

To Members

This is the first of periodic newsletters we will be sending you throughout the year as important new issues surface. Although your Board of Directors meets monthly and committees on which some of our members serve are very active, other members sometimes do not have a way of keeping up with development and growth issues. We will try to do this throughout these newsletters.

UDC Chapter 18 – Landscape, Clearing and Trees

Last year, there was an extensive addition to Chapter 18 which provided for, among other things, new requirements for:

1. *A Site Clearing Permit before a tract of land can be cleared (which includes requirements for a tree survey to identify certain species of trees of certain sizes).*
2. *New landscape and maintenance requirements.*
3. *Replacement for certain trees that are cleared, in addition to regular required landscaping.*



Prior to the disturbance for any development or redevelopment of a lot or parcel of land (excluding individual existing residential lots of less than five (5) acres in a recognized subdivision) a Site Clearing Permit for such activity must be obtained from the Department of Public Works. This requirement does not include property intended for agricultural activities or commercial timber harvesting. There is an extensive list of items that must be provided with the Site Clearing Permit application, including a survey identifying and locating certain tree species with a DBH (Diameter at Breast Height) of ten (10) inches or greater.

For required landscaping, there are incentives to preserve existing trees on a site. During construction activities, there are detailed requirements for protection of trees intended for preservation. In addition to regular landscape requirements, if certain trees over a certain size are cleared, new trees must be planted to replace the cleared trees.

For residential subdivisions, there are other requirements in Chapter 4.6.A.16.b to provide Subdivision Restrictions that require the planning of certain trees on lots by the homeowners within 6 months after occupancy of a home.

The provisions of Chapter 18 are extensive (24 pages) and can be reviewed (as can all sections of the Unified Development Code - UDC) on the Planning Commission web site (www.brgov.com/dept/planning).

Chapter 17 – Parking

At the June meeting of the Planning Commission a proposed amendment to Chapter 17 – Parking will be presented that addresses (among other things) the following:



1. *More explanation of the hours of operation and uses for sites and/or structures when shared parking for non-simultaneous uses is proposed.*
2. *Requirements for bicycle parking spaces for proposed uses providing fifty (50) or more vehicular off-street parking spaces, with the exception of single family, two-family residential and temporary or seasonal uses.*
3. *Changes to the definitions of Assisted Living, Nursing Home and Bedroom when determining the required number of parking spaces.*
4. *Changes to the number of parking spaces required for new multifamily housing projects.*

These proposed changes to Chapter 17 are posted on the Planning Commission web site and have been distributed to Growth Coalition members for review.

Flag Lots

In some cases a lot is created without the normal required frontage on a public street, with access gained by a private servitude. There have been some instances where proper legal documentation was not recorded regarding the access to the created lot, causing problems for the new lot. Because of this, there is currently a proposal to incorporate into the UDC provisions for creating a “Flag Lot” (named because the stick of the “flag” is the narrow access strip and the “flag” is the lot).



The final wording of this proposed addition to the UDC is still in discussion at the Zoning Advisory Committee and will probably not be presented to the Planning Commission until July. When the final proposed Flag Lot provisions are completed, they will be posted on the Planning Commission web site and distributed to Growth Coalition members for review prior to submission to the Planning Commission and Council.

Comprehensive Plan Update

Earlier this year, the Planning Commission issued a Request For Proposals to three planning teams for assistance in preparation of a new Comprehensive Plan for the Parish. This group of three teams had been earlier short-listed from a Request for Qualifications.

This new Comprehensive Plan will guide our planning and development for the next 20 years and will update the current Horizon Plan which was adopted by the Parish in 1992.



The public presentation by the three planning teams was on April 2. After the presentation, an Advisory Committee met and recommended the selection of Fregonese Associates, a Portland-based firm to assist with the Comprehensive Plan update. Fregonese Associates was in Baton Rouge the second week of May to meet with the Negotiation Committee that is working out the details of the contract. The Negotiating Committee is Troy Bunch, Boo Thomas, Charles Landry and Lee Ann Batson of the Parish Attorney's Office. The contract then goes to the Planning Commission and Council for approval. Troy Bunch expects the Update project to be about an 18 month process.

In addition to Fregonese Associates, the team includes:

- *Brown + Danos – in field of ecosystem and natural environment analysis, water system management and wetland rehabilitation.*
- *Robert Grow – for vision-development process*
- *Robert Twilley – Associated Vice Chancellor of Research and Economic Development and professor in the LSU School of Coast and Environment*
- *ABMB Engineers – Transportation Systems*
- *GOTECH – Civil Engineering*
- *Kimley-Horn and Assos. – National expertise in transportation planning*
- *Nelson\Nygaard – Transit planning and alternative modes of transportation*

This project is very comprehensive and will look at all aspects of planning, zoning, transportation and many other elements that affect development in our Parish. The Growth Coalition will be very active in committees and other input opportunities in the Comprehensive Plan update process.

SPUD/PUD/TND Amendment

There are certain items being considered regarding the length of time an approval of a SPUD, PUD and TND will be effective if the development does not take place. The Zoning Advisory Committee is looking at these matters and when the wording of the proposed amendment is completed, it will be posted on the Planning Commission web site and sent to Growth Coalition members for review.

Historic Preservation Ordinance

There are several minor proposed revisions to the Historic Preservation Ordinance, basically dealing with administrative items. Later this year, there may be more extensive substantive changes to the ordinance proposed. We will keep you informed on these proposals.

Wrap Up

The issues covered in this newsletter are only some of the many initiatives taking place that affect development and growth in our community. Members of the Baton Rouge Growth Coalition are involved in all of these matters. We strive to make the ultimate ordinance, rule or guideline something that not only promotes responsible growth, but also is something that does not unreasonably add to the cost of development and is workable in the real world. It is only through support of our members that we are able to show a unified force in participating in these initiatives.

We thank you for your support!

