

**FAIRFAX COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, MARCH 29, 2007**

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 MEMBER ABSENT:

Nancy Hopkins, Dranesville District

OTHER PLANNING COMMISSIONER PRESENT:

Peter F. Murphy, Springfield District

PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF PRESENT:

Barbara J. Lippa, Director, Planning Commission Office
S. Robin Hardy, Assistant Director, Planning Commission Office
Norma J. Duncan, Associate Clerk, Planning Commission

**ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE/ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ADVISORY COUNCIL
(EQAC) MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Lyle C. (Chet) McLaren, Braddock District

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICES STAFF PRESENT:

Michelle Brickner, Director, Site Development Services
James Patteson, Director, Land Development Services (LDS)
Audrey Clark, LDS

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING STAFF PRESENT:

Noel Kaplan, Senior Environmental Planner, Planning Division (PD)
Mary Ann Welton, Environmental Planner, PD
Jennifer Bonnette, Planner, PD

OTHERS PRESENT:

Marlae Schnare, Supervisor Elaine McConnell's Office, Springfield District
Randy Melvin, Winchester Homes, Inc.
Brendan Owens, U. S. Green Building Council
Jason Hartke, U. S. Green Building Council
Jon Lindgren, Pulte Homes/Northern Virginia Building Industry Association
Eileen Watson, Environment Committee, Northern Virginia Building Industry Association
Michael Rolband, Wetland Studies and Solutions, Inc.

//

Planning Commission Vice Chairman Walter L. Alcorn, constituted the meeting at 7:30 p.m. in the Board Conference Room at 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, Virginia, pursuant to Section 4-102 of the Commission's *Bylaws & Procedures*, and indicated that the first order of business was to elect a committee chairman.

Commissioner de la Fe MOVED TO ELECT COMMISSIONER JAMES HART AS CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE.

Commissioner Lawrence seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

//

Chairman Hart noted that the second order of business was approval of minutes.

Commissioner de la Fe MOVED THAT THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES OF JANUARY 25, 2007 BE APPROVED.

Commissioner Lawrence seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

//

Chairman Hart announced the following committee schedule:

- April 19, 2007 – Committee Meeting, 7:30 p.m., Board Conference Room, Energy Star Green Building Presentation.
- April 28, 2007 – Field trip to visit Wetlands Studies and Solutions, Inc. to tour a "green" building, at 10:00 a.m., Gainesville, Virginia.
- May 10, 2007 – Committee Meeting, 7:30 p.m. Board Conference Room, Northern Virginia Building Industry Association presentation.

//

Noel Kaplan introduced Brendan Owens, Director, Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Technical Development, U. S. Green Building Council, to present an overview of the program. (A copy of the presentation is in the date file.)

Mr. Owens stated that buildings had an enormous impact on the environment because they: 1) consumed 70 percent of electricity generated in the U. S. each year, both commercial and residential; 2) generated 65 percent of waste output; 3) caused 30 percent of greenhouse gas emissions; and 4) used 12 percent of the water supply. He said "green" buildings had proven to reduce waste 50-90 percent and water usage 30-50 percent; produce carbon savings of 35 percent; and energy savings around 30 percent.

Mr. Owens explained that the role the U. S. Green Building Council (USGBC) was to educate industry and the public about environmental issues, provide opportunities for stewardship, and to promote buildings that were healthy places to live and work, environmentally responsible, and economically profitable. He said USGBC also offered expertise, provided tools, and served as a forum for industry dialogue.

Mr. Owens said that USGBC had been founded in 1996 and now had 8,500 member organizations comprised of planners; building owners; architects; federal, local, and state governments; product manufactures; nonprofit leaders; engineers; interior designers; code officials; landscape architects; property managers; utility managers; building tenants; and financial planners.

Mr. Owens explained that the LEED rating system provided a framework for design, construction, and operations to assess environmental issues with a performance threshold above which points were awarded. He identified the core green building components as: site planning; water management, energy management; material use; and indoor environmental quality and noted that LEED also recognized innovation and design processes. He said features such as stormwater management, building location, and access to public transportation were considered and a LEED certification was awarded at the end of the design and construction process. He pointed out that LEED categories included new construction, commercial interiors, existing buildings, core and shell buildings, homes, neighborhood development, and schools (the latter three being new programs). He said ratings ranged from LEED Certified, LEED Silver, LEED Gold, to LEED Platinum.

