

MEMORANDUM

TO: City Council

FROM: David J. Deutsch
City Manager

SUBJECT: *Status Report*

DATE: December 11, 2014

Status Report

1. Electric Car

The Nissan Leaf budgeted for FY15 has been delivered. The charging station, located outside the employee entrance at City Hall, is operational. The vehicle became available for use as part of the City Pool Vehicle fleet on December 10th.

2. Bowie Gateway Center Stakeholders Meeting

A Stakeholders Meeting was held on Monday, December 8th, regarding a development proposal for the Enterprise Car Rental property, located at 16300 Heritage Boulevard in the Bowie Gateway Center (BGC). (The site, which contains 3.2 acres, is located at the intersection of Mitchellville Road and Heritage Boulevard, and is zoned C-M (Commercial Miscellaneous.) The applicant in this case, Bowie Heritage, LLC, is proposing to: amend the BGC Conceptual Site Plan to re-designate the use on the property from "Office" to "Office/Retail" and "Fast Food Restaurant"; subdivide the property into two lots (one lot would contain the existing building; the other lot would contain a new fast food restaurant); and obtain site plan approval to construct a new one-story/2,228 sq. ft./66-seat Taco Bell restaurant and renovate the existing building to provide 11,000 sq. ft. of retail space and 1,600 sq. ft. of office space. Staff sent approximately 106 letters advertising the Stakeholders Meeting; no one from the public attended. While no City public hearing dates have been established for this case yet, it is likely to be heard in February or March of 2015.

3. Prince George's Municipal Collaboration Update

In 2013, the City joined the Prince George's County Municipal Collaboration, a group of 20 municipalities and Prince George's County, which together applied for and received grant funding from MEA Empower Clean Energy Communities (\$600,000) and DHCD Community Legacy (\$150,000). By participating in the 2013-2014 Municipal Collaboration, it was originally anticipated that 20 low to moderate income homeowners in the City would receive funding for energy audits as well as a range of recommended energy efficient home improvements. Actual numbers for the completed program have

been provided and reveal that there was enough funding for 24 homeowners to receive energy audits on their homes. Of those, 18 homeowners were able to receive funding to complete recommended home improvements. In total, about \$165,000 was spent on energy audits and upgrades in Bowie. This value includes the amount of MEA and DHCD funds spent, utility incentives provided, and homeowner contributions.

4. Emerald Ash Borer Strategy

At the November 3rd City Council Meeting, City Staff made a scheduled presentation on the status of the Emerald Ash Borer issue and presented a suggested strategy on how to address this non-native invasive pest from Asia discovered in Maryland in 2003. This strategy is seen as a multi-year and multifaceted approach that includes observation, evaluation, pesticide application where applicable, and removal and replacement as needed. Removal occurs when a minimum of 30% of the tree's canopy is deemed to have been damaged.

As a result of the discussion, City Council requested a document be provided that delineates the recommended strategy, the associated costs, and a breakdown by fiscal year as to what staff anticipates the actions to be taken. Please find attached the draft strategy as stated. Staff will contact the Belair Greens Homeowner's Association and meet with them to review the strategy and follow that up with a direct mail out to each homeowner in Belair Greens. Staff is currently acquiring the services of a firm to provide pesticide applications and another to be available for City curb tree removal services as needed. In addition, firms to do stump removal and tree replacement will be engaged. Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions regarding this matter.

DJD/JLF/asf

Attachment

EAB Review:

- EAB is a non-native invasive insect from Asia discovered in Maryland in 2003
- EAB attacks only native ash trees thus far and has now moved into Bowie
- Once infested, a tree will die in 2-5 years...usually sooner than later
- Confirmed infestations have been found in Belair Greens, Collington Manor, Longleaf, Buckingham & Kenilworth

EAB Control & Treatment Strategy:

- Continue to observe, inspect & evaluate the condition of the approximately 700 City of Bowie ash street trees
- Determine whether individual trees or blocks of trees need to be removed and replaced with a variety of different tree species, or treat some existing ash trees with a 2-year residual pesticide to control EAB

EAB Strategy Cost Comparisons:

- Estimates range from \$800-\$1,000 to remove and replace each tree depending on size and location
- Estimates range from \$100-\$360 to treat each ash tree with a 2-year residual pesticide per application which would have to be repeated every 2 years in order to protect these trees

FY 2015 Proposal (\$32,000 already budgeted in CIP):

- Treat 100-125 ash trees with the 2-year residual pesticide primarily in Belair Greens, and secondarily selecting other relatively healthy individual ash trees in the city
 - Estimated Cost: \$10,000-\$15,000
- Remove and replace 60-75 declining and dead ash trees as observed throughout the year in the city prioritizing trees in total collapse
 - Estimated Cost: \$15,000-\$20,000 including funds budgeted in current year from CIP

FY 2016 Proposal:

- Treat another smaller undetermined number of ash trees with the 2-year residual pesticide selecting any other relatively healthy individual ash trees in the city (estimate 10-12 trees)
 - Estimated Cost: \$3,500-\$4,000
- Remove and replace another 150-200 declining and dead ash trees as observed throughout the year in the city prioritizing trees in total collapse
 - Estimated Cost: \$150,000-\$200,000
 - Plan for contingency if there is a further catastrophic failure of additional trees
 - Consider contracting (or hiring) a part-time arborist on a seasonal, temporary basis to manage the contracts for removal and replacement of these trees under the supervision of the Community Forester: proposed 1,600 hours annually at \$25 per hour (\$40,000 per year)

FY 2017 Proposal:

- Re-treat the originally treated 100-150 ash trees with the 2-year residual pesticide following a re-evaluation of the trees in Belair Greens and the other individual previously treated trees
 - Estimated Cost: \$10,000-\$15,000
- Remove and replace another 150-200 declining and dead ash trees as observed throughout the year in the city prioritizing trees in total collapse
 - Estimated Cost: \$150,000-\$200,000
 - Consider contracting (or hiring) a part-time arborist on a seasonal, temporary basis to manage the contracts for removal and replacement of these trees under the supervision of the Community Forester: proposed 1,600 hours annually at \$25 per hour (\$40,000 per year)

FY 2018: Any additional budget allocation addressing EAB will be predicated on the accumulated treatments, removals and replacements actually executed in FY 2105-2017. The budget impact for FY 2018 will be dramatically less than either of the previous fiscal years.

Summary:

- EAB is here and will continue to have a destructive effect on all ash trees in the city
- In the short-term, about 125 trees could be treated with pesticides with the long-term goal being to preserve approximately only 50-60 trees (phasing in the number of removals)
- Systematically remove and replace 600-650 ash trees over the next 3 years (2015-2017)
- Estimates are based on variability in the damage done by EAB as well as the evolving body of knowledge concerning control and treatment of this insect pest
- Ongoing evaluation of the overall condition of the ash population may determine the need for accelerating the removal of declining and dead trees