

**FAIRFAX COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, MAY 31, 2007**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

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

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Rodney L. Lusk, Lee 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 PUBLIC WORKS AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICES STAFF PRESENT:

Michelle Brickner, Director, Site Development Services

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING STAFF PRESENT:

Noel Kaplan, Senior Environmental Planner, Planning Division (PD)
Pamela Nee, Chief, Environment and Development Review Branch, PD
John Bell, Planner III, PD

OTHERS PRESENT:

Marlae Schnare, Springfield District Supervisor's Office

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Chairman James R. Hart called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m. He said tonight the Committee would again discuss the draft Plan Amendment addressing air quality and green building issues.

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Noel Kaplan, Planning Division, Department of Planning and Zoning, explained that the committee had received several presentations since the draft of a Plan Amendment addressing air quality and green building issues had been issued in January 2007¹. He noted that there were only two significant changes to the original proposal. (A copy of the proposed amendment is in the date file.)

Mr. Kaplan said the first proposed change, found on page 6 of 9 of the handout, Objective 13 of the Policy Plan Environment Section, was being proposed as a result of comments offered during the presentation of ENERGY STAR programs given by Michael Zatz and Jonathan Passe; the comments suggested that the ENERGY STAR program and green building systems should not be put on the same footing because ENERGY STAR was not a green building standard; it complemented green building and ensured energy conservation if green building standards were applied. Mr. Kaplan noted that the comments from the presenters indicated that ENERGY STAR required a lesser level of builder commitments than green building design and that there was not a great deal of cost associated with the ENERGY STAR program. Therefore, Mr. Kaplan indicated that the text on page 6 was being proposed for revision so that the two would not be identified in the same context. Mr. Kaplan said ENERGY STAR was now defined as desirable to pursue but had been taken out of the context of an incentive. He noted that both green building rating systems and ENERGY STAR could be included in Area Plan optional language.

Mr. Kaplan said the second revision, on page 8 of 9, in the Policy Plan, Land Use Section, Appendix 9, Residential Development Criteria, item g) "Energy" had been added because the focus of the current language did not include energy efficiency in building design; rather, the current focus was on site design techniques, solar orientation, landscaping, and non-motorized transportation facilities. He indicated that staff was proposing the addition of a sentence to this item to encourage incorporation of energy efficiency measures into building design, such as ENERGY STAR and other green building components.

In response to a question from Chairman Hart, Mr. Kaplan said the proposed amendment provided general policy support and did not establish incentives or direct implementation actions. Chairman Hart said that it was the intent of the Board of Supervisors to implement the policy. Mr. Kaplan replied that having the policy in place would provide broad support when negotiating proffer commitments during zoning cases even if not linked to incentives. He added that staff had been working with the Department of Public Works and Environmental Services to identify possible incentives and implementation techniques. Chairman Hart requested that when an action plan addressing incentives and implementation was available, it come back to the Committee.

Commissioner Lawrence suggested that one incentive could be a monetary penalty if goals were not reached, similar to recent commitments to the Transportation Demand Management programs. He also questioned whether any program, such as LEED or ENERGY STAR should be referred to by name. He suggested instead the policy address goals only with an Appendix, which could be updated, with examples of specific programs. Commissioner Lawrence further suggested that the policy apply to both design and construction.

Commissioner Lawrence suggested that a statement regarding indoor air quality be added to the air quality section of the amendment. Mr. Kaplan noted that indoor air quality had been identified as a component of green building design in the green building section of the draft amendment but had not been included in the air quality section.

Referring to Objective 13, "Maintain and enhance the efficient use of natural resources," Commissioner Flanagan commented that green building encompassed more than conservation of natural resources. Mr. Kaplan agreed and said perhaps this objective should be broadened.

In response to another question from Commissioner Flanagan, Mr. Kaplan said the bullets under proposed Policy a of Objective 13 provided a general overview of green building practices. Commissioner Flanagan suggested revising it to state: "Encourage practices and provide incentives where appropriate for commitments to the pursuit of certification programs." He said this would not give the impression that the bullets referred to LEED and ENERGY STAR certification only. Mr. Kaplan responded that there was a great deal of commonality among the rating systems and the intent was not to list all criteria and rating systems.

Commissioner Flanagan questioned whether the Policy Plan was the proper place to get into this level of detail. Mr. Kaplan said he did not think the proposed amendment set the course for implementation but provided broad policy support for green building practices and was appropriate for the Policy Plan. He added that he thought it was important to identify examples of green building practices that could be referenced when negotiating specific components of green building during evaluation of zoning applications (e.g., in cases where developers may not wish to commit to pursuing certification).

Responding to another question from Commissioner Flanagan, Mr. Kaplan said that the only change to the Residential Development Criteria that was being proposed in the draft amendment was the last sentence of g): "Energy efficiency measures should be incorporated into building design."

In regard to the discussion regarding the bullet points proposed for Objective 13, Policy a, Commissioner Alcorn commented that he thought it made sense to cite examples to illustrate what the policy was trying to achieve. He noted that metrics and scoring of certification programs were evolving.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Alcorn, Mr. Kaplan said the language under Policy h, on page 5, concerning transportation demand management, had been deleted because it was addressed in proposed Policy b. Commissioner Alcorn requested that this language be reviewed to make sure nothing was omitted and said he would like to see language remain calling for minimizing dependence on single occupant automobiles. Commissioner de la Fe noted that this was addressed in the Transportation Plan.

In response to a question from Commissioner Hart, Mr. Kaplan said policy g, on page 5, addressed reduction of emissions from stationary sources of air pollution.

Commissioner Sargeant recommended that the structure of the proposed language under Objective 13 be revised such that best practices pertaining to green building design would be identified first, perhaps followed by references to LEED and ENERGY STAR as examples of implementation. He said builders could indicate that they could not achieve a specific

certification or if they did, they might not do anything else. He said this information would be valuable to Commissioners when evaluating an application.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Sargeant, Mr. Kaplan noted that green building and air quality were two distinct parts of the draft amendment to the Environment Section of the Policy Plan. He said the focus of the air quality section was to identify what could be done during the land use process to support air quality improvement and that green building was a component of that.

Chairman Hart said he did not think the proposed amendment was ready to go forward and that the committee would meet again on June 27, 2007 to finalize its review.

Chairman Hart noted that the Northern Virginia Building Industry Association had suggested that he and one other committee member tour a green house and said more details would be forthcoming. Commissioner Sargeant expressed interest in taking the tour.

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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.

Minutes by: Linda B. Rodeffer

Approved: June 27, 2007

Linda B. Rodeffer, Clerk
Fairfax County Planning Commission

ⁱ Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), U. S. Green Building Council (March 29, 2007)

ENERGY STAR, U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (April 19, 2007)

Wetlands Studies and Solutions, Inc.'s (WSSI) green building tour (April 28, 2007)

Northern Virginia Building Industry Association (NVBIA) and the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) (May 16, 2007)