



CITY OF DUNWOODY

41 Perimeter Center East

Dunwoody, GA 30346

Phone: 678.382.6700 • Fax: 678.382.6701

www.dunwoodyga.gov

MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor and City Council

From: Sustainability Commission

Date: April 26, 2010

Subject: **Community Incentives for Green Building Policy**

ITEM DESCRIPTION

The Sustainability Commission recommends the Community Incentives for Green Building Policy.

BACKGROUND

As presented at the April Work Session, the attached policy has been drafted to meet the requirements of three ARC Green Communities measures: Measure 5 Community Green Building Incentives, Measure 18 Community Solar Incentives, and Measure 26 Community Incentives for WaterSense Homes. At the request of Council, the use of pervious pavement material has been added. All changes from the Work Session have been tracked and appear in redline and strikethrough.

In overview, the policy recognizes four different areas in which sustainable concepts can be incorporated into Dunwoody buildings – green building certifications such as LEED or Energy Star, incorporation of solar energy such as photovoltaic, reduction and efficiency of water use through the WaterSense certification; and integration of pervious paving materials. The intent of this policy is to incentivize the use of these green building practices by offering expedited plan review for both new construction and renovations. The construction industry operations are time sensitive. Expediting plan review enables builders to begin the construction process faster and possibly save money.

By incentivizing the incorporation of green building practices and more efficient use of resources, the City of Dunwoody will encourage builders in the community to utilize green building practices. This policy would be applicable to all future building projects in the community.

RECOMMENDATION

The Sustainability Commission recommends adopting the attached Community Incentives for Green Building Policy for the City of Dunwoody.

Additionally, staff recommends initiating a text amendment to the Zoning Ordinance definition of “paved.” Presently the Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 27, Article 1, Division 1, Section 1-17, has a limited definition of pavement recognizing only impervious surface. Staff believes a more robust definition could be drafted to allow the use of pervious pavement. If the Mayor and Council are amenable to this suggestion, staff would also suggest the text amendment be first heard by the Sustainability Commission prior to being entertained by the Community Council and then Planning Commission.

**A RESOLUTION TO ADOPT THE CITY OF DUNWOODY COMMUNITY
INCENTIVES FOR GREEN BUILDING POLICY**

WHEREAS, green building practices can be incorporated into Dunwoody buildings through green building certifications, use of solar energy, and reduction and efficiency of water use; and

WHEREAS, the City of Dunwoody recognizes that by incentivizing the incorporation of green building practices and more efficient use of resources the City of Dunwoody will encourage builders in the community to utilize green building practices; and

WHEREAS, the City of Dunwoody acknowledges that both construction and renovation projects are time sensitive; and

WHEREAS, by offering expedited plan review for projects that incorporate green building practices, the City of Dunwoody will enable builders to begin their projects faster and possibly save both time and money; now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and City Council of the City of Dunwoody, and it is hereby resolved by the authority of the City Council, that the City of Dunwoody Community Incentives for Green Building Policy as attached hereto and incorporated herein, is hereby adopted.

SO RESOVLED AND EFFECTIVE this 26th day of April, 2010.

Approved:

Ken Wright, Mayor

Attest:

Sharon Lowery, City Clerk

Seal



CITY OF DUNWOODY

COMMUNITY INCENTIVES FOR GREEN BUILDING

Article

Version 2010.03.29 ~~04.13~~

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COMMUNITY INCENTIVES FOR GREEN BUILDING POLICY

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish incentives for the community to incorporate green building practices in projects within the City of Dunwoody. This policy recognizes ~~three~~^{four} different areas in which sustainable concepts can be incorporated into Dunwoody building projects – green building certifications, incorporation of solar energy, ~~and~~ reduction and efficiency of water use through the WaterSense certification, and integration of pervious paving materials.

Green buildings are designed to reduce the overall impact of the built environment on human health and the natural environment. Several different certification programs exist to rate the sustainability of a building. One such standard is the United States Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system. Additionally the Environmental Protection Agency and United States Department of Energy's EnergyStar and EarthCraft programs include guidelines for buildings that are not LEED certified.

Multiple uses for solar energy can be incorporated into buildings. One of the most common uses of solar energy is photovoltaic, or solar panels, which use solar power technology through an array of photovoltaic cells to convert light from the sun directly into electricity. Solar cells produce direct current (DC) electricity from light, which can be used to power DC equipment or to recharge a battery. An inverter is required to convert the DC electricity to alternating current (AC) electricity to power almost all uses of electricity in the home. The basic photovoltaic cell typically produces only a small amount of power. To produce more power, cells can be interconnected to form modules, which can in turn be connected into arrays to produce yet more power. A second method of using solar energy is solar water heaters. Solar water heating systems include storage tanks and solar collectors. There are two types of solar water heating systems: active, which have circulating pumps and controls, and passive, which do not have circulating pumps.

WaterSense is a program developed by the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the new home certification is available as of December 2009. WaterSense labeled new homes are designed to reduce residential water use indoors, as well as outdoors, compared to typical new homes. WaterSense labeled homes have been independently verified to use 20 percent less water than typical new homes.

Pervious paving materials permit water to enter the ground by virtue of their porous nature or by large spaces in the material. Water-pervious materials such as gravel, crushed stone, open paving blocks, porous asphalt, concrete pavement, or pervious paving blocks for driveways, parking areas, walkways, and patios minimize runoff from those areas, as well as increase infiltration. Some pervious paving options can retain turf and carry autos and trucks evenly without creating tracks or other heavy traffic wear signs.



