



**WORK SESSION of the Greenbelt City Council held Monday, March 19, 2001, for the purpose of meeting with the Board and General Manager of Greenbelt Homes, Inc.**

Mayor Davis started the meeting at 7:40 p.m. It was held in the Board Room at the offices of Greenbelt Homes, Inc. (GHI).

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

STAFF PRESENT WERE: Michael P. McLaughlin, City Manager; and Kathleen Gallagher, City Clerk.

ALSO PRESENT WERE: Julia Eichhorst, Dorothy Lauber, Sylvia Lewis, Betty Deitch, Susan Ready, and Bill Phelan of the GHI Board; Gretchen Overdurff, General Manager of GHI; Amy Boyes, the Gazette; and Barbara Young, Greenbelt News Review.

Mayor Davis said Council hoped to continue to meet annually with GHI, as well as with other stakeholder groups such as the Greenbelt East Advisory Committee and Beltway Plaza.

Historic District Status: Mr. McLaughlin said it will take staff two or three months to prepare its report following receipt of the Advisory Planning Board report. Mayor Davis said work sessions and/or public hearings would follow.

Animal Control Position: The reclassification of the position and its transfer from the Police Department to the Department of Planning and Community Development will be reviewed by Council with the FY 2002 budget. The reason for the departmental relocation is that Planning has become the home base for the City's expertise in civil (as opposed to criminal) enforcement.

Eyesores/Newspaper Distribution Boxes: The Mayor said that while the subject still needs to return to a work session, Council has made progress on investigating uniform containers for news racks. Regarding parked cars, the Mayor said there are limits on what the City can do if the cars are licensed and capable of being moved, but staff is still looking into whether other cities have ordinances on junked cars that may be useful to the City. Mr. McLaughlin added that he was not optimistic that the Council would be able to legislate this. The Mayor added that it is appropriate for the City to be cautious about interfering with residents' private property.

Proposal to NORC: Council and GHI Board both expressed appreciation for the serendipity that allowed the City and GHI to cooperate on a proposal to NORC Supportive Services for grant funding to support a position that would allow for assessment of the needs of the City's seniors. Ms. Overdurff asked that both the City and GHI keep in mind that the position would received grant funding for two years but that neither organization is currently budgeted to pick up the salary, and some further cooperation might be necessary to manage that. She will send a copy of

the proposal to Mr. McLaughlin, who will see that it is copied, as appropriate, to Council. In a response to a query from Ms. Ready regarding why GHI had not found out about the deadline until the last minute, it was clarified that although City staff had contact with NORC earlier, during the work of the Task Force on Assisted Living, the City did not know of this grant opportunity. Ms. Overdurff added that GHI had also not been notified in January by its regional cooperative association, which should have passed on the word.

Smart Growth: Greenbelt has not previously been eligible under the state's "Live Near Your Work" program, which was targeted at lower income areas, but Mr. McLaughlin said the Planning Department is checking into whether the guidelines have been expanded. GHI is interested in pursuing a program for its employees. Mr. McLaughlin said the City will keep GHI informed. This program was designed to provide \$1,000 each from the state and county to match \$1,000 from the employer, in support of purchase of a house. In the absence of other support, the City has its own program of \$2,000 for its employees. Mr. Turnbull suggested that the City take a stronger advocacy role in pursuing this program with the staff of the Governor's Office and with the state delegation.

Sharing of Equipment/Staff: It was agreed it would make sense for GHI and the City to share specialized equipment and skilled staff on occasion rather than duplicating effort or contracting outside. Mr. Phelan suggested a program like GIVES, whereby services would be traded. He noted, for example, that where the City has expertise in such areas as grounds, roads, and parks, GHI has expertise in building maintenance. Another area for cooperation would be in-house training of staff, where GHI has supported a number of programs that could be expanded to serve a wider audience. Ms. Overdurff will pursue this subject with Consuella Harris, the City's Human Resources Officer. Mr. Putens emphasized that the Greenbelt East homeowner associations might have an interest in participating in cooperative efforts of this nature, and Mayor Davis added that Springhill Lake, with its large work crew, should also be included.

Overpass Safety: Ms. Ready expressed support for keeping the Spellman Overpass open, and others agreed it is essential to keep it open and safe. Mr. Turnbull suggested widening it when it is replaced would enhance the sense of safety. Using monitored cameras was discussed. Mr. McLaughlin said the City will continue to consider monitoring as it expands its use of cameras. Mr. Roberts sounded a cautionary note on this subject, however, stressing that because of privacy issues, cameras should be used only very selectively and in locations that are recognized as having security problems. The Mayor suggested call boxes as another alternative.

Entryways: The Mayor noted that improving the gateways to the City is often more difficult than it sounds because of rights of way. One high-priority item is the Plexiglas-covered map on Southway, which is out of date and in bad condition. Signage is also under review. Ms. Deitch said the quantity of "no parking" signs at the entryway on Crescent Rd. is unattractive; Mr. Phelan responded that the distance between the signs is probably driven by enforcement needs.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Gallagher  
City Clerk