

[EXTERNAL] Bonus Height Text Amendment

Sarah Haut <hautsl@yahoo.com>

Sat 6/11/2022 7:06 PM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>

[You don't often get email from hautsl@yahoo.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

Dear Planning Commission,

I oppose the Bonus Height Text Amendment as it is currently written and request that the amendment be deferred until the fall to allow more time to clarify and refine it.

On May 25th, I sent an email to Planning and Zoning Staff with specific questions about the amendment. I have yet to get a response. I have communicated with P&Z staff a number of times over the years and I know they are very good at prompt responses. I can only conclude that the lack of response is caused by a high number of bonus height emails they are responding to. Deferring the amendment will allow staff to respond to questions and will help the community to better understand the text amendment.

My townhouse is zoned RB. RB zones permit a maximum height of 45 feet according to the staff report. Although the text amendment clearly states that bonus height does not apply to single family houses and town houses, it does apply to other uses in the RB zone. Boarding houses are permitted in the RB zone. They can also be affordable. Now imagine the impact of a 70 foot high boarding house next to a two story townhouse with a narrow yard. Daylight for the townhouse would cease to exist. Although affordable housing is important and I support it, would this be fair to the townhouse owner? Additional provisions are needed to mitigate the impact on adjacent neighbors.

Speaking of affordable housing, the staff report indicated that builders can contribute to the affordable housing fund instead of building affordable units as part of the bonus height. I'm hoping I misinterpreted the staff report. However, if I didn't misinterpret, I oppose this. Affordable units should be blended into the community. Diversity is so important and so many parts of Alexandria have lost diversity. Blending affordable units into the community will enhance our diversity and make Alexandria a better city.

I request that you defer the text amendment until a fall hearing to allow for further refinement.

Thank you,

Sarah Haut
East Nelson Avenue.

DISCLAIMER: This message was sent from outside the City of Alexandria email system.
DO NOT CLICK any links or download attachments unless the contents are from a trusted source.

Del Ray Citizens Association

P.O. BOX 2233, ALEXANDRIA, VA 22301 | DELRAYCITIZENS.ORG

June 15, 2022

Justin Wilson, Mayor
Members of the City Council
Members of the Planning Commission
Karl W. Moritz, Director, P & Z
City of Alexandria, VA

RE: Bonus Height Text Amendment

On June 8, 2022 the Del Ray Citizens Association (DRCA) voted on and adopted the following position on the proposed Section 7-703(B) Bonus Height Text Amendment:

The Del Ray Citizens Association (DRCA) opposes the proposed Bonus Height Text Amendment (BHTA) as it is not consistent with the Potomac West Small Area Plan (SAP) and the Mount Vernon Avenue Business Area Plan (MVABAP). The DRCA requests that the City reject the proposed text amendment or amend to specify that the MVABAP (or SAPS in general) govern height constraints within the boundaries of the SAP.

The DRCA Land Use Committee (LUC) held a public meeting on June 1, 2022 to discuss the proposed text amendment and familiarize its members prior to the June 8, 2022 membership meeting. In addition, members of the LUC attended the two community meetings conducted by Planning and Zoning to garner an understanding of what effect the proposal would have on the Del Ray community and the commercial corridor of Mt. Vernon Avenue.

The DRCA does not oppose affordable housing but opposes the amendment due to the lack of adequate community engagement in the short period of time this has been brought forth to the citizens of Alexandria. The DRCA requests additional clarity on how it applies to Del Ray and the net effect it would have on the current available affordable housing.

Sincerely,

Kristine Hesse
Lisa Lettieri, Co-chairs
Land Use Committee

Tim Laderach, President 2021-2022
Katie Waynick, President 2022-2023
Del Ray Citizens Association



BRINGING NEIGHBORS TOGETHER
2

[EXTERNAL]OPPOSITION to §7-703(b)

Mark Ashley <mmashley@outlook.com>

Thu 6/16/2022 6:03 PM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>

You don't often get email from mmashley@outlook.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

My name is Mark Ashley and I am writing in strong opposition to §7-703(b) regarding the changes to planning & zoning proposed for Del Ray.

Specifically, I am opposed to Alexandria City's Planning & Zoning proposed plan to allow for an expansion of a program to allow developers to request increased height and density in zones which have height limits below 50 feet.

Specifically, I am opposed to the change—§7-703(b)—that allows developers to use a Special Use Permit (SUP) to disregard the height restrictions, a variance, to add an additional 25 feet to their building height.

On behalf of all my neighbors with whom I have spoken to regarding this issue, we stand united in our opposition to §7-703(b). Along with the added stress to Del Ray's infrastructure that these changes would create, we also feel that if new development were to move forward, it will single-handedly decimate Del Ray's wonderfully unique charm and sense of community that so many citizens have worked so tirelessly to create.

Mark Ashley

M: (202) 363-4493

E: mmashley@outlook.com

[Mark Ashley | LinkedIn](#)



DISCLAIMER: This message was sent from outside the City of Alexandria email system.
DO NOT CLICK any links or download attachments unless the contents are from a trusted source.

[EXTERNAL] Bonus Height Text Amendment - June 23, 2022 Meeting

Barbra Byington <babyington@gmail.com>

Fri 6/17/2022 9:36 AM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>

Cc: Nancy Williams <Nancy.Williams@alexandriava.gov>

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from babyington@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

Dear Planning Commission Members,

I am writing to express my opposition to the Section 7-703(B) Bonus Height Text Amendment proposed by City Staff. I am a long-term resident of Alexandria/Del Ray who lives very close to Mount Vernon Avenue so could be directly impacted by any changes.

I oppose the amendment for a number of reasons:

- 1) This amendment could have a material (adverse in many cases) effect on many neighborhoods (such as Old Town and Del Ray), but very limited time has been allowed for community input and engagement. This very significant amendment seems unnecessarily rushed.
- 2) City Staff does not appear to have determined what the actual impact on affordable housing stock would be - but they indicated that it would likely not be a substantial amount. It appears that developers could contribute money to the affordable housing fund rather than building units, which does (almost) nothing to solve the problem.
- 3) It is very unclear what would happen in neighborhoods that have a small area business plan in place (such as Del Ray - the Potomac West Small Area Plan). These Plans were negotiated through a lengthy process with significant community input and it seems like they could be negated or overruled if a developer were to successfully apply to build a 70' building through the SUP process. This would create very bad faith with the community and residents (tax payers). These Plans were developed in order to protect the historic character of certain neighborhoods, which could be destroyed. At a minimum, neighborhoods with governing small area plans should be exempted from this amendment.
- 4) It is unclear what types of setback or privacy requirements would be required when many of the "potential" properties are adjacent to single family homes or low-rise townhomes/duplexes.
- 5) Del Ray in particular has an unfortunate history of flooding and sewage problems. The streets are very narrow and there is limited parking. Allowing for the future build of large scale apartment or condo buildings would exacerbate existing problems with City infrastructure.
- 6) What really seems to be lacking in the City is moderately priced housing - older, more affordable homes and duplexes/townhomes are being torn down and replaced with \$1.5-\$2 million mini-mansions. New "market rate" apartments and condos are almost universally "luxury" and not affordable for middle income folks. Unfortunately, we have also learned that this amendment could allow for moderately priced garden style apartments to be replaced with higher rise luxury units, as long as some portion was designated as "affordable" or a contribution were made, decreasing the supply of less expensive units on a net basis. My first apartment in Old Town was in a low rise garden apartment building, which was all I could afford at the time. I had no desire to live in a high rise - or I would have moved to Arlington, which has much better transit accessibility.

I sincerely ask the Planning Commission to vote against this amendment and require Staff to conduct further analysis and diligence before presenting any type of modification in the fall.

thank you for time

Barbra Byington
Stewart Avenue

DISCLAIMER: This message was sent from outside the City of Alexandria email system.
DO NOT CLICK any links or download attachments unless the contents are from a trusted source.

