

Work Session Meeting of the Sandy Springs City Council was held on Tuesday, February 4, 2020 at 6:00 p.m., Mayor Rusty Paul presiding.

I. Invocation - Rev. Misha Sanders, Northwest UU Congregation

Mayor Rusty Paul called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm

Council Members Present: Council Members: John Paulson, Chris Burnett, Jody Reichel, Andy Bauman, Steve Soteres, and Tibby DeJulio.

Mayor Rusty Paul announced a very distinguished guest in attendance, Shane Stephens, the Consulate General of Ireland.

Consulate General Shane Stephens thanked the Mayor and Council for the hospitality. Consulate Stephen said that it is a real privilege to convey greetings all the way from Ireland to Sandy Springs to introduce the mission all. There has been a Consulate in metro Atlanta for 10 years. Consulate Stephen is the second Consulate General. Those sent from Ireland tend to stay as long as they can. There is also an IDA office that has been around for 20 years, supporting U.S. and Ireland investments for companies like Coca Cola, UPS, Global Payments and many other big companies in Atlanta.

II. STAFF DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. 2020-11 Economic Development Strategy

Economic Director Andrea Worthy presented that the last Strategic Economic Development Plan was updated in 2012. RKG Associates will be providing a brief overview of what the process will look like in the next 6-7 months. RKG will share how the public and Mayor and Council can get involved, and just how the process will work in general. Director Worthy introduced Kyle Talente.

Kyle Talente, RKG Associates, Vice President and Principal presented that RKG will return to the City multiple times to assist Mayor and Council during the process. From a RKG perspective, it is important to include everyone while they compile a Strategic Economic Development Plan. He presented a PowerPoint presentation to Mayor and Council.

Council Member Burnett questioned if RKG made micro comparisons to compare other communities that are in competition with the City of Sandy Springs.

Mr. Talente responded that RKG does realistically compare other communities. RKG will develop micro comparisons in order to identify and compare where the City is from a competitive standpoint and mitigate the areas where the City is not competitive in order to position the City to be successful. There also needs to be a compelling argument for improving transportation access and connectivity in the City.

B. 2020-48 Gateway Park Concepts

Assistant City Manager Jim Tolbert presented the Gateway Park concept that will be directly across from City Springs where the billboards now reside. The City has always intended to develop some sort of a park in that area. The City has asked Barge Design Solutions to provide concepts. Barge has provided three (3) concepts that have two (2) options. They all have in common, an arching walkway crossing over into Johnson Ferry from the Mt. Vernon/Roswell Road intersection. As part of the road project this will help to gain elevation, it will be ADA compliant, and tie in the sidewalks being built. **Landscape Park Option 1:** Envisioned as traditional landscape design: bold, elegant, clean, and simple. Intended primarily to be

visually consumed while traveling whether by car, bike or on foot. **Landscape Park Option 2:** Naturalistic landscape representation of the Chattahoochee River corridor and its rocky palisades and shoals, a major geological characteristic of the river as it flows through Sandy Springs. The palisades will be replicated with the use of large natural boulders which will also serve to help accommodate the site's existing grade change. Native, river corridor plant materials will be used in this design. **Veterans Memorial Park Option 1:** Somber, structured, and formal landscape design intended to honor and celebrate the men and women of the US Armed Forces. Large "gateway" fountain faces Roswell Rd & City Springs. Sitting above the large fountain and pulled back from Roswell Rd, a Veterans Memorial flag plaza with a calm reflecting pool/fountain. Landscape plantings more refined and manicured. **Veterans Memorial Park Option 2:** Identical to Option 1 except for treatment in center of flag plaza. Design incorporates a large, specimen memorial tree rather than water element. Example: use a conifer, which can be used as Christmas tree during holidays. **Art Park Option 1:** Formal landscape featuring multiple pieces including large, signature piece in main plaza circle. Multiple smaller pieces could be placed on plinths, with additional pieces added over time. **Art Park Option 2:** Formal landscape featuring multiple art pieces and a primary signature piece. However, Option 2 incorporates the addition of a large fountain feature, a mirror image of City Springs fountain located directly across on Roswell Road.

Council Member DeJulio commented that during the original planning of City Springs, the City has considered this area to be a Veteran's Memorial Park, there is a lot of support. A combination of Veteran's Memorial with art pieces is an interesting consideration.

Council Member Paulson concurred with Council Member DeJulio that adding a Veteran's Memorial Park in that area is a good idea. He also stated that the water features on both sides of Roswell Road, along with more than one flag around City Hall would be his choice.

Council Member Burnett too, concurred with Veteran's Memorial Park, art, and also a way to use the topography of the perfect terrain while incorporating a waterfall into a water feature.

Mayor Paul stated that he liked the thought of the combination. The City has always discussed the area being a Veteran's Memorial Park. Similar to the incorporation of the visual art into the memorial park.

Council Member Bauman stated that this is the middle of a really busy intersection. He would like to see the budget and particularly the accessibility.

There was a consensus of Council for staff to move forward with **Veteran's Memorial Park Option 2.**

III. PUBLIC WORKS

Public Work Director Marty Martin presented the Interstate North Parkway Sidewalk (TS170) Project Update. Staff is currently in the late concept. There was an open house in early December with property owners and other representatives in the immediate area, with very positive feedback about what the sidewalk/side path would offer, along with the recreational amenity for the entire City. To connect the existing sidewalk on bridge over the Chattahoochee with parks on both sides. As of today staff is current on schedule moving into utility coordination. The next steps later this year are right-of-way coordination and getting the project done for construction by this time next year.

Council Member Paulson stated he has seen this I-285 Expressed Lane project. Does anything that the City anticipates doing conflict with GDOT.

Director Martin responded that staff identified the project to the Managed Lane Team. There is a portion of the Concept Plan currently proposed, that spans over Interstate North. This may need to be modified or altered when the managed lanes are ultimately constructed. Staff provided comments to the GDOT team from the initial concept that identified that the project is scheduled for implementation in the next year, as to allow GDOT time to replace the side path project.

Council Member DeJulio asked for clarification for a project at this expense that may require later modification, who is required to modify the project, GDOT or the City? When would the City have a better understanding?

Director Martin stated there is no solid footprint from GDOT for the aerial structure regarding the managed lanes from, but it is staff's expectation that GDOT would do the replacing of any property that would need modifying. We will know more from GDOT in the upcoming years.

Council Member Bauman while planning the project, does staff have any estimate on utilization of what is happening. Who is this going to serve?

Director Martin stated there has been a long-standing request for access to the National Park from the business communities in the area. This would serve as a full-time access to the National Park, as a trip generator at the west end of the project.

Mayor Paul said it is not uncommon in the summertime for cars to park a ¼ mile up the road, then access the park while people are walking down the side of the road. This is a safety hazard. This will get a great deal of utilization from April to October, since there is inadequate parking down by the river near the park. From a safety stand point, this would protect individuals who are walking on the road and not the sidewalk

Council Member Reichel mentioned that while staff is working on this project, it would be a good idea to incorporate a traffic light to help with traffic congestion.

Mayor Paul stated that a traffic light is in the conceptual design but on the COBB County side where the main parking lot for the park is located.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at: 6:45 p.m.

Date Approved: February 18, 2020.



Russell K. Paul, Mayor



Lia Jones, Interim City Clerk

