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PLANNERS REGISTRATION BOARD

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GUIDELINES FOR REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL PLANNERS ON STREAMLINED VETTING PROCEDURES FOR PLANNING APPLICATION

1. Background and Objectives

An agreement has been reached between the Planning Department (PlanD) and the Planners Registration Board (PRB) to proceed with a trial run on the streamlined vetting procedures for planning applications (i.e. s.12A and s.16 applications) submitted by the Registered Professional Planners (RPPs). Under this arrangement, RPPs will have the option to submit planning application by way of the streamlined vetting procedures. RPPs are required to follow the principles and rules as detailed below.

2. Trial Run Period and Permanent Arrangement

The trial run was officially launched on 12 July 2021 and had lasted for one year till 11 July 2022. As the number of applications involving discrepancies in key information are not substantial during the trial run, it is agreed to continue the streamlined vetting procedure for planning applications submitted by the RPPs and to implement it as a permanent arrangement.

3. Requirements on Professional Qualification

Under the streamlined arrangement, qualified RPPs will be allowed to submit planning application by way of the streamlined vetting procedures. To avoid disputes, reference will be made to the list of qualified RPPs on the PRB web site (<http://www.prb.org.hk/enplanners.asp>).

4. Procedures

For RPP representing the applicant who choose to submit their planning application by way of the streamlined vetting procedures, he/she should tick the box of RPP and provide his/her RPP membership number in the “Declaration” part of the application

form. If the RPP chooses not to tick the RPP box, the submission will be processed following the normal vetting procedures.

5. Pertinent Guidelines and Requirements

RPPs are reminded to observe relevant guidelines/documents in submitting their planning applications, in particular:

A. Relevant Town Planning Board Guidelines and Guidance Notes

- i. Guidance notes of Application for Amendment of Plan under Section 12A of the Town Planning Ordinance
- ii. Guidance notes of Application for Permission under Section 16 of the Town Planning Ordinance
- iii. TPB PG-No. 31A - 'Owner's Consent/Notification' Requirements under Sections 12A and 16 of the Town Planning Ordinance

B. Application Forms (including Completed Samples)

- i. Form No.12A
- ii. Form No. S16-I
- iii. Form No. S16-II
- iv. Form No. S16-III

For applications certified and submitted by the RPP, PlanD will only vet the 'key information' (i.e. applied use for s.16 application (Part 6 and Gist of Application of the application form)/proposed amendments for s.12A application (Parts 6, 7 and Gist of Application of the application form), information and the associated documents proof in relation to current land owner, owner's consent/notification/reasonable steps (Parts 4 and 5 of the application form)). If the 'key information' is missing/discrepancies are found, PlanD will return the application to the RPP representing the applicant and PlanD will notify PRB separately for record and necessary action. If the submission is in order, the application will be officially accepted within three working days upon receipt of the application.

The accepted application will be passed to the respective District Planning Office (DPO) for checking of the details of the application including the key development parameters (i.e. site area, plot ratio, gross floor area, site coverage and building height, etc.),

consistencies between the application form and planning statement/impact assessments, etc. If incorrect information/discrepancies are found, the RPP should submit supplementary information to clarify/rectify the discrepancies before publication of the application for public comments. If the RPP fails to supplement the information required by DPO in time causing delay in publication of the application for public comments, PlanD will notify PRB separately for record and necessary follow up action.

6. Penalty Mechanism

The RPPs are advised to closely observe the requirements under the above Town Planning Board Guidelines/Documents for submission of planning application(s) and to ensure that his/her applications are in order before submission.

If missing information/discrepancies are found in the 'key information' before the application is officially accepted or incorrect information/discrepancies are found by DPO after the application is accepted, and the RPP fails to supplement the information required by DPO in time causing delay in publication of the application for public comments and such occurrence has accumulated three times, the concerned RPP will be suspended from submitting planning applications by way of the streamlined vetting procedures for one year. PlanD will follow the normal vetting procedures for applications submitted by the concerned RPP.

Should there be mistakes in the applications as noted by PlanD, such mistakes will be referred by PlanD and recorded by the PRB Registrar. If three mistakes are recorded in a calendar year concerning a particular RPP, his/her fast-track privilege will be suspended for 12 months, counting from the date of the 3rd mistake. **Since the streamlined vetting procedures for planning applications submitted by the RPP is an administrative arrangement, no appeal can be made.**

Other key points to note:

- i. for submissions in both hard and soft copies, the applicants should ensure the contents of the hard copy is the same as the soft copy; and
- ii. if the RPP representing the applicant withdraws the application before the publication, i.e. no implication on the publication, the mistake would not be recorded.

