

Work Session Meeting of the Sandy Springs City Council was held on Tuesday, August 3, 2010, at 7:31 p.m., Mayor Eva Galambos presiding.

STAFF DISCUSSION ITEMS

Community Development

1. **TA10-005** - An Ordinance to Amend Article 3, Definitions, of the Sandy Springs Zoning Ordinance.
2. **TA10-006** - An Ordinance to Amend Article 4, General Provisions, of the Sandy Springs Zoning Ordinance.
3. **TA10-007** - An Ordinance to Amend Article 18, Off-street Parking and Loading, of the Sandy Springs Zoning Ordinance.
4. **TA10-009** - An Ordinance to Amend Section 33.18, Prohibited Signs, of the Sandy Springs Zoning Ordinance.

Assistant Director Planning and Zoning Patrice Ruffin stated these items are in response to the Resolution that Council adopted to direct staff to clean up the Zoning Ordinance. This series of amendments and the ones that will follow in the next few months are related to the clean up. As the direction came from the City Attorney, this doesn't include any policy changes. These are just clarification and clean up items.

Mayor Eva Galambos asked if all the Councilmembers have read the changes very carefully.

Councilmember Dianne Fries stated she gave Assistant Director Planning and Zoning Ruffin a list of seventeen items for the definitions for clean up. She thought there should be discussion on whether Council should put a minimum seat number to the definition for stadium.

City Attorney Wendell Willard stated that will probably fall under a revision of the Ordinance as it pertains to the policy part of it.

Assistant Director Planning and Zoning Ruffin stated it's in Article 19 and it wouldn't be in the definition. Staff would apply that to the use permit.

Councilmember Fries asked if Council should review these all at one time.

Mayor Galambos stated yes, the whole thing. Bring up all the issues you may have.

Councilmember Karen Meinzen McEnery asked Councilmember Fries to expand on the implications of placing a minimum number for seating in a stadium.

Councilmember Fries stated it's because of the stadium issue. When people think of stadium, they think of a massive structure.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnery stated in other words, a stadium would be a larger event facility than bleachers. Just for discussion, bleachers would have 250 seats and a stadium would have greater than 250. Adding that standard will come back at a later time when Council discusses policy.

Councilmember Fries stated the definition of a fence says that it includes a gate. She wonders about the language of it including a gate, or may include a gate. She has seen plenty of fences around the City that are two-sided and have no gate, but she still calls them a fence.

Mayor Galambos stated it sounds to her like the housekeeping changes could be sent to Assistant City Attorney Cecil McLendon.

Councilmember Fries stated she wants to change the wording. Instead of it saying "including a gate", it should read it "may include a gate".

Councilmember Ashley Jenkins stated including a gate that is part of the structure.

Councilmember Fries stated it says including, and that definition means that it's going to have a gate. Not all fences are four-sided and have gates. She would rather it say "may".

Mayor Galambos stated the stadium was a policy issue. The gate issue is a scribe issue. Would you list the scribe issues and have Assistant City Attorney McLendon look at them? She doesn't think Council needs to spend their time tonight going over them now.

Councilmember Fries stated she didn't know if that could be a policy. She stated she has similar issues with the other proposed amendments, especially the one regarding the parking. She offered to type these up and send a copy to all Councilmembers and to Assistant City Attorney McLendon.

Mayor Galambos state that would be fine. She would be happy if Councilmember Fries sent them to Assistant Director Planning and Zoning Ruffin and Assistant City Attorney McLendon and have them clean it up.

City Attorney Willard stated it's actually being done by his office, primarily through Kathy Williams.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnery stated Council wants to make sure whether it's a policy issue or not.

Mayor Galambos asked if Council is willing to accept Councilmember Fries judgment as to whether it's a policy change or scrivener's change.

Councilmember Fries stated she'd email her ideas to the Councilmembers and they can agree or not agree.

Mayor Galambos stated she has one change. When the holidays are listed, Martin Luther King Day is missing. She asked if non-conforming is part of the definitions or someplace else.

Assistant Director Planning and Zoning Ruffin stated it's in the definitions in Article 4 under general provisions.

Mayor Galambos asked staff to look at that one again to see if it needs to be all of those conditions or if some of it could be "or" for the conditions.

