

**FAIRFAX COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION  
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE  
THURSDAY, JUNE 24, 2010**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Frank A. de la Fe, Hunter Mill District  
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 MEMBER ABSENT:**

Walter L. Alcorn, At-Large

**OTHER COMMISSIONER PRESENT:**

Peter F. Murphy, Jr., Springfield 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  
Linda B. Rodeffer, Clerk

**ATTACHMENT:**

Green Building Policy Review Issues

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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 MARCH 25, 2010 AND APRIL 29, 2010 BE APPROVED.

Commissioner Donahue seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

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Maya Dhavale and Noel Kaplan, Environment and Development Review Branch, Planning Division, Department of Planning and Zoning, and Committee members discussed research and staff recommendations on Green Building Policy Review issues, items 1-11, as shown in the Attachment.

A Committee meeting was scheduled for July 22, 2010, at 7:00 p.m. to discuss items 12-21.

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The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.  
James R. Hart, Chairman

An audio recording of this meeting is not available due to technical difficulties.

Minutes by: Linda B. Rodeffer

Approved: July 22, 2010

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Linda B. Rodeffer, Clerk  
Fairfax County Planning Commission

Green Building Policy Review -- Planning Commission -- June 24, 2010			
Item	Issue	Research	Staff Recommendation
Issues raised by Planning Commission			
1	Which green building rating system to use? Concerns about selecting a system with wide-spread/national use that is comprehensive. No interest in creating a system specific for Fairfax County.	COG recommends LEED for non-residential in their December 2007 report (currently no recommendation for residential). Other jurisdictions in the area use LEED.	Continue to recommend LEED or equivalent for non-residential buildings. Recommendation for residential to be determined.
2	Are builders able to recover their costs?	Much research has been done nationwide. The general consensus is that builders gain value from building green***.	None.
3	What does the building industry think? / need for building industry input.	NAIOP frequently has green building/LEED events with substantial interest from members. Significant numbers of LEED projects in Northern VA.	None.
4	Considering the location of a building and how it fits into the built environment (building green) vs. a green building. Encouraging consolidation.	LEED-ND addresses this issue, but at the cost of not focusing as exclusively on green buildings.	The neighborhood design (location of the building and the surrounding built environment) is generally addressed with the existing site-specific guidance in the Comprehensive Plan. Green building expectations will be addressed through the green building policy, although the language can be clarified to emphasize the importance of "building green."
5	Adaptive reuse of buildings, policies to encourage retention and reuse of historic buildings.	LEED does emphasize reuse of buildings and construction materials during renovations.	Green building policy guidance could be updated to emphasize this.
6	Compare County's green building policies and success to other jurisdictions.	Other local jurisdictions in VA have similar policies***. Our project total is also comparable***.	None.
7	Compare County's green building policy/program to Arlington, Charlottesville, Roanoke.	Charlottesville has many environmental programs and LEED buildings, as well as a green buildings policy. Roanoke has environmental programs and LEED buildings but do not appear to have a green building policy. Arlington's policy is one of the most developed in Virginia.	None.
8	What is the evolution of green building issues/rating systems since adoption of the policy in December 2007?	Staff has encountered issues with clarifying specific LEED rating system, agreements and proffers, federal/secure buildings, enforcement mechanisms (i.e. escrows), timing of requirements, and residential rating systems.	None.
9	How to address existing buildings in our policy?	Many jurisdictions require LEED-EB for existing buildings. Renovating buildings are covered either by LEED-NC if applicable, or LEED-EB	None.
10	Analyze pending applications of various land use types, following their progress through the zoning process to determine how the policy is used and if the cases are positively or negatively affected.	We have created a green building database with all cases, ranging from "soft" commitments to green building practices through certification. We can use this database to follow all cases with green building elements***.	None.
11	More specific policy guidance discussing alternatives to LEED.	Use of an "equivalent" to LEED is common in policies nationwide***.	Staff can explain "or equivalent" more clearly in the language (i.e. third-party, independently verified) but listing specific programs could be problematic.
12	How to implement our policy? Should there be an implementation entity as in Tysons plan?	Implementation is generally done by the jurisdiction.	None.
13	How to green the operations/management of buildings?	Currently staff recommends the creation of a "green building manual." Research suggests creation of DVDs and training materials in addition to the manual, as well as ongoing attainment of LEED-EB*** or submission of monitoring reports.	None.
14	Is there a way to document/certify if green building goals have been achieved? Interested in monitoring performance as compared to goals.	There are a variety of tools (such as meters) available as well as monitoring programs such as Energy Star's Portfolio Manager***. However, operations data can be difficult to interpret.	None.
15	Are there third parties to conduct annual monitoring review and proof of compliance?	There are a variety of companies that provide monitoring services or tools to use (e.g. Pulse Energy***). Some are suited to commercial or residential applications.	None.
Issues raised by Staff			

\*\*\* Indicates additional information/research is available.

Item	Issue	Research	Staff Recommendation
16	What are the goals of the green building Policy Plan - energy efficiency/conservation, water conservation, etc.?	Our County faces a variety of issues that LEED addresses (e.g. stormwater, urban heat islands, preserving open space) - some issues of are more concern or problem in various areas of the County.	Staff recommends flexible Plan guidance to ensure all projects can focus on the most appropriate green building areas.
17	Emphasis/selection of certain credits or categories of credits over others?	COG's December 2007 discussed a "COG Regional Standard" with specific LEED credits to be included.*** Many other jurisdictions throughout the Country prefer additional credits beyond the minimum in specified categories.	Depending on what goals are emphasized, the guidance in the Policy Plan can be updated to reflect an emphasis on certain credits or categories.
18	Distinction between certain types of LEED (e.g. LEED-NC, LEED-ND, LEED-EB).	Very few other jurisdictions (none in the area) distinguish between types of LEED.	To ensure that our vision for the Plan Policy remains consistent with proposed development, staff recommends revising the plan guidance to clarify LEED-NC or LEED-CS.
19	The residential recommendation in the current policy does not reflect the current market.	The residential market has significantly changed since the adoption of the green building policy. (e.g. EarthCraft, LEED for Homes, Passivhaus, NAHB). Energy Star is still the foundation for most of the rating systems.	Staff recommends updating the residential policy to include "Energy Star Qualified Homes or equivalent."
20	How to handle public-private partnerships?	The County has the potential for public-private partnerships that have an expectation of green building. This can create conflict as the standards for private and public development may vary.	Public-private partnership green building expectations should be clarified in the plan guidance.
21	LEED-EB expected in addition to initial LEED certification?	Some jurisdictions do recommend this. However, the implementation of this is problematic.	Staff recommends investigating enforcement mechanisms.

\*\*\* Indicates additional information/research is available.