Work Session Meeting of the Sandy Springs City Council was held on Tuesday, April 5, 2011, at 7:30 p.m., Mayor Eva Galambos presiding.

STAFF DISCUSSION ITEMS

Community Development

1. Resolution to Support the Rehabilitation of Affordable Housing Units for Older Persons on Property Located at 144 Allen Road

Director of Community Development Blake Dettwiler stated this item is a proposal for a letter of support and disposition for the Fulton County Housing Authority for rehabilitation of property located at 144 Allen Road. Currently, the facility has one hundred public housing units. Through the rehabilitation process, the proposal would yield ninety mixed income units and ten market rate units. Members of the Housing Authority and the Benoit Group are here to answer questions.

Mayor Eva Galambos asked if the proposal would keep the same number of units, but they would be renovated.

Director of Community Development Dettwiler responded yes.

Robert Engstrom, Fulton County Housing Authority Chairman, stated there are two facilities in Sandy Springs. The Housing Authority is in the process of selling the Belle Isle facility, because the cost of refurbishing it would be exorbitant. Allen Road is a one hundred unit facility. Seventy percent of the residents are elderly and thirty percent are handicapped. The facility will be refurbished as segment one and then looked at as a possible expansion for segment two.

Theresa Davis, Chief Mortgage Finance Officer with the Fulton County Housing Authority, introduced herself.

Torian Priestly, Vice President of the Benoit Group, stated he is the developer on this project.

Councilmember Karen Meinzen McEnerny asked what will happen to the current residents located at the Allen Road facility.

Mr. Priestly stated there are one hundred units and seventy percent of those units are independent seniors. The residents from twenty-seven units would be relocated to other properties within the Atlanta area. The Benoit Group would work on one or two floors and once the work is complete, the residents would then be moved back into the units.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnerny asked for clarification that the handicapped residents would be relocated permanently and the seventy or so independent would be relocated temporarily while their units are being renovated.

Mr. Priestly responded the residents would be rotated from floor to floor. The overall project anticipates spending approximately $55,000 per unit. This would rehabilitate cabinets, appliances, flooring, and amenity spaces throughout the facility. The building would be brought up to ADA and UFAS codes. The HVAC, electrical systems and security systems on the property would be upgraded as well. The building was built in 1982, and it is outdated for a facility that houses independent seniors.

Councilmember Chip Collins asked for an explanation of what is needed from Council.

Mr. Priestly stated the Housing Authority is trying to receive tax credits from the Georgia Department of Community Affairs to utilize the equity and complete the renovation of the project. Part of the process includes submitting an application to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. A Resolution of support is needed to submit with the application and this is what the Housing Authority is seeking from Mayor and Council.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnerny asked if Phase Two can be described. Looking at the map, it looks like the property will be subdivided.

Mayor Galambos stated Phase Two does not need to be discussed this evening. The renovation is what is at issue.

Mr. Priestly stated the illustrations show plans for Phase Two, but that would come before Council at a later date. What is being discussed now is the renovation of the existing one hundred units.

Councilmember Tibby DeJulio asked who currently owns the property.

Mr. Priestly responded the Fulton County Housing Authority owns the property.

Councilmember DeJulio asked if the developer is an independent organization that develops these types of properties.

Mr. Priestly stated his company is a development partner with the Fulton County Housing Authority.

Councilmember Dianne Fries stated she is familiar with these types of projects. Council discussed a similar project that was being considered at the Mary Hall Freedom House. It is fantastic the units are going to be refurbished.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnerny stated she does not see why Mr. Priestly cannot speak on the plans for Phase Two.

Councilmember Fries stated the funds are not guaranteed for the second phase. What is being asked of Council now has nothing to do with Phase Two.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnerny stated she understand the funds for the second phase are not guaranteed. She has no issues with Phase Two, but would like to hear more information about it.

Mayor Galambos stated the Community Development staff is probably not ready to speak to Council about Phase Two. She would like to leave this to be discussed at a future City Council Meeting.

Director of Community Development Dettwiler stated the Phase Two plans are very preliminary.

Councilmember Collins stated this is a non-binding letter of support from the City for the project. It does not affect zoning, variances, or anything else.

Mayor Galambos responded correct.

Councilmember Fries stated she would like this item to be placed on the consent agenda.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnerny stated her concern about placing things on the consent agenda is not that all of Council will agree on the item. Her issue is getting the word out to the community that this good thing is happening.

Councilmember Fries stated that is what the press is for.

Mayor Galambos stated placing items on the consent agenda is in order to expedite Council meetings.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnerny stated when the public is not informed, expediting is not helpful.

Mayor Galambos stated this is not a controversial item. This is the type of item that would be placed on the consent agenda.

Councilmember Fries stated this is Fulton County property. There are quite a few limitations the City has because this is Fulton County property. This is a remodeling of the property, correct?

Director of Community Development Dettwiler stated this is a rehabilitation of the property. The City will have some limitations.

Councilmember Fries stated she would like this item to be placed on the consent agenda.

Councilmember Collins asked if anyone on Council does not like the wording of the resolution, what would be the procedure to get that changed.

Mayor Galambos stated the agenda would be amended to remove this item from the consent agenda.

Councilmember Collins asked to have the draft of this resolution given to Council for review before being placed on the final agenda. There should have been a resolution prepared for Council to discuss tonight.

Mayor Galambos stated that is not what has been done in the past. At the Work Session an item is usually discussed in broad terms and there is not always detailed language. This agenda item deals with Council supporting the Fulton County Housing Authority proceeding with the renovation of the Allen Road units.

Councilmember Collins stated he wants to make sure he has the right to review and possibly change the language of the resolution.

Mayor Galambos stated if the item is on the consent agenda and a Councilmember does not like it, then it can be removed from the consent agenda at the meeting.

Mr. Priestly stated the Fulton County Housing Authority does have a resolution form with the general language which has been submitted to Community Development.

Councilmember Collins stated as long as he has the right to remove it from the consent agenda; he has no problem with the item being on the consent agenda.

There was a consensus of Council to move forward with this item.

Public Works

1. Allen Road Abandonment and Exchange of Right of Way

Director of Public Works Tom Black stated this item is a right-of-way swap. The owner wants to build an office at this location. The half moon area of the property he is trying to get the City to abandon will allow the owner to move the structure closer to Allen Road. This will allow the owner the higher probability of being missed by the road projects. This will be an owner occupied project by an engineering company.

Councilmember Dianne Fries stated the property is located on the south side of Allen Road.

Director of Public Works Black stated the owner would be giving the City enough right-of-way to complete the streetscape and additional right-of-way along I-285. The owner wants to start the construction process as soon as he can.

Mayor Eva Galambos stated she supports this.

City Attorney Wendell Willard stated someone in the past had the idea they were going to close off Allen Road and create a cul-de-sac there.

Mayor Galambos stated she remembers that proposal from fifteen years ago when GDOT was discussing building a new bridge, which they never built.

Councilmember Fries asked if the owner is giving the City more right-of-way somewhere else.

Director of Public Works Black stated looking at the map, the orange area is what the City is giving the owner and the yellow area is what the owner is giving the City.

City Attorney Willard stated the abandoned right-of-way goes back to the adjoining properties and has never been considered for use.

Councilmember DeJulio asked about the orange area on the map.

Director of Public Works Black stated that was a forced dedication by Fulton County on the previous developers who had plans to place a cul-de-sac on Allen Road.

There was a consensus of Council to move forward with this item.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 7:47 p.m.

Date Approved: April 19, 2011

Eva Galambos, Mayor

Michael Casey, City Clerk