Councilmember Fries stated her issue with the parking is the odd parking numbers. When there is a stadium or amphitheatre, it allows one parking place for four seats. The Ordinance is stating that four people will come in one car. Then, you look at a bowling alley and it requires five parking spaces for one bowling lane.

Mayor Galambos asked Ms. Ruffin if there's a book that staff references for these requirements.

Assistant Director Planning and Zoning Ruffin stated there is. Staff went back and compared everything and the City's Ordinance is consistent with the industry standards.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnery asked if staff could discuss why, under cemetery on page seventy-three, so many of the definitions have been taken out.

Assistant Director Planning and Zoning Ruffin stated staff took them out and placed them in Article 3. All of the definitions need to be located in one spot.

Mayor Galambos asked Community Development Director Leathers if she has something she'd like to add to this.

Community Development Director Nancy Leathers stated the reason the sign Ordinance is before Council is because the City is in litigation. Staff discovered a problem with the language that they need to correct. Staff was not intending to bring Sign Ordinance to Council at this time.

Councilmember Fries stated she has an issue with the parking for multi-family properties. It states something similar to, if it's forty units or less, a two bedroom unit requires two parking places, but if it's larger than forty units, a two bedroom requires 1.75 parking spaces. What kind of control does the City have in this?

Assistant Director Planning and Zoning Ruffin stated when a permit comes in, the applicant would have to show how many bedrooms are in each unit. Staff checks the parking at the time of the permit.

Councilmember Fries stated there is an item listed that says there are two different types of multi-family. One type shows 1.75 spaces for a two bedroom and for the other type, the number of spaces is different.

Assistant Director Planning and Zoning Ruffin stated the difference is in the density of the development. For example, if there is a high rise.

Councilmember Fries stated her point is a two bedroom is a two bedroom is a two bedroom. Why can't we require two cars across the board?

Mayor Galambos asked the rationale for the two different numbers.

Assistant Director Planning and Zoning Ruffin stated she would have to go back and look. The density is forty units per acre. That's the dividing point. If it's less than forty units per acre, it requires more parking space.

Councilmember Fries stated that makes no sense to her.

Community Development Director Leathers stated part of the reason that happens is because traffic studies have shown when there is a larger complex; the sharing of the guest parking tends to reduce the numbers required.

Councilmember Fries stated she would argue those traffic studies. She has tried to sell units at Atlantic Station that have the 1.5 parking spaces, and you couldn't get a pizza delivered there, let alone have your mother come visit you.

Mayor Galambos stated if the City doesn't go by some nationally recognized standard, when the developers come in the City has nothing to abide by.

Councilmember Fries asked if we have to tie our hands to some of these standards when we see them being used in places where they don't work.

Community Development Director Leathers stated if Council would like to ask the staff to separately look at the parking standards in the Ordinance, that is something that can be done. Right now, staff is trying to clean up the Ordinance. What they are trying to do with the parking is to get the uses in the Parking Ordinance portion of the Zoning Ordinance in line with the use provisions of the various zoning districts, so they are the same.

Councilmember Fries stated she understands that is what staff is doing. Council has the ordinances in front of them now and that's what is bringing up questions.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnery stated when staff does look at the parking standards, look at commercial parking and regional malls to see how much parking space is unused. We want to have an industry standard for that type of use, so there is enough parking. However, we have precious little land in our community to devote to parking spaces that are never used.

Mayor Galambos asked if Council is asking for a definitive study of our parking spaces by use.

Councilmember Fries stated she would first like to chat with Community Development Director Leathers about the standards that make no sense to her.

City Attorney

1. Proposed Amendment to the Business and Occupation Tax Ordinance Section 54-127(d) on Hearings.

City Attorney Wendell Willard stated that a procedure has been set up for an informal hearing process. This applies when someone has questions regarding the business and occupation tax being applied to their business, what is being included for gross receipts, and how that determines the amount of tax. The City has set up an informal hearing process where Assistant City Attorney Cecil McLendon serves as a hearing officer. In all the cases, except for one, all the issues have been resolved and moved forward. It's always required, when someone is appealing the assessment of a tax, that the tax has to be paid. The appeal process is not a means of avoiding paying the taxes. He wants to clarify that point as part of the policy in the form of a Resolution before Council at the next City Council Meeting.

