

**Work Session Meeting of the Sandy Springs City Council was held on Tuesday, August 21, 2012, at 9:27 p.m., Mayor Eva Galambos presiding.**

## **STAFF DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **Recreation and Parks**

#### 1. Abernathy Greenway Update

**Director of Recreation and Parks Ronnie Young** stated Council approved a contract at the July 17, 2012, City Council meeting for Phase IV of the Abernathy Greenway project and the contract for additional design work. During the meeting there were a few public comments regarding the project. As a result of the comments, Council asked staff to review the site, the location of the playable art, and the possibility of some the art moving to the west side of Ms. Woodward's property. Another issue was the location options for the restroom pavilion. Staff and Councilmember Collins met on August 6, 2012, with twenty-six of the residents in the community. Discussed at the meeting was the option of moving the restrooms to the west side of the Woodward property versus the east side. A majority of the people who attended the meeting would like the restrooms to be located on the west side of the Woodward property. In order to eliminate damage to existing trees, the restrooms will be located about 100-125 feet from the property line. This is the original location where the restrooms were to be located in the concept drawing at the beginning of the project. The sewer line would run out to Abernathy Road and the water line would enter from that same location. This is a request to Council for staff to move forward with this plan for the consultants to design the restrooms on the west side of the property. It was decided that the playable art positions will remain as they currently are.

**Councilmember Chip Collins** stated the neighborhood is concerned that the greenspace is rapidly being diminished. What had been decided on originally was a twenty-two space parking lot to service a large playground. The playground has now been replaced by playable art and the parking lot spaces have increased to thirty-six. The parking lot will take up a large space in a narrow area of the park. The other concern is the pavilion attached to the restrooms. The idea of the park was to have a long greenspace that would allow people to run on a trail located in the park. Now with the huge parking lot and the restroom placement there will be no trail. There is already a plan to have a covered structure next to the grassy area. The neighborhood is requesting that the City not build a covered pavilion by the restroom and instead build a covered structure by the large grassy space. He asked that the pavilion attached to the restroom not be built, which will reduce visual clutter in an already congested area.

**Mayor Eva Galambos** asked how far the suggested placement of the pavilion would be from the restrooms.

Director of Recreation and Parks Young responded the pavilion would be 100-150 feet from the restrooms.

**City Manager John McDonough** stated the City has paid the consultants for the design of the park.

Mayor Galambos asked if Council has already seen the design that combines the restrooms with the pavilion.

City Manager McDonough responded yes. There is a long history of design work that has been discussed with the neighborhood. These issues have only recently surfaced regarding the park.

Mayor Galambos stated Council had agreed to have a parking lot on Wright Road and the neighborhood objected to that. The parking area has now been moved to the middle of the park.

City Manager McDonough stated depending on where the residents live, there are different perspectives and opinions regarding the park. It is very difficult to have a consensus from everyone on some of the issues regarding the park.

**Councilmember Dianne Fries** stated the City is very fortunate to have the playable art, even though the park plan originally did not call for playable art. She has an issue with the design plans changing whenever anyone complains. She does not recall a consensus of Council to move the pavilion. There are good reasons to place the pavilion where it is located on the map, one being to save the trees. Staff supports this recommendation to move the pavilion from the east side to the west side of the Woodward house.

Mayor Galambos asked if the restrooms will be convenient to where the playable art will be located.

City Manager McDonough stated the suggestion was for the restrooms to be located in the middle of the park near Wright Road. It was decided by Council that Phase IV of the park would be built to include trails, parking lot, restroom pavilion, and the playable art. Afterwards, staff would assess the impact on parking and then if there are parking issues, Council could look at possibly building the parking lot at Wright Road.

**Councilmember Karen Meinzen McEnery** stated for cost savings purposes, she would like to eliminate the proposed pavilion next to the restrooms and instead build the conceptual shade pavilion, further to the west.

Mayor Galambos asked how this would be a cost savings.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnery stated another pavilion is already going to be built.

Mayor Galambos stated it has not been decided if the other pavilion will even be built.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnery stated a pavilion will be better used if it is not overlooking a parking lot next to restrooms. The pavilion should be placed further west near Brandon Mill Road. The pavilion attached to the restrooms is not functionally appealing.