[EXTERNAL]23 June Meeting - Bonus height amendment

Christopher Anderson <christopherlanderson@gmail.com>

Fri 6/17/2022 1:59 PM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>

Cc: Nancy Williams <Nancy.Williams@alexandriava.gov>; Patrick Silva <Patrick.Silva@alexandriava.gov>

Some people who received this message don't often get email from christopherlanderson@gmail.com.

[Learn why this is important](#)

Hello,

As a resident of northeast Alexandria/Parker Gray/Potomac Greens areas near where the bonus height amendment is subject to change (based on my reading of city provided maps), I wanted to indicate my strong support for the amendment to increase the height available to build. Our city and region desperately needs more housing, and this is a great place to start. Please approve the amendment.

Thanks, Chris Anderson

**DISCLAIMER: This message was sent from outside the City of Alexandria email system.
DO NOT CLICK any links or download attachments unless the contents are from a trusted source.**

June 17, 2022

TO: City of Alexandria, VA Planning Commission

RE: Proposed Height & Density Amendment Zoning Text Amendment #2022-00005

As business owners in Del Ray and as residents of Alexandria, we strenuously object to the proposed text amendment. The reality of this proposed amendment is it will DESTROY the historic neighborhoods of Alexandria, Old Town and Del Ray.

In the 1960s, residents of Alexandria fought mightily to protect the old, rundown buildings on King Street and environs and establish what is now known as Old Town. My parents, Jack & Patsy Ticer, were two of those heroes who had the foresight and deep care for our beautiful historic town to fight off the clarion call of the time – Urban Renewal. And, thereafter, those citizens and many more flocked to the decrepit area and restored the commercial buildings and residential homes that are the envy of neighbors near (Arlington) and wide. It was a transformative success story that still ripples through neighborhoods needing rejuvenation all across our country. It is a success story that is still written about today.

Fast forward to the early 2000s when another historic neighborhood in Alexandria was in need of rejuvenation – the old Town of Potomac, now known as Del Ray. Enter another group of concerned, visionary neighbors who envisioned an old fashioned, walkable neighborhood with small, locally- owned businesses along Mt. Vernon Avenue. Their foresight and ability to work WITH the City resulted in the Mt. Vernon Avenue Business Area Plan which has successfully guided the rejuvenation of dozens of blocks over the past 20 years. Another success story due to the foresight and hard work of residents who recognize the importance of history as it relates to PLACE.

The current clarion call – Affordable Housing – is what is being hailed in this text amendment, to the detriment of the future of these two historic districts in our city. There has been *no evidence* presented by the city planners that this text amendment will actually provide an incremental increase in affordable housing.

You have the choice to understand the history, both past and future, that is at stake right now and choose to be on the right side of preservation of what we call the “Geese that laid the Golden Eggs” for Alexandria – Vote NO on this text amendment.

Sincerely,

Margaret and Laurent Janowsky
106 W Braddock Rd., Alexandria, VA

[EXTERNAL]Opposition to the Section 7-703(B) Bonus Height Text Amendment

karen johnson <kaj2600@yahoo.com>

Fri 6/17/2022 7:42 PM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>

Cc: Nancy Williams <Nancy.Williams@alexandriava.gov>

You don't often get email from kaj2600@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Ms. Williams –

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the Section 7-703(B) Bonus Height Text Amendment being considered by the City. I understand that this amendment is part of a larger national and regional trend developed under the guise of generating more affordable housing.

I do not believe the City has adequately demonstrated that this radical (and rushed) change in zoning will increase the amount of affordable housing. I watched the April 12th community meeting on changes to the zoning where you stated, “We don't necessarily expect that this will generate a large number of [affordable housing] units”. If a well-informed representative of the City and an expert on housing can't unequivocally say the height and density amendment will increase the number of affordable units, then this isn't really about affordable housing.

Walk around my neighborhood of Del Ray and you will see incredibly diverse forms of housing – garden apartments, low-rise apartments, duplexes, low-rise condos, single family homes, multi-family dwellings, and a couple new luxury high rise apartment buildings. With the exception of the new luxury high rise apartment buildings, the majority of apartments and condos in Del Ray are market rate “affordable” - they house hundreds, if not thousands, of our neighbors who are part of Del Ray's fiber. Juxtapose these charming and affordable apartments and condos with some of the newish apartment buildings in Potomac Yard that have opted for the bonus density -- at Station 650 only 8 of the 253 of units are considered affordable. At Notch8, it's 12 of 253 of units. <https://www.alexandriava.gov/housing/affordable-housing-projects-and-partners>

Rather than destroy the history, character and community of Alexandria with a push for increased height and more density – we are already the most densely populated area in Virginia, the City (and its residents) would be better served to preserve its current stock of affordable housing by using incentives for building owners to update and maintain, rather than demolish and rebuild.

With Alexandria's tight knit residents, diverse neighborhoods, irreplaceable history and unique character in mind, I implore the City to use the various small area plans as a guide for any future development. These plans are painstakingly detailed and were developed through the collaboration of the City, residents, businesses, and citizen associations. The process by which this text amendment is being determined is creating not only a distrust of our City government, but it's causing discourse, strife and anxiety across Alexandria because the amendment threatens every inch of a City residents love.

Thank you for your hard work on this issue and consideration of my comments.

Karen Johnson

2600 DeWitt Avenue

Alexandria, VA 22301

[EXTERNAL]Fwd: BHTA

K M <mcklynnbop@yahoo.com>

Fri 6/17/2022 8:21 PM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>

You don't often get email from mcklynnbop@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Please see below

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: K M <mcklynnbop@yahoo.com>

Date: June 17, 2022 at 12:29:34 PM EDT

To: nancy.williams@alexandriava.gov

Subject: BHTA

City of Alexandria Zoning and Planning Committee:

I write you to implore you to oppose the proposed bonus height text amendment (BHTA). As a threshold matter, your purported intent is to increase affordable housing. That intent would be a laudable effort were it in fact true. All of the construction and additions in my area (Warwick Village in Del Ray) have been anything but affordable. By way of example, the developer who has scooped up much of Mt Vernon Avenue, has recently requested a number of waivers and indicated their intent NOT to provide affordable housing at 2525 Mt. Vernon Ave. The term "affordable housing" has become a magic ticket to bypassing zoning rules for developers who have no intention of providing any such housing. I think it is disingenuous to suggest otherwise.

Moreover, the City still has significant flooding and sewage issues in Del Ray that are exacerbated by all the exceptions granted to the developers. How about correcting the issues with the current infrastructure before trying to expand it? There are plenty of properties in Alexandria generally and Del Ray in particular that can accommodate affordable housing without adding additional stress to the infrastructure.

And significantly, residents do not have concerns about additional housing, they have concerns about their current property flooding and being towered over by massive structures in what will become another Crystal City. Please do not take the easy way out and simply building up and selling out rather than figuring out a sensible way to welcome affordable housing and new neighbors and retain the historical nature of the buildings in our neighborhood.

Please reject the proposed text amendment, and address the current infrastructure concerns before increasing density and height of buildings.

Thanks,

Kelly McDonald
58 Ancell St
(Warwick Village)

DISCLAIMER: This message was sent from outside the City of Alexandria email system.
DO NOT CLICK any links or download attachments unless the contents are from a trusted source.

[EXTERNAL]YIMBYs of NoVA Founder comments in advance of 6/23 Planning Commission Meeting

Luca Gattoni-Celli <potentiaeromanorum@gmail.com>

Fri 6/17/2022 8:32 PM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>;Karl Moritz <Karl.Moritz@alexandriava.gov>

Cc: Alex Goyette <AlexMGoyette@gmail.com>;David Byrd <villainofvaudeville@gmail.com>;Matt Larson <mdlaron45@gmail.com>

Dear Planning Commission (and Director Mortiz),

I write on behalf of the nearly 800 members of YIMBYs of Northern Virginia, many of whom including myself live in Alexandria. Our grassroots organization strongly supports the city's Zoning for Housing initiatives as well as various projects and proposals you will be considering during your June 23rd meeting. I am unable to attend as I will be on a great American road trip with my wife and children June 22 to July 5. CCed are the other members of our leadership team who live in Alexandria.