Councilmember John Paulson stated that's not what this says. It states they don't have to pay the tax prior to the initial discussions with Assistant City Attorney McLendon. If they don't like that outcome and want to move to a formal appeal process, then they have to pay.

City Attorney Willard stated they do not pay going through the informal hearing. If they aren't satisfied with the decision made by the hearing officer, and want to appeal, they will then have to pay the tax.

Councilmember Ashley Jenkins stated this has been in the papers recently. She doesn't want the City to get cross with all of our businesses in Sandy Springs. We have some wonderful worldwide headquarters located here in the City. Council needs to look at how the City handles the Business and Occupational Tax. Right now, the City taxes gross receipts on everything for service companies, and that includes service sales out of state. We have national and international headquarters that are major corporations.

Those companies aren't selling widgets, they're selling services. Assistant City Attorney McLendon has instituted this cost of performance sourcing appeal. If you're selling widgets, you only get taxed on the widgets you sell here. This needs to be brought up to Council to give direction and change of policy as to how the City will go forward with this. The City has a lot of empty office space that she would like international companies to occupy. If the City has a tax policy contrary to the rest of the state, it will discourage companies from working within the City. She and the Mayor sat down with Cox Communications and a few other companies. They discussed looking at the total tax package that individual companies are paying. This issue has bubbled below the surface for at least 1 ½ years. She asked the Mayor if this issue can be placed on the Work Session in October.

Mayor Eva Galambos stated she thinks Council needs to define what these complaints are. When they were in a meeting with the attorney that brought forth the complaints, she thought he did not understand the State authorization of the City's tax. She doesn't think the City is taxing any differently than other jurisdictions. Nor does she think the City is taxing all the gross receipts out of the national headquarters; only if the sales are made directly out of the national headquarters and not someplace else. The City does not inhibit national headquarters from locating in Sandy Springs by taxing the gross receipts actually made in the building. Most national headquarters don't do that. The City has gotten a bum rap on this issue. She'd like City Attorney Willard to address where the City is in negotiations with the individual companies.

Councilmember Jenkins asked if the Mayor will allow Sherry Wilburn and Cox Communications to come to the Work Session in October and explain these issues.

Mayor Galambos stated they explained the issues at the meeting and she thought it was resolved that individual companies would come and meet with staff to see if they can come to an agreement.

Councilmember Jenkins stated the company wants to come before the full Council and present their case about the problems they have with the way the City's Business and Occupational Tax is structured. She is asking it be placed on the October Work Session.

Mayor Galambos asked City Attorney Willard to address the complaints that we've had and how Sandy Springs enforces the tax any different than other jurisdictions.

City Attorney Willard stated the City has employed a private contractor, which is RiverTree. They assist the City in ensuring all the companies within the City are complying with the City Ordinance in regards to having a business license and paying their occupational tax. RiverTree is also performing audits on behalf of the City, instead of having staff do it. Initially, RiverTree's approach to people caused some problems. Staff sat down with RiverTree and prepared a specific policy that addresses who they are to contact with the first letter of notice. The first letter of notice will come from the City and will state that the company has been selected for an audit. The audit is done on a random basis. What the City is looking for when the audit is performed is the gross receipts as defined under State law. The City's Ordinance is patterned exactly after the law of the State of Georgia, as is every other taxing jurisdiction levying what is known as an occupational tax. That law defines what gross receipts are, and what may be used to determine gross receipts. The City doesn't include the income from a subsidiary company that comes to a national office as part of gross receipts. RiverTree did go out on occasion and make assessments of tax based on that. When it was brought to the City's attention, we resolved that. That is part of the policy statement that was drawn up several months ago. The City is the one that makes the determination on what may or may not be inclusive in tax. One of the main reasons the City set up the informal hearings is if there is a dispute, we want to sit down and hear the side of the business as to what they consider appropriate things to be included in the taxing of gross receipts. There was a study done by the Carl Vinson Institute. The study categorized the various types of business and industry to make a

determination of how the tax will be assessed to their form of work and business. What the City adopted is what every other jurisdiction in Georgia uses. The only variance between jurisdictions is the tax on employees. Every company has one employee that is not taxed with their occupation taxes. When you get above one employee, the tax is based on the number of employees. The City did a study under the direction of the City Manager to look at all the jurisdictions and see whether or not we are in line with what is being done by our sister jurisdictions: Cobb County, Marietta, Alpharetta, Roswell, Norcross, Gwinnett County, DeKalb County and Dunwoody, to see if the City of Sandy Springs is in line with the other jurisdictions. Sandy Spring is in line. During the last couple of years, due to the downturn and change in the economy, all jurisdictions have focused more on the appropriate levying of occupational taxes in their jurisdictions. This is an untapped and unrealized source of income for them. He is open to responding to any company that has a specific issue they feel has not been addressed by City staff.

