



Minutes of the Oberlin City Council Public Hearing
 Held in Council Chambers, 85 South Main Street, Oberlin, Ohio
 August 18, 2025

Public Hearing – 6:15 p.m. – Council Chambers

Purpose: Consider a Recommendation by the Planning Commission to Amend the Zoning Map from “R-1A”/ Single-Family Dwelling District and “R-1”/Single-Family Dwelling District to “PDOD”/ Planned Development Overlay District for 45918 Maple Street, 321 North Main Street, 329 North Main Street, 316 North Pleasant Street, and 318 North Pleasant Street submitted by Anthony Hiti of Hiti, Difrancesco, and Siebold on Behalf of Kendal at Oberlin

A public hearing of the Oberlin City Council was held on August 18, 2025, at Oberlin City Hall in Council Chambers, located at 85 S. Main Street, Oberlin, Ohio. The meeting was called to order at 6:15 p.m. by Presiding Officer Eboni Johnson for the above-stated purpose. *Roll Call was taken as follows:*

Council Members:

	Present	Absent
Eboni Johnson	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Michael McFarlin	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ray English	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Libni Lopez	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jessa New	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Joseph Waltzer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kristin Peterson	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appointees:

Belinda Anderson, Clerk of Council
 Jon Clark, Interim City Manager/Law Director

Others Present:

Ann O’Malley, CFO of Kendal at Oberlin
 Anthony Hiti, Chief Architect of Hiti, Difrancesco, and Siebold

Members of the Council heard a presentation from Carrie Porter, Oberlin Planning Director, about the proposed rezoning.

Porter provided an overview of the proposed rezoning request.

Porter remarked that Kendal is proposing to construct approximately 150 multi-family residential units on all of these properties. The Planned Development Overlay District (PDOD) has several steps to get plans approved. Right now, they are considering the zoning and the land use of the property and whether multi-family residential is appropriate for this location. The plans will be approved later. Kendal will have to submit a preliminary development plan to the Planning Commission, the Planning Commission will review

that and make a recommendation to Council, Council will approve the preliminary development plan and then they will have to come back with a final and go through the Planning Commission and City Council again for a final development plan after they have resolved whatever issues they need to fix.

At this time, the concept plan shows 24 units on the property on the north side of Maple Street and 126 units on the South side of Maple Street.

Porter remarked that she would be happy to answer any questions at this time. Also in attendance to address questions were Anne Malley, CFO of Kendal at Oberlin, and Anthony Hiti, Chief Architect of Hiti, Difrancesco, and Siebold..

Peterson responded to Porter's comments, clarifying that the City Council is presently considering only the rezoning application. She emphasized that no specific development proposals are currently under review. Any such proposal will be presented as the process progresses, at which point a decision will be made.

English further outlined the procedural steps that would follow if the City Council approves the proposed PDOD rezoning request. Should the rezoning be approved, Kendal would be required to submit a Preliminary Development Plan to the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission would then review the plan and vote either to approve or deny it in its submitted form. Regardless of the outcome of the Planning Commission's vote, the plan would proceed to City Council for formal consideration. If the City Council denies the plan, the process would conclude at that point. However, if the City Council approves the plan, it will be returned to the Planning Commission for any necessary modifications and then resubmitted as a Final Development Plan.

He also noted the Planning Commission would once again vote to either approve or deny the final plan. Whatever the outcome, the plan would be forwarded to the City Council for a final vote. There will be four separate opportunities for public comment on any specific development plan submitted by Kendal during this process. To reiterate, at this time, only the rezoning request is under consideration. No specific development proposals are being evaluated at this stage.

Members of the Council heard from Ann O'Malley, CFO of Kendal at Oberlin, who read a prepared statement on behalf of Seth Vilensky, Chief Executive Officer, who was unable to attend the meeting. The statement noted that Kendal at Oberlin has been a community member for 33 years and is known as one of the best continuing care retirement communities in the country. Kendal at Oberlin has a robust strategic planning process, and under the current plan, they envision growth of their mission to serve more seniors by providing care and services. There are currently 200 people on a wait list waiting to get into Kendal. There is a need for middle-income senior living, and under the City's comprehensive plan, this would expand senior housing options, including high-density housing. Kendal has applied to the Planning Commission to amend the zoning map from single-family to senior-living under the Planned Development Overlay District (PDOD). It would provide maximum flexibility for developing the site and contributing additional senior housing to the City. As more market research is conducted, design studies and financial models will need to be modified to meet their needs.

The statement reported that Kendal held a neighborhood meeting on July 31 to describe their early plans and timelines, and to provide an opportunity for questions and concerns. Concerns voiced included the timing of the proposed development in light of the impending construction of the new middle school, as well as questions about traffic, noise, building height, and design. More conversations will need to be held with the neighborhood, the Planning Commission, and the City Council as the process moves forward. The statement concluded by stating that Kendal feels fortunate to be part of the Oberlin community and is seeking the Council's approval to amend the zoning map that the Planning Commission recommended.

English asked for an explanation of the relationship to the residents of College Village Apartments and Kendal at Oberlin. O'Malley responded that the College Village Apartments are owned by Kendal Northern Ohio, which is the supporting organization for community outreach. The College Village Apartments is an affordable housing complex where we host meetings. The tenants are allowed access to our outside campus to use the walkways and fish. But they would need to be a guest of a Kendal resident to have access to the dining and fitness facility. We envision a community connection space as part of the proposed project that would be accessible to everyone, not just the Kendal residents.