The Bonus Height Zoning Text Amendment Proposal is a prudent albeit, on balance, modest policy change that would enable developers in our city to produce more market rate and committed affordable housing units, which residents so desperately demand and, frankly, deserve. The hostile response the proposal has received is notable for two reasons. That hostility is out of proportion with the modest geographic scope of the proposal, which in current form would not apply in very many areas of Alexandria. And it is simply not representative of the median Alexandrian voter, based on the results of the most recent election, in which pro-housing candidates essentially ran the table. Many Alexandrians live in multifamily buildings and it is obvious that most of us wish for housing that is less egregiously expensive. This is an important incremental step to relieving Alexandria's housing shortage.

My understanding is the commission will also be considering a measure to functionally remove parking requirements from Auxiliary Dwellings (ADUs) in commercial zones (i.e., apartments above or behind shops and restaurants). This is a deceptively important issue. As I noted in my comments to the commission during its previous meeting, minimum parking requirements add exorbitant cost and complexity to residential developments, especially small-scale projects such as ADUs. An off-street parking space might be the difference between an ADU making sense for a homeowner or not being worth the trouble. As in most American cities and towns, Alexandria's legacy approach to land use regulation places some specious restrictions on property owners. Our neighborhoods are unable to grow and evolve to meet residents' needs. California tinkered with various ADU laws for more than a decade before it saw an ADU construction boom. I hope to see one here before my three-year-old can legally drive.

The final project I wish to discuss and endorse is Hilco's redevelopment of the decommissioned coal plant site in Old Town North -- formally called the NRG Potomac River Generating Station. It astounds me this site has lain dormant for nearly a decade, considering the economic and population growth in our region. But as the saying goes, the second-best time to plant a tree is now. I toured the site with my associate Alex Goyette on Saturday and spoke with the Hilco SVP in charge of the project. She candidly answered all of my questions and clearly is working hard to balance various community interests. I think it is notable that the developer is using multiple mechanisms to set aside 8 to 16% of the residential units on the site as committed affordable; I was told that technically Hilco has the right to make all units market rate.

The usual community complaints about height are bubbling up, though not necessarily from adjacent residents, and they are of dubious merit given the height of surrounding building. I beseech the commission to ensure the height of this housing development is not curtailed. Not only will this project chip away at our city and region's housing shortage, it will also serve as a model for sustainable, multiuse development that does not prioritize cars over all other road users and

inhabitants of the outdoor space. People will actually want to spend time here, including tourists. I am not really a fan of giving developers bonus density for community art space, compared with the alternatives, but that is a topic for another time.

Especially as a father with a visceral stake in our community's future, I want to see evidence that environmental remediation of the brownfield site is thorough and delivers a safe residential community. But with all of the scrutiny this project is receiving, and knowing how competent and dedicated our city's professional policy staff are, I am confident this will be a tremendous project for our community.

YIMBYs of Northern Virginia urges all commission members to support and approve these measures.

Thank you for your consideration in this important matter. And thank you for all of your hard work in service of the city we all love to call home.

Respectfully,

Luca Gattoni-Celli

Founder, YIMBYs of Northern Virginia

[Website](#) | [Contact Form](#) | [Facebook Group](#)

843-793-7106 (Mobile/[Signal](#))

[LinkedIn](#) [Twitter](#) [Medium](#)

**DISCLAIMER: This message was sent from outside the City of Alexandria email system.
DO NOT CLICK any links or download attachments unless the contents are from a trusted source.**

[EXTERNAL]Fwd: Section 7-703(B) Bonus Height Text Amendment

Rich McAfee <xcmcafee@gmail.com>

Fri 6/17/2022 8:37 PM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>

You don't often get email from xcmcafee@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Rich McAfee** <xcmcafee@gmail.com>

Date: Fri, Jun 17, 2022 at 4:19 PM

Subject: Section 7-703(B) Bonus Height Text Amendment

To: <nancy.williams@alexandriava.gov>

I am writing to express my disagreement and concern with the direction that the Section 7-703(B) Bonus Height Text Amendment(BHTA) proposed by City Staff. As a long term resident of Del Ray, the decisions made will directly affect the neighborhood, community and my personal access to the area. With the proposed changes to the height and use it would force me to not be able to access or use significant areas of Del Ray due to my combat related PTSD. Additionally, if the BHTA is approved the look, feel and fabric of the Del Ray neighborhoods will be lost. All of the cute shops that line Mount Vernon Ave will be forced to leave the area due to higher rents. In their place large chain stores will take their place. If this is not evident, look at the Walgreens on the corner of Mount Vernon and Monroe St that displaced three businesses for one convenience store. The current plan for 2525 would turn it into over 220 units of varying size. In that plan there is no discussion about improving the crumbling water, sewer or electric service in the area. If you consider that each unit would have two people and a minimum of one car (more than likely two cars) where is all of this supposed to go in an area that already has parking issues.

I am planning to attend the planning commission meeting on 23 June.

Respectfully,
Richard McAfee

DISCLAIMER: This message was sent from outside the City of Alexandria email system. DO NOT CLICK any links or download attachments unless the contents are from a trusted source.

[EXTERNAL]Fwd: Opposition to Section 7-703(B) Bonus Height Text Amendment

JoMarie Hoholik <jhoholik@gmail.com>

Fri 6/17/2022 8:39 PM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>

You don't often get email from jhoholik@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: JoMarie Hoholik <jhoholik@gmail.com>

Date: June 17, 2022 at 4:47:28 PM EDT

To: nancy.williams@alexandriava.gov

Subject: Opposition to Section 7-703(B) Bonus Height Text Amendment

Dear Ms. Williams -

I have been a resident and homeowner in Warwick Village for 23 years. Additionally I am the caregiver to a 100% disabled vet (including PTSD due to combat injuries). The feel of the neighborhood and the ability to walk down the Avenue with SMALL businesses is what allows our family, a veteran family, to continue to live and thrive here.

I STRONGLY oppose the Section 7-703(B) Bonus Height Text Amendment proposed by City Staff. As a Warwick Village resident, I will be directly impacted by this, as will my husband, who will literally not be able to walk down the street, where he's lived for more than a decade due to increased density and tall buildings.

I fully support affordable housing, and I've heard a lot of sound bites saying how this will increase affordable housing. However, I have yet to see any new developer actually offer any significant amount of affordable housing to families who need it the most. Tearing down actual affordable housing (like garden apartments or "smaller" houses) to build monstrosities of large buildings, without consideration for parking, flooding (which is rampant in our area), the taxing of our cities resources, sewage, and schools, is completely irresponsible.

We have existing zones and rules for reasons, that have theoretically been carefully planned and negotiated with area residents, who will be affected most by them. Please do not change these rules without actually considering how this affects people who already live here, and live here for specific reasons. Changing the height and density so drastically will have negative consequences to both the nature of our community, and to issues that we are already experiencing from growing pains, such as flooding and parking issues - issues to which there are NO solutions for the current residents.

Sincerely,
JoMarie Hohoik

DISCLAIMER: This message was sent from outside the City of Alexandria email system.
DO NOT CLICK any links or download attachments unless the contents are from a trusted source.

