

# Business owners still want canopies

BY RENEÉ CELLA  
Staff Reporter

Because of a recent proposal by the Kirksville City Council, the canopies over the shops on the Square might be removed, much to the dismay of store owners.

Some business owners on the Square were angered at the last Council meeting by the discussion to remove the canopies from their respective shops at business owners' expense. The Council maintains that because of an agreement made by store owners in the '70s and the results of a community improvement study done in recent years, the canopies might need to be taken down, despite owners' complaints.

Plans to change the width of the sidewalks are a main component to the issue.

"In a community-developed plan made during the 1970s, the

city ordinance said that if the city made changes to width of sidewalk, then property owners had to remove their canopies and make changes to them," City Manager Mari Macomber said.

However, the changing sidewalks are not the only factor contributing to the proposed change.

"A.T. Still and Truman State University, among others, started the TIF Commission to revitalize downtown Kirksville," said Aaron Rodgeron, councilmember and Council representative for the TIF Commission.

Rodgeron said that in 1999, the commission spent \$50,000 and hired a firm to do a study about what people in Kirksville wanted to see downtown. He said that in 2004, the study revealed that residents wanted a quaint, historic square.

"The current canopies are old-looking, and with a couple thou-

sand dollars from the business owners, we could get the desired look," he said.

Rodgeron said the commission recommended the removal of the awnings and that once the plans were laid out, it received opposition from business owners.

Rodgeron said the city also is doing all it can to follow what the 2004 guidelines laid out for Kirksville.

"The city is following the guidelines — the new sidewalks and parking were all part of the renovation process," Rodgeron said. "The city has tried, but business owners don't want to put up the money."

He said the resulting problem is a tough one: the awnings are owned by the businesses, even though the city owns the land the business is on.

Councilmember Jill McCord said a lot of the business owners



Mayank Dhungana/Index

Two Kirksville residents take a smoking break Tuesday under the canopies that cover the sidewalk along the Square. The canopies might be taken down despite the objections of many business owners.

have made repairs to their canopies, such as painting them, and the owners who haven't done so have been having difficulties with the weather. McCord also said business owners are arguing that customers really enjoy the canopies.

"Right now is a difficult time for [the business owners], and this is not the right time for them to remove the canopies," McCord said. "Financially, it's a problem

because they have to make an investment, and now they may not have the money."

Although a compromise hasn't been reached, Rodgeron said business owners have some ideas.

"I don't see this as an all-or-nothing deal," Hidden Treasures owner Sherry Stacy said. "I believe each owner should have the right to keep their own canopy or take down their own canopy."

Rodgeron said he understands all of the business owners' complaints, but when such extensive research has been done to show that the awnings are detracting from citizens' opinions of downtown Kirksville, the 2004 guidelines should be followed.

Macomber said the councilmembers, the city and the business owners still are working on a solution.



Mark Hardy/Index

Trash from Washington Street Java Company is placed in one of many Veolia dumpsters in the alley south of the Square. Veolia is currently Kirksville's trash removal company, and it might take on the large-item curbside pickup soon.

## City might adopt new waste system

BY JOHN HITZEL  
for the Index

City councilmembers are considering a proposal that might change the future of local trash removal.

City councilmembers asked Veolia Environmental Services, the company that operates Kirksville's weekly trash and recycling pickup, to handle the annual large-item curbside pickup service this year. Veolia responded with a proposal that advocates multiple changes to the current trash-pickup system.

Amber Bumam, the municipal marketing representative at Veolia, said that every week, each residence with curbside pickup is allowed to put one bag containing as much as 33 gallons or 40 pounds of trash curbside by 6:30 a.m. on its regularly scheduled day. She said additional bags may be collected by purchasing \$1 stickers, at Hy-Vee, Wal-Mart or the Ice House, for each one.

"The current program is designed to promote recycling, and the proposed program will promote [it], too," Bumam said.

Bumam said the proposal would give each residence a plastic upright bin to store trash in and

place curbside each week.

"Each residence would be allowed to place one large item at the curb each week," Bumam said.

This allowance could completely eliminate the need for spring cleaning, the once-a-year event when residents can place as much as 10 cubic yards of large items at the curb.

"Yard waste collection would no longer be picked up the last week of the month," Bumam said. "However, we will allow a site location for yard waste to be taken to for a fee, and we will provide a yard-waste pickup two weeks out of November each year."

These changes would eliminate excess costs that Bumam said are caused by monthly yard-waste pickup.

"We go around the whole city looking for yard waste, and there may only be three or four people who have some," she said.

Bumam said she thinks the proposal would benefit Kirksville because it allows more trash to be placed curbside during regular weekly pickups.

Senior Martha Daxer lives on Jefferson Street and said she recalls a period when other trash bags mysteriously appeared overnight at her curb on pickup days,

which kept her trash from being removed for a time.

"They stopped picking it up ... for about three weeks," Daxer said. "They didn't pick up the recycling either."

The trash bags sat around in Daxer's front yard for a few weeks.

"Then animals got into it," she said. "It looked like something gnawed into the bags, and the trash was strewn all over our front lawn for a while."

Daxer said eventually they had to buy \$1 stickers to make sure the trash was picked up.

Senior Hillary Hugelmann, who has lived off campus since the spring of 2006, said she agrees with the current system's encouragement of recycling.

"I have two roommates," Hugelmann said. "We make about two bags per week, and more if we clean or have a party."

When there is too much trash to put at the curb, Hugelmann said she usually just takes it to work and disposes of it there.

"At home we constantly recycle," Hugelmann said. "It definitely lessens the amount of trash we produce. You basically have to recycle in Kirksville, and that's good."

City Manager Mari Macomber

said that under the existing system, large items such as couches, tables and chairs, but not appliances or pieces of buildings, can be disposed of once a year during spring cleaning.

"It's not just about beautification, it's about providing a service," Macomber said.

Macomber said she initially sought a better way to do spring cleaning because the Street Department, the sub-section of the Kirksville Public Works Department that's designated to perform the large-item pickup, had to divert its energies away from fixing potholes and into bulk trash removal.

Macomber said the change will not have a large effect on residents' costs.

"With one sticker bought each week, the cost of garbage removal is \$10.83," she said. "If Kirksville accepts the new proposal, it would cost residents \$10.75 per month."

Macomber said councilmembers will hear concerns before making a decision.

"I thought it would be something people might like but not everybody is receiving it that way," Macomber said. "What I thought people would be us getting to the potholes sooner and to put out more trash."

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