# Greenbelt Rews Review

AN INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

#### Volume 49, Number 22 P.O. Box 68, Green belt, Maryland 20770 Thurs., April 17, 1986

## **Council Discusses Election Changes And Revised Council Procedures**

#### by Diane Oberg

At its April 7 regular meeting, the Greenbelt city council took the final step in revising its meeting procedures and took the first formal step in revising the city's election procedures. Council also began preparations for the annual budget review.

Proclamations were presented by Mayor Gil Weidenfeld to the Greenbelt Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad, in support of their General Fund Drive, and to the dispatchers in the communications office of the police department in recognition of National Telecommunicators' Week.

#### **Election Procedures**

Weidenfeld suggested changing the city election date from the third Tuesday in September to the Tuesday after the first Monday in November and extending council's term from two to four years.

The change in date was needed. according to Weidenfeld, to allow candidates adequate time to campaign in a growing city. He said the longer council term would avoid the need for council to slow down every two years for elections and would also save money for the city.

Weidenfeld discounted the effect of a longer term on council's composition. He said that over the last twenty years, fifteen people were elected to the council. Of these. Rhea Cohen chose not to run for re-election and current council member Joseph Isaacs is in his first term. Of the remaining thirteen, all were elected to at least two terms, and the average number of terms served is four.

Dorothy Pyles supported the four year term. saying council

GREENBELT

MD. 20770.

BOARD OF ELECTIONS

needs to spend more time on issues, However, the other citizens who spoke on this issue opposed the longer term. Several of these speakers said the two year term kept council more responsive to the public.

Werner Neupert said some issues seem only to be resolved as a result of elections. Council member Antoinette M. Bram argued, however, that elections should not be decided upon single issues, and that better decisions would result from having three to three and a half years without election pressures.

Steve Curtis questioned the relevance of Weidenfeld's study of council terms served. The argument that since people are elected to multiple terms the length of the term could be extended shows flawed logic, ac. cording to Curtis. It could be extended to justify eight or sixteen year terms, leading to a "mayor for life" situation. Curtis said no "substantive" reasons have been given to go to a four year term except council's convenience. New Election Date

The motion to change the election date passed 4-0. Mayor pro tem Thomas X. White was out of town on business. City Clerk Gudrun Mills noted that there would be staff difficulties in 1987 with a November election because of the fiftieth anniversary activities and the Maryland Municipal League conference. In addition. the staff is seeking legal advice as to whether the change can legally take effect in 1987 or cannot occur prior to 1989.

The motion to lengthen the council's term died. however, in a 2-2 tie. Bram and Weidenfeld supported the change while Putens and Isaacs voted no.

GUDRUN H. MILLS, CMC

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CITIZENS INTERESTED IN SERVING ON A CITY

In explaining his vote, Putens said that while he personally supported the longer term, he felt it is the duty of council to get the voters to support it in a referendum. Isaacs, saying he had too little experience to be "fully supportive" of the longer term, also favored a referendum.

Other Election Issues Several of the citizens present objected to the limited scope of Weidenfeld's proposals to change election procedures.

Eunice Coxon spoke in favor of universal registration. whereby the county voting lists would be used for city elections. She told of the ad hoc advisory committee she served on, which in 1972 recommended universal registration and suggested that if universal registration had been implemented, the study of the number of terms served would show different results. Several other citizens spoke in favor of universal registration.

Neupert questioned why campaign disclosure changes were not being proposed, since they had been supported by citizens at the March 25 hearing. Konrad Herling said campaign spending limits are needed to prevent campaigns from becoming so costly that people could not run.

On a motion from Putens. council unanimously approved changing one of the campaign disclosure deadlines from one week before the election to two weeks before in order to allow adequate time for citizen and press review of the statements. Giese and the city staff will verify that the change is acceptable under state laws.

The proposed change of election date will now be drafted as a charter amendment resolution requiring two readings before final passage. After final passage there is a forty day waiting period during which citizens can petition for a referendum on the resolution. Petitions containing the signatures of twenty percent of the voters registered with the city would be required to force See ELECTIONS, page 3, col. 1

#### Correction

The Greenbelt City Council held a work session on April 7 dealing with the development of Parcel 15. No public hearing has been scheduled. The News Review regrets the error.

