
Planning Commission Environment Committee

Green Buildings Workshop
September 6, 2007

Overview

- Background on process to date
 - June 27, 2007 memorandum regarding Arlington County's green building incentive program and possible application in Fairfax County
 - Referral to Planning Commission Environment Committee
 - "Strawman" outline
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Green Building Practices

Include:

- Environmentally-sensitive site planning
 - Energy efficiency/conservation
 - Water conservation/water resource protection
 - Conservation of materials
 - Indoor environmental quality
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Draft Policy Plan Amendment

- Presented to Environment Committee in January, 2007
 - Several subsequent Committee meetings leading to support for public hearings
 - Draft amendment would incorporate broad policy support for green building practices
 - Would not establish incentives
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June 27, 2007 Memorandum

- Investigation of potential to use green building incentives applied by Arlington County
 - Density/intensity bonuses
 - Increased building heights
 - Green Building Fund
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June 27, 2007 Memorandum

- Options for density/intensity incentives/encouragement of green building practices through the Comprehensive Plan:
 - General linkage to Area Plan options
 - Bonus densities/intensities through Policy Plan guidance
 - Special Exception procedure for additional density/intensity
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Arlington County's Green Building Fund

- \$0.03 per square foot contribution required through site plan conditions
 - Refunded if LEED certification is attained within one year of occupancy
 - Fund supports education, outreach and training
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July 9, 2007 Board of Supervisors Actions

Included (but not limited to):

- Authorization of Plan Amendment for public hearings
 - Referral of June 27 memorandum to Planning Commission Environment Committee
 - Request for consideration of promotion/encouragement of green building practices through the Comprehensive Plan
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Key Issues

- 1: Bonus densities/intensities
 - 2: Green building performance levels
 - 3: Geographical application
 - 4: Residential vs. nonresidential application
 - 5: Enforcement
 - 6: Green building fund
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Issue 1: Bonus Densities/Intensities

Concerns:

- Basis for identification of magnitude of “bonuses”
 - Extent to which density/intensity can be used as an incentive tool
 - Relationship to Area Plan recommendations/implications to transportation, schools, etc.
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Issue 1: Bonus Densities/Intensities

Strawman proposal #1

- **Do not pursue density/intensity bonuses at this time**
 - **Consider bonuses through Area Plan reviews**
 - **Incorporate into Policy Plan linkages between Area Plan options/density-intensity ranges and green building performance**
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Issues 2, 3, and 4: Specifics of Application

- Levels of green building performance
 - Levels of Plan options/ranges
 - Geographic limitations
 - Type of development limitations
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Issues 2, 3, and 4: Specifics of Application

- Use of certification/rating systems
 - Verification/enforceability
 - Need for third party verification
 - Statement from qualified third party
 - Certification under an established program
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Issues 2, 3, and 4: Specifics of Application

Strawman proposal #2

- **Incorporate certification under an established green building program as a preferred means of third party verification**
 - **Retain flexibility to consider other approaches during the zoning process**
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Issues 2, 3, and 4: Specifics of Application

- Green building certification programs
 - Retention of flexibility
 - Need for rigorous, effective and enforceable approach
 - Consider single family and low-rise multifamily residential separate from other development
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Issues 2, 3, and 4: Specifics of Application

- Nonresidential and high rise multifamily residential
 - LEED rating system applied by the U.S. General Services Administration
 - LEED adopted by other DC area jurisdictions
 - MWCOCG Intergovernmental Green Building Group—Interim report recommends LEED
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Issues 2, 3, and 4: Specifics of Application

Strawman proposal #3

- **Identify LEED as an acceptable green building rating system**
 - **Retain flexibility to allow for consideration of alternative equivalent systems/approaches during the zoning process**
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Issues 2, 3, and 4: Specifics of Application

- Single family and low-rise multifamily residential
 - LEED for Homes in pilot stage
 - NAHB Green Home Building Guidelines—ANSI recognition sought
 - MWCOCG Intergovernmental Green Building Group—Interim report does not recommend a specific rating system at this time—further study needed
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Issues 2, 3, and 4: Specifics of Application

