

Work Session Meeting of the Sandy Springs City Council was held on Tuesday, June 2, 2015, at 6:51 p.m., Mayor Rusty Paul presiding.

Councilmembers present: Council Member John Paulson, Council Member Ken Dishman, Council Member Graham McDonald, Council Member Gabriel Sterling, Council Member Tibby DeJulio, and Council Member Andy Bauman.

STAFF DISCUSSION ITEMS

Communications

1. 15-214 Update on City Center Branding Effort

Director of Communications Sharon Kraun stated in March the City issued a RFP for brand marketing services related to developing and naming associated brand elements for the City Center project. Eight firms were asked to participate. All were recommended and considered highly qualified for the specific work in the RFP. The Evaluation Committee selected Iconologic. The firm presented a client portfolio of projects similar in scope to the RFP requirements, including brand marketing for Avalon in Alpharetta, the Square on Fifth in Atlanta near Georgia Tech, and the Atlanta Beltline. The firm has a local presence and its team has a long history of working together on projects of similar size and scope to the City Center project. Iconologic began its work with the City of Sandy Springs in early May, conducting research and community interviews, and working with our brand marketing task force on development of a Brand Platform which identifies the essence – the DNA – of the brand for City Center. One of the elements under consideration is defining what is City Center. When the City Council adopted the City Center Master Plan in December 2012, the long term illustrative development plan was called City Center. The plan extends from Johnson Ferry Road on the north to Allen Road on the southern border. The Phase I implementation plan adopted in January 2013 focuses on the master block currently in development. In the upcoming presentation the task force is recommending development of a brand for both the overarching district as well as the master block that will house City Hall, the performing arts center (PAC), market square, and the City park.

Juliet D'Ambrosio, Editorial Director and Partner, presented a PowerPoint on City Center branding.

Mayor Rusty Paul thanked Ms. D'Ambrosio. Sandy Springs lacks a clear identity and if you speak to most people around the metro area and ask what the most recognizable thing is about Sandy Springs they will say the King and Queen buildings. The City has the fifteen acres at City Center and also the surrounding area will be developed. The goal is the City should try to identify and place a name and brand to this district. Examples of districts are in San Diego, CA with the Gaslight district and in Chicago, IL there is Rush Street. These areas have identities and the City needs an identity for what is currently being called the City Center. This will be a step up from it previously being called the old Target site.

Council Member John Paulson asked how Ms. D'Ambrosio sees the performing arts center fitting into the branding.

Ms. D'Ambrosio stated the only way she can speak to this is not from the development standpoint, but how that will actually work from a brand standpoint. The performing arts center will set Sandy Springs apart in a big way. There are only so many times one can go out to eat and so many times one will want to go shopping. From a brand standpoint this area will have a lot of uses and become a draw for the community on a sustaining basis. When her company was first briefed on this project she did not know there was to be a performing arts center. When they learned that the PAC will be part of the

Council Member Andy Bauman stated he encourages the continued dialogue from the north to the south end of the City. On Saturdays there are many families at Morgan Falls Park as well as the Sandy Springs Farmers Market. He stated he would prefer not to hear south of Hilderbrand referred to as "SoHi" or "NoHa" as North of Hammond. The critical mission is an authentic and organic branding and not manufactured. When you think of the great places in the Atlanta area and all over they feel authentic. Even though Ponce City Market has been recently renovated, it has been part of that community for quite some time. When comparing that to Atlantic Station, which was manufactured, that area is still trying to find its sense of place. The City is very linear. There is also the panhandle to the east which creates a vast distance from the top end of the City to the south. Chastain Park on the south side of the City allows for a sense of place, although it is not within the city limits. The branding for the City Center will require a reason for those that live on the south side to drive to the downtown area. This was a good presentation. The branding should target empty nesters, the first stroller generation, and the 40,000 renters in the City. The branding needs to be reachable and attainable. He encouraged Ms. D'Ambrosio to continue dialogue with the community whether it be at Movies by Moonlight, the Concert on the Springs or any other events. Those are the people already using the amenities.

