



## City Council Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, February 8, 2022

6:00 PM

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**1) Call to Order**

Council President Troy Markham called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

**2) Roll Call of Members**

Council Members in Attendance: Matt Klingler, Jen Robinson, Troy Markham, Monique Lampke, Jessica Saad

Council Members Absent: Sam Marcellino and Lori Ann Feibel

Mr. Markham moved to excuse absences for Mr. Marcellino and Ms. Feibel

Ms. Lampke seconded

**Motion passed by voice vote 5-0.**

**3) Pledge of Allegiance**

**4) Presentations/Special Guests**

**A) St. Albans Presenting Check to Mid Ohio Food Bank**

Ms. Zimmerman, along with Father Devin and a representative of the Turkey Trot, presented the St. Alban's Turkey Trot check of \$18,000 to the Mid Ohio Food Collective. Mr. Kessler asked about the name change to Mid Ohio Food Collective (from Mid Ohio Food Bank) and Ms. Zimmerman answered this, explaining some of the expanded services offered.

**B) Project Discussion of Drexel Avenue Improvement Options**

Mayor Kessler presented on the Drexel Avenue Workshop, highlighting the content of the presentation which is attached to the agenda. Ms. Balsamo added comments about the presented designs and explained the limitations of the width of the corridor and presented the plan specific slides. Mr. Koch offered some additional input on some potential adjustments that could be made to Option A.

The City Service Director, Andy Bashore, provided a recommendation for Option A, citing some safety and maintenance concerns listed in the presentation including issues with trash pick up, leaf and snow removal, and utilities maintenance. Mr. Kessler then provided some additional information regarding this recommendation.

Mr. Kessler then thanked residents for their feedback and input and Mr. Markham asked speakers to state their name.

Herb Hoffman of 2618 Bryden Road spoke regarding the bike plan expressing his concerns over a potential loss of parking and the impact on Bexley businesses and about beautification and safety issues.

Devorah Lipkind of 431 S. Drexel spoke regarding safety concerns on the Drexel corridor and her concerns with the potential of adding a bike lane. Ms. Lipkin also mentioned activities by St. Albans and Columbus School for Girls and their need for the parking

Matt Eshelbrenner of 225 S. Drexel spoke regarding safety concerns on the Drexel corridor, and the importance of making safety the number one priority.

Katie Rotenburg of 215 S. Drexel spoke regarding her concerns with potential issues with leaf removal and concerns with speed and safety, in particular the impact of more congested parking on pulling out of driveways safely.

Daniel Ferdelman of 2550 Bryden Road stated that Plan B is the only plan that specifically addresses the needs of bikers, which is in line with the Bexley Bike Plan.

Ronnie Leeman of 500 S. Drexel stated that many years ago there was a focus on creating a plan for parking on Main for businesses on Drexel and stated the need for parking accommodations.

Babak Diourabchi of 447 S. Drexel Avenue stated that any ideas should be centered on safety. He stated that he believes there is a need for a raised platform in particular to protect small children and put them in the line of sight for drivers. He stated that he doesn't feel a bicycle lane is practical and stated concerns about liability.

John Reichard of 240 S. Drexel stated he is in favor of Option A and echoed the comments of others regarding safety. He also spoke about a flashing sign.

Bill Benedict of 484 S. Drexel Avenue spoke regarding the parking issues and specifically issues with visibility and pulling out from side streets and urged the City to examine the placement of crosswalks.

Ken Rubin of 228 S. Drexel Avenue spoke regarding his support of Option A, and his concerns about Option B creating issues with cycling safety and concerns with the loss of parking. He urged Council to weigh the opinions and feedback for those who are most impacted by this project.

Evan Williams of 492 S. Drexel spoke regarding his concerns about loss of parking and his belief

that speeds need to be lowered on the corridor, and also mentioned a safety concern with additional pedestrian crossings created by limitation of parking to one side of the road.

Jenny Hoffman of 2618 Bryden stated that she also owns two other properties she owns on South Drexel. She stated that she agrees with the importance of slowing traffic down and preventing u-turns and also expressed concerns with any limitation of parking.

Craig Ness of 2576 Bryden Road spoke in support of Option B, and stated the City need's to offer safe options for bikers. Mr. Ness further stated that by creating safe options, the City will encourage more biking and asked why the City is entertaining an option that only favors cars.

Mark Subel of 661 S. Cassingham stated his support for Option B and stated he feels this is the safer option and that the installation of bike lanes will effectively slow traffic. He further stated that he believes that Option A will encourage speeding between bump outs.

Gerry Stiemman of 314 S. Drexel spoke regarding some history on Drexel Avenue and asked about the potential use of speed bumps to slow traffic.

