

PELU TASK FORCE MEETING #7
Thursday, February 28, 2008

Start Time: 5:10 p.m.
End Time: 7:00 p.m.

Members present: Brian England, Bill Erskine, Judy Fisher-George, James Howard, II, Cathy Hudson, William Lewis, Julia Mattis, Bridget Mugane, Sang Oh, Susan Scheidt, Tim Sosinski, Andrew Stack, Shari Zaret.

Also present: Kimberley Flowers, Stephanie Scott, Theodore Wimberly

The minutes for the meeting held on February 13, 2008 were approved with a correction.

Co Chair, James Howard opened the meeting by introducing the guest Speaker for the evening, Cindy Hamilton, Chief of Land Development.

Cindy Hamilton (CH) was introduced to the task force and available for a question and answer session.

Information Imparted by Ms. Hamilton:

- Ms. Hamilton's division, Land Development (LD), is the hub agency for the Subdivision Review Committee(SRC).
- Her staff consists of 12-14 people.
- LD reviews all land use that are submitted to the County, mostly subdivision and land development plans. LD reviews all phases of plans from sketch plans to the signature on site plans.
- SRC meetings are totally closed to the public for sake of efficiency.
- Only a small minority of plans that are reviewed by LD go before the Planning Board.
- All of LD's decisions are appealable to the Hearing Examiner.

Task Force Issues/Concerns/Questions for Hamilton:

- How can the public get involved in the review process?
 - CH - Attend the pre-submission community meeting or contact the Planner assigned to review the project.
- How is the Howard County review process, compared to other jurisdictions?
 - CH - The Howard County process is different from other jurisdictions, it is a more administrative process.
- Is your staff required to visit every site they review?

- CH - She encourages her staff to visit every site, however, there is no requirement.
- Who has standing in your cases?
 - CH - Anyone who can prove that they have been aggrieved.
- If the presubmission law was to be changed to require an additional presubmission meeting, when should it occur?
 - CH - Maybe, before DPZ approves a technically complete plan.
- Incentives are needed to encourage developers to work with the community.
- The issue of Building Coverage on lots needs to be improved.
- What happens when comments are sent on a SRC project?
 - The sender is copied on the action items and the developer is sent a copy of the comments.
- Can a handout be developed to instruct Community Associations about the relevant issues to pursue regarding complaints?

Subcommittee Issues:

New members were added to the following subcommittees:

Committee #1 (educate the public about land use process and decisions)

Committee #2 (improve the General Plan, comprehensive zoning and regional issues)

Debbie Nix
Shari Zaret

Committee #3 - (improve the land use process in terms of piecemeal zoning, variances, planning board interaction, subdivision process, and the hearing examiner)

Andrew Stack
Patrick Crowe

The following suggestions were made:

- It was asked that the Task Force members to give thought to what the final report should look like.
- It was suggested that the task force focus on the commonalities and similarities within each committee. The committee should consider dissimilarities at the end and not invest time in ironing out the details of differences at this time.
- Each group should identify and then evaluate at strengths/weaknesses and offer suggestions for improvement.

Leaders of Committees

Committee #1 - Cathy Hudson

Committee #2 - Shari Zaret

Committee #3 - Brian England

The next meeting will be held:

March 11, 2008
5-7 p.m., Tyson Room

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephanie Scott
Theodore Wimberly