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**Work Session Meeting of the Sandy Springs City Council was held on Tuesday, February 5, 2013, at 7:39 p.m., Mayor Eva Galambos presiding.**

**Councilmembers present:** Councilmember John Paulson, Councilmember Dianne Fries, Councilmember Chip Collins, Councilmember Gabriel Sterling, and Councilmember Karen Meinzen McEnery

**STAFF DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**Public Works**

1. FY 2013 Capital Paving List

**Director of Field Services Charlie Roberts** stated this item is the final paving list as previously proposed in December 2012. Every road will be paved that was on the previous list with the exception of three roads that have already been submitted for LMIG. With the approval of Council, staff will move forward with receiving bids.

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

2. Roswell Road Corridor Livable Center Initiative (LCI) Five-Year Update (2013)

**Transportation Planning Kristen Westcott** stated this item is the Roswell Road Corridor Livable Center Initiative (LCI) five-year update. The study was adopted in June 2012. As part of the funding agreement with the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), the jurisdictions that receive the LCI money are required to have a periodic update. The update is a report of what the City has accomplished, what is in progress, and the future plans. Another reason for the update is to remain eligible to continue to submit for funding grants. The original study included land use, transportation, and economic development recommendations. The land use and economic development recommendations included development of zoning and design guidelines for the nodes. This was accomplished in the comprehensive land use plan the City adopted in 2007. There was a recommendation for developing overlay guidelines and these guidelines are in the Sandy Springs overlay district. The update looks larger than the original plan. Included are the items for ARC to review. There was a broad major transportation recommendation. There are ten major projects, two of them have been completed, and three are underway. There are also five transportation initiatives that were broader policy based studies. Three of the transportation initiatives have been completed and two are underway. Major projects include the project at I-285 and Roswell Road. Two years ago a Sandy Springs Circle underpass was completed. There have been small intersection improvements such as Windsor Parkway at High Point Road and Glenridge Connector at Johnson Ferry Road. Sidewalks have been completed on Windsor Parkway, High Point Road, and Long Island Drive. Other improvements include the High Point Road/Northland Drive school zone beacons. The LCI five-year update was done in order to ask for project funds.

Councilmember John Paulson left the meeting at this time.

Transportation Planning Westcott stated the Roswell Road Intelligent Transportation Signal (ITS) improvement is a funded project for which the City received \$1.3 million to complete the project. In June 2012, Council approved a bus rapid (BRT) study for the Roswell Road/Piedmont Road corridors. This project is currently in process. Sidewalk projects include Roswell Road/CIP T-0019, a project that is split in three phases. The first phase includes the City limits up to Long Island Drive, which is partially funded. Also under the sidewalk program are the Mt. Paran Road and Glenridge Drive projects. The Lake Forrest Drive sidewalk project has not moved forward from the original recommendation list. This

project is on the sidewalk master plan and as redevelopment occurs sidewalk will be installed. There were a number of trail projects identified including Long Island Creek, trails parallel to I-285 and to Roswell Road.

**Councilmember Gabriel Sterling** asked about the trails parallel to I-285.

Transportation Planning Westcott stated the trails were recommended in the prior study. Money was funded last year from ARC to develop a comprehensive bicycle pedestrian and trail plan.

**Councilmember Karen Meinzen McEnerny** stated there was great discussion at the LCI meetings about the trails. Not many single family neighborhoods on the southern section, where the multi-use trails would be located, embraced the idea. She hopes the trails parallel to I-285 and Roswell Road do not occur and she believes the neighbors do not want them either.

**Councilmember Dianne Fries** stated the Buckhead Community Improvement District is planning trails along GA400. She asked if the trails parallel to I-285 will be connected to the GA400 trails.

Transportation Planning Westcott stated there was thought to connect the trails prior to the City's inception. The cities of Roswell and Alpharetta are also exploring the same trail connections.

Councilmember Sterling asked when the plan will begin.

Transportation Planning Westcott stated the City was awarded money for fiscal year 2014 for the trail project. The project will begin in the second or third quarter this year. Staff would like this item to be approved at the next Regular City Council meeting along with a resolution to accompany this update to send to ARC to maintain eligibility for funding.

There was a consensus of Council to move this item forward to the consent agenda of the February 19, 2013, City Council regular meeting.

### **City Manager's Office**

#### 1. Road Closures and Special Events

**City Manager John McDonough** stated Council was provided with a presentation along with the current special events ordinance. The City has become a popular location to hold special events and has had success with these events held in the community. There have been concerns in locations where events are held on multiple occasions during the year. In some instances, the City has asked the event holders to consider other locations or has had to deny a special events permit. Section 50-118 of the City ordinance addresses the denial or revocation of a special event permit. The section addresses if the event will disrupt traffic, interfere with access to fire stations or fire hydrants, or cause undue hardship to adjacent businesses. Staff looks at all these possible issues when reviewing an application. The goal is to not deny special event permits. Staff has evaluated the special event permit process in order to identify issues and created recommendations and solutions. The presentation for this evening will be in two parts. The first part is the administrative portion and the second part will address event routes.

