



The Fairfax County Tree Commission
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Fairfax, Virginia 22035
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Approved July 6, 2023

Jeffrey McKay, Chairman
Dan Storck, Environmental Committee Chairman
Members, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors
12000 Government Center Parkway
Fairfax, VA 22035

Sent by email to: clerktothebos@fairfaxcounty.gov

RE: Tree Commission recommendations on the Proposed Landscaping and Screening Provisions of Section 5108 of the Zoning Ordinance

Dear members of the Board of Supervisors:

The Tree Commission (TC) wishes to advise the Board of Supervisors (BOS) on the Proposed Landscaping and Screening Provisions of Section 5108 of the Zoning Ordinance. We appreciate the work of the Zoning Administration Division on comprehensively reviewing the landscaping provisions of the Zoning Ordinance, and seeking comment on its proposed revisions to the ordinance. At the TC's June 1, 2023 meeting, Ms. Morgan, Senior Planner with the Zoning Administration, presented an excellent update on the status of the proposed amendment to the zoning ordinance.

The TC supports the proposed revision to the ordinance so that it applies to 10 (down from 20) parking spaces, and increasing the requirement for interior parking lot landscaping to 10% from 5%. The proposed revision also adds a new requirement for shrubs within the landscaping strip. In addition, the proposed revision includes a new requirement for street frontage landscaping, parallel to public and private streets that must be at least 10 feet wide and contain one tree per 30 feet of linear frontage (excluding lots developed with single family dwellings, internal drive aisles and when peripheral parking lot landscaping is required). These revisions and additions are consistent with the TC's goal of expanding the county's urban forest and green spaces as

stated in the BOS approved 2019 Tree Action Plan. These revisions also are in accord with the BOS's Community-Wide Climate and Energy Plan and Resilient Fairfax.

The TC understands that the amendment specifies the use of native non-deciduous trees, but would allow waivers for the use of existing deciduous vegetation. We understand that evergreen trees will provide screening all year round. However, there are a relatively small number of evergreen trees that are native to the Northern Virginia area, while the number of native deciduous trees is large. Accordingly, to the extent that required landscaping is not primarily for peripheral parking lot screening or screening of commercial or industrial uses, we recommend that the amendment permit the planting of a broad array of native deciduous as well as native evergreen trees and shrubs to promote biodiversity and the creation of mini-ecological corridors.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide comments on the Proposed Landscaping and Screening Provisions of Section 5108 of the Zoning Ordinance and look forward to seeing its further iterations.

Sincerely yours,

Please email TreeCommission@fairfaxcounty.gov for official signed version of letter

Cindy Speas, Chair

Fairfax County Tree Commission

cc: Tracy Strunk, Director, Department of Planning and Urban Development
Christopher Herrington, Director, Department of Public Works and Environmental Services
Bill Hicks, Director, Land Development Services
Brian Keightley, Director, Urban Forest Management Division
Leslie Johnson, Zoning Administrator, Zoning Administration Division
Bryan J. Hill, County Executive
Christina Jackson, Chief Financial Officer
Environmental Quality Advisory Council