REPORT ON IMPROVING THE W-S DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS

W-S Development Review-Related Advisory Committee Report

Committee Members

| Jim Armentrout, Esq.                  | Mike Powers, Commercial Const. |
| Nancy Gould, RLA, AICP               | Phillip Rector, REALTOR®       |
| Clement Little, REALTOR®             | Stan Senft, PE                 |
| Wendy Mailey, MPA                    | John-Troy Witherspoon, GC      |
| Jeff MacIntosh, REALTOR®             |                                 |

Staff Support

Derwick Paige, Deputy City Manager / Greg Turner, Assistant City Manager / Kenneth Millett, Development Specialist - Small Business Liaison / Kareen Smith, City Manager’s Office Coordinator

This document is DRRAC’s report to the W-S City Council on its study of the current development review process, documentation of hindrances within the process that discourage development, and recommendations for improving the review process to make it more efficient and user-friendly.
MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 29, 2012

TO: Mayor Allen Joines and Members of the City Council

FROM: Development Review-Related Advisory Committee (DRRAC)

RE: REPORT ON IMPROVING THE W-S DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS

All nine members of the Development Review-Related Advisory Committee (DRRAC) appreciate the Mayor and Winston-Salem City Council giving us the opportunity to study the City’s current development review process and advise you on improvements needed to make the process more efficient and user friendly. We feel privileged that you appointed us to work with other citizens and City staff to complete this important task. We trust the enclosed Report on Improving Winston-Salem’s Development Review Process meets and, hopefully, exceeds your expectations.

The report provides you with a full range of recommendations, some being very detailed and simple, and others being broad and more complex. Some have no out-of-pocket costs, while others will cost a significant amount. We encourage you to not focus your attention solely on those that are fairly inexpensive because of the challenging economic times. The future costs and potential damage to our job opportunities, tax base, and quality of life will be much, much greater than the cost to implement some of the more expensive recommendations. We, the business, development and real estate sectors of our community, are ready to continue working with you and all of Winston-Salem to find appropriate cost-sharing ways to fund recommendations and begin the needed comprehensive improvements.

Thank you again for the honor of allowing each of us to contribute toward making our great city an even greater place to live and work. We are happy to discuss the report further with you and look forward to presenting the DRRAC report to the Winston-Salem Public Works Committee.
REPORT ON IMPROVING THE W-S DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary ................................................................. 2
Introduction ................................................................................. 7
I. General Committee Information .............................................. 8
II. Summary of Work................................................................. 10
III. Improvement Area Charts ................................................... 12
IV. BIG 5 Recommendations ..................................................... 19
V. Miscellaneous Recommendations .......................................... 21
VI. Conclusions ........................................................................... 22
VII. Appendices ........................................................................... 25
The nine-member Development Review-Related Advisory Committee (DRRAC) began its work in October 2011, as directed by the Winston-Salem City Council. The Committee was charged with developing a report that would advise the Council on ways to improve the City’s development and approval process. The Committee took its charge seriously. During its allotted one-year time schedule, DRRAC met twice a month, visited and met with City staff in each of the seven development review departments (Planning, Inspections, Fire, Engineering, Transportation, Stormwater and Utilities), and visited Greensboro’s One-Stop Development Service Center. DRRAC members worked over 600 volunteer hours inside and outside its meetings to insure its report, “Report on Improving Winston-Salem’s Development Review Process,” would be thorough and would provide the Council with easy to understand recommendations. DRRAC’s working definition of “development review process” can be found on page 10.

During the Committee’s fact finding, it received close to 100 questions, comments and suggestions from builders, developers, real estate professionals, related trade organizations, City staff and citizens. The Committee had discussions with representatives of the Chamber of Commerce, The Downtown Partnership, Winston-Salem Business, Inc. and other groups that assist existing, potential and new businesses. Many of their comments were echoed at the Committee’s public input meetings by the citizens who attended them. Below are a few (paraphrased) examples of the concerns and questions the Committee heard multiple times.

Comment Examples

- “The current review and approval process is confusing, especially for an out-of-town business wanting to explore our City’s requirements and understand how to start and work through the review process.”

- “There is no one person I can go to for guidance, and I don’t even know who or where I go to begin the process. I’ve tried the City’s website, but I can’t find much help there either.”
“No one can tell me which departments have reviewed and approved my plans and what else I need to do. Sometimes I get conflicting requirements from two different departments. Why is this? Don’t they have the same computer system and software to communicate with each other and track my project’s process?”

“If there was more information on the County’s G.I.S. system, it would allow me to gather facts and maps that I need to decide if a site or building is appropriate for what I want to do. It would also speed up the time it takes to prepare the plans and documents that I will need to submit with my applications. Heck, it would save both City staff and me lots of time and money.”

“Hey, sometimes, I can build my project faster than it takes for my plans to get approved; something’s wrong with that.”

Although a daunting task, DRRAC was able to group the comments and ideas it supported into three major areas of the review process that needs improvement: External Communication, Modernization and Technology Utilization, and Internal Structure. A chart was developed for each of the improvement areas that: states the problem or hindrance, lists the Committee’s major recommendations for addressing the problem, and also contains a list of other recommendations DRRAC received and accepted as a positive action that could be taken. The Improvement Area Charts are located on pages 13-18.

Using information from Improvement Area Charts, DRRAC was able to synthesize and rank the recommendations into the top five overall recommendations that together will significantly enhance Winston-Salem’s development review process and make it more efficient and more user-friendly. DRRAC’s BIG 5 Recommendations are below:
REPORT ON IMPROVING THE W-S DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS

DRRAC’s BIG 5 RECOMMENDATIONS

To satisfy its charge to advise Council on ways to make Winston-Salem’s development review process more efficient and user-friendly.

1. Development Services Center. Create a Development Services “One-Stop Shop” with management oversight by one person, whose responsibilities include monitoring the process and providing the City Council and development community with updates about and changes to the review process. Most often, a One-Stop-Shop is a center that provides access to all aspects of the commercial and residential building approval processes, including plan review, inspections and permitting. Some cities have their Development Services Center also being responsible for enforcing the NC State Building Codes and its required inspections and approvals on general construction, plumbing, heating, and electrical inspections. See a copy of Greensboro’s webpage for its Development Services One-Stop-Center on pages 5-6 of APPENDIX 6.

2. Up-to-Date Technology with Designated IS Staff. Provide improved technologies that allow electronic submission and review of plans, shared communication and a single, shared project tracking system with IS technology oversight of the review process by one person or team.

3. New Development Services Webpage. Redesign the City’s website, to include a separate webpage/site designated to the development review process. The content and functionality of the webpage should be determined by a group that includes development community members. This “Virtual One-Stop Shop” should be much more informative, more user-friendly and designed to help with many different types of projects than what is currently on the City’s website.

4. Individual Assistance and Staff Accountability. Provide a single person (gatekeeper) responsible and accountable for the process running smoothly and quickly for each applicant. This employee would be the “go to person” for anyone interested in building or developing in Winston-Salem, and would have the authority to direct and work with departments to correct problems that are unnecessarily slowing down a project.
The gatekeeper would be the person all citizens entering the Bryce A. Stuart Municipal Building would be directed to for any matter related to building and development. Ideally, the gatekeeper would be located on the same floor as the Planning and Inspections Departments (which are currently on two different floors). A less effective, but alternative method could be an electronic kiosk in the building’s lobby that directs a person to the appropriate department/person based upon their need.

The gatekeeper would also be responsible for answering questions, determining for the applicant which approvals and permits are needed and in which order, tracking the applicant’s plans as they move through the review and approval process, and being the liaison between the applicant and the development review departments. (DRRAC sees recommendation #4 as the first step towards creating a Development Services One-Stop Center).

5. **Ongoing Dialogue.** Establish a group of City staff members and representatives of the development and real estate communities to work together, assisting and advising the City Manager and staff as the logistics of approved strategies are discussed.

**DRRAC members realize some of the Big 5 Recommendations are major undertakings** that will be costly, especially since public and private funds are more limited than ever. However, the consequences of ignoring the flaws in the current process and the need to modernize the City’s technology will eventually cost our community much more than the cost of the needed improvements. Just think how much time, money, and natural resources are wasted with the current process. Implementing only **Recommendation 2, Up-to-Date Technology with Designated IS Staff**, above would make a huge difference. Rather than multiple large sets of paper plans being hand delivered to each review department and stored there, electronic submission would allow plans and review comments to be sent to all of the review departments and the applicant with just a click on the computer. This is just one of many examples and reasons why Winston-Salem’s development review process needs improvements that will bring it up to 21st Century standards.
DRRAC trusts that the City Council, City staff and fellow citizens will find useful insights and information in its report, and will agree that it is not the final word on the subject matter. Rather, it is “just the beginning” of working together toward the goal of making Winston-Salem more business (and citizen) friendly. Even though DRRAC consolidated and generalized some of the more specific recommendations it received, all of the recommendations work toward this goal, and all of them should be considered. Then those judged to be practical should be used to develop an implementation plan starting as soon as possible. Additionally, Recommendation 5, Ongoing Dialogue, above is critically important to insure workable and jointly agreed upon strategies for improving the review process.

As recent work between City staff and development and real estate members has demonstrated, working closely together on well-defined objectives fosters trust, information sharing and creative thinking. The results are improved methods that protect the public, save money; are effective, efficient and easy-to-understand; and which can be implemented through reasonable cost sharing among all stakeholders. What’s the best way to improve Winston-Salem’s development review process? DRRAC believes it is through continued use of this type of collaborative problem solving.
INTRODUCTION

A few of us can still remember when Winston-Salem’s development review process consisted of walking in and sitting down with a building inspector, and sometimes, engineering and utilities staff with one set of construction drawings, and then walking away in an hour or so with the permit needed to start grading and building. However, as towns grow into cities and cities continue to grow, the development review process becomes more time consuming and complicated out of necessity. Winston-Salem, like most growing cities and for the most part, has simply added additional reviews and permit requirements as new regulations have been adopted, without evaluating the impacts to the overall review and approval system. Therefore, the review process has grown like Topsy over the past 30 years, to the point that it is showing signs of starting to crumble under its own weight, with frustrated citizens, applicants and City staff. A poorly operating review process will eventually discourage new development and negatively impact Winston-Salem and its government’s image as a top digital, business friendly, green conscious city with an efficient and service oriented local government and staff.

Too many Winston-Salem citizens, business and institutions have worked too hard and too long, continuously striving to make Winston-Salem a better place each year, to allow its development review process to pull it down. Winston-Salem City Council and staff recognized this several years ago and have taken steps since 2008 to begin improvements. In 2011, the Council created the Development Review-Related Advisory Committee (DRRAC) to provide citizen, consumer based recommendations for comprehensively improving the review process. The Committee’s one year of work is consolidated and presented in its “Report on Improving the Winston-Salem Development Review Process” report, which also presents its recommended actions for improving the process and helping keep Winston-Salem’s future bright.
I. General Committee Information

**DRRAC’s PURPOSE and CHARGE**

The Development Review Related Advisory Committee (DRRAC) was created and directed by the Winston-Salem City Council to prepare a report for the Council on ways to make the City’s development review process run more efficiently and be more user-friendly.

In fulfilling its purpose, DRRAC was directed by Council to present, within 12 months, a report with its findings and recommendations on strategies to:

1) Keep Staff and the City Council informed about major concerns by the development community and opportunities for improvement;

2) Better inform the development community about the development review and approval processes, requirements and upcoming changes; and

3) Promote public-private partnership opportunities and initiatives to help achieve the Committee’s recommendations.

Note: The findings, recommendations and strategies found in this report are not organized around the desired results above. However, the three desired results will be achieved as the implementation of the report’s recommendations take place.

**DRRAC MEMBERS AND STAFF**

Each member of DRRAC was required by Council to have some knowledge of the City’s development review process. In fact, several have years of direct experience as applicants for new development or redevelopment proposals and are very familiar with the entire review and approval process. In addition, the Committee’s members represented the following broad spectrum of professions that often utilize the process: construction, development, real estate, engineering, architecture, landscape architecture and planning. Also included on the nine-member Committee are a citizen representative and the government affairs director of the Chamber of Commerce. DRRAC is chaired by Ms. Nancy Gould and Mr. Stan Senft is vice chair. (Committee and staff support members names can be found on the cover page of this report)
# REPORT ON IMPROVING THE W-S DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS

## TIME LINE AND MEETINGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 2011</td>
<td>DRRAC is established by the Winston-Salem City Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2011</td>
<td>Members are appointed by the City Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2011</td>
<td>Committee has its first meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2012</td>
<td>Committee’s final report is ready for submittal to the City Council</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DRRAC’s standard meetings were held twice monthly and were well attended. Members also worked outside the standard meetings, contributing over 500 volunteer hours in fulfilling the Committee’s charge.
II. Summary of the Committee’s Work
(For a more detailed description, please refer to the Summary Meeting Minutes located in the APPENDIX)

**DRRAC’s METHODOLOGY**

City Council asked the Committee to gain an understanding of all aspects of the City’s development review process; hold city-wide public input sessions to solicit comments regarding issues that hinder the development process; evaluate the development review process “best-practices” of other similar communities; and prepare a prioritized list for the City Council of recommendations by department. DRRAC completed this work in the following manner:

1. **Working definition of “Winston-Salem’s development review process” and the Committee’s scope of work.** Ask five different people, “What’s the development review process?” and you will most likely get five different answers. For purposes of the Committee’s work, it used the following definition:

   *Winston-Salem’s development review process is its system of discussions, applications, reviews and approvals that are in place to ensure that all construction, reconstruction and land development proposals, plans and documents meet all required regulations and policies. A set of approvals are required before each of the following major events can occur: (1) any work on the site, (2) any buildings constructed, and (3) any of the development and its buildings can be occupied.*

   DRRAC focused its attention primarily on the review process as it relates to (1) and (2) above.

