

Council could revamp rules for property

After a long discussion about the ordinance on unkept property and what the city code enforcement officer does, the Oberlin City Council plans to look at the rules and possibly make some changes when it meets Thursday.

At the meeting Thursday, Oct. 20, enforcement officer Jan Ackerman talked about several of the properties she's received written complaints on, including 711 S. Frasier, where Keith Alstrom has a salvage yard.

While he has complied with the city's rules, said Mrs. Ackerman, there is no salvage license on file with the Kansas Department of Transportation for the site. The city could direct them to get a license or vacate the property.

Has he ever had a license? asked Councilwoman Fonda Farr. Mayor Bill Riedel said he didn't know, but Mr. Alstrom has used the lot there as long as he can remember. There was some question if the use was "grandfathered in."

The city has asked him to put up a fence so that no one could see the salvage items, said Mayor Riedel, and he did. The city doesn't want to start going to established businesses and forcing them to close, he said, adding that he's sure there are others that have more than nine vehicles on a lot or within 1,000 feet of a city street without a license from the state.

Mr. Alstrom did clean up the perimeter like he was asked, said Mrs. Ackerman. Maybe, she said, she can write a letter letting him know that a permit is available.

Mrs. Ackerman said she did talk to one of the owners of 120 S. Cass about the Connections Program. One said he would talk to his partners, she said, and she hasn't heard anything.

The city's ordinance, said Mayor Riedel, says there needs to be two or more signatures on the complaints. It leaves a lot of the complaints up to someone's judgement, he said.

This opens a whole Pandora's box, he said. If someone doesn't like their neighbor or a person across town, they can send a complaint about the house or the yard. Mayor Riedel said he thinks the council should form a committee to work on this ordinance to make it a lot less subjective.

He said he doesn't want people driving around turning people in they don't like.

In other towns, said Mrs. Ackerman, it's up to the enforcement officer, not citizens

That leaves it up to one person to determine what is and isn't OK, said Mayor Riedel.

No, the code determines it, she said.

"The way we are using this code book," he said, "we allow it to be too subjective, so that anyone can file a complaint about anyone and force the council to act on it. When there are other properties that are worse and those aren't being cleaned up."

Mayor Riedel added that he doesn't think it should be up to one person to determine what is OK and what isn't for the city.

The way it works now is a written complaint comes to the city administrator, said Councilman Rusty Addleman, and then goes to Mrs. Ackerman. She investigates to find out if the complaint is legitimate, then brings it to the council. He added that he doesn't see where it's any one person's responsibility. It's on the council, he said.

The council, said Mayor Riedel, gets to make the ultimate decision. The problem with the ordinance is that probably 95 percent of the houses in the town could fall in there.

Of those probably 75 percent would comply, said Mrs. Ackerman, and the rest they would have to take action on.

"The last thing I want to do is have everyone in this town point fingers at what houses should or shouldn't look like," said Mayor Riedel.

That's why the council should take the written complaint part out of the ordinance, said Mrs. Ackerman. Then the code enforcement officer, who doesn't live here, will be using his or her judgement based on the ordinance.

Before other resolutions on properties are passed, said Councilman Josh Williby, maybe the council should look at this ordinance. Councilwoman Farr agreed.

The ordinance, said Mayor Riedel, is based on an example that came from the League of Kansas Municipalities in 1989.

Cities can make the rules to fit their own town, said City Attorney Steve Hirsch. That's the council's job. The council agreed to move forward on the house at 120 S. Cass, which is empty and the neighbor is trying to sell their property.



Church holds bazaar

AT THE UNITED CHURCH Fall Bazaar on Saturday, Estella Waldo (above) cut up and served corn bread while Janice Cundiff (left) looked at the handiwork for sale.

— Herald staff photos by Kimberly Davis

Second-grade class learns and writes poems about fall

The weather is cooler, the leaves have changed and are falling from the trees and the second graders at Oberlin Elementary School are writing about the season as they learn nouns, verbs and adjectives. Each year, kids in Kathy Tacha's second-grade class write poems about fall. They use their best handwriting, draw pictures and then display their work in the hallway outside their classroom on the second floor.

Here are their poems:

Fall is...
Raking, trick-or-treating, carving
Halloween, pumpkins, family
Red, yellow, brown
Fall is...
Fantastic!
By Madison Fick

Fall is...
Trick-or-treating, learning, crunching
Brown, red, yellow
Apples, candy corn, caramel
Fall is...
Scrumptious!
By Morgan Ketterl

Fall is...
Spectacular!
By Jacie Fortin

Fall is...
Trick-or-treating, raking, jumping
Yellow, red, brown
Leaves, pumpkins, rain
Fall is...
Pretty!
By Malia Bishop

Brown, red, yellow
Caramel apples, turkey, pie
Fall is...
Beautiful!
By Brekin Sauvage

Fall is...
Jumping, falling, eating
Red, yellow, brown
Pie, trees, family
Fall is...
Fun!
By Angela Canaway

Yellow, red, brown
Corn, pie, treats
Fall is...
Fun!
By Tod Mastin

Fall is...
Eating, raining, raking
Red, orange, purple
Soup, corn, chili
Fall is...
Fun!
By Sierra Canaway

*Preaching vigil goes for a week

(Continued from Page 1A) have preached and shared their testimonies. Others have listened, prayed and worshipped. One of the things they saw was God bringing a lot of people of different faiths together "in perfect unity." "The spirit of God had us lay down everything at the door," he said, "leaving us in unity, and left us in a state of amazement." The recent murder of Corey Cook, 22, certainly jolted the community, he said. There are people

who are lost and hurting. Out of the prayer vigil, said Mr. Paulson, the Lord opened several people's eyes to some of the influences in the community. The Red Devil emblem of Decatur Community High kept coming up over and over. He added that they believe that was prompted by the Spirit of God moving. Mr. Paulson wrote a letter to the editor about the school, which appears on Page 4A of today's newspaper.

Fall is...
Trick-or-treating, carving, biking
Red, orange, brown
Jack-o-lanterns, pumpkins, Halloween
Fall is...
Spectacular!
By Brynna Addleman

Fall is...
Eating, munching, crunching
Gold, orange, yellow
Pie, chili, turkey
Fall is...
Scrumptious!
By Logan Hayward

Fall is...
Changing, carving, trick-or-treating
Red, yellow, brown
Halloween, pumpkins, candy

Fall is...
Eating, trick-or-treating, raking
Red, yellow, brown
Cider, pumpkin patch, bales
Fall is...
Awesome!
By Bryce Peter

Fall is...
Trick-or-treating, eating, playing
Green, yellow, brown
Pumpkins, pie, Thanksgiving
Fall is...
Super!
By Jacquelyn Marshall

Fall is...
Hunting, carving, trick-or-treating,

Fall is...
Falling, trick-or-treating, harvesting
Red, orange, brown
Thanksgiving, Halloween, cider
Fall is...
Fun!
By Gage Scott

Fall is...
Changing, raking, falling
Green, red, brown
Treats, pie, rain
Fall is...
Fun!
By Zander Kempt

Fall is...
Falling, eating, trick-or-treating

Fall is...
Trick-or-treating, eating, playing
Red, yellow, green
Halloween, Thanksgiving, school
Fall is...
Wonderful!
By Corbin Wessel

Fall is...
Hunting, studying, harvesting
Red, brown, yellow
Pheasant, corn, deer
Fall is...
Beautiful!
By Ryan Ketterl

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Rodney Dill, MD
Charles Zerr, MD
Dana Jewell, PA-C
Deaun Carpenter, ARNP
Michael Porsch, PA

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