

Work Session Meeting of the Sandy Springs City Council was held on Tuesday, October 2, 2012, at 8:13 p.m., Mayor Eva Galambos presiding.

STAFF DISCUSSION ITEMS

City Clerk

1. Consideration of the Proposed 2013 City Council Meeting Schedule

Councilmember Dianne Fries suggested moving the November 5, 2013, meeting date to November 12, 2013.

City Clerk Michael Casey stated he prepared the meeting schedule starting with the first and third Tuesdays for each month of next year. The first Tuesday in January was deleted, since it falls on New Year's Day. The first meeting in July was deleted as well, to provide for summer vacation.

Councilmember Karen Meinzen McEnerny asked about the month of December.

City Clerk Casey stated all of the rest of the months are scheduled on the standard meeting dates of the first and third Tuesdays of the month, except for the first Tuesday in January and the first Tuesday in July.

There was a consensus of Council to accept the suggested change and move this item forward to the next Regular City Council meeting.

Public Works

2. Presentation on T-0039 Spalding Drive/Mt. Vernon Road Intersection Improvement

Director of Public Works Kevin Walter stated this item is an update regarding the progress of the design for repairing the intersection at Spalding Drive and Mt. Vernon Road. The project is needed for safety reasons. In the last four years, there have been twenty accidents at this intersection. The number of accidents is three to four times the normal rate expected. Several of the accidents have involved injuries. On Spalding Drive westbound there is a large hump in the road that makes sight distance difficult. Because of the stop at this location, there are great delays during the morning and afternoon peak times. During the morning, drivers are travelling towards Atlanta on Mt. Vernon Road. During the afternoon travel time the drivers are going the opposite direction. The bulk of the traffic comes down Mt. Vernon Road and Spalding Drive. Staff came up with a solution to help traffic flow better and improve pedestrian connectivity. This project would connect the sidewalk system from this intersection down to the Orchard Park shopping center. This solution would cause minimal impact on the neighbors.

Councilmember Gabriel Sterling asked how many accidents could be expected at one intersection over four years.

Director of Public Works Walter responded three or four. Staff also surveyed five other unsignalized intersections and this intersection had the highest number of accidents. One intersection had eighteen accidents in four years, one fourteen, one twelve, and another had eight. Three different options for a solution were evaluated. The first option to improve the traffic was a roundabout. The roundabout is too difficult to construct due to the homes located in this area. The second option was the evaluation of unsignalized intersections. The third and recommended option is the traffic signal. There have been three public meetings regarding this project. Construction for the project should start in spring 2013.

Councilmember Tibby DeJulio asked if during the public meetings there was support from the neighboring residents.

Councilmember John Paulson stated there are some people in this area that do not want the project. He has reiterated that the City should do something about a failing intersection, especially when safety is concerned.

Councilmember Karen Meinzen McEnerny stated the public meetings allow the citizens to voice their opinions.

Director of Public Works Walter stated this is a dangerous intersection and staff wanted to come up with a balanced solution. The solution selected provides an excellent level of service. The solution also minimizes the right-of-way impacts on residents in the area. There are no takes of right-of-way in the design, just construction easements. The solution is a traffic signal that will control Mt. Vernon Road and Spalding Drive. Also included is a yield sign for westbound traffic on Spalding Drive coming from the east going west. Staff believes this is an excellent design. The traffic signal will slow people coming up to Mt. Vernon Road. The key at this intersection is sight distance. The island will not be shrubs, but instead grass and low plants.

Assistant City Manager Bryant Poole stated there is some right-of-way acquisition at the corner of the property.

Director of Public Works Walter stated properties in the area were concerned about losing ten to twenty feet of right-of-way and staff was able to avoid that with this design of the intersection. In the morning, going westbound cars backup two minutes and eighteen seconds. Director of Transportation/Traffic Brad Edwards provided information that this area has a car backup time as much as six minutes. The car backup during the afternoon peak hour on Mt. Vernon Road is one minute and forty-five seconds.

Councilmember Karen Meinzen McEnerny asked what level of service "D" refers to.

Director of Public Works Walter responded that corresponds to a fifty-five to sixty second wait for cars.

Councilmember Meinzen McEnerny asked if GDOT gives a description of acceptable and unacceptable levels of service.

Director of Public Works Walter stated this information is based on the manual for Uniform Traffic Control Devices. There have been no fatalities at this intersection within the last four years, but staff would like to repair this intersection to prevent any from occurring. He displayed a model of how traffic will flow once the intersection repair is made.

Councilmember Dianne Fries asked about the stacking of cars travelling up Mt. Vernon Road from Spalding Drive and if the cars will have room if a driver decides to drive straight.

Director of Public Works Walter responded the cars will merge on the north side of the intersection.

Councilmember DeJulio asked how much the project will cost.

Director of Public Works Walter responded under \$1 million.
There was a consensus of Council to move this item to the consent agenda for the next Regular City Council meeting.

3. Discussion on Johnson Ferry and Abernathy Road Corridor Initiatives

This item was moved to the next Work Session meeting.

City Attorney

4. Utility Relocation on Morgan Falls Road

Assistant City Attorney Cecil McLendon stated this item includes two agreements that need to be executed with Georgia Power in order to move forward on the utility relocation on Morgan Falls Road. One agreement is the primary agreement to relocate the power lines pursuant to the franchise agreement. Under the \$1.2 million relocation agreement, Georgia Power has agreed to bury the power lines from the sharp turn on Morgan Falls Road to Overlook Park.

Deputy Director of Public Works Garrin Coleman stated that relocation is highlighted in yellow on the map.

Assistant City Attorney McLendon stated the burying of the power lines was not an obligation of the franchise agreement. The second agreement addresses the City's agreement to pay for concrete poles. This is an upcharge from the cost of the wooden poles and there are benefits for concrete poles.

Deputy Director of Public Works Coleman stated the total pole height would be eighty feet, but twenty feet of the pole will be underground. This will enable the power lines to be out of the sight line. If wooden poles were used, they would more than likely be in the right-of-way. If concrete poles are used, they will be able to be moved behind the proposed retaining wall and fewer poles will be used.

Councilmember Gabriel Sterling asked about the cost differential between wood and concrete poles.

Assistant City Attorney McLendon responded \$300,000.

Councilmember DeJulio asked what the cost would be to bury the rest of the power lines.

Councilmember Dianne Fries responded \$2 million.

Deputy Director of Public Works Coleman stated there are three power circuits involved. This circuit powers all of the City of Sandy Springs north of I-285 all the way to the Chattahoochee River.


Mayor Eva Galambos asked when paving will begin on Morgan Falls Road.

City Manager John McDonough stated the construction will begin next spring.

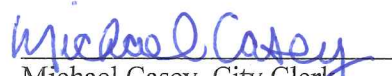
There was a consensus of Council to move this item forward to the next Regular City Council meeting.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

Date Approved: October 16, 2012



Eva Galambos, Mayor



Michael Casey, City Clerk