

Work Session Meeting of the Sandy Springs City Council was held on Tuesday, February 7, 2012, at 7:10 p.m., Mayor Eva Galambos presiding.

STAFF DISCUSSION ITEMS

Recreation and Parks

1. Abernathy Greenway Project

Director Recreation and Parks Ronnie Young stated this item is an update on the Abernathy Greenway Project. Currently, the project is transitioning from the oversight of the Public Works Department to the Recreation and Parks Department. During the transition process, Deputy Director of Public Works Garrin Coleman will be involved in the project. The contract for Phase 3 that involves grading and plantings is currently being completed. The purpose of the plantings is to separate the residential property from the park. The completion date for this part of the project is the end of March. Currently, the design drawings and specifications are being worked on for Phase 4. These drawings are now with GDOT's architects and engineering firm and will be reviewed in the next two or three weeks. Atkins Engineering, who is the City's design group, is developing the bid package which should be ready to send out in April 2012. Once the bids are reviewed, there is anticipation of a construction contract beginning in late May or early June 2012 on Phase 4. The Phase 4 total budget is \$1 million, with \$800,000 of that being federal money and \$200,000 City appropriated funds. The elements in Phase 4 extend from Wright Road to Brandon Mill Road. In Phase 4, the parking lot next to the Woodward property will accommodate 36 vehicles and the entrance drive to the property. The ten foot wide walking/jogging trail will extend from east to west through the park and will be made of crushed gravel and lined with stones on each side. The overlook plaza will be located on the west side of the park and will include stairwells that drop down into the park area and the trail. All of these items will be constructed in Phase 4. There is additional landscaping in Phase 4 as well. Elm, oak, and magnolia trees will be planted along the north side of the street. An irrigation system will be installed to irrigate the entire north side of the park. Approximately twenty-seven park benches will be installed, thirteen trash receptacles, and four bike racks. The playable art pieces will be installed in the fall of 2012. The City will be responsible for mounting each piece of art and the fall zones that are required for playground equipment. Staff is working with the garden club conservancy on the planting of the daffodil mile. There is a six foot wide reserved space for the daffodils where they will border the existing sidewalk on Abernathy Road.

Mayor Eva Galambos asked where the flowers will be located in relation to the trees.

Director Recreation and Parks Young stated the flowers will be in front of the trees. The daffodils are a fund raising project by a combination of garden clubs. The daffodils should be planted by October or November 2012.

Councilmember Karen Meinzen McEnery asked if the parking lot will be located on the north east side of the park.

Director Recreation and Parks Young responded no.

Councilmember Dianne Fries asked about the circular object on the map.

Director Recreation and Parks Young stated it is a private pad.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnery asked where the parking area will be located.

Director Recreation and Parks Young answered an additional parking lot should be added near Wright Road, based on the anticipated number of people who will use the park. This drawing contains a recommendation for a 24 car parking lot and two small restrooms with access across the drive of the nearby homeowner.

Mayor Galambos asked if the additional parking lot will be surrounded by trees.

Director Recreation and Parks Young stated yes. The parking lot will be buffered with trees, so the park will not be visible to residents, and also to block the noise.

Councilmember Chip Collins stated the parking lot for Phase 4 is in front of the Woodward house.

Director Recreation and Parks Young stated staff feels that additional parking will be extremely valuable, because of the number of residents that will participate with the playable art. It is recommended to have the additional parking so residents and children will not have to cross Wright Road or any other street to get to the park. The number of people drawn to the park will cause people to park along Wright Road, whether there is a parking lot or not. Residents are concerned with the additional parking, but if an additional parking lot is not built, the cars will cause traffic problems.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnery asked about the total number of parking spaces being 159 or 173.

Director Recreation and Parks Young stated the parking will be to the west of the art center. Parking at this location requires you to walk across Abernathy Road. As the project moves forward, the parking could be removed from the plan, unless another amenity is chosen to be placed in that area.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnery asked if the playable art could be installed where the proposed main parking lot will be located.

Director Recreation and Parks Young stated there is not enough space to do that.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnery stated the 173 or 159 parking spaces could potentially be reduced, if they are not needed, and made into greenspace or incorporated into the park.