#### WHAT GOES ON

Mon., April 21, 8 p.m. City Council Meeting, City Council Room, Municipal Bldg. Tues., April 22, 7:30 p.m. Lake-

wood Civic Association, Greenbelt Library, Conference Room. 8 p.m. Museum Committee,

City Council Room. Municipal Building

## **Proposed New Lake - Asset Or an Attractive Nuisance?**

#### by Betsy Likowski

The Greenbrook stormwater retention facility, which will serve as a lake suitable for recreational uses, was a topic of discussion both at the regular city council meeting on Monday, April 7 and at an earlier council work session on Tuesday, April 1.

Various aspects of the plans for the lake were discussed, such as an island, two different landscaping plans for the surrounding park, and other miscellaneous items. No final action on the plan was taken by council. Mayor Gil Weidenfeld stated there would be no decision on the lake without input from citizens and the city advisory boards.

#### The Island

The idea of an island in the lake was subject to much discussion at the work session and of some citizen reaction at the regular council meeting.

The island would be in the eastern end of the lake. It would sit about four feet above the water level and would be 120 feet by 50 feet-about 1/5 of an acre in size. The island would be covered with vegetation now existing in that area with perhaps the addition of plants loving a wet environment.

Council members Antoinette Bram, Joseph Isaacs, Edward Putens, and Mayor Pro Tem Thomas White expressed concerns at the work session that the island would be an attractive nuisance. Weidenfeld said that the whole lake could be seen as an attractive nuisance and that a positive point of the island is that it could serve as a sort of wildlife refuge.

He pointed out that the ducks at Greenbelt Lake can hardly nest in peace. City Manager James Giese later noted during regular council meeting that an island would give the lake a more natural appearance so that it does not look like the excavated stormwater facility it is.

The concern of the island being a liability arose again during the regular council meeting. Wayne Gordon of Windsor Green asked whether the island would

#### **Old Zoning Petitions** For Parcels 1 and 2 **Are Withdrawn**

The Office of the Prince Georges County Zoning Hearing Examiner on April 9 granted the request of Charles Bresler and Theodore Lerner to withdraw their long-standing applications for rezoning of Parcels 1 and 2.

Withdrawal of a rezoning ap-plication prevents the applicants from refiling on the same property for two years.

The rezoning applications for Parcels 1 and 2 involve land between the Baltimore-Washington Parkway and Greenbelt Homes. Inc. property. About 102 acres (Parcel 1) are located north of Northway extended and 10 acres (Parcel 2) are between Hamilton Place and Gardenway. The land is presently zoned rural residential and the applicants were requesting townhouse zoning. The city and the Prince Georges County Planning Board recom-mended denial of the applications.

In the meantime, negotiations are continuing between the city and the property owners dealing with city acquisition of all or most of the 112 acres in Parcels 1 and 2 as well as the adjacent 72-acre surplus school site.

affect the liability of the city. City Attorney Robert Manzi answered that Maryland does not have an attractive nuisance doctrine, so that the city would only be guilty of this if it was a case of gross negligence. Manzi noted that the lake itself would be a problem even without the island.

Don Reider, of the Hunting Ridge Association, said he believed an island would be a liability and would probably end up as "an eyesore and a garbage dump."

Bob Zugby, chair of the Greenbelt East Advisory Committee. stated that some east Greenbelters were for and some against the island.

Of the council members only Bram stated a definite opinion on this issue, she was against having an island.

#### Landscape Plans

Two landscaping plans were reviewed at the work session, one designed by landscape architect Joanne Volk, the other by Greenhorne and O'Mara and paid for by Michael T. Rose, developer of one segment of the Greenbrook subdivision. The plans are similar in that both call for a cleared, grassy area around the lake, but differ on the types of individual trees and shrubs to be planted within that grassy area.