**Assistant City Manager Eden Freeman** stated staff has done an analysis of routes that have caused the largest number of issues for residents and businesses. Staff also looked at a history of the special events. The current special event permit fee is \$50. If an entity provides a copy of its 501 (c)(3) certificate from the IRS, they do not have to pay the permit fee. The nonprofit will only pay the permit fee if they serve alcohol. That is not a fee that is paid to the City, but to the State Department of Revenue. She referenced

a slide on the presentation that represents a breakdown of special events that were permitted in the City over the last four years. May, June, April, and October are popular special event months. There was a downturn in the number of special events from 2011 to 2012. There are typically a number of road closures when a special event occurs. If the event is for a ride, race, walk, or fun run, there is some type of lane closure that happens for the safety of the participants as well as the safety of the residents. The road closure of Mt. Vernon Highway has raised concerns for residents that live on Mt. Vernon. The area of concern is on Mt. Vernon west of Roswell Road.

**Councilmember Dianne Fries** asked if the area is east of I-285 on Mt. Vernon or west of I-285.

Assistant City Manager Freeman stated the area is west of Roswell Road down to the Powers Ferry Road area.

**Councilmember Gabriel Sterling** asked if the complaints are coming from mostly the west part of I-285 or are split evenly.

Assistant City Manager Freeman stated the complaints are coming from the neighborhoods between these areas. The complaints are coming from the section of Mt. Vernon between Roswell Road and Mt. Vernon. The area is west of Roswell Road and east of I-285.

Councilmember Fries stated Mt. Vernon is a flat road and a great place for running events. The complaints are mostly between Sandy Springs Circle, the Hitson Center, and the bridge over I-285. Road closures are not a problem for the bicycle race that she helps to organize.

Assistant City Manager Freeman stated after staff's review and discussion on this topic, staff would like to propose a tier system to begin charging for permits. The entire purpose of the tier system represents how much staff time it takes to review the permit. She referenced the slide of Tier I and Tier II events. The Tier II events require far more staff time to review and approve than a Tier I event.

Councilmember Fries recommended if an event is more than one day it should have a Tier II requirement.

Councilmember Sterling asked about the Tier II requirement of a City sponsored event with more than 100 anticipated attendees.

Assistant City Manager Freeman stated a City sponsored event will take additional resources compared to a non-City sponsored event. The event will require additional staff time to plan the event.

Councilmember Sterling stated if a private organization holds the event and the City is the sponsor, the organization will pay more for a permit fee.

Assistant City Manager Freeman stated a nonprofit will pay no permit fee.

Councilmember Fries stated the City only sponsors the bicycle race and the Sandy Springs Festival, which both are 501 (c)(3) companies. She asked if the City decided to have a parade, would that qualify as a Tier II event.

Assistant City Manager Freeman responded yes, that could be an example.

Councilmember Sterling asked who will pay the permit fee for a City sponsored event.

Assistant City Manager Freeman stated the ordinance allows the City Manager to waive the permit fee.

Councilmember Fries stated if the City is sponsoring the event, the fee would be waived.

City Manager McDonough stated that requirement can be removed.

Assistant City Manager Freeman stated she surveyed neighboring cities to see what they charge for special event permit fees. The City of Alpharetta charges \$200 even if the organization is a nonprofit. The City of Marietta charges \$500 to use the City Park and additional fees if off duty police officers are used. The City of Roswell charges \$150 for a permit fee if city services are used and if no city services are used the charge is \$50. The City of Johns Creek charges a \$50 fee plus \$10 per day. The City of Decatur charges a \$50 application fee and then additional fees are charged depending on the number of people that are projected to attend.

Councilmember Fries asked what the City of Atlanta charges for a special event permit fee.

Assistant City Manager Freeman stated she called the City of Atlanta, but she could not reach them.

Councilmember Fries stated she believes either Atlanta or Fulton County charges depending on the number of attendees.

Councilmember Sterling stated the 24 Hours of Booty Race organizers were looking at a route in the City of Atlanta near Centennial Olympic Park and the initial permit fee was around \$10,000.

**Assistant City Manager Bryant Poole** stated the proposed routes were chosen in regards to logistics for everyone affected. Staff tried to choose routes that match lengths for a 5K or a 10K run. Factors taken into consideration are staging areas and parking. Staff also searched for routes that would least impact businesses and residents. This does not mean that an individual cannot propose a new route. If the individual were to pick a City suggested route it would make the permit process faster. The applicant will still be required to notify the businesses and residents impacted by the road closure, even if they chose a preapproved City route.

Councilmember Fries asked how many complaints the City has received.

