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## SENATE BILL NO. 1249

Offered January 13, 2021

Prefiled January 11, 2021

A *BILL to amend and reenact § 15.2-2259 of the Code of Virginia, relating to local planning commissions; review deadlines.*

Patron—Stuart (By Request)

Referred to Committee on Local Government

**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**

**1. That § 15.2-2259 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**

**§ 15.2-2259. Local planning commission to act on proposed plat.**

A. 1. Except as otherwise provided in subdivisions 2 and 3, the local planning commission or other agent shall act on any proposed plat within 60 days after it has been officially submitted for approval by either approving or disapproving the plat in writing, and giving with the latter specific reasons therefor. The Commission or agent shall thoroughly review the plat and shall make a good faith effort to identify all deficiencies, if any, with the initial submission. However, if approval of a feature or features of the plat by a state agency or public authority authorized by state law is necessary, the commission or agent shall forward the plat to the appropriate state agency or agencies for review within 10 business days of receipt of such plat. The state agency shall respond in accord with the requirements set forth in § 15.2-2222.1, which shall extend the time for action by the local planning commission or other agent, as set forth in subsection B. Specific reasons for disapproval shall be contained either in a separate document or on the plat itself. The reasons for disapproval shall identify deficiencies in the plat that cause the disapproval by reference to specific duly adopted ordinances, regulations, or policies and shall identify modifications or corrections as will permit approval of the plat. The local planning commission or other agent shall act on any proposed plat that it has previously disapproved within 45 days after the plat has been modified, corrected and resubmitted for approval.

2. The approval of plats, site plans, and plans of development solely involving parcels of commercial real estate by a local planning commission or other agent shall be governed by subdivision 3 and subsections B, C, and D. For the purposes of this section, the term "commercial" means all real property used for commercial or industrial uses.

3. The local planning commission or other agent shall act on any proposed plat, site plan, or plan of development within 60 days after it has been officially submitted for approval by either approving or disapproving the plat in writing, and giving with the latter specific reasons therefor. The local planning commission or other agent shall not delay the official submission of any proposed plat, site plan, ~~or~~ plan of development, *rezoning or generalized development plan, special use permit, or special exception application* by requiring presubmission conferences, meetings, or reviews. The Commission or agent shall thoroughly review the plat or plan and shall in good faith identify, to the greatest extent practicable, all deficiencies, if any, with the initial submission. However, if approval of a feature or features of the plat or plan, *rezoning or generalized development plan, special use permit, or special exception application* by a state agency or public authority authorized by state law is necessary, the commission or agent shall forward the plat or plan to the appropriate state agency or agencies for review within 10 business days of receipt of such plat or plan. The state agency shall respond in accord with the requirements set forth in § 15.2-2222.1, which shall extend the time for action by the local planning commission or other agent, as set forth in subsection B. Specific reasons for disapproval shall be contained either in a separate document or on the plat ~~or~~, plan, *permit, or application* itself. The reasons for disapproval shall identify deficiencies in the plat or plan, *rezoning or generalized development plan, special use permit, or special exception application* that caused the disapproval by reference to specific duly adopted ordinances, regulations, or policies and shall identify, to the greatest extent practicable, modifications or corrections that will permit approval of the plat ~~or~~, plan, *permit, or application*.

In the review of a resubmitted proposed plat, site plan, or plan of development, *rezoning or generalized development plan, special use permit, or special exception application* that has been previously disapproved, the local planning commission or other agent shall consider only deficiencies it had identified in its review of the initial submission of the plat ~~or~~, plan, *permit, or application* that have not been corrected in such resubmission and any deficiencies that arise as a result of the corrections made to address deficiencies identified in the initial submission. In the review of the resubmission of a plat or plan, *rezoning or generalized development plan, special use permit, or special exception application*, the local planning commission or other agent shall identify all deficiencies with the

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59 proposed plat ~~or~~, plan, *permit, or application* that caused the disapproval by reference to specific duly  
60 adopted ordinances, regulations, or policies and shall identify modifications or corrections that will  
61 permit approval of the plat ~~or~~, plan, *permit, or application*. Upon the second resubmission of such  
62 disapproved plat ~~or~~, plan, *permit, or application*, the local planning commission or other agent's review  
63 shall be limited solely to the previously identified deficiencies that caused its disapproval.

