

**THE CITY OF KENT, OHIO
KENT CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
WED., SEPT. 24, 2008**

This work session of Kent City Council was called to order at 8:40 p.m. on Wed., Sept. 24, 2008 by John Fender, Mayor.

PRESENT: MR. AMRHEIN, MR. DELEONE, MR. FERRARA (arr. @ 7:15 p.m.); MR. HAWKSLEY, MR. KUCHAR, MS. SHAFFER, MR. TURNER, MS. WALLACH AND MR. WILSON

ALSO PRESENT: J. FENDER, MAYOR; D. RULLER, CITY MANAGER; J. SILVER, LAW DIRECTOR; W. LILlich, SAFETY DIRECTOR; J. PEACH, POLICE CHIEF; J. WILLIAMS, FIRE CHIEF; AND L. COPLEY, CLERK OF COUNCIL.

Mayor Fender said the first item on their agenda dealt with the combined police station. **Dave Ruller, City Manager**, said they all know there are a number of problems with their police station, adding it is a money pit in violation of state standards. He said it has been on the screen for replacement. He said replacement does not come cheaply, and they have been looking for options to save money. Mr. Ruller said they have had conversations with some partners. He said they have spoken with the County, adding that the judges are anxious to move into a newer facility. He said they have discussed a combined public safety center that would also serve as a justice center. Mr. Ruller said in the spirit of collaborative work with the University, they initiated discussion with them also. He said the University has expressed an interest. He noted that "both Peaches" (Chiefs Jim and John Peach) were present.

Mr. Ruller said the idea at this point was to give them more of an outline about where they are and the potential cost savings. He said they will need to pursue a joint project in the not too distant future, and will need a memorandum of understanding with the County and the University. He said that one of **Bill Lillich's (Safety Director)** frustration is that as word has spread of the project, other partners have expressed an interest, including the Sheriff. He said the Sheriff is not in the numbers they are presenting this evening.

Mr. Lillich said he would provide a brief history. He said in 1995, they had an original analysis of the police portion of the then-City Hall. He said a number of issues were identified by Horne and King Architects, whose speciality is in public safety facilities. He said they identified three alternatives and the possibility of building a new facility to address some of the identified needs. He said in retrospect, some of their needs would have been short sighted and would not accomplish what they have currently. He said they need a facility that is functional for 25 years, and adaptable for an additional 25 years.

Mr. Lillich said they did not move far with that study, but recognized there were needs that would have to be addressed. He said in January 2000, they started working with David L. Sommers from Kent. He said Mr. Sommers was involved with some of the modifications that were previously done to the building, and was thoroughly familiar with the building. He said he understood some of the standards as they apply to a public safety building.

Mr. Lillich said there are certain basic principles they need to know, but never think about, such as the width of a hallway in a police station. He said a cop is wider when walking down the hall. He said as they reviewed this the cost approached \$4 million, and did not include the cost of the property acquisition or the site preparation. Mr. Lillich said they studied a combined police and fire facility, as they knew they had problems on both sides of the block. He said they asked if it was feasible to replace two old facilities with one new joint facility. Mr. Lillich said the decision at that time is the block did not have enough space to accommodate the needs. He said they knew the fire facility had to be expanded. Chief Jim Williams said they had 5300 square feet of living space. Mr. Lillich said that amount was totally inadequate. He said they decided to not do the joint facility, and had to improve the fire station, as it was the oldest and most inadequate at that time. He said it was fairly close to the cost of the police station at that time.

Mr. Lillich said with that number in mind, they kept it on the radar, and kept plugging it into capital budget plans. He said the figure of \$5 million is a place saver and is not an accurate number. He said they started with the current feasibility study and talked to County officials. Mr. Lillich said they knew the court wanted to make some changes, as their facility is inadequate. He said the County studied three different alternatives which were neither attractive nor functionally efficient. He said all three made the building look really ugly. Mr. Lillich said that is when they approached the County and asked if they would entertain some discussion of working together. He said they have deficiencies with the building; less than adequate parking; security and circulation problems; and inadequate record storage. He said the jail inadequacies are a growing demon that they try to not acknowledge.

