

**FAIRFAX COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION  
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE  
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 16, 2008**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Walter L. Alcorn, At-Large  
Frank A. de la Fe, Hunter Mill District  
James R. Hart, Commissioner At-large  
Kenneth A. Lawrence, Providence District  
Rodney L. Lusk, Lee District  
Timothy J. Sargeant, At-Large

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Nancy Hopkins, Dranesville District

**OTHER PLANNING COMMISSIONER PRESENT:**

Earl L. Flanagan, Mount Vernon District

**PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF PRESENT:**

Barbara J. Lippa, Executive Director, Planning Commission Office  
Linda B. Rodeffer, Clerk to the Planning Commission

**DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING STAFF PRESENT:**

Noel Kaplan, Senior Environmental Planner, Planning Division (PD)  
Pamela Nee, Chief, Environment and Development Review Branch, PD  
Dawn Dhavale, Planner, Environment and Development Review Branch, PD, DPZ  
Peter Braham, Senior Planner, Zoning Evaluation Division, DPZ

**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICES STAFF PRESENT:**

James Patteson, Director, Land Development Services, Department of Public Works and  
Environmental Services

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Stella Koch, Chairman, Environmental Quality Advisory Committee (EQAC)  
Frank Crandall, McLean Citizens Association/EQAC  
Harry Glasgow, Fairfax County Park Authority  
Chuck Bolen, Fairfax County Public Schools  
Marlae Schnare, Springfield District Supervisor's Office  
Amanda McGill, Office of the County Executive  
Inda Stagg, Walsh, Colucci, Lubeley, Emrich & Walsh, P.C  
Elizabeth McKeeby, Walsh, Colucci, Lubeley, Emrich & Walsh, P.C  
Robin Rentsch, Great Falls Citizens Association  
Peter Rosen, JPI  
Donald Gibson, JPI  
Brad Tolleson, JPI  
Eileen Watson, Williamsburg Environmental Group

- Jay Donahue, citizen, Dranesville District
- Genelle McDonald, Associated Builders and Contractors Virginia
- Michael Rolband, President, Wetland Studies and Solutions Incorporated (WSSI)
- Laura Giese, WSSI
- Russ Dudley, WSSI
- Rob Walker, William Gordon Associates/National Association of Industrial and Office Properties (NAIOP)
- Brian Gault, Peterson Companies/NAIOP
- Lou Sagatov, Sagatov Associates
- Cam Lewis, Collier Homes
- John McBride, Esquire, VFN Law

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Chairman James R. Hart called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

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Commissioner de la Fe MOVED THAT THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 15, 2007 BE APPROVED.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Sargeant and carried unanimously.

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**Presentation on the Dulles Station LEED for Homes pilot project by JPI**

Donald Gibson, Senior Design Manager, JPI, gave a presentation on Dulles Station, one of the first projects accepted in the LEED for Homes Pilot Program. (A copy of his presentation is in the date file.) He said the construction of the five-story 457 apartment building was expected to begin later this year. He outlined the project’s green building objectives and costs:

▪ Sustainable Site/Location Linkage	\$ 141,000
▪ Water efficiency	\$ 235,000
▪ Energy and atmosphere	\$ 1,415,000
▪ Materials and resources	\$ 171,000
▪ Indoor environmental quality	\$ 336,000
▪ Awareness and education	\$ 50,000
Total estimated green premium	\$ 2,348,000
Total estimated green premium per unit	\$ 5,137

Mr. Gibson said the additional costs of green building were a major stumbling block for many commercial builders since the value of the building would not increase.

Mr. Gibson made the following conclusions:

- Cost premiums of 3-5 percent for building green multifamily properties under the U. S. Green Building Council LEED for Homes program.
- Energy and water savings realized by the tenant, not the building owner or developer.
- Energy savings realized by the building owner or developer did not justify the added investment required to achieve the savings.
- Consumer surveys showed that the majority of prospective tenants would not pay more to live in green buildings.

Mr. Rosen explained that Hunter Mill Supervisor Cathy Hudgins had raised the possibility of fee rebates to offset green building costs when this project had been presented to her in August 2007. He pointed out that a developer would not realize a return on his investment for 40 years, making green building economically infeasible. He explained that County permits and fees for the Dulles Station project would cost approximately four million dollars and suggested the following fee rebates upon third-party LEED certification:

LEED Certification – 50 percent  
LEED Silver Certification – 75 percent  
LEED Platinum or Gold Certification – 100 percent.