Mayor Galambos stated she'd like to add one more point to this. When Council had a meeting about two weeks ago with the Sandy Springs Chamber of Commerce representatives and Cox Communications, they complained loudly about the way they had been treated by RiverTree. Their complaints were justified. If there is any evidence the company is being mistreated again, they are to come to the City. She had the feeling Cox Communications was perfectly satisfied with that agreement.

City Attorney Willard stated those complaints stemmed from the period of time before the implementation of this policy on how RiverTree is to conduct business. This policy was set up in April or May, 2010. Since that time, he believes the corrections have been made that were brought to staff's attention.

Mayor Galambos stated she is willing to tell Ms. Wilburn and the Chamber of Commerce that if they continue to have a problem of that nature, Council would like to meet with them.

Councilmember Jenkins stated as late as the opening of Overlook Park, Sherry Wilburn asked her when are they going to be on the agenda. She wanted to know if they are going to be on the agenda in September. She and Yvonne Williams had lunch that Monday and Ms. Williams asked the same thing. She is asking that for the October work session Yvonne Williams and Sherry Wilburn be there to make their case to the Mayor, and so that the Council can understand as well.

Mayor Galambos stated she will contact Ms. Wilburn and Ms. Williams again to see if there is a need to have the discussion.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnerny stated there seems to be a communications issue between the City's wonderful business community, represented by the Sandy Springs/Perimeter Chamber of Commerce, and the City. The City should provide a forum to hear and address their concerns, similar to the way Director of Community Development Leathers implements a new Ordinance. She would like to see a forum that includes our City Attorney to explain what the City has been doing and our process.

City Attorney Willard stated he would ask that they come with specific issues that need to be addressed, not generalities.

Councilmember Chip Collins stated he thinks Council should have a forum. He would like to hear from both sides.

Councilmember Dianne Fries stated she thinks a lot of this stems from the fact the City audits and follows through with it. She has heard from other people and believes the October work session is well needed and appropriate.

Mayor Galambos stated Council will devote some time in the October Work Session to address this problem. She will communicate again with Ms. Wilburn and Ms. Williams. Their concerns need to be specific.

Councilmember Fries stated she would like a learning session for Council. She remembers when they went through and changed the employee percentages. There are some other items in the business occupational tax she doesn't understand.

Mayor Galambos asked if City Attorney Willard can send out to Mayor and Council a capsule of how the business occupational tax works?

City Attorney Willard answered yes.

Councilmember Jenkins stated Council needs an explanation on the market sourcing versus cost of performance sourcing.

Councilmember John Paulson stated he'd like to know how many cases are being protested. How long is the list of businesses that are protesting?

City Attorney Willard stated he can get Council a history of what has been submitted through the informal hearing process. A lot of the cases have been resolved by going out to the company offices and sitting down with their financial departments.

Councilmember Jenkins stated it shouldn't be that difficult. If all these people are appealing, clearly there is a problem out there.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnery stated it is about the companies paying taxes and that the City is auditing. She can understand a little push back there.

Councilmember Fries asked if we have a cap. She would like a refresher course on the business occupational tax.

Councilmember Jenkins stated we may need to look at the cap.

Councilmember Tibby DeJulio stated we just set the cap.

Councilmember Fries stated the cap doesn't bother her, she wants to know the process.

Mayor Galambos stated all Councilmembers will receive a condensed version on how the process works and the major issues companies are complaining about.

2. Discussion on RFP for Sandy Springs Tennis Center Management.

Mayor Eva Galambos stated the RFP needs additional work. The City Manager, Councilmember Fries, and the Mayor have come to a solution to this. They would like to roll the RFP process of the Tennis Center into the big procurement process for the overall contract. By doing this, someone can come in and bid on the Tennis Center, and they can do it as part of Parks and Recreation or as the whole contract.

