

**COMMON COUNCIL  
CITY OF NOBLESVILLE  
JUNE 25, 2024**

The Common Council of the City of Noblesville met in the Council chamber on Tuesday, June 25, 2024. Darren Peterson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. pursuant to public notice with the following members present: Mark Boice, Mike Davis, Evan Elliott, David Johnson, Pete Schwartz, Aaron Smith, Todd Thurston, and Megan Wiles.

Also present were Mayor Chris Jensen, City Attorney Jonathan Hughes, department directors, staff, interested citizens, and members of the media.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mr. Elliott led the chamber in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL**

Deputy Clerk Ilga Pruzinskis called the roll. A quorum was present.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES: JUNE 11, 2024**

Mr. Peterson moved to approve the minutes, second Mr. Smith, nine aye, motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Ms. Wiles moved to approve the agenda, second Mr. Davis, nine aye, motion carried.

**PETITIONS OR COMMENTS BY CITIZENS WHO ARE PRESENT**

There were eight petitions to speak.

Myra Ping of 1437 Clinton Street addressed the Council. She stated she has lived in downtown Noblesville for almost three years and wanted to comment on the recent and planned tree removal actions that she had recently heard. She stated she appreciated Mayor Jensen's well-spoken comments in the Hamilton County Reporter on June 21. She stated he listed many environmental values that trees provide; for instance, the air temperature cooling effect, the filtering of air and water, preventing erosion, noise reduction, and providing oxygen. She stated in addition, the trees have been attributed to greatly promoting mental health and a healthy natural environment for children to play in. She stated trees raise property values and can greatly add to the aesthetics of a neighborhood, which can attract new residents like herself. She stated that if a tree is diseased, it should be removed. She stated that she understood and saw the problems caused by tree roots and the resulting uneven sidewalks. She stated she lives on Clinton Street, and there are a lot of uneven sidewalks there. She stated that she has been a physical therapist for over 30 years and is very familiar and sympathetic with the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) concerns. She stated she wondered if the City officials here are really making all possible efforts to retain the lovely big trees. She stated Mr. Larry Kane recently had an op-ed published regarding the Noblesville tree removal plans. She stated this gentleman is on the Board of Indiana Forest Alliance, and he is a retired environmental lawyer. She stated Mr. Kane cited many cities that have found ways to deal with sidewalk safety concerns other than cutting their trees down. She stated some of these cities mentioned are two in Indiana; two in Ohio; Washington, D.C.; Lake Forest, Illinois; Salt Lake City, Seattle, and Savannah. She stated that she realizes that she has come to this topic a little late in the game, but even in the past two days she had found two articles about methods that other cities, such as Portland, Oregon and Savannah, Georgia, are using to solve their tree and sidewalk issues that don't include removing the trees. She stated these cities seem to have made saving their trees the priority. She stated she would like to see some more evidence and be reassured that the powers in our town have researched all of the possible measures that have been put out there and have been experimented with and found success in these other communities. She stated these other cities may be placing a higher value and consideration on their beautiful trees. She thanked the Council.

Jeff McCarty of 1360 Logan Street addressed the Council. He stated it would be a great horrific atrocity if the City came in and cut down their mature trees. He stated he moved here nine years ago, and part of the reason was the charm of the city. He stated a lot has been done to save the

**COMMON COUNCIL  
CITY OF NOBLESVILLE  
JUNE 25, 2024, PAGE II**

historic architecture, and a good job has been done. He stated the arborist doesn't seem to understand that there are workarounds. He stated cities around the world and all over the United States have figured out ways to save trees. He stated he has met with the arborist three times, and he seems to be completely set that the trees have to come down. He stated the arborist has convinced Council, and he's convinced the Tree Board. He stated it is not true. He stated if you cut down their mature trees, it will dramatically change the charm of the city. He stated the City has to do whatever it can to find alternatives than coming in and doing what is going on at Oakmont, when they come in and clear-cut trees. He stated he understood that there are only four people who can plant trees, but that contractors are hired to come in and cut down and clear-cut trees, and then they can't plant again until Spring. He stated the trees that are talked about cutting down in Old Town, some of them are 60, 70, or 100 years old. He stated those cannot just be replaced. He stated if you take a walk through our town, our beautiful town, if you cut down these trees it will destroy the charm of our town.