Ms. Wallach said a constituent asked why Kent still has a jail, when all others send their prisoners to the County, and Mr. Lillich said they are the biggest supplier other than the Sheriff. He said they arrest more than any other entity in the county. Mr. Lillich said they are only a holding facility, adding if they did not have it, they would be traveling back and forth to Shalersville every day. Jim Peach, Police Chief, said they had eighteen arrests last Saturday night. Mr. Lillich said it becomes impractical.

Mr. Wilson asked how much they pay the county, and Chief Lillich said it is \$51 per day. Mr. Ferrara asked the average stay, and Mr. Lillich said it depended on when they are arrested. He said they would make one trip to take them to Shalersville and another to take them to court. Mr. Ferrara asked for a cost benefit analysis on the dollars spent, and Mr. Lillich said they do not have dollars, but do have practical explanations.

Mr. Lillich displayed a photo of the city hall in the 1960s, before the Fire Department moved to Depeyster. Ms. Shaffer asked the location, and Mr. Lillich said it was the current safety building. Mr. Kuhar asked the City's population, and Mr. Lillich said it was twenty thousand plus. Mr. Turner objected, saying he felt that was too high, and Mr. Hawksley noted the City has not grown that much.

Mr. Lillich displayed the building as it looks today. He said it looks modern, but there are a lot of mechanics in the building. Ms. Shaffer asked when it was built, and Mr. Lillich said it was built in 1923. He said there have been six additions, with various adaptations. He said there are a lot of big, heavy internal walls that precluded efficient remodeling.

Mr. Lillich displayed the front door entrance, with deficiencies in the concrete and the railings. He said they are minor issues but that is what the public sees. He showed a slide displaying the access to the roof, which is through the drop ceiling in the men's restroom. He said that the drop ceiling should not move, adding that is a violation of their own fire code.

Mr. Lillich displayed several other pictures at this time that showed the disrepair of the building. He showed rooms with leaks, and the inadequacies of storage. He showed a picture of one shower that was on full power and was a trickle.

Mr. Lillich showed a picture of a room with the primary phone connections that are underground and fiber optic. The picture showed water running out of a conduit.

Mr. Kuhar questioned how they can send the Code Enforcement officer to other properties, when he could spend a whole year at the City's building. Mr. Lillich suggested that is why he is talking to them, adding they have limped through, trying to not be extravagant. He said the Manager asked how they saved money, adding that his office's average temperature was fifty-eight degrees, and that was not by design.

Mr. Lillich explained that four mice were caught this week outside of the Detective's Bureau, and the primary restroom for the dispatchers had a new cabinet installed. He said it is inadequate, as it does not mean current accommodation requirements.

Mr. Lillich showed pictures of the jail, adding each cell had two bunks each, measuring 5' x 8'. He said that is less square footage than the requirements for single occupancy cells. He said the State Bureau of Adult Detention has been understanding, as they know the City is budgeting for a new facility.

Mr. Lillich displayed pictures of the man door on the north side, adding one needed an umbrella under the overhand because of the rain around the light fixture. He said the entire lobby measures 5' x 10', and is fully inadequate. He said they are doing the public a great disservice, as they cannot be accommodated.

Mr. Lillich said the primary communication area handles both police and fire communications, and should have three people. He said they are unable to do that, as there are only two seats. He said their technology is twenty-five years old, and is on its last leg. He said the maintenance people will not warranty it soon.

Mr. Lillich displayed the gas meter. He said they have had problems with the natural gas service the last two years because of condensation in the line in front of the building. He said water fills the line and gas cannot get through, getting up to the meter. He said Dominion has put a heat wrap under the insulation and wrapped it in plastic to maintain the flow. He said they have done some changes in the line, but it is the design and age that are the problem.

Mr. Lillich displayed pictures of the computer area, adding that it is the room for the primary feed for internet access for the City, including voice mail. He said they have inadequate HVAC control, adding they have an IT person who is a retired police officer.

