

**THE CITY OF KENT, OHIO  
KENT CITY COUNCIL  
WORK SESSION  
WED., JANUARY 6, 2010**

This work session of Kent City Council was called to order at 7:00 p.m. on Wed., January 6, 2010 by Jerry T. Fiala, Mayor & President of Council. Mayor Fiala explained the purpose of this session was to conduct interviews for vacancies on City boards and commissions. He further explained that Council would be balloting and making their appointments at the next Council meeting on January 20, 2010.

**PRESENT: MR. AMRHEIN, MR. DELEONE, MR. FERRARA, MR. KUHAR, MS. SHAFFER, MR. VALENTA, MS. WALLACH, AND MR. WILSON**

**ALSO PRESENT: J. FIALA, MAYOR; D. RULLER, CITY MANAGER; J. SILVER, LAW DIRECTOR; AND L. COPLEY, CLERK OF COUNCIL**

**ABSENT: MR. TURNER, COUNCIL**

**Elisabeth Willmott, Applicant for reappointment to the Storm water Board of Review and Appeals:**

Ms. Willmott explained she lives on Lake Street, having lived in Kent since 1993, and is a homeowner. She said she is seeking reappointment on the Storm water Board of Review and Appeals.

Ms. Wallach noted that the previous year was her first year, and asked what she thought, and Ms. Willmott said they never met. She said she would love to be involved, adding she is interested in Storm water. Ms. Willmott said she is an amateur hydrologist, with extensive training on rain gardening. She explained her interest in Storm water abatement. She said they all have sump pumps on Lake Street, adding she understands the issues people face.

There were no further question for Ms. Willmott at this time.

**Janet Rusanowsky, Applicant for reappointment to the Board of Building Appeals:** Ms. Rusanowsky said she is seeking reappointment to the Board of Building Appeals, adding she has been on it for a while. Ms. Rusanowsky explained she is an architect who lives in the township. She said she has been a member of the community for twenty-five years.

There were no questions for Ms. Rusanowsky at this time.

**Denise Mote, Applicant for reappointment to the Income Tax Board. of Review,** was unable to attend.

**Paula J. Rosky, Applicant for reappointment to the Community Reinvestment Area Housing**

**Council:** Ms. Rosky said she is reapplying for the CRA Housing Council and has been on the board since 2003. She said she also served, previously, on the Board of Zoning Appeals from 2003-2005, as well as the Cable TV Commission and the Assessment Equalization Board. Ms. Rosky said the Council only met annually. She said she enjoys visiting the sites, and it keeps her up-to-date on what has been invested in the City of Kent.

There were no questions for Ms. Rosky at this time.

**Audrey C. Kessler, Applicant for reappointment to the Community Reinvestment Area Housing**

**Council & Shade Tree Commission:** Ms. Kessler said she has been a Kent resident since 1995, owns her business which is involved with technical writing and editing. She said she is seeking reappointment to both commissions.

Ms. Kessler said she has spent several years on the Shade Tree Commission, adding it is important to educate the public about the value of trees and their stewardship. She said she enjoys serving on the Community Reinvestment Housing Council, as it is important to ensure companies are deserving of what

they received from the City.

Ms. Shaffer asked her to speak to what the Shade Tree Commission does, and Ms. Kessler said a lot of it deals with education. She said they developed a plan to guide the Commission. Ms. Kessler said they have been involved in workshops, and have had tables at events, like the Heritage Festival. She said they try to get the word out in Kent.

There were no further questions for Ms. Kessler at this time.

**Melissa M. Long, Applicant for reappointment to the Planning Commission:** Ms. Long explained she has been a resident for four years, and was appointed to an unexpired term on the Planning Commission about one year earlier. She said she promised at that time that she would work to update the Zoning Code of the City, and has done that. She said she has attended all planning meetings with Council and City officials, the Architectural Review Committee, and the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Ms. Long said they have given extensive study to improving and rewriting the City's sign ordinance, and to defining and recommending the creation of an Architectural Review Board. She asked for their consideration for appointment to a full term on the Planning Commission.

There were no questions for Ms. Long at this time.