City Management

2. 15-210 Non-profit Annual Report

1. Sandy Springs Youth Sports

Tom Hutchens, President of Sandy Springs Youth Sports, stated he is the President of the Sandy Springs Youth Sports that organizes the softball and baseball leagues. The sports are doing well in the City and the recreation season just finished about two weeks ago with closing ceremonies. There were about 820 families that played baseball or softball and most facilities have both represented on the field. That is a testament to the City and investment the City made in Morgan Falls Park. There are on average 725 to 750 families that play ball and that number has grown by almost 100 more families in the past season. There is competition with other sports such as travel baseball. He has made it a focus to make the sports a family, instructional, and recreational environment. There are some families that left and joined a travel team, but ended up coming back to Sandy Springs Youth Sports stating they missed the experience. There are many ongoing projects at the park. There is an indoor training facility called "the barn". It is a covered area for the ball players, since the season starts in January. There is also discussion about expanding the barn. The Sandy Springs Slam was just completed which is a softball tournament with 34 teams. There are 74 girls that play in tournament softball through June. Out of the 250 girls that participate in the recreation season, almost a quarter of them play in the summer season. There were 120 boys that played tournament baseball up to the age of twelve years old. The last weekend in June the organization is hosting the District 4 tournament for ten year olds and twelve year olds in baseball. The following week they are hosting the Dizzy Dean State tournament for eleven year old boys.

Council Member Andy Bauman asked if Mr. Hutchens knows what percentage of those that participate are Sandy Springs residents.

Mr. Hutchens stated he would guess seventy-five to eighty percent. Those that are not Sandy Springs residents come from DeKalb County.

Council Member Tibby DeJulio asked about the organization's finances.

Mr. Hutchens stated there are football and cheerleading operations that he represents as well. There are about 300 football players and 50 cheerleaders. He does not know those revenues offhand, but they usually operate on a break even basis. The baseball program has been profitable every year and they are looking at how to invest the profit that has been made into the park. The last fiscal year that ended in

Director of Public Works Garrin Coleman stated the City of Dunwoody and Cobb County offer the payment in lieu of. The City of Roswell charges \$200 a liner foot for payment in lieu of.

Council Member Andy Bauman asked if Council can have a map showing each District for the individual Council members. Staff is beginning the City's Comprehensive Plan process that will be very public. He asked if it would be appropriate to include the sidewalk policy map as a subset of this.

Assistant City Manager Tolbert stated this can be used in the small area plans and the overall transportation in the Comprehensive Plan.

Council Member Gabriel Sterling stated every small area plan will have sidewalks, because they are all on Roswell Road and are required in the commercial sectors.

Assistant City Manager Tolbert stated staff has asked that this plan be reviewed for recommended updates.

Council Member Bauman stated in District 6 on Dublin there are four or five homes built over the last eighteen months that are installing sidewalks. That resident at his cost is installing sidewalks for the benefit of the community. He asked who would be responsible for the future maintenance of the sidewalk.

Director of Public Works Coleman stated the sidewalk is in the right-of-way. Generally, the sidewalk will be in the right-of-way or permanent easement. The City would be required to maintain the sidewalk.

Council Member Bauman stated one issue affecting how Council scores a project for the capital improvement program is whether we have access to the right-of-way. He asked if it is part of the requirement of construction to dedicate the right-of-way.

Director of Public Works Coleman responded yes.

City Attorney Wendell Willard stated there is a plat that is required to be recorded. There usually has to be a survey of the property of the area that will be dedicated.

Council Member Bauman stated when a resident under the current system is building a house and they build 100 feet of sidewalk to the City standards, then it will be their liability if someone trips and falls while walking on that sidewalk. If the sidewalk needs to be repaired later on, will it be the responsibility of the homeowner.

City Attorney Willard stated sidewalk contractors have requirements to build sidewalks to City standards. Some of the older houses, as part of the redevelopment of property, may provide a greater amount of right-of-way. There is a requirement to have a certain footage from the center line to the side.

Council Member Bauman asked staff to double check the actual process of someone building a house and installing the sidewalk and as a legal matter having contributed right-of-way to the City. The assumption is until the house is torn down, it is possible that not all the property is in the right-of-way. One criteria for scoring projects is the availability of the right-of-way and if a property owner is willing to give the right-of-way.

City Attorney Willard stated if a sidewalk is to be built in front of a residential property owner's home and there is not sufficient right-of-way, the City is not to purchase the right-of-way. These portions of the property can be dedicated to the City by easement or a transfer.

Council Member Paulson stated so that means if a capital project is coming to the area and if a property owner is building in the area and decides not to build the sidewalk, it will be built in front of the property owner's house for free.

Director of Public Works Coleman stated the City has offered this to several developers and they have not taken the option of payment in lieu of, but would rather build the sidewalks in order to fully complete their project.

Council Member Bauman stated there are some streets that lend themselves to sidewalks on both sides of the street. For example, Powers Ferry south of Mt. Paran towards Chastain Park. It would make sense to have both segments of the sidewalk on both sides of the street. He asked if it makes sense to require a sidewalk on both sides of a non-collector street.

