

WORK SESSION OF THE GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL held Wednesday, March 24, 2010, for the purpose of receiving a briefing on the GHI Right-of-Way Encroachments.

Mayor Davis called the meeting to order at 8:09 p.m. It was held in the Multi-Purpose Room of the Community Center.

PRESENT WERE: Councilmembers Konrad E. Herling, Emmett V. Jordan, Leta M. Mach, Silke I. Pope, Edward V. J. Putens, Rodney M. Roberts and Mayor Judith F. Davis.

STAFF PRESENT WERE: Michael P. McLaughlin, City Manager; Terri Hruby, Assistant Director of Planning; and Cindy Murray, City Clerk.

ALSO PRESENT WERE: Suzette Agans, Patricia Novinski, Sylvia Lewis, Ed James and David Morse, GHI Board; Dianne Wilkerson and Dorothy Lauber, GHI Audit Committee; Gretchen Overdurff and Tom Sporney, GHI Staff; Tom White, Greenbelt News Review; Ed Halley and Bill Orleans.

Ms. Hruby reviewed the two options presented to Council at the regular meeting of November 23, 2009, regarding the encroachment of GHI structures and yards into City rights-of-way along Crescent Road between Gardenway and Eastway. Option #1 would establish a new right-of-way line based on the yard that extends furthest into the Crescent Road right-of-way and Option #2 would establish a new right-of-way line based on the location of the utility pole which is located the farthest from the street line. In January, she and GHI staff had met with PEPCO regarding both options. PEPCO indicated Option #1 was not acceptable to them as they require a minimum one foot offset from the rear of the utility pole, but Option #2 was acceptable. Option #2 was the preferred approach recommended by staff since it allows GHI members reasonable use of their yards, while the reduction in the right-of-way is minimized and existing utilities continue to be located within the right-of-way. This approach does not eliminate all yard encroachments, but does resolve all of the unit encroachments.

Ms. Hruby said the proposed right-of-way line referred to as Option #2 was staked in January and GHI members in the eight (8) homes directly impacted by the proposed right-of-way change were notified. Four members expressed support of the proposed change, and four members haven't responded. Ms. Hruby said the main concern of the members was that existing fences and hedges in the impacted area be allowed to remain until replaced.

Ms. Mach asked whether new property owners would be advised of hedges and fences located within the city right-of-way at the time of property resale. Ms. Novinski said yes, these would be shown on new yard plats.

Mr. Halley, 62-B Crescent, said his residence was one of the homes impacted by the proposed change and he supported the recommended solution. He expressed concern about the large holly tree in the right-of-way in front of his unit. Mayor Davis noted this was a valid concern and asked Ms. Hruby to advise PEPCO of the importance of protecting this tree.

Ms. Agans thanked Ms. Hruby and Council for their efforts in resolving the yard line issue.

Ms. Lewis questioned how long the entire process would take. Ms. Hruby estimated it would take several months, noting the plan had to be approved by the County Planning Board.

Mr. McLaughlin said approval of proceeding with Option #2 would be included as an agenda item for the Council meeting on April 12th.

Other Issues

Ms. Lewis mentioned problems with Census form mailings to GHI residents. Mayor Davis added that residents of Greenbriar still hadn't received their census forms. Mr. McLaughlin said staff was aware of the problems and was in contact with the Census Bureau.

Informational Items

Ms. Pope expressed concern that the City had not been notified when a recent fire in Empirian Village occurred. Mr. McLaughlin said staff is working with the fire department to correct this communication problem.

Mr. McLaughlin reported that he had received a letter from the State Highway Administration regarding work scheduled on the Kenilworth Avenue bridge.

The meeting ended at 9:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Cindy Murray
City Clerk*