Wesley Rodermund of 7343 Hardin Oak Drive addressed the Council. She stated it is a war zone on her street. She stated there is not one person there that doesn't feel physically violated by this. She stated the workers have come into their home, they have ripped out the beauty of their street, and they are going to continue to do it all over their neighborhood. She stated there will not be anything left if the Council allows this to continue. She stated it is horrific what is happening there, and everybody just sits there like nothing is happening. She asked the Council to please come drive down her street. She stated it is not good, not good at all. She stated on the practical side, where is the money coming from for this. She asked who gave it? She asked who gets to decide where it gets spent? She stated that it is heard that the funding for their main boulevard, which is amazing, hasn't been fully funded. She again asked where is that money coming from. She stated they have a right to know, and they have a right to know how the City came up with doing this. She asked why this is the only way that this can happen. She stated there are innovative things happening all over the world. She stated there has to be something different. She stated they need help. She asked the Council to please come and drive down her street, all of them.

Mark Rodermund of 7343 Hardin Oak Drive addressed the Council. He stated his street is now Ground Zero for scorched earth. He stated he and his wife moved into the neighborhood about a year and a half ago and moved to Noblesville about a year before that. He stated they took their time; they were very careful looking for a home, and they had criteria. He stated one of the big ones was trees, and they found it. He stated that was the perfect neighborhood. He stated that certainly there are issues with concrete buckling. He stated they moved from Arizona, and they lived in a community with mature trees, and that they had a process there. He stated it was a never-ending process where every year two or three or four trees, two or three areas of buckled sidewalk were fixed, and then the next year the same was done again. He stated basically what that means, if it's managed like that, the beauty and the value of the neighborhood remains. He thanked the Council.

Erin Brattain of 17982 Kinder Oak Drive addressed the Council. She stated she is a resident of Oakmont and wanted to express how upset she is over the large-scale tree removal taking place. She stated she has lived in Noblesville since 1992. She stated she works for the schools, and her husband is a small business owner. She stated they are invested in their community. She stated they love their city; they love what they do, who they work for, and being here. She stated they didn't choose to go to Fishers or Carmel or other places, and as taxpayers, they are upset. She stated they specifically chose the west side of Noblesville and Oakmont to move to in 2019. She stated they feel communication has been very poor with the residents about this project and the timeline. She stated things continue to change as it progresses and again, things have not been transparent. She stated she realizes there is a grant and understands that requirements of the grant need to be met, but that the beauty of the neighborhood is being sacrificed and making a lot of people upset in the process. She stated that she didn't trust that the City has addressed all of their concerns and heard all options or looked into all options. She stated she understood there is an ADA compliance issue. She stated Mayor Jensen did come out, and he explained what's going on. She stated that she recognizes and agrees that some of the trees do need to go, and some areas do need to be resolved. She stated she thinks there are still other alternatives instead of

**COMMON COUNCIL  
CITY OF NOBLESVILLE  
JUNE 25, 2024, PAGE III**

rushing to this and just knocking all these trees down. She stated we need to slow down a little bit. She stated that they are not the only ones slated for this. She stated she heard someone else speak this evening about Old Town. She stated she knew some of the other neighborhoods a little bit northwest were going to be slated. She stated this is going to make others upset. She stated these are large, large trees that cannot just be replanted and regrown. She stated the beauty of their neighborhoods is being ruined just to mobilize contractors and save a buck. She stated the City is failing the community and failing to examine other alternatives to find middle ground. She stated this is her home, and she wants to maintain its beauty. She urged the Council to please consider the progression of this project and review other alternatives. She thanked the Council.

Courtney Kulp of 17946 Forreston Oak Drive addressed the Council. She stated she struggled with what to say today; that there are so many things to say. She stated she came here today to ask that the tree cutting stop. She stated it is already a tragedy to have lost as many trees as they have in two days with the accelerated cutting that occurred. She stated the bleeding can be stopped now. She stated that the City claims that they offered an opportunity for discussion, but the actual fact was the plans were set and Oakmont was told what would be happening. She stated that only after collective outrage that the number of trees was reduced once. She stated when again speaking to John Easley today the number was again down. She stated trees are suddenly getting saved because they are putting pressure on the City. She stated they want this to stop. She stated in municipalities all over Indiana and in the United States, there is an effort to save trees and use alternative methods for safe walkways. She stated Oakmont residents have amassed many ideas, and none of them were adequately discussed with the City except for one, and even then, the City rejected it after one test area. She stated the City wants a 30-year stretch of concrete and against the comparator, all other methods will fail. She stated all other methods for safe walkways that spare trees will fail. She stated in fact, concrete will fail before 30 years, as most concrete contractors will tell her. She stated she came today to say that there is still an opportunity for the City to make lemonade out of lemons. She stated, as she has stated to others, were this administration to decide to change course, she would be at the front of the line talking about their virtues. She stated to be an ecologically progressive city with creative ideas would maintain the natural, hard-working, and vital infrastructure that could help put Noblesville further on the map as one of the great places to live and raise a family. She stated they in Oakmont would support them and would help them with further research and cost analysis of the many options for creating safe walkways while saving trees. She stated they would share this good news with the world and would stop talking about how the City doesn't listen and doesn't value their opinions, their home values, and doesn't value the trees. She stated let's stop this today; stop the cutting today. She stated nine trees have already been taken, and they are heading down Benton Oak Drive, and they are going to take a whole bunch more. She stated stop; stop the cutting today. She asked for meetings to be set up so a better plan can be devised for Oakmont and a better Noblesville. She thanked the Council.

