



WORK SESSION OF THE GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL held Wednesday, January 15, 2003, for the purpose of reviewing the Roosevelt Center Market Study.

The meeting began at 7:40 p.m. It was held in the Multi-Purpose Room of the Community Center.

PRESENT WERE: Council members Rodney M. Roberts, Thomas X. White and Mayor Judith F. Davis. Councilmember Edward V. J. Putens arrived at 8:03 pm.

STAFF PRESENT WERE: Michael McLaughlin, City Manager; Kristen Ward, Community Planner and David Moran, Assistant to the City Manager

ALSO PRESENT WERE: Joe Nathanson, Peter Carney, Janet Goldberg, consultants; Ray Stevens, Eileen Peterson, citizens; Judy Bell, News Review and Maniko Barthelemy, the Gazette.

Mr. McLaughlin reported that this was a presentation of the final report by the consultants conducting the Roosevelt Center marketing study and also an opportunity to videotape the presentation.

Mr. Nathanson reported on the various components of the study. He noted that the consultants had conducted an "intercept" study of Roosevelt Center patrons. He presented maps and data which illustrated the primary market (trade area) for Roosevelt Center and summarized the results of the intercept survey.

Next, Mr. Nathanson presented demographics of Roosevelt Center shoppers. He also reported on suggestions that respondents made for additional services at Roosevelt Center, as well as suggestions for improvements that could be made at Roosevelt Center.

Ms. Goldberg reported on total household expenditures made in the primary trade area. She also reported on business sales made in the primary trade area. Next, Ms. Goldberg noted that significant dollars are flowing out of the area. She presented data on additional square footage that could be supported at Roosevelt Center.

Mr. Nathanson reported on development obstacles and opportunities. He particularly noted that the theater was a magnet that could draw customers from a farther away.

Peter Carney, reported on the special qualities of the Greenbelt Theatre that could attract patrons. He noted that the theater was one of the best places in the area to see a film. Mr. Carney summarized the changes in the industry over the last 20 years. He presented data on the nearby market and noted that the Greenbelt Theatre was only capturing a very small share of the potential market area.

Mr. Carney stated that the theater's programming approach (as an art film theater) was a good concept. He suggested more marketing, more cooperation with other merchants and more nightlife (restaurants, etc.) at the Center. Mr. Carney stressed the need for more signage on major roads to attract patrons to the theater and the Center as a whole.

Mr. Nathanson summarized the recommendations. He suggested physical improvements including façade improvements and additional tables and chairs. He suggested more color through landscaping improvements and seasonal plantings. Additional signage along major roadways was stressed as another key need.

Mr. Nathanson stated there was demand for additional restaurants and added retail opportunities. He stressed the need for active, engaged management at the Roosevelt Center. He also suggested new activities such as a farmer's markets, flea markets, craft shows and more arts and entertainment activities. Temporary stands and push carts were also suggested as opportunities for additional retail offerings.

It was suggested that film festivals, particularly for college students be revived at the theater.

Mr. Nathanson commented on public safety concerns expressed at Roosevelt Center. He stressed the need for additional public safety personnel. There was discussion about the need for an active merchant's association.

Mr. Nathanson stated that Roosevelt Center had a story to tell. He suggested outreach to nearby office parks and NASA.

It was announced that a final report will be delivered to the City Manager in a week. Mr. Nathanson noted that momentum had built up during this study and it would be a shame to lose that momentum.

The meeting ended at 9:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
David E. Moran
Assistant to the City Manager