2. **Research and education.** DRRAC first worked with City staff to better understand and document the current review process, and find any hindrances within the process that might discourage new development or redevelopment. At the same time, concerns and recommendations from the development community, City staff and the general public were gathered, and the **2008 Development Review in Local Government: Benchmarking Best Practices** was reviewed by all members and discussed. The Committee also visited Greensboro’s Development Services Center, more commonly called a “One-Stop Shop.” See IV.1. for a description of a “One-Stop-Shop.”
3. **Organization and evaluation of information.** DRRAC then studied the concerns, suggestions, and information it had gathered over several months, and found that most of them fell into one or more of the following three Improvement Areas:

   (a) **External Communication and Information Sharing;**
   (b) **Modernization and Technology Utilization;** and
   (c) **Internal Structure**

For ease of understanding, staff prepared an individual page-sized chart for each of the three Improvement Areas. The front-side of each includes the Committee’s **Findings** (problem statement) and a list of **Top Recommendations** for addressing the Findings. The back-side of each chart lists all **Other Recommendations** the Committee finds worthy of further consideration. These charts follow this section of the report.

4. **Feedback on and support of DRRAC’s Draft Recommendations.** The Draft Improvement Area Charts were then shared with City staff and Council members. Also, both Committee staff and individual members took it upon themselves to make sure a wide range and large number of development community organizations and individuals received the charts for review and comment once again. The distribution list, along with a list of the professional associations that support the recommendations, are located on page 1 of APPENDIX 7.

5. **Major comprehensive recommendations.** Since the three Improvement Areas and many of their recommendations are interrelated and overlap, the Committee thought it beneficial to consolidate the recommendations from the charts into a short list of the most important overall recommendations. The result is a list of the **BIG 5 Recommendations** DRRAC believes will result in the most significant improvements to all aspects of the development review process. The BIG 5 are listed on pages 19-20.

6. **Other groupings of recommendations and additional conclusions.** As its final work, DRRAC asked staff to develop three other lists of recommendations: (1) Those City staff implemented or began during the past year, (2) Department specific recommendations, and (3) Those that can most easily be implemented. These can be found on pages 21-22. In addition, DRRAC shares several conclusions it was able to draw from all it learned over the past year.
III. Improvement Area Charts

(LOCATED ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES)

A. External Communication and Information Sharing

B. Modernization and Technology Utilization; and

C. Internal Structure
FINDINGS

Communication between city departments and the owner, developer, designer, contractor, management agency, and/or tenant tends to be fragmented throughout the development review process. This is especially true for those involved in a project that are unfamiliar with the process in Winston-Salem. Delays in the development review process are frequently caused by the lack of thorough, timely, and consistent communication between the applicant and City departments.

TOP RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Implement a single integrated electronic tracking system accessible by all development departments and applicants through the review and approval process.

2. Develop a comprehensive website/webpage outlining the departments involved and detailing the development review process from a simple upfit to major commercial or residential development; website also should include applications, flowchart of the entire development process, fee schedules, etc. (Completed)

3. Offer electronic notification of plan, permit, and inspections reviews and comments.

4. Create a one-stop development services center.

5. Track plans/projects through the development review process including time in the “City’s hands” and time in the “designer’s/contractor’s/developer’s hands.”

6. Designate a single contact person to help liaison through the development process.

7. Designate a manager to oversee the development review process and resolve disputes when they arise.

8. Adopt a “can do”, customer focused attitude among staff. (Completed)

9. Expand sketch plan review to include plan review of projects that already have the proper zoning.

10. Provide more consistent interpretations and reviews by providing ongoing staff training, retaining documentation that is publicly accessible whenever new interpretations are made, etc.

(See other External Communication & Information Sharing recommendations on reverse side)
EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION SHARING

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Improve electronic access to more public tax and GIS information important to building and development communities.
B. Prioritize the returning of phone calls, responding to e-mails, etc.
C. Advertise all development incentives on a website or webpage.
D. Develop checklists and associated fees for each step of the development review process.
E. Track complaints/feedback through the development review process.
F. Build in flexibility of staffing and operations of the development services center to account for fluctuations and trends.
G. Conduct a comprehensive review of development related processes every 3 to 5 years in conjunction with the development community to identify any unintended consequences that may hinder new development. Any changes in the regulations process should be shared with the development community ahead of implementation in order allow their review.
H. Explain/justify any fee increases clearly in order to link them with the resultant benefits of quicker processes, improved record keeping, etc.
I. Update website to include a “suggestion card” soliciting public feedback on how the development review process can be improved.
J. Conduct an annual review to ensure process revisions are being implemented in accordance with the committee’s recommendations.
K. Provide necessary training for field inspectors to ensure confidence in their interpretations and enforcement of building code compliance without the fear of ridicule from colleagues or customers.
L. Partner with the development community when designing the comprehensive website to ensure the consideration of their ideas and needs.
M. Form a partnership between city staff and the development community in order to create a more formal, on-going system for the communication of potential changes and actual changes in rules or processes. Such a system also provides the opportunity for the development community to provide feedback to staff on what’s working, what’s not working, and how changes to the process can be made.
N. Standardize the procedure to include a study of a potentially new rule’s or ordinance’s effect on the development review process.
O. Form a partnership between city staff and the development community to explore ways the development review process can include more accountability on both the city staff side and the development community side.
P. Develop fast-track review process for smaller upfit projects.
Q. Offer fast-track review as an incentive for targeted development the city wishes to attract.
R. Establish timelines for each step of the development review process.
REPORT ON IMPROVING THE W-S DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS

B. MODERNIZATION & TECHNOLOGY UTILIZATION

FINDINGS

The current system of paper-based plan submission and review hinders the consistency and particularly the timeliness of feedback and comments through the development review process. It often requires the submission of several sets of plans and multiple trips to different departments as plans are moved back and forth between the applicant and departments during the review process. It also makes it difficult for each department to know other departments’ comments about each project, sometimes resulting in conflicting requirements by departments.

TOP RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Enhance overall technology to include: 1) A single integrated tracking system accessible by all departments and applicants through the review and approval process; 2) Electronic submission and review of plans; 3) Electronic notification of plan, permit, and inspections reviews and comments; and 4) As plans/projects are tracked through the development review process include time in the “City’s hands” and time in the “designer’s/contractor’s/developer’s hands.”

2. Designate an IS/IT staff person responsible for continual oversight and improvement of development review process technology.

3. Develop a comprehensive website/webpage in partnership with development community’s ideas and needs that outlines the departments involved and detailing the development review process from a simple upfit to major commercial or residential development; website also should include applications, flowchart of the entire development process, fee schedules, etc.

4. Add or improve support technology (hardware and software) needed by each development department.

5. Improve connectivity between City and County databases and information.

6. Improve electronic access to more public tax and GIS information important to building and development communities.

7. Offer standardized, simple system for payment of all permit/development fees.

(See other Modernization & Technology Utilization recommendations on the reverse side)
### MODERNIZATION & TECHNOLOGY UTILIZATION

#### OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Utilize feedback to implement needed changes or improvements.

B. Conduct a comprehensive review of development related regulations every 3 to 5 years to identify any unintended consequences that may hinder new development. Any changes in the regulations process should be shared with the development community ahead of implementation in order to allow their review.

C. Develop a financial structure that maintains high quality service while remaining competitive with other communities.

D. Explain/justify any fee increases clearly in order to link them with the resultant benefits of quicker processes, improved record keeping, etc.

E. Add the ability to purchase some permits online via the website.

F. Conduct an annual review to ensure process revisions are being implemented in accordance with the committee’s recommendations.
FINDINGS

The current organizational structure and separate physical locations of departments involved in the development review process encourages the silo mentality. Each department—and therefore their processes—operate independently of each other, creating a lack of coordinated communication and accountability as plans are being moved through one department to another. Without a manager over the entire process, there is no one serving as the ultimate authority or decision maker in the event of conflicts or disputes. Applicants must contact multiple staff in multiple departments to find the current status of their project.

TOP RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Create a one-stop development services center.
2. Designate a single contact person to help liaison through the development process.
3. Designate an IS/IT staff person responsible for continual oversight and improvement of development review process technology.
4. Designate a manager to oversee the development review process and resolve disputes when they arise.
5. Develop checklists and associated fees for each step of the development review process.
6. Develop a flow chart of the entire development review process. (Completed).
7. Build in flexibility of staffing and operations of the development services center to account for fluctuations and trends.
8. Assign a single assistant/deputy city manager to oversee all of the departments involved in the development process. (Completed)
9. The development review process should include the tracking of complaints and feedback.

(See other Internal Structure Recommendations on reverse side)
INTERNAL STRUCTURE

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Utilize feedback to implement needed changes or improvements.

B. Establish timelines for each step of the development review process.

C. Adopt a “can do”, customer focused attitude among staff.

D. Conduct a comprehensive review of development related processes every 3 to 5 years in conjunction with the development community to identify any unintended consequences that may hinder new development. Any changes in the regulations process should be shared with the development community ahead of implementation in order to allow their review.

E. Develop a financial structure that maintains high quality service while remaining competitive with other communities.

F. Explain/justify any fee increases clearly in order to link them with the resultant benefits of quicker processes, improved record keeping, etc.

G. Conduct an annual review to ensure process revisions are being implemented in accordance with the committee’s recommendations.

H. Provide necessary training for field inspectors to ensure confidence in their interpretations and enforcement of building code compliance without the fear of ridicule from colleagues or customers.

I. Form a partnership between city staff and the development community to explore ways the development review process can include more accountability on both the city staff side and the development community side.

J. Coordinate efforts between City Council, city staff, neighborhood organizations and the development community in order to review the parts of the development review process involving board approvals to see if there are opportunities to a) replace board approval with staff approval, or b) replace multiple board approval with single board approval.

K. Plan reviewers in the Fire Department should perform only plan review; the Prevention and Suppression inspections should be performed by other designated department staff.
IV. BIG 5 Recommendations

**DRRAC’s BIG 5 RECOMMENDATIONS**

To satisfy its charge of advising Council on ways to make Winston-Salem’s development-review process more efficient and user-friendly.

1. **Development Services Center.** Create a Development Services “One-Stop Shop” with management oversight by one person, whose responsibilities include monitoring the process and providing the City Council and development community with updates about and changes to the review process. Most often, a One-Stop-Shop is a center that provides access to all aspects of the commercial and residential building approval processes, including plan review, inspections and permitting. Some cities have their Development Services Center also being responsible for enforcing the NC State Building Codes and its required inspections and approvals on general construction, plumbing, heating, and electrical inspections. See a copy of Greensboro’s webpage for its Development Services One-Stop-Center on pages 5-6 of APPENDIX 6.

2. **Up-to-Date Technology with Designated IS Staff.** Provide improved technologies that allow electronic submission and review of plans, shared communication and a single, shared project tracking system with IS technology oversight of the review process by one person or team.

3. **New Development Services Webpage.** Redesign the City’s website, to include a separate webpage/site designated to the development review process. The content and functionality of the webpage should be determined by a group that includes development community members. This “Virtual One-Stop Shop” should be much more informative, more user-friendly and designed to help with many different types of projects than what is currently on the City’s website.

4. **Individual Assistance and Staff Accountability.** Provide a single person (gatekeeper) responsible and accountable for the process running smoothly and quickly for each applicant. This employee would be the “go to person” for anyone interested in building or developing in Winston-Salem, and would have the authority to direct and work with departments to correct problems that are unnecessarily slowing down a project.
The gatekeeper would be the person all citizens entering the Bryce A. Stuart Municipal Building would be directed to for any matter related to building and development. Ideally, the gatekeeper would be located on the same floor as the Planning and Inspections Departments (which are currently on two different floors). A less effective, but alternative method could be an electronic kiosk in the building’s lobby that directs a person to the appropriate department/person based upon their need.

The gatekeeper would also be responsible for answering questions, determining for the applicant which approvals and permits are needed and in which order, tracking the applicant’s plans as they move through the review and approval process, and being the liaison between the applicant and the development review departments. (DRRAC sees recommendation #4 as the first step towards creating a Development Services One-Stop Center).

5. **Ongoing Dialogue.** Establish a group of City staff members and representatives of the development and real estate communities to work together, assisting and advising the City Manager and staff as the logistics of approved strategies are discussed.
V. Miscellaneous Recommendations

**COMPLETED OR INITIATED RECOMMENDATIONS**

DRRAC was most pleased and surprised on several occasions during the year to learn from its staff about recommendations on which work had already begun or were totally implemented. These include the following:

a. Assign a single assistant or deputy city manager to oversee all the departments involved in the development review process. (Greg Turner was the assistant city manager assigned this responsibility.)

b. Develop a flow chart of the entire development review process. (See flow chart under Appendix 8)

c. Adopt and encourage a “can do” attitude among staff. (The City has a Service Excellence Program.)

d. Develop a comprehensive development services website/webpage. (Upgrading of the City’s website is currently underway.)

e. Provide additional information important to development and building on the GIS. (Lead by the County, staffs from both the County and City are currently working on this recommendation.)

f. Create an ongoing working group of City staff and development community representatives to assist the City Manager and other City staff as the implementation of recommendations are refined. (There already exist two such groups, DRRAC and the Change-of-Use Taskforce, that have worked closely with City staff on solving development review problems.)

