

ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY CONSERVATION COMMISSION

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

October 28, 2014

The Honorable Jay Fiset, Chairman
Arlington County Board
2100 Clarendon Blvd.
Arlington, VA 22201

Re: Green Building Incentive Program Revision

Dear Chairman Fiset:

The purpose of this letter is to comment on potential revisions in the floor area ratio (FAR) bonus density award levels and requirements under the County's Green Building Density Incentive Policy for Site Plans. The Environment and Energy Conservation Commission (E2C2) supports Arlington County Department of Environmental Services' (DES) proposal to strengthen the award program and tie it more closely to the County's long-term goals for sustainability and greater energy efficiency.

Existing FAR bonus density awards for a project are linked to attainment of Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification and vary by level of certification (i.e. Silver, Gold, and Platinum). To be certified a project must satisfy all LEED rating system prerequisites and qualify for points in LEED environmental categories. Arlington is the only local jurisdiction that provides this incentive. DC and Montgomery County require LEED Certification at the baseline Certified level and Fairfax only encourages LEED certification.

E2C2 appreciates the complexity involved in revising award criteria to provide market incentives, promote a sustainable form of development in Arlington County, and make efficient use of limited County resources as part of a voluntary program. E2C2 generally supports the adoption of County staff's revised FAR bonus density award levels that vary according to LEED level of certification and do not provide incentive for buildings below the Silver LEED standard. E2C2 also supports proposed changes that would provide even greater incentives for LEED Platinum and Net Zero Energy buildings. These changes will bring the award program in line with today's building industry which now evaluates all aspects of design, construction, and costs associated with operation comprehensively.

Further, E2C2 supports the following additional program requirements proposed by DES:

- The inclusion of performance standards after the building is occupied through the Energy Star program. Establishing this performance link is important to Arlington County in that it would verify reduced energy use, thereby contributing to "Goals for Arlington's Sustainable Energy Future" as described in the Arlington County Community Energy and Sustainability Task Force Report.

- The new addition of community priority credits into the program. These particular green building strategies help address issues that have been identified as priorities in Arlington. Energy focused credits further support the CEP goals. Other credits focus on issues such as habitat restoration, light pollution reduction, bird-friendly facades, and materials reuse.

E2C2 thanks the Board for the opportunity to comment on potential revisions in the County's Green Building Density Incentive Policy for Site Plans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott Dicke". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent loop at the end.

Scott Dicke