



Prince George's County Planning Department
Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations Rewrite
Town of Cheverly – March 12, 2015

- **How does the consolidation of the current zone structure to 43 zones relate to the Regional Transit Districts and the General Plan?**

The Clarion recommends base zones and Planned Development Zones that are envisioned as general plan implementation zones and which could be used in Regional Transit Districts and other centers.

- **What was the discussion around the text amendment process and what revisions have been proposed?**

The term “text amendment” is the legal term for amending any legal code. In order to make changes to the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations, we have to keep this process. This is not to say that how “text amendments” have been used in the county should be how they continue to be used in the future. One possible option is to limit the timeframe in which a text amendment can occur within a given year.

- **Have there been conversations about incorporating incentives around affordable housing or green building practices?**

Many types of incentives are beyond the scope of the Zoning Ordinance. We could investigate techniques such as density incentives, but economic and financial incentives would need to come from other agencies in the county or other implementing parties.

- **Are there going to be any changes in the permitted density in particular areas of the County? The way I understand it, density is currently so high in the county, that you don't need density increases.**

Yes, changes in the permitted density of some zones is a likely outcome of this process. Implementation of a new Zoning Ordinance may result in some reduced density in centers and other locations which may then become more feasible for density transfers. Additionally, the county is looking at the potential for transferring development rights in the rural and agricultural parts of the county (Sustainable Growth Tier 4, for example) to other locations in tier 4 or other parts of the county as part of an ongoing study.

- **What in this process will support more than being heard, but being listened to? What demonstrates that residents have input? How does this process work?**

New recommended procedures in the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations are intended to greatly enhance community input, particularly at the front end of the development



review process where such community input has the most potential for positive discussions and outcomes. One recommendation would add a required pre-application community meeting for certain projects; this kind of meeting could result in a submittal requirement documenting discussion points from the meeting and how the developer has responded to community issues.

With regard to the project to review the codes itself, feedback from the community on the project to date is posted online. We are also working on launching an online commenting system, Open Comment, to allow citizens to have a virtual forum to discuss and vet ideas about the project.

- **How can the code help us get to a place where the County allows development to incorporate green building practices?**

We can start this through the development regulations included in the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations but at some point the best way to incorporate and ensure green building practices is through market demand and updates to the county's building code. The addition of a green building code is a path that many jurisdictions choose, and is an option for Prince George's County in the future.

- **What is the connection to the environmental resources and capacity that exist?**

The county's environmental regulations are spread in multiple parts of the county code today. Environmental analysis is conducted for many types of development applications. This would remain the case moving forward, but the details may evolve.

- **How can the zoning code address limitations or establish special zones for the Anacostia Watershed? Are you looking at "ecological zoning concepts?" Are there any zoning codes that incorporate the environmental regulations in the zoning regulations?**

Portions of the Anacostia River Watershed are already protected by the state-mandated Chesapeake Bay Critical Areas Overlay Zone. The concept of ecological zoning has not come to our attention before now but we can follow up with Clarion to see if they are familiar with jurisdictions that may have explored such tools.

- **Is there a green infrastructure component to the zoning code that recognizes waterways or green infrastructures?**

The county is preparing an update to our 2005 Green Infrastructure Functional Master Plan that will look at these issues.

- **If a site is located both in a transit-oriented area and an environmentally-sensitive area, which goal or code controls? Is there something in the Zoning Ordinance that speaks to this question?**



This is a balance that we will need to explore through this process.

- **It makes sense that there is an emphasis on changes of administration of the zoning, and more professionalization of the zoning ordinance.**
- **Will municipalities have more zoning authority through this process?**
This is a common theme and request we know we will need to address with the rewrite process. We do not intend to reduce any existing municipal zoning powers that have been duly delegated to them.
- **With regard to transitional/shelter housing, the team should understand that the zoning practice for these uses is often quite different than the reality and social services approach.**