right through* campus, so it actually is more accessible to campus than Bishop or University streets (location of first city bike lanes)
4. New BCRTA bus line runs down Spring St. directly to campus
5. Campus Ave parking garage and City parking garage are within 5 blocks of most houses on Spring St.
6. Miami University proposed plan to turn make a long-term parking lot at THS building—about 6/10th of a mile away from most houses on Spring St.
7. Spring St. is also a major artery of the city, with lots of traffic
8. Spring St between Patterson and Campus Ave will have bikes lanes beginning in August— as the result of a long term plan of the University (Miami University Circulation Plan, July 2011, page 28-34)

Nonetheless, Council asked for an unprecedented survey of property owners on Spring St. to ask their opinion of the removal of parking on the public street and the creation of bike lanes between Campus and College Aves.

Here is a review of the results of that survey:

On this length of Spring St between Campus Ave and College Ave there are

23 property owners
37 properties
all but two are rentals

- 5 of the 23 property owners responded to the survey (5 of 23 means about 20% of all property owners of the designated area).
- All of those who responded were landlords (e.g. no single family homeowners responded)

- The 5 property owners collectively own 14 rental properties on Spring St. or less than half of all the 37 properties in the designated area.
- All of the 5 of the 23 property owners who responded returned the survey said they did not want the removal of public city street parking outside or near their properties.

Perhaps they made that request because they feel that they need public city street parking for their tenants?

Let's review the off-street parking status of those properties:

According to the Spring Street Parking Analysis that was prepared by staff, here is a review of the off-street parking facilities of the 14 properties of which the landlords object to the removal of public street parking:

- 2 meet the city requirement for off-street parking
- 6 have *more* off-street parking than the city requires
- 3 have *less* off-street parking than the city requires
- 3 are lodging houses—non-conforming—and their off-street parking facilities are inconsistent (one lodging house has 6 off-street parking spots for an occupancy of 7; another has 14 off-street parking spots for occupancy of 35).

FOURTH POINT: REVIEW & RECOMMENDATIONS

This is about safety and it's about a city vision.

It's also about a democratic process and, as I reminded us earlier, the proposal for a designated bike lane on Spring St. is part of an extensive plan with lots of public input, from the creation of the "Shifting Gears" plan through to approval of the plan by Planning Commission and City Council.

2008 Comp Plan, Transportation Chapter (Chapter 5)—which now includes the City of Oxford Bike and Pedestrian Safety Improvement Plan-- originally recommended

1. promoting alternative modes of transportation (city wide public transportation system and promoting a wider pedestrian and bicycle network throughout Oxford) (Objective 2)
2. Manage parking within Mile Square

Note that the approved Shifting Gears plan recommends as part of the short term (0-2 years) plan, "on-street bicycle lanes" on Spring Street from Patterson to McGuffey (page 52). And note that the Oxford Parking and Transportation Advisory Board voted unanimously to recommend removal of parking along Spring Street in support of pedestrian and bike safety plan.

So, given all this evidence, how can we think about our charge here?

Let's think about kids—college kids, high school kids, young children—and their accessibility around town.

Let's think about the argument made by tourism directors all over the country—including our own Jessica Greene-- and innumerable studies that show that bike lanes increase visitors and commerce.

Let's think about the city's relationship with Miami University, which is placing designated bike lanes on Spring St. from Patterson to Campus Aves, on both sides of the street, and eliminating on-street parking. Then let's think about what it will look like if there is a full-fledged bike lane for the equivalent of 4-5 blocks, which then stops abruptly when the road enters the city.

Let's think about innumerable cities—large and small, in the north and south—that in the last 5 years have instituted bike safety trails. It's a big cultural shift, and Miami University is actually leading the way in our community here.

And let's think about the many people over the last 20+ years, and particularly in the last 3 years—who have stood before us, come to multiple public meetings, written letters, and joined in discussions promoting our bike and pedestrian safety plan—also approved by this Council and Planning Commission.

And let's think about finances:

The City has limited financial resource to continue to maintain and improve roadways on an annual basis to accommodate automobiles only. Every year, we, the City Council, discusses and debates how a finite resource can be divided up to maintain the services.

There are overwhelming studies and reports to support healthy living by walking and biking.

Let's look at biking and walking as a sustainable way of spending tax dollars since walking and biking does not wear and tear the roadway system as much as 2000 lb. vehicles. The long-term cost of walking and biking, logically, will be less burdensome—physically and financially-- to our roadway.

More about finances: there are multiple studies that show that increased biking and walking spurs economic economy. There are specific studies, that have been referred to often in the last 20 years of this community work, that show how bike lanes in particular increase housing values and a community's economic development.

Improved biking and walking facilities are good for our health and good for our economy.

Recommendation

I recommend that the City develop a designated bike lane on both sides of Spring Street, from Campus Ave to Main St. and eliminate parking and that we do that this summer, so that when Miami University students return in mid-August, there will be continuous on street designated bicycle lane from Patterson Ave to Main St.

I recommend that in consultation with City staff, we review the situation from Main Street to College, where the road narrows, but that we continue all of our approved upon recommendations to develop a bike safety plan through to McGuffey Ave. “

Ms. Rousmaniere noted another problem with sharrows was that bicyclists were sharing the road with cars and advised she was riding west on Spring Street today and stopped at the stop sign at Main and Spring where there was a significant hill. Ms. Rousmaniere noted she slowed traffic down because she could only ride up the hill so fast. Ms. Rousmaniere advised she was going to submit these notes for the record so Council could review them over the rest of the summer noting it was important data. Ms. Rousmaniere noted a ton of research had already been done and this was not new material. Ms. Rousmaniere advised many recommendations had been made and many studies had been done and suggested that Council referred to them and referred to the decisions that had already been made.