English asked whether the people in the south parcel development would have access to continuing care from Kendal at Oberlin. O'Malley said they would not have access to continuing care. There is a possibility that packages could be created to enable residents to access dining. We also offer the Friends of Kendal program, this program allows certain amenities on Kendal's campus to be available at specific times.

John Bevan, 308 North Pleasant Street, addressed the Council regarding the Kendal proposal. He stated that he and several neighbors met to discuss their concerns. While they understand that the current discussion pertains only to the zoning change, he noted that Kendal is seeking approval for up to 150 units, which has raised concerns in the neighborhood. He wrote a letter, walked around the neighborhood, and asked several of his neighbors to sign it. There are thirty-eight signatures that he was able to collect by himself while working full-time, and while he collected thirty-eight signatures, only two declined, citing that they didn't know enough about the project. Bevan read the letter, which discussed concerns about how traffic would increase in the neighborhood, property values declining due to the lack of green space and the height of these buildings, as well as the potential for light and noise pollution, and the environmental impact. There were three conditions that the neighbors would like to make to Kendal when building on those parcels of land. One, the South Parcel development should have no more than fifty-six units and be developed in a cottage-style neighborhood with buildings limited to no taller than a "story and a half". Condition two is that all driveways in and out of the south parcel be on North Main Street, as this would help mitigate additional traffic. The third condition would be to maintain at least 85 feet of green space as a buffer along the south side of the south parcel, as this could help address concerns about light and noise pollution. The letter also mentioned that the north parcel development be limited to twenty-four units.

Mark Rozmarynowycz, 306 North Pleasant Street, requested that the Council not rezone this property. It is directly across the street from the high school. They are concerned about the number of vehicles that will be coming up and down this street. He expressed concern about the safety and aesthetics of a three-story building in an area that has been zoned residential for years. Many of the people he spoke to at the Kendal meeting were opposed to the project. It was stated that questions were asked about whether future residents would be from Oberlin or from outside the community. When asking current residents if people interested in Kendal would be out of state or Oberlin residents, the consensus was that they didn't know. He further noted that, because the proposed age threshold is 55 and older, many residents would likely still be working and would rely on vehicles, which would lead to concerns about traffic congestion. He expressed a preference that no entrance or exit be located on North Pleasant Street, citing its proximity to the permanent access road for the new middle school.

McFarlin inquired about the proposed timeline for the development. O'Malley remarked that the northern development would be developed sooner than the southern development. They will be in a position to do construction in two years. The north development could draw from out-of-state or within the northern Ohio area. The southern development would be more local, as that market doesn't pull from out of state. McFarlin commented that, even with Bevan's earlier statement, rezoning is necessary for any development to occur. He expressed hope that Kendal would take to heart the Planning Commission's report that accompanied their recommendation as they are developing plans for this neighborhood. O'Malley commented that Kendal plans to incorporate the dark sky lighting initiative currently in use on campus to mitigate light

pollution, and that a traffic analysis would be conducted to determine the best way to access the southern parcel.

English asked how many traffic analyses would be conducted. O’Malley responded that the analysis is most needed for the southern development.

English outlined the process so that everyone would be on the same page regarding what is expected.

Lydia Young, 264 North Pleasant Street, addressed the Council. She stated that she signed the neighborhood petition and understands the reason for the proposed zoning change. She expressed concern about existing traffic congestion in the area due to the relocation of the elementary school and stated that a traffic study should be conducted now. Young remarked that while Kendal offers much to Oberlin, the City has valuable amenities, including safety and walkability, which are attractive to outside interests. She stated that housing efforts should balance multifaceted options with the needs of current residents, cautioning that focusing too heavily outward could make long-term residents feel excluded. She also requested statistics clarifying what is meant by “moderate income.”


John Bevan, 308 North Pleasant Street, stated that at the July 31 neighborhood meeting hosted by Kendal, residents were informed that there is a wait list equivalent to approximately 150 units. He expressed concern that the wait list functions as a “holding tank” and noted that, according to Kendal’s CEO, roughly 40-50 percent of those on the list are from Ohio, with the remainder from out of state. He stated that neighbors hope Kendal will operate in good faith and will serve Oberlin residents before outside residents.

New wanted to reiterate that while the Council is listening to their concerns and taking their comments into account, the rezoning must occur first before any development can proceed.

Joe George, 317 North Pleasant, will be having a school access road near his property. That driveway is going to be across the street from him. He is concerned that the headlights will go in and out. His neighbors don’t understand what is going to happen, which is why they are worried. He indicated that he would like to see something nice developed in this area so that he can get to know his neighbors, but he does not want to see a traffic signal installed or purchase darkening curtains so he can get some sleep at night.

Adjournment: Since there was no additional information to come before the Council, the public hearing adjourned at 6:59 p.m.

Prepared by:



Briana Reynolds
Clerk of Council’s Assistant

Attest:



BELINDA B. ANDERSON, MMC
CLERK OF COUNCIL



EBONI A. JOHNSON
PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL

APPROVED: 09/02/2025

POSTED: 09/03/2025