



Public Hearing Summary

Wednesday, February 13, 2019

Committee Members:

The following Committee Members were present at the meeting:

- Mrs. Bridgid Annisette- George - Chairman
- Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Ancil Antoine - Member
- Mr. Clarence Rambharat - Member
- Mr. Daniel Dookie - Member
- Mr. Garvin Simonette - Member

Witnesses who appeared:

Ministry of Planning and Development

- Mr. Sterling Chadee - Permanent Secretary (Ag.)
- Ms. Marie Hinds - Deputy Permanent Secretary (Ag.)
- Dr. Ancil Kirk - Director (Ag.) Town and Country Planning Division
- Ms. Camille Guichard - Assistant Director (Ag.) Town and Country Planning Division
- Ms. Camille Fortune-Rollock - Assistant Coordinator Town and Country Planning Division
- Ms. Renelle Sarjeant - Senior Land Use Planner
- Ms. Jacqueline Weekes-Penco - Director (Ag) Planning Division

Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government

- Ms. Stara Ramlogan - Permanent Secretary (Ag.)
- Mr. Jameel Ameeral Chadee - Chief Executive Officer
Chaguanas Borough Corporation
- Ms. Aisha Donaldson - Senior Officer - Local Area and
Regional Planning and Development
Unit
- Mr. Deoraj Ramtahal - Building Inspector II
Port of Spain City Corporation
- Mr. Francis Pierre - Building Inspector II (Ag.)
Sangre Grande Regional Corporation

Key Issues Discussed

General Issues

Ministry of Planning and Development

1. The three key projects undertaken by the Ministry of Planning and Development;
2. The establishment of a Complex Development Facilitation Committee in accordance with the Planning and Facilitation of Development Act;
3. The review and improvement of the Ministry of Planning and Development's Policy Standard;
4. The challenges faced by the Ministry of Planning and Development mainly the lack of resources and reduced funding;
5. The challenges faced as a result of the delay in the proclamation of the Planning and Facilitation of Development Act 2019; and
6. The challenges faced by as a result of the shortage of staff.

Town and Country Planning Division

1. The role of the Drainage Division at the Ministry of Works and Transport;
2. The administration of the Town and Country Planning Act Chapter 35:01 through the Town and Country Planning Division of the Ministry of Planning and Development;
3. The promotion of a sustainable form of land use by the TCPD;

4. The role of TCPD Ministry of Planning and Development in the in granting of planning permission;
5. Details on the core functions of the TCPD;
6. The initiatives to improve the effectiveness and operations of the TCPD;
7. The number of Regional Offices of the TCPD; and
8. The lack of Development Control Officers in the TCPD.

The approval process for land use and development

1. The relationship between the TCPD and Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government;
2. The prerequisites which developers are required to meet for planning permission;
3. The role of the Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government with regard to the granting final approval for land use and development;
4. Details surrounding the occurrence of unauthorized development activities;
5. Lack of resources to manage over eight thousand (8000) applications;
6. The waiting period for the review of application for planning permission;
7. The initiatives undertaken by the TCPD to improve the Planning Permission Process;
8. The delays in the application process;
9. Attempts made by the Ministry of Planning and Development to engage the Public on the issues of land use and development;
10. The overlapping roles and responsibilities of Ministries and State Agencies in the approval process for land use and development;
11. The improvement in the delivery of land related services through automated land transactions application process;
12. The pilot project to improve the delivery of land related services; and
13. The mechanisms in place to reduce the occurrence of unauthorized development activity.

Enforcement Unit

1. Actions taken by the Ministry against persons who start developments without Final Planning Permission;
2. The number of complaints recorded in the first year of operation of the Enforcement Unit;
3. The number of complaints recorded annually;
4. The training received by staff employed in the Unit;
5. Details on the matters which have been brought to the Unit and have resulted in litigation;
6. Fines imposed on persons who are in breach of the regulations;
7. The role of the Environmental Management Authority (EMA) and land approvals;
8. The shortage of staff in the Enforcement Unit of the TCPD;
9. Complaints for unauthorized development activity is dealt with by the Enforcement Unit in the TCPD;
10. Details on site visits conducted by Enforcement Officers; and
11. The number of Enforcement Officers assigned to each regional cooperation.

National Land Use Plan

1. Details of the review and amendments made to the National Physical Development Plan;
2. Details on the revision of the Regional Divisions Land Use Strategy Plan; and
3. Details on the approval of the National Spatial Development Strategy by Cabinet in 2018.

Staffing

1. The status of the Draft Cabinet Note sent to PMCD requesting additional staff at the Enforcement Unit of the TCPD;
2. The vacant positions in the Town and Country Planning Division; and
3. Daily paid workers employed in the Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government.

Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government

1. The challenges faced by as a result of the shortage of staff;
2. The number of vacancies in the Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government;
3. The Ministry's role with regard to the oversight of local government bodies;
4. The role of the Ministry with regard to coordinating, facilitating, monitoring and ensuring accountability of Municipal Corporations;
5. The Ministry's role in the approval process for land use;
6. The transformation and modernization of the Land Use policy and standards;
7. The continuous collaboration between the Ministry and the Ministry of Planning and Development;
8. The efforts made by the Ministry to improve its current governance system, policies and procedures;
9. The establishment of a Technical Team in the Ministry;
10. The review of the operations of the Ministry;
11. The Ministry's role before, during and post construction;
12. The status of the Draft Cabinet Note sent to PMCD for Building Inspectors in the Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government; and
13. The lack of Engineers employed at the Ministry.

The number of developments transferred and vested to the Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government

1. The number of developments the Regional Corporation assumed responsibility for in fiscal 2018.

Development control capacities that are vested at the Municipal Corporations

1. Challenges faced by the Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government in monitoring land developments; and
2. The number of Building Inspectors per Regional Cooperation.

View the Hearing:

The hearing can be viewed on our YouTube Channel, ParlView via the following link:

<https://youtu.be/dHA2F8WbbW0>

Next Meeting:

The next Public Hearing of the Committee will be held on **Wednesday, February 20, 2019**, at 1:30 p.m. At this meeting, the Committee intends to commence its follow up inquiry into the Processing of Payments of Pension and Gratuity to Retired Public Officers and Contract Employees

PAAC Secretariat

February 14, 2019