**EASY-TO-IMPLEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS**

DRRAC pulled from the long list of the recommendations it received and accepted those recommendations that should be fairly easy and/or inexpensive to implement.

a. Require all major development proposals, including those that have the appropriate zoning district, to start the process with review by City staff’s Technical Review Committee that meets every Friday morning to discuss proposals with each applicant.
b. Add a “Positive and Negative Feedback” link on the existing City website and on the recommended Development Services webpage, so feedback can be better tracked.

c. Publish, record and track department review times to see if goals are being met, and to use this information to evaluate how improvements as implemented, shorten review times.

d. Develop checklists of required information, steps and fees available to citizens, through the City’s website.

e. Investigate the feasibility of providing an Express Review for “up fit” projects and smaller development projects as some other NC cities have.

DEPARTMENT SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Soon after DRRAC started meeting, each development review department’s director briefed the Committee on the internal review and approval processes of their respective department. Later, smaller groups of members visited each of these departments and talked with its plan review staff. Staff members were also encouraged to make improvement suggests to the Committee and to review and comment upon the Committee’s draft recommendations. Based upon what was learned from this work, DRRAC finds that the internal development review process of each development review department runs efficiently.

There were only two recommendations DRRAC received that apply to specific departments: (1) A separate detailed analysis of the Storm Water Management Department should be conducted, with the goal of finding ways to shorten the time for reviews and approvals, while also maintaining the quality and control needed by the Department. (2) Fire department plan reviewers should not be assigned other tasks that take them out of the office or will delay plan reviews.
VI. Conclusions

- In 2008 City Staff participated in a program offered to UNC School of Government, Development Review in Local Government: Benchmarking Best Practices, to help them learn first-hand about development review processes and services in other parts of our country known for being efficient and user friendly. DRRAC studied the report from this work and finds that the information, especially about the common characteristics of well-run development review processes and services, is still accurate and still a valuable guide. These top five characteristics are:

  1. Commitment to delivering services at a level and cost that match the scale of development in their community
  2. Customer-focused services
  3. Transparency
  4. Reliance on high-functioning technology
  5. Extraordinary relationship with Information Technology support personnel.

- The City’s development review departments have done a good job of implementing most of the Benchmarking Report’s inexpensive recommendations over the past few years. Therefore, this report acts as a guide to build upon the improvements made thus far.

- The internal system each development review department has set up for conducting its part of the overall process functions well. The development review process’s major weaknesses relate primarily to the overall process, such as the following deficiencies:

  - No employee with the authority and responsibility to make sure the process is efficient and user friendly.
  - Lack of an adequate up-to-date technology system for all the development review departments that allows for tracking a plan’s progress, for compatible communication between all the departments and submission of electronic plans.
  - Information available on each development department’s webpage related to development reviews, but no single webpage to assist and guide someone thinking about building in Winston-Salem.
REPORT ON IMPROVING THE W-S DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS

- Winston-Salem is behind many other North Carolina towns and cities that have up-to-date, integrated technology and a single development services center.

- Some of the most needed improvements will be expensive. However, the current system is very costly, and will continue to get more costly each year improvements are not made. It currently eats up large amounts of City staff time, can unnecessarily increase development costs significantly, and creates frustration for both City staff and the applicant.

- A smooth running development review process benefits not only the business sector of our community, but also all citizens. The community benefits include new services and jobs, more housing types to choose from, an increasing tax base and revenues, saved staff time, “green” operations, and major long term savings.

- To successfully implement these reports major recommendations, creative solutions and a fair cost sharing plan will be necessary. DRRAC believes that the business and development sectors will be willing to collaborate with City Staff and Council on creating an implementation plan, including costs. However, in order to gain their support, an easy to understand cost benefit analysis will be needed with a clear explanation of exactly what new services will be provided and how funds from any increased fees or costs will go directly to providing the new service.

- Over the past few years, collaboration between City staff and representatives of the development community have paid off for everyone with the creation of solutions to problems that result in win-win-win solutions for Winston-Salem, City staff and the development community. This type of collaborative work should continue through every step of the implementation process, beginning with work already started by City staff on updating the City of Winston-Salem’s website.
VII. Appendices

*(LOCATED ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES)*
APPENDICES
Development Review Related Advisory Committee (DRRAC)

Table of Contents

Appendix 1 ......................................................... Background Material Establishing DRRAC

Appendix 2 .......................................................... DRRAC Roster

Appendix 3 .......................................................... Departmental Review Processes

- City Engineering
- Fire Department
- City/County Inspections
- City/County Planning
- Stormwater Department
- City/County Utilities

Appendix 4 .......................................................... Input from Public Comment Sessions

- January 10, 2012
- January 24, 2012

Appendix 5 .......................................................... Notes from Departmental Site Visits

- City/County Planning
- City/County Utilities
- City Engineering
- City/County Inspections
- Stormwater Department
- Fire Department
- City Department of Transportation

Appendix 6 .......................................................... Notes from Greensboro Visit

Appendix 7 .......................................................... Groups/Individuals Contacted

Appendix 8 .......................................................... Flow Chart of the Development Review Process
APPENDIX 1
interoffice
MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor Allen Joines and Members of the City Council
From: Derwick L. Paige, Deputy City Manager
Date: June 15, 2011
Subject: Development Review-Related Advisory Committee

During the Community Development/Housing/General Government Committee's discussion of this item, a question was raised about the difference between this proposed advisory committee and the Internal Development Service Center Task Force.

The Development Review-Related Advisory would be evaluating the current development review and permitting process and making recommendations for how those processes can be better coordinated, more efficient, more streamlined, easier to understand and more clear, or more timely in their completion.

The Internal Development Service Center Task Force would be evaluating how to create a single, physical "space" for this interdisciplinary team; the software, hardware, networking, furnishings and equipment necessary to establish the center; the types of permits and approvals that would be handled by the center; the operating procedures of the center; the management and administration of the center; and the costs/revenues/fees/financing associated with the center.

The table below illustrates some of the major differences between the two groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Development Review</th>
<th>Internal Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Review permitting process</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review development review process</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solicit public input</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide recommendations to Council to enhance processes</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design space/determine structure for one-stop center</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determine IS needs</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determine management structure</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I am available if you have any additional questions regarding this matter.
City Council – Action Request Form

Date: May 22, 2011
To: The City Manager
From: Derwick L. Paige, Deputy City Manager

Council Action Requested:

Adopt Resolution Establishing a Development Review-Related Advisory Committee.

Summary of Information:

In August 2008, City staff presented a Development Review Process report to Council based upon a series of community meetings and a benchmarking project that the City participated in with the UNC-School of Government. The report outlined a series of recommendations that could be implemented over the next 3+ years to streamline the City’s development review process while addressing many of the concerns of the development community.

Although some of the recommendations involved additional funding and were eventually delayed, there were several recommendations that could be implemented with little or no additional funding. Over the last few years, staff has periodically updated Council on some of the steps that have been taken including: 1) developing customer-friendly handouts/checklists/applications in the various development review departments; 2) enhancing customer contact and communications by placing staff pictures on their respective department websites and improving signage for customers; 3) providing additional staff training to emphasize the importance of a “partnership” with the development community; 4) providing additional customer training to the various partner organizations within the development community to help them better understand the rules and processes; 5) revising the site plan review process to provide pre-submittal review; 6) consolidating similar zoning uses with the Unified Development Ordinances; 7) implementing a mobile field solution for all field inspectors to provide more timely information; and 8) developing a Change of Use (COU) Task Force to evaluate and make recommendations regarding the change of use process.

Committee Action:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committee</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Approval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CD/H/GG 6/14/11</td>
<td>Unanimous</td>
<td>Against</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

www.cityofws.org
Some of the changes emanating from the COU Task Force include consolidation of several similar zoning uses within the Unified Development Ordinances; a pre-assessment evaluation and a zoning verification process. All of these enhancements have taken place and modifications in the COU process are helping to improve the development review process.

Among the seven City departments involved in the development review process, 8 of the 12 immediate-, short-, and medium-term recommendations were implemented by at least one of the departments. As a result, the overall process appears to have been improved while the number of complaints in this area have significantly decreased.

Only four of the recommendations have yet to be implemented by any of the departments: Creation of a Development Review-Related Advisory Committee; Formation of an Internal Development Service Center Task Force; Establish Enhanced Fee Program; and Certification incentives/salary escalators. The last three items were intentionally delayed due to the associated costs either to the City or the development community.

The remaining recommendation is the creation of a Development Review-Related Advisory Committee. As described in the Development Review Process Report, this committee would include representatives from the following groups:

i. Commercial builder  
ii. Residential builder  
iii. Developer  
iv. Realtor  
v. Engineer  
vi. Architect  
vii. Government Affairs Director from Chamber  
viii. Government Affairs Director from HB/RA  
ix. Citizen representative

Working with City staff, the committee review would evaluate processes and programs and make recommendations to City Council for improvements as well as alert Council to major concerns in the process that could hinder development.

The attached resolution authorizes the creation of Development Review-Related Advisory Committee, defines the committee’s purpose and duties, and outlines the conditions for membership, for officers, for staff support and other rules of procedure.
RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING A DEVELOPMENT REVIEW-RELATED ADVISORY COMMITTEE

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Winston-Salem desires to create a Development Review-Related Advisory Committee to evaluate processes and programs and make recommendations to City Council for improvements as well as alert Council to major concerns in the process that could hinder development.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Winston-Salem City Council that a Development Review-Related Advisory Committee is hereby established as described below.

Section 1: PURPOSE.

The purpose of the Development Review-Related Advisory Committee, hereinafter Advisory Committee, shall be to present a report to the City Council within 12 months that develops a strategy to:

(A) Inform the development community about processes, programs and upcoming changes;

(B) Inform staff and the City Council about opportunities for improvement and major concerns; and

(C) Provide a focus on partnership opportunities and initiatives.

Section 2: DUTIES.

The duties of the Advisory Committee shall be to:

(A) Gain an understanding of the issues that currently hinder development;

(B) Conduct city-wide public meetings to solicit input regarding issues that hinder the development process;

(C) Evaluate “best-practices” or other similar process; and

ADOPTED

CITY COUNCIL

June 20, 2011

CITY OF WINSTON-SALEM, NC

www.cityofws.org
(D) Prepare a prioritized list of recommendations by department (the report) that should be further evaluated for implementation by the respective departments.

Section 3: MEMBERSHIP AND APPOINTMENT.

The Advisory Committee shall be composed of up to nine members, who shall represent the following areas of the development community:

i. Commercial builder
ii. Residential builder
iii. Developer
iv. Realtor
v. Engineer
vi. Architect
vii. Government Affairs Director from Chamber
viii. Government Affairs Director from HB/RA
ix. Citizen representative

The members shall be appointed by the City Council upon the recommendation of the Mayor.

Section 4: TERM.

The members of the Advisory Committee shall serve until the required report is completed to the satisfaction of the City Council. Any vacancy occurring prior to the completion of the report shall remain vacant.

Section 5: OFFICERS.

The Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson shall be elected by the members of the Advisory Committee. The Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson shall establish any subcommittees and appoint members from the Advisory Committee’s membership to any such subcommittees found necessary to review any matters before the Advisory
Committee. Any and all such subcommittee meetings shall be subject to the open
meetings law, in the same manner as the Advisory Committee meetings.

Other Officers. Should both the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson be absent at
any meeting, the Advisory Committee shall elect a temporary Chairperson to serve at the
meeting.

Section 6: REMOVAL.

Members of the Advisory Committee shall serve at the pleasure of the City
Council, and may be removed by the City Council. In order for the Advisory Committee
to carry out its duties and responsibilities, it is necessary for all members to attend the
meetings. If any member is absent for two consecutive regular meetings, without excuse
granted by the Advisory Committee, the Chairperson and/or Vice-Chairperson may
notify such member in writing of such member’s absences, and if such member fails to
attend the next regular meeting, the Advisory Committee may, by majority vote of the
remaining members, request that the position be vacated.

Advisory Committee members shall abide by the City’s ethics policy. If it is
determined that a member has a prohibited interest or relationship, or has failed to abide
by the City’s ethics policy, said member shall be removed from the Advisory Committee
by the City Council.

Section 7: STAFF SUPPORT.

The Advisory Committee shall be provided staff support from the City Manager’s
Office, and the various departments associated with the development review process. The
City Manager’s Office shall designate an Executive Secretary for the Advisory
Committee. The Executive Secretary shall keep or cause to be kept all records, shall
prepare all correspondence of the Advisory Committee for the signatures of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson, shall arrange for all required public meeting notices, shall notify Committee members of pending meetings and their agendas, and shall generally supervise the clerical work of the Advisory Committee. The Executive Secretary shall keep the minutes of every meeting of the Committee, and shall comply, in every respect, with Section 2-61 of the Winston-Salem Code of Ordinances and all applicable laws. Copies of all correspondence and other documents pertaining to the Advisory Committee shall be maintained in chronological order by the Executive Secretary, in a separate file.

Section 8: MEETINGS.