Erin Synk of Yay Bikes from 63 Hanford Street spoke about the Bexley Bike Plan and pointed to some of the content in the plan that she feels speaks to the Drexel Avenue Project. Erin further stated that she feels Option B would encourage additional bike usage in Bexley, elaborating on some thoughts behind this being a benefit.

Michael Gire of 389 S. Drexel spoke regarding his concerns with Option B, particularly in regard to CSG school drop off and release and St. Albans needs. He also spoke regarding the business areas and his concerns for their foot traffic and concerns about the driveways along West Drexel.

Reverend James Devin Rogers of St. Albans Church expressed his concerns with safety, especially after a recent tragic accident. Father Rogers also discussed the impact on accessibility issues for disabled and elderly members of the St. Alban's parish.

Dennis Howard of 267 S. Drexel asked about getting a stop sign at the corner of Fair and Drexel. He specifically asked about the possible installation of a stop sign which he feels would slow traffic.

Robert Ferrin of 147 N. Merkle Road spoke about the accessibility of elected officials and the ability to have a good discourse here. Mr. Ferrin spoke regarding his involvement in the Bexley Bike Plan and his support of Option B and his belief this will improve the safety of the corridor and asked Council to prioritize people over parking.

Larry Goldin of 542 S. Drexel spoke regarding the importance of preserving safety and spoke regarding concerns regarding his wife's business and accessibility issues and also spoke regarding access by emergency personnel and recommendations for adjustments to Option A.

Ruthellen Weaver, a business owner of 542 S. Drexel spoke in support of many of the local businesses who rely on the parking and expressed concerns about accessibility and safety for differently abled people. She further stated her gratitude for elected officials for listening.

Jennifer Cicarelli of 80 S. Columbia, the head of school at Columbus School for Girls, thanked Council for listening and expressed her support of Option A. She spoke to the specific challenges faced by CSG.

Rebecca Ness of 2576 Bryden Road spoke about the importance of considering the greater good for the planet and the issues the world is facing. She also spoke regarding her perspective as a business owner who treats those who've been injured in accidents.

Carolyn Harding of 156 N. Roosevelt spoke about her understanding of the concerns on both plans and asked if having a bike lane in the middle might be a good solution and asked if there are other speed control options but also encouraged Council to move forward with a bike lane, but perhaps in another location or on another road.

Whitney Carr of 799 Montrose thanked Council for giving everyone the opportunity to give feedback and spoke from the perspective of a one-vehicle family who uses bikes more functionally than recreationally. Shared that it would be a game changer for drop offs at preschool.

Mr. Kessler responded to some of the questions that were raised by speakers, including the limited utility of speed bumps. Gina added that this is generally a last resort issue. Gina also clarified that Drexel is Federal Route 40 but it is the same to the City either way. Gina also spoke about the ineffectiveness of stop signs as speed control devices. Mr. Kessler also spoke about the safety benefits of the bumpouts. Mr. Kessler also shared that the fire department that serves the City is in support of bumpouts and medians. Mr. Koch offered input on the noise issues with speed bumps.

Ms. Saad clarified the recommendation of Ms. Balsamo regarding traffic lights and traffic volume along the corridor, which Ms. Balsamo answered and Mr. Koch on speed reduction, which they answered. Ms. Saad also asked about what the City needs to do to successfully petition to be a 25 mile per hour street, which Ms. Balsamo answered. Ms. Saad asked Ms. Balsamo and Mr. Koch to clarify that their recommendation to accomplish this petition is to follow the plan with bumpouts and a median versus the bike lanes, and Ms. Balsamo and Mr. Koch confirmed that this is their recommendation.

Ms. Lampke asked about the ability to ban U-Turns, which Ms. Balsamo answered and asked a question about median.

Ms. Robinson expressed her gratitude for the community and her belief that we'll be able to find a solution that meets the needs of businesses and residents affected by this corridor and also for bikers to make the area more safe and friendly. Ms. Robinson also asked about Service Department concerns, which Mr. Bashore answered.

Mr. Klingler asked about the potential of making the road a bicycle boulevard, similar to Bryden into Old Town East, with the bumpouts if that would be possible and/or safe? Mr. Koch responded to this question.

Mr. Markham asked about any hard deadlines on this project and Mr. Kessler invited Mr. Koch to speak to any deadlines and Mr. Kessler added his thoughts to this timing. Hearing no more questions from Council, Mr. Markham asked if Mr. Kessler had additional questions. Mr. Kessler asked Council to weigh in and make recommendations and expressed gratitude for the input he'd received from residents.

