



**PLANNING COMMISSION
MEMORANDUM**

TO: Calvert County Planning Commission
FROM: Robert Cohn, AICP, Planning Commission Administrator *RC*
DATE: January 11, 2010
SUBJECT: Agenda Format

For your information, many county governments use an agenda format different than that used by the Calvert County Planning Commission in order to shorten meetings and achieve other objectives. This alternative format uses a "Consent Agenda" prior to the Regular Agenda, for uncontroversial items requiring no questions or discussion by the staff, Commissioners, or public.

The way it works is as follows:

1. Staff prepares a draft agenda in advance of the meeting as usual, but including an initial category of items, such as subdivisions and site plans, considered by staff to be straight-forward and likely uncontroversial.
2. At the start of the Planning Commission meeting, the Secretary reads the caption of each proposed "Consent" agenda item, and in turn asks if there is any Commissioner (including Planning Commission Attorney) or member of the public who wishes to address that particular item. If so, the item is transferred from the Consent to Regular Agenda, and addressed following action on all remaining consent items, in full detail with staff presentation, public input, etc. as has been the Planning Commission's practice in the past. No staff presentations are made on consent items, nor is commission or public discussion allowed.
3. Upon completion of the Planning Commission's review of the staff's proposed consent agenda, the remaining items constitute the official consent agenda, and are voted upon as a group with one motion.
4. The regular agenda is then finalized and approved by the Planning Commission, and the meeting continues as normal.

In my experience, this agenda format has proven to be quite popular among commissioners, developers, engineers, and staff due to the shortening of meetings, reductions in developer cost, and focus on more important matters.

cc: Greg Bowen
Planning Commission Staff

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