The Advisory Committee shall hold regular meetings. Special and emergency meetings may be called by the Chairperson and/or Vice-Chairperson or any two (2) members of the Advisory Committee, signing a call for such a meeting. A schedule of all the Advisory Committee’s regular meetings shall be filed with the City Secretary, showing the time and place of the Advisory Committee’s meetings, and any changes in its schedule of regular meetings shall be reported to the City Secretary at least seven (7) days before the first meeting held pursuant to the revised schedule. The Advisory Committee members shall determine the frequency and location of the meetings.

Section 9: QUORUM.

All meetings shall be duly convened only when a quorum is present. A quorum shall consist of a majority of the current members of the Advisory Committee excluding any vacant seats.
Section 10: VOTING.

An affirmative vote equal to a majority of all the members of the Advisory Committee present and not excused from voting shall be required for any official action of the Advisory Committee. The Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson shall be full voting members of the Advisory Committee.

Section 11: RULES OF PROCEDURE.

The Advisory Committee shall adopt such additional rules of procedure as may be necessary for the proper discharge of its duties, and shall file the rules of procedure with the City Secretary.
DEVELOPMENT REVIEW-RELATED ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Ms. Nancy C. Gould - Chair
1031 Van Hoy Ave.
Winston-Salem, NC 27104
336-659-5526
Business: W-S Regional Assoc. of REALTORS
& Home Builders Assoc. of W-S
gould@wsrar.com

Mr. Charles M. Powers
3335 Dobbs Parish Lane
Pfafftown, NC 27040
336-345-5640
Business: Frank L. Blum Construction Co.
powers@lilblum.com

Mr. Clement Little
1724 Huntington Woods Ct.
Winston-Salem, NC 27103
336-995-5544
Business: Allen Tate Realtors
clemlittle@hotmail.com

Mr. James W. Armentrout
3822 Ryan Way
Winston-Salem, NC 27106
336-922-4000
Business: Ramey, Inc.
jim@ramey-inc.com

Mr. Jeff MacIntosh
129 Woodbriar Rd.
Winston-Salem, NC 27106
336-918-0107
Business: Leonard Ryden Burr Realtors
jeff.macintosh@gorrb.com

Mr. John-Troy Witherspoon
1520 Timer Creek Lane
Kernersville, NC 27284
336-992-8720
Business: Premier Design Builders, Inc.
it@premierdesignbuilders.com

Mr. Stan Senft – Vice Chair
175 Piccadilly Dr.
Winston-Salem, NC 27104
336-723-5501, ext. 405
Business: McNair Construction Co., Inc.
ssenft1@bellsouth.net

Mr. Philip Rector
4055 Havenwood Dr.
Winston-Salem, NC 27106
336-776-0375
Business: Rector Realty
Phillip@philliprector.com

Ms. Wendy P. Mailey
6407 High View Rd.
Greensboro, NC 27410
336-728-9249
Business: W-S Chamber of Commerce
wmailey@winston-salem.com

City Staff

Mr. Derwic L. Paige
Deputy City Manager
City of Winston-Salem
P. O. Box 2511
Winston-Salem, NC 27102
336-747-7473
Derwickp@cityofws.org

Mr. Ken Millett
Small Business Liaison
Community & Business Development
City of Winston-Salem
P. O. Box 2511
Winston-Salem, NC 27102
336-747-7472
kenm@cityofws.org

Revised 11/26/12

www.cityofws.org
APPENDIX 3
City of Winston-Salem Engineering Division

Development Review Services

Prior To and During Design

- Friday sketch review
- Monthly plan submittal review
- Driveway permits (commercial only)
- Plan Review of infrastructure (streets and drainage)
- Maintain Infrastructure Development Standards
- Maintain records of existing infrastructure

During Construction

- Review plan changes during construction
- Driveway inspection (commercial only)
- Inspect infrastructure

After Construction

- Assist in plat review
- Bonds and letters of credit
- Asbuilt submittal review
- Legal documents for acceptance of public infrastructure

Differences in other communities: Departments are sometimes structured differently but I haven’t seen that this hinders or helps

Best Practices: Electronic plan submittal and online tracking
Note: Developers are encouraged to meet with City staff prior to design reviews to facilitate discussion and design approval.
**Plans Review Process for the Fire Department**

1. We review all commercial drawing for new construction and up-fits.

2. Review fire protection plans.

3. Review site plans (attend scheduled meetings)

4. Review tank plans

5. We typically review between 1500-2000 drawings a year.

6. Conduct inspections for,
   - New Construction
   - Up-Fits
   - Fire Protection
   - Tanks
   - Rough-In
   - Courtesy
   - New Group Homes or Daycares
   - Change of Use

7. **Five staff members** are located at building inspection for plans review and new construction inspection.
   - One Senior Office Assistant
   - Two Plans Reviewers
   - Two New Construction Inspectors

8. We are located in the same office with building inspections personnel.
   - Two computers are also set-up at the Public Safety Center for plans review as needed.

9. We made this change approximately 10 yrs ago to better accommodate the public and better communication between agencies.

10. At full staff we can typically complete plans within **two business days**.

    **Electronic Submission & Review**
11. *Paperless/Electronic inspections since 2003*
   - Tablet Computers (Tough Books)
   - Wireless printers
   - Email Reports Directly

12. *Paperless/Electronic plans review since 2007/2008*
   - Purchased Dual Monitors
   - Adobe Professional & Blue Beam
   - Scanner for Drawings not Received Electronically

13. Fax and or email all deficiencies concerning plans to the listed contact personnel.

14. *Submit drawing back electronically showing deficiencies.*

15. *Meet with personnel at our site or theirs if needed.*
Inspections

Combined City-County Agency

Part of the City’s Community & Economic Development Services

Service Area

All Areas of Forsyth County Excluding Kernersville and King
WHAT WE DO....

Promote building & land development in accordance with adopted state & local standards for land use, construction and environmental protection to safeguard and improve the health, safety and welfare of our communities.

Local Regulatory Agency for:

- Land Use (Zoning)
- Building Construction
- Environmental Protection
● Land Use (Zoning)

- Use of Structures & Open Land
- Public Access to Property
- Maximum Size of Structures
- Location of Structures on Property
- Maximum Impervious Surfaces
- Minimum Off-Street Parking
- Landscaping Regulations
- Sign Regulations
- Miscellaneous
- **Land Use (Zoning)**
  - Not mandated by state to be enforced by local governments
  - Adopted & amended by local elected bodies in accordance with requirements of state law
  - Each jurisdiction can have its own distinct ordinance

- **Building Construction**
  - Maximum Size (Height & Area)
  - Type of Materials
  - Layout and Use of Spaces
  - Fire & Life Safety
  - Sanitary Facilities
  - HVAC & Electrical Systems
  - Energy Conservation
  - Accessibility
  - Miscellaneous
Building Construction

NC Statewide Building Codes

- By statute, adopted & amended by NC Building Code Council (17 member Governor appointed)

- Mandated by state to be enforced by local governments

- Local governments cannot amend building codes
Environmental Protection

- Erosion & Sediment Control
- Watershed Management
- Floodplain Management
Environmental Protection

- Some regulations are mandated by state
- All are adopted & amended by local elected bodies
- Local ordinance must comply with minimum requirements of applicable state or federal regulations

Environmental Protection

Erosion & Sedimentation Control Regulations
- Localities may be approved by state to adopt and enforce an erosion & sedimentation control program

Watershed Protection Regulations
- State mandates localities to adopt and enforce a water supply watershed management and protection program

Floodway and Floodway Fringe Regulations
- Localities must adopt and enforce for eligibility for National Flood Insurance Program
HOW WE DO IT....

- Review permit applications & plans of proposed work
- Issue permits for the work
- Conduct inspections of the work in progress
- Provide final inspection & approval of work
- Issue certificates of compliance or occupancy

Questions

???
Planning Staff's Role in the Development Review Process

Much development happens on land that is already appropriately zoned for the intended use. In cases where a rezoning, subdivision, or plan approval involving the Planning Board or elected body is not involved, a builder or developer deals directly with the permitting agencies such as City-County Inspections.

For development that requires Planning Board consideration, Planning staff participates in the beginning of the process as plans are first conceived and presented for review. Planning staff is also involved later in the process when plats are reviewed, final development plans are approved, and when approved site plans are modified through the staff change process.

In close collaboration with the Inspections staff, Planning staff works with customers to help direct them to the appropriate review process. Weekly sketch plan review meetings, orchestrated by Planning staff, are an opportunity for developers to sit down with several interdepartmental staff representatives to get important information on projects they are considering.

If it is determined a project requires formal site plan review by the Planning Board or requires rezoning, Planning staff takes the lead in shepherding the case through the process. Each month the plan review process begins with Site Plan Submittal where plans are reviewed for accuracy and completeness. Formal submittal is made to Planning staff who then distributes site plans for review and collects and organizes comments from multiple departments. Planning staff review for proposed rezoning includes policy issues that come from our adopted plans. Our Area Plans often have specific land use and site design recommendations that Planning staff refers to when reviewing zoning and site plan proposals.

Planning staff chairs the Interdepartmental Site Plan Review Committee which meets approximately two weeks after the submittal deadline. At the meeting, each of the departments shares their comments with the developer who is given an opportunity to ask follow-up questions. Planning staff emails written comments from the meeting to the developer and the site plan preparer later that day.

One week later revised plans are submitted by the developer to Planning and a week after that, the item is presented by Planning staff to the Planning Board. Items approved by the Planning Board are distributed by Planning staff to other departments so developers can pursue permits to move forward on the project. Items that require elected board approval are presented to the elected board in the following month by Planning staff.

After site plan approval by the boards, Planning staff is involved in orchestrating the review of final plats and serves as Plat Review Officer for the county. Planning staff also has staff change authority to approve certain minor changes to site plans without requiring the plans go back through the development review process.
Overview

Rezoning in Winston-Salem and Forsyth County involves submitting a petition or application, to change a zoning district from one designation to another. There is a monthly deadline by which all petitions must be filed; copies of the schedule are available. Petitioners may request a general use, special use limited, or special use district rezoning. The petition is filed at the public counter of the Design and Development Review Team of the City-County Planning Board, located on the second floor (Suite 225) of the Bryce A. Stuart Municipal Building, 100 East First Street, Winston-Salem, NC, (336)727-8000. The petitioner(s) must generally be owners or have the owner's permission to rezone the property. There are, however, special provisions for rezoning property without the owner's permission.

**General Use Rezoning** - A General Use petition requests that a parcel be changed from one zoning district (e.g., RS-9, or Residential Single-Family with 9,000 sf minimum lot size requirement) to another district (e.g., HB or Highway Business), without specifying the particular use or manner in which the property will be utilized. Those who file General Use petitions are not allowed to speak to any specific use for the property at the public hearing because boards must consider every use permitted in the proposed zoning district.

**Special Use Limited Rezoning** - A Special Use Limited (L) petition is more restrictive than a General Use rezoning, but less restrictive than a Special Use rezoning. A SUL rezoning allows the petitioner to volunteer conditions that address concerns of Planning Staff or surrounding property owners. Examples of volunteered conditions include limiting the use(s) of the property, retention of an existing structure, increased bufferyard/landscaping, etc. Unlike Special Use rezonings, no site plan is required with a SUL rezoning request.

**Special Use Rezoning** - A Special Use District petition requests that a parcel be changed from one zoning district (e.g., RS-9) to another district (e.g., HB-S, or Highway Business, special use) which will be limited to a specific use(s) identified and graphically illustrated on a site plan that accompanies the application. A site plan checklist is available at the Development and Design Review Counter or from our Applications Page. Conditions are generally attached to the Special Use site plans.

**How does the rezoning process work?**

1. The process should begin with a call or visit to the Design and Development Review Team to discuss your preliminary plans, to ask the staff's advice on submission procedures, and to pick up the necessary materials. (Application forms, checklists, and requirement materials are on our Applications page) For special use district petitions, site plans should include information required on the appropriate checklist and must be reviewed by staff at the pre-submittal application stage. In addition, applicants may also desire to have an informal interdepartmental review of their proposed project. Applicants may receive a 30-minute review period on Fridays beginning at 8:30 a.m. provided 14 copies of the sketch plan are received by the preceding Monday at 5:00 p.m.
2. The petitioner is advised to contact neighbors who may be affected by the proposed rezoning request. The petitioner should exercise their best judgment in deciding what neighbors to contact.

3. Bring the application and all applicable information (including fee) to the Bryce A. Stuart Municipal Building, Suite 225 for submission. Here the petition will be assigned a case number, and you will be advised of the later steps and timetables. If you are requesting a special use rezoning that includes a portion of a lot, the legal description for that lot will need to be submitted at the pre-submittal deadline.

4. Staff prepares a zoning report for the Planning Board. Staff begins this by visiting the site and consulting with other City-County departments to get their information and input. Then, a report is prepared including a review of the relevant points involved in the case including: compliance with Legacy along with any adopted area plans; a discussion of any planning issues that impact the case; and a recommendation of the entire staff as to whether the petition should be approved or denied. In addition, site plans prepared for special use district petitions receive comments in addition to any conditions that may be placed on the site plan or zoning. This report is available for review on the Monday before the scheduled Planning Board meeting on the DDR portion of the website.