Mr. Klingler stated that he is very much in favor of bike lanes and moving forward to making biking safer throughout Bexley. In this particular situation, he is in support of Option A, as he feels this creates other safety concerns. He expressed that he wants to continue to investigate north-south bike lanes.

Ms. Lampke stated that she reviewed the emails that were sent to her and stated that she heard one common theme from all sides regarding the importance of safety in the corridor. Ms. Lampke shared that she is leaning toward Option A and she has great concerns with the safety issues on two-direction bike lanes in particular. Ms. Lampke also addressed concerns with safety for vehicles entering and exiting driveways. Ms. Lampke does feel Option A should be revisited for placement of crosswalks, etc. and would like to see more bike-friendly Bexley be a priority in the strategic plan.

Ms. Robinson thanked residents for their feedback and echoed Ms. Lampke's encouragement to include an answer to bike safety concerns and where we will put a north-south bike corridor, and stated that she is leaning toward Option A but with the emphasis on creating a strategic approach for bike lanes.

Ms. Saad thanked the residents who provided feedback and in particular thanked Mark Subel and Craig and Rebecca Ness for their hard work on the bike plan and in speaking with her. She pointed out some of the bike plan items that have been put into place in Bexley and further encouraged those in support of bike lanes to be encouraged by the important insight they are providing us through their feedback. That said, she said her primary concern is dropping the speed limit to 25 miles per hour and as such, she believes Mr. Koch's recommendation of Option A being the most likely answer to this.

Mr. Markham thanked the engineers for participating and provided his three important considerations when listening tonight, which include slowing down traffic on Drexel, making the corridor attractive, to avoid creating a hardship for Drexel residents. He's like to include these considerations while also keeping an eye on furthering the bike plan.

Mr. Kessler spoke about the bike plan and some of the background on the option of a bike lane on Drexel Avenue and spoke about his commitment to safety for the community and the importance of safety for residents and bikers alike. Mr. Kessler stated that he feels there will be creative ways to find safe ways for bikers to be able to travel in Bexley. He also expressed his gratitude for those who provided feedback and in particular for those who attended. Mr. Kessler did state he believes the recommendations from Council and recommendations from his staff lead him to believe that Option A is the option to move forward with and expressed that this will be visited and provided for resident feedback so that it can be tweaked and enhanced.

Ms. Saad encouraged Mr. Kessler to provide these plans for feedback at City Hall in a similar

fashion to the way the Livingston Avenue plans were presented.

8:33pm Five minute recess called.

8:43 Meeting resumed.

**5) Public Comments (Speaker Slip Required)**

None.

**6) President's Report**

President Markham complimented Council Members for their work on the Drexel Avenue project discussion.

Mr. Markham encouraged Council members to send ideas to Jen for the retreat on items council members would like to learn about or research.

Mr. Markham also shared an update from the library including the announcement of Jim Wilson as a new Trustee, some upcoming enhancements to the Auditorium and upcoming programs on censorship.

**7) City Attorney Report**

No report.

**8) Auditor's Report**

No report.

**9) Administrative Update:**

A) Service Department Update - Andy Bashore

Mr. Bashore has no additions to his report.

Mr. Kessler thanked Mr. Bashore and his team for their amazing work over the snowstorm.

B) Police Department Update - Interim Chief Gough

Captain Gough was not present to speak to his report.

C) Recreation and Parks Update - Mike Price

Mr. Price is on vacation. Mr. Kessler did report on a cooling tower project that will need to be completed at the mansion. This will be on the Board of Control meeting which will be scheduled for the coming days. Mr. Kessler also offered compliments to the Service Department about the ice rink. Ms. Saad also mentioned that there will be a digital pool pass and the pool will be opening earlier this season, at 11:30. Ribbon cutting is on Superbowl Sunday, February 13. Mayor Kessler also announced the Jeffrey Woods festival on March 3.

D) Finance Department Update - Beecher Hale

No update at this time.

E) Mayor's Update

Mayor Kessler covered the highlights of his report, including an update on the Police Chief search. Mr. Kessler spoke with Joe Mazzola today and he is interested in moving forward with the potential of removing the mask mandate when numbers drop further but still providing protective measures in high quality masks for residents who feel the need for additional protection. He's hoping to have a fuller plan for moving into the next phase.

Mr. Klingler asked for a clarification on the Community Forum timing which Mr. Kessler answered.

**10) Consent Agenda: (No Speaker Slip Required)**

A) Meeting Minutes - 1/25/22 City Council Meeting

B) Ordinance 1-22 to amend Chapter 220.01, Rule 8 of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Bexley introduced by Troy Markham on January 11, 2022.

