

**Processing Action Team/Permitting Review
Site Plan Process Task Force
Minutes of Meeting of December 6, 2006**

Present:

- Matthew Drew, AWB Engineers
- David Bates, Vista Design Group, Inc.
- Brock Parker, Parker and Associates
- Dale Pusey, Supervisory Civil Engineer, City of Salisbury

Meeting Discussion Points:

1. Dale Pusey began discussion on Salisbury Public Works' site development plan review process.
 - a. The City has recently developed an inter-departmental meeting to discuss site development requirements prior to annexation. Representatives of Public Works, Fire, Police and Planning and Zoning departments present development concerns to the City Administrator, John Pick. Those concerns are made known to the property owner prior to annexation. It helps them see problems ahead of actually going through the process.
 - b. The developer's consultant submits a concept drawing of the development plan showing layout of buildings, parking, entrances, stormwater management and water, sewer and storm drainage. Submission of a concept drawing is recommended but not required by Salisbury Public Works. The concept drawing by Public Works is unrelated to Planning Commission review and approval. The concept drawing review by Public Works results in a comment letter to the consultant that includes:
 - Guidance regarding design of water, sewer and storm drainage. Includes oversizing requirements and layout of public and private mains.
 - Explanation of Comprehensive Connection Charges owed by the developer and possible reimbursements that he may collect from future developers.
 - Explanation of regional water, sewer, storm drainage and traffic improvements that may be required and the developer's estimated cost share of those improvements.
 - Regional storm drainage and traffic study requirements.
 - Minimum stormwater management quality control requirements.

Brock Parker said that a concept phase gets the ball rolling. Matt Drew had the idea last week of making this a required step. At first glance it looks like it would extend the project because of it being an extra submittal, but in the long run it would shorten the process. The reviewer wouldn't have to spend as much time going back through the plans and reviewing everything. It would also let the consultant know what issues or problems he is going to face during the project up front. The concept plan should be submitted to the City before preliminary plat approval.

Matt Drew suggested allowing simple projects to bypass this phase. Have some kind of cut off that once exceeded a concept phase is required. Brock suggested requiring a concept phase for projects with a 15 acre or more disturbance.

All members of the group agree that a concept phase should be required. Dale asked if it should be required in the preliminary stage of zoning, before the preliminary plat. Brock suggested that everything could be turned in at the same time to Planning and Zoning and then they could give Public Works their part. Dale said that he wouldn't want a concept phase to hold up Planning and Zoning, so it should be an abbreviated review.

Dale said that he would like to see Public Works held to what they put in writing during the review. Matt agreed with that and asked if there would be support for that. Dale said he would like to say yes, but he is sure that it couldn't be guaranteed that things wouldn't change.

David Bates asked who would be responsible for doing the concept reviews. Would it be the reviewer who would have the project in the other stages of the review? Dale said that ideally it would be, but projects may get shifted as new employees are hired.

- c. The developer's consultant submits a preliminary fully engineered construction improvements plan. The Salisbury Public Works comment letter (P-1) is generated based on compliance with:
- Information contained in the concept letter.
 - City standards and specifications.
 - City utility design guidelines.
 - 2000 Maryland Stormwater Design Manual

The project engineer coordinates his review comments with:

- Salisbury Public Work's traffic engineer
 - Salisbury Public Work's wastewater pretreatment coordinator
 - Salisbury Fire Department
 - Wicomico County Public Works Department
 - Maryland State Highway Administration
- d. Resubmitted plan contains point-by-point response to P-1 and review comments are checked off as they are resolved. This process may take several iterations.

Matt Drew said that he would like to see the comments separated for developers and consultants, which was recommended in the PAT Recommendation Implementation Plan from the last meetings. Brock said that when he gets his comment letter he makes a list of comments that are just for the developer. Dale asked if this would be done in two letters. Matt said it could be, just split them up and have a list of comments for each person.

Brock said he would like to see a list of comments per page of the plan. That way the consultant would know exactly where to look to fix the problem.

Matt said sometimes the developer gets the comment letter and doesn't realize that anything in the letter pertains to him, so doesn't bother reading it. David Bates said that the consultant needs to get everything that the developer gets, so they know what has been sent.

Dale said that having one letter is easier because all the comments are in one place. He feels that splitting the comments up into two letters would cause confusion. Matt suggested that it could be in one document, but still separate the comments for the consultants and developers. Dale said there could be a third section for procedural comments.

2. Brock brought up that there should be some kind of cut off for an endless stream of revisions. Dale said that Public Works' view on that is that the more that is found in the review stages, the less problems there will be in the long run. Brock felt that comments that are not important should not hold up the review process.

