At 5:30 p.m., Mayor Condrey called the City Council meeting to order in Council Chambers, Lower Level of the City Building.


The Middletown Historic Commission is recommending approval to the Middletown City Council the historic district designation of the Oakland Historic District that is generally bounded by First Avenue to the North, Verity Parkway to the West, the Pioneer Cemetery property, Cohen Brothers Inc. properties, and the west-side of Lamneck Street to the East, and Calumet Avenue to the South. The City Council will review and have final decision regarding the proposed Oakland Historic District.

City Manager Cohen invited Dan Barton to the podium. Mr. Barton has been working with the City of Middletown on the revitalization of the Oakland neighborhood since 2018. Mr. Barton stated that the Oakland neighborhood is a great historic neighborhood that has fallen on hard times. He explained that southwest Ohio has been successful in rebuilding confidence in struggling neighborhoods by using a strategy of a combination of incentives. He explained that confidence is essential; confidence to buy a house in the neighborhood and confidence to invest money into the restoration of your house. He described the Oakland Historic Boundary:
A: Bound on the North by 1st Avenue, (Properties on both sides)
B: Bound on the West by Verity Parkway (Former Miami Erie Canal site)
C: Bound on the East by Pioneer Cemetery, Cohen Works Scrap Yard, and west-side of Lamneck Street
D: Bound on the South by Calumet (Properties on both sides)

He explained that the incentives for the Oakland Neighborhood would come from a self-replenishing TIF-Development Fund over a fifteen year period. New amenities in the Oakland neighborhood will include a beautiful new park, improved streetscapes, and improved lighting. He described the process of the historic designation. Once approved by
City Council, the historic district moves through the process to be recognized by the National Register of Historic Places; once approved, this will allow homeowners to apply for historic tax credits. These tax credits are a powerful tool for homeowners and investors. Banks are much more willing to invest in properties that are in historic districts. In historic districts the property values increase because the property comps are matched to other historic districts in the City. The strength of the other historic districts in the City will build the strength of the Oakland Historic District.

Mayor Condrey opened the public hearing at 5:44 p.m. and asked for those who wished to speak in favor of the historic district designation of the Oakland Historic District.

Debbie Coleman

Debbie Coleman, 1514 Forrest Avenue stated that she was in favor of the historic district designation of the Oakland Historic District.

Jim Johnson

Jim Johnson stated that he owns rental properties in the Oakland neighborhood. He asked what happens when a home goes from a valuation of $40,000 to $80,000? The people who rent there cannot afford that kind of increase. He has been a real estate appraiser for a number of years. He stated that quality of the homes in the Oakland neighborhood don't really compare to the homes on South Main Street. He stated that the foundations of some of the Oakland neighborhood homes aren't worth money putting into. Many of the homes and lots in the Oakland neighborhood are very small. He said that if you cut it off at Woodlawn, it would make more sense to him. He said that the area from Calumet to 14th Avenue is a trashy neighborhood. He is not in favor of the historic district designation of the Oakland Historic District.

Celeste Didlick Davis

Celeste Didlick Davis, 505 Garfield Street, stated that she was in favor of the historic district designation of the Oakland Historic District. She stated that the City needs to make a stronger effort to be more inclusive and bring people in from the community to develop the homeowners' association rules.

Wanda Glover

Wanda Glover, 1106 Calumet Avenue, stated that Calumet has always had large homes and that she wouldn't call it a trashy area. She stated that she was in favor of the historic district designation of the Oakland Historic District but that she agreed that the City needs to make a stronger effort to be more inclusive and bring people in from the community to develop the homeowners' association rules. She is looking forward to the improvements to the neighborhood.

Anthony Thomas

Anthony Thomas, 533 Garfield Street, stated that he has lived there for 18 years and sits on the porch in the morning and afternoon and watches what goes on in the neighborhood. He stated that it is a good neighborhood, despite some of the riff-raff that comes and goes. He plans on staying on Garfield Street as long as God gives him breath. He is in favor of the historic district designation of the Oakland Historic District and the improvements.

Dan Tracy

Dan Tracy, 4921 Oaks Court, stated that he has been an investor in properties in Middletown for 32 years. He stated that he is in favor of the historic district designation of the Oakland Historic District but he is not in favor of the parameters, they are too broad and too long. He stated that you can't take what's on Main Street, which is special to Middletown, and put it in the Oakland neighborhood, unless the neighborhood is leveled. He stated that with the rising property values the tenants and the homeowners in the Oakland neighborhood will be pushed out. He stated that the rules of the historic district on Main Street are very strict.

Mayor Condrey asked for those who wished to speak in opposition to the historic district designation of the Oakland Historic District; hearing none, the public hearing was closed at 5:57 p.m.

