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Faster DBKK approval for DPs with PEP

David Thien

KOTA KINABALU: Local and foreign developers and investors are discouraged by delay costs of getting approval permission for their building project development plans (DPs).

Stating this, Mayor Datuk Yeo Boon Hai said there is a need to optimally develop the city in a sustainable manner. It is essential for all infrastructure key elements or components required in any development proposal to be identified and properly planned from the initial development planning stage.

As with the DBKK Hillside Development Guidelines endorsed by the State Government in 2015, Yeo said he wants to simplify PEP approval processes during his watch.

"Quite often, some of the key elements, in particular the engineering aspects, are missing or left out. This is where a Preliminary Engineering Plan (PEP) is needed and we strongly believe that it is crucial for all of us, especially the professionals, to encompass comprehensive sustainable practices in our thinking and planning process."

Yeo is determined to make the PEP to expedite the DP submission for approval process to improve the points (to be reduced from 173) accorded to DBKK by the Malaysia Productivity Corporation (MPC).

MPC will hold a workshop on May 11 and 12 with regard to this issue of how to minimise red tape, among others.

To prepare for the event, the Mayor led architects, engineers and others to a PEP Briefing and Awareness Talk on Thursday.

He said the Kota Kinabalu Local Plan has not been gazetted yet and reference to the Central Board continues for some DP cases.

Yeo was heartened to see a hundred members of the Sabah Chapters of the Persatuan Akitek Malaysia (PAM), the Association of Consulting Engineers Malaysia (ACEM) and the Institution of

Engineers Malaysia attend the event with key speakers from DBKK, the Drainage and Irrigation Department and Water Department.

Due to work meeting, the Lands and Surveys representative could not grace the occasion. Hasil Bumi is another property development plan process gratification bottleneck for some developers and investors.

"By looking at today's crowd, I can feel your enthusiasm and support," Yeo said in his address, adding that with assistance from the MPC and supported by the Federal Ministry of Urban Wellbeing, Housing and Local Government. DBKK has been chosen together with four other local governments in Malaysia to implement the programme - 1 State 1 DCP Champion (DCP - Dealing with Construction Permit) with the objective to review and improve the current development plan, building plan and Occupancy Certificate procedures.

He said the purpose of the PEP is, basically, to facilitate the approval process when the developers submit their development proposals, where the preliminary engineering inputs are precisely in place.

"With this approach, the civil and structural engineer, mechanical and electrical engineer, and even quantity surveyor, are all appointed at the early stage of the project and have given their inputs on the subject development."

Yeo called on the attending professionals to help and actively assist him in realising improvements for DBKK, and to make him a better administrator of the city. He was courageous to accept that the buck stops with him.

"The Government has always emphasised on the importance of best management practices in the civil service.

"With our mission to spearhead Kota Kinabalu City into a better, faster, efficient and prudent management for the wellbeing of the city's citizens, we in DBKK are also very concerned with the

effectiveness of our service delivery where one of it is processing plan submissions for development projects.

He said DBKK adopted the MS ISO 9001 certification since 2008 where the standard operating procedures for plan processing, including DP or DP submission process and a few engineering plan submission processes, were established which contributed to shorter processing period.

"Nevertheless, all these procedures are by no means exhaustive and will be updated and improved from time to time to reflect the changing needs or to suit any latest requirements including the need to incorporate the PEP.

According to Yeo, comprehensive drainage system, in-depth traffic impact management, sufficient water and power supply, better solid waste management, besides others, are all important issues or main components of infrastructure that must be envisaged and properly considered right from the inception stage.

"Conceptual planning of all these would be incorporated in the PEP which shall be read together with the DP."

The Mayor said that in considering any development projects, DBKK have to seriously take into account the public interest especially with respect to safety, pollution and environmental aspects to avoid any discomfort in their vicinities.

"DBKK always welcomes any new ideas and innovations in development proposals that will help to protect the environment," Yeo promised.

DBKK Director-General Datuk Joannes Solidau closed the event, emphasising that the One Stop Centre proposed by project professionals for DBKK's leadership role instead of just being a messenger conduit to other approving departments for DP, need the support and commitments of all and other approving authority departments.

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Yeo (left) receiving a memento from ACEM Sabah head Amirul Hisham.