

Work Session Meeting of the Sandy Springs City Council was held on Tuesday, October 15, 2019 at 6:01 p.m., Mayor Rusty Paul presiding.

Invocation – Rev. Misha Sanders, Northwest Unitarian Universalist Congregation

Mayor Rusty Paul recognized Representative Karen Handel in attendance.

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

STAFF DISCUSSION ITEMS

Police

1. 19-341 Georgia Power / Genetec Custom Surveillance System

Deputy Police Chief Keith Zgonc presented that since its inception, SSPD has utilized technology to assist and aid in crime reduction strategies. One of these strategies has been the use of license plate reader (LPR) cameras. In 2018, SSPD began discussions with Georgia Power to take advantage of a program known as “SiteView.” The Georgia Power SiteView program allows customers to leverage the infrastructure, GA Power poles, and use a high-definition camera system in which all equipment is owned, installed, and maintained by Georgia Power while the customer controls and maintains the data.

SSPD learned that Flock Safety improved its technology and had begun specializing in law enforcement with the Flock Falcon camera. Flock already has a significant footprint in the City on the private network side (HOA communities), and SSPD has access to footage from those cameras. It made sense to explore options for a partnership with Georgia Power for Flock cameras.

The cost of a Flock camera is significantly less than Genetec (about 3 Flock cameras for 1 Genetec). Flock has great analytical functionality and requires less infrastructure compared to Genetec. Flock has limitations in terms of performance when the camera is placed far from the roadway or when the roadway speeds are greater than 50-60 mph. Genetec’s technology can fill this deficiency. The decision was made to install 42 Flock LPR cameras and 57 Genetec LPR cameras. SSPD command staff approved the recommendation for a hybrid model. The monthly cost for the 42 Flock LPR cameras is \$7,520.94. The monthly cost for the 57 Genetec LPR cameras is \$32,331.08. The Sandy Springs Police Department (SSPD) requests approval of the Mayor and City Council to move this agenda item forward for consideration at the next regular Council meeting.

Council Member Reichel questioned if SSPD was going to put any cameras in neighborhoods and asked who to contact if neighborhoods want to install cameras.

Deputy Chief Zgonc replied that some neighborhoods already have cameras. There are a number of neighborhoods in the city that have contracted with Flock and so they have a program shares that information from the neighborhood cameras to the police department, and get the alerts when a tag goes in there, either a stolen car or suspect. Specific locations have yet to be finalized.

City Attorney Dan Lee responded to Council Member Reichel. There has been a lot of questions from different neighborhoods that want to go out on their own and rent these cameras from Flock and Genetec, and other vendors. We had put this on hold in the Legal Department, waiting to put this proposal together so that neighborhoods could see where the 99 cameras are being placed.

Council Member Burnett stated that his neighborhood petitioned the City to allow them to put in camera and the City said no because there was some legal action threatened by some residents who did not want the invasion of privacy. He asked what had changed and if these cameras would be available either for the City to put in or paid for by the neighborhood.

Mayor Rusty Paul mentioned that there is some state law regarding cameras and the efficacy of camera enforcement of traffic, particularly red lights. The challenge is you can see the tag, but not who is actually behind the wheel. It is difficult because the individual must be charged rather than the car. The technology will likely be refined at some point, but not there yet.

Council Member Paulson wanted to know if the locations have been chosen and if the public will have access to that knowledge. Knowing this information will assist a neighborhood in whether they feel it is important or not to reach out about installing cameras.

Council Member DeJulio questioned whether there would be cameras on the ramps that come up from SR400 and I-285, on Roswell Road and other entries into the City, to be able to identify criminals as they enter the City.

CONCENSUS OF COUNCIL moved this item to next Agenda for Tuesday, November 5, 2019.

Public Works

2. 19-342 Managed Lanes Access

Public Works Director Marty Martin presented that back in January of this year, at the Council Retreat, there was a presentation from GDOT and as a part of that presentation and the discussion with GDOT representatives, alternatives were discussed for the GDOT space line access to I-285 top end Managed Lane Access Point at Mt. Vernon Highway. The understanding at that meeting was that if the City were to commit to an additional \$30M in funding, to fund the difference between GDOT Space Line alternative and what was proposed as the Crestline alternative, GDOT would entertain that alternative within the environmental analysis process still to go for the I-285 Top End project. At the time Council tasked staff to measure the potential benefits of this Crestline alternative compared to the Mt. Vernon Highway access. Staff was to determine if the \$30M investment would be effective. Staff developed a traffic study to go along with the Crestline alternative and measured the impacts and potential benefits. Out of that analysis, came a comparison as the two (2) most likely candidates, the base line priced at \$59M compared to, a cost estimate of some \$82M; \$23M being the delta with Crestline extension northern alignment, no Barfield access as the most promising option available. Staff worked with a consultant to study the feasibility of constructing this alternative to tie into the new managed lanes. They were asked to model traffic, comparing the two alternatives, the Mt. Vernon Highway base line and the Crestline access alternative. Staff developed an area of perceived greatest impact, and within that area, there are a series of key intersections believed to be of greatest concern to the city with that traffic model. As well, the consultant was asked to forecast for future year traffic patterns. The Aecom Team used the Atlanta Regional Commission model, which ultimately GDOT will use as well to model traffic for this project. Director Martin provided a presentation of the analysis including traffic counts and projections for each option.

Mt. Vernon Highway, if selected or preferred, requires no additional funding or action by the City, it is a part of the base line. Crestline requires the City commitment contribution of \$30M, as the difference between the Crestline option and the base line, estimated by GDOT. As you look through the numbers, the difference, was that 3,000 vehicles per day difference on Mt. Vernon Highway, between Glenridge and Barfield, in the 2048 design year, comparing the \$30M additional City commitment required for the alternative access point.

Mayor Rusty Paul summarized that the modeling shows that even with the access point at Mt. Vernon, there are not massive numbers of additional cars into that area. The conclusion is that this is not worth \$30M worth of benefit. It was an exercise that was needed to make sure the right decisions were made for the community, but given the limited benefit and the exorbitant costs, this is an option that the City would like to inform GDOT that should be taken off the table.

Council Member Bauman added that for the Crestline option, it would require the demolition of existing homes and Mt. Vernon access point would not. It seems like a logical consensus to no longer pursue Crestline alternative.

Council Member Paulson pointed out that it is the equivalent of spending \$30M for 3,000 cars on top of the factor of homes being demolished and agreed it wasn't worth it.

Council Member DeJulio questioned spending \$30M of taxpayer's money for a solution to a problem in 2048. There are so many things in this City to spend \$30M for the benefit of the residents, rather than spending it on all the people who want to cut through the City.

CONCENSUS OF COUNCIL take the Crestline option off the table and inform GDOT of this decision.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at: 6:47 p.m.

Date Approved: November 5, 2019.



Russell K. Paul, Mayor



Coty Thigpen, City Clerk