Lisa Taylor of 7322 Hardin Oak Drive addressed the Council. She states she has lived at that address for 25 years. She stated what is happening to the neighborhood breaks her heart. She stated it was horrible. She stated one of the things they looked forward to moving there was an area that was established. She stated there were beautiful trees. She stated in the fall she could see the changing of the colors, and now they are going to lose walking outside, having no trees to go under, not hearing the birds. She stated what's happening breaks her heart. She stated she is assuming this is going to happen to other neighborhoods. She stated she couldn't imagine that there were no other neighborhoods that have uneven sidewalks, too, but there's got to be a way to do this without destroying everything that's beautiful about their neighborhood. She stated if the City wants trees to cut down, she has trees in her backyard and they are welcome to cut them down. She stated why take what has made their neighborhood what it is and established over the years. She stated another thing that upsets her is the guys come in there like a tornado to cut those trees down. She stated she didn't understand why it had to be done so urgently. She stated they come at 7:00 a.m. when some people aren't even awake and start working and tearing down trees. She stated she doesn't understand. She stated what is happening breaks her heart, and she wishes that the City could think of some other way to fix this problem instead of taking away everything that is beautiful about their neighborhood. She thanked the Council.

**COMMON COUNCIL  
CITY OF NOBLESVILLE  
JUNE 25, 2024, PAGE IV**

Glenn Smith of 18001 Benton Oak Drive addressed the Council. He stated he also has lived there for 25 years. He stated he hoped that the Council had seen what is going on. He thanked Mayor Jensen for having come out to talk to them. He stated he could remember when the trees were eight feet high, and now they are 60 feet high and absolutely gorgeous. He stated now, in the fall, with everything being wiped out, it will be really bad, and it is not what they came here for. He stated the Council has power. He asked for one of the Council to stand up and ask for a vote. He stated the Council should vote to stop it and investigate. He asked one of the Council to raise enough emotion to stop the cutting until this can be under control and understood. He stated that is all he asked. He thanked the Council.

Mr. Peterson thanked the speakers.

**MAYOR'S COMMENTS**

Mayor Jensen stated he has an update regarding some things happening this week, but first wanted to thank those who took time tonight to come this evening. He stated many times from this dais and at public meetings over the last several months, this has been a very difficult conversation. He stated the City has tried to listen openly and hear the residents, and he has tried to respond to everyone who has reached out to them. He stated he knows a lot of people have reached out to Council as well, and he appreciates that time was taken to listen and to learn. He expressed appreciation for Street Department employees, and especially for Urban Forester John Easley, who has had some very difficult conversations. He expressed appreciation for the courtesy and respect City employees have shown to citizens. He stated the City will continue to listen and work to move forward with the project. He stated he did not know Myra Ping or Jeff McCarty and had not spent time with them, but there are no plans for any tree removal in Old Town Noblesville. He stated there are no plans for mass tree removal. He expressed appreciation for everyone voicing their concern on the topic.

Mayor Jensen welcomed all those who would participate in SERVE Week. He stated Patrick Probst and his team at SERVE Noblesville will be all over the community. He stated church groups, Little League teams, and departments from the City of Noblesville will do work throughout the community, from trash pickup to mural painting Downtown. He stated it is the largest volunteer operation in Hamilton County, and it will take place this week in Noblesville. He stated he knew many of the people in attendance would participate with different groups, and he thanked them. He stated even amid hard conversations, he is proud of what this community stands for and does. Mr. Peterson inquired if there was still time to get involved in SERVE Noblesville and whether the Mayor could provide any contact information. Mayor Jensen replied yes, volunteers can still sign up on all of SERVE Noblesville's social media platforms, such as Facebook, or on their website. He stated the Mayor's office would assemble meal kits at the fairgrounds on Friday. He stated the Police Department, Street Department, Planning Department, and many others are taking part. He stated all are welcome to volunteer.

