



# **Sustainable Land Development Code (SLDC)**

## **Comments Received December 2011**

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LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®  
OF SANTA FE COUNTY

December 12, 2011

Board of County Commissioners  
Santa Fe County Administration Building  
P.O. Box 126  
Santa Fe, NM 87504-2706

Dear Commissioners:

We are writing to you to reiterate and expand on our support for a strong building code, specifically that recommended by your staff. The staff has done an exceptional job of sifting through competing ideas, desires and needs to come up with a good solution. In addition, they have done extensive cost-benefit analyses, resulting in solid figures on the benefits of energy efficiency in housing and other buildings. We ask that you look forward to future sustainability and support the recommendations.

The League of Women Voters, after careful study, determined that when local governments adopt a building code, it should not only recognize energy conservation achieved through quality of building components and construction methods, but should also tie the amount of energy conservation required to building size.

The time has come when we simply must adapt to survive. Climate change and climate disruption are here to stay, and we must be smart about living with it. This means we must conserve water, reduce use of fossil fuels and make our dwellings and workplaces energy efficient. To do this we have to have strong standards. The League urges the BCC to adopt a building code that reduces energy consumption, particularly fossil fuels, and thus rewards the buyer or renter in the long run with reduced energy bills.

The League has also analyzed the benefits of energy efficiency. There is ample evidence that building a house or building with energy efficiency strongly in mind significantly reduces utility costs to consumers. Local examples include Habitat for Humanity and Homewise, builders of affordable dwellings. Both organizations have adopted energy-efficient construction; Homewise estimates that in its recent development, residents will save over a third of the bills they would have been expected to pay in conventional dwellings. The newest example is the proposed reconstruction of the Stagecoach as LEED-certified affordable housing. Many national surveys have shown large energy cost savings from energy efficient practices in homes and other buildings. These include several studies conducted by McKinsey and Co., a respected consulting firm.

We realize that some county residents have voiced concerns about potential housing costs resulting from energy efficiency standards. But most of us aren't aware of the benefits, and so are naturally concerned about costs of mortgages.

However, surveys around the nation have shown that people want energy efficiency in their own homes as well as other construction. They recognize its value. A multi-state survey showed (Public Policy

Polling, Inc. in Illinois, Michigan, Main and Ohio) showed that large majorities (in the 75% range) support the expanded use of energy efficiency technologies to help meet our energy needs and reduce energy costs, and are installing energy efficient products in their homes. There is strong bipartisan support across all four states for energy efficiency standards. They would also like federal and state governments to set strong energy efficiency standards. Finally, the survey found that elected officials who attempt to weaken or delay energy efficiency standards could pay a price at the polls.

A survey of New Mexico Hispanics showed they are concerned about air and water pollution, abuse of the land, and related factors. They have a high degree of conservation awareness. While energy efficiency questions were not asked, their concerns would lead them to support energy efficiency in building. Another study, conducted by the Yale Project on Climate Change and the George Mason University Center for Climate Change Communication, found that between 80 and 90 percent of Americans favor incentives and other requirements for energy efficient building.

The county is fortunate to have staff o conduct such thorough analyses and develop an excellent plan. We ask that the Commission adopt their recommended code elements.

Sincerely,



Judy Williams, President  
League of Women Voters of Santa Fe County

Cc: Katherine Miller, County Manager  
Jack Kolkmeier, Planning and Development Division Director  
Robert Griego, Planning Manager

**1<sup>st</sup> Message sent**

**From:** Andrewsells [mailto:andrewsells@msn.com]

**Sent:** Thursday, December 15, 2011 4:44 PM

**To:** Melissa S. Holmes

**Subject:** Re: Draft Sustainable Land Development Code (SLDC) Chapters Now Available

Melissa can you send me the part regarding zoning?

Thank You

Andrew M. Leyba

Sent From the iPhone

**2<sup>nd</sup> Message sent**

-----Original Message-----

From: Andrewsells [mailto:andrewsells@msn.com]

Sent: Thursday, December 15, 2011 4:45 PM

To: Melissa S. Holmes

Subject: Landfill zoning

The part regarding landfill zoning?

Thank You

Andrew M. Leyba

Sent From the iPhone

**From:** Victoria Dalton [mailto:victoria@jwsiebert.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 27, 2011 8:47 AM  
**To:** Robert Griego  
**Subject:** FW: SLDC Chapter 1 comments

Hi Robert,

Below are comments from Jim on the SLDC chapter 1. The email address that is on the County website to send comments to is not accepting our email.

*Victoria Dalton*

*James W. Siebert & Associates, Inc.  
915 Mercer Street  
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87505  
(505) 983-5588  
(505) 989-7313 Fax*

**From:** Front [mailto:jim@jwsiebert.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 27, 2011 8:23 AM  
**To:** victoria@jwsiebert.com  
**Subject:** FW: SLDC Chapter 1 comments

**From:** James Siebert [mailto:jim@jwsiebert.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, December 23, 2011 3:03 PM  
**To:** [SLDC@santafecounty.org](mailto:SLDC@santafecounty.org)  
**Cc:** Michael Hurlocker  
**Subject:** SLDC Chapter 1 comments

Dear reviewer

Here are my comments on Chapter 1:

1.4.2.4 I am not sure what this means. Is there a need to include the language about ad hoc? I recommend rewording this to make it more understandable.

1.4.2.8. I am opposed to a hearing officer if this is for every development application. This sounds like a Freilich hold over that creates another layer of bureaucracy. The system seems to be working fine with the planning committee review. I have not heard an demand on anybody's part that a hearing officer is warranted. It may work for unique circumstances such a stand alone variances, in which case it should go directly to the BCC or approved at that level with the right of appeal to the BCC.

1.4.2.27.3 The concept of the Fiscal Impact report needs work. I have done dozens of these and taken post Master graduate work coursed in this. Unless the County develops a model of their own, each consultant will provide a different analysis. Without a consistent model the Fiscal Impact reports are meaningless.

1.11.4. One year to proceed to development plan or plat from master plan is insufficient in this economic environment. It will be several years before the financing is available to proceed with master plan projects. It seems the County is making a great deal of work for themselves with very little benefit.

There needs to be a chart that graphs the development review procedures. This needs to include when an amendment to the SGMP is required and how many applications can be handled simultaneously. The chart needs to include time frames to proceed thru the review process.

*James W. Siebert & Associates, Inc.  
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