Mr. Lillich said they began studying potential locations in the Fall 2006. He said in Feb. 2007 through the Fall, Kent State began consideration of participation in the project and began their study of space needs and design relationships. He said that Portage County recognized that since their study in 2004, their needs had changed. He said Mr. Sommers undertook a review of their needs in November that would go in the building. He said Mr. Sommers had completed Venn diagrams. Mr. Lillich explained that a Venn diagram is used by an architect or engineer to identify relative space. He said they also identify relationships from office to office. He said a three-level facility would have a court, and most of it would independent of police operations, other than exits, entries and mechanical equipment. He said the central area would be the city police applications, ground, first floor and second floor, with the university applications on the other side. He said all gray areas on the charts are for joint use.

Mr. Lillich said the next sheet showed square footage. Mr. Kuhar asked what types of operations would be performed in the joint use area, and Mr. Lillich said he would move to that next. He said square footage show 53,000 for the City; 26,500 for the University and 15,500 for the County's court. Mr. Lillich said the economy of scale construction shows the same square footage, but the cost per square footage changes as does the total cost. He said it would be a savings of 3263 square feet for both police departments, and 803 square feet for the county. He said it represents a total savings of 7329 square feet. Mr. Lillich explained that different types of rooms require different construction, such as a jail, as compared to open meeting rooms. He said the total cost for each of the three agencies and the savings. He said Kent's savings would be \$880,000 to upward of almost \$1.2 million. He said Kent State would save between \$1.2 million to \$1.3 million; with the County saving \$1.7 million to \$2.4 million. He said those significant savings warrant a collaborative effort. Mr. Lillich said that it is a lot of work, but brings about a collaborative effort that would make them proud.

Mr. Lillich said the next sheet showed the combined efficiencies, and while it does not quantify the savings, it identifies the practical savings or improved efficiencies and operations. He said this includes prisoner transport and court time. Mr. Lillich said they would save a lot if everything was in the same building, instead of loading them up every morning to take them to court. He said they could have combined use of joint, shared facilities, such as meeting rooms, break rooms, and training rooms. He said with a centralized location, they could address criminal justice issues, such as attorney wanting to look at police reports, talk to their client and go to court.

Mr. Lillich said that the combined operations would provide improved and coordinated communications. He said that "tons of money" are spent on communications and record equipment, adding they could improve on that substantially.

Mr. Lillich said they could have joint training, emergency operations, and a shared jail. He said this would provide an improved focus on community pride and projects. He said a good collaborative effort for a

building that fits in would provide a good sense of pride for the community, the University, and the County.

Mr. Lillich said the most recent change has been the inclusion of the Sheriff. He said this process has taken longer than planned, and will continue longer yet with the inclusion of the Sheriff. He said they are due to have a joint meeting of all of the partners.

Mr. Turner asked what the involvement would be from the Sheriff, and if he is looking to have a jail in Kent or a long term holding, and Mr. Lillich said it was possible, but not for long term holding. He said they have spoken of the feasibility of a short term holding facility, adding it would hold people who had to serve time for less than twelve days. Mr. Lillich said that State standards change if they are held longer than twelve days. He said this would be for less than twelve days and non violent offenders. He said there will be more investigation with the state officials before they get into too much detail. He said a jail could be done in such a way they would not know it was there. Mr. Lillich said it could be an expansion of some of the Sheriff's services, and could include a small office to accommodate portions of Portage County.

Mr. Kuhar asked if there was any possibility of having Homeland Security having an office with federal monies, and Mr. Lillich said they have looked into other partners. He said he was unsure there were any federal monies available, as they do not need a Kent office. He said that Probation is planning on having an office, and Adult Parole may consider an office to more adequately service Portage County.

Mr. Kuhar asked if the operation costs would be proportional, and Mr. Lillich said they have not gotten into any substantial detail. He said the County was having legal people talk about it. Mr. Lillich said the amount of space and type of use would all roll into the decision. He said they could save substantially on other things, such as the maintenance. He said they would need to create a management board, with management authority, to take care of those things needed to run the building. He said that authority could contract with maintenance people, and they could continue to build on efficiencies.

