



**WORK SESSION of the Greenbelt City Council held Monday, May 21, 2001, for the purpose of reviewing the FY 2002 budget for Green Ridge House.**

Mayor Davis started the meeting at 7:10 p.m. It was held at Green Ridge House.

PRESENT WERE: Council members Thomas X. White and Mayor Judith F. Davis. Council members Edward V.J. Putens and Rodney M. Roberts arrived later.

STAFF PRESENT WERE: Michael P. McLaughlin, City Manager, and Kathleen Gallagher, City Clerk.

ALSO PRESENT WAS: Terry Blake, Property Manager.

Mr. McLaughlin reviewed the current year's accomplishments, including the parking lot expansion, the replacement of awnings over the terrace level doors, the completion of the design for incorporating larger stoves into the kitchens of the units, and the security system upgrade that is to be completed by the end of June. A position has been established for an on-site maintenance person, who has begun employment. Mr. McLaughlin said Council and staff are proud of Green Ridge House, but he noted that it is an aging facility that will continue to require ongoing work and upgrades. Projects under consideration now include fencing the back yard for increased security and developing a car-sharing program.

Mayor Davis said she was pleased to hear the City had been able to come up with a design for incorporating larger stoves into the units, since that issue had been raised several years ago, and initially it was thought to be impossible. In response to a question from a resident, it was clarified that installing a larger stove, with a compensatory loss of cabinet space, would be entirely optional for the tenants.

Mayor Davis also raised a question about how the system that monitors security on doors works, and Mr. Blake clarified that it is connected to a monitoring service that can reach staff by beeper if doors aren't secure. The monitor is not intended to be visible to residents.

Turning to the proposed budget, the meaning of several lines items was clarified, and it was agreed that next year the category of revenue from the beauty shop would be combined with miscellaneous revenue.

In response to a question from Mr. Cassels, Mr. McLaughlin said Green Ridge House could be included in the City's energy-savings evaluation if Council decides to go forward with the study.

Mr. Cassels also commented that the building was designed to have a resident manager and that it might be a good idea to have one again in the future. Mr. Blake responded that this could certainly be considered again in the future but that the present manager does not need housing.

There was some discussion of the revenue loss attributable to vacancies between tenants during the year. Mr. Blake said they project about 18 turnovers during the year, and the average preparation time is about 21 days. He said they are working to reduce that time, but Council members commented that it did not seem unreasonable. Mr. Blake also clarified that the revenue listed as lost from "unavailable" space is accounted for by the management unit.

Mr. Putens asked about a question that had been raised some years ago regarding individual thermostat control in the units. Mr. Blake said their evaluation was that the piping system in the building would not handle individually-controlled heat and air-conditioning. Installing heat pumps would run about \$8,000 per unit, and there would be the aesthetic issue of the many condensing units. Mr. Roberts noted that, while it would not solve the cost problem and would create its own aesthetic problems, the pump units could be put in the window or wall. Mr. Blake said he had looked into that at the time, and his recollection was that there was some structural problem that would be prohibitive. Several residents commented that having no control over the heat can present serious health concerns for those with respiratory or heart problems. A number of residents said the building is so hot that they virtually never need to turn the heat on in their units at all. There was some discussion of the possibility of installing room air conditioners for those who need them prior to the turning on of the building air conditioning in the spring. Mr. Blake also said he would investigate the possibility of upgrading to have greater thermostat control than the current "on" and "off."

With the review of the budget complete, the Mayor asked if there were other issues the residents would like to raise. Mr. McLaughlin responded to a request for funding for social activities by saying there would be no problem in providing some funding prior to the end of the fiscal year.

Mr. Cassels requested that the City consider restricting residency to senior citizens. He noted this was the original plan for Green Ridge House and that both the social and the operating needs are different for a younger, disabled population. Mr. McLaughlin said staff is still working on the revision to the occupancy policy and that this question will be considered in the context of the whole policy as soon as the draft is completed.

Mr. Blake will look into problems that were noted with the performance of one or more of the elevators and the surveillance cameras.

A resident questioned whether the laundry facilities were adequate, given that not all the washers are working all the time. Although the others present did not agree there was a problem, there was nevertheless a positive response from the group to a suggestion that the first floor bathroom could be used as an additional laundry room so that laundry facilities would be available in more than one place.

Mayor Davis thanked the residents for their suggestions and for the refreshments they had provided. The latter were enjoyed promptly upon the adjournment of the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Gallagher

City Clerk