

STAFF REPORT

- PROPOSED COUNTY CODE AMENDMENT
- PROPOSED PFM AMENDMENT
- APPEAL OF DECISION
- WAIVER REQUEST

Proposed amendments to address January 2006 revisions to Appendix B of the Virginia Department of Transportation Road Design Manual

Authorization to Advertise February 5, 2007

Planning Commission Hearing March 15, 2007, at 8:15 p.m.

Board of Supervisors Hearing May 7, 2007, at 4:30 p.m.

Prepared by: Code Analysis Division
JAC (703) 324-1720
January 8, 2007

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A. Issues:

The proposed amendments to the Public Facilities Manual of Fairfax County, Virginia (PFM) reference the current Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) design standards rather than restating them.

B. Recommended Action:

Staff recommends that the Board of Supervisors adopt the proposed amendments.

C. Timing:

Board of Supervisors Authorization to Advertise – February 5, 2007.

Planning Commission Public Hearing – March 29, 2007 at 8:15 p.m.

Board of Supervisors Public Hearing – May 7, 2007 at 4:00 p.m.

Effective Date – May 8, 2007 at 12:01 a.m.

D. Source:

Department of Public Works and Environmental Services

E. Coordination:

The proposed amendments have been prepared by the Fairfax County Department of Public Works and Environmental Services and coordinated with the Fairfax County Department of Transportation (DOT), VDOT and the Office of the County Attorney. In addition, the proposed amendments were recommended for approval by the Engineering Standards Review Committee.

F. Background:

The majority of the streets in Fairfax County are currently maintained by VDOT. In order for a new street to be accepted by VDOT for maintenance, its design and construction must comply with the most current Subdivision Street Requirements (SSR) (Virginia Administrative Code 24 VAC 30-91-10 through -160). The SSR was revised in 2005 to remove the design provisions from the document and refer to them in Appendix B of the VDOT Road Design Manual. This revision allows VDOT the flexibility of changing design standards without changing the state administrative code. VDOT can now revise the design standards much more quickly and more often. For instance,

the manual was revised again in January of 2006. The county's process for revising the Public Facilities Manual still requires a public hearing process and the Board's approval. It would be impossible to keep the PFM current with the VDOT standards, which may result in conflicting design criteria and confusion for the land development design community.

The proposed amendments to the PFM reference the VDOT manual for design standards rather than restating the standards. These amendments would allow the PFM to remain current with the VDOT manual as much as possible in order to facilitate VDOT acceptance of streets that are constructed through the land development process. Situations where the county design standards are purposely different from the state standards will remain in the PFM.

In the past, the majority of VDOT revisions has been related to transportation engineering standards such as sight distance, K values, and crossover spacing. These standards are usually based on recommendations from nationally recognized organizations such as the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and have been acceptable to the county. In the unusual instance where the county would desire a stricter standard than VDOT, an amendment to the county regulations would have to be adopted in order to deviate from the state standards.

G. Summary of Proposed Amendments:

Where possible, the proposed amendments refer to the VDOT Road Design Manual or other relevant state manuals rather than restating design standards for sight distance, crossover spacing, right-of-way width, pavement design, and geometric design. In situations where the county design standards are meant to be different from the state standards, the design standards will remain in the PFM. For instance, the typical section for streets with ADT (average daily traffic count) between 5500 and 8000 (Plate 3-7) is included in the amendment with revisions to refer to state standards, where relevant, but also show a median to divide the street, which is a county requirement and not a state requirement. It is the county's position that the median facilitates pedestrian crossings and left turns.

Plates 1-7, 2-7, 3-7, 12-7 and their metric counterparts were revised to reference the VDOT Road Design Manual for design criteria such as maximum grade, minimum radius of curvature, K values, pavement and shoulder width, pavement design, right-of-way width, sight distance, underdrain details and superelevation. These plates are typical sections of street types that VDOT maintains.

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Although Plate 6-7 is a typical section of an R-C cluster subdivision street, which VDOT does not maintain, the plate was revised to reference sight distance criteria that agree with the new VDOT standards and to note a section in the PFM regarding easement widths that is relevant to the typical section.

H. Summary of Proposed Amendments:

Attachment A- Proposed amendment to Chapter 7 of the PFM