Volk's plans also call for leaving the southeast corner of the lake shore as a peninsula to give a more natural appearance and to retain some existing trees. At the council meeting Giese reported that it would cost \$114 .-000 if the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) were to leave such a peninsula when it excavates for the lake.

#### Miscellaneous Items

There was some concern about the lack of parking facilities at the proposed lake. Bram expressed concern that parking for use of the park might interfere with parking in nearby residential neighborhoods.

Putens expressed interest in a water fountain. Giese said this would be a problem since there is no water main in the vicinity that would be sufficient for this use.

At the regular council meeting Giese reported the results of a meeting with WSSC officials which answered some points at an earlier discussion on the plans for the lake and park He said WSSC would not object to a bridge being built to the island. Also discussed was the possibility of a foot bridge or low culverts across the stream that would feed into the eastern end of the lake.

#### LAKEWOOD MEETING SET

The Lakewood Civic Association will meet Tuesday, April 22. (Note that the meeting is on Tuesday, not Monday as reported in last week's News Review.) The meeting will be held at the Greenbelt Library, lower level. conference room, at 7:30 p.m.

Important Lakewood issues will be discussed and voted on. Lakewood residents are requested to be there!

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Thursday, April 17, 1986

### Greenbelt Rews Review

AN INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER ALFRED M. SKOLNIK, PRESIDENT, 1959-1977 Editor: Mary Lou Williamson, 441-2662 News Editor: Elaine Skolnik, 654-7423 Copy Editors: Barbara Likowski, 474-8483 Virginia Beauchamp Bill Rowland

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#### Thursday, April 17, 1986

#### Support the Fire Dept. **They Deserve It!** To the Editor:

On May 19, 1985, I fell and tore the ligaments in my right ankle and foot. My neighbors, the Vardas, called the ambulance. which took me to the emergency room at the hospital, but not until the Ambulance Crew had examined the ankle and put it in a plastic boot, which they blew up so that it would be resting entirely on air. They also treated me very gently, seeing that the foot got no bumps whatever.

Both the doctor at the hospital and the onthopedic doctor the next day said not to be dis-couraged if it took four to six weeks for it to heal so I could walk on it unassisted .The orthopedist told me to return in two weeks for him to check it, He was surprised to find it entirely well.

The orthopedist said. "This healed so quickly because of the primary care you got for it. both by the Ambulance Crew and at

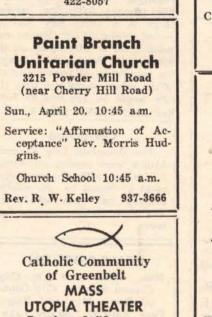
I waited to write this until now because our Fire Department and Rescue Squad are asking for our support now. Please give it to them-all of you. They Janet M. James deserve it.

#### **Baha'i Faith**

'Spirituality is the greatest of God's gifts, and "Life Ever-lasting" means "Turning to - from the Baha'i God".' Sacred Writings Greenbelt Baha'i Community P.O. Box 245 Greenbelt, MD 20770

United Methodist Church 40 Ridge Rd. 474-9410 Sunday School 11:00 A.M. Morning Worship 11:00 A.M. Rev. Dr. James Chong Park Pastor 474-1924

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH Episcopal Baltimore Blvd. at Powder Mill Rd., Beltsville 8:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist 10:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist First Three Sundays 10:30 a.m. Morning Prayer Fourth Sunday 10:30 a.m. Sunday School Rev. John G. Bals, Rector

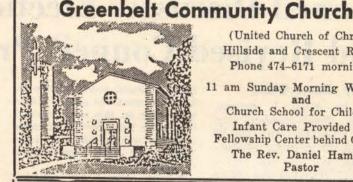


#### "Democratic" Confusion To the Editor:

Greenbelters going to the Post Office have been met by persons representing the "National Dem-Political Committee." ocratic These persons are not representing the Democratic Party as one would assume from their name. Instead they are supporters of Lyndon LaRouche. . .

Despite their use of label "Democratic," LaRouche support-ers do not represent the views of the Democratic Party, and their claim to do so is misleading. The heart of both the Democratic and Republican parties in the United States is compromise. Each party represents a wide range of opinions and views which are reconciled - each giving up something to keep some. thing - in the party platforms which are hammered out at the party conventions every fourth year.