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The intent of this policy is to incentivize the participation in these green building practices by offering expedited plan review for both new construction and renovations.

II. Definitions

When used in this policy, the following words, terms and phrases, and their derivations, shall be the meaning ascribed to them in this section, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning,

- A. AGENT means an official contracted or subcontracted person who is authorized to act on behalf of the City of Dunwoody and represent their interests.
- B. CITY DIRECTOR OF SUSTAINABILITY means the Director of Sustainability or other employee or agent as designated in writing by the City Manager.
- C. EARTHCRAFT HOUSE means a certification program created in 1999, a residential green building program of the Greater Atlanta Home Builders Association in partnership with Southface. This program serves as a blueprint for energy and resource efficient homes. Information can be found at the EARTHCRAFT HOUSE website <http://www.earthcrafthouse.com/>.
- D. EMPLOYEE means an individual drawing a salary or wage from the City whether on a full-time, part-time, or contractual third-party basis. The term shall encompass all members of the Governing Authority without regard to whether or not such individual is compensated.
- E. ENERGY STAR means a joint program of the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the United States Department of Energy which aims to protect the environment through energy efficient products and practices. ENERGY STAR is also an energy performance rating system. The EPA also recognizes top performing buildings with the ENERGY STAR designation. Information can be found at the ENERGY STAR website <http://www.energystar.gov/>.
- F. EXPEDITED PLAN REVIEW means in all cases in which building plans include green building practices, as defined by this policy, the City of Dunwoody will to speed up the progress of plan review once an application. In all cases where practicable, the City of Dunwoody will complete its plan review in no more than ten business days.



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G. LEADERSHIP IN ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN (LEED) means a regulatory system for construction that establishes several levels of environmental achievement from a Certified rating to a Platinum rating. Information can be found at the United States Green Building Council's website <http://www.usgbc.org/LEED/>.

H. OFFICIAL means any elected or appointed person who holds office or serves in a position of public capacity.

I. PERVIOUS PAVING MATERIALS means materials that permit water to enter the ground by virtue of their porous nature or by large spaces in the material. By way of example, water-pervious materials include gravel, crushed stone, open paving blocks porous asphalt, concrete pavement, or pervious paving blocks.

I.F. PHOTOVOLTAIC means a solar power technology that uses arrays of photovoltaic cells to convert light from the sun directly into electricity.

K.J. SOLAR WATER HEATER means water heating systems include storage tanks and solar collectors. There are two types of solar water heating systems: active, which have circulating pumps and controls, and passive, which do not have circulating pumps.

L.K. UNITED STATES GREEN BUILDING COUNCIL (USGBC) means an entity that promulgates the LEED Rating System. Information can be found at the United States Green Building Council's website <http://www.usgbc.org/>.

M.L. WATERSENSE is a program developed by the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the new home certification is available as of December 2009. Information can be found at the Environmental Protection Agency's website <http://www.epa.gov/WaterSense/>.

III. Scope

This policy recognizes ~~three~~four different areas in which sustainable concepts can be incorporated into building projects – green building certifications, incorporation of photovoltaic, ~~and~~ reduction and efficiency of water use through the WaterSense certification, and integration of pervious paving materials.

A. Green Building



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1. Builders seeking green building certification(s) including LEED, EarthCraft, and ENERGY STAR must submit proof of LEED, EarthCraft House or ENERGY STAR registration and the corresponding program's checklist indicating all of the credits they plan to pursue. Additionally, intentions must be shown on building plans and indicated on their Building Permit Application in order to be granted expedited plan review.

B. Solar Energy

1. Builders incorporating solar energy elements, such as photovoltaic or solar water heaters, as shown on building plans and indicated on their Building Permit Application shall be granted expedited plan review.

C. WaterSense

1. Builders seeking WaterSense new home certification must submit a checklist of EPA WaterSense measures with intentions for meeting certification measures shown on building plans. Additionally, intentions must be indicated on their Building Permit Application shall be granted expedited plan review.

D. Pervious Paving

1. Building projects incorporating pervious paving materials, such as open paving blocks, porous asphalt, concrete pavement, or pervious paving blocks for driveways, parking areas, walkways, and patios, as shown on building plans and indicated on their Building Permit Application shall be granted expedited plan review.

IV. Exceptions

The City of Dunwoody's practice to expedite building plan review is not always practicable. The following situation is an exception to the Community Incentives for Green Building Policy.

- A. For all projects requiring reviews by other agencies, such as commercial buildings that must first be reviewed by the Fire Marshal's office for life safety, the City of Dunwoody cannot control the length of time needed by other agencies; however, the City of Dunwoody will make every effort to expedite its review of building plans.

V. Responsibility



Article

A. Director of Sustainability

The City Council may appoint the City Manager, or said agent appointed by the City Manager, to serve as the Director of Sustainability for the City, or the Council may contract with an independent third party to serve as the Director of Sustainability.

DUTIES: The Director of Sustainability shall have the following duties and powers in regards to the Community Incentives for Green Building Policy:

1. Work with all Department Heads to make certain that employees are aware and educated about this Community Incentives for Green Building Policy.
2. Work with the Chief Building Official to ensure that the Community Incentives for Green Building Policy of expedited review is practiced in all appropriate projects.
3. Work with the Community Development Director to make ensure this practice is monitored.