

*WORK SESSION OF THE GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL held Wednesday, August 18, 2010, for the purpose of meeting with the Roosevelt Center Merchants.*

*Mayor Davis started the meeting at 8:04 p.m. It was held in the Multipurpose Room of the Community Center.*

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

*STAFF PRESENT WERE: Michael P. McLaughlin, City Manager; and Cindy Murray, City Clerk.*

*ALSO PRESENT WERE: Bob Davis, Greenbelt Consumers Cooperative: Bill Novick, Greenbelt Service Center: Leonard Wallace, Realty One; Gwen Vaccaro and Marsha Voight, Pleasant Touch Spa; Bill Wilkerson and Ed James, Friends of the New Deal Café; and Bill Orleans.*

#### *Trash/Recycling*

*Mr. Novick reported an odor coming from the Beijing dumpster located in the far end of the parking area behind Greenbelt Auto & Truck Repair. Mr. McLaughlin said he would notify Code Enforcement of the complaint and ask them to determine how often the dumpster is serviced and whether it is sanitized on a regular basis.*

*Mr. Wilkerson recommended two additional toters for recycling be placed in the trash and recycling area behind Greenbelt Carry Out. He said the area sometimes looks messy because of overflowing recycling bins and boxes stacked around the bins. Mr. Wilkerson noted the overflow is often due to merchants not taking the time to properly break down cardboard boxes.*

*Mr. Novick said the Greenbelt Step Club had built an enclosure for trash containers but their dumpster was still in the parking area. Mr. McLaughlin said Public Works had provided the Step Club with a cost for City trash and recycling service but they hadn't yet contracted for this service.*

*Mr. Wilkerson mentioned that some merchants would like to have small recycling bins for collection of recyclables in their businesses. Mayor Davis said the merchants should contact Public Works for the bins.*

#### *Maintenance*

*Ms. Vaccaro and Mr. Wilkerson said they were very pleased with the overall appearance of the Center. They complimented Michael Jawar for the excellent job he does maintaining the Center and the surrounding areas.*

*Ms. Vaccaro, Mr. Wilkerson and Mr. Wallace reported their businesses have been experiencing problems with roof leaks for the past several years. They said that Mr. Christacos' property manager for the Center, Mr. Jaffney, is slow to respond to their complaints. Ms. Vaccaro added*

*that Code Enforcement has cited Mr. Christacos for the two current leaks in her business and he has until September to address the problem.*

*Mr. Wilkerson and Ms. Vaccaro complimented City Code Enforcement staff for their responsiveness to problems and also for keeping the merchants informed of issues, such as the recent sewer break, that affects their businesses.*

*Mr. Wilkerson asked if anything could be done to improve the appearance of the facade in the rear between Greenbelt Carry Out and the New Deal. Mayor Davis suggested he discuss his concerns with Code Enforcement. There was also discussion regarding the conditions of the awnings. Mr. McLaughlin said he would check with Celia Craze, Director of Planning & Community Development, to determine if any action can be taken to have the awnings repaired and/or replaced.*

*Mr. Wilkerson reported there appeared to be a problem with erosion on the hill area across from Realty 1 but added that Public Works is aware of the problem and are monitoring the situation.*

#### *Marketing*

*Mr. Wilkerson said the Roosevelt Center Merchants Association (RCMA) has been working on marketing their businesses by offering discount coupons to employees of the City, as well as government employees of the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center and Goddard Space Flight Center. He added that they were beginning to advertise with leaflets and newsletters to residents of Greenbelt East. Mr. Putens suggested they attend a Greenbelt East Advisory Committee meeting.*

*There was considerable discussion regarding the need for additional signage and/or improved signage for the Center businesses. Various signage options were mentioned, including signage on Greenbelt Road listing all the Center businesses.*

*Council suggested several ideas for promoting the RCMA businesses including: developing a webpage; advertising on PATCH, the new online community newspaper coming out in September; sending weekly email blasts; and advertising on transit busses.*

*Ms. Mach asked if the RCMA participates in the City geocache. Mr. Wilkerson said items from the Greenbelt Consumers Cooperative and Greenbelt Federal Credit Union had been provided to the Recreation Department for the geocache last year, and some RCMA discount coupons would be provided for the geocache in the future.*

*Mr. Wilkerson, Mr. Davis and Mr. Novick mentioned their overall business was up slightly from last year. Mr. Wallace reported the real estate business was still very slow. Ms. Vaccaro said her business had been down for some time and she had decided to close the business by the end of the month. Ms. Vaccaro said she will be looking for space to lease for her alone to continue operating.*

*Mr. McLaughlin provided an update on the Theater Renovations.*

*Mr. Davis reported renovations at the Greenbelt Consumers Cooperative are approximately 66% complete, with the entire renovation work scheduled to be finished by the end of October.*

*Mr. Jordan provided the merchants with an update on the proposed WMATA and County transit changes, noting the Center would be a terminus point for bus transfers. Mr. Herling suggested the marketing campaign to promote the transit changes may provide an opportunity for the RCMA to market their businesses.*

*Informational Items*

*Ms. Pope mentioned a tree had recently fallen onto the Lake path in front of a group of walkers. She said Public Works had been notified of the incident but suggested warning signs be considered to alert park users of the possibility of falling trees due to the wet ground.*

*Mayor Davis asked members to review information received regarding Michelle Obama's Let's Move nationwide initiative that promotes making healthy choices and consider whether the City should participate.*

*The meeting ended at 10:24 pm.*

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Cindy Murray  
City Clerk*