The LaRouche people do not appear to believe in such compromise. . . . Do not confuse them with the Democratic Party. Katherine Keene



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#### The growth of the city has brought many changes to Greenbelt and made the job of campaigning for a city coun-

cil seat more difficult. Several changes have been suggested in council election procedures: moving the election date to early November; electing the council members to four-year terms; "universal registration," that is abolishing sep-arate city registration and using the voter lists for county/ state/national elections; election of council members from separate districts; and an advisory referendum for the mayor. The first two of these proposals are under active consideration by the city council at this time. Before any changes are made, however, council and the citizens need to be sure that the changes do not create new problems and that they do not lessen the opportunity for lively debate on which our city has thrived.

The Labor Day festival has traditionally marked the end of summer and the beginning of the council campaigns. Unfortunately, the voter registration books are closed one month before the election. That means that the voter lists are closed in August when most people's minds are still on vacation (at least, ours are). A later election date would allow candidates to try to inspire previously uninvolved citizens to participate in the election.

But the proposed November date, although commonly thought of as "election day," would result in the very ineffi-ciency that council is striving to reduce, by causing the city council to be sworn in right before Thanksgiving and the end-of-the-year holidays. Council would then have little time after the holidays to get itself organized and to handle the issues deferred "for the next council to decide" before receiving the budget in April.

Changing the election date to early October, rather than November, coupled with later closing of the voter registration rolls, would allow the council and citizens adequate time to get involved in the election without drastically increasing the time lost to campaigning and organizing.

We are against lengthening the council members' terms from two to four years. We have heard the arguments in favor of the longer term but feel that the advantages of having council members face the voters every two years far outweighs any of those arguments. Greenbelt's citizens have never been reluctant to let council know just how they feel about any given issue. We wonder if this might change if council were insulated from election "pressure" for three and a half years. The current two-year terms give frequent opportunity for newcomers to challenge council and ensure that council remains responsive to the citizens. While there have been no major council shakeups in recent years, there have also been very few elections with major issues upon which the candidates disagree. Elections without volatile issues tend to favor incumbents, so the relative stability of council should not be used as an argument to extend the term.

The two-year term goes back almost 50 years. It's let's not tinker with it.



345-2918 / 474-4090 **Mowatt Memorial** 

422-8057

Sunday 9:50 a.m. **Camp Marie Family** Retreat May 2, 3, 4 Call 474-7280

for information

**Choose Change Carefully** 

## the Emergency Room."

#### ELECTIONS

#### (Continued from page one)

referendum. If adequate petia tions are received, the question would have to be put to the voters at the next regular election or in a special election. Otherwise the resolution would become effective at the expiration of the waiting period.

#### **Council Procedures**

Council approved for final passage changes in the standing rules governing the council.

Under this resolution the agenda for council meetings will change to present those items of greatest public interest before items of lesser interest, and a consent agenda incorporating any routine business items into a single item will be introduced. **City Budget** 

The budget is normally presented at the first council meeting in April. However, Giese reported that because of other staff assignments and the time required to automate the city's financial records, the budget has been completed. Council not unanimously approved Giese's request to defer introduction of the budget for two weeks.

A tentative schedule for the budget review was established. The budget meetings will be: April 22-Public Safety, April 29-Organization budgets, May 6-Recreation Department, May 12-Public Works, May 13-General governments, social services, miscellaneous budgets, other funds and revenues.

A public hearing on the bud-

Frank Barthalf Former resident Frank Bart-

half died on April 3 in Lakewood, California. He is survived by his wife, Miriam. and daughter, Patricia.

The Barthalfs lived in Greenbelt from the 40's to 70's, moving to California when Frank retired.

Friends can write to: Miriam Barthalf, 5639 Hazelbrook, Lakewood, California 90712.

#### Astronomy Club to View Halley's Comet at Goddard

The Goddard Astronomy Club will hold an open house on National Astronomy Day at the Goddard Visitor's Center on April 19 (or April 20 if it is too cloudy on April 19) from approximately 8 p.m. through midnight. There will be telescopes, but the public is invited to bring their own telescopes and binoculars. For last minute information call the Visitor's Center.