5. The Planning Board meets to hold a public hearing and review the petition. The staff presents its report and recommendation. If the recommendation is for approval, and no opposition is present at the hearing, the item may be placed on the consent agenda; in this instance, the public hearing process may be expedited. If the staff’s recommendation is for denial, or if there is opposition present and wishing to speak about the request, a staff presentation is made and a full hearing is held. A maximum of twelve (12) minutes is allotted to each side (supporting and opposing) to present the respective views. There is no rebuttal period. The applicant or representative is strongly encouraged to attend the public hearings where the case will be considered by the Planning Board and the Elected Body.

6. Following the Planning Board meeting, the case is then sent on to the City Council (for City cases) or to the Board of Commissioners (for County cases) for review and final decision. This review occurs regardless of the recommendation by the Planning Board, and the decision of the elected body is final. Any persons who speak at the Planning Board meeting will be notified by mail of the meeting date and time of elected body meeting. The entire process generally takes between 2-3 months.

7. For rezoning cases within the City of Winston-Salem, petitioners are advised to contact their Council member to discuss City rezoning cases prior to the elected body public hearing.

Additional information which may be helpful to persons submitting petitions, including permitted use tables, setback requirements, and descriptions of zoning categories are also available from the Design and Development Review Team. The phone number of the Design and Development Review Team is (336)-727-8000.
FLOWCHART OF PLATTING PROCESS (rev 5/11/12)

Site Plan Engineer submits draft final Plat (5 copies) to Planning Counter.

Draft copies of Final Plat are distributed to respective Departments for review.

- Engineering Staff
  - *See below*

- Tax Office
  - Assigns Plat # to Plat

- Stormwater Staff
  - Verifies Stormwater issues

- Planning Staff
  - Verifies street names:
    - Assigns addresses to Plats

- Utilities Staff
  - Verifies utility easements

- NCDOT verifies R/W dedication on State maintained roads.

- City Attorney
  - Approves form of Surety

- Surety submitted to City CFO for filing

- Approved

- Review comments & Plat mark-ups collected by Planning Staff and sent back to site plan preparer for corrections.

- Site Plan Preparer
  - After corrections/submitter (2) mylars for final submission

- Records signatures are obtained by respective departments and return for file.

- Final Plat with signature is returned to site plan preparer.

- Final Plat is recorded in the Office of the Register of Deeds by applicant

- Register of Deeds gives Plat to Planning Staff

- Addresses
  - Verification made by Planning Staff Address Coordinator, Inspections, Utilities, and Forsyth County Tax Office.

- Copies of the Final Plats sent to Planning Staff

- Department building permits are issued for the lot.

* Plat review by Engineering Staff includes:
  - City Surveyor verifying that Plat meets minimum standards, (GS 47-36)
  - Construction Inspector verifies with Contractor that the minimum required infrastructure is in place for the proposed plat.
  - Construction Inspector also verifies that platting plan shown on the plat matches with existing plan shown on the approved plans.
  - Construction Inspector reviews checklist for incomplete items from Developer/Consulting Engineer.
  - Construction Inspector reviews scope of work and unit prices for estimate for incomplete cost items and verifies that minimum required infrastructure is in place.
  - Cost Estimate approved by City Engineer.
  - Records Center Staff and Inspectors verify that draft record drawings & Plat reflect what is on the ground. (%. loss, easements, street names match plans, etc)
  - Engineering Records Center prepares memo to City Attorney verifying amount of Surety. (Records Center supervisor retains a copy of plans, cost estimates and bonding instructions for files).
Stormwater Post-Construction Ordinance

Nutshell Description:

This ordinance creates a requirement to manage stormwater runoff from development and redevelopment projects to minimize damage to the natural and human environment from stormwater runoff from that development and puts in place legal, financial, and operational authorities to assure the environment continues to be protected.

Section Summaries

Section 1

In this section, the General Provisions of the Ordinance are covered. These provisions include:

- The North Carolina Laws and Regulatory rules that authorize the City to regulate post-construction stormwater run-off.
- An explanation that the purpose of the ordinance is to protect, maintain, and enhance the public health, safety, environment, and general welfare.
- A list of the eight specific objectives of the ordinance.
- Descriptions of those types of development and redevelopment subject to the ordinance and the circumstances where exemptions or exclusions to the ordinance requirements will be made.
- The specification of the North Carolina Stormwater Design Manual as the City’s Stormwater Design Manual.
- Sets the effective date of the ordinance at 6 months after the date of Council adoption.

The eight specific objectives of the ordinance are: 1) to establish a decision making process that protects the health of water resources; 2) requiring that new development and redevelopment minimize negative impacts on flooding, on stream bank erosion, and on water pollution; 3) establishing minimum stormwater standards and design requirements for water quality and quantity management; 4) establishing design and review criteria for the construction, function, and use of acceptable stormwater management devices; 5) encouraging the use of low impact site design practices; 6) establishing provisions for the long-term responsibility for stormwater devices and stormwater transport systems; 7) establishing administrative procedures for stormwater plans and for the inspection of projects; and 8) assigning responsibility for approval of adequate drainage and for flood damage prevention.

Development and redevelopment projects that are subject to this ordinance are those that disturb one acre or more of land. There are exceptions for farming and forestry activity and for development projects that obtain a building permit or an approved site plan prior to the effective date of the ordinance.
Section 2

In this section, the Administrative procedures that will be used to implement and enforce the Ordinance are covered. These provisions include:

- The designation of the Stormwater Manager as the person to administer and enforce the ordinance.
- A summarization of the duties and authority of the Stormwater Manager.
- A specification that a stormwater permit is required for all development/redevelopment that is subject to the ordinance requirements.
- A requirement that development/redevelopment be done in compliance with the approved stormwater permit.
- A confirmation that the City Council will establish the fees for submittal and review of stormwater permit applications the allowance for a concept plan review with the Stormwater Manager to discuss the stormwater implementations of a proposed development/redevelopment project.
- The allowance for a concept plan review with the Stormwater Manager to discuss the stormwater implementations of a proposed development/redevelopment project.
- The specification of the range of area to be evaluated for stormwater impacts.
- The requirement for substantial progress on projects to prevent the expiration of an approved stormwater plan.
- A commitment that completed stormwater permit applications will be reviewed by the City within 20 business days of submittal.

The range of affected area for a development under the ordinance includes the area upstream and downstream of the proposed development where the stormwater would be adversely affected by the proposed development. The areas include the properties adjacent to the development and the drainage ways as well as areas downstream to the 10% drainage point. The 10% drainage is the point at which the water from the development constitutes only 10% of the water flow in the stream and is generally considered the point beyond which impacts are minimal.

The substantial progress provision of the ordinance rescinds stormwater permits for projects that do not make substantial progress toward construction within 2 years of the issuance of the permit, and there is a provision for an additional year for projects that can demonstrate extenuating circumstances.
Section 3

In this section, the specific standards for post-construction stormwater management are specified. These standards are:

- The stormwater permit imposes an enforceable restriction on the property that is tied to the land not the developer or the land owner.
- The property must have an operations and maintenance plan for the development’s stormwater system.
- An encouragement to use low impact development (LID) practices when practical.
- A 30 foot minimum buffer against perennial and intermittent surface waters.
- Management of the control one year 24 hour storm for water quality control and the 2 year, the 10 year, and the 25 year storms for water quality control.
- Management of post-construction stormwater runoff to the predevelopment levels.
- Confirmation that water quality treatment devices in the stormwater design manual will be presumed to meet minimum water quality standards if properly designed and constructed.
- A description of the variance petition process.

The 24 hour storm is the type of storm that generates pollution run off and therefore creates water quality problems. This is because it tends to wash down the roads parking lots and other impervious services and carry dirt, oils, trash, and other debris into the creeks and streams.

The 2-year storm is the type of storm generally responsible for erosion and stream channel formation. It is therefore the type of storm that causes stream beds to move sideways over time.

The 10-year storm is the City’s current flooding minimization design storm but designing systems for both the 10 and 25 year storms will provide more flooding protection for public and private property owners.

The requirement to manage stormwater runoff to the pre-development levels means that the developer will install stormwater control devices (often ponds) to capture the water leaving the site and release it at the same rate as the water was released by the pre-developed site.
Section 4

In this section, the general standards for maintenance of the stormwater control devices which are required by the ordinance are prescribed. These standards include:

* The requirement that the entity responsible for the maintenance of the stormwater devices is also responsible for submitting an annual inspection report on the status of the devices which has been prepared by a registered professional.
* The virtual requirement that new residential developments have a homeowners association to be responsible for the operations and maintenance of the private stormwater system and stormwater management devices.
* The requirement for developers to create and execute with this homeowner’s association an operations and maintenance agreement for the stormwater devices required by the approved Stormwater Plan.
* The requirement that an escrow account be set up to cover the ongoing maintenance costs of stormwater devices and specifications on how it is to be set up.
* The requirement that stormwater management devices such as ponds and conveyance systems such as ditches and pipes as well as stream buffers are recorded on the final plat for the development and must be recorded at the Register of Deeds Office.

The required escrow account is funded by both the developer and the homeowner’s association. The initial funding is paid by the developer and constitutes an amount equal to 15% of the construction cost of the stormwater devices. The homeowner’s association has to make annual payments into the account so that within 5 years they have contributed an amount equal to 10% of the initial construction cost and within 10 years an amount equal to 15% of this cost.

Section 5

In this section, the violations of the ordinance are specified and the enforcement measurements are identified. These include:

* Each day a violation of the ordinance requirements continues is a separate offense.
* The remedies for addressing violations of the ordinance include withholding a certificate of occupancy, disapproval of subsequent permits, installations/abatements, city repair with subsequent lien on property, stop work order.
* An allowance for civil penalties for violations of the ordinance.
* A description of the notice of violation procedure process to be used.
City of
WINSTON-SALEM NORTH CAROLINA
Stormwater Submittal Flow Chart

This flow chart is provided to outline the stormwater submittal review process. The applicant is responsible for preparing complete submittals for stormwater reviews by the City.

Begin

Planning/Zoning/Rezoning → Stormwater Concept Meeting

Hydrologic Analysis, ADVERSE off-site Impact Analyses

City REVIEW

ADVERSE Off-Site Impacts

Phase 1 Detailed Hydrologic Analysis

City REVIEW of Phase 1

Phase 2 - Detailed Hydraulic Analysis & Stormwater Management Plan - Follow Checklist

City REVIEW of Phase 2

Stormwater Management Plan Approval

Stormwater Permit Issued

NO ADVERSE Off-Site Impacts

Stormwater Permit Issued

9/19/2008
FLOWCHART OF TYPICAL INFRASTRUCTURE CONSTRUCTION PLAN REVIEW PROCESS

Pre-construction Plan Approval
Granted by Planning Board, City Council, Board of Commissioners

Application for grading Permit is submitted to Inspections Staff

Developer’s Engineer submits four (4) complete sets of construction plans, calculations, and specifications to Public Works Design Review Staff.

Plans are reviewed by Public Works & Public Safety Staff. (Eng, Saf, Streets, Utilities & Impoundments).

Plan Comments are made, compiled and returned to design Engineer for Correction

Corrections are made and resubmitted to City Staff with original rough-up/Comments.

Plans ready for approval? NO

Final Construction Plans are submitted to Utilities Administration Staff along with Permit Applications, Sewer Checklist and information Sheet

Is Office of required? YESS

Developer works with City/County Utilities Commission to obtain

Permit Approvals is verified.

Grading Permit Approval status is verified.

Signed Plans are released and returned by Design Engineer. Design Engineer submits five (5) copies of the signed plans to the City and Plans are reviewed for construction and returned to City Construction Office.

Plans are submitted to Planning Staff for Approval.

All required utility and street infrastructure must be built (See Plotting Process Flowchart).

Plans are recorded.

NO

YES

Application and Consents Agreement prepared and sent to developer

Developer signs return Application and Consents Agreement. Assist City Manager Public Works signs approvals. Agreement is forwarded for Utility Commission approval.

Record Drawings are processed & resubmitted to Engineering Records Center (see Record Drawings/Street Acceptance Flowchart).

Final Payment, warranties verified.

Engineering Field Supervisor verifies Construction Final Inspection.

Letter of Acceptance sent to Developer.

City of Winston-Salem assumes maintenance of street utilities/streets.

Note: Developers are encouraged to meet with City Staff prior to design reviews to facilitate discussion and design approval.

www.cityofws.org
City/County Utility Plan Review

Sketch Plan and Interdepartmental Site Plan Review

- Verify sewer and water availability
- Verify available sewer capacity
- Inform applicant of any utility easements on property

Building Applications Review

- Verify conformance to Winston-Salem's Technical Specifications and Detail Drawings for Water Line and Sanitary Sewer Line Construction
- Accessibility
- Easements for maintenance
- Backflow Preventers – domestic and irrigation connections and fire lines
- Sewer and Water connections
- Grease interceptor sizing
- Available sewer capacity
- Inspectnet, Cayenta, Hansen

Public Water/Sewer Extensions Review

- Verify conformance to Winston-Salem's Technical Specifications and Detail Drawings for Water Line and Sanitary Sewer Line Construction
- Accessibility
- Easements for maintenance
- Permit
- Available sewer capacity
Development Review Process

Differences

- Electronic (paperless submissions)
- Full review at planning level

Similarities

- Comparable fees
- Comparable permitting procedures
APPENDIX 4
Public Input- January 10, 2012

Nancy Gould
Stan Senft
John-Troy Witherspoon
Jim Armentrout
Phillip Rector
Mike Powers
Jeff McIntosh
Clement Little
Wendy Mailey

Nancy gave a background on the purpose of the committee. The members introduced themselves to the citizens in attendance.

