

WORK SESSION OF THE GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL held Monday, March 21, 2016, to Discuss Gateway Signage and the Greenbelt Station Pedestrian/Bike Trails.

Mayor Jordan started the meeting at 8:00 p.m. The meeting was held in the Council Room of the Municipal Building.

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

STAFF PRESENT WERE: Michael McLaughlin, City Manager; Celia Craze, Director of Planning and Community Development; Jessica Bellah, Community Planner; and Cindy Murray, City Clerk.

ALSO PRESENT WERE: Sharon Bradley, Bradley Site Design; Justin Frye and Michael German, Woodlawn Development Group; Jim Giese, Greenbelt News Review; Patricia Walters, Bill Orleans and Laura Kressler.

Gateway Signage

Mayor Jordan advised that staff has been working with Sharon Bradley of Bradley Site Design, Inc. to develop conceptual designs for “Welcome to Greenbelt” signage and to identify locations where the signs should be placed.

Ms. Bradley provided a PowerPoint presentation detailing the three types of gateway signage proposed: monument signage, column signage and pole signage. She reviewed the proposed locations of each type of sign:

<i>Monument Signs –</i>	<i>Southway Hanover Parkway @ Good Luck Road Cherrywood Lane Traffic Circle</i>
<i>Column Signs -</i>	<i>Kenilworth Avenue, North of Federal Courthouse Crescent Road & Kenilworth Avenue (By Police Station) Kenilworth Avenue between Westchester Park and Greenbelt Road</i>
<i>Pole Signs -</i>	<i>Research Road at Beltsville Agricultural Research Center Entrance Greenbelt Road at Windsor Green Kenilworth Avenue at Good Luck Road Greenbelt Road Bridge (by Greenbelt Station)</i>

There was discussion regarding the Southway sign. Mayor Jordan, Mr. Putens and Mr. Roberts indicated their preference for a map to be included at that location. Ms. Davis said she did not think a map was necessary as most people no longer read printed maps. She said people now use GPS or other electronic means for map reading.

Mr. Herling asked about a bus shelter for the bus stop by this location. Ms. Bellah said the new Americans with Disability Act (ADA) shelter will not fit within the right-of-way at this location. Mr. Herling asked for data on the numbers of riders using this bus stop.

Mayor Jordan asked if it would be possible to attach a banner to the column type signs to advertise special events. Ms. Bellah said yes.

Mr. Roberts said there is already an existing sign on Kenilworth Avenue at Good Luck Road.

Ms. Mach expressed her preference for monument signage as proposed, pole signs on Research Road and Kenilworth Avenue between Westchester Park and Greenbelt Road, and column signs at all other locations.

There was discussion regarding signs for City organizations. Ms. Bradley said if each one of the City's 46 organizations put signs out, it would be overwhelming. Ms. Davis mentioned that people use GPS or an organization's website to find information and locations. Ms. Mach suggested people could be directed to the Community Center for local information and a printed map could be available there.

Mr. McLaughlin said funds are included in the proposed FY 2017 budget for gateway signage but noted that without firm costs, he was not sure these funds will cover all the signage. He said there is a possibility of obtaining grant funding also.

Ms. Davis and Mr. Herling asked about signage for Roosevelt Center. After brief discussion, it was noted that this signage was a separate issue. Ms. Davis asked that staff provide a written explanation of the State's stance on this signage on Greenbelt Road to the Roosevelt Center Merchants Association.

Council requested Ms. Bradley review the suggestions made this evening and bring a revised proposal back to Council.

Greenbelt Station Pedestrian/Bike Trails

Mayor Jordan reported that the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) trail was envisioned to serve as a hiker/biker trail connecting South Core residents directly to the Greenbelt Metro Station. He said Woodlawn Development Group (WDG) is required as part of their development agreement with the City to construct the trail using all commercially reasonable efforts. Mayor Jordan noted that land on which the trail would be built is owned by WMATA.

Ms. Bellah said staff met with representatives from WMATA, Renard Development (North Core Developers) and WDG to discuss the proposed WMATA Trail. WMATA representatives clearly stated that they would not approve the proposed trail until after the FBI site selection is made. WMATA concerns included:

- Placement of the proposed WMATA garage and the proposed trail alignment overlap. Construction of a hiker/biker trail will directly conflict with placement and construction phasing of proposed development in the North Core.*
- No alternative trail alignments are feasible given existing conditions of topography and environmental features.*
- If Greenbelt is selected as the FBI site, construction of the WMATA garage would necessitate closing of the trail and surrounding area during this period of time.*

In no scenario would full implementation and opening of a trail be possible prior than three (3) years.

- *If Greenbelt is selected for the FBI, the current trail alignment would be significantly altered by development of the North Core. In addition, development of the North Core will incorporate new bicycle and pedestrian facilities on Greenbelt Station Parkway and a new parallel running shared-use path. These features would make the current proposed WMATA trail alignment redundant and unnecessary.*

Ms. Bellah said a decision is expected in September of this year regarding the FBI site selection. She said if the City is not selected as the FBI site, WDG and the City could immediately submit the prepared trail alignment to WMATA for review and approval. She said WMATA has indicated that in this scenario, they would welcome the trail and work towards its implementation.

Ms. Bellah said that staff recommends that the planned hiker/biker trail connection between the South Core and Cherrywood Lane, known as the Stream Valley Trail, should be made a priority as it will provide alternative access for Greenbelt Station residents. She advised these trail plans are currently under review by the Maryland Department of the Environment and Maryland State offices.

After discussion, Council requested the following items be included on the agenda of a future regular meeting:

- 1) Letter to State Delegation regarding the Stream Valley Trail at Greenbelt Station and requesting support and assistance in expediting review and approval of the trail project through State processes.*
- 2) Letter to Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) requesting support and assistance in expediting approval of the WMATA trail from Greenbelt Station to the Greenbelt Metro Station.*

The meeting ended at 10:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Cindy Murray
City Clerk*