

Committee on Real Estate

June 22, 2020

A meeting of the Committee on Real Estate was held this date beginning at 3:03 p.m. over video conference call.

Notice of this meeting was sent to all local news media.

Present

Councilmember Shahid, Chair, Councilmember Appel, Councilmember Waring (arrived at 3:08 p.m.), Councilwoman Jackson, and Mayor Tecklenburg

Also Present: Jennifer Cook, Christopher Morgan, Jeremy Collins, Janie Borden, Leigh Bailey, Jason Kronsberg, Laurie Yarbrough, and Bethany Whitaker

The meeting was opened with an invocation provided by Councilmember Waring.

Approval of Minutes

On the motion of Councilwoman Jackson, seconded by Councilmember Waring, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the June 8, 2020 Real Estate Minutes.

Approval of a Memorandum of Agreement between the City of Charleston and Kids on Point to utilize the recreation space in St. Julian Devine Community Center during the month of July 2020. (1 Cooper Street)

Ms. Yarbrough stated that this was an MOA to ask permission for the City to allow the non-profit to utilize the space in St. Julian Devine in July. There was no cost to the group or the City. It was just to make space available for up to 50 children in their program that Kids on Point would staff and pay for. Chairman Shahid asked what Kids on Point was. Ms. Yarbrough said that this was the former Chucktown Squash Group that started out by teaching the kids how to play squash. Unfortunately, due to COVID, they lost their space at the college for the summer and couldn't get space at CCSD, so they came to the City. They had worked with them in the past and they had kids in the City's programs. They had been a good partner for the last several years. Chairman Shahid said he assumed they would follow the rules and regulations for COVID. Ms. Yarbrough said they had agreed to use all the City's protocols and guidelines. Mayor Tecklenburg said this was a group that focused on helping underserved kids get opportunities. It was a great program.

On a motion of Councilwoman Jackson, seconded by Mayor Tecklenburg, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the above item.

Request authorization for the Mayor to execute a Resolution approving the Greenbelt application to Charleston County for funding the purchase of approximately 11.25 acres (portion of TMS No. 279-00-00-059) on Johns Island, South Carolina, commonly known as the Ross tract. City Council previously approved the application at a meeting held on February 11, 2020.

Mr. Kronsberg stated that this was a project they had heard from in the past when they made the Greenbelt application. Unfortunately, when they brought it last time, they didn't have a formal Resolution drafted, so this was a follow-up to that current application. Councilwoman Jackson stated that she fully supported this. She felt like there had been some questions that were framed about what they had said when they were buying the Fort Pemberton property and applying for the Urban allocation that the City was allotted through the per capita receipt of tax funds that went to the Greenbelt fund. At that time, they made it clear for the public record that not only were they using the total they had accumulated last year, but that they were actually borrowing future allocation and that was approved. So, there had been some people asking the City and County to look at using Greenbelt funds for other properties and she naively told them they had used up their allotment and that created a back and forth. She thought it needed clarification that there was now a more open-ended strategy with the Greenbelt Program Coordinator and Board in being able to take advantage of properties like this that would never come again. She thought they should make that as clear as they could that, yes, they had used up everything they had accumulated and now they were accumulating as the taxes came in over the next several years, but there was a new strategy that they could borrow against funds they knew they would be earning in the future.

Councilmember Waring said he wanted to piggyback on what Councilwoman Jackson said in that this was a rare opportunity to expand the park. He wanted to commend staff for working with the owner in this process. With the growth taking place on Johns Island, this was commendable. Chairman Shahid asked how many parks there were on Johns Island. Mr. Kronsberg said they currently had Johns Island Park and Angel Oak Park. Chairman Shahid said that this was an extension of one of those. Mr. Kronsberg said that the existing Johns Island Park was about 25 acres and this application was for a property that shared a property line with that park, so it was a logical way to expand to then provide more opportunity for future uses down the road. When the opportunity came up to purchase this land, the Greenbelt staff encouraged them that if there was an opportunity out there, they should go after it and not potentially lose it. They had indicated that, based on the existing funds on hand inside the Green Belt, the money was there. Councilwoman Jackson said this highlighted how a fund like this was a tool of unparalleled value. They couldn't time purchases to go along with an accumulation of money, so the fact that they had the flexibility to meet a goal like this that wouldn't happen again, she saluted the Greenbelt board and the County Council. She just thought that somehow the information was provided in a way that made it seem like they had used everything they had and now had to sit until they started to accumulate again. The help they were getting was to the credit of the program.

Councilmember Waring asked if they would be going from 25 acres to about 35 or 36. Mr. Kronsberg said that was correct. It was currently about 27 and would be gaining 11 acres. Mayor Tecklenburg said that some of that was wetlands. Councilwoman Jackson said that was open space for conservation.

On a motion of Councilmember Waring, seconded by Councilwoman Jackson, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the above item.

Approval of a Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Charleston, the Lowcountry Land Trust, Inc., and Angel Oak Park, LLC wherein the City agrees to construct a surface parking lot to serve

the City's Angel Oak park on land that will be deeded to the City by the Low Country Land Trust, LLC and the Angel Oak Park, LLC as more fully stated in Exhibit A attached hereto.

Mr. Kronsberg said this was a project that had been a long time coming. He had been working with the Land Trust to figure this out for around four years. This Memorandum proposed that, on the land that was protected a couple of years ago around the tree, there had been an effort to preserve the land. So, in conjunction with citizens and the Conservation minded people and other municipalities, they coordinated to protect the land from development. The small parking area that existed did not support the number of people that visited. That forced a lot of vehicles to park along the road which created an access issue. They had a concept plan adjacent to the Angel Oak that showed a wooded type parking area. The goal of this MOU was that the Land Trust would then deed over a portion of the Preserve such that they could build a proper parking area. Chairman Shahid said he remembered some of the controversy and thanked Mr. Kronsberg for the information.

On a motion of Councilmember Waring, seconded by Councilmember Appel, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the above item.

Consider the following annexations:

- i. 1720 Pinecrest Road (TMS #: 351-12-00-038) 0.22 acre, West Ashley (District 9). The property is owned by Elizabeth White.*
- ii. 2118 and 2120 Saint James Drive (TMS #: 343-02-00-072) 0.23 acre, James Island (District 11). The property is owned by Claire Witbeck.*
- iii. Savannah Highway (TMS #: 307-05-00-015) approx.. 6.68 acres, West Ashley (District 5). The property is owned by John McLeod Bradham et. al.*

Mr. Morgan said that two of these were single family, and one was a commercial annexation in front of Carolina Bay.

On a motion of Councilwoman Jackson, seconded by Mayor Tecklenburg, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the above annexations.

Miscellaneous

Councilmember Waring stated that he wanted something added to the agenda for the next time. That was a parcel of land in between the houses on Montclair Street and the apartments. It could have potential as a nice park. It had water on both sides. He had gotten some requests to look at it for a park. Mayor Tecklenburg asked him to send that TMS number.

Having no further business, the Committee adjourned at 3:24 p.m.

Bethany Whitaker
Council Secretary