Mr. Elliott advised he would talk with Ms. Rousmaniere and he would have something on the agenda as the City needed to get this project done before the students returned.

Ms. Southard endorsed Ms. Rousmaniere's presentation noting it was excellent and outlined the positions and the data very clearly. Ms. Southard endorsed the idea of dedicated bike lanes on both sides of Spring Street so it was safe going to and from Miami's campus. Ms. Southard noted this was a quality of life issue for the community and it was for the safety of bicyclists as well as drivers. Ms. Southard noted she felt it was about time the City got with the program and cooperated with the university as they were on the cutting edge of this issue.

Mr. Elliott updated Council and the public regarding Municipal Electric Aggregation noting it would be a ballot issue for the City in November. Mr. Elliott noted he, Mr. Kyger and Mr. Dreisbach had met with two energy brokers so far who would assist in establishing the program if adopted by the voters in the fall. Mr. Elliott advised the broker would provide voter information prior to the election, obtain PUCO approval, assist with public hearings, energy bidding and contracting, and opt out notifications. Mr. Elliott noted staff would probably meet with at least one other energy broker and make a recommendation to Council for selecting one of the firms.

Mr. Elliott advised President David Hodge invited the City to participate in a Task Force on Sexual Assault with Miami University. Mr. Elliott noted the letter he and Chief Holzworth received proposed to "form a joint task force, to explore ways in which we might, through cooperative efforts, respond more effectively to off-campus sexual assaults" and he and Chief Holzworth agreed to participate with the first meeting taking place on June 9th. Mr. Elliott advised one likely outcome would be to draw more attention and publicity to this problem which Oxford shared with other college campuses and college towns. Mr. Elliott noted alcohol use/abuse was implicated in the majority of incidents of student sexual assault. Mr. Elliott advised with this collaborative initiative we may find ways to improve our response when these crimes occurred whether on or off campus.

Mr. Dreisbach noted if a visitor were here tonight they would think my goodness, what has this City done over the last decade. Mr. Dreisbach noted the City had built miles of sidewalk that did not exist 10 years ago and miles of biking and walking paths at the Oxford Community Park. Mr. Dreisbach advised over 100 new handicap ramps were installed to make the sidewalk system accessible. Mr. Dreisbach advised he wanted to remind visitors in town that the City had made achievements. Mr. Dreisbach thanked the City Manager and Council for the resources to do that work.

Mr. Smith reported that Historic Preservation Month was very successful with over participants in the historic walking tours that took place each Saturday in May.

Mr. Blackburn thanked the City for proclaiming Charlie Coles Day noting Mr. Coles was a fine man. Mr. Blackburn noted his grandchildren played soccer with Mr. Coles grandchildren and he was always there. Mr. Blackburn advised Mr. Coles was missed by many.

Mr. Blackburn noted we could not have put on the Wine Festival, Welcome Backs, or even some of the plantings and maintenance without volunteers. Mr. Blackburn advised the City was very fortunate to have a lot of people (not just students) that gave back to the community.

Ms. Rousmaniere advised the Oxford housing group and Oxford Seniors sent out a questionnaire to a few hundred Oxford residents. Ms. Rousmaniere urged people to fill out the questionnaire as it would help Oxford Seniors better conceptualize the kind of planning it recommended about seniors living in place and other opportunities for seniors in Oxford.

Ms. Rousmaniere thanked Mr. Dreisbach for his comments and noted her criticism was probably of Councilors and the process not the staff themselves. Ms. Rousmaniere advised the walking opportunities in Oxford were beautiful and the paths were fantastic with the handicap accessible aspects. Ms. Rousmaniere noted the Oxford Community Park was a dream come true. Ms. Rousmaniere thanked the Service Department staff for their efforts.

Ms. Southard advised in May the Mayor presented a proclamation for the letter carriers food drive day and noted the food drive brought in 1,969 pounds of food for the Oxford Community Choice Pantry. Ms. Southard thanked the volunteers and the community for being generous. Ms. Southard advised the Kramer School food drive brought in 482 pounds of food last week and thanked the City for its support and thanked the generous community for its support.

Ms. Southard noted there was a lot of synergy between the Oxford Community Choice Pantry and the Community Garden. Ms. Southard recognized the Community Garden and the Farmers Market for donating food to the food pantry. Ms. Southard noted the Community Garden organizer Marilyn Elzey, was doing a wonderful job and needed more volunteers for the garden. Ms. Southard advised this was a great way to learn about gardening and not everyone had the time, money, resources or even discipline to have their own garden whereas a community garden offered the opportunity to share that experience.

Ms. Southard noted she and Mayor McKeehan attended the Oxford Community Foundation's scholarship event held at the high school and it was inspiring to see the scholarships given to so many deserving young people. Ms. Southard advised the City of Oxford established the Charles Warren Memorial Scholarship which went to 2 very deserving young people and she and Mayor McKeehan were proud to met Katia Michael and Sarah Starrett. Ms. Southard noted the City was doing a wonderful thing in memory of Charles Warren.

Mayor McKeehan commended the Oxford Chamber of Commerce, Carol Dockum, and all of the volunteers for their efforts to make the Wine Festival a splendid event.

Mayor McKeehan commended Gail Brahier for another successful pool opening despite some difficulties this year.

Mayor McKeehan noted the season's first Music Festival was Thursday, June 5th and at 6:00 p.m. Miami's 'Caravan of Coaches' would be in the Uptown Park at which time he would read the Proclamation for Charlie Coles for the public.

ADJOURN

Ms. Rousmaniere moved to adjourn at 9:06 p.m. Mr. Blackburn seconded. The motion passed 5-0-0.