[EXTERNAL] Bonus Height Amendment §7-703(b)

Tatiana Van Steinburg <tv.0137@gmail.com>

Sat 6/18/2022 3:00 PM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>

You don't often get email from tv.0137@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Planning & Zoning Team,

I am writing to you as a concerned resident of the Del Ray neighborhood in regard to the rushed nature of Bonus Height Amendment §7-703(b). I moved to Del Ray in 2019 and live in the Manor House garden apartments. I moved to Del Ray because of its charm, the diversity in architecture and the hometown feel of Mt. Vernon Avenue. In the time that I have lived in Del Ray I have seen significant changes in housing development. I am a 45 years old single person who one day hopes to own a home. I would love for that home to be in Del Ray. When I walk my dog through the neighborhood it saddens me to see that the bungalow homes that could be a "starter home" for a single person making a six figure salary are demolished and turned into a behemoth 5+ bedroom 4+ bathroom home that goes for over 1 million dollars.

If you want to create affordable housing, limit the development of these huge single family homes that are unaffordable to most people and will eventually turn Del Ray into a homogenized community. I love the diversity of Del Ray because we do have low-income housing in the neighborhood. If the goal is affordable housing why do we need a height increase? Why not build more low-income specific garden apartments instead of building a six-story apartment with X% dedicated to low-income? Also, I enjoy unlimited free parking around my neighborhood without the need for a residential decal. If you move forward with these larger buildings what will happen to the free parking around the neighborhood? What is being done to address the strain on the sewer system and flooding? And, I would hate to see Mt. Vernon Avenue turned into another generic main street.

I would love to see an impact study done that addresses the community's concerns and to really understand how this proposal will affect the community, positively or negatively. I want to understand exactly how many apartments per new building will be mandated as low-income or income-restricted. I don't think this is something that should be pushed through to the benefit of developers and taking advantage of the current real estate market.

Sincerely,
Tatiana Van Steinburg
5 E Monroe Avenue, Apt 111
22301

**DISCLAIMER: This message was sent from outside the City of Alexandria email system.
DO NOT CLICK any links or download attachments unless the contents are from a trusted source.**

[EXTERNAL]Del Ray development

Dan Wolf <danjwolf@me.com>

Mon 6/20/2022 4:19 PM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>

You don't often get email from danjwolf@me.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Please add my voice to the chorus of local citizens opposed to overdeveloping Del Ray. I have no problem with development, change, turnover, etc. I've been in this neighborhood for 21 years and have seen the normal churn of cityscapes. However, I can't imagine allowing six-story buildings on "The Ave". That is simply a mistake that would kill the character of a beloved neighborhood. Aesthetically, it would create a sunshine-less canyon of our narrow main street, not to mention pack it too tightly for its footprint.

Let's be smart and inclusive about the evolution of our neighborhood. I don't want to freeze it in 1950, but I don't want Clarendon either.

Many thanks.

Dan J. Wolf
703-623-5372

"When it's third and ten, you can take the milk drinkers and I'll take the whiskey drinkers every time." Max McGee

**DISCLAIMER: This message was sent from outside the City of Alexandria email system.
DO NOT CLICK any links or download attachments unless the contents are from a trusted source.**

[EXTERNAL] Bonus Height Amendment

michelle.kamalich@verizon.net <michelle.kamalich@verizon.net>

Mon 6/20/2022 4:47 PM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>

You don't often get email from michelle.kamalich@verizon.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

Do whom it may concern, as a proud Del Ray resident for over twenty years I am opposed to the proposed Bonus Height Amendment. I would like to recommend that the Planning Commission either reject the text or add language specifying that the change does not override the guidelines of the Small Area Plans.

I am concerned that the Bonus Height Amendment will have a negative impact on the Del Ray Community. The city has not studied the effects such a change would have on the community, and I think that is poor planning.

I am not opposed to growth, nor affordable housing, but there is such a thing as smart growth.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Michelle Kamalich

**DISCLAIMER: This message was sent from outside the City of Alexandria email system.
DO NOT CLICK any links or download attachments unless the contents are from a trusted source.**

[EXTERNAL]Zoning Text Amendment #2022-00005

Jessica Morton <jessicaamorton@gmail.com>

Mon 6/20/2022 5:26 PM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>

You don't often get email from jessicaamorton@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Planning Commission:

I am a resident and property owner in Del Ray. As I am not able to attend the June 23 Planning Commission meeting in person, I am writing to convey my thoughts on the proposed bonus height amendment.

I strongly support the addition of more affordable housing in Alexandria in general, and in Del Ray in particular. But it is not clear to me that the proposed amendment will actually provide a meaningful solution to the lack of affordable housing in our community. And worse, I worry that enacting the amendment will allow the city government to believe--incorrectly--that they have made strides towards a solution, thus removing any incentive to take actions that will *actually* make headway. I therefore oppose the proposed amendment in its current form for the following reasons:

First, although the bonus height would enable the creation of a significant number of new apartments, it appears that only a very small number would be designated as affordable housing. If we are going to fundamentally change the architectural character of the Avenue, we should get a tangible benefit from it: a meaningful increase in affordable housing units, not just a handful.

Second, it does not appear that there is any requirement that the few affordable housing units be of any particular size. In the absence of such regulation, one suspects that developers will designate small studio apartments as the affordable units. But the true need for affordable housing in Alexandria is for families--apartments of two or more bedrooms. Unless the developers are required to designate large apartments as affordable, there is a mismatch between the housing problem we face and the solution presented.

Third, I understand that these all may be academic questions, because instead of actually making affordable units available, developers may instead simply put money into a fund. This undermines the entire project of making more affordable housing available, and permits developers to charge their normal rents, now subsidized by the taxpayer. And it precludes one of the critical reasons that building affordable housing in Del Ray matters: to permit medium- and lower-income families to live close to the businesses they work at and the communities they thrive in, rather than being forced to relocate further away from those amenities and transportation.

All told, the current proposal appears to pay lip service to the very real need for affordable housing, but will only help developers profit. I strongly encourage the planning commission to reject the proposed amendment unless and until it provides actual teeth on affordable housing: a significantly increased number of units that must be designated for affordable housing, a requirement that those units contain at least two bedrooms, and clarity that putting money in an affordable housing fund is not an adequate substitute.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my views. Please do not hesitate to contact me if any further information would be helpful.

Sincerely,
Jessica Morton

DISCLAIMER: This message was sent from outside the City of Alexandria email system.
DO NOT CLICK any links or download attachments unless the contents are from a trusted source.

[EXTERNAL]Opposition to change of height restrictions

Mary Hobbie <mkhobbie@gmail.com>

Mon 6/20/2022 5:51 PM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>

[You don't often get email from mkhobbie@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

I would like to ask that any consideration of a change to the height restrictions in Del Ray not be approved without a full impact assessment of the plan. I further ask that the planning commission inform the community how the new suggested height maximum is consistent with the previous small area plan for Del Ray.

Finally, if the commission is inclined to approve the change, since the proposed change is allegedly needed to provide more affordable housing, I ask that no change be allowed without specific plans for a described and required number of affordable housing units that will be included in any new development.

Sincerely yours,
Mary Hobbie

DISCLAIMER: This message was sent from outside the City of Alexandria email system.
DO NOT CLICK any links or download attachments unless the contents are from a trusted source.

[EXTERNAL] Bonus height in Del ray

Elena Hutchison <ecaudle@gmail.com>

Mon 6/20/2022 7:50 PM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>

You don't often get email from ecaudle@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello planning commission,

I am a Del ray resident writing to share my support for the bonus height zoning option under your consideration. I felt it was especially important to do this given the Del ray citizens association adoption of a letter opposing the bonus height amendment - in this case the association does not speak for my point of view (or for about 1/3 of Del Ray voting members present).

While I likely would not support every individual bonus height proposal, in general, I believe Del Ray should be dense, walkable, and designed for mixed use. With soon-to-be two metro stations, a vibrant and walkable community in Del ray is within our reach - and allowing for slightly denser potential zoning makes a lot of sense in this context.

