



**WORK SESSION OF THE GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL held Wednesday, July 27, 2005, for the purpose of holding a stakeholder meeting with the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center.**

Mayor Davis called the meeting to order at 8:03 p.m. It was held in the Senior Classroom of the Community Center.

PRESENT WERE: Mayor Judith F. Davis, Mayor Pro Tem Rodney Roberts, and Councilmembers Konrad Herling, Leta Mach, and Edward V. J. Putens.

STAFF PRESENT WERE: David Moran, Assistant City Manager, and Brent Elrod, MML intern in the City Manager's Office.

ALSO PRESENT WERE: Dr. Ronald F. Korcak, Associate Area Director, Robert Serrano, Deputy Area Director, and John Van de Vaarst, Facilities Director, from Beltsville Agricultural Research Center; and Jennifer Sciubba from the Greenbelt News Review.

Mayor Davis began by reaffirming Greenbelt's desire to help protect BARC from Congressional surplus. Dr. Korcak then made a presentation to Council on the FY06 budget for BARC; in 2005, the facility had a budget of \$136 million and for 2006, BARC expects to receive an additional \$4 million for research. This would likely be a permanent budget increase. Dr. Korcak described the projects that would be funded by this money, including experiments with biomass energy from animal manure and from switch grass, and improved surveys on Americans' dietary intake. Dr. Korcak mentioned biodiesel and noted Greenbelt's use of this product. Mr. Roberts explained that emissions tests showed the biodiesel mix produced more carbon monoxide than regular diesel. Dr. Korcak asked to see the results of those tests, and Mr. Moran agreed to send the biodiesel emissions test results to BARC.

Dr. Korcak described other developments at BARC, and invited Council to join Rep. Steny Hoyer for a ceremony on September 9 at 1:30 p.m. for a newly constructed poultry station (a formal invitation is forthcoming). Dr. Korcak explained several improvements BARC is making to its infrastructure, such as upgrading its electrical and steam utilities and relocating many of the "outlier" research buildings to Powder Mill Road. Mayor Davis asked whether BARC has felt any pressure to swap parcels of its land. Dr. Korcak said it is a "never-ending battle" with University of Maryland-College Park wanting to build the "Terrapin Parkway" connecting I-95 to campus. Mr. Serrano mentioned that BARC may swap its old granary site on Powder Mill Road with some land at the intersection of Rhode Island and Sunnyside Avenues. Dr. Korcak said the county wants to install a traffic circle at the intersection of Sellman and Cherry Hill Roads, in exchange for building a low-impact development on BARC to research stormwater management.

Mr. Putens asked about the deer population on BARC and whether BARC was working to improve any of its road surfaces. Mr. Van de Vaarst reported that the deer population is

down (338 deer were eliminated last year alone). He also informed Council that the worst roads—Sunnyside, Beaver Dam, and Edmonston—are owned by the county or the state. BARC owns Powder Mill but has not had the funds to repair it. He said that money has been set aside to begin some work next year on East Line Drive and First Street.

Mayor Pro Tem Roberts expressed concern about BARC's environmental integrity in the long term in the face of continued efforts to chip away at its perimeter, and he suggested protecting it as a wildlife refuge. Mr. Van de Vaarst reassured Council that BARC enjoys both federal and state protections, as well the support of environmental groups like the Anacostia Watershed Society and the Friends of Agricultural Research-Beltsville, which citizens can join. Dr. Korcak then mentioned BARC's ongoing efforts to promote itself as a natural asset, including a current project to inventory and GIS-map all of the species on the property with national or state endangered-species status.

Dr. Korcak also said BARC is starting to work with the county on its green infrastructure program, and he offered to host Council and the City's Recycling & Environment Advisory Committee for a "green tour" of the facilities. Dr. Korcak mentioned that BARC is getting more involved in Chesapeake Bay issues. On Chesapeake Bay Day (October 25th), BARC anticipates signing an M.O.U. with Beltsville, the EPA, and an environmental group. Dr. Korcak said that he sits on the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee for Bay Restoration, where he has begun to work more closely with the Council of Governments, which also sits on the Committee. He wants to increase regional awareness of BARC's value to the area and has started an e-newsletter, which he sends to COG and others. Dr. Korcak agreed to send Mr. Moran the e-mail address and/or website address for Friends of Agricultural Research-Beltsville, and Mr. Moran agreed to send Dr. Korcak City Councilmembers' email addresses to receive the BARC e-newsletter.

Mr. Van de Vaarst closed the meeting with a "not-so-good piece of news": BARC's general counsel will be sending a letter to the City of Greenbelt seeking historical records and documents on the City's use of the College Park landfill. While BARC has used Superfund money to research innovative ways to recap the landfill, it needs additional funds to conduct this research, and the general counsel has determined that any historical users of the College Park landfill may be liable, in part, for that research.

Other Items: Ms. Mach reported that she had spoken with County Councilmember Doug Peters, and that his attorney has ruled that AIMCO will be responsible for adequate public facilities for the total number of units in the redesigned Springhill Lake, not just the additional units. Mr. Moran reported the sad news that Hugh Jascourt passed away while jogging in Buddy Attick Park earlier that day.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brent Elrod  
MML Intern, City Manager's Office