

WORK SESSION OF THE GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL held Wednesday, January 11, 2012, to discuss Capital Projects/McDonald Field Lights.

Mayor Davis called the meeting to order at 8:04p.m. It was held in the Multi-Purpose Room of the Community Center.

PRESENT WERE: Councilmembers Konrad E. Herling, Emmett V. Jordan, Leta M. Mach, Edward V. J. Putens, Rodney M. Roberts and Mayor Judith F. Davis. Councilmember Silke I. Pope was not present attending to family matters.

STAFF PRESENT WERE: Michael P. McLaughlin, City Manager; and David E. Moran, Assistant City Manager.

ALSO PRESENT WERE: Jim Inzeo, Christine Bailey and Steve Valentich, Greenbelt Baseball; Thomas White, News Review; and Jill O'Donnell, Marion Holland, Chris Shuman and several other residents who live near McDonald Field.

McDonald Field Lighting

Mayor Davis stated that the purpose of this item was to consider next steps. Mr. McLaughlin indicated that a more extensive and publicized work session was probably needed which may require some staff research.

Council reviewed the results of a 2011 questionnaire of nearby residents about possible lighting at the field.

Ms. Mach noted that one resident expressed concern that lighting the fields would extend the hours students played and would compete with homework time for students. Mr. Putens believed a community education process regarding the type of lights was needed.

Jim Inzeo, representing Greenbelt Baseball, summarized Greenbelt Baseball's program. He noted the group only uses Sunday for all star games. He indicated games run from 6-8pm and no inning begins after 8:00pm. Mr. Inzeo stated his intent to fundraise to obtain the money to install lights. He suggested that temporary lights could be placed on the field to test their impacts. Mr. Inzeo stated there was not much that could be done about noise. He expressed the need for more parking at the field and noted that Greenbelt Baseball parents are instructed not to park in the court.

Mr. Roberts expressed support for the lights but expressed concern about creating additional parking on site. He suggested the need for off-site parking and a shuttle. Mr. Inzeo agreed to consider this and take it back to his Board.

Mr. Jordan suggested that Mr. Inzeo provide examples of other baseball fields with lighting. Mr. Herling appreciated the fundraising suggestion and suggested contacting both the Nationals and the Orioles for funding assistance.

Mayor Davis suggested that trash pick-up needed to be handled by the teams. Mr. Inzeo stated that team managers are responsible for ensuring field clean-up. He stated that more receptacles were needed. She also requested a printed schedule.

Mr. Shuman wondered what percent of Greenbelt Baseball players and participants were Greenbelt residents. Mr. Inzeo responded 75%. Mr. Shuman asked about operating costs for the lights.

Marion Holland stated that parking was a terrible problem. She stated that people were trashing the adjacent playground. She expressed concern about people washing vehicles at the shack.

Jill O'Donnell expressed concern about adding new parking at the field. She stated that the residents have to pick up the trash left behind after games.

Christine Bailey stated that they pick up trash after the games. She suggested that residents contact her if they see people washing cars at the field.

Another resident stated that it's a neighborhood before it's a ball field. He expressed concern about the aesthetics and pole heights of ball field lights. He also expressed concerns about parking, noise, lighting problems, etc. He believed the lights were not appropriate for a residential neighborhood.

Mr. Putens stressed that Greenbelt Baseball needed to work more closely with the residents to address these concerns. Mayor Davis suggested that facts were needed about the parking designations.

Mr. Roberts suggested that Greenbelt Baseball had a responsibility to police itself. Mr. Inzeo expressed concern about having to tell people what to do.

Mayor Davis suggested that City staff facilitate a meeting between residents, Greenbelt Baseball and appropriate City staff. Greenbelt Baseball representatives expressed a willingness to address the concerns raised by the residents.

Mr. Shuman suggested that a bond be posted by groups who use the field. He also suggested that the proposed parkway widening project might impact lighting at the field.

Ms. O'Donnell stated that police officers with children playing baseball were also double parked at some games.

Big Ticket Capital Projects

Mr. McLaughlin reviewed his memo dated January 4, 2012.

Ms. Mach wanted to see the theater project started. She stressed the need to move forward with the project sooner rather than later. Mr. Roberts asked about efforts to contain costs. Mr. Jordan stated that the Heritage Area grant for the theater was at risk. Mr. Putens stressed the need to work with the vendors to reduce costs.

Mr. Shuman wanted to encourage the rehabilitation of the movie theater. He suggested priority be given to flooding and structural problems.

Mr. McLaughlin briefed Council on the dam/lake dredging project. Mayor Davis suggested contacting Congressman Hoyer for funding assistance.

Volunteer Fire Association

Mayor Davis reported that the County Executive issued an executive order on the last day of the County Council session which modifies the Prince George's County Fire Commission effective March 1, 2012. Council requested that staff draft a letter and place this matter on the next Council agenda.

The meeting ended at 10:32p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

*David E. Moran
Assistant City Manager*