CHARLOTTE

City Council
Follow-Up Report

October 14, 2011

October 10 – City Council Business Meeting

Kenilworth Avenue Lighting
Staff Resource: Phil Reiger, CDOT, 704-336-4896, preiger@charlottenc.gov

During Monday's City Council meeting, questions arose about the Kenilworth Avenue Lighting project costs, and concerns expressed about street light outages and maintenance in general. In response, the following information is provided:

Kenilworth Lighting Project Costs (One-time cost)

31 decorative pedestrian lights	$182,543.50
8 decorative street lights	68,379.84
Tax	7,527.70
Total	$258,451.04

These lights match existing lights in the area. As with all street lighting, there is a separate, monthly, per pole electrical/maintenance charge.

Street Light Outages
The City of Charlotte currently pays Duke Energy an average of $9.90 per pole monthly to install, maintain, and provide electrical service to approximately 75,000 street lights. Street lighting rates are approved by the Utilities Commission, and are standardized among all cities in the Duke Energy system. Any adjustment to these rates would, staff believes, involve the Utilities Commission.

Citizens can report street light outages by calling the Charmeck 311 Call Center, or by submitting a street light outage form on the City's website. A report is sent nightly to Duke Energy. Citizens can also report outages directly to Duke Energy at duke-energy.com or by calling their customer service number: 1-800-777-9898. Residents are also asked to mark poles with bright ribbon or tape to help Duke Energy locate the correct pole since outages are oftentimes repaired during the daylight hours. Staff discovered a technical problem with the reporting system that has recently been repaired. Duke Energy is working to repair the backlog of outages.

Duke Energy requires an address when reporting an outage. Residents tend to have addresses readily available when reporting residential street lights. On the other hand, thoroughfare lighting

issues are more difficult for customers to report because addresses are oftentimes unavailable or difficult to see at night from a vehicle.

Duke Energy typically repairs outages in 3-5 business days unless the problem is something other than a bulb out. Problems such as underground wiring, vandalism, or problems with other parts can contribute to the need for additional repair time. The standard life expectancy of a high pressure sodium bulb is about three years.

CDOT has had discussions with Duke Energy about improving thoroughfare lighting service. There is a technology where Duke can install a device on each pole to alert them of outages. Duke proposes that the City bear the cost of this technology, which would be $2.50 per pole per month for at least 75 poles. City staff has not agreed to the service because of the expense, but will be continuing these discussions with Duke and will reflect the concerns of the City Council as the process goes forward.