

Greenville County Low Impact Development Roundtable

Planning Meeting Notes

October 31, 2006
Boiling Springs Fire District Station

Purpose and Goals of Roundtable Process

Jason Van Driesche, Director of Watershed Conservation at Upstate Forever, opened the meeting with an overview of the purpose and goals of the Roundtable process. Upstate Forever hopes to use a recently completed audit of pavement standards in the region to initiate discussions of ways to introduce flexibility into pavement standards (street width, parking lot ratios, and so on), while maintaining essential services like emergency access and adequate areas for utility infrastructure.

The broad goal of this effort is to allow developers to reduce stormwater impacts and the financial costs of development by reducing impervious surface in areas of new growth. The purpose of this roundtable is to develop a consensus document to identify recommended changes to county development standards that all partners can agree on. These recommendations will be framed in broad terms at the policy level rather than specific regulations and will be submitted to county council for consideration.

Jason emphasized that the roundtable will be a collaborative process - support from each group is crucial to achieving flexibility in county paving standards. Therefore, recommendations will only go forward with the consent of ALL partners in the process.

Introduction of Participating Partners

Following the overview, participants introduced themselves and their organizations. Representatives from each organization were:

- Chip Bentley, Appalachian Council of Governments
- Jimmy Forbes, Greenville County Planning Commission
- Marti Thompson, SC DOT (representing Greenville Area Utility Coordination Committee)
- Todd Ward, The Furman Company
- Wayne McCall, Travelers Rest
- Steve Graham, Greenville Association of Fire Chiefs
- Paula Gucker, Greenville County Public Works
- Judy Wortkoetter, Greenville County Engineer
- Stephanie Amell, SC DOT
- Coleman Shouse, Home Builders Association of Greenville
- Rick Sumerel, Verdae Development, Inc.
- Mason Ailstock, Clemson University International Center for Automotive Research
- Mary Pat Crozier, South Carolina Chapter of the US Green Building Council
- Bob Manz, City of Greenville
- Glen Pace, City of Greer
- Roger Case, City of Fountain Inn
- Johnny Sanders, City of Simpsonville
- Carmela Kisner, Greenville Chapter of the American Institute of Architects

Others partners not present at the first meeting, but committed to participating include:

- Bogue Wallin, Liberty Property Trust
- Theresa Barber, Greenville County Fire Marshal
- JD Martin, Arbor Engineering
- Eston Rodgers, Home Builders Association of Greenville
- City of Mauldin

Participants also suggested that representatives from the ALSA and private sector engineers should be invited to participate. JD Martin of Arbor Engineering and Mett Davis of Davis and Floyd were names suggested for the additional entities, respectively.

Summary of Pavement Audit Findings

The recently completed audit is available at www.saludareedy.org/paveaudit.html. The audit is divided into two sections:

1. A chapter by chapter look at each aspect of the development process with sections on street design and other non-street pavement areas (parking lots, driveways, alleys, and setbacks).
2. An appendix that outlines how different areas within Greenville County scored on the assessment of flexibility allowed in their standards.

Summary of Upstate Forever's Role

Jason Van Driesche proposed that Upstate Forever's role in the process be twofold, as both facilitator and researcher. As facilitator, Upstate Forever will organize each meeting and ensure that each participant in the process has equal voice in determining the consensus set of recommendations. As researcher, Upstate Forever will collect information between meetings at the request of various partners, in order to help them make better informed decisions. To this end, Upstate Forever will use the audit of pavement standards as a starting point, and will search for additional examples of low impact development standards and practices in the region.

To ensure equal participation in the recommendation process, each 'vote' on a specific recommendation will be conducted with a set of colored dots: green, yellow, red. The dots will represent the entity's degree of comfort with the proposed recommendation: green = agree, yellow = hesitant, red = disagree. After assessing the votes for each recommendation, those with a number of reds will be discarded, those with green will be incorporated into the consensus document, and those with yellow will be the focus of subsequent meetings where Upstate Forever will facilitate discussion to help identify where consensus may be reached. The research capacity of Upstate Forever will occur between these meetings and will be focused on the 'yellow' items.

Meeting Structure and Times

Five additional meetings of the roundtable were proposed at the meeting. Two meetings will focus on pavement issues associated with the public right-of-way and two will focus on pavement issues not in the public right-of-way. The public right-of-way meetings will focus on those topics in the street design section of the audit. The non public right-of-way meetings will focus on those topics in the parking section and 'other paved areas' section of the audit. The final meeting will be a wrap-up where participants will finalize the consensus document.

Meetings were set for every third Tuesday of the month, beginning January 16. They will be held from 8 - 10 AM in the training room in the Conference Room D area of County Square.