The turn out on the morning of March 15 at the Visitor's Center to see Halley's comet was very good. At 4:05 a.m., in addition to the normal celestial objects, we showed a fireball, a rare meteor. The group again hopes to see Halley's Comet at the April 19 meeting.

get will be held on Tuesday. May 20. with the final budget work session on May 27. The budget will be officially adopted by council on June 9, with the scheduled June 9 council meeting rescheduled to June 10.

#### Young-Old Dialogue

An Intergenerational public debate between Paul Hewitt, president of the Americans for Generational Equity and Irving Riskin, National Field Representative, Gray Panthers, will take place Saturday, April 19 at 1:30 p.m. at the Greenbelt Library. This dialogue between young and old, sponsored by the Gray Panthers will discuss the issues as to whether an intergenerational conflict exists between young and old in current social programs. Moderator will be Abe Bloom, vice president, National Gray Panthers. Young persons are especially invited to come and present their point of view. Free refreshments will be served.

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## **Council Considers Plan for New Pond and Housing in Greenbrook Development**

#### by Leta Mach

Development in east Greenbelt at Greenbrook concerned council at the regular meeting on April 7. Of particular concern was the relationship of the proposed housing development to a pond which the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSS-C) intends to use for storm water management.

Council viewed the site plan for the Greenbrook townhouses which would overlook the pond. Staff was concerned that tree plantings in the proposed landscape plan would screen the view of the pond from the homes. However, city manager James Giese noted that "the problem of the view from the townhouses was the developer's problem, not the city's." Don Volk added that it would be a good thing to screen the homes from the pond so that the buildings were not an intrusion, as he felt was true of the homes around Greenbelt Lake.

The city's Advisory Planning Board (APB) had recommended approval of the plan subject to an additional sitting area, enhanced planting, and the resolution of pathway ownership questions. The city staff was also concerned that extra parking would be needed. Council member Toni Bram felt that barriers were needed in certain areas to prevent vehicular traffic on foot paths, and council member Ed Putens expressed the view that a buffer was needed to separate the residents from the lake.

Richard Reed, an attorney representing the project, noted that a vegetative barrier was provided in the plan. He felt that landscaping would be a better barrier than a split-rail fence. It was noted that some Lakeside residents became concerned when a split-rail fence was put up in their area because it proved to be an attractive place for people to sit and gather.

Council passed a motion to in-

good neighbor,

See me for car, home,

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#### form the Prince Georges Planning Board that it found the pond a "visual amenity and suitable active and passive recreation area." Council also approved the townhouse site plan subject to an additional sitting area. enhanced plantings, resolution of pathway ownership, extra parking, barriers and a buffer between the pond and the homes.

Council also considered the Greenbrook commercial development. Reed asked for council approval to expedite the county approval process. He noted that the plan included APB recommendations for handicapped parking and screening around dumpsters. The plan also included a landscaped buffer strip along Hanover Parkway.

Mayor Gil Weidenfeld ex- Register Now pressed appreciation that the city's concerns had been addressed by the developer. The city granted preliminary approval contingent upon further comments to be added when the city receives the report from the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission technical staff.

#### New Sign in Center

With the imminent opening of the Mellon Bank in the old Community Savings and Loan Office, council had received a request for sign approval. While the city does not normally regulate signs, the signs are proposed for an area on which the city has an easement. Therefore the placement required city approval.

The sign proposal calls for a 30-inch band of black aluminum fascia along the top of the canopy. At the end, the fascia would have internally lit letters of bright green reading "Mellon Bank." The signs would face the mall, the medical center and the west parking lot.

While staff felt the proposed signage was attractive, staff was concerned about the effect on plans generated by the charette. But since the branch expected to open very soon, there was no time to refer the matter to APB.