7. Suspension Record and Review

If three (3) mistakes are recorded in a calendar year from 1 July to 30 June, the fast-track privilege will be suspended for 12 months, counting from the date of the third mistake. The mistakes counting cycle would begin every year from 1 July.

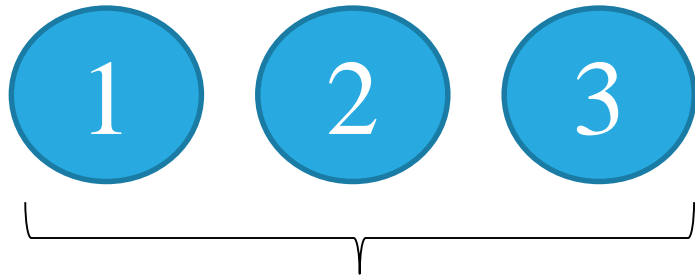
Example (please refer to **Attachment 1**):

- a. If three mistakes are made by a RPP within one year and the 3rd mistake is recorded on 1 December 2022, the RPP will be suspended from submitting planning applications by way of the streamlined vetting procedures till 30 November 2023.
- b. A new cycle begins with the start date from 1 July next year.

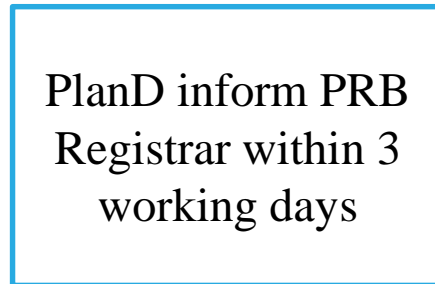
For each mistake recorded, PlanD would inform PRB Registrar including the specific category of mistake (i.e. which part of the application form and missing document/information) by email within 3 working days and this information will be kept on file by the PRB Registrar.

PRB Registrar would provide an updated list of suspension of RPPs fast-track planning application (a read only record) to PlanD for monitoring of submission by RPPs. This updated list would be forwarded to PlanD within 3 working days by email when PRB Registrar received notification from PlanD.

Penalty Mechanism of Streamlined Vetting Procedures for Planning Applications

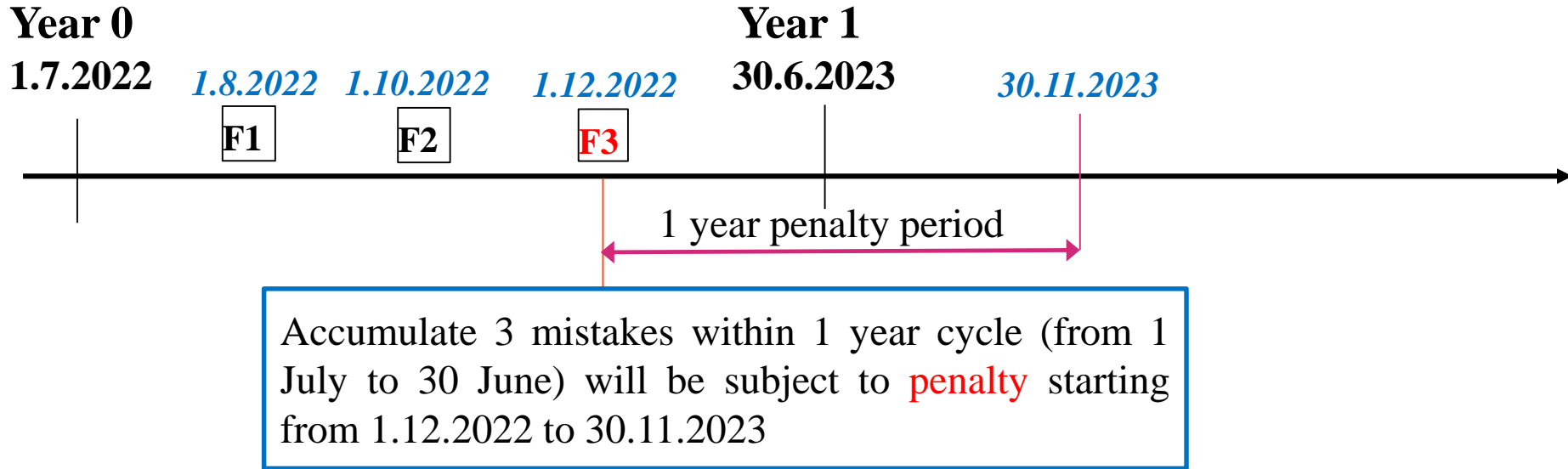


Maximum 3 times of mistakes in submissions within one year (i.e. one cycle from 1 July to 30 June).



How to determine the timeframe of the cycle

Scenario 1: 3 mistakes within 1 year cycle (from 1 July to 30 June)



Scenario 2: 2 mistakes within 1 year cycle (from 1 July to 30 June)