Strawman proposal #4

- **Limit LEED-based (or equivalent) linkages to Plan to nonresidential development, mixed use development and multifamily residential development of four or more stories.**
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Issues 2, 3, and 4: Specifics of Application

Strawman proposal #5

- **Limit LEED-based (or equivalent) linkages to Plan to transit station areas and other growth centers.**
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Issues 2, 3, and 4: Specifics of Application

Strawman proposal #8

- **Adopt Policy Plan text providing broad support for green building practices**
 - **Pursue green building commitments, even outside areas subject to LEED based (or equivalent) linkage to the Plan.**
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Issues 2, 3, and 4: Specifics of Application

- Level of green building performance
 - LEED certified applied by Montgomery County and Washington DC in their green building mandates
 - Interim COG report suggests LEED certified with focus on several specific LEED credits, with strengthening to LEED silver by 2012.
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Issues 2, 3, and 4: Specifics of Application

Strawman proposal #6

- **Establish LEED certified level (or equivalent) as level of performance to be linked to Plan options and densities/intensities.**
 - **Pursue commitments to Silver or higher LEED (or equivalent) performance and commitments to LEED credits of particular local/regional importance.**
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Issues 2, 3, and 4: Specifics of Application

Strawman proposal #7

- **Apply green building performance linkage for**
 - **Comprehensive Plan options**
 - **Overlay levels of development**
 - **High end of the density/intensity range**
 - **Consider the top 40% of the nonresidential intensity range**
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Issues 2, 3, and 4: Specifics of Application

Strawman proposal #9

- **Pursue commitments to the “Designed to Earn the ENERGY STAR®” program.**



Issues 2, 3, and 4: Specifics of Application

Strawman proposal #10

- **Establish expectation that, for residential development at the high end of the Plan density range, eligible homes will qualify for the “ENERGY STAR® Qualified Homes” designation.**
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Issue 5: Enforcement

- All approaches identified would be implemented through the zoning process
 - Challenge associated with enforcement of proffered/conditioned green building commitments
 - Green building determinations generally made after construction--not timed consistent with site plan or building plan review processes
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Issue 5: Enforcement

- Variety of enforcement approaches can be incorporated into green building commitments
 - Link to issuance of occupancy permits
 - Link to bond release
 - Establish additional bond/escrow/surety
 - Other approaches may be available (e.g., multi-phased development)
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Issue 5: Enforcement

■ Green Building Bond

□ Amount

- Arlington County: Value of density/intensity bonus
 - Washington, DC: Percentage of total cost of building

 - Could be linked to the value associated with the Plan option or density/intensity range
 - Could be based on total square footage of the building
 - Further analysis would be needed to identify approach for determination of values of Plan options and density/intensity ranges
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Issue 5: Enforcement

- Disposition of defaulted funds
 - Could be conveyed to an existing fund supporting environmental project implementation
 - Further analysis suggested
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Issue 5: Enforcement

Strawman proposal #11

- **Retain flexibility to consider enforcement approaches that may be identified by applicants during the zoning process**
 - **Recognize the following as acceptable approaches:**
 - **Linkage to occupancy permits**
 - **Linkage to bond release**
 - **Establishment of a green building bond (subject to further analysis)**
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Issue 6: Green Building Fund

Strawman proposal #12

- **No suggestion at this time**
 - Arlington County—site plan conditions for \$0.03 per square foot contribution, refundable with LEED certification
 - Rough equivalent to LEED registration/certification costs
 - Washington DC--\$0.002 per square foot added to building construction permit fees (new construction)
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Issue 6: Green Building Fund

- Disposition of funds
 - Could be conveyed to an existing fund supporting environmental project implementation
 - Further analysis suggested
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Issue 6: Green Building Fund

- Issues for consideration
 - Suggested amount of contribution
 - Mechanisms for seeking contributions
 - Threshold of green building design/energy performance to be linked to refunds
 - Geographic application
 - Residential vs. nonresidential
 - Minimum square footage thresholds
 - Expenditures of funds
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