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# TOWN HALL MEETING

## COUNTY COUNCIL

### OF

## PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY MARYLAND

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## **"Progress on Streamlining the Prince George's County Permitting Process"**

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2011

COLLEGE PARK CITY HALL  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
4500 KNOX ROAD  
COLLEGE PARK, MARYLAND 20740

7:00 – 9:00 P.M.

### PROCEDURES

**Time limitations of three (3) minutes per speaker have been imposed.** You will hear a tone indicating that no time remains. **Your cooperation in immediately concluding your remarks will be very much appreciated.** **There will be no relinquishing of time by one speaker to another.** Written statements may be submitted for the record in addition to, or in lieu of, verbal testimony. Comments should be addressed to:

The Honorable Ingrid M. Turner, Chair  
Prince George's County Council  
County Administration Building  
Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772

**AGENDA**

- I. **Introductory Remarks by Council Chair Ingrid M. Turner**
- II. **Greetings by:** The Honorable Andrew M. Fellows, Mayor, City of College Park
- III. **Discussion/Update on the Status of the County's Initiative to Streamline Permitting Processes**
  - Carla A. Reid, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer for Economic Development and Public Infrastructure
  - Samuel E. Wynkoop, Jr., Director, Prince George's County Department of Environmental Resources (DER)  
Sarah Bouldin-Carr, Deputy Director, DER  
Kina Campbell, Acting Associate Director, Permits and Review Division, DER
  - Susan D. Hubbard, Prince George's County Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T) Public Information Officer  
Andre' Issayans, Deputy Director, DPW&T  
Dawit Abraham, Associate Director, Office of Engineering, DPW&T
- IV. **Comments by Interested Citizens**
- V. **Comments by County Council Members**
- VI. **Closing Remarks by Council Chair Ingrid M. Turner**
- VII. **Adjournment**



# **A Progress Report: Streamlining the Prince George's County Permitting Process**



Rushern L. Baker, III  
County Executive

**September 15, 2011**  
**[www.princegeorgescountymd.gov](http://www.princegeorgescountymd.gov)**

## **Presenters**

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**Streamlining the permitting process is important to dispel the perception that . . .**

**“Prince George’s suffers from a reputation of being difficult to develop in...”**

**The Examiner - July 23, 2011**

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**County Executive Baker takes this process seriously :**

**“We will work to make the County’s permitting process streamlined and effective so that development happens quickly and efficiently.”**

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## Permitting Processes Make Headlines



- "Mayor Emanuel of Chicago Announces New Efficiencies in Building Permitting Process"
- "Trimming the red tape: Responding to developers, state begins to streamline its permitting process"
- "Solar Firms Frustrated by Permits"
- "Glen Burnie County begins process of loosening business regulations"
- "Despite delays, candle factory about to open: Owner says permit process almost cost county 100 jobs in Glen Burnie"
- "Governor Announces Maryland Made Easy"
- "With careful planning and focused execution, the City of Roswell, Georgia was able to significantly improve permit process in its first event"

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## Headline Conclusions



- Issues with permitting processes are not unique to our County
- Movements to streamline permitting processes are not unique to our County
- What is unique is creating and instituting a model permitting process, where government makes things happen and respects businesses' and citizens' time

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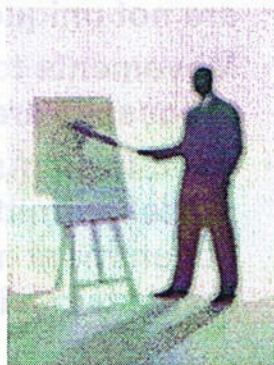
## Three Phase Approach to Streamlining the Permitting Process

- **Phase I: Assessment (April – June 2011/Completed)**
  - Conduct agency business briefings
  - Meet with stakeholders
- **Phase II: Analysis (July 2011 – December 2011)**
  - Research industry best practices
  - Review aspects of the process identified as issues
- **Phase III: Implementation/On-going Assessment (beginning in January 2012)**
  - Adopt industry best practices
  - Implement recommendations and execute action plans

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## Assessment and Analysis of Entire Permitting Process

- **Horizontal Components**
  - Entitlement/Land
  - Environmental
  - Transportation
- **Vertical Components**
  - Building



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## Create a Model Permitting Process that is . . .



- **Simplified**
- **Timely**
- **Predictable**

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## Agencies Involved in the Permitting Process

Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission

Department of Public Works and Transportation

Department of Environmental Resources

Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission

Soil Conservation District

Health Department

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## A Model Permitting Process Is SIMPLIFIED

- Reduce the number of agencies involved in the plan approval process
- Consolidate key plan approval functions
  - Transportation Reviews
  - Water and Sewer Reviews
  - Well and Septic and other Health Department Reviews
  - Environmental Reviews
- Modify organizational structure to accommodate the changes



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## SIMPLIFIED, cont.



- Conduct periodic coordination meetings to focus on process and /or project specific issues
- Review APF requirements as part of the process to eliminate redundancies and clarify expectations
- Conduct simultaneous operational and planning reviews and approvals

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## A Model Permitting Process Is TIMELY

- **Define what a priority project is based on:**
  - Environmental criteria
  - Economic development criteria
- **Provide options for expediting the process**
  - Expand Third Party Plan Approval Program (we have third party inspection)
  - Expand walk-through procedure into a Day Program
  - Implement an Accelerated Permit process to expedite tenant fit-out

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## TIMELY, cont

- **Require corrected plans to be returned within a specified period**
- **Expedite corrected plans if revised in specified period**
- **Offer a Certified Plan Correction Option**

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### **TIMELY, cont.**

- Categorize plans to incorporate a defined approval time period for midsize plans
- Expand Mailer Permit Program
- Implement E-plans
- Decrease wait time for permit processing by utilizing senior service aides
- Implement contract positions to assist with fire plans



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### **A Model Permitting Process is PREDICTABLE**

- Establish target turnaround times for every step of the process
- Adhere to timelines identified in a defined conflict resolution process
- Eliminate lost plans
- Track performance
- Review and assess processes periodically



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## A Model Permitting Process CUSTOMER FOCUSED

- **Promote Cultural Change**
  - Foster positive approach to plan approvals vs plan reviews
  - Take the common sense approach
- **Implement Training Program**
- **Expand staffing where needed**
- **Invest in new technology and other tools**
  - Increase on-line availability of services (application, payment, review status, project documents, e-permits, etc.)

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## CUSTOMER FOCUSED, cont.

- **Ensure Customer Convenience**
  - Expand daily walk-through procedure to include all permitting disciplines
  - Provide service through the lunch hour
  - Review varying shift start/end times to accommodate more customers
- **Establish a Quality Assurance Program**
  - Conduct regular customer and stakeholder surveys
  - Conduct annual Site Development and Education Forum
  - Convene Industry/Agency Committee

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## Closing Thoughts

- Effect positive change to be competitive
- Remember that process incentives are important
- Avoid layering of requirements that counteract incentives created
- Remain mindful of the need to balance development goals and environmental requirements

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CUSTOMER FOCUSED, cont.

- **Ensure Customer Convenience**
  - Expand daily walk-through procedure to include all permitting disciplines
  - Provide service through the lunch hour
  - Review varying shift standstill times to accommodate more customers
- **Establish a Quality Assurance Program**
  - Conduct regular customer and stakeholder surveys
  - Conduct annual Site Development and Education Forum
  - Convene Industry Agency Committee