**Paul Sellman, Applicant for Board of Zoning Appeals, with Planning Commission as second choice:** Mr. Sellman explained he was a lifetime resident Kent, having bought his first home in Kent in 1972. He said his parents owned several businesses in Kent, and he was involved in his dad's business. He said for that reason, he appreciates business activities.

Mr. Sellman said he graduated from Kent Roosevelt, attended Kent State, served in the U.S. Navy, and served two tours of duty in Vietnam. He said he spent most of his career as an engineer, so he is good at working out details and making wise decisions.

Mr. Sellman said he is currently in his ninth year as the network manager at Kent City Schools. He said he received the Emilio Ferrara Community Service Award recently. He said he previously served two terms on the Board of Zoning Appeals, totally nearly seven years. He said he left the board in 1985 to become Scoutmaster of Troop 253, resulting in meeting conflicts with the Board of Zoning Appeals. He said he decided last year that it was time to give back to his community.

Mr. Sellman said zoning is very important, adding that quality zoning makes a quality community. He said he has had many opportunities to move away, and has chosen to stay here. He said Kent is a great place to live, and he wants to see Kent grow and prosper.

Mr. Sellman said that people who own properties have a right to use it and maximize its use. He said he views the Board of Zoning Appeals as a committee that makes occasional gentle adjustments to the zoning laws, while respecting the needs and wishes of adopting property owners and the community at large.

Ms. Shaffer said they are currently revising the Zoning Code, and have had joint meetings with the Board of Zoning Appeals, Planning Commission, Council, and Sustainability Commission. She asked if he would be interested in such extracurricular work, and Mr. Sellman said he would be interested. He noted that the Planning Commission is an alternate choice for appointment, adding he felt he had a good skill set in all venues.

There were no further questions for Mr. Sellman.

**Rich Fender, Applicant for reappointment to the Board of Zoning Appeals, with Planning Commission as second choice:** Mr. Fender explained he has been on BZA for three years, and is present for reappointment to that Board. He explained he has been involved in planning and zoning in

several different ways, adding he is the Zoning Inspector for Edinburg Twp. He said he was also involved with the Regional Planning Commission for about one year.

Mr. Fender said he helped develop the design guidelines for downtown Kent, having chaired the committee for Main Street Kent. He said he has attended many meetings for the Zoning Code review, adding he wants to be sure the Code is as uniform to other codes in Kent, reducing conflicts and tensions, as those are potential issues.

Mr. Fender said he is involved in several different ways, and currently works for Family & Community Services at the Miller Community House. He said these different experiences enable him to add a perspective and insight when cases are being discussed before the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Mr. Fender explained he is very interested in the planning profession. He explained he helped organize a conference for the American Planning Association, Ohio Chapter. He said Kent was a sponsor for that conference. He said he raised about 10% of the funds needed for the conference. He said the Ohio Planning Conference has educational workshops also, and he has attended many of those to further his understanding of zoning.

Mr. Fender said he also has an interest in land use. He said he worked for more than three years to help preserve canal land for the state of Ohio. He said that through his efforts, the State Revised Code has changed so the State must take into account the historical, ecological, and recreational values. He said he had the support of fifteen legislators, including State Rep. Kathleen Chandler.

Mr. Valenta noted that Mr. Fender's second choice was the Planning Commission, but his resume shows he has done a lot in the planning field. Mr. Valenta asked Mr. Fender why he has chosen the Board of Zoning Appeals over the Planning Commission, as most of his background is in the planning field, and Mr. Fender said he has a big interest in planning, and likes to see how it is applied. He said a lot of planning is theoretical, while the Board of Zoning Appeals deals with actual cases, trying to fit them with reality. He said he wanted to be on the Board of Zoning Appeals, as it allows one to understand the Zoning Code.

Mr. Fender noted he also has a certificate in Urban Planning from Kent State University, having obtained that while on the board.

There were no further questions for Mr. Fender at this time.

Mayor Fiala thanked all who applied for the various commissions, and for wanting to make a commitment to Kent.

Hearing no further business before this Council, Mayor Fiala adjourned this meeting at 7:20 p.m.

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Linda M. Copley, Clerk of Council

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Jerry T. Fiala, Mayor & President of Council