Nancy discussed the purpose of the public meeting. She stated that the process is intended to gather public comment.

Public Comments/Observations

When we have a problem, we create solutions. But these solutions that we come up with have side effects and we create new solutions that also have side effects. The cycle then continues.

New employees feel that they don't have decision-making authority. People reviewing plans need to be given authority and decision-making responsibility then supported in the decisions that they make.

Staff needs a "can do" attitude. Need to give options or make suggestions instead of just saying you can't do it.

Need timeframe for getting responses back/returning calls. Even if not the final answer, should at least get back to the person with an update.

Staff also needs to be able to make more timely decisions.

CityLink concept of answering questions should be conveyed to the development process.

For simple stormwater process has become very difficult because so many permits are tied together. On one project, needed a site plan to simply grade land for future development. Also needed a driveway permit, but no plans for development were available.
City should consider giving up extra-territorial jurisdictions since State annexation laws have changed.

Error in the State Watershed Map in Planning regarding the flow of water and that should be corrected.

UDO 166 targeted rooming houses. Will have to put tenants on the streets. Will create financial hardships.

Would like to see a flow chart/checklist outlining what people need to do to go through the process.

Difficult for people to know what all departments they need to go through. Needs to be a single point of contact.

Needs to be able to go through a single entity instead of going through so many departments. Also a very expensive process to rezone.

Not getting the full process or all of the details from the on-set. This adds additional expenses to a project.

Does the Fire Department have the authority to go to the International Fire Code without Council adopting those changes in rules?

Some departments take payments and some departments don't take payments, but send you down to the Finance Department.

Too many zoning districts slow down the process.

Needs to be good public notice when changes to the ordinances occur. (FaceBook)

Need more consistent enforcement/interpretation among inspectors.

Need transparency/explanation as to why decisions were made/Lessons learned tab on City website.
January 24, 2012 Public Input Session

Committee Members Present
Stan Senft
Phillip Rector
Mike Powers
Jeff McIntosh

Stan gave a background on the purpose of the committee. The members introduced themselves to the citizens in attendance.

Stan discussed the purpose of the public meeting. He stated that the process is intended to gather public comment and that our goal is how to make it better.

Stan noted that there are 7 departments involved in the development process and that we are going to Greensboro in a few weeks to look at their process.

Public Comments

Not prepared for 7 different departments having a different mission or oversight. Process just unfolds, each department could not see beyond their role. Could be some advantage to some primary oversight so no single department has veto over the entire process. Hence, their entire process stopped because of the silo-mentality interest of the departments.

Quandary in permitting process is the latitude given to person (inspector) making the decisions. So much ability to interpret the code among individuals inspectors that it becomes costly, timely, confusing because getting different answers from different people. Leads to surprises/landmines that should not be the case.

Would be helpful to have an advocate in the process.

Homeowner Associations are becoming more involved in the development process and these people will need some hand-holding through the process.

Friday morning meetings not codified.

COU Committee was made up of Planning, Fire, Inspections and development community representatives to stream-line change of use. This committee was established 3 years ago.
10 objectives were established and 6 have been accomplished. Remaining objectives include:

Need to get Fire and Inspections systems to communicate.
Need to change the date for non-conformity.
Sometimes permits are linked, but don't know the future development plans for the site. Layering on of procedures and cross-connecting to others has slowed down the process.

Legacy Plan should be used as guide to encourage development.

City is throwing more project expense on developers such as sidewalks to nowhere. Sidewalks are important, but perhaps a fee in lieu for sidewalk to be constructed where useful instead of in locations that may be of benefit in 20 years.

Summary of comments:
1. Need oversight of 7 departments involved in DRP; eliminate silo mentality.
2. Developers need an advocate; a "yes we can" mentality and hold the 7 departments accountable. Advocate to be the cog in the wheel.
3. Problems with various interpretations of code depending on inspector.
4. City staff should be transparent with customers and willing to answer the questions "how" and "why" decisions were made.
5. Development review process improvement efforts may benefit from Change of Use efforts.
Development Review Related Advisory Committee
Department Meetings
Planning
January 5, 2012

Committee members present: Nancy Gould, Jim Armentrout, Jeff MacIntosh, and Wendy Mailey
Planning staff: Aaron King, David Reed
Committee support staff: Ken Millett

Notable Tools Available
- Description of Area Plans and Area Planning Process
- C-CPB calendar of significant dates
- Helpful Hints for Development Review
- Contact list
- Permitted use tables

Comments
- Planning is involved in policy making, not code enforcement.
- Customers typically include developers, property owners, and other city departments
- Planning serves as the clearinghouse for other six departments during sketch plan review (SPR). They host SPR meetings (available every Friday) and collect and distribute comments to city staff and the customer.
- Good communication—both formal and informal—occurs between all departments in the process. Planning stays in the loop on latest updates either through SPR or monthly meetings in preparation for Planning Board meetings.
- Despite its role as organizer, Planning does not supervise or control other departments’ processes or decisions.
- SPR educates the customer on what must be addressed in time for official submittal and helps identify potential deal-breaker issues.
- With all reviews or comments, the more detail the customer provides, the better the feedback.
- Since 2008 even general-use rezoning requests have been encouraged to take advantage of the meetings.
- Cases are assigned to staff based on workload or previous experience with a customer.
- Staff must consider the overall development of W-S and Forsyth County, but also offers assistance to customers and their development goals.
- Planning hears few complaints about process or timing (tied to City-County Planning Board schedule). Most issues are with policy.
- Efforts from all departments are improving to make customers aware—on the front end—of what is expected throughout the project (ex. turn lanes or sidewalks). Staff is also making a concerted effort to distinguish between recommendations and requirements in its comments.
- Initial communication from out of town customers usually involves fact finding phone conversations. Once it’s determined to be a legitimate project, customer is encouraged to submit for SPR to receive comment from all departments. This allows one point of contact and also provides a basic framework for moving forward.
- Weekly Planning staff meetings can be utilized for preliminary zoning feedback—not opinions—on potential rezoning cases.
Minor subdivision plans can be electronically submitted; they are also distributed to city and county departments as .pdf documents and viewed using free Adobe software. This works well because the plans typically are not too detailed.

Electronic full site plan review would require larger screens, computer upgrades, new software, etc. Planning staff would like to have same capabilities as Fire's electronic submission and review, were turned down when they asked if they could implement a fee collection system like the one developed for the Fire Department.

Full implementation of electronic submission and review limited by required coordination with NCDOT, Forsyth County tax office and other county departments still utilizing paper submission.

Planning staff is unsure of status but believes IS may be researching feasibility of software from similar to SIRE for plan review.

No dedicated IS Staff assigned to Planning for hardware/software issues; not all IS staff is equally knowledgeable on Planning's unique software or printer/plotters.

No system is in place for departments to review other departments' comments online or electronically.

Paper copies of plans are stored in filing cabinets. Planning worked with IS on a system to scan zoning docket files and site plans. Also working on backlogs dating to 1988. Additional scanning (ex. aerials) would likely need to be outsourced.

Local efforts pushing for compact development may conflict with state level requirements (ex. cul de sac radius). Or event city departments' goals may conflict (ex. need for curb and gutter).

Recommendations

- One city staff person with authority to make decisions relevant to the development review process, regardless of the department. All departments involved in DRP should know who to turn to. The position should not be based in any of the existing departments, perhaps out of the City Manager's Office.

- Staff related to DRP should be co-located.

- Web-based project tracking for both staff and applicant to follow a project through the process in real-time.

- IS focus for DRP should shift from troubleshooting to creativity and streamlining.

- Increase fluidity and flow of information between DRP departments and county tax office.

- Uniform method of payment and location for customers regardless of the fee or department involved (ex. some departments take payment directly, some to revenue, some online; some department not equipped to take credit card).

- Where possible, continue the consolidation of uses to simplify potential change of use process.
Development Review Related Advisory Committee
Department Meetings

Utilities
January 11, 2012

Committee members present: Nancy Gould, Jim Armentrout, and Stan Senft
Planning staff: Courtney Driver, David Saunders (portion of meeting)
Committee support staff: Ken Millett

Notable Tools Available

- Flow chart of typical infrastructure plan review process
- Simplified (bullet points) description of Utility plan review process
- Fee chart

Comments

- Utilities Department operates as an enterprise fund; budget first approved by Utilities Commission, then by City Council.
- Utilities reviews only water/ sewer (w/s) projects.
- Re: related work performed by another city department: Engineering designs w/s for the city and reviews storm drainage
- Forms and fees (see Tools above) are distributed to customer at sketch plan review (SPR).
- Hands-on staff in the DRP include Courtney Driver, Chris Jones, and Bob Kitchens.
- 75% of the time initial contact with customer comes through sketch plan review; some projects do not include utilities related items on the plans. Even so, staff will ensure w/s availability and check for capacity issues.
- All meters are now purchased through the City. Previously 2" and smaller meters where purchased through the City and 3" and larger were purchase by the Utility Contractor. The new method will help us track all meters in our system.
- W/S connections inspected by the meter shop; infrastructure inspected by engineering inspectors.
- Interactions re: You must have a physical address to purchase a meter. Many times the address is unknown or hasn’t been issued. This can slow down the process.
- Staff welcomes appointments when purchasing commercial meters rather than walk-ins to allow time for homework that can speed up feedback from Utilities.
- Utilities has begun to scan plans that are submitted. A copy will be redlined and returned to the customer. They hope to get to the point where plans can be submitted electronically, reviewed and redlined on the smartboard, then saved and returned to customer with comments. Computer issues are being worked through, but process is underway. From the technology standpoint, this could be done now, but in this budget environment machinery is taking priority.
- Technical or web-based infrastructure is not in place to allow Utilities to see plan review comments from other departments.
- Utilities and Engineering use Flow Cap for internal project tracking. Staff believes there may be potential for expanding the service to allow external tracking similar to InspectNet (Inspections).
- Utilities and Engineering share project #s for new development; other departments assign their own with no coordination between departments.
- Utilities contact information and Notable Tools (referenced above) are available online, but can be cumbersome to drill down and find. With thousands of possible questions and characteristics specific to each project, personal contact with staff with the most valuable resource.
- Experience local engineering firms know the processes and policies well, but outside firms may have difficulty learning the process.
- W/S extension review fees and capacity fees are paid directly to Courtney by check only. Payment cannot be paid through Revenue.

Recommendations
- A system had developed under the previous Plans Examiner (what was Ronnie Vernon’s title?), but now new staff and new tools are in place. Unfortunately the economic slowdown has prompted development slowdown that leaves the new systems relatively untested. Areas in need of improvement remain unknown.
- The process appears to be working fine overall, but staff is working hard to improve the B permit process (can you briefly describe what this is?). The B permit process was a paper copy of was installed in the field that needed to be added to our billing system. The new process of purchasing all meters through the City will hopefully eliminate unbilled meters. Currently the process may mean that work performed in the field doesn’t make it back to Engineering Records or billing.
- The City and department website can be improved for ease of navigation for customers (ex. a lot of information on Utilities is listed under Engineering).
- Central staff person to collect and distribute plans.
- Central staff person to manage projects from beginning to completion.
- Increased coordination for Utilities, designer, contractor, and inspector to work off the most current plan.
- Enhance current system in place to handle any field changes to improve perception that none are acceptable; can be reviewed on case-by-case basis. If the field inspector does not feel comfortable with a field change, then the Senior Civil Engineer in Plan Review will determine if a plan revision is needed or if the field change is acceptable.
Committee members present: Nancy Gould, Jim Armentrout, Clement Little, Jeff MacIntosh, and Phillip Rector
Engineering staff: Al Gaskill, Charles Hendrick, and Robert Prestwood (portion of meeting)
Committee support staff: Ken Millett

Notable Tools Available
- Outline of procedures for subdivision bonding for recording plats (online)
- Winston-Salem Infrastructure Development Standards (online)
- Construction checklist (online)
- Driveway permit application (online)
- Information re: easements (online)

Comments
- Engineering is typically not the first point of contact for a development project, but the Records Center is involved in the early stages of a project (ex. what infrastructure is available at a site).
- Staff involved in DRP includes Al Gaskill (driveway permits, public infrastructure in the right of way).
- Engineering participates in weekly sketch plan review (Al) and help identify any potential show stoppers. Al also represents the department at monthly comprehensive submittal review.
- SPR serves as a trigger but detailed site research, but projects can be missed because the meetings are voluntary. In down developers/designers are familiar with the typical process, but out of town designers or developers may submit an essentially complete site plan without having had any interface with Engineering. Utilities, or other department.
- Infrastructure Development Standards (available in office and online) outline the city standards for w/s, streets, stormwater, and other infrastructure that may be turned over for city control.
- The Records Center (Charles Hendrick) are also involved in the bonding/guarantee aspect of a development; if a developer is unable to finish the project, the city will have the financial capability to do so. To determine the bond amount, a field engineer puts together an estimated cost and adds 25% contingency.
- The Records Center also handles as-bults to ensure that the project “in the ground” matches with everything required of the project.
- The Records Center will know where w/s lines are located, but not their capacity. Customers are referred to Utilities to determine capacity (maximum capacity is considered to be 50% of pipe capacity). It’s important to note that North Carolina has designated the City of W-S as self-permitting.
- Pipes and pumps are evaluated for capacity considering new lots plus those already planned/approved, even if the previous lots have yet to be developed.
- The simple question of “Do you have sewer at this site?” has a complicated answer because it’s not just an issue of availability of accessibility, but also capacity.
- Development can only occur in areas that can handle the capacity upstream and/or downstream; most areas of W-S present no capacity issues.
- Paper records are still 85% of record keeping, but plans can be submitted electronically. If submitted by paper, plans will be scanned to a .tif file that can be geo-referenced. This information is available to anyone who requests it, but staff must ensure that the most recent/accurate plans are actually being used on the project.
- Out of town developers are referred to Infrastructure Development Standards, which include checklists and appropriate staff contacts. City Link has been trained to refer customers to proper location on city's website.
- Consistency presents a challenge as both private engineers and public engineers have different expectations and different levels of comfort with field changes.
- There is no charge for Engineering plan review. The only plans that require a fee are driveway permits. Al collects checks, then passes on to Engineering admin for submission to Revenue. Checks for bonds are handled similarly.
- Payment by check for approved Engineering permits are held until project is ultimately approved.
- Engineering has good relationships with other departments involved in DRP.
- In addition to involvement on the private development side, Engineering staff also works on city projects.
- Staffing levels are currently adequate, but when development activity picks back up, there may be workload issues for staff, especially field inspectors.

