



Committee: Directly to Council
Staff: Judy Rupp, Clerk of the Council
Purpose: To confirm
Keywords:

AGENDA ITEM #3Q
January 31, 2023
Action

SUBJECT

To confirm the County Executive's appointment of the Director, Department of Permitting Services

EXPECTED ATTENDEES

None

COUNCIL DECISION POINTS & COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

Confirmation of appointment.

DESCRIPTION/ISSUE

On January 10, 2023, the County Executive transmitted the appointment request for Mr. Rabbiah Sabbakhan for the position of Director in the Department of Permitting Services. The Council interviewed Mr. Sabbakhan on January 24, 2023.

The Council will confirm this candidate. His appointment will be effective upon confirmation by the Council.

SUMMARY OF KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

Not applicable.

This report contains:

Memorandum request for appointment	© 1-2
Due Diligence notification	© 3
Draft Resolution	© 4
Candidate Resume	© 5-7
Offer Letter	© 8

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OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Marc Elrich
County Executive

MEMORANDUM

January 10, 2023

TO: Evan Glass, President
Montgomery County Council

FROM: Marc Elrich, Montgomery County Executive 

RE: Appointment of Director, Department of Permitting Services

I am transmitting the appointment of Rabbiah Sabbakhan for the position of Director in the Department of Permitting Services. Mr. Sabbakhan is being appointed at a salary of \$200,000. His appointment will be effective upon confirmation by the County Council.

Enclosures

cc: Judy Rupp, Clerk of the Council, Montgomery County Council
Richard S. Madaleno, Chief Administrative Officer
Fariba Kassiri, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
Ken Hartman, Director of Strategic Partnerships
Dale Tibbitts, Special Assistant to the County Executive

APPOINTMENT

PURSUANT TO THE AUTHORITY VESTED TO ME UNDER SECTION 215 OF THE
CHARTER OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND, I HEREBY APPOINT

Rabbiah Sabbakhan

TO SERVE AS Director, Department of Permitting Services.

THIS APPOINTMENT SHALL BE EFFECTIVE UPON CONFIRMATION BY THE
COUNCIL FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND.



MARC ELRICH
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

1/10/23

DATE



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE


Marc Elrich
County Executive

Richard S. Madaleno
Chief Administrative Officer

MEMORANDUM

January 10, 2023

TO: Evan Glass, President
Montgomery County Council

FROM: Richard S. Madaleno, Chief Administrative Officer 

SUBJECT: Due Diligence on Non-Merit Appointment – Rabbiah Sabbakhan

The purpose of this memo is to confirm that in making appointments for non-merit positions, our selection process utilizes thorough reference checks, criminal history, checks for wants and warrants, credit history and other inquiries appropriate to the position being filled.

Please be assured that due diligence was exercised in determining the suitability of Rabbiah Sabbakhan for appointment as Director, Department of Permitting Services. In addition, Mr. Sabbakhan has filed his Financial Disclosure Statement.

cc: Judy Rupp, Clerk of the Council, Montgomery County Council
Fariba Kassiri, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
Ken Hartman, Director of Strategic Partnerships
Dale Tibbitts, Special Assistant to the County Executive

Resolution: _____
Introduced: _____
Adopted: _____

COUNTY COUNCIL
FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

By: County Council

Subject: County Executive's Appointment of Director, Department of Permitting Services

The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland approves the following resolution:

The County Executive's appointment of Director, Department of Permitting Services

Rabbiah Sabbakhan

The appointment of Mr. Sabbakhan is confirmed by the County Council.

This is a correct copy of Council action:

Judy Rupp
Clerk of the Council

RABBIAH “Robbie” SABBAKHAN

SUMMARY

A dynamic and versatile executive level professional with broad-based technical expertise in the areas of construction management, code administration, technical plan review and inspections, as well as design combined with exceptionally strong local government management and leadership skills. Effectively collaborates with stakeholders- internal and external, ensuring group cohesion and adherence to common goals. Works efficiently and resourcefully under pressure. Enhances knowledge base, constantly improving performance and capabilities. A dedicated, success-driven leader who performs with the efficacy of exceeding organizational benchmarks by creating solutions to complex issues, building successful partnerships with stakeholders, and influencing and enabling high-performing teams to develop a culture of excellence. Proven ability to effectively lead a major jurisdiction building department on the path to success.

