

Smart Growth for Clean Water

Development Strategies For Clean Water

Ron Thomas, AIA

Who is MAVDevelopment?

- Established by the Vlastic Family in 1989
- Manage and grow real estate investments
- Approx. 400,000 SF of office & retail space
- Presently in Washtenaw County & S.E. Michigan
- Future growth in Michigan & out of state
- 12 people of varied backgrounds - 3 architects

Why Am I Here?

- MAVDevelopment is in a position to promote “Smart Growth”
 - Investors more than developers
 - Long term ownership of projects
 - Interested in being a “Good Neighbor”
 - Repeat builders
 - Value team building & reputation

Owner / Investor Perspective on Smart Growth

- Each phase of our work may impact natural features and water quality
 - Site Selection & Pre-Design
 - Final Design & Approval Process
 - Documentation & Permitting
 - Bidding & Construction
 - Occupancy & Operations

Site Selection & Pre-Design

- Avoid prime agricultural lands
- Seek sites with limited natural features
- Urbanized area when possible
- Natural features which can be protected
- Compatible uses & building types
- Sympathetic design & construction team

Final Design & Approval Process

- General design goals
- Specific strategies we have used
- Additional strategies for future projects
- Approval process goals
- Approval process challenges
- Two Approval Process Examples

Documentation & Permitting

- Design & engineering teamwork
- Rapport with regulatory officials
- Attention to detail
- “Chicken & Egg” scheduling / sequencing

Bidding & Construction

- Construction management benefits
- Promote project goals
- Maintain dialogue with authorities
- The “Critical Path” is very critical

Occupancy & Operations

- Construction warranty period
- “Commissioning” – project turnover
- User & operator education
- Continuing special care of systems

Implementation of Smart Growth Principles Requires a Continuous Commitment for the Life of the Project

Observations For the Future

- Need community debate on “Growth”
- What is “Growth”? - “Good Growth”?
 - Number of people, jobs, taxes?
 - Growth in local, regional, national economy?
 - Growth in quality of life?
- What if we have “no growth” in Michigan?
- Smart “Improvements” for Clean Water

A Roadmap is Needed

- Density vs. Sprawl vs. Land Owner Rights
- Regional Planning
- Washtenaw County Plan