He stated he spoke that morning at the Forest Park Aquatic Center, which was the location of his very first job at a concession stand in 7<sup>th</sup> grade. He stated Greg Conner and the Friends of Central Pool have raised private funds to put banners all across the Aquatic Center that honor the 23 Olympians who trained at the pool. He stated this year a Noblesville Miller will swim in the Paris Olympics. He asked people to visit the Aquatic Center. He thanked Kim Bowling, Greg Conner, Alaina Shonkwiler, and their Board for the banners honoring swimming and diving Olympians from Noblesville.

He thanked the residents of Noblesville for their patience with the State Road 32 project that will conclude in the next several weeks. He stated he will continue to update the Council and the public. He stated the construction has not been an easy process for anyone. He offered to take questions. He expressed appreciation for the Council's work serving the citizens of Noblesville.

*Intentionally left blank*

**COMMON COUNCIL  
CITY OF NOBLESVILLE  
JUNE 25, 2024, PAGE V**

**COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Mr. Davis stated the Finance Committee met on June 20. He stated Deputy Controller Caitlin Moss reviewed an ordinance to update the credit card use policy for City employees. He stated Economic Development Manager Amy Smith discussed a bond authorization for an economic development area authorization at Noble West. He stated Justin Swanson and Lindsey Moss from Bose Public Affairs Group provided information about property tax, LIT reform, TIF reform and road funding. He stated the committee recommended approval of the claims.

**APPROVAL OF CLAIMS**

Ms. Wiles moved to approve the claims, second Mr. Davis, nine aye, motion carried.

**PREVIOUSLY DISCUSSED ORDINANCE**

#25-06-24 COUNCIL TO CONSIDER ORDINANCE #25-06-24, AN AMENDMENT TO THE 2024 SALARY ORDINANCE #25-09-23, AS AMENDED, FOR APPOINTED OFFICIALS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE CITY OF NOBLESVILLE (HOLLY RAMON)

Human Resources Director Holly Ramon stated this ordinance amendment includes requests from three departments. She stated an Engineering inspector title will be changed to Stormwater Technician. She stated a Street Department employee who has received certification as a CDL trainer will receive an additional \$2.00 per hour when training other employees. She stated lastly, effective July 1, the Department of Labor will increase the minimum salary threshold for exempt employees. She stated the City's golf professional is paid the minimum exempt salary, so his salary must be increased to meet the new minimum requirement. Mr. Smith stated the changes were discussed at length by the Finance Committee. Ms. Wiles moved to approve Ordinance #25-06-24, second Mr. Smith. The following roll call vote was taken for Ordinance #25-06-24:

AYE: Mark Boice, Mike Davis, Evan Elliott, David Johnson, Pete Schwartz, Aaron Smith, Todd Thurston, Megan Wiles, and Darren Peterson.

Nine aye, motion carried.

**NEW ORDINANCES FOR DISCUSSION**

#26-06-24 COUNCIL TO CONSIDER ORDINANCE #26-06-24, AN ORDINANCE OF THE COMMON COUNCIL AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF NOBLESVILLE, INDIANA, TO ISSUE ONE OR MORE SERIES OF ITS TAXABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REVENUE BONDS, AND APPROVING AND AUTHORIZING OTHER ACTIONS IN RESPECT THERETO (HAZEL DELL APARTMENTS) (AMY SMITH)

Ms. Wiles moved to introduce Ordinance #26-06-24, second Mr. Davis. Economic Development Manager Amy Smith stated an economic development agreement with Hazel Dell Apartments, LLC was approved at the April 9 Council meeting for the Noble West project which is located at the northeast corner of Hazel Dell Road and Edenshall Lane. She stated the project is a mixed-use development with an estimated investment of \$78 million. She stated the development will consist of up to 284 multi-family units, not more than 150 for-sale townhome units, and 30,000 square feet of commercial/retail space. She stated this ordinance and the resolution that is on the agenda later are the next steps in carrying out the commitments of the economic development agreement. She stated the ordinance authorizes the issuance of a bond that will be purchased by the developer. She stated the bond will be for an amount not to exceed \$6.7 million with a maximum interest rate of 8 percent for 25 years. She stated the bond proceeds will be used for eligible costs related to the apartment component of the project. She stated with the creation of the new allocation area, the Redevelopment Commission will pledge 83% of the TIF increment to the debt service of the bond. She stated this item was presented to the Finance Committee and received a favorable recommendation.

