

St. Charles Parish Department of Planning & Zoning

Land Use Report

Case Number: PZO 2017-04

Introduced by Paul J. Hogan, PE , Councilman-At-Large, Div. B

To modernize submission requirements for major subdivisions by eliminating the requirement for an original copy of the preliminary plat and construction drawings on "Mylar or film reproducible" media and adding a requirement for a .pdf (printable document format) and also to clarify the process for scheduling inspection of construction of major subdivisions.

Background

The blueline print process has been largely abandoned by architects, engineers, and surveyors. Modern computer aided design software allows for simplified transfer of construction plans in digital formats (like .pdf) and many modern offices have large format machines for printing, copying, and scanning construction plans. As a result, Mylar and film-reproducible document formats have become unnecessary and expensive. Surveyors, engineers, and subdividers complain about the requirement.

Engineers and subdividers object most strongly to the requirement for prints on film reproducible sheets for Construction Approval as these plans are often revised during the review process.

The Subdivision Regulations have been amended in the past in such a way as to create conflicts that make the Construction Inspection process confusing.

Planning and Zoning context

The Planning and Zoning Department disposed of its blueline machine several years ago. It had become unreliable; materials for it had become expensive; and maintaining it had become a burden of time and expense. In addition, storing Mylars and film reproducible copies of plans had also become a burden. The Department cannot use Mylar and film reproducible formats for subdivision plats and construction plans the way they are intended to be used (to be reproduced into blueprints). It is unnecessary for the Department to collect plans in these formats.

The Subdivision Regulations should be amended to clarify the process for arranging inspection of subdivision construction.

While both proposed amendments affect the Subdivision Regulations and promote Departmental goals, they are not closely related to one another. Each amendment would be more clear if they were in separate ordinances and prefaced with language describing the intent of the amendments (often referred to as the "Whereases").

Potential outcomes

Reduced costs to subdividers and the Department and an improved subdivision inspection process.