**Recommendations**

- Developers should talk with Utilities before designing a project, even before submitting to SPR. This establishes communication and sets the city's expectations for the project. It can also save the developer time if staff already knows that a plan would not be feasible for a given site (ex. there may be a very good reason why a “prime” site remains undeveloped).
- Changes “in the field” are possible, but vary depending on the specifics of a given situation (ex. changing the grade of a sewer line). Most of the time engineering inspectors want the change reflected in a sealed plan from engineer prior to approval. This can slow down a project and cost the developer money as a backhoe sits unused until approved. Similar changes may be worthy discussion for approval in the field, but any concession must not be taken as the new standard for the department. If the developer/designer/contractor disagrees with a decision, it can be appealed to the city staff member's supervisor. It was acknowledged that small changes are approved (and relief is given) every day in the field by city staff.
- Engineering is able to track a project internally, but it's not formalized like Utilities with Flow Cap. Online, web-based project tracking would allow everyone involved in a project to check its status and verify who's “hands” the project is in.
- Engineering can scan plans, but scanner is black and white; a color scanner would allow for the distinction of colored lines and make electronic comments possible. Software that staff has seen compares multiple copies of a plan for comments and conflicts. (Scanner has been approved for department for 3 years, but being told to continue with black and white scanner until it breaks). An IS steering committee prioritizes IS projects in the city.
- Electronic submission and review of plans eases process for customer, speeds up internal review, and expedites comments/feedback back to customer.
- Engineering is behind other departments technologically. Staff would prefer to enter information into Hansen, but they do not have access because it's been deemed too costly. The current tracking system is an Excel spreadsheet. Field inspectors use pad and paper; their use of laptops and real time inspection results speeds up the process.
- City IS helps whenever possible, but their knowledge of department specific software such as AutoCAD engineering software is minimal.
- Standardized method and location of payment for all permits/departments involved in DRP.
Development Review Related Advisory Committee
Department Meetings

Inspections
January 17, 2012

Committee members present: Nancy Gould, Jim Armentrout, and Jeff MacIntosh
Inspections staff: Bucky Frye

Notable Tools Available
- Permit applications, including Commercial/Zoning, Appendix B, Sign (online)
- Commercial submittal requirements (online)
- Schedule of required inspections (online)
- Change of Use Inquiry Form/Building Evaluation permit (online)
- Erosion Control plan checklist (online)
- Landscaping/Tree Save checklist

Comments
- Inspections ensures that the construction, alteration, or repair of structures in both Forsyth County and Winston-Salem adhere to the established building codes and standards.
- $432 M in projects were permitted in 2011, which is down from recent years.
- Building permit records date back to 1985.
- Plan review includes Building, Zoning, Mechanical, Electrical, Plumbing. (Erosion Control is still located with Inspections, but now under the Stormwater department).
- Inspections serves as the plan intake department; customers submit 7 complete sets of plans for review (plus an additional site plan) to Joe Kube, Plans Review Coordinator for Inspections.
- Many applicants begin the plan submittal process by meeting with Joe for direction on the review process and the necessary components for complete drawings. All checklists and permit applications are also available online.
- Inspections (usually Jeff Vaughn – zoning) participates in Friday morning sketch plan review (SPR). Building plans are usually not detailed, but feedback is provided on zoning issues, fire-rated wall needs, sprinklering requirements, and handicapped parking issues.
- In order to receive a building permit, an Erosion Control permit must also be approved.
- The assignment of an address is critical in order to log project into computer system (Hansen) or track plan review through the process. Addresses are assigned by Ben Starney in Planning. There is not an established timetable for address assignment.
- Once a project is logged into Hansen, Inspections has 10 business days for initial review. The designer (architect or engineer) makes the noted corrections and submits updated plans. If correct, a permit will then be issued. It may take several cycles for the resubmitted plans to meet code requirements. The more submissions, the longer the process for issuing permits.
- Review comments can be e-mailed, faxed, or phoned based on applicant’s preference.
- Project status entry into Hansen is labor intensive (ex. no field auto-population).
- Building upfit goes through same process, but the goal is to have the initial review completed in 5 business days.
- Permit process can be slowed if applicant wishes to change a plan that has already been approved; new plans may be required.
- Inspections is not set up to receive electronic sealed plans through pdf. A system to allow the submission and review of electronic plans would involve new hardware, software, and monitors. Estimated cost is $150,000 to implement.
Inspections currently utilizes a large plotter and should be getting a scanner that will allow electronic storage of plans (as built?).

The review process moves quicker when construction plans are submitted prior to requesting a building permit.

Projects can be tracked through web based InspectNet system (requires an account). Access could be available to the end-user, contractor, architect/engineer, or anyone else. Information is pulled from Hansen but is not user friendly (dates may be missing, inspections not necessarily listed chronologically).

Plan review fee charged by Inspections is 25% of the construction costs of the project. Based on building construction only @ $3.50 per $1000 (building only—not MEP). At end of project, fees can be adjusted to accurately reflect cost.

Permit cost includes separate fees for Building, Zoning, and Fire. Fees are not accepted at Inspections office; payment must be through Revenue.

Typical complaints made to Inspections:
  - Why do you need 7 sets of plans? Why is review even necessary?
  - Plan reviewers and inspectors enforce the code too strictly
  - Why can’t we have conditional approvals rather than formal approval on the plans for any changes? (state building code policy issue)
  - Inspections staff is unavailable when I need them
  - Plan review takes too long

Inspections process is familiar to experienced building/property owners and designer, but unknown to the “Mom and Pop” small business owner. The M&P small business is unprepared for the time and financial requirements. They may learn about process from Revenue from privilege license process, activity noted by inspectors as traveling around area, or neighbors ensuring that all businesses are held to the same standards and requirements.

Change-of-Use evaluation permit has proved successful (includes building, zoning, mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and fire). For buildings in the county, fire does NOT participate.

City’s focus on Service Excellence has improved relationships with external customers and instilled a sense of cooperation in all departments.

**Recommendations**

- **Most important recommendation:** improved centralized DRP operating system. Hansen functions decently, but there is a lot it doesn’t do and isn’t fast or efficient. It isn’t Windows, Mac, or web friendly. Finding details of a particular project are difficult to navigate and not necessarily chronological.

- **IS/technical infrastructure and financial resources to scan plans.** The state requires retention of plans for publicly funded projects (ex. schools) for the life of the building. Currently 27,000 pages need to be scanned and stored, but funding is not in place. (All other plans are destroyed one year after the certificate of occupancy is issued. However, a paper copy of the site/zoning plan is stored).

- **Fee schedules should be updated** to more accurately reflect International Code Council standards. W-S/FC lags in both fee amounts and approach. Fees should be based on the square footage of the buildings rather than fixtures, outlets, etc. City management advised that the economic climate was not suited for the increase. For example, fees in Kernersville are approximately 2-3 times higher than W-S/FC. Department receives no complaints because they’re significantly less expensive that other communities.
Development Review Related Advisory Committee
Department Meetings

Stormwater
January 19, 2012

Committee members present: Nancy Gould, Phillip Rector, and Stan Senft
Stormwater staff: Keith Huff and Joe Fogarty
Committee support staff: Ken Millett

Notable Tools Available

- Stormwater Management Permit application and relevant Operation and Maintenance (O&M) Documentation (online - includes checklist and detailed submittal requirements, O&M agreements and manuals)
- Stormwater submittal flow chart (online)
- Stormwater utility fee structure (online)
- Stormwater ordinance (online)
- Winston-Salem Infrastructure Development Standards (IDS) (online)

Comments

- Stormwater is a city department; unincorporated areas of Forsyth County (other than areas within the Salem Lake Watershed which is administered by the City and which must meet the provisions of the Salem Lake watershed Ordinance) fall under jurisdiction of the state. Department operates as an enterprise fund.
- Joe Fogarty (stormwater engineer), Keith Huff (director), and an erosion control engineer (Jeff Kopf before his retirement) are the staff involved in DRP. Plan intake is through Joe.
- Stormwater and Erosion Control have merged into one department; EC still physically located with inspections due to efficiencies of being co-located.
- Stormwater gets plans from either sketch plan review (SPR), rezoning cases from Planning, or concept meetings with a developer. Concept meetings are highly recommended, but voluntary. Approximately 90% of all projects have had at least a concept discussion with staff.
- Grading permits will not be issued by EC until Stormwater signs off.
- Construction site runoff (temporary measures) review is handled by EC.
- Plans are redlined and returned to owner/developer and/or design engineer. Comments include references to the checklist.
- Plans are submitted by paper copy; pdfs can be submitted for quick comments, but staff does not have the technical infrastructure (computers, video cards, screens, etc.) for full electronic review.
- Plans are reviewed and assessed for compliance with the water quality (cleanliness of the first inch of runoff) provisions of the stormwater ordinance and also the water quantity (control of flooding and erosive events) provisions of the ordinance. If the development is deemed that is must comply with the quality provisions (if more than 1 acre is disturbed during construction) then it is determined if it is a low or high density development. For high density developments water quality controls must be provided to treat the first inch of runoff for 85% total suspended solids removal. Quantity controls apply if more than 20,000 sq.ft of new impervious area is created by the development. A no adverse impact downstream study may be submitted in lieu of providing quantity controls. Developments will be exempt from all provisions of the stormwater ordinance (both quality and quantity) if there is no net increase in impervious area...
from the existing condition. If there is an increase developments may still be exempt from some, if not all, of the ordinance provisions. For example if there is an increase in impervious area but less than 1 acre is proposed to be disturbed during construction then the development is exempt from all of the quality provision. Likewise if there is less than 20,000 sq.ft of additional impervious area created from what was already existing on the site, the development will be exempt from the quantity provisions of the ordinance. Requirements are referenced in the IDS.

- Stormwater involvement typically consists of 3 phases: 1) plan/study review and approval, 2) submittal, approval and recording of Operation & Maintenance Agreements (O&M’s), Operation and Maintenance manuals and financial sureties, and 3) platting and recording of the plat as an exhibit to the O&M Agreement. Ordinance allows 30 days for plan review, but typically takes only 2 weeks. O&M may also turnaround quickly if standard forms are used; if developer wants to change or attorneys get involved, it can take much longer.

- O&M Agreements are required under ordinance provisions to ensure long term operation and maintenance of any designed stormwater device. Currently no performance bond is required because the maintenance bond term is so short. Because bonds mature and must be renewed, staff must ensure renewals.

- Sites can be cleared without a specific project in mind, but there is a process requiring an interim plan. A “placeholder” layout for the project can be used, but this still requires engineered drawings and follow through to ensure compliance.

- The city is not responsible for maintaining any stormwater conveyances such as pipes and swales outside of the public right of way and has no interest in assuming the responsibility of these private systems.

- An internal log stored on a shared drive tracks stormwater review through the process; there is not a public website or system for customers or other city departments to track projects.

- Staff ensures as-buils match the approved plans.

- Review fee of $220 is collected by Joe at time of plan submittal and deposited into Stormwater account. Checks only; no cash or credit card.

Recommendations

- Web-based project tracking system that shows both the status of the project and the amount of time in the hands of designer and time in the hands of Stormwater. Should also include the number of iterations of plans were required to make it through for approval.

- Consistent project numbers between departments would only work if review and tracking systems were centralized. System should be centralized and compatible with all departments involved in DRP.

