



DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & ZONING
MEMORANDUM

TO: Planning Commission
VIA: Robert S. Cohn, AICP, Planning Commission Administrator RC
FROM: Jenny Plummer-Welker, AICP, Principal Planner jpw
DATE: February 17, 2010
SUBJECT: Solomons Town Center Architectural Review Design Manual: Guidelines for Architectural Review Applicants (Draft)

BACKGROUND:

The Board of County Commissioners adopted the Solomons Town Center Zoning Ordinance, which became effective on September 22, 2009. This ordinance replaced the Solomons Zoning Ordinance, adopted June 10, 1986, as amended May 1, 2006.

The 2009 Solomons Town Center Zoning Ordinance includes an appearance code which applies to buildings, accessory structures (such as fences, decks, and sheds) and signs and includes design criteria for architectural features. The Solomons Town Center Zoning Ordinance states in section 6-7.02 B. 3:

The Planning Commission shall maintain an Architectural Design Manual, which shall include:

- a. *guidelines to be used in conjunction with the Appearance Code Criteria of this Zoning Ordinance; and*
- b. *examples of structures and elements, such as outdoor lighting fixtures, fences, street furniture, and trash enclosures, the design of which has been pre-approved by the Planning Commission after recommendation by the Solomons Architectural Review Committee.*

Any new element or structure that is determined to be in compliance with the Architectural Design Manual may be approved by the Planning Commission Administrator without review by the Architectural Review Committee.

The Planning Commission may delegate to its Administrator the authority to approve new elements or structures to be added to the Architectural Design Manual that are consistent with the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance, and comply with the recommendations of the Architectural Review Committee.

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DISCUSSION:

Staff prepared a draft of the *Solomons Town Center Architectural Review Design Manual: Guidelines for Architectural Review Applicants* (December 1, 2009 draft). The Planning Commission reviewed the draft at its meeting on December 9, 2009. Based upon the Planning Commission members' comments, staff revised sections of the *Design Manual* for the Planning Commission's consideration. Lauren Merrell presented the revised sections at the Commission's meeting on January 20, 2010. At the January meeting, the Planning Commission directed staff to proceed with completing the revision of the draft *Design Manual* in a consistent style as the sample revised sections. A revised draft has been prepared (dated February 4, 2010, attached).

The draft design manual includes an appendix of design features proposed for pre-approval. Additional features may be added to this appendix in accordance with the procedure set forth in Solomons Town Center Ordinance Article 7.02 B.3.b.

The Solomons Architectural Review Committee provided guidance on its development and reviewed earlier drafts of the design manual. Lauren Merrell prepared the draft manual and presented it to the Committee at their meetings in July, September, and November, 2009. I presented a slideshow about the draft Design Manual at the Solomons Civic Association's meeting at the Calvert Marine Museum on October 5, 2009. The Solomons Architectural Review Committee, at its meeting on November 2, 2009, recommended that the Planning Commission approve the *Solomons Town Center Architectural Design Manual*.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Provide staff with any comments (written and/or oral) on the revised draft *Design Manual* (February 4, 2010) at the Planning Commission's meeting on February 24, 2010.
2. Approve the draft for public hearing.
3. Direct staff to make preparations for a public hearing at the Planning Commission's meeting on March 24, 2010, including preparing a draft public hearing notice for the Planning Commission Attorney's review.

Attachment

C: Solomons Architectural Review Committee

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