

Land Use Committee 2015-2016 Report to the Town Council
June 20, 2016

1. Stormwater management and Sediment Control Ordinance. In the fall, the Land Use Committee (LUC), working with members of the Water Board, the Town's Water Engineer, and the Town Code Officer, completed drafting a stormwater and sediment control ordinance and executive regulations based on the State's model ordinance. The draft ordinance and regulations were sent to the State for review after being reviewed by the Town attorney. The State sent comments including a list of needed modifications to the Town in the Spring, which the LUC and its collaborators addressed. The LUC will make a brief presentation to the Town Council at its July meeting reviewing the reasons behind the stormwater management ordinance revision and seek permission to send the revised ordinance back to the State for review.

2. Administrative variances

The LUC reviewed proposed revisions to the Town's administrative variance regulations. The LUC analyzed variance request data and potential consequences of making the proposed changes. A report was prepared and presented to the Town Council. Subsequently, the Committee Co-Chairs participated in a Council work session and made recommendations based on the LUC's report. The work session produced a final draft ordinance, which was adopted by the Town Council following a public hearing.

3. Floating Zones

The LUC obtained information about floating zones from the Montgomery County Zoning Code and current Zoning Code Map, the draft Bethesda Sector Plan and related Planning Board decisions, and the Montgomery County Planning staff. The LUC reviewed these materials, identified properties in the Town that are currently eligible for floating zone development or may become eligible when the Bethesda Sector Plan is adopted, discussed possible uses of floating zones in the Town and their impacts, and considered measures that could be taken to limit floating zones or mitigate their impacts,. The LUC made an informal presentation on floating zones at the March Town Council meeting. The LUC presented its floating zones report and made a formal presentation at the June Council meeting.

LUC has recommended that information about floating zones be presented to Town residents and their opinions on floating zone development sought, preferably at a public meeting on a topic with broad appeal (such as the Bethesda Sector Plan to maximize audience size.).