The maps released regarding areas in Del ray to which this change would apply highlight a few buildings that are in residential areas not on the avenue - such as in Warwick village or closer to commonwealth, and the commission should consider explicitly excluding these areas so as to not unnecessarily concern residents. But outside of these and along the avenue, a bonus height opportunity, subject to all the normal SUP approvals and discussions, makes a ton of sense and would be another step toward the even more vibrant, walkable, and thriving Del Ray.

Thank you,

Elena Hutchison
105 Randolph Ave.

--

Elena Caudle Hutchison

**DISCLAIMER: This message was sent from outside the City of Alexandria email system.
DO NOT CLICK any links or download attachments unless the contents are from a trusted source.**

[EXTERNAL]Height amendments

kmueting <kmueting@gmail.com>

Tue 6/21/2022 8:46 AM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>

You don't often get email from kmueting@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello -

I live at 217 E Monroe Avenue, and I oppose the height amendments.

Katie Mueting

**DISCLAIMER: This message was sent from outside the City of Alexandria email system.
DO NOT CLICK any links or download attachments unless the contents are from a trusted source.**

[EXTERNAL]Planning commission vote Bonus Height & Density Ammendment 7-703b

Kate Madrick <katemadrick@gmail.com>

Tue 6/21/2022 8:54 AM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>

You don't often get email from katemadrick@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hi commissioners,

Please consider a no vote on the allowing changes to the height ammdement.

By all accounts there has been little research into this change & according to your sources no additional affordable housing will be available & who might benefit? We all know a builder or corporation (no residents of Alexandria) will be the recipient of this grand gesture.

The title "planning commission " should correlate to actual planning, and yet because those who stand to gain the most (builders/corporations) are the entities that your committee listens to.

Alexandria will grow & it should grow organically, not by allowing profiteers to do what they wish. Small businesses will not gain by this, they have local customers & visitors from around Alexandria to come here & park their cars & stroll the avenue. Not to look at higher buildings, people want simpler pleasures.

Face it, the community at large does not trust your planning.

Take it seriously & if nothing else do more research or even consider allowing the community to grow as it should not by pushing more "density" down the proverbial throats of those who pay taxes.

Thank you,

Kathy Madrick , homeowner & NY transplant

**DISCLAIMER: This message was sent from outside the City of Alexandria email system.
DO NOT CLICK any links or download attachments unless the contents are from a trusted source.**

[EXTERNAL]Docket Item 6, bonus height in 45 ft zones (support)

Ken Notis <civ2kn@gmail.com>

Tue 6/21/2022 1:24 PM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>

You don't often get email from civ2kn@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear sirs and maams,

I support the proposed amendment to allow 25 ft of bonus in exchange for committed affordable units in 45 zones.

As we try to maintain economic diversity in our City, it is essential to expand the tools available to create affordable housing.

Adding housing close to transit, jobs, activity centers (which all the impacted zones are) will additionally fight sprawl and benefit the climate.

I believe that the height increase - modest, stepped back, and unlikely to take place on more than a few parcels anytime soon - will be quite compatible with the character of all the neighborhoods involved.

Ken Notis
3001 Park Center Dr, Alexandria, VA 22302

**DISCLAIMER: This message was sent from outside the City of Alexandria email system.
DO NOT CLICK any links or download attachments unless the contents are from a trusted source.**

Re: YIMBYs of NoVA Founder comments in advance of 6/23 Planning Commission Meeting

Luca Gattoni-Celli <potentiaeromanorum@gmail.com>

Tue 6/21/2022 9:57 AM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>; Karl Moritz <Karl.Moritz@alexandriava.gov>

Cc: Alex Goyette <AlexMGoyette@gmail.com>; David Byrd <villainofvaudeville@gmail.com>; Matt Larson <mdlaron45@gmail.com>

Dear Planning Commission,

I neglected to include the docket item numbers for the issues I emailed you about. Please find below:

Item #2 - ADU parking rule change

Item #4 - PRGS

Item #6 - Bonus Height Zoning Text Amendment

Regarding Bonus Height, I wish to note that we have many members in Del Ray, including leaders of the Del Ray Civic Association, who attended our most recent YIMBY social meetup in Del Ray. At least a couple of them have already emailed you. They are all extremely supportive of this change and would welcome taller buildings and more new neighbors where they live. Del Ray west of Mount Vernon Avenue is already more than 10,000 residents per square mile and close to the Braddock Road Metro station (I actually used to live in a garden apartment on E Glendale Avenue with my wife and newborn daughter). It would be foolish to restrict development in Del Ray, especially because it would ultimately produce sprawl elsewhere. Blocking growth eventually leads to slow, painful decline.

Thank you,

Luca Gattoni-Celli

Founder, YIMBYs of Northern Virginia

YIMBYsOfNoVA.org | [Contact Form](#) | [Facebook Group](#)

843-793-7106 (Mobile/[Signal](#))

[LinkedIn](#) [Twitter](#) [Medium](#)

On Fri, Jun 17, 2022 at 8:31 PM Luca Gattoni-Celli <potentiaeromanorum@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Planning Commission (and Director Mortiz),

I write on behalf of the nearly 800 members of YIMBYs of Northern Virginia, many of whom including myself live in Alexandria. Our grassroots organization strongly supports the city's Zoning for Housing initiatives as well as various projects and proposals you will be considering during your June 23rd meeting. I am unable to attend as I will be on a great American road trip with my wife and children June 22 to July 5. CCed are the other members of our leadership team who live in Alexandria.

The Bonus Height Zoning Text Amendment Proposal is a prudent albeit, on balance, modest policy change that would enable developers in our city to produce more market rate and committed affordable housing units, which residents so desperately demand and, frankly, deserve. The hostile response the proposal has received is notable for two reasons. That hostility is out of proportion with the modest geographic scope of the proposal, which in current form would not apply in very many areas of Alexandria. And it is simply not representative of the median Alexandrian voter,

based on the results of the most recent election, in which pro-housing candidates essentially ran the table. Many Alexandrians live in multifamily buildings and it is obvious that most of us wish for housing that is less egregiously expensive. This is an important incremental step to relieving Alexandria's housing shortage.

My understanding is the commission will also be considering a measure to functionally remove parking requirements from Auxiliary Dwellings (ADUs) in commercial zones (i.e., apartments above or behind shops and restaurants). This is a deceptively important issue. As I noted in my comments to the commission during its previous meeting, minimum parking requirements add exorbitant cost and complexity to residential developments, especially small-scale projects such as ADUs. An off-street parking space might be the difference between an ADU making sense for a homeowner or not being worth the trouble. As in most American cities and towns, Alexandria's legacy approach to land use regulation places some specious restrictions on property owners. Our neighborhoods are unable to grow and evolve to meet residents' needs. California tinkered with various ADU laws for more than a decade before it saw an ADU construction boom. I hope to see one here before my three-year-old can legally drive.

The final project I wish to discuss and endorse is Hilco's redevelopment of the decommissioned coal plant site in Old Town North -- formally called the NRG Potomac River Generating Station. It astounds me this site has lain dormant for nearly a decade, considering the economic and population growth in our region. But as the saying goes, the second-best time to plant a tree is now. I toured the site with my associate Alex Goyette on Saturday and spoke with the Hilco SVP in charge of the project. She candidly answered all of my questions and clearly is working hard to balance various community interests. I think it is notable that the developer is using multiple mechanisms to set aside 8 to 16% of the residential units on the site as committed affordable; I was told that technically Hilco has the right to make all units market rate.

The usual community complaints about height are bubbling up, though not necessarily from adjacent residents, and they are of dubious merit given the height of surrounding building. I beseech the commission to ensure the height of this housing development is not curtailed. Not only will this project chip away at our city and region's housing shortage, it will also serve as a model for sustainable, multiuse development that does not prioritize cars over all other road users and inhabitants of the outdoor space. People will actually want to spend time here, including tourists. I am not really a fan of giving developers bonus density for community art space, compared with the alternatives, but that is a topic for another time.

