



## BERKELEY COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

400 West Stephen Street - Suite 203, Martinsburg, WV 25401-3838

Telephone: 304/264-1963, Fax: 304/262-3127

Web Page: [www.berkeleycountycomm.org](http://www.berkeleycountycomm.org)

### **Development Roundtable Meeting** **January 13, 2012** **Notes**

Mike Thompson, the Planning Director, opened the meeting by explaining that he had held similar sessions at his previous places of employment. The sessions are open to the public and the community is welcome. These sessions will be informal. All the agendas will be sent electronically. There will be no formal Minutes taken, but a summary will be compiled by the Administrative Assistant for the Planning Department. At this meeting, the refreshments were provided by Jim Whitacre, a County Council Member. The goal of these sessions are to present any changes that will be occurring in the Planning and Engineering offices regarding permits, the floodplain, codes, and storm water management. This is not the forum for specific plan problems or questions, the office would need to be contacted directly for those issues. The Planning review follows the stated code and the Subdivision Regulations. The Engineering Review follows state code and the Storm Water Management Regulations. Kim Shrader is the only one to perform the engineering reviews.

Work began about one and a half years ago on the proposed changes to the Subdivision Regulations. The work began with previous staff, but has continued with the current staff. The next step that will be taken regarding the changes will be to have a work session with the County Council members. After all questions or concerns are addressed, the Council will hold a public hearing. There should be action taken by the spring. The Development Roundtable members will be notified of the date by email. Steve Thomas and Mike Thompson have more proposed changes to look into in the future, but would like to have the current changes processed first.

The Developer's Agreements that are required in Appendix B should be submitted with Final Plats. A draft of the Developer's Agreement would suffice.

The departments would like a file number on all plats submitted and also a signature block for approvals. The minor plats especially seem to have limited space for these items without covering information. Staff will be sending out more information shortly.

The Land Development process usually includes the sketch, preliminary and final plats. Half of what is being submitted does not involve subdivision. Steve Thomas and Mike Thompson are looking into a site plan process that would cut the time to get projects approved where no subdivision is involved.

An important factor for projects moving forward is to make sure all the information needed is on the plat when submitted. If the items are addressed, there can be discussion.

Kim Shrader discussed the importance of signatures and sealing of drawings submitted to the office. There must be a registered firm and the engineer's seal on the plans. Also, she would like it if the signatures do not cover the license numbers or the state numbers. Ms. Shrader recommended a book on PE laws, rules and regulations.

Dirk Stansbury asked about car lots. He asked if parked cars equal disturbance.

Ms. Shrader answered that disturbance would be measured by grading.

Andy DiMagno asked about the stormwater regulations for existing lots.

Ms. Shrader stated that any disturbance over 5,000 square feet requires storm water management.

Mr. Thompson stated that he feels there will be more storm water regulations coming from the state. We are one of eight counties in the state that are subject to "Save the Bay" regulations.

Steve Thomas, Planner II, stated the he wanted to extend an open door policy to everyone including: public, developers, HOA's, and engineers. He also stated that the office will start documenting interpretations. An example of these interpretations would be plan changes. Since a plan change will be a new preliminary plan, it will have to be advertised and a complete set of plans will need to be submitted. He also stated that plans that are submitted to the office do not need to be standardized, but all the requirements need to be met.

Mike Thompson stated that the Development Roundtable meetings will be quarterly. The next meeting will be held in the early afternoon. If there are any future topics that members would like to discuss, they are welcome. Please submit the items for discussion 10 days prior to the meeting.

The Planning Office will try to respond to calls and emails within a 24 hour period.

Steve Cunningham thanked the departments for holding the roundtable meeting and stated it was a refreshing change.

Greg Yebernetsky also stated his appreciation of the willingness to work together.

Mr. Thompson stated that we are here to work for and with the public. He would like to know if issues arise with other departments, such as the Health Dept., DOT, etc., as he would like to try and resolve them.

A member of the Home Builders Association asked about concurrent review.

Mr. Thompson stated that Planning and Engineering reviews plans within the same time periods.

Jason Gerhart from WHGA asked if there will be any other extensions of approvals for preliminary plats past the 7/12 deadline. He asked how those extensions would be handled in our offices.

Mr. Thompson stated that more discussion is needed on this subject as the stormwater regulations are stricter now. The Planning Commission can extend approvals, but they will have to comply with the new stormwater regulations. There is no grandfathering for stormwater management from the state.

Mr. Thomas encouraged the projects needing extensions to come forth early, so that they can get on the agenda in a timely manner. There have not been any more discussions of automatic extensions.

Mr. Thompson suggested that the state delegates be contacted regarding the automatic extensions.

Mark Dyck from WHGA asked who will not grandfather the old storm water regulations.

Kim Shrader answered that the DEP will not grandfather them.

Matt Pennington, former Planner and current employee of Region 9, stated that he doesn't foresee any more restrictions for at least 2-5 years.

A Dan Ryan representative stated that Jefferson County has a solution to bonding projects that are economically tabled. He asked if Berkeley County is working on a solution as well. He stated that Jefferson County holds a plat in escrow to merge the lots in lieu of a bond.

Mr. Thompson stated he would appreciate information regarding this issue and staff will get with legal counsel and see if it would be feasible to have a similar plan in Berkeley County. Mr. Thompson stated that the next Development Roundtable meeting ma be held in the afternoon to better accommodate people who could not attend this meeting.

The meeting ended approximately at 10:45 am.