EXPERIENCE

City of Rockville

Rockville, MD

Chief Building Official, Department of Community Planning & Development Services

Dec 2016 - Present

Produced and implemented strategic plan for the building department designed to streamline permitting process and improve all facets of the operation including customer service, transparency, professionalism and extensive community engagement and outreach. Ensures division meets goals and priorities set by Mayor & Council. Oversees training, budget and Permit Center. Initiated Annual Permitting Stakeholders Forum. Assisted with development of Customer Bill of Rights. Spearheaded successful transition to electronic plan review and virtual inspections during start of pandemic to maintain and enhance continuity in operations. 2022- Launched The Compliance Engine fire prevention programs, Emergency Preparedness Roundtable with County, Gaithersburg, WSSC and Wash Gas; Proactive Code Enforcement Program

Department of Consumer & Regulatory Affairs (DCRA)

Washington, DC

Sr. Advisor Building & Compliance, Office of the Director

Jan, 2015 – Feb, 2016

Develop agency apprenticeship program. Coordinate with local and federal government agencies to ensure compliance with regulations. Create agency guidelines to improve stakeholder understanding of permitting process. Explore and implement initiatives to create efficiencies within the building department. Initiate code development for DC adoption of 2015 building code.

Department of Consumer & Regulatory Affairs (DCRA)

Washington, DC

Interim Director, Office of the Director

May, 2014 – Jan, 2015

Served as Cabinet member for Mayor of District of Columbia as the agency head for DCRA, the District agency of 300+ responsible for Permitting, Licenses, Construction and Housing Inspections, Zoning and Vacant Building. Develop and implement Strategic Plan for making DCRA a “World Class,” high performing organization. Initiated process which enabled DCRA to attain IAS accreditation and ISO rating. Develop One City Business Portal. Implemented ProjectDox, the electronic permitting submission and plan review program. Testified for agency at Performance Oversight and Budget Hearings. Worked closely with Executive staff and AFO, agency counterparts and stakeholders to ensure successful daily operation of the agency. Conducts frequent presentations, training and community outreach meetings. Met regularly with executive staff and industry groups, establishing great working relationship with DCBIA, AIA and AOBO.

Department of Consumer & Regulatory Affairs (DCRA)

Washington, DC

Chief Building Official, Permitting Operations & Inspections Compliance Division

Jan, 2011 – May, 2014

Managed Inspections and Permitting Divisions staff of 150+ to ensure overall agency objectives and initiatives are met with respect to thorough and timely plan reviews and inspections. Provided complex technical code interpretation. Coordinated review and inspection processes with agency counterparts. Corresponded regularly with external stakeholders. Ensured adequate staffing and resource needs are maintained to effectively run both divisions. Implemented measures resulting in positive turnarounds in both illegal construction and permitting revenue. Served as key member of Construction Codes Coordinating Board and Chair of Building Code Technical Advisory Group to help DC adopt the 2013 DC Construction Codes. Served as Signage working group agency representative to create to sign regulations with DDOT, OP & OAG. Headed all agency efforts for emergency preparation and response coordination through HSEMA. Created award winning Green Building Program. Developed District very first Special Inspections Program. Revenue surplus each year in office.

Department of Consumer & Regulatory Affairs (DCRA)

Washington, DC Division

Chief, Permitting Operations Division

May, 2009 – Jan, 2011

Oversaw the agency's day to day operations of Technical Plan Review as well as the Permit Center and Office of the Surveyor. Charged with task of increasing efficiency and productivity in Permit Center same day walk through process and file job plan review. Headed a division of 57 employees including 5 Managers. Appointed by Mayor to serve on the Construction Codes Coordinating Board to develop and amend the building code for 2011 adoption in DC. Served on Public Space Committee which meets monthly to hear cases involving DDOT public space permission requests. Organized and conducted monthly external stakeholder's meetings quarterly with designers, contractors, developers and others to inform, update and obtain feedback on DCRA permitting processes. Helped publish and reduce the time frame for permit review and issuance.