Councilmember Dianne Fries stated there would be one Parks and Recreation contract. Two separate companies could bid on it together.

Mayor Galambos stated in the meantime, the City would have to extend the contract we now have.

Councilmember Tibby DeJulio stated this makes perfect sense. When the City purchased the parks from Fulton County, he believes it was the easiest thing for Fulton County to just give the Tennis Center to Sandy Springs to run it. The citizens of Sandy Springs who own the center should be the ones whose needs are taken into consideration. Folding this into the general recreation plan and facilities for the whole City makes perfect sense. He thinks this is a good solution.

Mayor Galambos stated one of the things Council will do as an exercise is list all the various functions a Tennis Center can provide to the community. They will then rank those functions, similar to how they rank Capital Improvement projects, so Council will have a composite ranking. This ranking will then go on the RFP.

Councilmember Ashley Jenkins stated as she pointed out in the email she sent to Council, it's very hard to do anything when Council has zero information on how the Tennis Center is run now. That has been the problem from the beginning, having no idea how many courts are being used by kids versus adults, etc.

Councilmember John Paulson stated if we follow this suggestion, the Tennis Center remains under current management for six additional months.

Mayor Galambos stated if any Councilmembers haven't sent in their ideas on what the Tennis Center objectives should be, send them in. That is what the City Manager will use to put together the various objectives, and then they will be ranked.

Public Works

1. North Fulton Comprehensive Transportation Plan Presentation.

Deputy Director of Public Works Jon Drysdale stated he and Transportation Planner Cedric Clark have been working on different committees on the north Fulton comprehensive transportation plan. This started earlier this year with a public outreach. There were a couple sessions here at the City where the public submitted projects. All of the cities in north Fulton had similar outreach opportunities. The project management team that Transportation Planner Clark is on has been working on the data collection and putting projects together. Ed Ellis, Project Manager for the consultant team, is coming in two weeks to give Council a presentation. Council will receive the slideshow plus the project list in the advance package for the August 17, 2010, Council Meeting. Deputy Director of Public Works Drysdale wanted to discuss this in work session before Council receives the package. This study will help get projects submitted into the programming package in the future. These projects focus on north Fulton multi-jurisdictional regional projects. They will talk about cross-county projects such as I-285 and GA 400. The main focus is on funding that could be available for north Fulton cities. What they have done is taken the north Fulton funding and grouped it into three different types of projects: Tier 1, which are projects that add up to an amount that might be fundable in the normal RTP process; Tier 2, which might be an additional sales tax funding mechanism; and Tier 3, which is more aspirations and pie-in-the-sky type projects. Planning studies typically have to go through the whole process. Staff has reviewed the projects and in the package before Council, the projects that will be discussed are on the second page. Hammond Drive is the main project, which includes two different pieces and is about \$30 million. The study for Hammond Drive is in the Tier 1 list, so far.

Mayor Eva Galambos stated \$30 million is for more than just a study.

Deputy Director of Public Works Drysdale stated this is the construction program amount. They are using ARC rules and estimating procedures for certain lengths of road and how many lanes. There is a Morgan Falls power easement multi-use trail project that would start in Cobb County, cross below Morgan Falls Dam, go along the power line easement, cross GA 400 to Pitts Road and then into DeKalb County. This is also a multi-jurisdictional bike-pedestrian project that has been talked about among several cities, including Dunwoody. Those are the two in Sandy Springs that are in Tier 1. In Tier 2, there is a parallel bike-pedestrian route along Roswell Road. This would be from Forsyth County down to the City limits of Atlanta. Since this list has been prepared, staff has been able to add Riverside Drive at I-285, Northridge Road at GA 400, and Spalding in the east part of the City at Winters Chapel, as intersection/interchange projects on the Tier 2 list.

Mayor Galambos asked Deputy Director Drysdale to explain what was added

Deputy Director of Public Works Drysdale stated at Riverside Drive it is the \$2M project to have the light signal installed on the north side.

Councilmember Dianne Fries asked at I-285?

Deputy Director of Public Works Drysdale stated at I-285 and Riverside Drive. At Northridge Road there is a need for an additional lane.

Councilmember Fries stated I think you're talking about at the bridge.

Deputy Director of Public Works Drysdale stated at the Northridge bridge over GA 400. The lane would allow traffic to free flow across the bridge when driving towards Dunwoody Place.