- Centralized DRP staff and/or department would improve consistency, coordination, and communication between departments. Responsiveness to the customers would also be enhanced.
Development Review Related Advisory Committee
Department Meetings
Fire
January 26, 2012

Committee members present: Wendy Malley, John-Troy Witherspoon
Fire staff: Jon Canupp, Doug Coble, George Frye, Eric Hutchens

Notable Tools Available

Comments

- Fire strives for the prevention of fires through code enforcement, education, and arson investigation activities.
- Jon Canupp and Doug Coble are Assistant Fire Marshals and are over plan review. George Frye and Eric Hutchens are new construction inspectors.
- North Carolina fire code is adopted by the Building Code Council and is based on the International Fire Code as a model code. It includes revisions specific to North Carolina, and this sets the minimum level of code. W-S enforces the state code. The only area where W-S is more strict than state is the annual (rather than every 1, 2, or 3 years) inspection of all occupancies.
- Plan review is located with Inspections department.
- Fire is typically brought into the DRP through Inspections via the distribution of plans to DRP departments. Inspections enters the project into Hansen and distributes Fire’s copy to Kay Wall (senior office assistant).
- Fire aims for 5 business day turnaround for initial review; reviews are frequently quicker.
- In addition to plans submitted through Inspections, Fire will review plans that don’t go through other trades (ex. sprinkler, fire alarm systems, fixed pipe extinguishing systems)
- Plans that come through Inspections are paper copies, but are scanned and reviewed electronically by Fire. Fire protection plans can also be submitted electronically directly to Fire. Fire had originally been told by city IS that that such a system wouldn’t work, but it was implemented by Public Safety IS. System is working effectively and efficiently.
- Comments from review are sent by e-mail and/or fax to the applicant. Fire plan review personnel attempt to identify other applicable parties (ex. Contractor, designer, tenant representative, building owner, etc.) and distribute copies of the comments to these individuals as well. These same comments are entered into Hansen and can be tracked through Hansen or the web-based InspectNet. Hansen is functional for the purposes of Fire, but has limited space for comments.
- Fire participates in the Friday morning sketch plan reviews (SPR). As with all departments, feedback is only as good as the information that’s shared.
- Fire participates in the Change-of-Use Evaluation Permit issued by inspections (includes on site visit).
- Every business location in the City of W-S receives an annual fire inspection. Inspections may be performed by either Fire Prevention inspectors or by the Engine Companies. New discoveries of new businesses or change of use is shared with Inspections.
- Businesses and property owners depend on their own due diligence to learn what must be done to a building to be compliant with fire code requirements prior to occupancy. Inspections has taken on bringing potential fire compliance issues to the attention of prospective business or property owners.

www.cityofws.org
- Fire and Inspections work closely together, and their purviews frequently overlap (ex. need to sprinkle a building). The departments coordinate on reviews to ensure applicant hears consistent message and direction.
- Efforts for internal consistency include consulting with the initial plan reviewer before a resubmitted plan is reviewed.
- Customer service is a priority throughout the department, and plan review fees or citations can be paid via check, cash, or credit card—whether online or in person.
- Fire construction plan review fees are calculated into the Inspections plan review fee. Resubmittals and accompanying reviews are covered by this initial fee without a limit as to the number of resubmittals. Fire protection plan review fees apply to the initial plan review and one resubmittal. Additional reviews require an additional fee.
- Fire investigations take precedence over all other duties of plan review staff; this may leave DRP duties unaddressed for short periods of time. Staff may be assigned other duties such as teaching continuing education classes or field inspections during times of high demand.

Recommendations
- Other departments involved in DRP are behind technologically, and the capability for each department varies widely. Entire process could be improved if each department has the same technical/IS infrastructure to perform electronic review, communication, and project tracking that Fire has. Hansen is functional, but all the hardware/software involved in multiple DRP departments don't work well together. A centralized, coordinated information system would improve the DRP.
- Communication between all parties involved in a project—both internally and externally—is critical. For example, feedback communicated to the applicant needs to also get communicated to the contractor and anyone else involved in the process. Each project should have contacts representing the property owner, tenant/potential tenant, contractor, and designer.
- More city departments should focus on educating the customer as the "why" behind their decisions. Customers should also be given an overview of the entire process and set a level of expectation.
- "Express plan review" could expedite DRP for those willing to pay additional fee;
Committee members present: Nancy Gould, Stan Senft, Jim Armentrout, Clement Little, Jeff MacIntosh, and John-Troy Witherspoon
DOT staff: Connie Curtis
Committee support staff: Ken Millett

Notable Tools Available
- Sidewalk updates/sidewalks request form (online)
- Recent transportation plans and studies (online)
- Calendar of events (online)

Comments
- DOT reviews site plans from 2 perspectives: 1) safety/operations, and 2) compatibility with long term transportation plan.
- Review usually involved Connie (assistant director), Robby (streets director), bicycle & pedestrian coordinator, and transportation planner.
- The department consists of DOT – functional/operational elements and Streets – physical elements of the system such as curb, gutter, and drainage.
- Because of its lead role in the Metropolitan Planning Organization, DOT looks at all plans in Forsyth County. Some cities have transportation models that determine required infrastructure improvements with a local focus; NC’s model is more regional.
- DOT is usually brought into a project through Inspections (formal plan review) or Planning (rezoning, special use permit, or sketch plan review). If a developer or designer anticipates issues specific to DOT, they may come directly to staff for feedback.
- Contact from a citizen customer may come directly in cases of sidewalk request or streetlight.
- DOT involved with Planning for SPR (submit written comments to customer), monthly interdepartmental review, and staff level changes. Areas of review include (but not limited to) right of way, sight distance calculations, traffic circulation within a site, greenways, and sidewalks. SPR and interdepartmental review provide the opportunity to discuss potential conflicts resulting from various department comments.
- DOT coordinates its comments with Engineering, Streets, Fire, and any other department as required by a given project or situation. All departments share a collaborative relationship.
- NCDOT is involved in any project that involves or connects to a state road. They also participate in the SPR and interdepartmental review meetings.
- NCDOT has standards based on traffic volume that determine when turn lanes are required.
- A potential issue re: electronic submittal review involves the use of turning template. New software would be required that allows a turning template to be used on scaled pdf.
- The smartboard is used for internal review of plans submitted.
- Any DOT product for a city project is developed using CAD, but field crews still use paper copies for their reviews.
- Hard copies of plans are indexed by street name and year; They are purged after a period of time, but final approved copies are still available through Planning. Any comments are stored electronically.
- Private streets are treated no differently than public streets and must be built to public standards. DOT operates under the assumption that at some homeowners association will request that the city take over the maintenance of their streets. All developments are required to have streetlights; decorative lighting may require an assessment to an owners association.
- Any appeals usually involve sidewalks to “nowhere.” Topographical conditions may be a factor. If developer believes sidewalks would be cost prohibitive, DOT will involve their Director and Public Works Director.
- The capabilities of Hansen are a poor fit for DOT services and operations, but they’re making it work. It’s not used as part of DRP, but in other phases of DOT’s work.
- No fees are charged for specific services performed by DOT staff.

Recommendations
- Web-based system through GIS that allows you to click on a parcel and see its zoning history and the most recent site plan. Such systems are in use by other communities. To be successful, this would require coordination with the tax office and city IS and county IS departments.
- Plans not yet approved need to have tracking system both internally (city departments) and externally (customers).
- DRP departments should have access to electronic and paperless plan submission, review, and comments similar to Fire’s system.
- Departments should be uniform in how policies are applied from the procedural standpoint.
APPENDIX 6
Summary of Minutes
Development Review-Related Advisory Committee
February 14, 2012 - 11:00 a.m.

Greensboro Municipal Building
Development Services

Members Present: Nancy Gould
John-Troy Witherspoon
Phillip Rector
Clement Little
Jim Armentrout
Wendy Mailey
Jeff MacIntosh
Mike Powers

Staff Present: Derwick Paige
Ken Millett

Greensboro Staff: Andy Scott
Kenny Carroll
Walter Simmons
Steve Galanti

Kenny Carroll gave an overview of the Technical Review Committee (TRC) operations. Development Services (DS) is made up of staff from all aspects of review. The staff assigned to Development Services remain a part of their “home” department (ex. Engineering & Inspections), but work out of the DS office from 8-12 everyday; however, as work picks up they will probably start working there all day. TRC represents multiple departments. Model of bringing everyone together created by Paul Zucker. Implemented a year ago and took about 10 months to implement. Required a collaborative team effort and buy-in from the individual departments was critical to success. Reviewers working together help get away from silo mentality. No single person in control of the operation; however, if necessary, the Deputy City Manager resolves conflicts.

- Space lay-out was critical and is designed specifically for DS. About 5000 square feet provided for operations.

- Electronic plan review and tracking system have been merged. Technology has been critical in implementing. Plan reviewers can review comments from other departments.

- Bluebeam is the pdf mark-up and editing software used for plan review. Very intuitive to learn and use. Similar to Go to Meeting; can be used from different locations so that DS and developer/designer can be in different locations and discuss.

- Customers can track projects online, and auto-notifications are sent to applicant and any other contacts once review notes have been entered.
• Kenny and Steve demonstrated a mock submission using their technology. The base map came from GIS. They noted that two key components of the one-stop operations have been:
  o Pre-development meeting - used to review and look at big ticket items. To get started, all that is needed is an address. There is no fee for this service.
  o Sketch Plan review - tremendous cost savings to the development community via electronic submittals and review. A rudimentary sketch is all that is needed to receive feedback. There is no fee for this service.

• All plans are submitted and retained electronically. Previously approved plans can be retrieved and/or reprinted.

• Address Coordinator becomes involved during the sketch plan review process.

• GIS information is updated regularly from as-builts.

• Pre-development meeting is critical. Team meets daily, as needed.
  o TRC review and approval
  o Soil erosion and grading permits can be issued before TRC approval, but steps for a partial plan are required (ex. must still comply with tree preservation)

• Contractors have an abbreviated review.

• Putting together a single fee schedule for the entire development process. Eventually, everyone will be able to pay fees at a single point.

• Some fees can be paid on-line.

• Plan tracking system was from an outside vendor, but customized for their use. It basically designed the system based upon need. For example, the Inspections system was designed internally. Problems with the custom system include an inability to communicate with county or state systems that are not custom made and there is no technical support system.

• IT has its own budget for designing the system.

• DS assesses its success by on-going discussions with the development community to find out what can work better. While surveys are also used, DS staff also talks to the development community while they are in the office.

• Since implementation of DS, feedback confirms that time and money are saved, and more projects are getting through the process in one cycle.
- DS has quarterly meetings with developers/realtors to share data (ex. # and value of permits). Data is also available online.

- Walter Simmons (Director of Engineering & Inspections) performs the performance review for all DS staff in coordination with the person's home department director.

- DS operations are funded from general fund.

- Even if a project is not possible due to code or ordinance restrictions, the DS wants the customer to know that the DS did everything they could to try and make it work.
Plan Review Process

All new buildings, parking or additions must be reviewed and approved by the Building Department. The Review process begins with the submission of architectural drawings and specifications.

---

NOTE: Building department and permit applications can be submitted to Building Inspections Office at any point in the Plan Review Process.
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Development Services is the City's one-stop access for all aspects of commercial and residential building plan review, inspections and permitting. Development Services provides NC State Building Code inspections on general construction, plumbing, heating, and electrical inspections, as well as all plan review services on new construction, alterations, modifications, and additions to existing commercial and residential structures. This office also enforces the NC State Building Codes.

Development Services Staff Contact Information

Permits and Front Office
Building
Construction Plan Review
Electrical
Plumbing and Mechanical
Plan Review
Soil Erosion
Technical Review Committee (TRC)
Commercial Construction Contacts

Kenny Carroll
Acting Assistant Manager
Construction Plan Coordinator
Office: 336-373-2052

Check the status of your permit.

Schedule your permit for inspection.

Check the status of your plan submittal.

Watch a video about Development Service

Free Parking: Designated free parking is available in City/County parking lot at the corner of West Washington Street and Eugene Street.

Plan Review: Meet with members of the plan review team Monday through Friday from 8 am to 12 noon.

300 W. Washington Street  
Greensboro, NC 27401  
Phone: 336-373-2155  
Fax: 336-333-6056  
Business Hours: Monday-Friday, 8 am to 5 pm  
E-mail us

Address: 300 West Washington Street, Greensboro, North Carolina
APPENDIX 7
DRRAC REPORT DISTRIBUTION

The DRRAC report/recommendations were shared with the following groups and/or individuals. Some of these entities chose to formally vote to support of the recommendations. If so that vote has been indicated.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Entity</th>
<th>Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carl Carney, Davie Construction</td>
<td>Commercial builder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Beeson, Beeson Engineering</td>
<td>Engineer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aubrey Stimpson, Karl Stimpson Builders</td>
<td>Residential/Commercial Builder and Developer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jim McChesney, Taylor &amp; McChesney</td>
<td>Developer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bruce Hubbard, Hubbard Realty</td>
<td>Developer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mike Sears, Windsor Commercial</td>
<td>Commercial Builder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grover Shugart, Shugart Enterprises</td>
<td>Residential Developer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harris Gupton, Gupton Enterprises</td>
<td>Engineer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steve Causey, Allied Development</td>
<td>Engineer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyle Armentrout, Stewart Realty</td>
<td>Commercial Broker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wade Jurney, Wade Jurney Homes</td>
<td>Residential Developer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shane Wagoner, Hubbard Realty</td>
<td>Residential Builder and Developer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brad Coe, Coe Forestry and Surveying</td>
<td>Surveyor/Developer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ed Collins, Ed Collins Engineering</td>
<td>Engineer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Todd Isenhour, Isenhour Homes</td>
<td>Residential Builder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Chrysson, CB Development</td>
<td>Commercial and Residential Developer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Eskridge, NW Chapter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Engineers of NC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change of Use Task Force</td>
<td>Advisory Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WS Regional Association of REALTORS</td>
<td>Professional Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homebuilders Association of WS</td>
<td>Professional Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Authority of WS</td>
<td>Residential Property Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chamber of Commerce of Greater WS</td>
<td>Advocacy Group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>