

**FAIRFAX COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
POLICY AND PROCEDURES COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 13, 2007**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Walter L. Alcorn, At-Large
Earl L. Flanagan, Mount Vernon District
Janet R. Hall, Mason District
James R. Hart, At-Large
Kenneth Lawrence, Providence District

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Suzanne F. Harsel, Braddock District
Nancy Hopkins, Dranesville District
Rodney Lusk, Lee District

OTHER PLANNING COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Peter F. Murphy, Jr., Springfield District
Timothy J. Sargeant, Mount Vernon District

STAFF PRESENT:

Fred Selden, Director, Planning Division (PD), Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ)
Marianne Gardner, PD, DPZ
Clara Quintero Johnson, PD, DPZ
Anna Bentley, PD, DPZ
Barbara J. Lippa, Executive Director, Planning Commission Office
Linda B. Rodeffer, Clerk, Planning Commission Office

OTHERS PRESENT:

Phil Yates, Dewberry and Davis

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Chairman Janet R. Hall called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. in the Board Conference Room at 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, Virginia. She noted that the first order of business was approval of minutes.

Commissioner Alcorn MOVED THAT THE MINUTES OF THE MAY 24, 2007 POLICY AND PROCEDURES COMMITTEE MEETING BE APPROVED, AS AMENDED.

Commissioner Hart seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

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Clara Quintero Johnson, Planning Division (PD), Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ), reviewed topics discussed at the previous committee meeting on May 24, 2007 which included early screening of APR nominations by staff and the Planning Commission to determine which

items should be accepted, rejected, or deferred for special study. She noted that three concerns had been raised: adequate justification for a nomination; the concept for future development in specific areas, and how to handle changes to mixed use centers.

Referring to adequate justification, Commissioner Hart commented that although nominations should not be moving targets, he thought there should be an opportunity for agreed-upon changes. Chairman Hall replied that she understood the proposed process to mean that a task force would vote on a nomination as submitted. Ms. Johnson agreed and said it was intended to be an incentive to ensure that viable nominations were received and not changed before a task force vote. Chairman Hall agreed with Commissioner Hart that a nomination should be able to be improved upon during the process.

Commissioner Sargeant commented that a nomination should include enough information to be evaluated in accordance with Comprehensive Plan recommendations and said he liked the idea of having a task force vote on a nomination as submitted.

Marianne Gardner, PD, DPZ, said the intent of adequate justification was to prohibit significant changes to a nomination after submission which would require re-evaluation by staff.

Responding to a question from Chairman Hall, Barbara Lippa, Executive Director, Planning Commission Office, said that her staff did a cursory review of a nomination when submitted and it was then sent to DPZ for the indepth staff evaluation.

Fred Selden, PD, DPZ, said in the past a preliminary staff report was issued before a nomination was considered by a task force and if issues were raised about traffic, density, parks, etc., a nominator could significantly change the submission at the time of task force consideration. However, he said staff did not have an opportunity to evaluate such new proposals and the original evaluation often became a waste of staff resources.

In response to questions from Commissioner Flanagan, Ms. Gardner said staff would like for the nominator to understand that what they submit would be evaluated by the task force. Commissioner Flanagan agreed that changing the nomination after staff analysis was a waste of staff resources. Ms. Gardner said the goal was to prevent this from happening through the initial screening process and that if a nomination violated criteria, staff would make a recommendation for no further consideration.

Commissioner Lawrence commented that he had experienced instances in which staff and task force evaluations had been rendered moot by nominators and it should be clearly understood that nominations could not be significantly changed after submission.

Commissioner Sargeant said staff's preliminary analysis of a nomination was essential for a task force and that nominators should be told that their proposals had to meet best management practices for stormwater management, density, etc., and conform to the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Selden agreed that a preliminary staff report was necessary and nominators should be aware

that if they wanted their proposal to move forward it had to be reasonable and fit within the policy framework of the Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Murphy commented that he had seen nominations greatly improved by citizen and task force input and said that the process should allow such flexibility. Mr. Selden said that was a good point and perhaps the requirement for an initial task force vote should be removed and the task force could decide if it wanted to vote. Commissioner Hart also agreed that flexibility was important.

Responding to a question from Chairman Hall, Mr. Selden said sometimes staff suggested an alternative if a land use change was appropriate but, for example, with a different density. Chairman Hall said a vetting process was needed so that nominations could either be improved or rejected. Ms. Gardner reiterated that a substantial change would require another staff analysis.

Commissioner Sargeant concurred that staff input was essential and said perhaps staff could analyze a nomination but not make a recommendation. He said this would allow citizens to have data to work with but the nominator would not feel it necessary to work for or against a staff recommendation. He said this might discourage "bait and switch." Mr. Selden commented that staff analyses highlighted issues which led to recommendations.

Commissioner Flanagan pointed out that task force time would be doubled if both a preliminary and a final review were required. Commissioner Lawrence noted that only a few nominations would fall into this category.

Ms. Gardner explained that the intent was to put the power to change a nomination into the hands of a task force instead of a nominator and if a task force recommended a revision, staff would support it.

Three handouts were distributed as follows and are in the date file:

- Communication Strategy and Outreach Effort
- Area Plan Review (APR) Timeline
- 2008-2009 North County and 2009-2010 South County Area Plans Review Timeline.

Ms. Johnson pointed out that the Nomination Acceptance Process, including early screening and the Communication Strategy and Outreach Effort, called for mailings to adjacent property owners after acceptance of the nomination but before the task force process. She said the purpose of this was to target property owners who might be interested in participating before task force meetings began.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Lawrence, Ms. Johnson said the mailings would inform citizens where they could find further information. She also said that staff had consulted with the Office of Public Affairs (OPA) about public outreach resources.

In response to a question from Commissioner Alcorn, Ms. Johnson said staff had not yet consulted with the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) office.

Referring to the second handout calling for outreach implementation in February 2008 and submission of nominations in May 2008, Commissioner Alcorn asked if these dates could be moved up. Ms. Johnson replied that the end of the nomination submission period drove the beginning of the process and it could not happen too much earlier because staff was also working on major studies. She added that additional constraints included the fact that 2007 was an election year and the new requirement for Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to review certain nominations.

Commissioner Alcorn asked if two public hearings would be necessary for nominations requiring VDOT review. Mr. Selden explained the Planning Commission would hold public hearings on all nominations and determine which ones should go to VDOT for review and that a second public hearing on those nominations would be necessary. He said that all of the details had not yet been worked out. Commissioner Alcorn said this issue needed to be discussed further.

Responding to a question from Chairman Hall, Mr. Selden said representatives of DPZ, the County Attorney's Office, and VDOT would address the new requirement for VDOT review of some nominations.

Commissioner Alcorn requested that staff consult with GIS and Commissioner Murphy suggested that OPA staff be invited to a future meeting of the committee.

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The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.
Janet R. Hall, Chairman

For a verbatim record of this meeting, reference may be made to the audio recording which can be found in the Office of the Planning Commission of Fairfax County, Virginia.

Minutes by: Linda B. Rodeffer

Approved: July 26, 2007

Linda B. Rodeffer, Clerk
Fairfax County Planning Commission