

TO: Roger Millar, Smart Growth America
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FROM: Matthew Barron, Office of Councilman William Peduto

DATE: July 18, 2012

SUBJECT: Progress Report 1

Short Term Goals

- Adopt more specific solar installation standards for the City of Pittsburgh and work with surrounding municipalities and Allegheny County to devise standardized installation and permitting standards across municipal borders;
- Amend zoning code to allow renewable energy installations as primary uses (geothermal, solar, wind);
- Amend zoning code to allow pervious pavement and other green infrastructure;
- Allow clotheslines in SP and AP zoning overlay districts;
- Require cool roofs in building code;
- Adapt flexible parking requirements by linking parking minimums/maximms to transit access. Require additional stormwater management measures if parking exceeds maximum;
- Allow live/work units in mixed-use, commercial, and SP districts;
- Create additional development incentives for green roofs;
- Create expedited permit process for developments that meet LEED Silver standards.

Long Term Goals

- Create new TOD overlay district with value-capture mechanism to fund local transit initiatives;
- Craft more stringent steep slope development regulations;
- Create standardized system of green development incentives across municipal borders;
- Address non-conforming use/structure regulations to make it easier to improve legal non-conforming uses and employ green development;
- Explore creation of net-zero energy overlay district;
- Address accessory dwelling unit regulations to increase density in appropriate residential areas;
- Add energy efficiency requirements to lighting code;
- Pursue creation of stormwater utility to price stormwater externalities and make incentives for green infrastructure more attractive.

Implementation Plan and Progress to Date

Short Term

Adopt more specific **solar installation standards** for the City of Pittsburgh and work with surrounding municipalities and Allegheny County to devise standardized installation and **permitting standards** across municipal borders

A multi-part effort is underway to achieve significant progress on these goals. Following the Technical Assistance Workshop, City Council staff reached out to Citizens for Pennsylvania's Future (PennFuture), a statewide environmental advocacy and policy organization, to form a partnership to create installation and permitting standards for Southwestern Pennsylvania.

PennFuture received a U.S. Department of Energy Sun Shot grant, totaling \$315,000 over 12 months, to help achieve these goals. I have held three planning meetings with senior staff of PennFuture to share information and create a strategy to best utilize the DOE funds.

PennFuture has convened several roundtable discussions with solar installers in the region and has solicited feedback about what standard regulations should look like and what issues need to be addressed legislatively. We are working collaboratively to compile this information and begin crafting a model ordinance.

A parallel, yet connected, effort is underway at the Allegheny County level as well. Councilman Peduto serves on Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald's Energy and Environment Vision Team and is part of a group tasked with making recommendations to the new County Executive. One of the recommendations we have successfully pushed is to support the efforts of our office and PennFuture to create solar standards across municipal boundaries. With the weight of the County Executive behind this it will expedite the uptake by other municipal leaders.

Amend zoning code to allow **renewable energy installations as primary uses** (geothermal, solar, wind)

Solar arrays as primary uses have been a point of discussion with PennFuture and Allegheny County and will likely be folded in with the model ordinance discussed above.

Geothermal and wind as primary uses are slightly more complex and will require further discussion with the City Planning Department and Bureau of Building Inspection before work can begin on an amendment to Title Nine: Zoning of the Pittsburgh City Code. These discussions will be initiated this fall.

Amend zoning code to **allow pervious pavement** and other green infrastructure

A simple amendment allowing the use of permeable pavers is being prepared now and will be introduced following City Council's August recess.

Allow clotheslines in SP and AP zoning overlay districts

Not yet addressed.

Require **cool roofs** in building code

I have organized a conference call with officials from Chicago, New York City, and the Cool Roof Rating Council to begin discussing technical specifications for cool roofs. Other cities have tailored requirements based on the size and slope of the roof, some require testing and/or certification by a third party to verify the reflectivity factor, and others simply encourage the use of cool roofs when possible.

I plan to gather information from other cities that have passed regulations before crafting an ordinance for Pittsburgh. Once I have met with officials from other cities I plan to convene a meeting with representatives of the building trades to discuss any concerns they may have with compliance.

After this information gathering period an ordinance should be able to be drafted fairly quickly.

Adapt flexible parking requirements by linking parking minimums/maximums to transit access. Require additional stormwater management measures if parking exceeds maximum

Not yet addressed.

Allow live/work units in mixed-use, commercial, and SP districts

Not yet addressed.

Create additional development incentives for **green roofs**

Create **expedited permit process** for developments that meet LEED Silver standards

As Chris Duerksen mentioned in his memo, incentives for development are currently rendered somewhat ineffective by the low threshold for obtaining a variance from the Zoning Board of Adjustment and Planning Commission. The existing development incentives are rarely utilized because developers are able to obtain variances without taking steps to meet higher development standards and seek incentives. Unfortunately, changing the culture of the Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Adjustment takes time and political leadership and new and existing incentives are not likely to be effective until this change has occurred.

We will hold this legislation until we can begin to effect this change.

Long Term

Create new TOD overlay district with value-capture mechanism to fund local transit initiatives

With the recent announcement of Pittsburgh's award of a federal TIGER grant of \$15 million for major transportation improvements in the East Liberty neighborhood, the goal of creating a robust transportation planning district has become much more feasible. The federal money will allow us to work with City Planning, private developers, local business owners and the Allegheny County Port Authority (which runs Pittsburgh's public transit system) to target East Liberty as a possible TOD overlay district.

Due to the large number of stakeholders and the complexity of creating a new zoning overlay, this initiative will likely span several years, but factors are falling into place that will allow us to begin the process very soon.

Craft more stringent steep slope development regulations

Not yet addressed.

Create standardized system of green development incentives across municipal borders

Not yet addressed.

Address non-conforming use/structure regulations to make it easier to improve legal non-conforming uses and employ green development

Not yet addressed.

Explore creation of net-zero energy overlay district

Not yet addressed.

Address accessory dwelling unit regulations to increase density in appropriate residential areas

Not yet addressed.

Add energy efficiency requirements to lighting code

Not yet addressed.

Pursue creation of stormwater utility to price stormwater externalities and make incentives for green infrastructure more attractive

The county sewer authority, ALCOSAN, and the municipal water and sewer authority, PWSA, will be presenting their wet weather plan to meet the stipulations of the federal consent decree our region is under at the end of this month. We have formed partnerships with several nonprofit organizations and foundations that are working to build grassroots support for green infrastructure as a major piece of the plan and for the creation of a stormwater utility to fund improvements.

With pressure from the grassroots and elected leaders, the creation of a stormwater utility is much more likely.