



WORK SESSION of the Greenbelt City Council held Monday, November 19, 2001, for the purpose of holding a stakeholder meeting with representatives of the State Highway Administration, Region 3.

Mayor Davis started the meeting at 8:15 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: Michael P. McLaughlin, City Manager; Robert A. Manzi, City Solicitor; and Kathleen Gallagher, City Clerk.

ALSO PRESENT WERE: Charlie Watkins, District Engineer, Charlie Adams, Director of Environmental Design, and John Christman, regional bicycle and pedestrian coordinator, State Highway Administration; residents of Boxwood; and Virginia Beauchamp, the Greenbelt News Review.

Following introductions, the topics discussed were:

Noise Barriers: Several residents of Boxwood spoke about the increasingly intrusive level of noise from the beltway, but it was noted that Lakeside, parts of GHI, and parts of Greenbelt East—particularly southwest of Hanover Parkway—are also affected. Mr. Watkins said there are two categories of qualification for sound barriers. One is when the state is expanding highways or building new highways, in which case the state must take measures to reduce sound that reaches or exceeds 66 decibels at its worst times. Eligible communities are those that existed at the time the state first started to look at doing the work (called a "Date of Public Knowledge"), even if there is a substantial lag-time before its implementation. The other category involves going back to look at highways built before noise was a consideration. Eligible communities are those that existed before the road was built. The sound threshold is also 66 decibels or greater. These are federally funded programs, with the relevant county providing a 20% cost-share.

Mayor Davis remarked that Greenbelt had known of the second category but the first one might prove more useful. She asked about distance requirements from the highway. Mr. Watkins said distance is not a criterion; they look at the sound level and whether there is "a majority of impacted homes." He said they would be happy to come out and test and asked that a specific request, preferably accompanied by a map, be sent to him in writing.

In response to questions from Mr. Roberts, Mr. Watkins said: there is no comparable program for the Baltimore-Washington Parkway; the programs require an expansion of the roadways, not merely of the volume of the traffic; and that, even if Greenbelt were to qualify, the funding for sound barriers is already committed six years in advance. Mr. Putens suggested that the City

should add increased funding for these programs to its list of legislative concerns to discuss with the delegation next month.

Greenway Center Bus Stop: Mr. Watkins said work is underway and should be completed no later than spring. Mayor Davis congratulated him on finding a way to include the cut-in for the bus.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator: Mr. Watkins said each region is now required to have its own bicycle coordinator. Mr. Christman said his role is to work closely with communities and advocacy groups and coordinate with the local office.

Bollards at NE Corner of Greenbelt and Mandan: Mr. Watkins said they were originally placed incorrectly but had now been reinstalled. He was aware of the problem of buses not being able to negotiate the turn.

Water at Manhole on Greenbelt Road Opposite Greenway Center: Mr. Watkins observed that since it's dry now, and since we're in a period of drought, he would deduce that the water is caused by groundwater or run-off rather than by a leak. He added that they would continue to look for a solution.

Merging Southbound onto Kenilworth from Ivy Lane and Turning Left on Crescent: Mr. Watkins allowed that this was difficult, but he thought the problems were not worth losing the free right turn. Solutions are either to take the longer route via Cherrywood or to come up to the light rather than taking the free right turn.

Marriott Sign on Kenilworth: The placement of this sign causes drivers to turn left prematurely into the SHA driveway at the Crescent traffic light rather than continuing on to the Ivy Lane traffic light. Mr. Watkins said this caused such a problem that he would gladly let the hotel use state right-of-way nearer to Ivy Lane, other than the median, to place the sign.

Repair of State-Maintained Section of Southway: It will be done in spring 2002. Mayor Davis also asked who was responsible for replacing trees that had died in the median. Mr. Watkins said they were in the absence of any agreement to the contrary, and he said he'd look into it.

Light at Cherrywood and Metro Access Road: Mr. Watkins said they did a study earlier, and the intersection did not qualify for a light. He said they would test it again. Mr. White suggested that engineering remedies to improve the traffic flow out of the parking lot might be more effective than a light, and Mr. Watkins said they'd look at that too.

Light at Lakecrest and Greenbelt: Mayor Davis said she received this question a number of times while "door knocking" before the election. Mr. Watkins said he would check and, if enough time has passed, they would again test this intersection to see if it qualifies for a light. He said at least a year must pass.

Mr. Putens complimented Mr. Watkins on what a pleasure it is to work with him, and other Council members agreed. Mr. Watkins said he appreciated having the annual meetings.

Other Business

Mr. White asked that the City write to Congressman Hoyer to support College Park's request to reopen its airport.

Mr. Putens raised with Mr. Manzi the question of restricting the sale of items being used as drug paraphernalia. Mr. Manzi said there would have to be a declaration that these things were paraphernalia. Mr. Roberts said the thought the problem was one of enforcement, not simply banning things. Mayor Davis suggested talking with Berwyn Heights, which is using "J-1" and "J-2" classifications to exclude some juveniles from its teen center.

Mayor Davis asked Mr. McLaughlin to send a copy of the NLC policy request to Scott Hancock at the Maryland Municipal League, if that had not been done.

Mayor Davis announced there would be a memorial service for Carl Bond at Paint Branch Unitarian Church on December 8.

The meeting ended at 10:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Gallagher

City Clerk