

WORK SESSION OF THE GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL held Wednesday, November 14, 2012, for the purpose of meeting with Fieldstone Properties/Franklin Park.

Mayor Davis started the meeting at 8:03 p.m.

PRESENT WERE: Councilmembers Konrad E. Herling, Emmett V. Jordan, Leta M. Mach, Silke I. Pope, Edward V.J. Putens, Rodney M. Roberts and Mayor Judith F. Davis.

STAFF PRESENT WERE: Michael McLaughlin, City Manager; Celia Craze, Director of Planning and Community Development; Captain Kemp, Sgt. Triesky and MPO Holland, Greenbelt Police Department; Thomas Matthews, Supervisory Inspector; and Cindy Murray, City Clerk.

ALSO PRESENT WERE: Joseph Kazarnovsky, Ralph Reider, Lesley Luckhardt, Lea Garcia, Gail Comfort, Aaron Martin and Finis Calhoun, Fieldstone Properties; David Lange, Greenbelt Neighbors Alliance; and Bill Orleans.

Mayor Davis welcomed everyone and began with introductions.

City Issues

Residential Complaints: Ms. Craze advised that conditions in Franklin Park have improved significantly over the past two years. She reported the number of residential complaints received by her office have been reduced from over 600 complaints received in 2010 to 320 complaints in 2011, and 172 complaints to date this year. Ms. Craze also noted the relationship between the City staff and Franklin Park staff has improved and the future looks very good for the property providing everyone stays the course.

Signs and Permit Process: Ms. Craze reported the identification and directional signs erected by Franklin Park throughout the property have not been approved by the county or city. She said Fieldstone is aware of the requirement and must secure the required permits for these signs prior to issuance of their 2014 annual license.

Annual Licensing: Ms. Craze advised that Fieldstone has been operating under a temporary license due to the tremendous backlog of outstanding violations/maintenance issues assumed by Fieldstone when they acquired the property. She said it is expected an annual license will be issued for the June 1, 2013 to May 31, 2014 licensing year as long as all outstanding violation notices are resolved.

Community Clinic: Mr. McLaughlin reported that Dr. Flynt notified the City that the lease has been finalized and funds have been secured for renovation. Mr. Kazarnovsky said Fieldstone was very pleased that Community Clinic will be located in Franklin Park. He said it is expected the build out process will take approximately four to six months.

Camp Fire Program: Mr. Kazarnovsky said Fieldstone continues to provide free apartment space and swimming pool access for the Camp Fire Program. Mr. Herling asked if a larger, more suitable space could be provided to the program. Mr. Kazarnovsky and Ms. Luckhardt advised that all the commercial space in Franklin Park is now occupied. They suggested the City consider securing a larger space for the program in another location, possibly the old

Greenbelt Middle School depending on the future of the building. Mr. Kazarnovsky said Fieldstone would be willing to continue to contribute to the program but suggested a partnership type arrangement between the City and Fieldstone in the future.

Cooperative Nursery School: There was discussion regarding a group looking to begin a cooperative child care program in the Franklin Park area. Ms. Mach said there may be some resources available if this program would be considered by Fieldstone. Mr. Kazarnovsky said yes, a child care program would be considered.

Laundry Facilities/Fitness Room: Mr. Kazarnovsky reported on the new centralized laundry facility with over 70 new washer and dryers that recently opened. Ms. Luckhardt added that 14 strategically placed laundry facilities throughout the property are available for residents who do not drive. Mr. Kazarnovsky also noted the new fitness center is well used by residents.

Communications: Mr. Kazarnovsky said there are 12 members of their resident relations staff that deal with tenant questions and issues. He added that information is distributed through their newsletter and is available on their website, Facebook and Twitter. Mayor Davis asked that copies of the newsletters be sent to the City.

Recycling: Ms. Luckhardt reported the recycling bins that had been located at each trash dumpster had to be removed because of the large amount of contamination/improper use of the recycling bins. She said they are working on finding an alternative way to provide recycling for residents.

Other: Mr. Kazarnovsky said Franklin Park held 22 community events over the past year to create a sense of community for the residents. MPO Holland noted there had been no police incidents at any of these events. Mayor Davis requested that the event schedule for 2013 be sent to the City.

Ms. Pope asked about efforts mentioned at the last meetings to attract University of Maryland students and also military. Mr. Kazarnovsky said the plans have been changed as they have found students are not necessarily the most ideal residents. He added that the military had blacklisted Springhill Lake/Empirian Village from eligible housing option due to its past reputation when operating as Springhill Lake/Empirian Village. Mr. Kazarnovsky said they will continue to work on rebuilding the reputation for Franklin Park and is hopeful the property may be considered eligible by the military in another few years.

Ms. Luckhardt reported that the average income level of residents is approximately \$60,000 per household. She also mentioned there is currently a 10% vacancy rate.

Public Safety

Capt. Kemp reported that while the majority of crime in the City continues to occur in Franklin Park, crime has decreased in this area in every category except breaking and entering. He added that breaking and enterings are not only an issue in Franklin Park but throughout the City and area wide. Sgt. Triesky mentioned steps being taken by the Police Department to address this problem.

MPO Holland, the City's Franklin Park partnership officer, said that there have been major improvements in Franklin Park since Fieldstone acquired the property. He said management responds to problems promptly.

Franklin Park Issues

Path from Apartments at End of Edmonston Road to Springhill Lake Recreation Center and Cherrywood Lane: Mr. Kazarnovsky said many residents use this unsafe path for walking access to the Metro. He said they are willing to install a safer paved pathway with lights and have sent their plans to the City for approval. Ms. Craze said she has reviewed the plans and expects the path plans can be approved with some slight modifications.

Fees: Mr. Kazarnovsky requested a revised fee structure be considered for apartment developments with over 1,000 units. Mayor Davis suggested he submit this request to Mr. McLaughlin for review.

Informational Items

Ms. Mach advised that the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) has requested member jurisdictions send a letter to their Congressional Delegation requesting Congress enact legislation to avoid the Budget Control Act's required budget sequestration set to start on January 2, 2013. Council requested this item be added to the agenda of the next meeting.

The meeting ended at 10:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Cindy Murray
City Clerk*