



County Council Bills on Sustainability and Energy Conservation

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Description

The following bills have been introduced to promote sustainability and energy conservation in Montgomery County:

Bill 2-14, Environmental Sustainability - Buildings - Benchmarking

Bill 3-14, Buildings - Energy Efficiency - Energy Standards

Bill 4-14, Streets and Roads - County Street Lights

Bill 5-14, Environmental Sustainability - Social Cost of Carbon Assessments

Bill 6-14, Environmental Sustainability - Office of Sustainability - Established

Bill 7-14, Contracts and Procurement - Certified Green Business Program

Bill 8-14, Buildings - County Buildings - Clean Energy Renewable Technology

Bill 9-14, Environmental Sustainability - Renewable Energy - County Purchase

Bill 10-14, Buildings - Solar Permits - Expedited Review

Bill 11-14, Buildings - Electric Vehicle Charging Station Permits - Expedited Review

Bill 12-14, Personnel - Telecommuting – Amendments

Most of these bills do not have a direct impact on land use planning, however, we have asked for a briefing on these bills so that the Planning Board may be informed of the potential they have to achieve reductions in carbon emissions and provide any comments that may be appropriate to convey to the bills' sponsors. Some of these bills will have implications for how we build and monitor park facilities and the Department of Parks has provided a separate memo on those implications.

Recommendations

We recommend that the Board determine if they wish to transmit any comments on the following bills:

Bill 6-14, Environmental Sustainability - Office of Sustainability – Established

This bill establishes an Office of Sustainability in the Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection to assume the duties originally assigned to the Sustainability Working Group. The Planning Board was designated as a member of the Working Group that was established by the original legislation and was represented on the Group during the time when it was preparing the Climate Protection Plan.

This bill proposes to reduce some of the original charge, but keeps intact the need to update the greenhouse gas emissions inventory, develop an energy baseline and cost savings plan for county buildings, and to evaluate options to encourage homeowners to conduct energy audits. An annual report to the County Council would document actions taken to implement the Climate Protection Plan, use of biodiesel fuels as well as energy and cost savings for County buildings.

While we would yield to the Executive the best way to staff this effort, we would assert that the planning and approval of new development that promotes smarter, more energy efficient communities is a vital part of that effort and that we recommend that coordination with the office that results from this bill be written into the legislation.

Bill 2-14, Buildings – Benchmarking

Bill 3-14, Buildings - Energy Efficiency - Energy Standards

Bill 8-14, Buildings - County Buildings - Clean Energy Renewable Technology

Bill 9-14, Environmental Sustainability - Renewable Energy - County Purchase

These bills are related to the operation of county buildings and the purchase of renewable energy. Department of Parks staff may have comments related to these bills.

Bill 4-14, Streets and Roads - County Street Lights

This bill requires that any contract that the County enters into to maintain street light be with a company that specializes in LED lights.

Bill 5-14, Environmental Sustainability - Social Cost of Carbon Assessments

This bill requires the Office of Management and Budget to submit an analysis of the social cost of carbon with certain capital projects.

Bill 7-14, Contracts and Procurement - Certified Green Business Program

This bill would create a preference for certified green business in the law governing the County's procurement of goods and services.

Bill 12-14, Personnel - Telecommuting – Amendments

This bill would require the County Executive to adopt regulations with respect to telecommuting.

Bill 10-14, Buildings - Solar Permits - Expedited Review

Bill 11-14, Buildings - Electric Vehicle Charging Station Permits - Expedited Review

These two bills require the Department of Permitting services to implement expedited review processes for the installation of rooftop solar photovoltaic systems and electric vehicle charging stations.

Conclusion

We recommend that the Board transmit any comments on these bills to the County Executive.