**COMMON COUNCIL  
CITY OF NOBLESVILLE  
JUNE 25, 2024, PAGE VI**

#27-06-24 COUNCIL TO CONSIDER ORDINANCE #27-06-24, AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 30.08 OF THE NOBLESVILLE CITY CODE REGARDING USE OF CREDIT CARDS BY EMPLOYEES (CAITLIN MOSS)

Ms. Wiles moved to introduce Ordinance #27-06-24, second Mr. Davis. Deputy Controller Caitlin Moss stated this ordinance updates the City's credit card policy as it relates to employees. She stated there have not been issues prompting the changes. She stated the changes are modernization updates to bring the ordinance in line with current practice. She stated the changes proposed are removal of language regarding each department having one credit card for everyone in the department to use. She stated the credit card company requires an employee name on each card. She stated that the ordinance also specifies when an employee may no longer utilize the credit card and must return it to the Controller's office. She stated there is updated language regarding the timing and requirements for submitting receipts. She stated the policy authorizes the City to pay fees and bans the use of digital wallets such as Apple Pay or Google Pay. She stated the ordinance also specifies actions to be taken by employees to prevent fraud. Ms. Wiles indicated that the ordinance was thoroughly discussed at the Finance Committee meeting and received a favorable recommendation.

**MISCELLANEOUS**

#1 COUNCIL TO CONSIDER RESOLUTION RC-28-24, A RESOLUTION APPROVING A DECLARATORY RESOLUTION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN OF THE REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION AMENDING THE NOBLESVILLE CONSOLIDATED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AREA, AND CREATING THE NOBLE WEST ALLOCATION AREA (AMY SMITH)

Economic Development Manager Amy Smith stated this resolution approves the creation of the Noble West Allocation Area. She stated the project site for the Noble West project was discussed earlier in the meeting. She stated the project is within the Noblesville Consolidated Economic Development Area and Allocation Area. She stated the portion of the site where the multi-family units will be located will be removed from the Noblesville Consolidated Allocation Area, and the new Noble West Allocation Area will be created. She stated the Declaratory Resolution was approved by the Redevelopment Commission, and the Plan Commission has approved its order. She stated a portion of the tax increment generated from the project will be pledged to debt service. She stated the item was presented to the Finance Committee and received a favorable recommendation. Mr. Hughes stated the finance team on Project Scoreboard also looked at this removal from the consolidated area and had no concerns, as this area is currently undeveloped. He stated it will not affect financing of the event center. Ms. Wiles moved to approve Resolution RC-28-24, second Mr. Davis, nine aye, motion carried.

**COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Mr. Thurston addressed the individuals that spoke regarding trees. He stated he did not want them to think that the Council is not listening. He stated after the last meeting, he met with several key staff to get some background history. He stated he looked at the current situation and what it would be in the future. He stated the Council all live here too. He stated they all like trees. He stated it is tough. He stated the Council will continue to seek information. He stated he did not want people to think that because nothing is being said that the Council is not doing anything and not listening. He stated he has a better understanding of the problem now. He stated he believes that the Administration is doing the right thing, even though it may not feel like it. He stated based on the history and current problems, it seems to be what needed to be done. He stated the Council and Administration will continue to evaluate the situation. He stated the Council is listening. Mr. Boice thanked Mr. Thurston for his comments.

Ms. Wiles mentioned that the 4<sup>th</sup> of July will take place before Council's next meeting. She stated the City of Noblesville has a long history of the 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade through Downtown Noblesville and the fireworks festival that takes place at Forest Park. She stated the public can find more information on the City's website or Facebook page and learn more about being able

**COMMON COUNCIL  
CITY OF NOBLESVILLE  
JUNE 25, 2024, PAGE VII**

to celebrate our wonderful country and this community. Mr. Peterson asked if there was a new parade route. Mayor Jensen stated that due to the INDOT project and closure of Conner Street, the route is moving north one street to Clinton Street for one year. He stated he appreciates everyone's patience and understanding during this time.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the Common Council this 25<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2024, Mr. Peterson adjourned the meeting.

---

DARREN PETERSON, PRESIDENT

ATTEST:

---

EVELYN L. LEES, CLERK