Councilmember John Paulson stated Council has been talking about that one for awhile now.

Deputy Director of Public Works Drysdale stated over at Spalding Drive and Winters Chapel in District 1; with the tight bridge, the river exchange and the roads that come together in that area, the bridge needs to be widened as well as intersection improvements. This area carries almost as many cars per day as the intersection at Hammond.

Councilmember Chip Collins asked for elaboration on Riverside Drive at I-285. What else, other than the extra traffic light, is contemplated?

Deputy Director of Public Works Drysdale said the exit ramps are not currently wide enough to have two lanes.

Councilmember Collins asked about widening of the bridge.

Deputy Director of Public Works Drysdale stated no widening of the bridge. It's also synchronizing all the signals up to Heards Ferry on down. Tier 3 includes projects such as widening Abernathy Road.

Councilmember Ashley Jenkins stated she's tried to take that off the list.

Deputy Director of Public Works Drysdale stated staff got that out of the RTP. In 2008, Council directed staff to stop that project.

Councilmember Jenkins asked who keeps putting this on the list. Take it off.

Deputy Director of Public Works Drysdale replied citizens and interested people.

Councilmember Jenkins stated she sent Director of Public Works Tom Black all the letters she sent Deputy Director Drysdale in 2008. Take it off.

Deputy Director of Public Works Drysdale stated there were charrettes in other cities looking at the projects, so anyone could have added it.

Transportation Planner Cedric Clark stated the Abernathy project came out of the needs assessment because of severe congestion. What the consultant team did is a modeling analysis. The project scored well in the modeling analysis and was recommended in Tier 1. Due to public comment and staff recommendations, the project has been moved from Tier 1 to Tier 3.

Councilmember Jenkins stated the problem is Sandy Springs is being very generous to Cobb County by widening Johnson Ferry Road and Abernathy Road on the other side. She thinks the City has given up enough to Cobb County commuters. The City can keep that part of Abernathy four lanes and they can sit in congestion or they can find another route. She wants this item removed from the list. Abernathy can't move from a four lane to a six lane.

Mayor Galambos stated it's very clear who wants this project off the list. Who put it on the list?

Deputy Director of Public Works Drysdale stated there is a long list of projects proposed in these charrettes. The list is narrowed down in a scoring and modeling process.

Councilmember Tibby DeJulio asked if Council has the ultimate decision on whether or not to fund this.

Deputy Director of Public Works Drysdale answered you do.

Councilmember DeJulio stated let's not fund it, if we don't want it.

Councilmember Fries stated Peachtree Dunwoody should be four lanes and Abernathy should be widened. It's getting the people from Roswell Road to GA 400.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnery asked if Federal funds are involved in the Abernathy Road widening.

Deputy Director of Public Works Drysdale stated this study has Tier 3, with no recommended fund sources.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnery stated the Federal law states when you get historic designation to Glenridge Hall, no Federal funds can be used at all to widen that road.

Deputy Director of Public Works Drysdale stated the road can be widened in there. There is a historic house on Johnsons Ferry and the road has been widened close to it.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnery stated this is different. Joey Mayson's property has been registered with the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Mayor Galambos stated the City could widen it by taking the other side of the road.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnery stated the house on the other side isn't protected like Glenridge Hall.

Deputy Director of Public Works Drysdale stated the project management team will tell Council about it in two weeks. The team is going to all the City Councils within the next two weeks. They will then put the feedback together and present it to the Mayors later in the month. They will then come back with a final study in September. At that time Council will be asked to make some type of resolution of adoption. Council can adopt the study for Tier 1 only, and Tier 2 and 3 shouldn't be in there. The City doesn't want to miss the opportunity to get a study to support Hammond Drive, even if we get nothing else.

Councilmember Jenkins stated she thinks Tier 1 and Tier 2 sound wonderful. Take off the Abernathy widening project. If there is another project the City wants, place it on the list.

Deputy Director of Public Works Drysdale stated the project management team will take any comments during that session.

Mayor Galambos stated you didn't mention the other two items.

Deputy Director of Public Works Drysdale stated there are two river crossing projects in District 1 through residential areas. These are Tier 3 projects.

Mayor Galambos stated we're taking items off that we don't want. Is there something we can put on the list instead?

