

WORK SESSION OF THE GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL held Wednesday, June 23, 2021, to discuss the Beltway Plaza Detailed Site Plan.

Mayor Byrd started the meeting at 8:01 p.m. The meeting was held virtually via Zoom.

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

STAFF PRESENT WERE: Tim George, Assistance City Manager; Terri Hruby, Director of Planning and Community Development; Charise Liggins, Economic Development Coordinator; Molly Porter, Community Planner; and Shaniya Lashley-Mullen, Assistant to the City Clerk.

ALSO, PRESENT WERE: Kap Kapastin and David Sullivan, Quantum Companies; Mathew Tedesco, Attorney for the Applicant; Nat Ballard, Alex Villegas, Sheryl Fishel, and Jason Staley, Rodgers Consulting; David Polonsky, Atapco Properties; Jim Riviello, Martin Architectural Group; Ben Friedman, Advisory Planning Board (APB); Ric Gordon, Park and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB); Bill Orleans; Michael Hartman; and others.

Based on a question asked by Mr. Jordan, Mr. Tedesco answered that the Beltway Plaza Detailed Site Plan is evolving, and the presentation would reflect the changes. Ms. Hruby explained that staff received an updated presentation earlier in the evening. It's an overview of what was presented to the Advisory Planning Board (APB), Park and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB), and Greenbelt Advisory Committee on Environmental Sustainability (Green ACES).

Based on a question asked by Mr. Putens, Mr. Tedesco answered that the presentation reflects the changes from comments received from APB, PRAB, and Green ACES. He explained that the applicant is transparent and responsive to various analyses. Ms. Porter noted that the presentation is similar to what was presented to APB and PRAB. In addition, there are additional slides with background information.

Ric Gordon, a Greenbelt resident, stated that the City needs more recreation space in Greenbelt West and that the project is evolving in the right direction.

Mr. Tedesco, Mr. Ballard, and Ms. Fishel presented a PowerPoint presentation summarizing the proposal.

Mr. Roberts stated that the recreation space doesn't meet the community's needs, and there still hasn't been a discussion regarding what school the residents would be attending. The present school is overcrowded.

Based on a question asked by Mr. Roberts, Ms. Fishel answered that the proposed dog park is 3,000 square feet. Mr. Roberts mentioned that the proposed dog park is still too small. Mr. Sullivan noted that all the open spaces at the proposed location, including the courtyard, have 140,800 square feet.

Ms. Porter outlined staff concerns as follows: there needs to be more information on the phasing of Phase I; modification to the existing parking deck to bring it back inline due to the reduction of space that would be the proposed Recreation Center; the timing of specific amenities; the loading areas for the designed buildings should meet Development District Overlay Zone

(DDOZ) Standards; parking garages #2 and #3 need to be redesigned to conform to the requirements of the DDOZ standards; the hotel should be removed from the plans to allow for additional open space on the west side of Phase I; Street B should be redesigned to function as an entrance to the community; frontage improvement along Greenbelt Road should include bicycle lanes or sharrows to connect with the existing bicycle lanes that end at Greenbelt Road and 62nd Avenue.

Ms. Davis agreed with staff that the hotel should be deleted and does not see a need for the hotel. Ms. Davis inquired if the applicant was considering installing security cameras in the courtyards.

Ms. Davis noted that the proposed property has many amenities and asked how the applicant plans to pay for the upkeep and long-term maintenance. She commented that the proposed dog park at 3,000 square feet would be too small.

In response to Ms. Davis' questions, Mr. Sullivan answered that security cameras would be a part of the development and the long-term maintenance would be a part of each building section. The standard area sections maintenance would be handled by who is responsible for that section. Mr. Sullivan stated that there would be studies regarding a hotel at this location. He explained that the developers see a need in the future for a hotel. It is an excellent amenity for the potential residents and Beltway Plaza.

Mr. Jordan expressed his concern regarding the project being piecemealed together and the interaction between the new proposed development and Breezewood Drive regarding vehicular traffic.

There was discussion regarding the elevation of the proposed development.

Based on a question asked by Mr. Jordan, Mr. Sullivan answered that the proposed development would be stick construction. He explained that stick construction is what the area could support from a rent perspective, and concrete is costly. In addition, Mr. Sullivan noted that stick construction had been perfected with installation.

Mr. Putens explained that he needed to see the completed project, including how all the buildings and amenities would be phased in. The project needs open space. He stated that he couldn't support the project.

Ms. Pope asked why was there no playgrounds or tot lots on the Detailed Site Plan. She inquired, along with security cameras, would the proposed development have 911 call boxes. Ms. Pope expressed her concerns regarding the hotel, and she thought it would be too crowded with that addition. Ms. Pope stated that the dog park is too small to have agility training for dogs. She asked if there would be a shuttle for the property or just the bus station outside the property.

About Ms. Pope's questions, Mr. Sullivan explained that the proposed multi-use family development is designed more towards urban, young, professionals. He stated that the proposed development is a different product and wasn't competing against the garden-style family-oriented apartments right across the street. Mr. Sullivan noted that a tot lot doesn't fit the design, but a splash park is proposed. There is a lot on the other side of the proposed project near the middle school. If there is a need for a tot lot, it could be added later. The dog park is restricted to the

residents of the proposed development. They are scheduled to work with adjacent property owners regarding shuttle service.