David said that he has a problem when new comments are found at each submittal that have been missed in the previous reviews.

3. Brock suggested that the grading permit be issued before the plat is recorded. Dale the grading permit can't be issued until the sediment control plan is signed. The sediment control plan cannot be signed until the site plan is signed so the grading permit can't be approved early.

Matt suggested adding a plan that only addresses the sediment control problems. If they created a sediment and erosion control plan for the site, that could be approved ahead of the plat being recorded and then grading permit could be issued.

Dale added that there would need to be some kind of conditional approval. The developer would have to be willing to take the risk of something coming up that needed to be changed during construction. Dale will speak to Kevin Keenan about having a conditional approval to get the grading permit issued earlier.

One problem that Dale sees with issuing the grading permit early is that the City would lose their leverage to get the deeds and plats recorded. Brock said that if the deeds and plats have to be recorded before the Certificate of Occupancy is issued or the meters are set, the City would still have their leverage, but construction could start sooner.

4. Dale began discussion of the last Recommendation Implementation Plan that was created in 2001 by the Development Process Action Plan (PAT).
 - a. PAT Recommendation #1—Fill new staff positions as soon as possible. Dale said that this is still an issue for Salisbury Public Works. There are currently two open positions that are being advertised. He has advertised in The Daily Times, The Baltimore Sun, the Maryland Municipal League, the Regional American Public Works Association website, and the City of Salisbury website, and has not found anyone. Brock and David said that they have some resumes from qualified people that they will forward to Dale for review.
 - b. PAT Recommendation #2—Outsource for infrastructure design. Dale said that infrastructure design has been being outsourced for five years.

Brock suggested giving the consultant the option paying an extra fee to the City to have the review of their project outsourced. Dale said the City will be starting to outsource review, he is just not sure when that will start. Brock said that the reviewer should let the consultant know if the review is

expected to take longer usual (30 days). This would give the consultant the opportunity to have the project outsourced if time is an issue.

David asked if the whole project would be outsourced or if it would be broken into parts and just outsource certain parts of the project. Everyone agreed that it should be the whole project, breaking it into parts would cause confusion.

Brock commented that the City couldn't outsource right now because there isn't sufficient written guidelines and standards. Dale disagreed; he felt that projects could be outsourced with the current standards of the City of Salisbury. Salisbury Public Works would still do a final review of the project and make any needed changes.

Matt asked if Dale felt the Public Works employees feel threatened by review being outsourced. Dale said that they do.

Brock suggested making outsourcing available only during times when the review will take longer than the expected 30 days. Dale said the City would have a list of pre-qualified consultants to do the review. They would have to know in the beginning how long it would take them, and hold the consultant to that time frame. Brock said that would force the reviewers of Public Works to speed up their review time.

- c. PAT Recommendation #3—Establish a revolving fund for next year's budget (P. Wilbur). Have plan review fees feed into this fund. Dale said that his is no longer needed; the City now is in the "growth pays for growth" philosophy.
- d. PAT Recommendation #4—Need political leadership to support Public Works when plans are rejected. Dale said that the City really doesn't have this problem anymore. They don't really reject that many plans. John Jacobs would like to see Public Works reject more. John wants it to be based on the checklist, but Dale feels like it would be too easy to reject plans if they only went from the checklist.

Brock suggested possibly accepting incomplete or incorrect plans as concept or pre-preliminary plans and let the consultant know the once they fix the major problems listed they would be accepted for full review.

Matt suggested telling the consultant that the review stopped once these major problems were found, and these issues need to be addressed before the review can continue.

David said that a meeting at that point would be helpful to show the consultant exactly what the major problems are that need to be fixed before it can be reviewed.

Dale added that Public Works usually does provide a letter explaining why the plans were rejected and comments on the major problems that have to be fixed before the plans will be reviewed.

5. Due to the time, Dale went through list of PAT Recommendation Summaries and indicated which items were being implemented by Public Works.
 - Recommendation #5—Speeding up the Review Process. See 5-A through 5-M.
 - Recommendation #5-A—Goal of 30 days maximum to reject incomplete plans. Has been implemented by Public Works.
 - Recommendation #5-B—Invite applicants to roundtable discussions (not the Tuesday staff meetings). Previous PAT recommended implementing 5-B-1 and 5-B-2 instead of 5-B.
 - Recommendation #5-B-1—Site Plan Meeting. Has been implemented.
 - Recommendation #5-B-2—Roundtable Meeting. Has not been implemented.
 - Recommendation #5-C—“Reward” (speed up) well done submittals over poorly done ones. Has not been implemented.
 - Recommendation #5-D—Keep first come/first served basis. Separate large from small. Was to be determined by BHZ, not sure if it was implemented.
 - Recommendation #5-E—Small jobs take two weeks maximum for review, with phone call if incomplete. The definition of a small job has changed. It used to mean no stormwater management, but now almost everything has stormwater management.
 - Recommendation #5-F—Standard letter of rejection, to save comment letter time. Has been implemented.

