

WORK SESSION OF THE GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL held Monday, July 15, 2013, for the purpose of receiving a briefing on Greenbelt Lake Dam.

Mayor Davis started the meeting at 8:02 p.m. It was held in the Council Room of the Municipal Building.

PRESENT WERE: Councilmembers Konrad E. Herling, Emmett V. Jordan, Silke I. Pope, Edward V.J. Putens, Rodney M. Roberts and Mayor Judith F. Davis. Councilmember Leta M. Mach was on vacation out of the country.

STAFF PRESENT WERE: Michael P. McLaughlin, City Manager; Celia Craze, Director of Planning and Community Development; Jaime Fearer, Community Planner; and Cindy Murray, City Clerk.

ALSO PRESENT WERE: Jeff Blass, CPJ Associates; Brian Gibbons, Advisory Planning Board; Tom White, Greenbelt News Review; Marc Siegel, Bill Orleans and Laura Kressler.

Ms. Fearer advised that the Maryland Department of the Environment designated the Greenbelt Lake dam a high hazard structure and issued a draft consent order to the City in 2010 to make necessary repairs. She said that earlier this year MDE had advised that the City must both establish and submit a timeline for repairs of the structure or the State would prepare the timeline.

Ms. Fearer explained Planning staff has been working with CPJ Associates and have developed a series of five one-year plans that will bring the dam into compliance by July 1, 2018 as required by the State. Ms. Craze and Ms. Fearer noted the plans do not include dredging of the lake but if funding became available, it could be included later in the project.

Jeff Blass, CPJ Associates, provided a PowerPoint presentation reviewing the history of Greenbelt Lake, including work since 1960, the dam breach analysis, dam safety inspection findings, and geotechnical investigation. The presentation also included details of the proposed five one-year plans: Year 1 – Design & Permitting, Estimated Cost \$30,000; Year 2 – Lake Drain, Estimated Cost \$110,000; Year 3 – Filter Blanket Drain, Estimated Cost \$285,000; Year 4 - Raise Embankment, Estimated Cost \$70,000; and Year 5 - Spillway & Misc. Repairs, Estimated Cost \$155,000. Mr. Blass advised that upon completion of the proposed five one-year plans, the dam would be in compliance with the State consent order requirements.

Mr. Roberts noted the plan included the need to lower the water level of the lake by three feet at a point during construction. He advised this will impact fish and wildlife and suggested it occur at the best time for the environment. Ms. Craze said there are State restrictions for the protection of wildlife which will not allow the lowering to occur during certain periods of the year for the protection of wildlife. She said this will be considered during the planning process.

Mr. Putens questioned if the work could be done in a shorter period of time if funding was found. Mr. Blass said yes, the entire project could be done in approximately a one year period.

Mr. Jordan said he discussed possible funding for this project with Congressman Hoyer a few weeks ago and he had suggested staff check with the Army Corps of Engineers. Noting the dangers associated with a breach of the dam, Mr. Jordan also mentioned possible funding from Homeland Security.

Mr. Roberts commented that many people believe if the lake were dredged, the water clarity/quality would be improved. Mr. Blass agreed that dredging would only improve this for a short time. Ms. Craze said that sediment runoff is the greatest reason for poor water quality.

There was discussion regarding funding of the project. Mr. McLaughlin advised that funds were included in the current budget for Year 1, Years 2 and 4 are probably doable within the current capital projects funding but may cause a capital project to be delayed. He noted the real focus needs to be on finding funding for Years 3 and 5. There was discussion of a possible bond issue.

Mr. Roberts suggested that the City contact the following agencies regarding their possible contributions to and responsibility for some of the dam issues: Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) for its 1983 installation of the 96" water main along the downstream toe of dam; and State Highway Administration for the failure of a pipe installed by SHA in 1960 when they were allowed to add fill to the downhill stream embankment from dirt from the Capital Beltway construction. Ms. Craze advised that staff can pursue a line of discussion with the agencies but noted that the City must comply with the State consent order and address the repairs. Regarding the 1960's work by SHA, Mayor Davis commented that there may not be any formal agreement in place. Mr. McLaughlin will look into.

Marc Siegel, Lakeside Civic Association, expressed support of the proposed project. He suggested the depth problems (lack of) as well as the odor problem be addressed also. Mayor Davis said the Park and Recreation Advisory Board and other City advisory groups may be requested to review the plans in the future.

After further discussion, Council indicated their support with the plan as proposed. Ms. Craze advised the consent order process as proposed will come to Council for approval in September. Mr. McLaughlin commended Planning staff and CPJ on their work in developing the plan as proposed.

Items of Information

Council indicated its support for disbursement of funds to the Greenbelt Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad (GVFDRS) for the purchase of new equipment. This item will be included on the next Council agenda. However, Mayor Davis expressed concern regarding staffing levels at the GVFDRS. Mr. McLaughlin will check with Chief Rudy and report back to Council.

Ms. Pope reported she had received complaints regarding children using the opposite gender shower rooms at the Greenbelt Aquatic and Fitness Center (GAFC) with their parents. She requested that staff check on signage directing these individuals to use the family changing rooms and also enforcement by GAFC staff. Ms. Pope also said she had received a request that seniors over the age of 80 should have a further reduced rate at the GAFC.

Several other informational items were discussed.

The meeting ended at 9:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Cindy Murray
City Clerk*