Deputy Director of Public Works Drysdale stated these are regional projects that are not small intersection projects within Sandy Springs, but regional projects.

Mayor Galambos stated she's going to add a regional project. She thinks going from the hospital to Glenridge Drive, that whole stretch needs to be four lanes.

Councilmember DeJulio stated there's only one block that's not four lanes. That's where Georgia Power is. He spoke to Public Works Director Tom Black and now that Georgia Power is taking those houses down, there's no reason not to four lane that one block.

Mayor Galambos asked if this project can be added to the list.

Deputy Director of Public Works Drysdale stated he can't add it. The project management team is presenting this to Council, but he can tell them ahead of time to expect some additions and deductions. Council will receive the advance package and should let staff know if they have any questions.

Mayor Galambos stated that this was \$250,000 total for the study.

Deputy Director of Public Works Drysdale stated it was actually Fulton County's study money of \$1 million they didn't use from ARC, and then a match of \$250,000 for all of the cities.

Mayor Galambos stated Sandy Springs had to put in about \$70,000.

Councilmember Fries asked if the Roswell Road Bridge at the Chattahoochee River is on this.

Deputy Director of Public Works Drysdale stated it is.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnery asked about the Roswell Road Bridge over I-285.

Deputy Director of Public Works Drysdale stated it's already on the TIP.

Councilmember Fries stated there is new Abernathy Road with four lanes coming to Roswell Road. There are four lanes going across Roswell Road. Coming from Roswell Road and turning in, everybody from three directions is going to GA 400 at that one location. The road needs to be widened.

Councilmember Jenkins stated the argument for the Hammond Drive half-diamond was to relieve congestion at Abernathy Road.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnery stated on Glenridge Drive near Pill Hill it's all residential. There is tremendous proof that the people in that community do not want Glenridge to be widened.

Councilmember DeJulio stated we're not talking about widening Glenridge Drive, we are talking about widening one block, which the people have talked about. There is one block on that whole strip that is three lanes and there is a lane that goes nowhere.

2. Update on Hightower Trail Sidewalk Project

Capital Program Director Marty Martin stated earlier this summer a recommendation was made to add design to the Community Development Block Grant sidewalk project that the City has underway from Dalrymple up to the Chattahoochee River. This was to consider a sidewalk extension along Hightower Trail up to the area about the Community Action Center. Staff proposed a design that took them a little beyond that up to the post office and recommended design at that time on both sides of the roadway. Discussion was presented that evening that identified there are also MARTA funds available. The City could potentially consider extending sidewalk design and ultimate construction along the entire length of Hightower Trail. Council asked staff to go back and study this and make a recommendation for construction on one side of the road or the other on Hightower Trail. The staff report this evening does that and recommends that the City construct the sidewalk on the north side of Hightower Road through its entire length from Roswell Road to Dunwoody Place.

Councilmember Karen Meinzen McEnery asked the cost to construct the southern sidewalk, understanding that it's not staff's recommendation and there is a mid-block crossing.

Capital Program Director Martin stated it was about \$40,000 cheaper than the \$164,000 estimate that Council sees on the document. However, this doesn't consider the utility poles on the south side of the road. He would predict at least two or three poles at about \$15,000 a pole on the south side of the road.

Mayor Eva Galambos asked the reason why staff is recommending the sidewalk on the north side.

Capital Program Director Martin stated in level of difficulty, it was about a wash. One of the primary things staff saw was that it will be tough to construct a safe mid-block crossing to the Community Action Center from the south side of the road. This is due to the profile of the roadway through there. There is a quick climb coming up off Roswell Road and a steady climb again from the east side coming from Dunwoody Place. If one is talking about a mid-block or some pedestrian crossing attempt towards the post office, there is a much broader, clearer expanse where folks could negotiate traffic.

Mayor Galambos asked if there will be a walkway to get across to the post office.

Capital Program Director Martin answered yes.

Councilmember Dianne Fries stated traffic doesn't drive as fast on that part of Hightower Trail as they do on the other side.

Capital Program Director Martin stated it's a fairly energetic intersection at Roswell Road and Hightower. The further the pedestrian traffic is away from that intersection, the better.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Date Approved: August 17, 2010



Eva Galambos, Mayor



Michael Casey, City Clerk