

Mount Vernon Council of Citizens' Association Resolution on Proposed Amendment (Green Building Practices) SO7-CW-3CP

Whereas, Fairfax County proposes to amend the Comprehensive and Policy plan in the following areas,

- (1) To strengthen Comprehensive Plan guidance regarding air quality issues and
- (2) To incorporate support for “green building” practices within the Comprehensive Plan and encourage and promote the application of these practices through Policy Plan guidance; and

Whereas, Air quality in the metropolitan Washington, D.C. area has been improving but continues to fall short of Clean Air Act requirements; and

Whereas, the “green building” concept has gained broad acceptance at all levels of government in just a few years, and

Whereas, the county’s Department of Public Works and Environmental Services is routinely applying green building practices on general county building projects and is pursuing LEED certification for several county facilities. Of 20 facilities that are in design, under construction, or have only recently been constructed, 18 are pursuing green building design, with LEED certification anticipated for most; and

Whereas, the County does not preclude the inclusion of residential projects of any type built by the County; and

Whereas, the county desires to expand the requirements to specific building projects by the private sector to include green building linkages for nonresidential development and multifamily residential development of four or more stories would be limited to the county’s growth centers. While a countywide application of these linkages can be considered within the scope of this amendment, it is staff’s view that the application of these linkages should be limited, at least initially, to growth centers (where most of the future nonresidential development in the county will occur) and that broader application only should be considered after a certain period of time has elapsed and experiences with this effort can be evaluated; and

Whereas, the proposed Plan Amendment also promotes the implementation of green building practices through commitments to monetary contributions in support of the county’s environmental initiatives, with such contributions to be refunded upon demonstration of attainment of certification under the applicable LEED rating system or equivalent rating system; and

Whereas, the proposed Plan Amendment also proposes two revisions to the Residential Development Criteria (Appendix 9 of the Land Use section of the Policy Plan):

- The amendment would add text to the “Energy” component of the “Environment” section to recommend the incorporation of energy efficiency measures into building design and construction. Currently, this component focuses only on energy conservation as it relates to site design techniques relating to solar orientation, landscaping and facilitation of nonmotorized transportation.
- The amendment would augment the existing “Tree Preservation and Tree Cover Requirements” by encouraging air quality-sensitive tree preservation and planting efforts; and

Whereas, the proposed definition of Green Building is: Structures and their associated landscapes that are located, designed, constructed, operated and dismantled in an environmentally responsible manner to minimize short- and long-term negative impacts on the environment and building occupants.

Therefore be it resolved, the Mount Vernon Council of Citizens’ Associations urges the Board of Supervisors (BOS) to include LEED SILVER Certification as a requirement for all county built projects; and

Be It Further resolved, the BOS evaluate the merits of green building practices within an appropriate time frame for consideration of adopting future amendments applicable to all residential and nonresidential projects within the County and that the first of the evaluations be accomplished no later than one (1) year from the adoption of the proposed amendment S07-CW-3CP

Be It Finally resolved the MVCCA supports the proposed amendment and urges the BOS to pass Policy Plan Amendment S07-CW-3CP.