

Work Session Meeting of the Sandy Springs City Council was held on Tuesday, December 5, 2017, at 6:00 p.m., Mayor Rusty Paul presiding.

Council Members present: Council Member John Paulson, Council Member Ken Dishman, Council Member Chris Burnett, Council Member Gabriel Sterling, Council Member Tibby DeJulio, and Council Member Andy Bauman were present.

INVOCATION

There was no invocation.

STAFF DISCUSSION ITEMS

Recreation and Parks

1. 17-398 DNR - Trails Grant

Director of Recreation and Parks Michael Perry gave the Recreation and Parks Department of Natural Resources Trails Grant PowerPoint presentation.

Council Member John Paulson asked how the discussions have been going with the property owners.

Director of Recreation and Parks Perry stated the discussions are ongoing and will probably be addressed in an executive session. He hopes there is something that still can be worked out.

Council Member Paulson stated there was a designer that was doing some of the concept designs. He asked if they are on hold for now.

Director of Recreation and Parks Perry stated the plans are moving forward, because we are trying to get a little further in the budget formulation. The construction documents cannot be completed until we come to some resolution on if the City will apply for this grant or not.

Council Member Paulson stated he is in favor of this.

City Manager John McDonough stated he was recently briefed on this from the legal staff. The City has made multiple contacts with the ownership group in California. The record will show that there were about six to eight conversations or efforts to correspond on this. He asked the City's legal staff to make one last attempt to speak to the ownership group about this project. The City is working with the National Parks to make this connection. They have raised a number of concerns regarding fiscal security. Staff will try to address any concerns the Park Service may have. By the next City Council meeting there should be an update on whether that has been worked through.

There was a consensus of Council to move forward with the Department of Natural Resources Trails Grant.

City Management

2. 17-399 Tree Canopy Assessment

Assistant to the City Manager Kristin Byars gave the Tree Canopy Coverage 2013-2015 PowerPoint presentation.

Council Member Andy Bauman asked if the canopy number comparison would be "apples to apples" as a result.

Assistant to the City Manager Byars stated the two reports were completed by different analysts and two different sets of data were used. Both methods used the same resolution. The comparison is not exactly apples to apples because the same analysts are not comparing the reports and did not use the same tools.

Council Member Gabriel Sterling stated 2013 was the first year the 1 meter resolution was used. Prior to that date, the 10 meter resolution was being used.

Council Member Bauman asked if the 2015 number is the static number and if the shadows in the report are already accounted for. He asked if the 2013 numbers were adjusted.

Assistant to the City Manager Byars responded yes. The 2013 number is not an adjusted number. The 62% was presented in 2013.

GIS Analyst Langdon Sanders stated staff did not retroactively make any changes or reclassify the previous imagery.

Council Member Bauman stated there were false positive locations in 2013 that would not be in 2015. That number would more than likely decrease. If there was any shadowing that would create apparent canopy, there is nothing that would make it increase.

GIS Analyst Sanders stated he does not think there is anything that would make the number increase. The analysis of this year reduced the amount of shadows. That will impact by reducing the canopy.

Council Member Bauman asked if the 2015 number reflects the shadow reduction, but the 2013 number does not.

GIS Analyst Sanders responded that is correct.

Assistant to the City Manager Byars continued with slide 10 of the presentation. Staff will have a tree canopy report completed in the next two weeks. Hopefully the City can utilize this data for any future projects in specific areas or watersheds where canopy changes occur. Staff will have 2017 data at a future point.

Council Member Sterling stated in conjunction with this type of analysis, there has been discussion off and on over the years of creating an impervious surface inventory by watershed. He asked if there have been discussions on moving this project forward.

Assistant to the City Manager Byars stated there have been discussions about it. There are no firm details. Staff can certainly look into this.

Council Member Sterling suggested using that information as well as the imaging from the University of Georgia. This should allow for the City to have better qualitative analysis for both public and private projects moving forward.

Council Member Paulson stated he does not want anyone leaving this meeting thinking the City has lost 2.6% of tree canopy, which hopefully is not the case. A particular area's tree coverage percentage that has not changed since the 2013 study can be compared to the 2015 study. If no trees have been planted and none have been removed, would it be possible to get the difference between these two different methods of studying the canopy.

GIS Analyst Sanders stated staff is looking at the loss in coverage, estimating what percentage of that is due to the false positives, development, and transportation changes. Staff does not have those numbers tonight, but they are working towards that.

Council Member Bauman suggested the same for an area such as Glenridge Drive or Barfield, where the Mercedes-Benz and Ashton Woods developments are located. He asked if there is a sense of what an acre of canopy loss would equate to in a percentage amount.

GIS Analyst Sanders stated staff can run that calculation. He has a summary sheet that looks at the square mileage and acreage. There are about thirty-eight square miles of total land area in the City. There is also information on the square mileage of tree canopy versus non tree canopy. That information is available, if Council would like it.

Council Member Bauman asked when in 2015 was the photography/GIS imagery completed.

GIS Analyst Sanders stated he believes the date was in July 2015.

Council Member Sterling stated there has been a lot of development in the meantime. He is not sure how much of the imagery was taken during the last clearing process, which sometimes can take a year or two. This occurs when a project is created and then additional trees are replanted.

Assistant to the City Manager Byars stated staff looked at the land use on some of the sites where there are concentrated areas. In 2015 there was a lot of preparation happening for new development. That would account for some of it. The new trees being planted would not have been represented at the time.

Council Member Paulson asked if there will be a tree canopy study completed in 2017.

Assistant to the City Manager Byars stated staff was looking at that today. There was a flyover in 2017. When that data is available, it will be presented to Council.

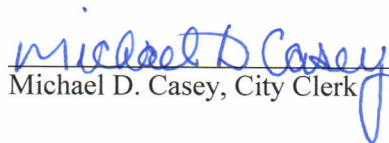
Mayor Paul stated the transportation project will have an impact on certain areas.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 6:17 p.m.

Date Approved: December 19, 2017



Russell K. Paul, Mayor


Michael D. Casey, City Clerk