

Planning Commission Meeting 7-11-2023 Summary Notes

Overall, the Commission supported the goals and resulting unified fee schedule. The Commissioners had a few questions as well as suggestions for clarity. (*Staff responses in italics*)

- Several Commissioners asked if staff would be proposing reduced fees to lower barriers to housing as part of this project.
 - *Staff noted that this proposal will come forward as a result of the partnership between the County and developers to explore a broad variety of incentives for the development of affordable housing.*
- When will the County be doing the revenues / expenditures analysis (or cost of services assessment)?
 - *Staff mentioned that a true fee study is not part of the current work. With the new Community Development System and zoning modernization, staff expects streamlining and changing processes. It makes sense to review costs after that, not now. That would be a good time to revisit the cost recovery policy.*
- It's somewhat hard, even with the crosswalk, to see what fee stays and what goes.
 - *Staff agreed and noted that staff worked on various techniques for showing the proposed changes. The explanation is complicated by the number of fee categories and complexity of fees. Staff has made additional revisions to the fee schedule crosswalk that should improve the ability to see the changes.*
- Is the largest single-family bundled fee category paying its way? How many permits in this category and how large are the houses being built?
 - *It's a small percentage of all applications that fall into that largest category. Staff didn't have the exact percentage or the sizes of the largest homes at hand – and they are a small percentage. Staff was not focused on house size but on the comparison of fees and revenue (existing and proposed).*
- Should consider broader benchmarking than Virginia. Don't agree that some of the chosen localities are comparable.
 - *Staff focused on aligning our fee schedule with the marketplace. When the County undertakes a cost of service or cost recovery assessment, it might be helpful to benchmark beyond Virginia.*
- There should be fewer single-family bundled categories than six.
 - *Staff started with four and expanded because the numbers (comparison of existing to proposed fees, existing to projected revenue) were too far off. After implementation, it will be easier to reduce the number of categories in a future iteration of fees.*
- Does the single-family bundled fee apply to an alteration/addition to an existing home?
 - *No, that's a separate fee.*

- Resubmittal fees – sometimes it's not the applicants' fault they need to resubmit, yet they have to pay a fee.
 - *Because there are currently fees for resubmittals, the proposed fee schedule does not establish this as a new fee. Staff applies common sense judgment of whether/when to apply the fee.*