Mr. Owens described LEED as a voluntary, consensus based certification system and noted that green building techniques were becoming more routine in application due to their use in LEED projects. He indicted that negative stigmas associated with new, green technologies were being removed and cited the acceptance of waterless urinals in Washington, D.C.'s building code as an example.

Mr. Owens stated that the U.S. Green Building Council was in the process of streamlining the LEED certification process and stated that there was a need to go further in this regard.

Mr. Owens noted that the application of LEED was increasing rapidly. He noted that, in 2002, there were over 80 million square feet of building space in some stage of the LEED process, but that at the present time there were over 850 million square feet of buildings at some stage in the process. He stated that this figure was expected to rise to a billion square feet by mid-year. He said 65 entities had adopted LEED in some form, including both the public and private sectors.

Mr. Owens also noted efforts of the U.S. Green Building Council in incorporating green building concepts into building codes through the establishment of an ASHRAE standard.

Mr. Owens briefly identified a few case studies of local green building programs and incentive efforts.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Alcorn, Mr. Kaplan explained that the goal of the County was to endorse the concept of "green" buildings, lay the groundwork to do so, and develop an implementation process, but not to adopt a specific program.

In response to another question from Commissioner Alcorn, Mr. Owens said USGBC had a residential program and would have a retail certification program by the end of the year.

//

Chairman Hart announced that the next agenda item was the proposed Policy Plan Amendment on Stream and Buffer Area Protection/Restoration.

Mr. Kaplan noted that a memorandum dated March 21, 2007 had been distributed concerning Policy Plan Amendment options to strengthen policy in headwaters areas, a copy of which is in the date file. He noted that this memorandum presented the same draft Plan Amendment that was presented in January with a couple of minor changes. He proceeded to describe the changes as follows:

He explained that the amendment retained the previous two-option approach to strengthening stream protection policy as supported by the Environment Committee. Option One would promote headwaters stream protection as a general water quality policy and Option Two would explicitly expand the EQC policy and apply it to headwaters and streams beyond areas that had been identified as EQC in the past. Mr. Kaplan explained that both approaches recognized that design and stormwater management issues needed to be considered on a site-by-site basis. He said that, in the previous draft, one approach would recommend that headwater protection only occur where consistent with site design and stormwater management; the other recognized site design and stormwater management as consideration items (i.e., headwater stream protection would be considered on an equal basis with stormwater management and site design concerns). Mr. Kaplan noted that the Environment Committee had asked him to explore which approach would afford the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors with the maximum amount of flexibility to make changes subsequent to advertisement. He explained that the County Attorney's Office had advised him that the latter approach would be more flexible and would allow the Planning Commission and Board to revert to the former approach if that is what they wanted to do. He noted that the language in the handout had therefore been structured to preface the guidance regarding headwater streams (for both options) with: "In consideration of overall site design and stormwater management benefits....".

Mr. Kaplan said at the request of Mike Rolband and based on guidance provided by the Stormwater Planning Division of the Department of Public Works and Environmental Services, language had been added to Option One that would also address restoration as well as protection of stream channels and riparian buffer areas (Option Two already contained such language). He said the next step in the process would be for the committee to endorse the proposed Policy Plan Amendment as set forth in the March 21 memorandum to the full Planning Commission to request that the Board of Supervisors authorize advertisement of the proposed amendment.

Chairman Hart asked for a motion TO RECOMMEND TO THE FULL PLANNING COMMISSION THAT IT ENDORSE A PROPOSED POLICY PLAN AMENDMENT, INCLUDING BOTH OPTIONS AS DISCUSSED TONIGHT, TO STRENGTHEN POLICY IN HEADWATERS AREAS AND REQUEST THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS TO AUTHORIZE ADVERTISEMENT OF THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT.

Commissioner Alcorn SO MOVED. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

//

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.

Meeting by: Norma J. Duncan
Minutes by: Linda B. Rodeffer

Approved: April 19, 2007

Linda B. Rodeffer, Clerk
Fairfax County Planning Commission