Director Recreation and Parks Young stated the fence is included in the plan to prevent children from running out onto Abernathy Road. All of the parking spaces on the other side of Abernathy Road at the art center are not needed. There is a need for the parking that is being proposed on the north side.

Councilmember Tibby DeJulio asked if there is parking on the north side of the park, besides what is proposed on Wright Road.

Director Recreation and Parks Young stated the original parking area is included on the map. Phase 5 or 6 includes the playground pavilion and restrooms.

Councilmember Collins asked when the first Phase 4 parking will be installed.

Director Recreation and Parks Young stated sometime this year.

Councilmember Collins stated if most of the time the twenty-four parking spaces are only half full, that indicates there is plenty of parking. If the parking lot is full from the first day of the park opening, then more parking spaces would need to be built.

Director Recreation and Parks Young stated most of the citizens visiting the playable art will probably park on Wright Road.

Councilmember Collins stated Council is not making a decision tonight regarding the parking lots.

Councilmember Fries stated Overlook Park has shown that Abernathy Greenway will be used. She would like to look at the park master plan and see the time frame on the phases. If additional parking is built after the park is opened, it will cost more money.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnery asked how many feet it is from the west end of the park to the back side of the L.A. Fitness.

Director Recreation and Parks Young responded he is not sure.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnery stated another option is to build the parking lot to the west of Ms. Woodward's property and then determine if the parking lot on Wright Road is necessary.

Director Recreation and Parks Young asked if Council would consider allowing a bid process for three components. These components are the well to be drilled for irrigation, the parking lot, and the restrooms. Staff would like to bid these components separately for Phase 4.

Mayor Galambos asked what the distance is from the Phase 4 parking lot near Ms. Woodward's to the playable arts.

Director Recreation and Parks Young stated the first piece of playable art is probably 100 yards. Once the initial parking is built, staff can assess if more parking spaces are needed.

Councilmember DeJulio stated the playable art is turning out better than anyone anticipated. Looking at the tremendous reception for the art, he has no doubt people will want to visit the park. There is to be a parking lot across the street from the park, which is unacceptable. If the park visitors park at L.A. Fitness, they will have to cross Wright Road. He asked if staff is asking Council for permission to bid out the components just to see what the cost is.

Director Recreation and Parks Young responded not necessarily. This agenda item is to update Council on what is included in Phase 4. The restrooms are not being built in Phase 4. If the parking lot is installed on the east side of the property, restrooms will be included. During Phase 4, the playable art will be installed and there will be no restrooms in the park. This would create a problem for visitors.

Mayor Galambos asked if the only option is to put the restrooms in the parking lot at Wright Road.

Director Recreation and Parks Young stated the restrooms near Wright Road could be installed during Phase 5. Staff anticipates installing restrooms with the other parking lot.

Councilmember Fries asked how far it is from one end of the park to Brandon Mill Road.

Director Recreation and Parks Young stated he does not know how far that is.

Councilmember DeJulio stated staff's best judgment for now is to consider installing the parking lot, the well, and the restrooms.

Director Recreation and Parks Young stated that is staff's recommendation, with the intention of having them installed by the end of the calendar year, when the playable arts and the daffodils are in place.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnery asked that staff consider an alternative to building the Phase 4 parking and Phase 5 bathrooms.

Director Recreation and Parks Young stated the pavilion and other components in the park have to be built before the restrooms are built.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnery asked if the money to plan Phase 5 has to be spent on construction drawings before the bathrooms are placed in the park.

Director Recreation and Parks Young stated that would be the best thing to do. The design work could begin on those plans in February.

Councilmember Fries stated if there will be only one set of bathrooms, they should be placed in the middle of the park. The additional parking lot should be included in the park as well.

Councilmember Collins asked why the Phase 5 bathrooms could not be built in the middle of the park.

Director Recreation and Parks Young stated the bathrooms could be built in the middle of the park, but would be like randomly picking a spot in the park without the other components designed in at the same time.

Mayor Galambos asked if the time schedule would keep the bathrooms and other components from being built.

Director Recreation and Parks Young stated he does not believe the time schedule would keep the bathrooms and components from being built. There may be issues regarding the size of the restrooms and the setback distances from the homes on the back side of the park. The bathrooms and pavilion will not fit in one building, due to the setback distance.

