

Public Hearing Comments Regarding Proposed Moratorium Ordinance  
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Section 7 of the proposed moratorium ordinance exempts preliminary and final subdivision plats that have been accepted for review prior to the call for a public hearing on the moratorium.

I suggest that sketch plats that have been accepted for review prior to the call for a public hearing on a moratorium also be exempt from the moratorium for the following reasons:

1. The language in the proposal is taken directly from the State statute upon which the proposal is based. The State statutes concerning subdivision do not include sketch plats, and I think that is the only reason sketch plats were not included in the exemptions in the moratorium statute.
2. Sketch is an additional procedure imposed by Chatham County. Under Chatham County's subdivision regulations, a sketch design approval is required for any subdivision that includes a new road. The sketch design application is subjected to the same process as preliminary and final subdivision plats.
3. The Subdivision Regulations say, "Approval of the sketch design by the Board of County Commissioners serves as permission to prepare other required plans for preliminary review."
4. Between sketch and preliminary subdivision approvals, a Chatham County landowner incurs significant expense in reliance on the sketch design, including site analysis, engineering and County and State approvals for utility systems, road plans and driveway connections, erosion control plans and other matters such as wetlands permits.

For these reasons, I respectfully suggest that you add sketch plats to the exemption for preliminary and final plats.

I also want to suggest that the timing provision on exemptions be clarified to include plats submitted before imposition of a moratorium without a public hearing. The proposed ordinance allows imposition of a moratorium in some limited circumstances without a public hearing, but Section 7 only exempts plats submitted before the call for a public hearing.

In two places in Section 7, the proposed ordinance addresses plats "accepted for review by the County." As far as I know, the County does not have a formal process for

“accepting” plats for review, so I suggest changing that language to plats “submitted for review by the County.”

Finally, the proposed ordinance refers in several places to the “call for public hearing to adopt the moratorium.” To clarify what that means, I suggest revising that language to say “scheduling of a public hearing by the Board of Commissioners to consider adoption of the moratorium.”

I have an edited version of the ordinance that incorporates these comments and some other more minor suggestions that I will send to Keith Megginson if he thinks it would be helpful. Thank you for allowing me to speak about this ordinance.