



WORK SESSION of the Greenbelt City Council held Monday, March 3, 2003, for the purpose of meeting with management and owners of the Springhill Lake Apartment Complex.

Mayor Davis started the meeting at 8:05 p.m. It was held in the Council Room of the Municipal Building.

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

STAFF PRESENT WERE: David E. Moran, Assistant to the City Manager and Celia Craze, Director of Planning and Community Development.

ALSO PRESENT WERE: Patti Shwayder, David Douglass, AIMCO; Bob Hildebrand, Casden Properties LLC; Cynthia Johnson & Allen Myers, A.R. Myers & Associates (architects); Joe Raker & Rudy Horton, Springhill Lake Management; Silke Pope, resident; Jim Giese, News Review and Maniko Barthelemy, Greenbelt Gazette

The meeting began with introductions. Mayor Davis announced that AIMCO representatives met with the City previously.

Ms. Shwayder noted that this plan was a work in progress and was a redevelopment plan. She noted the plan to divide the complex into smaller "communities." They wanted to provide increased amenities both within apartments and on site amenities. She noted it would be a multi-income, pedestrian friendly community.

Mr. Douglass stressed that this was an evolving process. He noted the attempt to create smaller "communities" within Springhill Lake. Each would have a separate name, with slightly different architecture and colors. He indicated a new baseball field and community center were planned to replace the existing commercial center. He highlighted the pedestrian path to the Metro station.

Mr. Roberts expressed concern about some of the new buildings being placed in wooded, wetland areas. He suggested that SHL remove additional older buildings.

Mr. Douglass stated his hope to start renovating in August and estimated a 5 year time frame for the whole project. Mr. Putens asked if retail opportunities had been considered. Mr. Douglass responded that there were ample shopping opportunities nearby and noted the planned Westfield shopping center at the Metro station.

Mr. Turnbull noted that the Westfield development was not a certainty. He expressed concern about the loss of retail, but understood why Springhill Lake was making the decision. Mr. Douglass suggested a private/public partnership as a possibility that was subsidized and could operate successfully.

There was also discussion about transportation improvements. Mr. Douglass reported that the complex was considering a free shuttle from the complex to the Metro station.

Mr. White expressed concern about building new structures near the stream. He asked if other non-residential uses had been considered. Ms. Craze noted that the zoning would not allow commercial office. Mr. White stated that there were trade-offs and suggested that more open space would be needed. Ms. Craze referenced the Beltway Plaza frontage along Breezewood Drive, and noted that this may be an opportunity for village retail development there.

Mr. Roberts asked about the plan for Fountain Lodge. Mr. Douglass noted that that would continue to be a Leasing Center. Mr. Roberts stressed the need to avoid building in the woods and on wetlands. He questioned if one ballfield and a new Community Center was an even trade-off, but thought that AIMCO was starting at a good place.

Mr. Putens expressed an open mind and hoped they could incorporate a commercial office component.

Mr. Turnbull asked about the density. Ms. Shwayder noted it was one of the largest apartment communities on the east coast. Mr. Myers stated that it was important to minimize the height of the new buildings to keep a residential feel. Mr. Turnbull stated that generally he was happy with the concepts shown this evening. He suggested placing the new buildings closest to the Metro station.

Mayor Davis favored placing the new buildings farther back to improve the visibility.

Mr. Myers stated the proposed apartment renovations amounted to \$30,000 per unit which would approach \$90 million for the whole complex. He said the outside of the buildings would have a new look and it would differ among the various communities. This included new balcony fronts, canopies, new glass. He stated that the interior of units would be modernized by opening kitchen corners and dining areas, adding bathrooms, replacing all appliances, cabinets, carpets, finishes, flooring, bathroom fixtures, etc. The plans would maintain/increase closet space. Every unit would have washers and dryers and individual HVAC systems and hot water heaters.

Mr. Roberts asked about air conditioning. Mr. Hildebrand noted that there would be individual a/c compressors for each unit. Council expressed concern about their appearance. Mr. White asked about electrical changes. Mr. Douglass noted an electric upgrade. Mr. Hildebrand noted that Comcast had wired the whole complex for cable internet.

Mayor Davis asked about income diversity. Ms. Johnson noted that diversity would be achieved within each community.

There was discussion of the Recreation Center. The architect noted the proposed recreation center was 6,000 square feet. Staff noted that the existing recreation center was 8,800 square feet with a planned 4,800 square foot addition. There was discussion about the need for any new recreation facility to accommodate the needs and desires of the City.

Mr. Giese raised questions about the existing recreation center being on land acquired through Program Open Space. He also asked about the plan to reforest the golf course. Ms. Craze responded that the reforestation would occur on land not proposed for development.

Ms. Barthelemy asked about notification and involvement of existing residents. Ms. Shwayder noted there would be community meetings. Mr. Douglass reported that a marketing company would be involved to advertise and inform the tenants about what was happening. Mr. Douglass also referenced a concept of hospitality suites that would be used to temporarily house tenants.

Ms. Craze noted the need for departures and variances that would require City approval.

Snow Removal

Mayor Davis expressed concern about snow removal at Springhill Lake during the recent major storm. Mr. Raker responded that it was the volume of the storm. Mr. Horton noted that there were equipment breakdowns and that also put them behind in snow removal.

Information Items

Mr. Turnbull reported on Ms. Penney's email regarding a legislative proposal. Council agreed to consider it next year. Mr. White reported on the meeting with State Delegate and BiCounty Committee Chair Doyle Nieman regarding MC/PG 108. He stated that Delegate Nieman indicated that the bill would likely be referred for a summer study.

Mr. Moran presented a map showing planning and zoning throughout the State. He also reported on an ill resident. Mr. Moran distributed a draft agenda for the MNCPPC stakeholder work session.

Mayor Davis noted that PGCMA had supported all bond bills. They had also supported the amended planning and zoning bill and the summer study.

The meeting ended at 10:05 p.m.

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