Mayor Galambos asked if there is already a problem with the Phase 5 location of the bathrooms.

Director Recreation and Parks Young stated that problem has been corrected. Staff has not met, yet, with the Abernathy Greenway Committee to show them what construction should occur in Phase 5.

Mayor Galambos stated it makes sense to have the restrooms centrally located.

Councilmember John Paulson stated it seems there may be a cost impact. He suggested the parking lot facing Abernathy Road be installed and hold off on installing the bathrooms at Wright Road. He would like to know the cost impact and what would happen to the construction schedule if the Phase 5 bathrooms are designed to be part of Phase 4. The bathrooms need to be installed before the playable art is installed and before the park opens.

City Manager John McDonough stated there are unanswered questions regarding the park plans. Some of the questions are related to how far it would be to walk to the different components. Staff will look at the available retail parking at Roswell Road and Abernathy Road and bring this item back to Council in two weeks.

Director Recreation and Parks Young stated an additional set of bathrooms should be placed where the additional parking will be located.

Mayor Galambos asked if the bathrooms are centrally located, will there be a need for more bathrooms.

Director Recreation and Parks Young stated once the park opens, there will be an influx of visitors. Then, as time goes, on the amount of visitors might taper off.

There was a consensus of Council to discuss this item further at the next Work Session.

Public Works

1. Review of proposed Bridge Type and Cost Estimates for CIP Project T-0035, SR 9/Roswell Road Pedestrian and Bicycle Bridge over the Chattahoochee River

Transportation Planner Kristen Wescott stated this presentation is an update on the T-0035, State Route 9 /Roswell Road pedestrian and bicycle bridge over the Chattahoochee River. Feedback is needed from Council on whether staff is headed in the right direction with this project. Sandy Springs is working with the City of Roswell on the project. Staff is trying to balance the financial obligation and aesthetics, at this point. In 2004, there was a Federal earmark to help correct the deficiency of not having any pedestrian or bicycle facilities on the current bridges. In 2010, Sandy Springs signed an IGA with the City of Roswell. In May, 2011, the City of Roswell hired Heath & Lineback consulting engineers to initiate preliminary design and concept work. Public meetings were held last fall. There will be a spring open house meeting, once a concept design report is created. The total cost of the project is \$3.7 million. This cost does not include right-of-way acquisitions. The consultant is trying to keep the project within budget. Six different bridge types were reviewed as well as the east and west alignments. The new bridge will be about 624 feet long and 12 feet wide. Treatments such as overlooks will be used at different locations along the bridge. Each of the overlooks can have aesthetics treatments such as railing and lighting. Bridge option 1, the stress ribbon, is more of an aesthetic option. This bridge would have a longer design time and be more costly. It replicates the idea of a cable stay bridge.

Councilmember Dianne Fries asked if this is the bridge option that Mayor Wood likes.

Transportation Planner Wescott stated this may be that particular bridge. There are two different types of steel truss bridges being considered. The difference is one has a longer span and the other has a shorter span. The issue with steel truss bridges is that more maintenance would be required over time, but the construction time would be shorter.

Councilmember Chip Collins asked why there would be additional maintenance.

Transportation Planner Wescott stated the steel bridges require more maintenance due to being regularly painted.

Councilmember Tibby DeJulio asked if stress ribbon is steel.

Councilmember John Paulson responded stress ribbon is reinforced concrete.

Transportation Planner Wescott stated there are two different types of AASHTO Girders. These types of bridges look like the highway bridges. One girder has a 70 foot span and the other has a 141 foot span. The contractor has looked at placing the piers at the same locations as the piers on the two existing bridges. The contractor recommends Option 6, which is the prestressed arch beam. This bridge type

combines the aesthetic elements into the bridge. This option would be more cost effective, low maintenance, of average construction time, and replicate the arches of the existing 1926 bridge that people like. The feedback received from the public and other stakeholders is they prefer the bridge on the east side at a total cost of \$3.6 million. The west side location would be less expensive. Most of the City's developments are located on the east side.

Mayor Eva Galambos stated she does not think that placing the pedestrian and bicycle bridge on the west side of the existing bridges is an option for Sandy Springs.