Dan Tracy

Dan Tracy, 4921 Oaks Court, asked who performed the appraisals on the school properties and who paid for the appraisals? Why would the City want to buy a property if there are investors? Let the investors do the investing, the City doesn't need to get back into the real estate business. He stated that there needs to be more transparency in the City, a hand full of people are paid big dollars to decide what to do with these properties. He suggested forming committees to advise the City Council before something is brought to a vote. He stated all of the candidates of the recent election talked about improving the streets in Middletown. He said that before the City pays $600,000 for these properties from the school, it ought to put the $600,000 into improving the streets in Middletown. He said if the City has a buyer for these properties then let the buyer purchase from the school.

Kent Keller II

Kent Keller II, 2040 Wellington Road, commented on discussed Ordinance No. 02020-01, an ordinance establishing a procedure for and authorizing the extension of a contract with T.R. Gear Landscaping, Inc. for gateway maintenance. He stated that the $65,000 contract with T.R. Gear of Fairfield, Ohio was approved in 2017 and has been extended
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<tr>
<th>CITY MANAGER REPORT</th>
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<td>Acting City Manager Cohen thanked everyone for coming out to speak about the Oakland Historic District and stated that the Oakland revitalization will start to improve the most disinvested neighborhood in the City. There will be a neighborhood association meeting at 6:30 p.m. at St. John’s Church on January 30, 2020, everyone is encouraged to attend.</td>
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<tr>
<th>CONSENT AGENDA</th>
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<td>Receive and File Oaths of Office for: Laura Brown, Heather Deaton, Daniel Dickson, Gary Ogden, Jesse Schulte, Sarah Thobe, and Griffin Steffen.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Confirm the personnel appointment of Cody Robertson to the position of Maintenance Worker in the Department of Public Works and Utilities, Street Maintenance Division.</td>
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<tr>
<td>To authorize a professional services agreement with Jacobs Engineering Group, Inc. for development of design drawings and specifications to add a pumping system to a new production well (Well 20) in the City’s wellfield.</td>
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Mr. Mulligan moved to approve the issues and actions listed on the Consent Agenda. Ms. Vitori seconded. Motion carried. Ayes: Ms. Nenni, Mr. Moon, Mr. Mulligan, Ms. Condrey, Ms. Vitori.

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<th>COUNCIL COMMENTS</th>
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<td>Ms. Nenni thanked everyone for coming out and speaking tonight. She thanked Mr. Barton and Mr. Mayzum for all of the work they have done for the City to establish the Oakland Historic District. She stated that at the end of the last meeting she was appointed to serve on the SELF Board (Supports to Low Income Families). SELF has some great programs which may benefit the homeowners in the Oakland neighborhood. As a member of the keep Middletown Beautiful Board she announced that they will be having an Earth Day cleanup on April 18th from 8 a.m. until noon at the MetroParks River Center.</td>
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Mr. Moon thanked Mr. Barton and Mr. Mayzum for all of the work they have done for the City. He encouraged homeowners in the Oakland neighborhood to stay engaged and to help share the future of the neighborhood. He congratulated and thanked the Ministerial Alliance for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Ecumenical Service; Steve Hightower was the main speaker and he did an incredible job. |

Ms. Vitori thanked Mr. Barton and Mr. Mayzum for all of the creative and collaborative work they have done on the Oakland Historic District. She acknowledged that change can bring fear but encouraged everyone to communicate and work together. She stated that this project could be one of the most important the City does over the next decade. |

Mr. Mulligan stated that the Oakland neighborhood has struggled for decades and if we want to see positive change, we need to try a different method. These methods have proven to be successful in Dayton and Cincinnati. He thanked the Ministerial Alliance for the Martin Luther King, Jr. events held to celebrate the spirit of Martin Luther King, Jr. |

Ms. Condrey stated that she was working with Ms. Quinnivan on improving communications. She has established a Mayor Nicole Condrey Facebook page and encouraged people to reach out to her. |

Mr. Mulligan moved to suspend the Charter provision that requires reading on two separate days and to declare Ordinance No. 02020-03 an emergency measure to be read one time only. Mr. Moon seconded. Motion carried. Ayes: Mr. Moon, Mr. Mulligan, Ms. Condrey, Ms. Nenni, Ms. Vitori.

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<th>Ordinance No. 02020-01</th>
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<td>Extend Contract for Gateway Maintenance</td>
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Ordinance No. 02020-01, an ordinance establishing a procedure for and authorizing the extension of a contract with T.R. Gear Landscaping, Inc. for gateway maintenance was read for the second time. |

Mr. Moon thanked Mr. Keller for his earlier comments and stated that although he was in favor of this legislation, he was also supportive of going out for bids. He stated that a Middletown business preference policy has also been discussed in the past but the execution is difficult. He is in support of using local contractors whenever possible. Ms. Cohen stated that in 2017 there were three bidders, none from Middletown. This extension was recommended because the company has done a good job in the past and offered 2019 pricing. She will pass along Council’s desire to use local contractors to City staff.
Mayor Condrey stated that she would like to see contracts opened for bidders, unless there is an exceptional reason to continue with a contractor.

