

WORKSESSION MINUTES
College Park City Council
Tuesday, January 21, 2020
Davis Hall, 9217 51st Avenue
7:30 P.M. – 11:02 P.M.

PRESENT: Mayor Wojahn; Councilmembers Kabir, Kennedy, Brennan, Dennis, Day, Rigg, Mackie and Mitchell.

ABSENT: None.

ALSO PRESENT: Scott Somers, City Manager; Bill Gardiner, Assistant City Manager; Janeen Miller, City Clerk; Suellen Ferguson, City Attorney; Terry Schum, Director of Planning; Bob Ryan, Director of Public Services; Jim Miller, Parking Enforcement Manager; Dan Alpert, Student Liaison.

Mayor Wojahn opened the Worksession at 7:30 p.m.

CITY MANAGER’S REPORT: Mr. Somers announced the Family Fun Bowling Bash.

AMENDMENT TO/APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA: The agenda was approved without amendment (Kennedy/Mitchell 8-0).

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

1. Discussion with the Board of Election Supervisors about 2019 election and other election matters - BOES Chair Jack Robson and Supervisors Cameron Thurston, Lisa Williams and Diane Ligon:

Mr. Robson reviewed the BOES report. Discussion of voter turnout, and turnout by district. The County mailed the Voter Notification Cards so they arrived after Early Voting, which may have lowered the turnout. The BOES thought the advisory ballot questions would increase the turnout. Discussion of election costs over the last few cycles, and the cost per ballot. Request by Council to survey other municipalities on their cost per ballot. A suggestion was made to have the next resident survey include a question about why residents don’t vote in municipal elections.

Our ability to do same-day voter registration is dependent upon County support; we will explore further. Right now, the only way we could do this is to have the voter vote a provisional ballot. Return with a report on this in the future.

Future cost estimates were discussed. Council is interested in having Early Voting again; in continuing the Voting Center approach (voter can go to any polling place); agreed to a Charter amendment to allow for appointment of Supervisors on July 1 in the year prior to the regular election (i.e., even numbered years); continue public education regarding Voter Notification Cards to help voter rolls. Right now, we should expect to use Davis Hall and Ritchie Coliseum as two polling locations in 2021; decide about use of Stamp Union as a poll in the future. It was expensive for the low turnout, but will take more than one election to get people used to going there. Explore ways to increase turnout there.

How many students voted, and how can we reach out to the student voters. We can’t identify the number of student voters. We can work with SGA and GSG next time around.

The BOES recommended language for a Charter amendment to allow for a candidate to meet the one-year residency requirement based on something other than the date they registered to vote. Council asked the City Attorney to analyze their recommendation.

Decennial redistricting, if done in time for the 2021 election, will make a difference, as well.

Regarding increasing voter turnout: this is not currently included in the charge to the BOES. There should be a broader conversation about this to determine the role of the BOES in this process.

The results of the advisory ballot question on term length were discussed with mixed opinions. Council took a straw poll and voted 5-3 to address whether the conversation should continue, or whether this issue is dead, at a future Worksession.

2. Review of Hollywood Commercial District Streetscape Plan - Seth Darlington, Wallace Montgomery Consultants, and Megan Maccio, Flora Teeter:

Ms. Schum said this project began in 2015 as a revitalization study, and there have been six community meetings with residents and businesses since then. Tonight's review is of the 60% level of design. After Council's comments tonight they would like to move forward to 100%. Miss Maccio reviewed the PowerPoint and Mr. Darlington reviewed the connection aspects. The next step is to complete 100% documents, acquire stormwater and other various permits, and start the bidding process. Once the contract has been awarded, the construction would take about a year. The revised cost estimate at this point is \$2.5M. This project is funded for final design, not for construction. Staff will seek other funding, such as a bikeways grant, but additional bond funds or City funds will be needed for construction.

Comments: Sharp turn on path to shopping center; dual jurisdiction (County and City) on Rhode Island Avenue; safety measures to provide pedestrian safety from vehicular traffic; possible phasing of the project; safety at intersection of Narragansett Parkway and Edgewood Road; shaded places to sit; creative ways to avoid creation of goat paths; how can we leverage these improvements by attracting new businesses.

Regarding the Muskogee Street trail: concern about tree loss and disturbing the area. Response that 30 trees would need to come down and that about 40% of those are in poor health. Replanting would be redone with a combination of deciduous and evergreen. Suggestion to have a meeting with Muskogee residents about this aspect of the project. This part of the project could be deferred.

Feasibility study about daylighting Narragansett: while they could remove the large stormdrain pipes that run from Edgewood south, it would result in a very steep channel stream that would require removing the trees behind the shopping center. Their conclusion is that it is not feasible to move forward with the daylighting project, and it is not in the scope of this project.

Move forward with 100% design. Some concern about spending this money at one time so there is a request to provide an a-la-carte option.

[Motion by Rigg/Brennan to suspend the rules to add a closed session at the end of the meeting. Passed 8-0.]

3. Discussion of on-street parking for owners of townhouses on Cherokee Street.

Mr. Ryan reviewed the staff report and history of this item. The permit parking zone was created in anticipation of the impact of the new development. The Townhouses have been built but the rest of the project which included a parking structure has not moved forward. As a result, residents who live in the Townhouses are requesting permission to park on the street, which the permit zone does not allow.

Council requested information on plans for future development of The Boulevard site. Can we restrict the guest parking to just a portion of Zone 4A, in front of the Townhouses, and not to the entire zone? Yes. Mr. Ryan said we are getting requests not only for guest passes but also for residential permits. Various scenarios were discussed.

Create a visitor parking zone within zone 4A for the Townhouses on Cherokee Street, west of 48th Street. To agenda next week.

[At 10:30 there was a motion to extend the meeting by Brennan/Day. Passed 8-0.]

4. Discussion of City comments on the MDOT Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP)

Ms. Schum reviewed the staff report and discussed a letter to MDOT on the CTP. Include: funding for design of Segments 2 and 3 of US 1, the Managed Lane Study, the Greenbelt Interchange, and Bike Lanes. To Consent next week.

5. Review of Legislation: Council discussed SB 209, PG 401, PG 402, Community Choice Energy, PG 108.

6. Agenda items for January 30 Four Cities Meeting in College Park: Legislation

7. Appointments to Boards and Committees: Nikesha Pancho Lewis to CBE.

8. Requests for/Status of Future Agenda Items: None.

ADJOURN: At 11:02 p.m., a motion was made by Councilmember Brennan and seconded by Councilmember Day to adjourn the Worksession and reconvene into a Closed Session to review the contents of a bid or proposal before a contract is awarded. With a vote of 8-0, Mayor Wojahn adjourned the Worksession.

Janeen S. Miller
City Clerk

Date
Approved