Transportation Planner Wescott stated part of the reason the bridge would be more expensive on the east side is because Sandy Springs has a stream on that side to contend with.

Councilmember Paulson asked if the cost of dealing with the stream could be included in the total cost of the project.

Transportation Planner Wescott responded yes. There are other pieces in the plan, including railing options. If the recommended Option 6 is chosen, it would be below the budgeted amount at a cost of \$3.6 million.

Councilmember Fries asked when Sandy Springs will be required to make a decision with the City of Roswell on these options for the bridge. She asked staff if they like the idea of the arch beam option. The City of Roswell has already met and discussed this, so the consultant can move forward with the concept design.

Councilmember Paulson asked if the City of Roswell has approved the arch beam design.

Transportation Planner Wescott stated the City of Roswell prefers either the arch beam or the stress ribbon design.

Councilmember Karen Meinzen McEnerny asked if logs hitting the bridge would have to be cleaned out from underneath.

Transportation Planner Wescott stated one of the reasons the consultant is choosing this distance between the piers is because it matches the existing bridges. The new bridge is offset enough from the other bridges so that if the other roadway bridges need to be replaced in the next twenty to thirty years, that can be done without affecting the new bridge.

Councilmember Paulson asked how far the new bridge will be from the existing bridge.

Transportation Planning Wescott stated twenty-five feet.

There was a consensus of Council to move forward with Option 6, the pre-stressed arch beam bridge.

City Management

1. Report on Evaluation of Applications for Funds by Non-Profit Organizations

Assistant City Manager Eden Freeman stated this item is a report on the evaluation of applications that the City received for the \$50,000 available under the nonprofit funding program. Fourteen applications were received from twelve nonprofit organizations requesting a total of \$171,217, compared to the available \$50,000. Three staff members reviewed each of the applications and scored them. The second

page in Council's packet is a spreadsheet that shows the actual score for each of the applicants, the amount they requested, and the award recommendation. The methodology for rating was to take the criteria that had been defined in the policy and to rank the organizations on that criteria. The organizations were scored on a fifty point scale and then allocated on a 66/33 basis. Once that ranking was complete, the available \$50,000 was distributed as far as it could possibly go. The exception to this is number six, Ridgeview Charter School Foundation, which asked for three promethean active desktop classroom systems at a cost of \$16,900. Their annual operating budget is around \$34,000. That one award would have made up 49% of their annual operating budget. The school indicated in their application that one system would be just as beneficial as the three. The amount under the award recommendation is the cost of one computer system. There is \$5,728 left that has not been allocated. The program did not have sufficient funds to award money to the next organization on the list, which was a request for \$19,810 from Heritage Sandy Springs. This request was to outfit the bottom level of the Bluestone building with audio and visual equipment.

Councilmember Dianne Fries asked if the sound system at Bluestone meets the application criteria.

Assistant City Manager Freeman stated Heritage Sandy Springs was evaluated based on what was in the criteria for the application. The criteria is that the use be to directly serve residents. The next requester is the Sandy Springs Garden Club. Staff has identified other funds that could be used for the daffodil mile project to cover that cost. The other requester is Act3 Productions, which had requested \$20,000.

Mayor Eva Galambos stated Heritage Sandy Springs has been renting out the space quite a bit lately and has received revenues from the rentals.

Councilmember Fries stated she does not think the nonprofit money should be spent on audio and video equipment when the City has already spent almost \$2 million on that facility in the last twelve months. She asked if it is Council's decision to allocate the remainder of the money to the next nonprofit on the score list.

Councilmember Tibby DeJulio asked if there is anything wrong with the City keeping the remainder of the money, just in case something else comes up where another organization needs a charitable contribution.

Councilmember John Paulson stated that is not how the nonprofit policy works. It would be unfair to allow an organization to request money in May and then allocate that money to them.

Mayor Galambos stated Act3 is a worthwhile organization. She suggested allocating the remainder of the money to Act3.

Councilmember Fries stated Heritage Sandy Springs has the classical concert series for \$7,400. She would like to include a stipulation similar to the other concert series which the City funds. She suggested the people be allowed to attend the concerts for free.

Councilmember DeJulio stated he would like the classical concert series to be in addition to the other free concerts, not in place of the other free concerts.