Ms. Shaffer asked if this would include dispatching, and Mr. Lillich said that was correct. Ms. Shaffer asked if they were not already doing that, and Mr. Lillich said they currently have two different dispatch facilities. He said they felt they could improve on that and become more efficient. He said there is an organization in Portage County that has been doing the dispatching for several fire departments have notified them that the rates were quadrupling the next year.

Mr. Lillich said if the agencies work together more, they can bring together their processes, which would help if one does something better than another. He said it is a coordinated effort. Mr. Lillich said at a conference last spring, they heard about a program in Toledo where one of the districts near their university had a two-man patrol team that worked three to four days per week. He said they are city and university representatives, and are doing some dynamic things. Mr. Lillich said if they work day-to-day together, they can accomplish more.

Ms. Shaffer asked about the downside, and Mr. Lillich said it would be the cost and the acquisition of property. He said this type of facility could require between 3.5 to 5 acres of land. He said the other downside would be the siting of the facility. Mr. Lillich said that historically, the community felt the court should be downtown, and the University has noteworthy interest in not letting the University stray too far from campus. He said this drives or limits some of our decisions. He said they had seven or eight locations, and have ruled out one or two. He said a lot of the locations depend on how they meet most needs and they accommodate what they are trying to do.

Mayor Fender asked the next steps, and Mr. Lillich said it is to meet jointly to agree on a general time line and determine if they are moving in the right direction. He said they are at the point where everyone needs to decide if they want to stay with it or not. He explained they have been promising an update, and would like some sense as to whether they should continue in this direction or if Council wanted some alternatives.

Ms. Shaffer asked if the potential partners have funding available, and Mr. Lillich said they have discussed

funding capabilities. He said they have talked about the ability of one entity doing the bonding, adding it maybe a good thing they are a little behind, as they probably read the article in the newspaper about the difficulties the County had with their bonds. He said those bonds currently being purchased are paying less interest for longer periods and more for shorter. He said they have all noted that the whole market is "goofy." He said they need to let the market settle out at the current time. Mr. Lillich said they have talked about funding, and how to go about it, and who would take the lead. Mr. Lillich said they would have to structure a legal entity.

Mr. Ruller said there is an openness with the creativity in financing. He said everyone realizes that money is an issue, and there is a strong sense that they all recognize they are short on cash and may use other venues. He said it would be more attractive to the City's cash position.

Mr. Ruller said Mr. Lillich has made this look nice and neat, adding that getting to where they are now is a significant milestone. He said getting the County, KSU, and the City side-b-side did not happen and took a lot of work. He credited that to Mr. Lillich and the staff, adding that the persistence has been there. He said they worked hard to give this a chance to survive, adding that collaborative projects are easy to unravel. He said it is harder to pull them together and make it happen. He said he is optimistic when he looks at the savings. He said they have an obligation to get it to a point for Council's consideration. He said that from a financial responsibility point of view, their share would represent a savings to the taxpayers of Kent. He said it is worth taking it this far, and they need to know what Council wanted next. He said they have extended themselves as far as they can go, without getting firmer commitments. He said that part of that was based on what Council wanted. He said they would need an MOU, followed by an RFQ.

Mr. Kuhar asked the difference in price between a facility for Kent only versus a joint facility, and Mr. Lillich said that without counting the land and site preparation, it would be \$6.2 to \$8.5 million. He said the University would be \$3.6 to \$5 million. Mr. Kuhar noted it would be a savings of about \$1 million if they joined. Mr. Lillich said the combined savings for all organizations would be \$3.8 to \$4.8 million. He asked they keep in mind the ongoing efficiencies that would save for forty to sixty years. Mr. Kuhar agreed, adding that is especially true if gas is \$5 per gallon. He suggested they may be able to reduce the police force in size.

Mr. Ferrara asked the square footage of the current building, and Mr. Roberts said it is approximately 6200 square feet. Mr. Ferrara said the question would be if they need ten times the current space, adding it is like a Taj Mahal. He said he is not saying they do not need it, but it is only fair to question the size. Mr. Lillich said they need to understand in terms of the inadequacies, and Mr. Ferrara said they better be prepared to explain why the need that much more space. He said he was not trying to be adversarial. Mr. Lillich said there was no extravagance in the estimation of size and cost. Mr. Ferrara said he would take his word, but the people in Kent will question it. Mr. Lillich said that is something Dave Sommers could explain better.