Ms. Mach suggested tearing down the parking garage at Beltway Plaza during the construction of the proposed development. She also indicated that the Indian Creek area across from Cherrywood Lane should be dedicated to the City as open parkland. Finally, Ms. Mach asked how all the small businesses at Beltway Plaza would survive during the construction of the proposed development.

About Ms. Mach's suggestions and questions, Mr. Sullivan stated that the parking garage at Beltway Plaza would be replaced during the redevelopment. Phase 1 doesn't remove any of the Mall. He advised that, eventually, Beltway Plaza will be like a lifestyle center. There would be some downsizing and smaller spaces. They hope to keep existing tenants. Mr. Sullivan explained that Quantum doesn't own the parcel in the Indian Creek District.

Mr. Roberts expressed his concerns in regards to the developer's marketing. The proposed development is designed for young professionals with no kids. He stated that the schools in the area are all overcrowded. The proposed development would become more of a transition apartment complex. Mr. Roberts commented that if the proposed development isn't built out of quality materials, the developers aren't providing anything for the community. He agreed with Ms. Mach regarding the developers purchasing the parcel of land across Cherrywood Lane and deeding it to the City. Mr. Roberts advised that he is concerned regarding the lack of schools in the area and suggested the developers scale back the proposed development.

Ms. Davis stated the Board of Education was proposing to change the school boundaries, and the children at this proposed development wouldn't be attending any Greenbelt schools. She advised that the City was trying to have an agreement with the Board of Education regarding the middle school's ball fields, which are in deplorable condition because the ball fields are not being appropriately maintained.

Ms. Davis commented on the minor improvements of the proposed development, including installing electric vehicle (EV) chargers, green panels on the garages, and art sculpture plans. She suggested adding play structures in the courtyards if tot lots cannot be installed. Ms. Davis commented that the dog park is too small because a big dog will not have enough space to run around. She suggested installing solar panels on top of the garages. Ms. Davis asked what the design of the bus shelter was. Mr. Tedesco answered that the applicant would have to use the plan approved and adopted by the City.

Based on a question asked by Mr. Jordan, Mr. Sullivan answered that the traffic study included all major roads and intersections required by the county. Mr. Tedesco added that the applicant submitted a Traffic Study during the Preliminary Site Plan of Subdivision. The City hired a Traffic Engineer to analyze the applicants' traffic studies and provided their suggestions. He noted a weekend traffic study request, which resulted in frontage improvements on Breezewood Drive and imposed a trip cap for the overall project. Ms. Porter said that a traffic study was submitted during the Preliminary Site Plan of Subdivision. The City hired an Engineer to review the plan, and all three proposed access points were analyzed. She explained that staff is speaking with the County and the applicant to ensure the trip cap isn't being exceeded.

Mr. Jordan asked whether there was any suggestion to add a traffic light at Breezewood Drive and Cherrywood Lane. Ms. Hruby answered the traffic studies found that the current compacity of Breezewood Drive can meet the trip cap. There are minimum requirements per the Preliminary Site Plan of Subdivision on Breezewood Drive. Staff is making sure that the calming devices don't interfere with the new accesses. She stated that Breezewood Drive would maintain two lanes of traffic, and all the parking will also be maintained.

There was discussion regarding the project being phased in. Ms. Hruby explained that the proposed development concept build-out plan with all the phases is a 15-20 years project. She added that the City has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on this property, and a lot of the items being discussed tonight are subject to the MOU. Ms. Hruby stated that there is no guarantee that future phases would be built out. It's essential that each subsequent Detail Site Plan that is presented can stand alone and that staff and council are comfortable with each phase.

Michael Hartman, a Greenbelt resident, commented that malls are in trouble, and many malls are closing down. He stated that he appreciates the dedication of Quantum to maintaining Beltway Plaza. However, Mr. Hartman advised that he had issues with the plans.

Bill Orleans, a Greenbelt resident, suggested that before the City endorse any Quantum intent for any future phases, Quantum should dedicate the property they own west of Cherrywood Lane and north of the parking lot to the City.

Ms. Davis advised that she wasn't making a favorable decision on the Detailed Site Plan, citing numerous concerns and issues.

Mr. Jordan stated that he wasn't necessarily opposed to the idea of the hotel.

Based on a question asked by Ms. Davis, Ms. Hruby answered that staff shares Council's concern regarding the July 12 deadline and will discuss with the applicant to develop a new schedule. She will update Council. In addition, the overall Concept Site Plan and a copy of the MOU are on the City's website.

Informational Items

Ms. Davis requested a report from Mr. George regarding Comcast and the I-Net. Mr. George stated that he will follow up with Mr. Dale Worley, Director of Information Technology, and will provide a report by the end of the week to the Council.

Ms. Davis reported on an article she read regarding Congressman Steny Hoyer adding to the Transportation Bill stating that Greenbelt needed the money to complete the interchange at the Greenbelt Metro. Ms. Mach suggested sending a thank you letter to Congressman Hoyer.

In July, Mr. Jordan requested a briefing from staff on the American Relief Plan Act Fund, and Ms. Davis asked for a work session.

Mr. Jordan also requested a Closed Session Meeting regarding the City Manager's Evaluation on July 7.

Mr. Roberts suggested sending a letter to Congressman Hoyer asking him why he supports the Maglev and the Bureau of Printing and Engraving facility.

Mr. Jordan stated that he was receiving pushback at the Transportation Planning Board meeting to pull the Beltway Widening and I-270 expansion project. He advised that he made the vote based on Council's discussions.

The meeting ended at 10:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Shaniya Lashley-Mullen
Assistant to the City Clerk