Commissioner de la Fe commented that rental units could become condominiums under more favorable market conditions but if rebates were granted, projects should remain rental for 40 years. He also said that a new federal energy bill had recently been passed that required some green building practices.

Commissioner Sargeant said he would be interested in knowing more about the requirements of the Virginia Energy Plan, which encouraged localities to establish policies, which included programs and incentives to increase energy efficiency of citizens. He said one provision stated: “Localities should take advantage of authority granted under 2007 legislation to create a separate real estate classification and lower tax rates for buildings that are 30 percent more efficient than required by building code.” Mr. Rosen said he did not know how this legislation would affect Fairfax County. Commissioner Sargeant said the Planning Commission had been charged with making recommendations to the BOS who could make recommendations to state officials about consistent application of incentives.

Addressing Commissioner de la Fe’s comments about rental units vs. condominiums, Mr. Rosen said in the 20 years JPI had been in business, it had only built two condominium projects. He said almost all of their projects had been rental apartments and student housing. Commissioner de la Fe pointed out that other developers had to be considered also. Mr. Rosen noted that tax rebates for green building features would go to an individual condo owner.

Mr. Gibson said as a designer of a green building project, he had noticed real estate developers were often hesitant to build green due to increased costs. He said a good green building policy

would help remove that roadblock and once the number of green buildings increased in the County, the cost premium would be eliminated as consumers became familiar with the products. He said he did not consider rebates a long-term incentive, but would be useful for the next few years to encourage green building.

Commissioner Lawrence commented that frequent review of incentives would be necessary due to changing market conditions.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Flanagan, Mr. Rosen said the number of units, 457, had been based on existing zoning and that he did not know how much costs could be reduced with increased density.

Commissioner Sargeant asked if it would be possible to construct new green buildings through a partnership, similar to the one between Virginia Tech and Hannon Armstrong for retrofitting existing buildings. Mr. Rosen replied that it would be necessary to convince a financial institution that such an arrangement would be economically viable. He noted that banks were reluctant to loan money for home building and asking for additional funding for green building without County backing would be difficult.

Mr. Gibson responded to questions from Chairman Hart about the affect of density on costs. He explained that the LEED for Homes program added points for higher density projects and deducted them for lower density projects. Commissioner de la Fe pointed out that the density for Dulles Station was spread out over the entire property.

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### **Continuation of discussion of green building incentives**

James Patteson, Director, Land Development Services, Department of Public Works and Environmental Services explained that a workgroup, composed of staff from the County Executive's Office, Tax Administration, Fairfax Water, Wastewater, Public Works, Land Development Services, and Planning and Zoning, had held one meeting to develop a work plan. He said the following incentives were being considered: tax credits; expedited processing; permit rebate fees; water and sewer connection fees; a green building fund; and an "energy hog" tax. He said the workgroup would explore the legality and cost of incentives; obtain the input of the building industry; and determine if utility companies would be willing to help offset initial green building costs. He said the committee would provide further guidance to the Environment Committee in March.

Chairman Hart noted that a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors would be made in June 2008.

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**Discussion of the proposed Policy Plan amendment addressing stream protection**

Noel Kaplan, Planning Division, Department of Planning and Zoning said a public hearing would be held tonight on the proposed Policy Plan amendment on stream protection. He explained that the committee had looked at a broad range of stream protection ideas over the last few years and had decided to focus on strengthening Plan policy relating to stream and buffer area protection and restoration along headwaters areas of streams. He noted that two approaches had been discussed; one which would promote headwaters stream protection and restoration as a general policy under the existing stream protection objective in the Policy Plan; the second would explicitly expand the EQC policy. Mr. Kaplan said the BOS had agreed to the Planning Commission's recommendation to advertise both options. He commented that staff was recommending the more general approach identified in the staff report as Option 1. He noted that EQAC had submitted a resolution on this matter, a copy of which is in the date file.

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**Scheduling of future meetings**

After discussion, it was decided to wait until after tonight's public hearing to decide if another committee meeting needed to be scheduled before presenting a recommendation to the BOS on the Policy Plan amendment on stream protection.

A committee meeting was scheduled for March 13, 2008, at 7:30 p.m., to continue discussion on green building incentives.

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The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.  
James R. Hart, Chairman

For a verbatim record of this meeting, reference may be made to the audio recording which can be found in the Planning Commission Office, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Suite 330, Fairfax, Virginia 22035.

Minutes by: Linda B. Rodeffer

Approved: March 27, 2008

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Linda B. Rodeffer, Clerk  
Fairfax County Planning Commission