Mr. Mulligan moved to approve Ordinance No. 02020-01, an ordinance establishing a procedure for and authorizing the extension of a contract with T.R. Gear Landscaping, Inc. for gateway maintenance. Mr. Moon seconded. Motion carried. Ayes: Mr. Mulligan, Ms. Vitori, Ms. Nenni, Mr. Moon. Nays: Ms. Condrey.

Ord. No. 02020-02
Parks Master Plan Agreement

Ordinance No. 02020-02, an ordinance authorizing an agreement with V3 Companies to develop a Parks Master Plan was read for the second time.

Mr. Mulligan moved to approve Ordinance No. 02020-02, an ordinance authorizing an agreement with V3 Companies to develop a Parks Master Plan. Ms. Vitori seconded. Motion carried. Ayes: Ms. Condrey, Ms. Vitori, Ms. Nenni, Mr. Moon, Mr. Mulligan.

Ord. No. 02020-03
Supplemental Agreement
Frost Brown Todd

Ordinance No. 02020-03, an ordinance authorizing a supplemental agreement with Frost Brown Todd, LLC for legal services and declaring an emergency was read.

Mr. Mulligan moved to approve Ordinance No. 02020-03, an ordinance authorizing a supplemental agreement with Frost Brown Todd, LLC for legal services and declaring an emergency. Ms. Vitori seconded. Motion carried. Ayes: Ms. Vitori, Ms. Nenni, Mr. Moon, Mr. Mulligan, Ms. Condrey.

Ord. No. 02020-04
Phase I Lakeside Redirection Project

Ordinance No. 02020-04, an ordinance establishing a procedure for and authorizing a contract with Ulliman Schulte, LLC for progressive design-build procurement for Phase 1 of the Lakeside Redirection Project and declaring an emergency was read with no action requested until February 4, 2020.

Res. No. R2020-01
Purchase Property from Middletown City Schools

Resolution No. R2020-01, a resolution authorizing the purchase of real property from the Board of Education of the Middletown City School District and declaring an emergency was read with no action requested until February 4, 2020.

Ord. No. 02020-05
Designating Properties in Oakland Historic District

Ordinance No. 02020-05, an ordinance designating properties located in an area generally bounded by First Avenue to the North, Verity Parkway to the West, the Pioneer Cemetery property, Cohen Brothers, Inc. and the west-side of Lamneck Street to the East and Calumet Avenue to the South as the Oakland Historic District was read for the first time.

Ord. No. 02020-06
Repeal Ord. No. 02019-94
315 Garfield Street

Ordinance No. 02020-06, an ordinance repealing Ordinance No. 02019-94, in part, as it relates to the transfer of 315 Garfield Street to the Butler County Land Reutilization Corporation was read for the first time.

Mayor Condrey added that five consultants submitted proposals for the Parks Master Plan. Staff conducted interviews with the top three proposers based on qualifications and recommended proceeding with V3 Companies. The proposal includes an evaluation of the community’s desire for a new recreation center and/or aquatic center.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 6:25 p.m. Mr. Mulligan moved to adjourn to executive session under the authority of O.R.C. 121.22 (G) (1) To consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, or compensation of a public employee or official and under the authority of O.R.C. 121.22 (G) (8) To consider confidential information related to the marketing plans, specific business strategy, production techniques, trade secrets, or personal financial statements of an applicant for economic development assistance, or to negotiations with other political subdivisions respecting requests for economic development assistance, provided that both of the following conditions apply:

(1) The information is directly related to a request for economic development assistance that is to be provided or administered under any provision of Chapter 715., 725., 1724., or 1728. or sections 701.07, 3753.67 to 3753.70, 5709.40 to 5709.43, 5709.61 to 5709.69, 5709.73 to 5709.75, or 5709.77 to 5709.81 of the Revised Code, or that involves public infrastructure improvements or the extension of utility services that are directly related to an economic development project.

(2) A unanimous quorum of the public body determines, by a roll call vote, that the executive session is necessary to protect the interests of the applicant or the possible investment or expenditure of public funds to be made in connection with the economic development project. Mr. Moon seconded. Motion carried. Ayes: Ms. Nenni, Mr. Moon, Mr. Mulligan, Ms. Condrey, Ms. Vitori.

ADJOURNMENT

At 6:49 p.m., the meeting was declared adjourned until the Council Retreat on February 1, 2020 at 9:00 a.m. at Verity Lodge at Miami University.

Attest: [Signature]
Nicole Condrey, Mayor