64 The local planning commission or other agent shall act on any proposed plat, site plan, or plan of  
65 development that it has previously disapproved within 45 days after the plat or plan has been modified,  
66 corrected, and resubmitted for approval. The failure of a local planning commission or other agent to  
67 approve or disapprove a resubmitted plat or plan within the time periods required by this section shall  
68 cause the plat or plan to be deemed approved.

69 Notwithstanding the approval or deemed approval of any proposed plat, site plan, or plan of  
70 development, any deficiency in any proposed plat or plan, that if left uncorrected, would violate local,  
71 state, or federal law, regulations, mandatory Department of Transportation engineering and safety  
72 requirements, and other mandatory engineering and safety requirements, shall not be considered, treated,  
73 or deemed as having been approved by the local planning commission or other agent. Should any  
74 resubmission include a material revision of infrastructure or physical improvements from the earlier  
75 submission or if a material revision in the resubmission creates a new required review by the Virginia  
76 Department of Transportation or by a state agency or public authority authorized by state law, then the  
77 local planning commission or other agent's review shall not be limited to only the previously identified  
78 deficiencies identified in the prior submittals and may consider deficiencies initially appearing in the  
79 resubmission because of such material revision.

80 B. Any state agency or public authority authorized by state law making a review of a plat forwarded  
81 to it under this article, including, without limitation, the Virginia Department of Transportation and  
82 authorities authorized by Chapter 51 (§ 15.2-5100 et seq.), shall complete its review within 45 days of  
83 receipt of the plat upon first submission and within 45 days for any proposed plat that has previously  
84 been disapproved, provided, however, that the time periods set forth in § 15.2-2222.1 shall apply to plats  
85 triggering the applicability of said section. The Virginia Department of Transportation and authorities  
86 authorized by Chapter 51 (§ 15.2-5100 et seq.) shall allow use of public rights-of-way dedicated for  
87 public street purposes for placement of utilities by permit when practical and shall not unreasonably  
88 deny plat approval. If a state agency or public authority authorized by state law does not approve the  
89 plat, it shall comply with the requirements, and be subject to the restrictions, set forth in subsection A,  
90 with the exception of the time period therein specified. Upon receipt of the approvals from all state  
91 agencies and other agencies, the local agent shall act upon a plat within 35 days.

92 C. If the commission or other agent fails to approve or disapprove the plat within 60 days after it  
93 has been officially submitted for approval, or within 45 days after it has been officially resubmitted after  
94 a previous disapproval or within 35 days of receipt of any agency response pursuant to subsection B, the  
95 subdivider, after 10-days' written notice to the commission, or agent, may petition the circuit court for  
96 the locality in which the land involved, or the major part thereof, is located, to decide whether the plat  
97 should or should not be approved. The court shall give the petition priority on the civil docket, hear the  
98 matter expeditiously in accordance with the procedures prescribed in Article 2 (§ 8.01-644 et seq.) of  
99 Chapter 25 of Title 8.01 and make and enter an order with respect thereto as it deems proper, which  
100 may include directing approval of the plat.

101 D. If a commission or other agent disapproves a plat and the subdivider contends that the disapproval  
102 was not properly based on the ordinance applicable thereto, or was arbitrary or capricious, he may  
103 appeal to the circuit court having jurisdiction of such land and the court shall hear and determine the  
104 case as soon as may be, provided that his appeal is filed with the circuit court within 60 days of the  
105 written disapproval by the commission or other agent.