Assistant City Manager Freeman stated Heritage proposed that concert an additional concert.

Councilmember Chip Collins stated when the nonprofit policy was discussed, the impression was that traditional pass through entities would be ineligible for funding. He is not sure that is in the policy. This means that pass through entities are not completely exempt from any grant, if they otherwise meet the

policy criteria. A pass through is a group that raises money to give to other charitable groups. If one of the groups has a grant proposal to provide services to the community, that should not be considered a pass through group. If any group wants to propose a grant, such as the holiday market that provides a service to the community, that falls well within the criteria of the policy. An example is a community event and a fund raiser. The nonprofit should fill out an application that will be judged on its merits. There is an organization that was dissuaded from even applying for a grant this year.

Assistant City Manager Freeman stated she has a letter submitted by the entity that he is referencing. The letter thanked the City for having the funds available, and said they did not have a project they felt would meet the criteria. The letter states: "We are respectfully declining to apply for any funding in response to the December solicitation and we will apply for our upcoming projects during future City grant cycles."

Councilmember Collins stated he wanted to make sure the organization understands they are not banned from applying for a grant.

Assistant City Manager Freeman stated that was not implied and the organization stated they understand how the policy is structured.

There was a consensus of Council to allocate the remainder of the nonprofit funds in the amount of \$5,728 to Act3 Productions.

CITY COUNCIL DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Discussion on Coyotes in Area

Councilmember Chip Collins stated from the media reports there appears to be a proliferation of coyotes. He has received many reports from Sandy Springs residents who have had cats and small dogs killed by coyotes. He has read that trapping coyotes does not work, because more coyotes will move back into the same area. Last week, he read a report where a trapper said the behavior of coyotes can change and some coyotes are no longer afraid of humans, which results in them being aggressive. He received about seventy-five responses from residents saying they are in favor of trapping coyotes. He is not advocating a position one way or another. Council should discuss this to determine if it is a City responsibility.

Mayor Eva Galambos stated she has seen coyotes in her neighborhood and she has a cat to be concerned about. Her solution was to call a trapper who captured and moved the coyotes.

Councilmember Collins stated it is acceptable to him if the only thing the City decides to do is provide the names of trappers.

Councilmember Dianne Fries stated there was a small group that voiced their opinion stating they do not believe in trapping coyotes. The decision on what to do with the coyotes should be made on an individual basis.

Mayor Galambos asked if Police Chief Sult has a recommendation for what the City should do.

Police Chief Terry Sult stated it is Council's decision on what to do. If there are any questions about trapping, he has a presentation available for Council. There are trappers that will trap the coyotes and not euthanize them, but take them to fox pens. Fox pens are preserves of about 800 to 1,000 acres with fences around them and the coyotes are used for fox hunts. The goal is to not kill the animal, just to continue to hunt the animal. He met with a trapper that had trapped two coyotes after they killed a cow.

Coyotes are extremely adaptable and smart animals. If you start trapping coyotes in one location, they will move from that location and go elsewhere. He has seen three coyotes in the last two weeks.

Councilmember Karen Meinzen McEnerny stated there are a lot of deer along the river corridor near Spalding Drive. There have been many instances of deer colliding with cars, but the City does not authorize people to go out and trap or shoot the deer.

Councilmember Collins stated people do deer hunt. The purpose of deer hunting is to thin the heard.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnerny stated the shooting of deer is not allowed within the City limits.

Councilmember Fries stated bow hunting is allowed within the City limits.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnerny stated she prefers the decision be left up to each individual. She does not support City funds going towards the killing of wild animals.

Councilmember Collins asked Councilmember Meinzen McEnerny if she is willing to let the wild animals kill people's pets.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnerny stated she would either keep her pet inside or do what the Mayor did on her private property.

Councilmember Fries stated there are two neighborhoods in her district where pets were taken off the front porch by a coyote. There are young kids to consider in those neighborhoods as well.

Councilmember John Paulson asked if trappers are listed in the Yellow Pages.

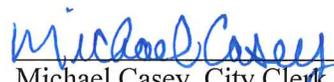
Police Chief Sult responded yes.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Date Approved: February 21, 2012



Eva Galambos, Mayor



Michael Casey, City Clerk