

**FAIRFAX COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, MARCH 25, 2010**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jay P. Donahue, Dranesville District
Earl L. Flanagan, Mount Vernon District
James R. Hart, Commissioner At-Large, Chairman
Kenneth A. Lawrence, Providence District
Timothy J. Sargeant, At-Large

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Walter L. Alcorn, At-Large
Frank A. de la Fe, Hunter Mill District

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING STAFF PRESENT:

Pamela G. Nee, Chief, Environment and Development Review Branch (EDRB), Planning Division (PD)
Noel H. Kaplan, Senior Environmental Planner, EDRB, PD
Maya P. Dhavale, Planner II, EDRB, PD

PLANNING COMMISSION OFFICE STAFF PRESENT:

S. Robin Ransom, Assistant Director
Kara A. DeArrastia, Deputy Clerk

ATTACHMENT:

Green Building Policy Review

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Chairman James R. Hart called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m., in the Board Conference Room, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, Virginia 22035.

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Commissioner Lawrence MOVED THAT THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES OF JANUARY 28, 2010, BE APPROVED.

Commissioners Sargeant and Donahue seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

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Maya Dhavale, Planner II, Environment and Development Review Branch (EDRB), Planning Division (PD), Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ); Noel Kaplan, Senior Environmental Planner, EDRB, PD, DPZ; and Committee members continued discussion of the topics of interest surrounding green buildings and the Fairfax County Green Building Policy that had been raised at the January 28, 2010 meeting, as outlined in the attachment.

It was the consensus of the Committee that no more items of concern needed to be added to the list in the attachment although many questions reiterated or expanded upon the topics that had already been identified, including the following:

- Are the County's green building goals limited to energy, or is there a broader range of benefits the County is seeking?
- Is the County able to measure how well its goals are being attained through policy implementation?
- Can/should other green building rating systems (e.g., Green Globes, NAHB) be integrated into the policy?
- How can the County expand upon ENERGY STAR? Should the County apply additional criteria?
- Should a set of local criteria be developed to replace or augment national criteria, or are the national criteria appropriate? What would be the implications of establishing priorities beyond those already established in rating systems (e.g., evolution of priorities with time; implications to staff resources; difficulty in improving upon established rating systems)?
- Should the County develop goals in regard to retrofits of existing structures? How should the County consider retrofits when reviewing Special Exception Amendments, Special Permit Amendments, and other applications? Should the expense/affordability of retrofitting be considered? If so, how?
- Should the County consider applying different rating systems for different price ranges of buildings? Should the County also ensure that its guidance will remain flexible enough such that it would not unduly narrow the set of systems that could be applied?
- Should the County be designing its buildings to allow for future retrofits of green building practices that may not be practical at this time?
- Can alternate rating systems be tested to see how they would work?

In addition, it was requested that staff prepare something that would explain the evolution of green building issues/rating systems since adoption of the Green Building Policy in December 2007.

Ms. Dhavale said she would be able to provide findings from her research on the issues and questions raised by the Committee in two months in order to help determine the appropriate timeline and approach to address these items. She noted that there was no deadline for making a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors.

Commissioner Lawrence pointed out that he had received a presentation on the stormwater management facilities proposed in applications RZ/FDP 2009-PR-021, Elm Street Communities, Inc., from Paul Johnson, Engineer with Charles P. Johnson & Associates, Inc. He said he thought that this presentation would benefit the Committee because it would apply County policy to a real scenario.

Commissioner Lawrence asked whether it would be of benefit to staff to tag certain pending applications of various land use types and follow their progress to gain experience in the green

building area. He said this might help in crafting language to incorporate flexibility in the Green Building Policy. Chairman Hart suggested that staff could also consider how each application was positively or negatively affected by the green building commitments.

Chairman Hart announced that the Committee would meet again on the following dates, in the Board Conference Room of the Government Center:

- Thursday, April 29, 2010 (tentative), at a time to be determined, to receive a presentation on stormwater management.
- Thursday, June 24, 2010, at 7 p.m., to continue discussion with staff on revisions to the Green Building Policy.

Mr. Kaplan recommended that there be coordination with staff from the Stormwater Planning Division in the Department of Public Works and Environmental Services to help organize the April 29th presentation.

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The meeting was adjourned at 7:53 p.m.
James R. Hart, Chairman

An audio recording of this meeting is available in the Planning Commission Office, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Suite 330, Fairfax, Virginia 22035.

Minutes by: Kara A. DeArrastia

Approved: June 24, 2010

Linda B. Rodeffer, Clerk
Fairfax County Planning Commission

Green Building Policy Review
Planning Commission Environment Committee 3/25/10

Summary

In the November meeting, the Green Building policy and review were introduced.

The January meeting allowed for discussion of topics of interest surrounding green buildings and the County policy raised by the Planning Commission, including:

- Existing rating systems for residential and non-residential buildings
- How rating systems work
- Use of a nationally recognized green building rating system vs. local system
- Costs associated with green building
- Implementation
- Use of alternative rating systems (equivalent to LEED)
- Green buildings as a component of a greener type of development
- Policy clarification regarding acceptable ratings systems
- Greening groups of buildings vs. individual buildings
- Monitoring of green buildings / goal achievement
- Operation and management of green buildings (i.e. ensuring buildings stay green)
- How to best achieve green building goals through the zoning process
- Goals of the policy (e.g. energy efficiency/conservation)
- How to handle greening existing buildings

Tonight's Meeting

For the first half of the meeting, staff would like to continue this discussion to ensure all items of concern are raised.

During the second half of the discussion, staff proposes discussing the timeline and approach to take to address the topics raised by the Planning Commission.