Resolution No. R-2014-28

Policy No. 2014-3-12

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF ROCKDALE COUNTY, GEORGIA PROVIDING FOR A POLICY TO PROVIDE THE CRITERIA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES

WHEREAS, the Rockdale County Board of Commissioners adopted Resolution # R-2014-11 to promote sustainable development practices and strategies, and to participate in the Green Communities program of the Atlanta Regional Commission; and

WHEREAS, the Rockdale County Board of Commissioners adopted the Comprehensive Plan Update by Resolution # R-2008-139, which included an element to promote the protection of the natural environment against the negative impacts of development; and

WHEREAS, the Rockdale County Board of Commissioners desires to set a broad policy governing sustainable development incentives, including green building, certification, affordable housing, solar energy, and smart growth.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Rockdale County Board of Commissioners that the attached recommendations, identified as Exhibit "A" (as prepared by the Rockdale County Department of Planning and Development) are hereby adopted as the policy governing sustainable development incentives.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that any resolution in conflict with this resolution is hereby repealed.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution shall become effective upon adoption.

This 28 day of October, 2014.

ROCKDALE COUNTY, GEORGIA
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

BY: Richard A. Oden
Richard A. Oden, Chairman

Attest:

Jennifer Rutledge, County Clerk

Approved as to form:

M. Qader A. Baig, County Attorney

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EXHIBIT A

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES

1. Definitions

Affordable housing: Residential units are defined as affordable when the total housing cost does not exceed thirty (30) percent of a household's income. Housing costs include rental expenditures or mortgage expenses. For the purposes of the incentive, housing is deemed affordable when it is affordable to a household whose income is at or below fifty (50) percent of Rockdale County's median income as reported by the most recent survey by the U.S. Census Bureau. Affordable housing units must be exclusively available for sale or rent to qualifying households. The affordable character of these housing units must be maintained as such for the lifetime of the unit, including through change of ownership.
Note: As of September 2014, the median household income in Rockdale County as reported by the 2013 American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimates, is of $49,767. Therefore the affordability threshold is $24,883.50 per household, until new data will be made available by the Census Bureau.

Building permit fee: Fees associated with a building permit, as described in Sec. 302-4 – Building Permits of the Unified Development Ordinance of Rockdale County, Georgia, as amended. Fees are set and updated from time to time by the Board of Commissioners.

Developed property: Any legal lot of record currently occupied by a principal structure or was previously occupied by a principal structure.

EarthCraft: Green building certification system developed in Atlanta in part by Southface. Projects seeking certification must be inspected at several stages of construction by an EarthCraft professional.

Energy Star: Green building certification system managed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Projects seeking certification must obtain a certain score reflecting energy consumption.

Green building: A building is considered green if it is constructed in an environmentally responsible manner in terms of materials and technology selections, and of construction methods.

Green Globes: Green building certification system managed by Green Building Initiative. Projects seeking certification must accumulate a certain number of points in different categories including project management, energy and emission of pollutants.

Infill project: Development occurring within either **a)** vacant parcels where industrial, commercial, or residential use previously existed, or **b)** occupied parcels with existing structures in need of redevelopment as determined by the Department of Planning and Development.

Land disturbance permit fees: Fees associated with a land disturbance permit, as described in Sec. 302-44 – Land Disturbance Permits of the Unified Development Ordinance of Rockdale County, Georgia, as amended. Fees are set and updated from time to time by the Board of Commissioners.

LEED: Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design; green building certification system managed by the U.S. Green Building Council. Projects seeking certification must meet a certain number of credits in different categories such as transportation, construction materials and water efficiency.

WaterSense: Certification program managed by the US Environmental Protection Agency. Projects seeking certification must demonstrate the use of water efficient strategies.

2. Scope

Green Building Certification

Any project obtaining certification by EarthCraft, Energy Star, Green Globes, LEED (for any rating system, at any level of certification), WaterSense, or any certification system deemed equivalent by the Director of the Department of Planning and Development, is be eligible for a rebate up to 50% of building permit fees on this specific project. Rebates shall be determined according to the type of certification received in the following manner, as a percentage of the normal building permit fees:

Certification System	**Rebate**
EarthCraft	20% for Certified level +10% for each additional level
Energy Star	20%
Green Globes	20% for Level 1 +10% for each additional level
LEED	20% for Certified level +10% for each additional level
WaterSense	10%

Affordable Housing
Residential projects obtaining the Green Building Certification incentive are also eligible for an additional 15% rebate on building permit fees if affordable housing is provided. In multifamily housing developments, at least 25% of units must be affordable.

Solar Energy
Any project incorporating electricity generating by solar energy, such as photovoltaic cells or solar water heaters, is eligible for a 15% rebate on building permit fees.

Smart Growth

a. Infill Development

Any nonresidential infill project occurring on a developed property located inside an Urban Redevelopment Area is eligible for a 50% rebate on building permit fees or on land disturbance fees, at the choice of the land owner. The amount invested in renovation or rebuilding must amount to at least 50% of the total existing property value

b. Rezoning to Sustainable Districts

1. Rezoning in the Salem Road Corridor Overlay area from any zoning district to Mixed-Use Development (MxD) is eligible for a 100% rezoning fee rebate if the proposed development includes a combination of at least two major use categories (office, retail, residential) vertically, in a same building.

2. Rezoning of property for the purpose of residential subdivision development from any zoning district to Collaborative Residential Subdivision (CRS) or Conservation Subdivision Development District (CSD) is eligible for a 100% rezoning fee rebate.

c. Increased Open Space

Any multi-family or nonresidential project providing open space at least twice the minimum area required per Sec. 214-1 – Dimensional Standards of Zoning Districts is eligible for a land disturbance permit fee rebate of 50%.

3. Procedures

Applicants for sustainable development incentives must submit all permits fees in full at the time of application, in the form of two separate checks. The Department of Planning and Development will hold the incentivized portion of the fee until the applicant provides proof of green certification of the project with a system of their choice, evidence of affordability, installation of solar energy equipment and/or use of a smart growth strategy. Upon presentation

of documentation, the Director of the Department of Planning and Development will review the application and will authorize the release of the check if the conditions are satisfied.

The four categories of fees rebates can be used cumulatively on a single project, up to 100%, however only one green building certification will be recognized. The certification granting the greatest rebate will be honored in the even that a project receives more than one green building certification.