

Roll Call

A neighborhood meeting of the Kalamazoo City Commission was held on Monday, April 17, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. in the Community Room at City Hall, 241 W. South Street.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Mayor Bobby J. Hopewell
Vice Mayor Don Cooney
David Anderson
Erin Knott
Matt Milcarek
Jack Urban

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

Shannon Sykes*

Also present were City Manager Jim Ritsema, City Attorney Clyde Robinson, and City Clerk Scott Borling.

Commissioner
Excused

Commissioner Milcarek, seconded by Commissioner Anderson, moved to excuse the absence of Commissioner Sykes. With a voice vote the motion passed.

Communications

An opportunity was given for miscellaneous communications, but no communications were offered.

Neighborhood
Communications

Neighborhood communications were received next.

Representatives from the following neighborhood associations were present and addressed the City Commission:

Eastside Neighborhood Association

Pat Taylor, Executive Director

Northside Association for Community Development

Brent Hepp, Resident
Mattie Jordan-Woods, Executive Director

Oakland Drive/Winchell Neighborhood Association

Peter Kushner, President

Northside Association
for Community
Development

The Northside Association for Community Development (NACD) representatives:

- described workshops that had been held for people who wanted to start their own businesses.
- reported a company had designed a literacy pocket park for the NACD property and announced the Association was soliciting funds and applying for grants to cover construction costs.

*Commissioner Sykes arrived at 6:06 p.m.

- stated Ransom Street was slated to be repaved to address the many potholes, and Public Services would be taking measures to increase accessibility for bus stops.

- reported the Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety (KDPS) had been working with community partners to address breaking-and-entering repeat offenders.
- indicated the x-train was happening on weekend nights and expressed concern about the speeding and reckless driving that were part of these events.
- stated KDPS responded to x-train complaints, but the response was ineffective.
- suggested the City Commission adopt an ordinance that would require permits for "car parades."

Northside Association
for Community
Development (cont'd)

Commissioner Urban questioned why KDPS was not more aggressive with x-train enforcement and observed that the enforcement solution needed to de-escalate the situation.

Public Safety Chief Jeff Hadley stated KDPS officers were frustrated with the x-train, and he reported that for next four Saturdays KDPS, the Michigan State Police, and the Kalamazoo County Sheriff would conduct directed, concentrated enforcement activities to address the x-train.

The Eastside Neighborhood Association representative:

Eastside Neighborhood
Association

- distributed the March/April 2017 edition of the Association's newsletter.
- reported on recent activities and stated the Neighborhood Center had been busier than normal for the winter months.
- described upcoming events such as the Meet Your Neighbor event, the Building Blocks program, mural projects with The Arts Council of Greater Kalamazoo, a KDPS block party, board of director elections in June, the tool lending library, collaboration with Youth Opportunities Unlimited for the Summer Youth Employment Program, the Fresh Food Initiative, and the Summer Meet Up, Eat Up program.
- remarked on the continued use of the Neighborhood Center as a polling location and the consistent, good interactions with Community Police Officers.
- expressed concern about the City's Shared Prosperity Kalamazoo (SPK) initiative and encouraged the City spread the wealth and not reinvent the wheel. Ms. Taylor stated neighborhood associations did a lot of the work that SPK might address.

In response to a question from Commissioner Urban, Ms. Taylor stated Eastside residents did not need a new facility. Rather, they needed more activities and gathering places like parks and churches.

Eastside Neighborhood
Association (cont'd)

In response to questions from Mayor Hopewell, Ms. Taylor stated she was not sure what was happening with The Maker space or the laundromat. Ms. Taylor indicated something was happening at the Station 3 location, but she was not sure what it was.

Mayor Hopewell noted the City Commission wanted to identify gaps and areas of need with SPK, not reinvent the wheel.

Oakland/Winchell
Neighborhood
Association

The Oakland/Winchell Neighborhood representatives:

- thanked Community Planning and Development Director Rebekah Kik for her work on Imagine Kalamazoo 2025 (IK2025).
- thanked Forestry Supervisor Todd Pryor for working with Consumers Energy to trim/remove trees on Broadway Avenue.
- thanked Housing Inspector Yvonne Wright for attending Association meetings and sending a monthly report on rental properties in the Neighborhood.
- thanked KDPS for increasing its outreach to the Neighborhood.
- remarked on street and sidewalk issues that needed to be addressed.
- discussed property maintenance issues.
- requested more bus stops in the neighborhood, not just on the main roads.
- encouraged the City to continue to reach out to neighborhood associations in a proactive way, as with the IK2025 process.

Commissioner Urban suggested the Oakland/Winchell Neighborhood Association form an alliance with the Oakwood Neighborhood Association regarding the bus stop issue.

Commissioner Anderson reminded people that Kalamazoo's bus service was operated by the Central County Transportation Authority.

Citizen Comments

An opportunity was given for general citizen comments, but no comments were offered.

Commissioner
Comments

Finally, an opportunity was given for miscellaneous comments by City Commissioners, but no comments were offered.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott A. Borling
City Clerk

For City Commission approval on June 5, 2017

Approved by: _____
Bobby J. Hopewell, Mayor
Dated: June 5, 2017