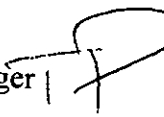




MEMORANDUM

2011 APR 14 PM 3:33

TO: District of Columbia Zoning Commission

FROM: Travis Parker, Zoning Review Project Manager 

DATE: April 14, 2011

SUBJECT: Additional public outreach in the Zoning Review process

On March 30, 2011, Zoning Commission members attended a meeting of the Zoning Review Taskforce to listen and participate in a Taskforce discussion on general concerns about the Zoning Review process. At that meeting, OP noted, and has since confirmed with the Taskforce, a consensus around three points:

1. It is important to have a **complete body of text** for the public to review to understand how different sections work together.
2. It is important to initiate a **broad public outreach** after a full body of text is available, but prior to formal rulemaking action by the Zoning Commission.
3. The Commission should continue to have **hearings by subject** prior to any hearing on the entire body to allow citizens to speak to specific areas of interest.

With this guidance in mind, OP has proposed to the Taskforce that a significant public outreach component be added to the Zoning Review process. This outreach would use multiple media and governmental conduits to reach a more general audience that does not normally focus on zoning issues. The outreach would culminate in a series of city-wide meetings, possibly ward based, that would present both general and specific information on potential zoning changes. The meetings would likely follow the Comprehensive Plan model of a general presentation followed by specific subject breakout groups. The information could be tailored, where possible, to local area interests.

OP met with the Taskforce again on April 13 to discuss two possible process options that incorporate this public outreach and accomplish all three goals listed above. Unlike some the discussion on March 30th of moving ahead with hearings on text as it is finished, both options begin with completion of remaining text drafting prior to further public hearings in order to accomplish goal number 1. Both options contain the public outreach component in order to accomplish goal number 2. Both options have a block of subject specific ZC hearings on text after the public outreach to accomplish goal number 3. The difference between the two options is in the timing of the public outreach and whether the ZC reviews text prior to public outreach.

The first option presented to the Taskforce followed the following steps:

1. Completion of draft text
2. "Preliminary review" of text by the Zoning Commission
3. Broad public outreach
4. Subject-specific public hearings on text

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EXHIBIT NO. 139

The second option presented to the Taskforce followed these steps:

1. Completion of draft text
2. Broad public outreach
3. Subject-specific setdowns and public hearings on text

The Taskforce members had variety of comments and opinions on the options. There were concerns that ZC review prior to public outreach would give an impression of a fait accompli and that people would consider the process too far along. Others, however, felt that it was important to have a first ZC review of text to avoid presenting issues that were not vetted by the Commissioners. Any additional time for ZC review prior to public outreach was not a concern for most Taskforce members. Finally, a concern was expressed by some Taskforce members that option two would result in public outreach over the summer months, when some of the intended audience would be on vacation.

An informal poll of Taskforce opinion split exactly evenly between the two options. Based on the discussion and the even split of Taskforce members, OP recommends a compromise position. OP recommends that the Commission review text prior to the public outreach through their setdown process, but that public hearings be held after the city-wide informational meetings. This would allow the Commission to review and comment on text prior to public discourse, but maximize participation at public hearings. It would also insure that, with time to setdown the text, public outreach would not happen until the fall. OP's recommended process would follow these steps:

1. Completion of draft text
2. Setdown of text by the Zoning Commission
3. Broad public outreach
4. Subject-specific public hearings on text