Councilmember Fries stated the pavilion being near the playable art and not the parking lot was ideal.

**Councilmember Tibby DeJulio** stated he believes the restrooms should be located where the people will be. It would make sense to locate the pavilion near the playable art.

Councilmember Collins stated the brick area that is currently there is the largest flat piece of land. If a performing pavilion is placed in that location, there will be a lot of activities including community meetings and school concerts.

Director of Recreation and Parks Young stated during the past couple of weeks staff met with Ms. Woodward and requested an additional frontage of 10 - 15 feet across her property, which she agreed to. This was done in order to keep the walkers and joggers away from Abernathy Road.

Mayor Galambos asked if the pavilion restroom combination has been designed and how much has been spent.

Director of Recreation and Parks Young responded yes.

**Councilmember Gabriel Sterling** stated a safety concern was previously discussed regarding the restrooms being located on Wright Road. The concern was having the restrooms near a parking lot, where issues may occur.

Mayor Galambos stated she does not think that there will ever be a complete meeting of the minds and the neighborhoods will constantly change their minds. It is time to defer to staff on these decisions and move forward with the park plan.

Councilmember Collins stated the steering committee has been in place for five years working with the planner. He is frustrated there is no consensus on this project. The impact on the neighbors needs to be considered and the project needs to meet the City's needs. The thirty-six parking spaces will take away from a large green space. Twenty-two parking spaces should be constructed at this location and more parking should be constructed on Wright Road. He suggested the steering committee work with staff and come back to Council with a plan.

Mayor Galambos asked if the parking lot will be pervious and if it will include a wall behind the restrooms.

Director of Recreation and Parks Young responded yes. A solid wall buffer or fence can be built.

There was a consensus of Council to delegate these details to staff and to move forward with the project.

### **City Manager**

#### 1. City Center Planning Investment Criteria Briefing

**City Manager John McDonough** stated this item has been presented to the Planning Commission and the Economic Development Advisory Commission and the responses received were positive. The next phase would be to move forward with the plan drawings and options and bring it back to Council in September 2012.

**Mayor Eva Galambos** asked when a final report is anticipated.

City Manager McDonough stated Council should have a final report by the end of the year. The City has the LCI requirement that has to be completed by the end of September. The plan that will take the longest is the regulatory piece that includes the development of and education of the community on form based code.

Mayor Galambos asked if the regulatory and form based piece can be done as an addendum and then move forward with the form based code.

City Manager McDonough responded yes.

There was a consensus of Council to move forward with the next phase.

### **City Attorney**

#### 1. Proposed Cell Tower Regulations

**Assistant City Attorney Cecil McLendon** stated this item is a proposed amendment to the City's zoning ordinance. In the City's current ordinance, O&I, MIX, C1, C2, M1, and M2 require an administrative permit. If an applicant comes to the City and is able to meet six criteria, the applicant is allowed an administrative permit for a cell tower exceeding the district height maximum requirements. For residential districts and AG-1, the City's ordinance would require that a use permit be issued. The use permit would come before Council to determine whether the proposed site and conditions are satisfactory. This ordinance is proposing to move four of the categories, O&I, MIX, C1, and C2, from an administrative permit to a use permit process. This would be for a cell tower exceeding the maximum height for the district. The Subsection D requirements under the use permit provision are necessary for staff to evaluate a cell tower application. The requirements would be a site plan that shows setbacks, surrounding uses, historical features, and environment features. Another requirement would be for information regarding where on the property the proposed cell tower would be located and the need for the cell tower. Subsection E of the ordinance includes the criteria Council uses to approve a use permit. Having these criteria should help the City ensure the decisions being made are legal and justifiable.

**Councilmember Gabriel Sterling** asked about the permit process.

Assistant City Attorney McLendon stated the first provision takes four of the zoning classifications and changes the requirement from an administrative permit to a use permit.

There was a consensus of Council to move forward with revising the regulations for cell towers.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 10:01 p.m.

Date Approved: September 11, 2012

  
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Eva Galambos, Mayor

  
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Michael Casey, City Clerk