Especially as a father with a visceral stake in our community's future, I want to see evidence that environmental remediation of the brownfield site is thorough and delivers a safe residential community. But with all of the scrutiny this project is receiving, and knowing how competent and dedicated our city's professional policy staff are, I am confident this will be a tremendous project for our community.

YIMBYs of Northern Virginia urges all commission members to support and approve these measures.

Thank you for your consideration in this important matter. And thank you for all of your hard work in service of the city we all love to call home.

Respectfully,

Luca Gattoni-Celli

Founder, YIMBYs of Northern Virginia

[Website](#) | [Contact Form](#) | [Facebook Group](#)

843-793-7106 (Mobile/[Signal](#))

[LinkedIn](#) [Twitter](#) [Medium](#)

Alexandria City Government
Planning Commission

My name is Mark Ashley and I am writing in strong opposition to §7-703(b) regarding the changes to planning & zoning proposed for Del Ray.

Specifically, I am opposed to Alexandria City's Planning & Zoning proposed plan to allow for an expansion of a program to allow developers to request increased height and density in zones which have height limits below 50 feet.

Specifically, I am opposed to the change—§7-703(b)—that allows developers to use a Special Use Permit (SUP) to disregard the height restrictions, a variance, to add an additional 25 feet to their building height.

On behalf of all my neighbors with whom I have spoken to regarding this issue, we stand united in our opposition to §7-703(b). Along with the added stress to Del Ray's infrastructure that these changes would create, we also feel that if new development were to move forward, it will single-handedly decimate Del Ray's wonderfully unique charm and sense of community that so many citizens have worked so tirelessly to create.

Those of us in opposition to this motion are fully aware that no detailed civic-based studies have been conducted regarding the impact the proposed development would have on the school system, water/sewage system, traffic system, etc. in the selected areas. Those of us in opposition are, however, aware that both the Historic Alexandria Resources Commission (HARC) and the Alexandria Historic Restoration and Preservation Commission have directly cautioned Alexandria's city council of the "profound negative impact on the Old and Historic Alexandria District, the Parker-Gray Historic District, the Historic Town of Potomac in Del Ray" and other historic properties throughout the city."

There may be no better example of Del Ray's unique appeal and sense of community than that found on E Glendale Avenue, which, for decades now, has comprised a wide variety of housing styles including single-family homes, townhouses and duplexes, as well as garden-style apartments. It is without question, however, that the garden-style apartments really forge E Glendale's community. During any part of the year—the dog days of summer or the most frigid days of winter—an E Glendale visitor will find any number of the apartment residents gathered in their respective gardens out front in a wonderful display of neighborliness and camaraderie. From my house, I can hear their laughs. Should this development haphazardly advance, I fear the laughs will no longer be heard.

With this, I strenuously object to §7-703(b) and urge Alexandria's Mayor Wilson and the City Council to not only conduct the proper impact assessments regarding the proposed development, but to also use the small area plans as a guide for any future development.

Mark Ashley

Members of the Planning Commission,

My name is Stephen Popick and I am a resident of Alexandria, Virginia in the Del Ray neighborhood. I am writing in my capacity as a Del Ray resident. I hold a PhD in urban economics from George Washington University with a focus on housing, and regularly advise and present housing related materials to a variety of groups both in the DC Metro, nationally as a private citizen and do similar work in my role as a US Government economist. Let me be explicitly clear, the views and opinions of two Del Ray groups, Save Del Ray and Del Ray Citizens Association, do not represent my view nor the views of many of my neighbors who each have begun their own planning for building ADUs per the city policy and support policies that increase equity of housing opportunity in our neighborhood. I am also a member of Livable Alexandria and I believe they will be submitting a separate letter of support for the bonus density program.

I support the proposed bonus density plan (docket item 6 - Zoning Text Amendment #2022-00005) and have a few suggestions to make it a stronger policy for affordable housing. In particular, the bonus density plan does not, in my read, have as strong of a linkage between bonus density and designated affordable housing. For example, the proposed rebuild of 2525 Mt. Vernon Ave does not explicitly designate a set # of units as affordable. It should. The city can bolster the overall plan by more clearly linking these two policies. Quibbles like this aside, it is imperative we not let the perfect be the enemy of the good. I note that the city has already supported actions consistent with the bonus density plan, such as its decision regarding the Heritage at Old Town. The city SHOULD CONTINUE its support on these fronts.

There is substantial economic research finding that bonus density plans help produce and promote affordable housing supply. For example, a 2009 research study by housing economist Jenny Scheutz found that "programs that grant density bonuses and exempt smaller projects produce more affordable housing.¹" Her follow up research in her recent book "Fixer Upper" continues to report evidence that such programs have beneficial effects on affordable housing supply.² More homes equals more affordability and economic opportunity for our city. Further, the opportunity to own housing or have ample rental property is associated with positive economic outcomes, household financial stability, and economic resilience. Housing typically commands the largest share of a household's income, and addressing housing affordability has positive effects far downstream of simply making housing affordable. The plan should also have a small but positive increase in purchase housing accessible to minority households. My own research shows that even in 2020, minority households are less likely than similarly situated non-minority households to be approved for housing loans.³

Further, economic research strongly supports building more housing. In a recent research presentation held by the Urban Institute, Freddie Mac, the W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, and First American Financial Corporation found the following "the best housing affordability policy is a 'build more homes, any homes, at any level, policy.'" Further, Freddie Mac found that "in addition to affordability challenges for individual households, the lack of [housing] supply slows economic growth because people cannot move to the places with the most productivity." As a father of a beautiful and smart 3 year old daughter, I hope we are planning for the future of our city such that my daughter would want to live here when she is a working adult.

There is no magic bullet or one size fits all solution to the affordable housing challenge Alexandria City faces, or any other city. It is only through a combination of multiple avenues which address housing access, wage inequities, employment that can . That said, this proposal is a part of answering these challenges and increasing housing affordability for all who live in our wonderful city.

1 Scheutz, "31 Flavors of Inclusionary Zoning: Comparing Policies From San Francisco, Washington, DC, and Suburban Boston" Journal of the American Planning Association. 2009.

2 <https://www.brookings.edu/research/gentle-density-can-save-our-neighborhoods/>

3 https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=4131603

Samantha Lockwood

From: Dan Q <dan.quigley@comcast.net>
Sent: Friday, June 17, 2022 3:59 PM
To: Nancy Williams
Subject: [EXTERNAL]Opposition to proposed bonus height ammendment for Del Ray/Mt. Vernon Ave

You don't often get email from dan.quigley@comcast.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

Greetings,

I'm writing to voice my opposition to proposed bonus height ammendment for Del Ray/Mt. Vernon Ave. I know others will write concerned about the character of Del Ray and parking which I am also concerned about, but I have a more personal concern that will affect others that live close to the Avenue. We live behind the 2525 building. The height variance being proposed for that project will destroy the quality of our home. Our backyard will essentially be turned into a courtyard for that apartment complex. The privacy we currently enjoy will be lost to the thirty-two apartments overlooking our yard. For three months of the year there will be no sunlight in our backyard. The sun will set significantly earlier on our yard all year long. This is NOT what we bought into when we moved in almost twenty years ago. If the 2525 project proceeds we will most likely have to move from our dream home. I don't wish this upon any of my neighbors, so once again I reiterate, that I am against the proposed height ammendment for the Del Ray/Mt. Vernon area. No one else should have to go through what we are going through.

Sincerely,
Dan Quigley
107 Stewart Ave

DISCLAIMER: This message was sent from outside the City of Alexandria email system.
DO NOT CLICK any links or download attachments unless the contents are from a trusted source.

