



WORK SESSION of the Greenbelt City Council held Wednesday September 5, 2001, for the purpose of holding a stakeholder meeting with the management of Springhill Lake (SHL).

Mayor Davis started the meeting at 8:10 p.m. It was held in the Multipurpose Room of the Community Center.

PRESENT WERE: Council members Edward V.J. Putens, Rodney M. Roberts, and Mayor Judith F. Davis.

STAFF PRESENT WERE: Michael P. McLaughlin, City Manager; Renee Landen, Inspector, Planning & Community Development; Gordon Pracht, Police Department; and Kathleen Gallagher, City Clerk. Celia Craze, Director, Planning & Community Development, arrived toward the end of the meeting.

ALSO PRESENT WERE: David Zweig, Michael Glass (General Manager, SHL), Carl Maysz, and Rupy Horton, AIMCO; Joyce Chestnut; Sylvia Lewis; David Haverman; Sheldon Goldberg, Greenbelt East Advisory Committee; Amy Boyes, the Gazette; and Barbara Young, Greenbelt News Review.

After introductions, Mayor Davis thanked Mr. Glass for flying the Greenbelt flag at SHL.

Mr. Zweig gave an overall description of the investment AIMCO is making in SHL, saying that this is the best evidence they can give of the company's commitment to the complex. He said they have invested \$5.8 million over the past year, and he described renovation and revitalization of the on-site day care center, the retail shopping center, the Fountain Lodge, and a site for parking for recreational vehicles, as well as structural upgrades, repairs, and replacements. He added that they are very pleased to have landed a ten-year lease with the county for a Head Start program. The area for storing recreational vehicles is not limited to residents of SHL; there is a fee, but the area is fenced and locked. They have rented apartment units that were previously occupied by management offices, which are now divided between the reopened Fountain Lodge and the retail area. The Lodge renovation also included major work on the lake behind it, landscaping, and the trail.

Ms. Chestnut pointed out that the Lodge used to be a center of community activities. Mr. Glass said that although it is not suitable for social events, there is meeting space that can be used by community groups.

Mr. Zweig and Mr. Maysz talked about the window replacement program, which they are now getting bids on and expect to begin within the next eight months or so. This project will be spread out over several years and will cost on the order of \$10 million. In the meantime, they are putting bars across the windows at the request of tenants to improve child-safety.

Mayor Davis asked how AIMCO perceives SHL at this point, in terms of its viability as a community. She asked if, for example, they were succeeding in reducing vandalism. Mr. Glass responded that there is still vandalism, but the situation has improved. He attributed the improvement to success in tightening up screening of applicants and particularly the good relationship between SHL and the Greenbelt Police Department. They have also reestablished a good relationship with the University of Maryland-College Park off-campus housing office and currently have something under 900 units occupied by students.

Mr. Glass and Ms. Landen described the success of the towing program. In response to a question from Mr. Putens, Mr. Glass also said that compared with 700 last year, evictions this year are on the order of only 20-30 per month, which he attributes to improved screening. Mr. Zweig added that an internal "mediation" program has also improved collections by working with tenants to get their rent paid before eviction proceedings would be initiated. Mr. Glass said SHL is nearly 99% occupied, with units remaining vacant for only about nine days, which also diminishes vandalism.

There was discussion of the status of the plans for Greenbelt Station. Mayor Davis described some of the reasons for the appeal of the planning board's approval of the conceptual site plan, and she encouraged SHL management to become involved with the process. Mr. McLaughlin also advised, however, that they should be aware that there is strong political pressure at the county level in favor of the development.

Mr. Putens described the proposed bond issue, which includes \$1.5 million for expansion of the SHL Recreation Center.

With regard to City communication, Mr. Glass said they are willing to try to help with the distribution of the News Review if someone will get in touch with them about it. Council asked Ms. Young to please pass the word about this. Mr. Horton said Comcast was finally on track with the local cable, which they anticipate having by the end of November.

Mr. Putens offered a "heads up" on a project the Neighborhood Improvement Team is working on to place emergency call boxes in strategic locations.

Mr. Pracht identified some communication problems between after-hours and office-hours staff. He said the police would benefit if SHL's after-hours, on-call maintenance person had information on occupied and vacant units so officers could know who was entitled to be in certain locations. In addition, information needs to be passed from the on-call individual to proper office staff during working hours. Mr. Zweig said they should be able to improve this situation.

Ms. Landen praised the new signage in the complex but noted there are many lights out at night. Mr. Glass said they would look into this again, and Mr. Zweig said on-call night staff should have replacement lights available. Mr. Horton said this has already been attended to, with sections having been assigned to night crew to check regularly.

Ms. Landen and Ms. Chestnut both encouraged the development of a new community newsletter.

Mr. Zweig and Mr. Glass encouraged Council members to attend the day care center opening.

Other Business

Mr. McLaughlin briefed Council on a meeting Celia Craze attended in the Governor's office today. Issues raised at this meeting will be on Monday's regular meeting agenda.

Mr. McLaughlin reported the Dean-1B redistricting plan was adopted and that this version of the plan corrects some of the issues municipalities had with the prior version. Mayor Davis noted we should pursue changing precinct lines with the county Board of Elections right away.

Mayor Davis reported on a lunch meeting she and Mr. McLaughlin had with Martin and Wayne Resnick of Martin's Crosswinds. They are considering expansion but have insufficient parking because of a misunderstanding regarding a cross-easement with the adjacent office building.

Mayor Davis asked all Council to look at information on the Maryland Municipal League's legislative priorities, which must be returned by September 10.

The meeting ended at 9:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Gallagher

City Clerk