



Prince William County Government

Environment Chapter Update

Board of County Supervisors – Planning Commission
Joint Work Session

October 13, 2009

Environment Chapter Update (Introduction & Format)

Process:

- Sub-Committee of PC co-chairs and Staff
- Citizen input/posting system

Status to Date:

- 2 public input meetings – 6/24, 9/10
- 2 PC work sessions – 9/23, 10/15 or 10/21 or 10/22 (pending)
- Amended timeline – 12/2 PC public hearing

Purpose of Joint Work Session:

- BOCS / PC update
- Seek BOCS input



Environment Chapter Update (proposed text)

INTENT:

- New Sustainability approach
- New Green initiatives – building, infrastructure, and technology

GOAL:

- Preserve, protect, and enhance the environmental resources and features of the County.



Environment Chapter Update (proposed text)

EN-POLICY 1: Consider environmental concerns at all levels of decision-making.

Significant Changes (Policy 1):

- Environmental Constraints Analysis – expanded list provides a comprehensive overview of natural features
- Development of new maps and GIS layers to establish baseline data to better assess potential impacts, restoration priorities, and highlight progress



Environment Chapter Update (proposed text)

EN-POLICY 2: Develop and implement a data collection, tracking, and analysis structure to monitor and establish the county's environmental baseline, resource status, and sustainability.

Significant Changes (Policy 2):

- Complete Countywide Stream Assessment and make available to public
- Inventory County-owned properties to identify environmental resources
- Develop baseline analysis of existing tree cover
- Assess economic value of the County's existing green infrastructure
- Publish annual report detailing County's environmental assets



Environment Chapter Update (proposed text)

EN-POLICY 3: To further support OS-Policy 5, a minimum of 39 percent of the total area in the County, (exclusive of acreage of Marine Corps Base Quantico for all calculation purposes), will be retained as protected open space, as defined in the Open Space Chapter.

Significant Changes (Policy 3):

- Suggest amendments to ZO/DCSM to require/increase buffers around public/conservation lands
- Ensure private property is not encumbered with proffered conservation areas
- Encourage private conservation donations through public information, outreach efforts, and partnerships
- Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program (39% open space)

Unresolved Issues:

- ZO vs. DCSM amendments – which is more appropriate?



Environment Chapter Update (proposed text)

EN-POLICY 4: Monitor air quality and collaborate with DEQ, MWCOG, and other regional entities to identify and implement strategies to improve air quality.

Significant Changes (Policy 4):

- Regional collaboration and cooperation for air quality
- Enhanced coordination with agencies and tracking

Unresolved Issues:

- Whether or not to encourage orienting structures to maximize solar and wind benefits on development proposals (topic remaining for discussion)



Environment Chapter Update (proposed text)

EN-POLICY 5: Protect the natural landscape and its associated economic, aesthetic and ecosystem benefits.

Significant Changes (Policy 5):

- Preservation/conservation of County's green infrastructure
- Critical slope areas and shrink-swell soils
- Vacant land/Brownfield redevelopment

Unresolved Issues:

- Slope thresholds and setbacks for discouraging/prohibiting development
- Usage of the phrase "at the time of rezoning/special use permit..."



Environment Chapter Update (proposed text)

- **ENERGY POLICIES – (New section; May all be moved into separate policy document)**
 - **EN-POLICY 16:** Develop a Community Energy Master Plan.
 - **EN-POLICY 17:** Implement cost-effective energy-conservation measures at County facilities.
 - **EN-POLICY 18:** Provide recognition and incentives for energy conservation at non-government facilities and residences.
 - **EN-POLICY 19:** Provide recognition and incentives for renewable energy application at non-government facilities and residences.
 - **EN-POLICY 20:** Provide leadership by example and education in the areas of energy efficiency, demand response and renewable energy application.



Environment Chapter Update (proposed text)

All references to viewsheds under consideration to be re-located to Community Design chapter.

GOAL: Preserve, manage, and where necessary, integrate viewsheds that are character-defining features of Prince William County into development.

□ **NATURAL VIEWSHEDS POLICIES & ACTION STRATEGIES**

- ◆ **DES POLICY 14:** Identify significant natural viewsheds in Prince William County.
- ◆ Viewshed definition



Environment Chapter Update (Resource Identification & Prioritization)

Environmental resource mapping

- ❑ Determine ongoing resource needs, feasibility, and priorities
- ❑ At least 9 identified new GIS layers to be developed, maintained, and made available to the public
- ❑ Identified County-wide layers to include, but not limited to, the following:
 - Tree canopy coverage
 - Impervious area coverage
 - Vegetation cover types
 - Wetlands
 - Critical streams
 - Stormwater management facilities
 - Water quality monitoring stations
 - Floodplains
 - Conservation easements



Environment Chapter Update (Resource Identification & Prioritization)

Updating ZO / DCSM:

- ❑ At least 14 identified updates to the Zoning Ordinance and Design and Construction Standards Manual, to include but not limited to the following:
 - expanding the required information for environmental constraints analysis
 - buffering requirements around conservation and preservation areas
 - thresholds for clearing/grading, site enhancements, stormwater management, and onsite preservation for REZs and SUPs
 - tree preservation ordinances
 - drinking water overlay districts
- ❑ In process of determining tasks to be accomplished within short-term, mid-term, or long-term time frames



Other Remaining Issues & Topics

1. Inter-agency review and feedback
2. Analysis of policy implications during REZs and SUPs
3. Countywide stream assessment
4. Identifying environmental resources on County-owned properties
5. Report detailing County's environmental assets
6. Identifying County's mature hardwood forests
7. Ongoing stakeholder input and coordination
8. Assessing data analysis needs and current organizational capacity

