

*WORK SESSION OF THE GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL held Wednesday, November 9, 2016, to meet with the Roosevelt Center Merchants.*

*Mayor Jordan started the meeting at 8:03 p.m. The meeting was held in Room 201 of the Greenbelt Community Center.*

*PRESENT WERE: Councilmembers Judith F. Davis, Leta M. Mach, Silke I. Pope, Edward V.J. Putens, Rodney M. Roberts and Mayor Emmett V. Jordan. Councilmember Konrad Herling was unable to attend.*

*STAFF PRESENT WERE: Michael McLaughlin, City Manager; and Shaniya Lashley-Mullen, Administrative Assistant.*

*ALSO PRESENT WERE: Dr. Caitlin McGrath, Greenbelt Theater and President of Roosevelt Center Merchants Association; Joe Timer, Greenbelt Consumers Cooperative and Greenbelt Federal Credit Union; Joe Gareri and Barbara Ford, Greenbelt Consumers Cooperative; Cindy Comproni, Greenbelt Federal Credit Union; Michael Hartman and Rich Greystone; New Deal Café; Diane Oberg, Greenbelt News Review; Susan Walker, Greenbelt Community Development Corporation; David Whaples, WMCRP/Architects; Leonard Wallace, Realty One; and Bill Orleans.*

*Mr. Herling wasn't able to attend tonight's work session but sent in several questions: 1) has there been a breakdown of the foot traffic for the different stores; and 2) has the Credit Union thought about providing hours on Saturday.*

*Dr. Caitlin McGrath advised that she missed the last Roosevelt Center Merchants Association (RCMA) meeting but gave a summary. She advised that the meetings are being moved from the last Thursday of the month to the last Wednesday. She also advised that most of the merchants participated in the Halloween parade.*

*Dr. McGrath also advised that the Roosevelt Center is doing well and it has room for growth. She advised that an ad highlighting Roosevelt Center with a map was placed in a travel guide, which was placed in 14 different hotels between College Park and Greenbelt. It came out last month and will get updated once a year. Council advised that the ad was a great idea and wants to work with Dr. McGrath on the ad for next year. Dr. McGrath said she would try to put them in the Welcome to Greenbelt bags. Mr. Putens requested more copies of the ad.*

*Mayor Jordan asked Dr. McGrath how many people visited Roosevelt Center. She answered by saying there are about 30,000 people that visit the Greenbelt Theater in a year but she didn't know how many people visited the Center. Michael Hartman advised there are three main destinations people come to visit at Roosevelt Center - the Greenbelt Art Center, the Greenbelt Theater and the New Deal Cafe. He advised that the New Deal Café is filled every weekend with people from Baltimore, DC, Virginia and Annapolis.*

*Dr. McGrath advised she didn't have any updates on the Bike Grant but said she would check with Ms. Hruby. Dr. McGrath also made a suggestion that a bike repair station be near the bike rack near Curves.*

*Leonard Wallace discussed a website or app for cell phone to show a map of Roosevelt Center. He advised he reserved a website "Greenbelt.City" that can be used for that purpose and can be advertised at Roosevelt Center.*

*David Whaples with WMCRP/Architects advised that the company was sold to Kathy Dixon and they are having a kickoff and launch of their new website event at Friends School.*

*Mr. Michael Hartman introduced Mr. Rich Greystone, the new Chief Manager at New Deal Café. Mr. Greystone gave the following update that they are going to start remodeling the kitchen at the end of this month and it should be fully operational by early January. Mr. Hartman also advised of another project, a coffee/espresso bar, starting either March or April of next year. Mr. Hartman did express concern about the water bill, noting that it ranged from \$1,000 to \$3,000 a month. He said each merchant should have their own meter.*

*Ms. Cindy Comproni advised that they are slowly making renovations to the Credit Union after being in the same space for 35 years. In response to Mr. Herling questions about Saturday hours, Ms. Comproni advised they will have to look into it.*

*All the merchants advised they had problems with either Comcast or Verizon. Mayor Jordan and Mr. Putens suggested that they all meet with each of the companies and invite Council to the meeting.*

*Mr. Joe Timer, Greenbelt Consumers Cooperative, advised that they made a profit after two years of losses. Ms. Mach and Dr. McGrath complimented Mr. Timer on how well the produce section looked and the different programs they offer, such as the \$5.00 bag of groceries to the food pantry and the spare change program. Ms. Mach made a suggestion that the cashiers inform customers how they can become members of the Greenbelt Consumers Cooperative if they aren't already a member.*

*Mr. Timer also advised that WSSC shut off the water to the sprinkler system due to a water leak. Mr. McLaughlin advised that the City is in contact with WSSC in reference to this emergency and concern.*

*Dr. McGrath gave an update for the Greenbelt Theater, advising that they showed all the debates and the election results. Ms. Mach made a suggestion that the Greenbelt Theater should host a membership drive or have some type of notice about membership. Dr. McGrath advised they have about 900 members and that they notify members a month before expiration. Dr. McGrath advised they are about to kick off an end of the year event starting on December 3<sup>rd</sup> with the showing of "It's a Wonderful Life". It is to raise awareness of the cost of keeping the doors open to the theater for free events.*

*Dr. McGrath also advised that they are hiring a new Director Program Outreach on December 5<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Roberts suggested that the Greenbelt Theater should stop doing so many free activities. Dr. McGrath advised that the theater is booked thru December with different free programs and will rethink about transitioning in January.*

*All the merchants collectively have issues with the parking at Roosevelt Center during the Labor Day Festival and would like to be informed of the permits that are issued. Council advised they should meet with the Labor Day chair in the spring. Mr. McLaughlin advised that the RCMA will be emailed the list of permits that are issued for Roosevelt Center.*

*Mr. Timer advised that the bushes at Greenbelt Federal Credit Union are high and need to be cut down for security reasons. Ms. Davis advised that the light under the awning isn't good for the security cameras and management needs to be informed due to safety concerns.*

*Dr. McGrath said Anwar Saleh of the Greenbelt Barber and Stylist Shop would like the festivals to utilize more of the Roosevelt Center. She also made a suggestion that the holiday decorations for Roosevelt Center be up from Halloween through Valentine's Day.*

*Mayor Jordan asked about the smoking problem in the Center. Dr. McGrath advised it's getting better.*

*There was discussion about the food trucks at the festivals*

*Ms. Davis asked about the table or bench for the Step Club and the light fixture in the basement. Mr. McLaughlin advised that a picnic table was donated but a set of benches to match the ones on the other side of Curves is being worked on. Ms. Comproni advised she always suggests taking a flashlight when going into the basement.*

*Informational Items:*

*Several informational items were discussed.*

*The meeting ended at 10:30 p.m.*

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Shaniya Lashley-Mullen  
Administrative Assistant*