



MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION

held Wednesday, February 9, 2000

For the purpose of meeting with representatives of Greenbelt Homes Incorporated (GHI).

The meeting began at 8:08 p.m. It was held in the Multi-Purpose Room of the Community Center.

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

STAFF PRESENT WERE: Michael P. McLaughlin, City Manager and David E. Moran, City Clerk

ALSO PRESENT WERE: Sue Ready, Bill Phelan, Dorothy Lauber, Betty Deitch, Chuck Hess and Julia Eichhorst, of the GHI Board of Directors; Gretchen Overdurff, GHI General Manager; Hopi Auerbach, Sylvia Lewis, Ron Jewel, Brian York, Bob Snyder; Karl Hille, The Gazette and Betsy Likowski, The News Review

Mayor Davis welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Prior Notice of Issues:

Ms. Eichhorst stated that both GHI and the City could benefit from notifying each other when issues of mutual interest are going to appear on an agenda. Providing each other with copies of the agenda for upcoming meetings was suggested. Mr. White noted that the City tries to keep GHI informed of issues.

Removal of Tree Issue

Mayor Davis noted that this issue had been internal to GHI, but became external and was brought to the Council's attention by a citizen.

Mr. Roberts noted that GHI's request to perform cabling should have come to the Council and not the City Manager and suggested that in the future GHI come directly to the Council.

Mr. Phelan noted that GHI felt that since GHI was not represented at the Council meeting, only one side of the issue had been considered.

Mr. White noted that this was the first time the Greenbelt City Council had considered the issue. He further stated that the City had made a request to GHI which was ignored.

Mr. Turnbull stated that the City had received a request from a resident and made a request to GHI to give Council a better comfort level of the actions GHI took.

Mr. Hess stated that this issue had gone on for many months and appeared on 9 GHI agendas. He noted that GHI made several requests to the City and the City had responded it would help if GHI did something specific.

Mr. White suggested that GHI communicate directly to the Council.

Ms. Ready asked how GHI should communicate directly with the Mayor and Council. Mr. Phelan suggested phone communication between the Mayor & GHI President for sensitive issues.

Parking around Green Ridge House (GRH) & on Research Road

Research Road (eyesore cars)

Mr. McLaughlin stated that the City's advisory boards had considered this issue. They did not have a recommendation and were not comfortable with a ban or time limit.

Mayor Davis noted the aesthetic issue and recognized that people had different opinions regarding aesthetics.

Mr. Phelan suggested that the city legislate the condition of the cars similar to the way it enforces property standards.

Mr. Turnbull believed that if the City can enforce lot restrictions, it should be able to enforce similar restrictions on cars and suggested the City ask Ms. Craze to consider this.

Mr. McLaughlin expressed a willingness to look at this, but did not hold out hope.

Mr. Roberts indicated he was not in favor of legislating to solve a problem with one person. He also didn't favor regulations regarding the type of car.

Mr. White did not believe the City could legislate this, but was willing to take another look at this.

Mr. Hess stated that there are several examples of problem cars and that this affects property values negatively.

Ms. Ready noted that many cars are snowed in and haven't been moved.

Mr. White suggested permit parking. Mr. Turnbull indicated that the City believed that permit parking was too intrusive, based on a relatively small problem.

Mr. Roberts did not believe there was a parking problem on Research Road and a permit parking system was not needed.

Ms. Deitch believed there were eyesore ordinances in other communities and wanted Greenbelt to enact similar legislation.

There was considerable discussion about junk cars and what constitutes an eyesore.

Mr. Putens suggested using a storage lot for these cars.

Council asked Mr. McLaughlin to check with Mr. Manzi and Ms. Craze to see if other cities had "eyesore" ordinances.

Green Ridge House Parking

Ms. Eichhorst reported that the parking was still a problem at this location.

Mr. McLaughlin reported that the lot expansion would be constructed in the Spring or Summer. Mayor Davis stated that Council would re-look at the management plan and was exploring a car sharing program.

Mr. Phelan noted that GHI was looking into how GHI garages are used (storage versus parking).

Mr. Jewel reported that cars were increasing at Green Ridge House. He complained about people other than approved residents living at GRH. He asked for definition of independent living and a response to a letter he sent to the Mayor.

Mayor Davis informed Mr. Jewel that this issue was not on the agenda and indicated that a letter was coming to Mr. Jewel.

Mr. Roberts had concerns about non-approved residents living at GRH. Mr. Turnbull favored looking at the parking management plan sooner than later.

Mr. York indicated that parking was still a problem and noted that permit parking would push the problem out on to the street.

Code Enforcement of Parking Violations

There was general consensus that this item had already been covered.

Traffic Calming

Mr. McLaughlin reported on the status of traffic calming projects in the City. There was discussion regarding how historic district might affect traffic calming programs. Council asked staff to check with Maryland National Capital Park & Planning Commission.

Trash Collection

GHI was concerned about yard waste pick-up on Fridays. Council indicated this would return to Council on a future agenda.

Zone Parking

Council requested specifics from GHI, including feedback from residents, about their parameters and needs for zone parking or permit parking.

Electric Deregulation

Ms. Overdurff stated that GHI was investigating this and had formed a committee. Mr. Moran provided the status of legislation currently before the General Assembly which would allow municipalities to aggregate.

Playground Work Status

Mr. McLaughlin reported that PRAB had issued a report, and a staff report was being worked on and Council would likely consider this in March. He also noted that the City had submitted an application for CDBG funds.

Starpower Agreement

Mr. McLaughlin reported that the city's agreement with Starpower had not been finalized. He noted that Greenbelt would likely enter into the agreement.

Historic District

Mayor Davis announced that APB still was considering this.

Tree Management Plan

Ms. Overdurff reported that the plan exists and GHI reviews 1/5 of the community each year. Then their contractor makes recommendations regarding maintenance and pruning.

Mayor Davis suggested that GHI put information in the News Review. Council requested a copy of GHI's tree plan and policy.

The meeting ended at 10:37 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

David E. Moran, CMC

City Clerk