

MINUTES
Public Hearing of the College Park City Council
Tuesday, July 3, 2007 – 7:00 P.M.

Proposed Detailed Site Plan of Downtown Parking Garage

PRESENT: Mayor Brayman; Councilmembers Milligan, Krouse, Catlin, Perry, Fellows, Stulich, Hampton and Cook. Student Liaison Danielle Kogut.

ABSENT: None.

ALSO PRESENT: Joe Nagro, City Manager; Suellen Ferguson, City Attorney; Janeen Miller, City Clerk; Sara Imhulse, Assistant To The City Manager; Terry Schum, Director of Planning; Steve Groh, Director of Finance; Steve Halpern, City Engineer; Jim Miller, Parking Enforcement Manager; Elisa Vitale and Dorothy Friedman, Planners.

Mayor Brayman opened the Public Hearing at 7:07 p.m. He stated that the City does not have a full Detailed Site Plan on the downtown parking garage at this time, and that tonight's discussion will involve the basic concepts. When a formal DSP is finalized, there will be another opportunity for public comment.

Mayor Brayman invited Terry Schum to give an overview. Ms. Schum stated the City is moving forward with Capstone Development Corporation on the development of a downtown parking garage to be located at the corner of Knox Road and Yale Avenue, ½ block east of the US Route 1 corridor. It is envisioned as a four-story building with five levels of parking for a total of 300 parking spaces, plus 5,800 square feet of ground floor retail space that would front onto Knox Road. The only vehicular access would be from Yale Avenue. It is thought that monthly permits would be sold and those permit holders would park on the upper floor. There would be an automated machine for the payment of parking fees, not parking meters. The concept of the garage is for pre-cast concrete, thin brick and painted metal railings. Ms. Schum reviewed additional details of the garage – handicap spaces, pedestrian access, individual floor plans, lighting, and the elevations.

There was discussion about the different finish alternatives and the cost for each: tinted concrete, formliner, and thin brick. A choice needs to be made to allow the Detailed Site Plan to go forward.

Steve Groh gave an overview of the project's financing model: The current cost estimate for the parking garage project is \$8,080,294, but the cost will vary depending on the finishes selected by the Council. This cost does not include land acquisition. It is

expected that the parking garage will not show a profit at first. The current increase in parking meter rates will be used to offset debt service. The sale of monthly parking permits will also generate revenue, as will the income from the retail space. The expectation is that the project can proceed without an impact to the City's tax rate. The financing model does not include ticket revenue.

Mayor Brayman introduced members of the development team: Joe Nagro, Terry Schum, Steve Groh, Bob Levan, Ernie Crofoot, Bob Catlin, Jose Morales, from Design Collective (the architect), and Mark Owens with Division One, the City's Construction Manager.

Mayor Brayman invited public comment.

John Payne, 4802 Guilford: Supports additional parking and retail in downtown College Park. Wants the Council to comply with the kinds of conditions it would require of developers in the City and wants the visible surfaces to be faced with brick, including the south and west elevations. Thinks under grounding of utilities is also important. Wants this to be a quality development.

Stacey Baca, 8408 49th Avenue: Asked when the garage would turn a profit. Mayor Brayman indicated the goal is not for the garage to actually turn a profit because any revenues would be reinvested in the district. Mr. Groh said the model from the Desman report projects that for the first 5 years there would be a shortfall, which is why the parking meter rates were recently increased. The Desman report projects various models with different variables that could be used to cover the shortfall. Ms. Baca asked how other development in the area would impact this garage.

Leo Shapiro, 6907 Rhode Island Avenue: Strongly endorsed having the City maintain ownership of the retail space. This project will affect a lot of people for a long time and he hopes the City will go for the best possible project.

Morgan Gale, 7010 Wake Forest Drive: This parking garage is an opportunity to make an impact statement in the City. The costs may be substantial, but the City should show the best possible face it can show. He asked about the durability of the thin brick option and how it weathers over time.

Mr. Owens described the thin brick manufacturing process. The thin brick is real brick that is 5/8" thick and is cast in the concrete panel, and mortar is not used. The brick is stuck in a preformed panel of concrete. He has not seen any problems in the buildings he has built using this product, but they have been in the last 10 years, not of a longer duration. He believes the Council would be pleased with its performance, and said the technology is always improving.

Jack Robson, 4710 Harvard Road: Asked if there was room between the rear of the Route 1 buildings and the parking garage for a walkway. Agrees the City should spend the money to make the garage look good, but asked about using a mixture of thin brick

and real brick, depending on the height. He commented that the Desman parking study was done before the Lord Calvert Manor fire lanes were created, thus reducing the supply of parking spaces. He stated that all the City's handicap spaces are free, and does not agree that they should be free.

Jeanne Jennings, 4617 Clemson Road: Prefers uniform materials on all four sides of the garage. Wants the City to use the highest standards. Likes the design of the building.

Don Jennings, 4617 Clemson Road: Agrees that all four sides should be done in the same material. Prefers full brick rather than thin brick.

Joan Carol Poor, 9112 Autoville Drive: Has a concern that the southern exposure might act as a heat island for the local region.

Mayor Brayman stated that the Council would take action at the regular Council meeting next week to provide direction to staff on how to proceed. The City will be asking the County to fast-track the permits. When the Detailed Site Plan is ready, it will come back at a Worksession.

There being no further public comment, the Public Hearing was declared closed at 8:20 p.m.

Janeen S. Miller, City Clerk