Mr. Ferrara asked if they have considered other options, like acquiring 132 Days Street and Quik Service Welding, adding he did not want to reinvent the wheel. He said there are times when it is acceptable to level a whole block. Mr. Lillich said the important point is that they have not locked into any site. He said they have general ideas and areas, and are participating with the downtown planning effort. He said that may have a significant impact on the recommended site, as they are not going to be an island. Mr. Lillich said they will be a part of the great neighborhood, and expect the facility to fit in the best way possible.

Mr. Amrhein said they asked people to view the old school when they planned the middle school, so they can see the inadequacies. He suggested they have an open hose. Mr. Amrhein said he was horrified when he toured the facility, adding he did not realize the poor condition. He suggested they open it up to the public.

Mr. Kuhar said he probably knows the answer, but asked if Lamson and Sessions would be too far away for Kent State, and **John Peach, Kent State University Chief**, said there are only a few locations that the University would be interested in, as they did not want to be too removed from the main campus. He said

they are desirous of having the University move west and integrate into the community, being more blended. He said that Mr. Lillich has brought up other locations that would not work. He said they may work for the City and possibly the court, but not the University. He said there is a small geographical location that would be acceptable to the University.

Mr. Ferrara asked what they University will do to acquire the property to integrate more into the Community, and Chief Peach said when they were first approached, he was unsure what they would gain. He said his boss, at the time, was Dave Kramer, who was a strong fiscal conservative. He said Mr. Kramer felt it would fit in well. Chief Peach said he is not a money man, nor does he control the purse strings. He said this would be a huge footprint in the City, where it is most needed, Chief Peach said the University wants to make a statement, beyond rhetoric, that they have been talking about this partnership. He said if the feasibility study shows that it makes sense, they will work out the finances. He said this is part of the bigger package of the vision between the City and University. He said he was amazed to be present discussing it, adding that Yank Heisler told him to go for it. He said he is amazed at the resolve the University has, adding they see a vision that may occur if the partnership is strong and fits the location.

Ms. Shaffer asked how much parking they are anticipating, and Mr. Lillich said it would be between 150 to 160 spaces, according to the standards.

Mayor Fender asked for Council for their thoughts at this time. Mr. Ferrara said they need to go with an MOU, and Mr. Amrhein said they should proceed. Mr. Wilson said they are trying to get businesses downtown, and those people would be downtown. He said he supported the idea of the downtown and they should move forward. Mr. Kuhar said he hated spending money, but there was a definite need. He said they should be encouraged to get as many financial partners as possible. Ms. Shaffer said she is excited about the possibilities, as it is a whole new world of possibilities. She said she would like it to be located downtown, and it may open up possibilities for more community policing. Ms Wallach said they need to go ahead, and Mr. DeLeone supported it, asking they keep Council posted.

Ms. Wallach said she knew one consideration was to refinance with bonds, and asked if that is what they are doing, and Mr. Lillich said they would look at that. He said there may be other alternatives with other partners, adding there is a variety of ways to do it. He said that someone will be pursuing it. Mr. Hawksley said it is a great idea, and Mr. Turner congratulated them for thinking outside of the box and being collaborative. He said it is a great benefit to the community, and he definitely believed they needed to keep it downtown.

Mr. Ruller said the next item on the agenda was the update of Council's pending list. He said he finished it earlier in the day, and wanted to share it with them. He recommended they digest it and direct staff accordingly at a later time. He said it is a snapshot of where they are currently.

Ms. Shaffer asked what the "slash marks" meant on the list, and Mr. Ruller said they coincide with staff's recommendation for removal. He said it was just a recommendation, adding they could schedule more time later.

Hearing no further business before this Council, Mayor Fender adjourned this meeting at 9:45 p.m.

Linda M. Copley, Clerk of Council

John Fender, Mayor & President of Council