*City of Greenbelt, Maryland*

***GREENBELT CITYLINK***

 *WORK SESSION OF THE GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL held Wednesday, October 25, 2006, for the purpose of meeting with the Forest Preserve Task Force to discuss their final report.*

*Mayor Davis called the meeting to order at 8:05 p.m. It was held in the Multipurpose Room of the Community Center.*

*PRESENT WERE: Councilmembers Konrad E. Herling, Leta M. Mach, Edward V. J. Putens, Rodney M. Roberts, and Mayor Judith F. Davis.*

*STAFF PRESENT WERE: Michael McLaughlin, City Manager; Celia Craze and Tarek Bolden, Planning and Community Development Department; and Kathleen Gallagher, City Clerk.*

*ALSO PRESENT WERE: Keith Chernikoff, chair, Forest Preserve Task Force, and task force members Ginny Mudrock, Ruth Kastner, Valerie Elliott, Susan Gregersen, Luisa Robles, John Cooper, Marc Siegel, and Charles Jackman, chair of the Advisory Committee on Trees, representing Bob Trumbule; Sheldon Goldberg, Advisory Planning Board; Joan Falcão, Park & Recreation Advisory Board; Eli Flam, Greenbelt News Review; and Bill Orleans and Doug Love.*

*Following introductions, Mayor Davis expressed pleasure that the entire task force was represented at tonight’s meeting and that Bob Trumbule had been able to attend the City Council’s advisory group appreciation dinner. She distributed certificates of appreciation to the task force members who had not been able to attend.*

*Mr. Chernikoff said that they wanted to focus on the issues that had been raised at the work session last February. The following items were noted or discussed.*

* *There was discussion of how to deal with such activities as the “Pumpkin Walk.” Activities should not adversely affect the preserve, and educational benefits should exceed any impacts.*
* *Mr. Chernikoff pointed out that they had included contingency language in the draft for all the parcels they are proposing to add to the preserve, including Parcel 12.*
* *The task force thinks establishment of a permanent board/committee would be the best way to oversee the maintenance agreement, but they think the annual forest inventory should be conducted by the Advisory Committee on Trees (ACT). Ms. Mach asked whether the boards who were represented on the task force agreed with this recommendation. Mr. Siegel said the Park & Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB) initially had reservations but most members were probably in agreement now. Ms. Gregersen said that the Recycling & Environment Advisory Committee (REAC) cannot take on more “maintenance” responsibilities at this point and thus thought it to be a good idea. Mr. Jackman said that ACT agreed. Although the Advisory Planning Board (APB) had not discussed it, Mr. Chernikoff and Mr. Goldberg did not see any reason for objection if the boards that more directly overlapped were in agreement.*
* *Mr. Chernikoff also noted that in their report, they recommended against a suggestion made at the last work session that a decision to include or remove a parcel in the preserve should be subject to referendum (either automatically or by petition) since the original goal was to make addition easy and removal difficult.*

*There followed a review of the documents on a page-by-page basis. Some of the points raised include the following:*

* *Mayor Davis clarified with Mr. Love that trail maintenance by a private group that had been doing it has now ceased on City property, though it is understood that GHI regulations may be different (Sec. 1, p. 8).*
* *Mr. Chernikoff said they thought some types of trails were acceptable in some circumstances. Mr. Roberts wanted to say paving was forbidden in paragraph “x” on p. 17, but it was agreed to remove the sentence saying “Paved trails are not recommended” instead, since there could be a parcel included in the future where it might be acceptable. Mr. Roberts still had concerns about this and said that if a wooded park with a paved trail was what was wanted, then there was no need to make it part of the Forest Preserve (Sec. 2).*
* *Mr. Love questioned the presence of vertical slopes in this area, as well as the advisability of switchback hiking. It was agreed that “steep” would be better than “vertical.” (Sec. 2, p. 18, parag. III).*
* *Ms. Craze noted the need to change the paragraph on accessibility to say “the possibility of designating any trails, including barrier-free trails, should be based . . . “ (Sec. 2, p. 30).*
* *Regarding the South Preserve – Area E, Mr. Love said it is not true that it is not used and that there are camp sites in this area (Sec. 2).*

*Mr. Chernikoff said they are recommending four parcels to be added: Parcel 12, Boxwood, Belle Point, and Sunrise. They chose not to recommend another five that they looked at.*

*The Mayor pointed out that the potential playground area at Belle Point needs to be excluded. Ms. Mach asked what the impact was of the fact that the Belle Point parcel is included in the Buddy Attick Master Plan. Mr. Siegel said that meant it needed to be coordinated with PRAB.*

*Mr. Roberts asked about the philosophy of excluding areas from the preserve versus including them but grandfathering existing permitted uses. He said he would prefer the latter, since that would prohibit any new or additional development on that land. Mr. Chernikoff said the task force had taken the other tack since they did not want appropriate changes or modifications to those areas to have to go through an approval process under the Forest Preserve. The Mayor said this could be discussed further later.*

*Regarding a new board or committee, Mr. Putens said he was unsure of whether it was needed. The other four Councilmembers favored it, given that there had been no objections raised by other boards or committees.*

*Council expressed great appreciation to the task force for a job well done. Mr. Siegel commented that much credit was owed to Ms. Craze for the successful outcome. This part of the meeting concluded at 9:45 p.m. After a number of informational announcements, the meeting was adjourned at 10:10 p.m.*

*Respectfully submitted,
Kathleen Gallagher
City Clerk*