Samantha Lockwood

From: Kate Briscoe <kbbiscoe@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, June 17, 2022 8:10 PM
To: plancomm@alexandria.gov; Nancy Williams
Subject: [EXTERNAL]Section 7-703(B)

You don't often get email from kbbiscoe@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Ms. Williams,

I sincerely hope that you will not support Section 7-703(B) Bonus Height Text Amendment (of course, this is not a mere “text amendment,” but rather a total transformation of the development plan), in its current form as it will render moot the Mount Vernon Avenue Business Area Plan and the sound, consensus-driven parameters it represents. I own a home in Warwick Village and was quite shocked to see the proposed areas for high-rise and high-density development. Indeed, it appears the City is hoping to turn Mt. Vernon Avenue and Warwick Village adjacent to the swimming pool into high-rise apartments. Eyesore aside, this is not the Warwick Village/Del Ray that attracts people. It is not “where Main Street still exists” and it is not what drew Amazon to this area. Instead, it seems the City is looking to cash in on the Amazon move by rendering Del Ray unrecognizable. But that would be cutting off our noses to spite our faces. If Del Ray/Warwick Village becomes a version of Clarendon its entire charm would be gone and the high demand to live here would evaporate.

I certainly appreciate the need for affordable housing but the City’s plan would negatively affect those currently in what passes for affordable housing in the area. And honestly, the City has not historically proven its commitment to affordable housing. A review of the City’s website on the alternative affordable housing set-asides already granted shows a lack of commitment by the City, for example: (1) Gables Old Town North, 232 units, 9 affordable housing (7 studios, 2 one-bedroom); (2) The Thornton, 443 units, 24 affordable housing (14 studios, 10 one-bedrooms); (3) Notch 8, 253 units, 12 affordable housing, Alexan Florence, 287 units, 12 affordable housing; (4) The Blake, 292 units, 5 affordable housing; (5) Station 650, 253 units, 5 affordable housing. Note, studios and one-bedrooms are not long terms solutions for a family. Additionally, there were a number of developers that opted to give money to the City instead of following-up on a commitment to include affordable housing set-asides. So a question for the City, will there be buildings dedicated to affordable housing, or is the thought that there can be set-asides with the option to pay the housing fund instead? In other words, is this more of the same from the City where the magic words are said – affordable housing – but in actuality, the plan is totally ineffective to the problem. Wouldn’t Potomac Yards and Rt. 1 be the better place to put high-rise apartment buildings? That space is being developed versus having established homes and high-rise affordable housing fits there; it’s local and appropriately placed. Though, of course, not if the goal is maximizing profits for developers who see Warwick Village/Del Ray as a pot of gold.

I should, of course, mention the flooding problems endemic to this area that would only be exacerbated by high-rises. After extensive and recurring flooding, residents in Warwick Village and Del Ray have had to pay huge sums to protect their homes. This fell on deaf ears with respect to the HHS site redevelopment, but the City really needs to understand that Warwick Village/Del Ray is not City’s cash cow; you can’t ignore basic needs, enjoy huge property tax, and do contortions to help developers ruin the fabric of the community.

Kate Briscoe

Ancell St.

Samantha Lockwood

From: Kate Morse <k_morse02@comcast.net>
Sent: Friday, June 17, 2022 10:46 PM
To: Nancy Williams
Subject: [EXTERNAL]Section 7-703(B) Bonus Height Text Amendment

You don't often get email from k_morse02@comcast.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

Ms Williams,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the Section 7-703(B) Bonus Height Text Amendment being considered by the City. The amendment is being sold as an effort to increase affordable housing, but appears to only increase density and destroy the neighborhood feel of the city. This amendment seems to be focused mostly on adding density to an already crowded area with failing schools and crumbling infrastructure.

What does the city gain at the expense of the demise of the neighborhood and Main Street?

I do not support the city's push to increase density. The current infrastructure (roads, sewer issues), schools, and pedestrian safety challenges would only be further strained by carelessly allowing additional density across the city.

Kate

**DISCLAIMER: This message was sent from outside the City of Alexandria email system.
DO NOT CLICK any links or download attachments unless the contents are from a trusted source.**

Samantha Lockwood

From: Karis Painter <painterkaris@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, June 17, 2022 10:05 PM
To: Nancy Williams
Subject: [EXTERNAL]Response to DRAFT DENSITY HEIGHT TEXT AMENDMENT PROPOSAL

You don't often get email from painterkaris@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

I am writing in response to the "Bonus Height Amendment." Proposed zoning changes appear to be motivated by the need to add "approximately 15,000 low to moderate income housing." The Future of Housing in Greater Washington document indicates that there has been a decline in affordable housing units (88% from 2000-2018). This document recommends, "that about 38 percent of new units are priced in the lowest cost bands (housing costs of \$0-\$1,299 per month), about 40 percent priced in middle cost bands (\$1,300-\$2,499 per month), and about 22 percent in the highest cost bands (\$2,500-\$3,500 per month).

While rezoning existing structures may seem to create additional units vertically, the motivation and reality behind zoning changes needs to be put under the spotlight.

The areas in Delray that are slated to be rezoned are currently lower income, older units: East Glendale, Commonwealth Crossing Apts, and most of Arlandia. These units are currently the most affordable in the Alexandria and Delray areas. The units on East Glendale were built in the 1940s. Residents currently live with little upgrades since then: original bathrooms, one laundry facility per block, one trash dumpster per block, one window air conditioner per apartment (often in the living room), galley kitchens, radiators with no thermostats (open the windows for cool), and old school fuses.

The people who choose to live in these units love the garden style apartments that encourage us to go outside for fresh air, walk down the street to take out the trash, and take the laundry to the laundry room. We like the older buildings that have charm, history, and create a sense of community. Even local residents who live in houses, walk their dogs down our street because there tends to be more people outside. The current listed rent for a 1-bedroom--East Glendale is: \$1450 (listed) Commonwealth Crossing: \$1450. Presidential Greens (Arlandia \$1400).

We live here not for the luxury amenities that often are built and marketed in new luxury developments. We are here for the community and affordability. Our residents are diverse: government workers, nurses, teachers, military families, retirees, people who have lived here for 15 years, young couples, refugees from Afghanistan, and best friends. Residents in other buildings may be a school aide, bus driver, a lawyer, an immigrant family, a food preparer, a cleaner, a construction worker, or a student. These diverse communities want access to DC--need access to public transportation. These communities are especially trying to save money for school, pay off loans, or live off of retirement checks. We know the DMV real estate market is desirable. We know that big corporations are moving headquarters here (often for lobbying purposes). We know a new metro station is being built. We know housing prices are out of our reach.

People that live in these older units in Delray need guarantees that they will have a place they can afford. The recent Bonaventure development project for Mt. Vernon Ave includes NO affordable housing units. This is evidence that if there was such a desperate need for low and middle-income affordable housing units, then this proposal would have never gone through without the mandatory affordable units. Plus, we have learned from the pandemic the benefits of community and the outdoors. Again the Bonaventure project is being built with no balconies. Most apartments in countries from Columbia to Vietnam have balconies because their cultures recognize the need for fresh air.

Density is important to protecting the environment. However, the density that developers see with these types of zoning amendments is \$\$\$ density.

What evidence exists that new units will meet or exceed the goal of affordable units as outlined in the "Future of Housing?" By targeting the lower income, older units in Delray for zoning change, it is clear that the motivation is not building more affordable housing for middle and low income residents. The motivation is to change the demographic of who lives in these areas. The motivation is for developers to increase their bottom line. The reality is that developers see zoning as a way to get their foot in the door claiming affordability, mix use, benefiting the community...Owners of these older units see more dollar signs than they could have imagined decades ago. Why not sell?

Where will the diverse community members who live in these units go? There is a lack of affordable apartments near public transit in VA, especially the metro. Are there any guarantees about the monthly rent of an apartment when proposed zoning comes up? NEVER. The affordable units developers often pitch are never enough. We don't want cookie cutter, trendy, luxury apartments. The community of Delray needs affordable housing. Simple works for many people. Many of us are happy with simple things. I like washing the dishes by hand. I like that my windows can open and I can put a chair in the front grass to chat with people walking by. I like that I see my neighbors in the laundry room. I like that I can save money for a vacation. I like that I don't live in a cookie cutter, soulless corporate housing structure or man made neighborhood with manicured grass.