Director of Public Works Coleman stated if the property is located on the Master Plan, sidewalks will be built on both sides of the street, but the City will build only on one side of the street, unless the City receives Federal funds.

Council Member Sterling stated \$150 sounds like a reasonable amount.

Council Member Paulson stated staff can do an assessment of each project and if it is an easy project, the City can charge less and if it is a more difficult project, the property owner will be charged more.

There was a consensus of Council to charge \$150 per linear foot for payment in lieu of for the sidewalk policy, until a decision to change that amount is made in the future.

4. **15-212** Consideration of Interim Guidelines for Development in City Center, PCID, and Roswell Road Corridors

Assistant City Manager Jim Tolbert stated the City has been working with the City of Dunwoody in looking at shared goals and policies for development. He presented a PowerPoint on the Interim Guidelines for Development in City Center, PCID, and Roswell Road Corridors.

Council Member Gabriel Sterling asked what a floor area ratio is.

Assistant City Manager Tolbert stated it is a way of determining density. A floor area ratio of one means that an acre lot can be covered with a one acre building or half of the lot can be covered by a building with a two story building. The floor area ratio would be a half acre for a one story building or two stories. This is a way of determining density or how much open space will be on the property, which is related to the height of the building. This is a common zoning term that the City's ordinance does not yet address.

Council Member Tibby DeJulio stated the City came across an issue several years ago when talking about the distance to MARTA. When the City created its Comprehensive Plan, the standards were to be within a mile of a MARTA station. The City did not take into consideration the fact that GA 400 was between the MARTA station and some of the properties and there was no access to MARTA. With this issue the City found itself in court. When these standards are created, the location of the MARTA stations should be taken into consideration.

Assistant City Manager Tolbert stated when the small area plans are created, he hopes the areas will be defined by current standards of where there is access. A new technique that may be used in the City is where an individual rents space, but pays extra for a parking space.

5. **15-217** Update on Convenience Store Moratorium

Assistant City Manager Jim Tolbert stated several months ago Council passed a moratorium on the construction of new convenience stores. About one month ago Council extended the moratorium. Before this item was heard at the Planning Commission meeting last month, it was discovered that the moratorium was probably not needed at the time. There was confusion that convenience stores are allowed in the City's zoning ordinance. When reading the City's ordinance, they actually are not allowed at this time anywhere in the City. The City has an ordinance that is very explicit that if a use is shown in the use table, the construction is allowed. If the use is not shown, it is now allowed. There may have been a time prior to last March when someone might have interpreted the ordinance to say that convenience stores are allowed for retail use. Last March, Council amended the zoning code to define convenience stores, which had never been defined before, and to specifically exclude them from the main street overlay. The information that was not connected is that convenience stores were not allowed anywhere at the time. Now that the term is defined, it is very clear they are not an allowed use. The City needs standards to allow the convenience stores. Staff discussed this with the Planning Commission and since the City is not rushing to get quality convenience stores at this time, because they are not allowed at all, staff suggested using the current planning process to determine where the stores should be located. This information will then be brought back to Council as standards. The City's code does not need to be amended to make sure there are no inappropriate convenience stores. If Council wants the regulations brought to them that were sent to the Planning Commission, that can be done. Staff suggests studying the regulations first in the planning process.

Council Member Gabriel Sterling asked if the process will take about fifteen months.

Assistant City Manager Tolbert responded yes. Council will see a rezoning modification application from Kroger soon. Kroger is not a convenience store and neither is Costco. The sale of gas at those stores is an ancillary use to their main function, but for some this was a concern.

Council Member Sterling stated that means any convenience and gas store by definition is nonconforming.

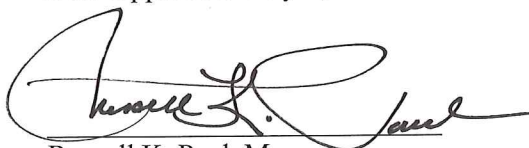
Assistant City Manager Tolbert stated they are grandfathered in as a nonconforming use.

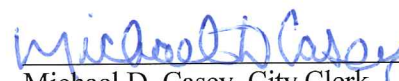
Council Member Andy Bauman asked what level of redevelopment of a house triggers the requirement for a sidewalk to be built.

Assistant City Manager Tolbert stated the redevelopment would have to be substantial.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

Date Approved: July 7, 2015


Russell K. Paul, Mayor


Michael D. Casey, City Clerk