Mr. Fishel read the items on the consent agenda. Mr. Markham

Ms. Robinson moved to accept the items on the consent agenda.

Mr. Klingler seconded.

All in Favor: Matt Klingler, Jen Robinson, Troy Markham, Monique Lampke, Jessica Saad

Opposed: None

**Motion passed 5-0.**

**11) Ordinances/Resolutions with visiting presenters**

**12) Third Readings: (No Speaker Slip Required)**

A) Ordinance 2-22 to authorize \$15,000 in supplemental appropriations for calendar year 2022 for paying expenses associated with the Chief of Police search process (introduced by Monique Lampke on January 11, 2022)

Mr. Fishel read the ordinance and Ms. Lampke and Ms. Saad? I think? (8:56pm) asked for some additional information on the \$15,000 which Mr. Kessler answered.

Ms. Lampke moved to adopt Ordinance 2-22.

Mr. Klingler seconded.

All in Favor: Matt Klingler, Jen Robinson, Troy Markham, Monique Lampke, Jessica Saad

Opposed: None

**Motion passed 5-0.**

**13) Second Readings: (Speaker Slip Required)**

**14) First Readings: (Speaker Slip Required)**

A) Ordinance 3-22 to appropriate \$2700 from the Friends of Jeffrey Preschool Fund to pay preschool related expenses in 2022. (Introduced by Monique Lampke on February 8, 2022)

Mr. Fishel read the ordinance and Ms. Lampke asked for some additional information on this ordinance. Mr. Kessler clarified the purpose of the Friends of Jeffrey Preschool fund and the background of this ordinance.

**15) Tabled Ordinances:**



- A) Ordinance 41-21 accepting the proposed donation of the Columbia Place private street in the Columbia Place subdivision by the City of Bexley for a public street. (Introduced by Jessica Saad September 28, 2021)
- B) Ordinance 24-21 (Tabled), to award the Bexley Electricity Aggregation Program contract to AEP Energy, based upon the terms and conditions provided for in their RFP, as modified by the Board of Control, introduced by Mr. Sharp. (Introduced on May 25, 2021)
- C) Ordinance 12-21 (Tabled), to adopt and approve the City of Bexley Electric Aggregation Plan of Operation and Governance, and to declare an emergency, introduced by Mr. Sharp (introduced on March 9, 2021).

No action at this time.

**16) Strategic Committee - Jen Robinson, Chair**

Ms. Robinson reminded everyone about the upcoming Council Retreat on Thursday, March 3 and shared her excitement about some of the items up for discussion. Ms. Robinson also mentioned that she attended the CIC meeting with Mr. Klingler and Ms. Lampke and shared about that experience.

Mr. Kessler also shared thoughts on City Council's engagement with the search committee. Ms. Robinson and Mr. Markham suggested doing this separately from this meeting. Ms. Saad asked about meeting in person, and Mr. Fishel clarified that Council will need to be in person.

**17) Service and Environmental Committee - Lori Ann Feibel, Chair**

Ms. Feibel is not present to provide a report, but did provide a video featuring the snow day in Bexley.

**18) Finance Committee - Monique Lampke, Chair**

Ms. Lampke reminded everyone that there is a Pet Supply drive organized by the Citizen's Police Academy Alumni February 19 from 10am - 1pm in the Rubino's parking lot. The Bexley Community Foundation has many great things going on including the grant cycle. Bexley Citizen's Police Academy will be welcoming Patti and Troy Markham next year.

**19) Safety and Health Committee - Sam Marcellino, Chair**

Mr. Marcellino is excused and did not have a report. Mr. Kessler did address some upcoming out of state training travel that needs to be approved by Council.

Mr. Klingler moved to approve out of state travel in March of 2022.

Ms. Lampke seconded.

**Motion passed by voice vote 5-0.**

Ms. Lampk removed to approve out of state travel for a police officer in May of 2022.

Mr. Robinson seconded.

**Motion passed by voice vote 5-0.**

**20) Zoning and Development Committee - Matt Klingler, Chair**

Mr. Klingler mentioned the upcoming ARB meeting on February 10 at 6pm and encouraged residents to visit the Green Bexley page for information on environmentally friendly ways to celebrate Valentine's Day.

**21) Recreation and Parks Committee - Jessica Saad, Chair**

Ms. Saad reported Joel Rosenberg of the Columbus Blue Jackets will be at our ice rink this Saturday with a potential visit from Stinger.

**22) Public Comments (No Speaker Slip Required)**

None.

**23) Adjourn**

Mr. Klingler moved.

Ms. Lampke seconded.

**Motion passed 5-0.**

Mr. Markham adjourned the meeting at 9:19pm.