

CLIMATE CHANGE, ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION

**c/o Department of Environmental Services
2100 Clarendon Blvd., Suite 705
Arlington, VA 22201**

July 27, 2023

Honorable Christian Dorsey, Chair
Arlington County Board
2100 Clarendon Blvd., Suite 300
Arlington, VA 22201

Re: Proposed Updates to Conditions of Property/Weed Ordinance

Dear Chair Dorsey,

The Climate Change, Energy and Environment Commission strongly endorses the proposed amendments to the Conditions of Property Ordinance, Article II, Section 10.12, commonly referred to as the “Weed Ordinance.” Clearly distinguishing between lawn area and weeds from managed landscapes aligns this ordinance with broader County goals and policies to incorporate native plants and natural landscaping practices as part of its stormwater management measures and biophilic goals. Revision of this ordinance will facilitate County staff interactions with members of the public who might complain about perceived unkempt yards that incorporate native plants into their landscaping and prevent unwarranted removal of such gardens as has happened in the past.

C2E2 also greatly appreciates the coordination between the Departments of Community Planning, Housing and Development and Parks and Recreation to develop the definitions underlying the changes and to work through a process of enforcement that taps into the expertise of the County’s natural resources team.

The proposed changes will bring Arlington’s code in line with those of our neighbors and will support a transition to more environmentally-friendly landscapes, moving away from landscapes dominated by grass and nonnative trees and shrubs. Landscapes that incorporate native trees, shrubs, and other plants provide better habitat for wildlife, support birds and pollinators, are better adapted to our climate and soil conditions, help manage stormwater, control pollution, and reduce the urban heat island effect.

Sincerely,



Joan McIntyre
Chair, Climate Change, Energy and Environment

CC: Anthony Fusarelli, CPHD Director
Jane Rudolph, Director of Parks and Recreation