

The ESC acknowledges that in-fill redevelopment with localized businesses and residential density is beneficial with respect to environmental sustainability. Increasing mixed use density in places like Falls Church will help us reach our regional climate goals by supporting walkable neighborhoods which are less car dependent. Meeting housing demand and creating more affordable homes combats detrimental urban sprawl. Home energy efficiency also increases affordability for residents.

Although the ESC would prefer that the below conditions be imposed for all large projects in the T-zones, we expect that the Dillion Rule will prohibit the City from imposing additional requirements on by-right development. Therefore, recommendation *D*, below, is written assuming they will apply only to projects receiving a Special Use Permit.

We recommend that:

- A. **Parking:** Lowering or outright removing parking minimum requirements can make projects more economically viable, as well as will promote multi modal transportation and additional green space. We encourage City staff to complete its review of parking-space requirements in the City. Until that is completed, we recommend a requirement for car parking to be set as low as possible.
- B. **Greenspace:** Excellent [recommendations have been made by the Urban Forestry Commission](#). The ESC supports their suggestions around tree cover and other requirements.
- C. **Healthy Living Spaces:** For the portions of the structure above 40 ft, the minimum side and rear setbacks should be increased to at least 20 ft. This is to protect the window / sunlight resources and healthful living of those who purchased adjacent properties with an expectation of 45-foot height limits on neighboring structures with a 25 to 40 ft side setback.
- D. **Sustainable Development:** The following text shown **in red** be inserted in the proposed Sec. 48-867 as shown below. Italicized text is shown for City Council's informational purposes only:

“Such uses shall comply with the following regulations and with any other conditions stipulated, pursuant to subsection 48-172:

(1) **Stormwater:** In addition to other requirements under City code, the project must reduce stormwater runoff from the site during a 10-year 24-hour storm by 20% versus existing conditions. Such calculations must include a design storm rainfall depth of 5.87 inches or the amount otherwise mandated in City code, whichever is greater. *(This captures a Voluntary Concession from Founders Row II.)*

(2) **Large Projects:** Projects comprising over 30,000 gross square feet of conditioned floor space must:

- a) Obtain at least Gold certification under LEED BD+C (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, Building Design & Construction), version 4 or later. The project must also be designed such that its predicted energy performance rating is at least 24% better than the baseline; *(This is similar to an existing secondary criterion for Special Exceptions (SE).)*
- b) Install only ENERGY STAR-certified appliances. No fossil-fueled appliances or heating and cooling equipment may be installed for residential or common spaces; *(Full*

electrification has been promised in recent SE projects and is part of the NextGen program recommended below for smaller projects.)

- c) Install only EPA WaterSense-labeled plumbing fixtures.
- d) Provide electric conduit to at least 50% of parking spaces for future installation of electric vehicle chargers; *(A voluntary concession from Founders Row II.)*
- e) Aggregate rooftop mechanical equipment as best as practical to maximize free areas oriented toward the southern sky and sized for standard solar panel arrays. Projects must provide conduit to the roof and sufficient space in the main electrical room(s) to support possible future inverters, controls, and meters for solar panels; *(A voluntary concession from Founders Row II.)*
- f) Benchmark energy usage through the ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager program for at least 10 consecutive years starting with the year of initial occupancy.

(3) Small Residential Projects: Projects comprising 30,000 gross square feet or less of conditioned floor space and containing townhouses, apartments, and/or condominiums, which do not choose to meet Requirements (2a) through (2d) of Large Projects above, must obtain ENERGY STAR NextGen certification. *(This certification will become available in 2023; will reduce energy use roughly 10-20% below Virginia code; will require efficient heat pump HVAC and water heating; will require electric ovens and induction cooktops; and will require EV-ready pre-wiring to parking spaces. This will also allow projects to qualify for the federal tax credit of at least \$2,500 per single-family home or \$500 per unit in a multifamily building.)*

~~(4)~~ **(4) Townhouses, apartments, and condominiums in the T zones.** In addition to any requirements found elsewhere in this chapter, special use permits for townhouses, apartments, and/or condominiums, in which 10 percent or more of the units are committed affordable and/or workforce housing, may be approved by City Council provided the projects are on sites not larger than one acre and Council....”

We further recommend that developers post a bond, proportional to square footage, as a guarantee that Requirement (2) or (3) above is satisfied.

We hope the Council will find these recommendations helpful in their pursuit of encouraging sustainable and equitable development in Falls Church.