Assistant City Manager Poole stated the typical area of complaints is coming from the Mt. Vernon Highway section west of Roswell Road. On average, there are twelve complaints a year. Mt. Vernon Highway is being used six times a year for special events, which can be a lot to some residents.

**Councilmember Chip Collins** asked if the complaints are by residents or travelers.

Assistant City Manager Poole stated primarily the residents are complaining.

Councilmember Fries asked if the complaints are due to the organization not preparing the neighbors enough. She does not receive any complaints from the residents near the bike race, because she gives plenty of notice when the event is scheduled. She also has off duty police officers at the location, so if there is an emergency the residents can get out of their neighborhood. She asked if the complaints are due to a lack of the residents being notified and prepared for the street closing.

Assistant City Manager Poole stated generally that is not the feedback he has received. On occasion, residents sometimes do call saying they were not aware of the special event.

Councilmember Fries stated she contacts every person that is impacted by the street closure. She asked if the organization is notifying each resident impacted by the street closure.

Assistant City Manager Poole stated the challenge arises because it is the organization's responsibility to notify the residents of the street closure due to the special event. He does not know if every organization fully complies with this requirement. This will be part of the new agreement.

**Councilmember Karen Meinzen McEnerny** stated she heard major complaints that she thought were warranted. The complaints were regarding the Artsapalooza event in 2011, during which time Johnson Ferry Road was closed. She is glad to see the proposed routes are not including streets in front of businesses.

Councilmember Collins asked if the proposed City policy includes a change so that the road closure does not prevent the businesses from operating.

**Mayor Eva Galambos** stated that will be included in the policy.

Assistant City Manager Poole stated included in the presentation are upcoming special event permit applications that have been submitted to the City.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnerny stated she thought this discussion today was to identify preapproved routes. She asked if each route will have to be brought before Council if a new route is submitted.

Assistant City Manager Poole responded no.

City Manager McDonough stated staff's recommendation is for the proposed routes to be approved and the listed events at those locations approved.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnerny about the street closing of Mt. Vernon Highway on March 2<sup>nd</sup> for the Chattahoochee Road Runners Race.

Assistant City Manager Poole stated the Chattahoochee Road Runners race will be held with a route along Mt. Vernon Highway from 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. Police officers will be on the route and will work with the residents if they need to leave their neighborhood.

Councilmember Fries stated this race has been in existence for almost twenty years. This race is the fastest qualifier for the Peachtree Road Race.

Assistant City Manager Poole stated an example is the PetCo 5K9 route. The runners will leave the elementary school and go down Sandy Springs Circle, turn left on Allen Road, go towards Roswell Road, go back to Lake Forrest Drive, go up and then down Cliftwood, and then back. This is done in order to gain the mileage. One lane will remain open on Lake Forrest Drive.

Councilmember Fries asked if this event will be staged at the school.

Assistant City Manager Poole responded that is what he understands.

Mayor Galambos asked how the residents felt about the 24 Hours of Booty Race.

Councilmember Sterling stated they really enjoyed the race. There were 150 comment cards from the race and 100 of the comments stated the route had too many hills. The upcoming race will be on a more flat route.

Assistant City Manager Freeman stated if Council agrees with what staff is proposing, staff would like to have an information session for the applicants that request special event permits. This would be to review the new application requirements and tier structure and receive their feedback as well.

Councilmember Fries asked if staff will deny events on the west side between Sandy Springs Circle and I-285.

Assistant City Manager Freeman stated staff will work with the race organizers to get the preapproved routes to be qualified as qualifiers by the Atlanta Track Club.

Councilmember Fries stated over a year's time if six special events are held and there are only twelve complaints, she is not sure it warrants the applicant to be denied the permit to hold the event.

City Manager McDonough stated staff is looking for direction from Council on how many events per year they would prefer to be allowed.

Councilmember Sterling stated he does not see any reason for changing the routes of the legacy events that have many held for many years.

Councilmember Fries stated the permit applicants need to be educated that they need to notify every resident or business affected by the race. If residents know what to expect, they can work their day around the race.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnery stated she appreciates Councilmember Fries and Councilmember Sterling's input regarding races. However, since they run races, their views may be biased. She hopes that everyone takes the time to organize their event as well as Councilmember Fries to minimize the negative effects on residents. She supports the process and the proposed routes from staff.

Mayor Galambos suggested the legacy events keeping the same routes, but have the new events choose from the proposed routes.

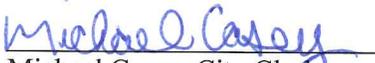
Councilmember Fries stated staff needs to let the applicant know that it is expected they communicate with the homeowners. If staff becomes aware of the applicant not notifying the residents properly, the applicant will be in jeopardy of losing the ability to hold their event another year.

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

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

Date Approved: February 19, 2013

  
Eva Galambos, Mayor

  
Michael Casey, City Clerk