



**WORK SESSION of the Greenbelt City Council held Wednesday, November 14, 2001, for the purpose of meeting with representatives of Capitol Cadillac to review a revised site plan.**

Mayor Davis started the meeting at 8:05 p.m. It was held in the Senior Classroom of the Community Center.

PRESENT WERE: Council members Rodney M. Roberts, Alan Turnbull, Thomas X. White, and Mayor Judith F. Davis. Mr. Edward V. J. Putens arrived at 8:20 p.m.

STAFF PRESENT WERE: Michael P. McLaughlin, City Manager; and Kathleen Gallagher, City Clerk. Celia W. Craze, Director, Department of Planning and Community Development, arrived late in the meeting.

ALSO PRESENT WERE: Daniel Jobe, President, Capitol Cadillac; Jim Soltesz, engineering consultant for Capitol Cadillac; André Gingles, legal counsel for Capitol Cadillac; Floyd Sheahan; and Judy Bell, Greenbelt News Review.

Mr. Gingles first noted that they had withdrawn the legislation they had previously put forward because of the importance of maintaining a good relationship with the City. He said they were returning to Council with a revised plan for the adjacent lot, which they believe meets Council's earlier objections.

Mr. Soltesz reviewed the main objections Council had raised to the plan at the previous work session. The new plan shows the 75' setback Council had requested for buffer and situates the entrance of their driveway so that the new facility would not be visible from Greenbelt Road. He said with this plan they will be devoting 32% to greenspace. They also located and will leave intact the marker of the historical property, as well as setting a plaque in a landscaped setting to recognize the site.

The following matters came in the course of the meeting in response to questions from Council members. Mr. Jobe said the two new buildings would be showrooms and a service reception area. Cars would be brought from there to their existing building for work. Mr. Jobe said the proposed facilities should not be visible from the beltway when the trees were in foliage.

Mr. White said he had always objected to Capitol Cadillac's location in Golden Triangle at all and that it was only by pressure from the county that a car dealership went into space that was intended to be restricted to office park. He said he has been told that the presence of Capitol Cadillac makes it difficult for Golden Triangle to get tenants.

Mr. Gingles said it was not until they had begun to pursue the possibility of purchasing the state-surplus land that they realized the City was also interested. They decided to come forward

immediately and make their interest known, and, as a result, they are somewhat ahead of themselves in terms of their planning. They also thought the state would recognize that this parcel is of greater value to Capitol Cadillac than to anyone else, given their need to expand and their location on contiguous property.

Mr. Gingles asked Mr. Jobe to explain the need for the expansion for the benefit of Council members who had not attended the last meeting. Mr. Jobe explained it is an issue of economies of scale to have multiple dealerships at one location, and General Motors has given Capitol Cadillac a grace period to do so. But they need more space.

Mr. Turnbull pointed out the need for Council to balance their needs with those of the other tenants in Golden Triangle, and he asked Mr. Jobe what their relationship was. Mr. Jobe responded that they have had straightforward conversations with the management and have tried to be cooperative. There are currently some parking problems related to on-street parking by employees of Golden Triangle and Capitol Cadillac. They recognize that cars left for body work are the primary eye sore, but the long-term plan is to relocate their body shop to a more industrial-park type of setting, as the dealerships expand. In the meantime, the tree buffer is growing at the rate of 2-3' per year and should soon shield the view.

Mr. McLaughlin said the City had written to the state requesting information on the current status of their intentions regarding disposal of the property, and we expect to hear back within two-three weeks.

In response to a question from Mr. Roberts, Mr. Soltesz said the existing storm water system would be adequate for the additional run-off. There was discussion of the problems with maintaining the storm-water area. Mr. McLaughlin said the county is responsible for maintaining functionality, but the problems arise when maintenance is needed but there is no actual blockage. He said he thinks the ongoing maintenance is done by Golden Triangle.

Mr. Turnbull asked if the state had appraised the property. Mr. McLaughlin said it had been previously appraised at \$2.5 million, but it was not clear whether the sale price would be the appraisal price. Mr. Gingles said their expectation was that the state would want a market value. Mr. Turnbull said that if the state sold the land for development, he wanted the City to make a claim for Open Space funds in the amount of sale.

It was left that the City needs a response from the state before deciding on any plan of action or making any response to Capitol Cadillac. There was general feeling that another work session would be needed. Mr. Gingles stressed that in this revised plan Capitol Cadillac had worked very hard to be responsive to what Council had said previously; he added that some further modifications could possibly be made, and they have some new thoughts about the existing property too. He said they would take another look at the combined sites. Mr. Turnbull said he would also like to hear some input from Golden Triangle.

Other Business:

Mr. McLaughlin said the New Year's committee wanted approval to consider using the \$3,000 that is earmarked for fireworks for another type of "kick off" programming. Although a majority of Council members were willing to give the committee this flexibility, there was not consensus that it should be approved without more information on how the money would be spent. It was also noted that there appear to be problems with getting enough volunteers to continue this activity. Mr. White asked for clarification on the role of the City and, in particular, Recreation Department staff in the event. Council agreed that the relationship of the City to the event should be more clearly defined and asked that a work session with the Recreation Department and the event committee be scheduled for early in 2002 to discuss this.

Mr. McLaughlin said Mr. Gingles had requested an executive session with Council at 7:30 p.m. on Monday to discuss the status of the condemnation lawsuit for the postal facility property. An interview for the Youth Advisory Committee will require rescheduling.

Mr. McLaughlin asked for Council direction on taking a position prior to the November 19 public hearing on CB-5 and CB-40 regarding development and overcrowded schools inside the beltway. Council directed that a letter opposing CB-40 be prepared.

Mr. Putens said it had come out at the Police Department's meeting Tuesday night on Roosevelt Center that articles were for sale in the variety stores that were doing duty as drug paraphernalia. He that the City Solicitor review whether the City could request a restriction on the sale of any of these things.

Mayor Davis reminded Council of the Prince George's County Municipal Association meeting tomorrow night in Mt. Rainier.

The meeting ended at 10:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Gallagher

City Clerk