- Recommendation #5-G—Need stricter rejection process. Is not always followed.
- Recommendation #5-H—Bill for subsequent submittals, with fees known in advance, and check due at re-submittal. Has not been implemented.
- Recommendation #5-I—Remove billing from hands of reviewer. Has not been implemented.
- Recommendation #5-J—Submittal dates for transfer of properties established without regard to subdivision plat review and process. Not really a problem anymore.
- Recommendation #5-K—Clear corporate limit lines on plans would be helpful. Has been implemented.
- Recommendation #5-L—Comprehensive plans to be submitted as sketch plans. Has not been implemented.
- Recommendation #5-M—Deal with size of plans...takes days to reduce size for Public Works. Has not been implemented.
- Recommendation #6—Modify Department's Checklist. Has not been implemented.
- Recommendation #6-A—Delete #25 (as-builts). Has not been done.
- Recommendation #6-B—Delete #33 (detailed sequence of construction). Has not been done.
- Recommendation #6-C—Delete #36 (construction specifics) Has not been done.
- Recommendation #6-D—Delete #9 (property monument) Has not been done.
- Recommendation #6-E—Delete #10 (deed and plat reference) Has not been done.
- Recommendation #6-F—Divide into 2 sections: necessary and original submittal versus later in process. Has not been done.

- Recommendation #6-G—#28 Most often missed. Has not been done.
- Recommendation #7—Fire Marshall to attend all Tuesday morning meetings, unless told not necessary. Has not been implemented.
- Recommendation #8—Invite John Redden (County Public Works Department) to the Tuesday meeting, unless not necessary. Can John Redden coordinate the fire department approval process to speed it up? Has been implemented.
- Recommendation #9—Hire consultants with money currently in the budget to do City drainage plan. Has been implemented
- Recommendation #10—Hire consultants with money currently in the budget to do plan of potential annexation areas. Has not been implemented.
- Recommendation #11—Education of the private sector/
Announcement of fees for the year. Has not been implemented.
- Recommendation #12—Coordination of Stormwater Management software between City departments and private sector to save time. City now accepts any software, so this is no longer a problem.
- Recommendation #13—Public Works would like to require dates for responses from other departments. John Pick was to follow up on this.
- Recommendation #14—City and County PW and BHZ staffs would like to meet occasionally to discuss how to exchange information, review requirements, coordinate, etc. Has been implemented.
- Recommendation #15—Need a single sheet listing all people needed for various approvals. Dale was not sure if this has been implemented.
- Recommendation #16—Easement requirement: want plat only and no deed (like the County) (P. Wilbur). Has not been implemented.
- Recommendation #17—Small Permit Day once a week for BHZ applications. Was to be implemented by BHZ director.
- Recommendation #18—Meeting of City, County, Developers, and all agencies for plan submittals. Has not been implemented.

- Recommendation #19—Support formal pre-annexation agreements. Has been implemented.
 - Recommendation #20—Annexation-County to pre-designate areas open for annexation. Change to coincide with County zoning changes. Dale was not sure if this has been implemented.
 - Recommendation #21—Have approval for City and County Stormwater Management under review authority of Planning and Zoning for all City/County facilities with exception that public storm drain construction in City streets would be under their individual jurisdiction. Has not been implemented.
 - Recommendation #22—Change from service area assessment to front foot assessment (into revolving fund). Has not been implemented.
6. Matt Drew began discussion on how to go about implementing the plan. David Bates said that one of the biggest problems with the PAT Recommendation Plan last time was that there was no follow-up. Brock Parker suggested continuing to have meetings once the plan is established. He recommended going from weekly to monthly meetings to check with everyone to see how the plan is working.

David said that some parts of the plan won't be able to be decided by Dale and John Jacobs; some things will have to go through City Council. The recommendations that the team makes need to be taken seriously and followed-up with. There also should be a date that each item is to be implemented by, which should be followed to make sure it happens.

7. The next meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday, December 12, 2006 at 4:00 in Room 300.