



**WORK SESSION of the Greenbelt City Council
Held Monday, November 20, 2000
For the purpose of meeting with the Assisted Living Task Force to discuss their final report**

Mayor Davis started the meeting at 8:10 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; Kathleen Gallagher, City Clerk; and Karen Haseley, Supervisor, Therapeutic Recreation Programs.

ALSO PRESENT WERE: from the Assisted Living Task Force—Rev. Edward H. Birner (chair), Alexander Barnes (vice-chair), Audrey Barnett, Helen Geller, Leonie Penney, and Betty Timer; Sheldon Goldberg, Advisory Planning Board; Jim Cassels, Green Ridge House; Booker Hughes; Diane Oberg, the Greenbelt News Review; and Amy Boyes, the Gazette.

Everyone agreed that there was more research and more work to do on this topic. Mr. Barnes clarified that the task force had been given an October 1 deadline for its report and had thus found a stopping point to meet its deadline.

One of the two major recommendations of the task force is that a professional community needs-assessment be undertaken, with reference to both assisted living facilities and assistance-in-living services. Ms. Haseley explained that there are so many types of services and facilities available under the rubric of "assisted living" that the task force concluded that evaluating what seniors really need in Greenbelt would require a comprehensive needs assessment that goes beyond the capabilities of the task force. Mr. Putens asked if it would be possible to do this in-house, but the task force thought it needed external expertise.

The other major recommendation of the report, which had also been in the interim report, is the hiring of a "community resource advocate" to undertake this type of coordination. Ms. Penney said that "assistance in living" (assistance provided in one's home rather than in an assisted living facility) is needed now in Greenbelt. The task force is suggesting not that the City provide such services but rather that the City help to identify available services from other agencies and also possibly to help aggregate services for better prices. She later commented that Ms. Haseley already does some of this.

Ms. Timer added that while social workers from the County's Department of Aging will do an appraisal to identify what services an individual needs, they do not locate the services—one must either do the follow-up oneself or have other help to do so. She said the community resource advocate is needed for the follow-up.

Mr. Putens said he thought this "assistance in living" component was most important and should be further developed before the budget comes up. Mr. Turnbull said that he still thought an assisted living facility would be needed in Greenbelt and did not want to rule that out of the discussion, but that pursuing assistance-in-living services would be a practical starting place.

Mayor Davis asked Mr. McLaughlin to look into possibilities for getting the assessment done and for initiating the community resource position. She said the task force had discussed starting it on a part-time basis. Ms. Penney suggested looking into using an AARP intern or a University of Maryland doctoral student part time. As one possibility for the assessment, Mr. McLaughlin suggested asking Collington to do a contract proposal. Council concurred with this but said not to limit the field to for-profits.

Mr. Goldberg asked about the possibility of using the vacant nursing home facility. Mayor Davis responded that it would take a good deal of renovation for assisted living. She also mentioned the possibility of a shared use facility—part nursing, part assisted living. Later in the meeting, Ms. Timer also suggested this dual use for Green Ridge House—part independent living, part assisted living.

Mr. Barnes reminded the group that the questionnaire that sparked the formation of the task force indicated a concern with assisted living, not assistance in living, and he encouraged Council not to lose sight of the potential need for an assisted living facility.

Mr. White asked for a summary paragraph on the nature of each of the different alternatives reviewed by the task force; Mr. McLaughlin asked Ms. Haseley to do this. Mr. White said the two recommendations are straightforward, but both have price tags. He said that real as the needs are, it is not necessarily the case that the City is the appropriate entity to meet the needs, and that more exploration will need to be done.

Ms. Timer responded to Mr. White, saying one model for the City's involvement might be the Adult Day Care Center, where the City does not actually run the service but contracts it and thus has input into its quality. She urged that for the City to be involved would mean the City would have a say in what it gets, which she considers to be essential.

In response to a query from the Mayor, Mr. McLaughlin said that staff is looking at its authority to regulate group homes, which would be one area in which the City could exert oversight.

Ms. Penney asked what would happen with the two recommendations. Mayor Davis responded that she thought the assessment could be done quickly on a contract basis, but that discussion could proceed on the resource person independent of that. She asked that the task force recommendations be placed on the agenda for the December 18 regular meeting.

Ms. Haseley noted that a related item that came up in the task force's investigation is that according to the County, a lot of the calls coming from Greenbelt seeking services are from people whose incomes are a little too high to be eligible for services.

Mr. Putens raised the question of what should happen to the task force now. It was agreed that the group would not yet be disbanded but would remain on stand-by, possibly to assist Council in following up on its recommendations.

The discussion of the task force proposal ended at about 9:30 p.m.

Council remained to discuss how to proceed in dealing with the split between the Greenbelt Association for the Visual Arts (GAVA) and Greenbelt Pottery. Mr. Putens, Mr. Turnbull, and Mr. White expressed the opinion that it would be appropriate for Council to meet with the City Manager and other staff to discuss staff's handling of the matter but that it was not appropriate for Council to be involved directly. Since one issue is the implication of the City's not having a signed contract with GAVA, it was decided to meet in Executive Session next week with the City Solicitor to discuss options.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Gallagher

City Clerk