

MINUTES
Special Session of the College Park City Council
December 1, 2009
8:28 P.M.

PRESENT: Mayor Brayman; Councilmembers Wojahn, Molinatto, Catlin, Perry, Stullich, Mark Cook, Hampton and Mary Cook.

ABSENT: None.

ALSO PRESENT: Joe Nagro, City Manager; Suellen Ferguson, City Attorney; Janeen Miller, City Clerk; Terry Schum, Director of Planning; Mayor-elect Andrew Fellows; Councilmembers-elect Marcus Afzali, Denise Mitchell and Christine Nagle; Deputy Student Liaison Becca Lurie.

During the regularly scheduled Worksession of the College Park City Council, a motion was made by Councilmember Mark Cook and seconded by Councilmember Stullich to enter into a Special Session. The motion to enter into the Special Session carried 5-3-0 (Perry, Hampton and Mary Cook opposed).

Action Item:

09-G-99 To Approve Program Open Space Fund Allocation And Application To Encumber Program Open Space Funds, And To Authorize The City Manager To Negotiate Acquisition Of Property Located At 8200 Baltimore Avenue.

A motion was made by Councilmember Catlin and seconded by Councilmember Stullich to reallocate unencumbered Program Open Space Funds in the amount of \$300,000.00 from the Design and Rehabilitation of Duvall Field Project to the US Route 1 Open Space Acquisition Project and to authorize the City Manager to take those steps necessary to prepare, and proceed with, an application to encumber funds for the US Route 1 Open Space Acquisition Project, and further, to adopt Resolution 09-R-20 to authorize the City Manager to proceed with negotiations to acquire the property located at 8200 Baltimore Avenue, for the public purpose of construction of a park, and to take those actions necessary to proceed with condemnation if the negotiations are not successful.

Councilmember Catlin stated this is the start of a process that the next Council will finish. It authorizes staff to start negotiations and all actions will be monitored closely by Council. This is the beginning not the end of a process.

Mayor-elect Fellows supports the motion.

Councilmember-elect Afzali supports the motion.

Councilmember-elect Mitchell supports the motion.

Councilmember-elect Nagle does not support the motion.

Councilmember Mary Cook is opposed to the motion and believes this action would scare businesses away from College Park. She does not believe she has the information she needs to make a good decision.

Councilmember Stullich said there has been a lot of discussion lately about the type of quality business that is desired in College Park, and this property has been an eyesore for a long time and does not contribute to high quality retail in College Park.

Councilmember Wojahn had initial concerns about taking money away from Duvall Field but understands that we don't have the funds now to proceed with the Duvall Field project. He will support this motion with the hope that the City will continue to proceed with the rehabilitation of Duvall Field as soon as possible. This is an opportunity we have now to improve this portion of the Route 1 corridor.

Councilmember Catlin said this project has been discussed with developers for about seven years so it shouldn't be a surprise to anybody.

Councilmember Molinatto echoed Councilmember Wojahn's concerns about Duvall Field, but has been swayed by the arguments he has heard. He believes this is the best thing the City can do, and he does believe the information he has is adequate to make this decision.

A motion was made by Councilmember Perry and seconded by Councilmember Hampton to postpone this motion until January 2010 to let the next Council decide the issue. The motion failed 3-5-0 (Molinatto, Wojahn, Catlin, Stullich, and Mark Cook opposed).

Councilmember Perry clarified that this is the liquor store next to University View. He does not believe there is sufficient information to go forward with this. Once this Program Open Space money is used for this project, it would not be available for other projects in College Park.

Mayor Brayman said he remains as committed as ever to bringing more money to the Duvall Field project. He believes this would serve a vital public purpose and he appreciates the resolve of the new Council on this project as well.

Councilmember Perry believes it should be the next Council that decides this matter. He would like to see money put toward the renovation of the Public Works facility.

Councilmember Catlin restated that this is the beginning of a process and that this motion does not guarantee that the City will acquire the property and that future decisions will need to be made by the new Council to proceed with this.

Mayor Brayman clarified that Program Open Space funds could not be used for a new Public Works facility.

The motion carried 5-3-0 (Perry, Hampton and Mary Cook opposed).

Adjournment: A motion to adjourn the Special Session was made by Councilmember Wojahn and seconded by Councilmember Stulich. The Special Session was adjourned at 8:45 p.m. by a vote of 8-0-0.

Janeen S. Miller *12/8/09*

Janeen S. Miller **Date Approved**
City Clerk