I strongly urge those who consider proposed zoning changes not to only see it for height and width--but to see housing as a quality of life issue. There are values tied to zoning, development, and housing. Historically, minorities, low income families, and immigrants have been left with sub-par housing options. I would encourage every person who has a voice in this to think--does Alexandria represent the values that are reflected in the monuments across the river? Or will Alexandria and Delray be a gated community for transient tech workers? Delray needs to be the model of a high percentage of ACTUAL affordable housing. Delray needs to be the model of diverse living. Delray needs to be the model of community. This can only be done by considering the needs of those who might not even know about this zoning proposal.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

A Delray resident who loves to interact with all the diverse individuals.

Karis

**DISCLAIMER: This message was sent from outside the City of Alexandria email system.
DO NOT CLICK any links or download attachments unless the contents are from a trusted source.**

Samantha Lockwood

From: Lori Smith <pelegreen835@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, June 17, 2022 11:57 PM
To: Nancy Williams; Patrick Silva
Cc: Lori Kreger
Subject: [EXTERNAL]Zoning Text Amendment #2022-00005, Bonus Height

You don't often get email from pelegreen835@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

17 June 2022

From: Lori A. Kreger, Del Ray

To: City of Alexandria, Virginia Planning Commission

Reference: Zoning Text Amendment #2022-00005, Bonus Height

As a long-term resident of Alexandria, I resolutely oppose subject text amendment to expand a program to allow developers to request increased height and density in zones which currently have height restrictions below 50 feet; in Del Ray maximum building height is 45 feet. This change will allow developers to request increased height to add an additional 25 feet to their building height. This change will most unquestionably be detrimental to historic neighborhoods in Alexandria and specifically in Old Town and Del Ray.

I have been a tax-paying resident of the City of Alexandria, specifically Del Ray, since relocating from Maryland in 1992. At the time, I never imagined I would be in the same Del Ray home just over 30 years later. In part, I moved to the area for its proximity to my job with the Defense Department; I have stayed in the area for its strong sense of community and its small-town charm and character which is difficult to replicate, along with the rich history, walkability, and plethora of community activities, and its small, locally owned businesses. That will all disappear if this amendment is approved by the city.

I am acutely concerned about the future of the approximately 125 garden-style, two-story apartments along both sides of the 200 and 300 blocks of E. Glendale Avenue. My home is in the 200 block of Adams Avenue, and my back yard butts up to the back yard of these apartments; apartments which would be considered "affordable housing" by any standard for this area. If these charming and buildings are razed and six- to seven-story buildings replace them, they will block sunlight to the surrounding areas, necessitate the removal of beautiful 80-year-old oak trees surrounding the buildings, create a fish bowl effect as tenants on upper floors look down into the back yards of the 200 and 300 blocks of E. Glendale and Adams Avenues, eliminating privacy. They most definitely will not fit into the neighborhood of 70-80-year-old small, single-family homes and duplexes. Residents purchased homes in this area because of its unique character and many advantages it offers. If we wanted to live in a sea of cold, high-rise buildings, with little charm or character, we would have purchased homes in areas like Rosslyn or Clarendon.

In closing, the proposal is being presented as an effort to increase the number of affordable housing units in the city. Yet, there is no evidence to support this approach will achieve those goals. This effort is being ramrodded through with little visibility to Alexandria residents. I have walked my neighborhood and spoken with dozens of residents about this issue and the vast majority have heard

anything about it. What is the rush in pushing this through without adequate study and community involvement? Why the lack of transparency? What is the impact on the existing, overstressed infrastructure in the city?

Thank you.

Lori Kreger

**DISCLAIMER: This message was sent from outside the City of Alexandria email system.
DO NOT CLICK any links or download attachments unless the contents are from a trusted source.**

Samantha Lockwood

From: Melissa Smith <melissasmith@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, June 17, 2022 7:43 PM
To: Nancy Williams
Subject: [EXTERNAL]Opposing New BHTA

[You don't often get email from melissasmith@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

Hello-

I'm writing to respectfully but strongly oppose the the bonus height text amendment. I am very supportive of affordable housing, but, at this point, there is nothing about this plan that indicates promises of affordable housing will be kept. Perhaps there is that in the proposal, but it's been rushed through in a way that members of the neighborhood, including us on Holly St, haven't been able to formulate a real opinion. To simply ignore the requests of local residents to just slow down is absurd and irresponsible.

Thank you, please seriously consider our concerns and do not just rush this through.

DISCLAIMER: This message was sent from outside the City of Alexandria email system.
DO NOT CLICK any links or download attachments unless the contents are from a trusted source.

17 June 2022

To: Mayor Wilson, members of City Council, members of the Planning Commission, Mr. Moritz and Ms. Williams

RE: Bonus Height Text Amendment §7-703(b).

We are fifteen-year residents of Del Ray and registered voters in the City of Alexandria. We are writing to voice our strong OPPOSITION to potential changes to the Bonus Height and Density (§7-703(b)). We request you REJECT the text amendment outright.

We have attended both public information sessions and spoken directly with some of you on council. Based on a thorough reading of the available materials, review of the maps and in discussions it is clear this is a strategy of hope rather than a plan for success. On the public information sessions both Nancy Williams and Helen MacIlvaine acknowledged that this would not be a driver of significant affordable units. There has been no quantification of positive impact and a total disregard for potential negative impacts. This proposal seems rushed and ill-developed.

Where developers see potential for “asset maximization” in the low building heights of Del Ray, we see a community that is thriving due to the hard work of our neighbors that took time and effort to build what Del Ray is today. Many of those early residents worked with the City to develop and implement the Mt. Vernon Ave. Business Area Plan (MVABAP) as a way to guide a common vision of establishing a thriving community. That plan has guided Del Ray to become the most sought-after neighborhood in the region. The MVABAP not only protects Mt. Vernon Ave. from being developed into another placeless “town center” but also protects the varied types of housing. Passage of this text amendment opens the door to the neighborhood being transformed into just another place in the DC area that looks like so many other places in the DC area. Passing this text amendment will nullify those protections and insult the years of work that went in to making Del Ray the thriving community it is today.

Del Ray is comprised of incredibly diverse forms of housing: garden apartments, condos, duplexes, multifamily, townhomes, and single family which meet a wide range of budgets and housing style preferences ensuring people at all stages of life and in all levels of income a place in our community. Del Ray has many apartments complexes which are market rate affordable such as the Linden at Del Ray, Mason Arms, and Manor House Apartments in addition to the many privately-owned rental units.

The new construction in the area has increased rents substantially. Apartments in Potomac Yard start rents about 25% higher than the complexes mentioned above. New construction is building more “luxury” units and bringing with it the associated higher rents which will have the opposite effect of providing affordable places to live. We’ve already seen developers buy land

and convert what was once affordable apartments into AirBnBs.¹ If a complex like Mason Arms was to be redeveloped using this bonus height, the 38 currently market rate affordable could be replaced with 111 market rate luxury apartments and just 6 committed affordable. That is not a plan for affordable housing. That is a gift to developers.

As residents of Del Ray and registered voters in the City of Alexandria, we request that the Planning Commission reject this amendment. Should this amendment pass Planning Commission, we request the City Council reject this change due to the concerns enumerated above.

Respectfully,

Nate and Dawn Hurto

Raymond Ave.

¹ After acquiring the 2400 block of Mt. Vernon Ave., Bonaventure Holdings replaced The Avenue Flats with a Sonder managed short-term rental with listings on AirBnB. Over the years we've known several people who lived there and the pricing is no longer affordable.