FOREST CITY ENTERPRISES
Project Manager

Washington, DC
2007-2009

Managed and coordinated construction with contractors, design consultants and testing agencies for demolition, infrastructure, and vertical construction for 42-acre, mixed-use development project. Organized and provided progress reports and schedules to land owner bi-weekly. Facilitated closeout construction of six-story multi-family residential building project with punch list and warranty closeout, with general contractor. Performed on-site inspections, and secured building permits and certificates of occupancy from the City of Richmond permits and inspections office, on-site inspections, and secured building permits and certificates of occupancy from the District of Columbia and City of Richmond permits and inspections offices. Reviewed and approved monthly contractor payment requisitions, change orders RFI's and submittals. Communicated closely with designers and general contractors through progress and pre-construction meetings, along with daily correspondence via email and telephone.

- Saved company over \$600,000 with successful recovery of streetscape bond reimbursement of Richmond Tobacco Row project
- Ensured completion of corporate goal, reaching deadlines for completion of parking lots for grand opening of Washington Nationals 2008 baseball season at new stadium.

CITY OF RICHMOND
Engineer II

Richmond, Virginia
1996-2007

- Ensured compliance with Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code for city's largest and most complex economic development construction projects with Department of Community Development, ranging in cost from \$500,000 to \$350,000,000. Served as Richmond's primary code official for such projects, including Richmond Convention Center, Crestar (now SunTrust) Riverview Center, Richmond Times-Dispatch headquarters, Stony Point Fashion Park Mall, Riverside Village multi-use development, Tobacco Row adaptive reuse development and Philip Morris Research and Technology building. Oversaw design and construction from start to finish by conducting of code design review and special inspections meetings with designers and contractors. Performed structural, architectural, accessibility, fire and life-safety inspections and issued certificates of occupancy. Provided customer service, building code analysis and interpretation, and technical training. Interacted via telephone, e-mail and meetings with design professionals, general contractors, owners and other city agencies daily. Facilitated review and approval of third-party daily inspection reports, material testing reports, submittals, certifications and addenda. Responded to emergency calls involving fire, flooding and structural collapse, assessing damage and determining suitability for occupancy. Hired and trained new Building Inspectors. Collaborated with panel members from other City agencies such as Public Works, interviewing prospective employment candidates, reviewing qualifications and proposals, and selecting contractors.
- Developed, implemented and revised *Special Inspections* program manual and successfully managed program.
- Performed beyond the call of duty with emergency recovery property structural evaluations of Shockoe Bottom area buildings and structures damaged by severe flooding from Tropical Storm Gaston in 2004.

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

CITY OF RICHMOND, Richmond, Virginia, **Building Inspector**, 1993-1996. Performed inspection of residential and light commercial projects, ensuring compliance with Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code. Reviewed plans of residential projects for permit issuance. Responded to emergency calls, determining structural integrity of damaged structures. **Earned distinction of Department of Community Development's Employee of the Year award for 1995.**

City of Newport News, Newport News Virginia, **Assistant City Architect** 1996- Assisted with CIP projects, Bids & design

EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA, Charlottesville, Virginia

B.S., Architecture, 1993; Studied Abroad at the **American University in Cairo** Fall semester 4th-year thesis-Egyptian architecture

CERTIFICATIONS

ICC

Certified Building Official; Accessibility Reviewer & Inspector, Energy, Plan Review, Property Maintenance; QCM

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Plans Examiner, Fire Protection, Building Inspector, 1 & 2 Family Dwellings

PROFESSIONAL

2015 DC AIA Board of Directors, 2014 WDCEP Board of Directors, Construction Codes Coordinating Board-CCCB, Green Building Advisory Council- GBAC, DC Signage Working Group, DC Public Space Committee

PERSONAL

Avid health and fitness; Married to Camille Sabbakhan, Deputy General Counsel at GSA; two daughters Sahna (graduate JMU track athlete) and Alahna, currently a track and field student athlete at UVA



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Marc Elrich
County Executive

Richard S. Madaleno
Chief Administrative Officer

December 1, 2022

Rabbiah Sabbakhan

Dear Mr. Sabbakhan,

I am pleased to offer you the position Director of the Department of Permitting Services for Montgomery County Government. The salary offered for this position is \$200,000, plus benefits. The benefits are summarized in the enclosed document.

I look forward to your acceptance of this employment offer. Note, your appointment is subject to confirmation by the County Council and is a non-merit, at will position. If you have any questions about this offer, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Richard S. Madaleno
Chief Administrative Officer

Accept ☒

Not Accept ☐

eSigned via SeamlessDocs.com
Rabbiah Sabbakhan
Key: 1bd6ef200425692ee8d7648f3bb8051

Signature

12/01/2022

Date