



**WORK SESSION of the Greenbelt City Council
Held Wednesday, September 6, 2000,
For the purpose of receiving a presentation on the Goddard Space Flight Center Master Plan.**

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, Thomas X. White, and Mayor Judith F. Davis.

STAFF PRESENT WERE: Michael P. McLaughlin, City Manager; Celia Craze, Director, Planning and Community Development; and Kathleen Gallagher, City Clerk.

ALSO PRESENT WERE: Kim Toufectis, Facilities Planner, Karen Flynn, Chief, Facilities Division, and Nina Harris, Public Relations, NASA/Goddard; Sheldon Goldberg, Greenbelt East Advisory Committee; Virginia Beauchamp, the Greenbelt News Review; and Amy Boyes, the Gazette.

Mr. Toufectis told Council that to date the Goddard Space Flight Center (GSFC) Master Plan has been presented only to NASA/Goddard staff. NASA guidelines require periodic facilities master plans. This one is intended to look 20 years ahead. They are sharing this plan on an informal basis early in the process, rather than waiting until the stage of formal community review to seek input. GSFC has more than 12,000 employees on site in Greenbelt. Although they have plenty of space, many of their buildings do not provide quality space, and the configuration of buildings and roads on the property has become a problem, particularly as a result of the fact that over the last decade, they have come to make more extensive use of their "east campus," i.e., the property east of Soil Conservation (SC) Road. One problem is simply that the space is being used inefficiently, with the staff being too scattered and needing to use vehicles even during the day to get around the property. Another problem is that having a public road, on which people travel at fairly good speed, split their property down the middle creates problems of safety and security, as well as forming a barrier to internal movement.

They are thus proposing to close SC Road to through traffic and enhance an existing road that would circle around their campus to the west and intersect Greenbelt Road east of Mandan, less than a mile to the west of the SC Road intersection. A new traffic light would be required at Brittany Place, where GSFC believes there is already an existing problem with traffic access to Greenbelt Road. GSFC employees would continue to use SC Road, so the light there would still be required but could probably be retimed. They recognize that the community is very accustomed to having access to SC Road and that the traffic on that road is approximately 50%

through traffic. Mr. Toufectis also described a "partnering and outreach zone" that they intend to locate outside their security perimeter.

Council made it clear that its concern, and that of Greenbelt residents, is with the road and its impact on Greenbelt Road traffic. Mayor Davis asked about bike lanes on the "new" road; Mr. Toufectis said they would make the road "bike-friendly" but weren't sure the width would permit actual bike lanes for the length of it. Mr. White said SC Road presently operates as a bypass of sorts, routing traffic to the east around Greenbelt; he said he thinks GSFC is violating its longtime compact with the City not to do anything that would seriously impact Greenbelt Road. Mr. Goldberg asked why they could not divert the traffic farther east, instead of west. Mr. Toufectis said their studies showed less impact to the west because they would hit both wetlands and residential areas on Good Luck Road if they tried to push to the east. He further emphasized that they were attempting to engage in a "Smart Growth fill-in" approach to their space use rather than simply expanding outward as they have in the past.

In response to questions from Council members and residents, Mr. Toufectis also said that: the green buffer between GSFC and Greenbriar/Glen Oaks would not be affected; GSFC is discussing the possibility of an on-site shuttle; they will not make any significant changes in the current character of their construction, particularly regarding building height, and they intend to reforest between the earth science buildings and Greenbelt Road on the east campus; they will not raise any more towers. Mr. White asked about the previously proposed conference center and was told that although that had appeared in a preliminary document for the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC), it was no longer being planned.

Mr. Toufectis said they anticipated soliciting full community review in late fall or early winter and that, shortly before that stage, results of transportation and environmental studies would be forthcoming that would make it possible to answer other questions.

The Mayor and Council indicated that despite their concerns with some aspects of the plan, they appreciated GSFC's making this presentation and their willingness to share information on a timely basis. Earlier in the meeting, Mayor Davis had requested that information on the alternate routes and rationales GSFC had considered in coming to its recommendation be forwarded to Council, which Mr. Toufectis agreed to do. Council will refer this material to the Advisory Planning Board for review when it arrives. The results of the traffic and environmental studies will also be made available to Council when available. Another work session will be held after the point of formal referral from the NCPC.

Other Items of Business

Mr. White raised a question of whether upcoming recycling changes would also make it possible for new materials to be recycled, specifically the #2 plastics not currently being recycled; he also noted that at last night's Greenbelt Homes, Inc., budget meeting, there was discussion of conditions near the Gardenway underpass and the sheds and structures that have arisen near the Mobil station. Mr. Putens asked that we assemble materials for a Greenbelt basket for a Small Cities Council function in Boston. Items such as a t-shirt, mugs, and note cards were suggested. Mayor Davis asked if she could be reimbursed for the expenses of attending an upcoming

Maryland Municipal League board retreat and was encouraged to put this on the next agenda. She also told the other Council members that Mr. Turnbull had indicated his intention to request deferral of action on the agenda item to increase staff salaries by 2%, since he would be out of town at the next regular meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Gallagher

City Clerk