Staff recommended approval subject to elimination of the sign facing the medical building and any additional signs on the rear of the building. In addition, Mel-

lon would be asked to cooperate in the plans to restore the Center. Council gave preliminary approval. noting that the matter would be referred to APB and if the board had comments they would be forwarded to Mellon. Council also emphasized that the approval would only be temporary until the charette plans for the Roosevelt Center renovation were completed.

In accordance with APB and staff recommendations, council moved deferral of action on a rezoning application for the Witt tract located across from Green. way Center Drive east of Han-Parkway. The deferral over would await the negotiations between the owner and WSSC.

## For Kindergarten

Registration for kindergarten classes next fall in the public elementary schools of Prince Georges County will be held April 23 through April 25, and April 28 and 29. All children who will be five years old on or be-fore January 1, 1987, are eligible for registration in kindergarten classes this fall.

Registration for kindergarten requires parents or legal guardians to provide both a proof of age (birth certificate) and a proof of residency in Prince Georges County, which also includes the completion of the Affidavit of Disclosure to verify residency as required by law.

In addition, all children entering the public schools for the first time must provide proof of immunization against various diseases, as required by the Maryland State Department of Health. The immunizations include those against: diptheria, pertussis (whooping cough for children seven years old and younger), tetanus, polio, rubella (German or three-day measles), and rubeola (Red or 10-day measles).

For more information concerning kindergarten registration and to identify the appropriate elementary school their child would attend the next school year, parents should telephone the Office of School Boundaries at 952-4390. **Based** on Information

**Police Blotter** 

#### Released by the Greenbelt **Police** Department

On April 10. Officer Troy Harding arrested a suspect after the man had broken into an apartment in the 400 block of Ridge Road. Investigation revealed that the suspect was also responsible for a previous breaking and entering in Lakeside North and that he had an outstanding theft warrant under an assumed name. The man was incarcerated pending trial.

Unknown suspect(s) broke into a residence in the 9100 block of Edmonston Road on April 9 about 10 p.m. When the resident entered the apartment, she heard someone climbing out of the bedroom window. A VCR and a stereo were taken.

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A female resident was the victim of an indecent exposure which occurred in the 7700 block of Hanover Parkway on April 4 at 3:15 p.m. The suspect was described as a Hispanic male, 25 years old, 5'9", 160 lbs., black hair, navy gym shorts, white T-shirt with a navy blue band on the sleeve.

A breaking and entering to a residence on Pinecrest Court was reported on April 7. The incident occurred while the occupants were away.



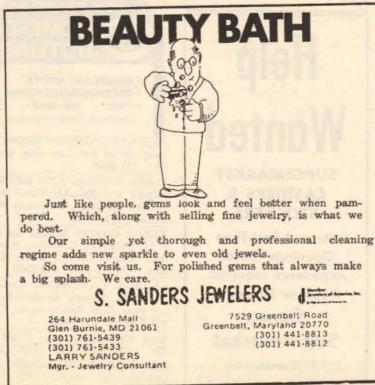
As a service for its members, GHI offers a discount purchasing program. Members may join the program for the small fee of \$1.00. Participants need to renew their cards yearly. There is no charge for this service. Contact the GHI Member Services Office (474-6644) for more information.

GHI members will find the discount purchasing program extremely useful especially when doing any yard or house work. Participants in this program receive discounts from many area merchants by presenting their discount purchasing card before making a purchase. The following merchants offer discounts to GHI members through this program:

Acme Aluminum Awning & Window Corp. Arrow Refrigeration & Appliance Company A-Z Sew-Vac Mart Builder Kitchens, Inc. **Carpet** Choice Carpet House **Clinton Fences** Continental Hobbycrafts Cottman Transmission Duron Paints & Wallcoverings Hocking Enterprises Kitchens by DePinto, Inc. Mister Appliance Company, Inc. Sherwin Willams Stephens Upholstery Inc. Solar Gardens, Inc. The Spokesman True Value Hardware Wills Decorating Center & Hardware Store Winslow Paint Company In addition, members of this program may take advantage of group rate insurance by calling 474-4161. SPRING SPECIAL: The Book 101 Townhouse Garden

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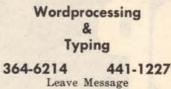
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