

June 27, 2024

Via email

Honorable Libby Garvey, Chair
Arlington County Board
Ellen M. Bozman Government Center
2100 Clarendon Blvd, Suite 300
Arlington, VA 22201

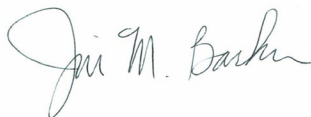
RE: Park and Recreation Commission Comments on Weed Ordinance Implementation

We appreciate the action taken by the County Board in adopting amendments to the County "weed" ordinance (Chapter 10, Article II, Condition of Property Ordinance) dated September 23, 2023. The Park and Recreation Commission seeks clarification regarding how the updated regulations are being enforced. We received a report of confusing direction to a resident to "apply" for a native plant "exemption" to avoid a penalty for the native landscaping in her yard, but the process for such an application does not exist.

Thus, we request information about how the County is implementing the changes to the ordinance. Adding some Frequently Asked Questions to the County's webpage on native plant landscaping would help to clarify the process, list the benefits of native landscaping, and articulate what is not acceptable. Adding information about "Cues to Care" would provide additional clarification. (See this link: <https://www.plantnovanatives.org/cues-to-care>)

Given the numerous County policies that encourage native landscaping for stormwater management benefits, as well as to attain biodiversity and biophilic objectives, we seek assurances that the County is supporting, rather than discouraging, native landscaping on private property. Moreover, we ask for assurances that inspectors, and the Department of Parks and Recreation expert staff they rely upon, have the resources needed to implement these updates to the ordinance.

Sincerely,



Jill M. Barker,
Chair – Park and Recreation Commission
cc: Members, Arlington County Board
Mark Schwartz, Arlington County Manager
Jane Rudolph, Director, Department of Parks and Recreation

Commission Members

Jill Barker, Chair
Gary Shinnars, Vice Chair
Nelson Dimpter
Dean Foster
Daniel Garay
Neal Hunter
Shruti Kuppa
Andreana Lin
Mark Lincoln
Claire Pascocello
Adam Rasmussen
Melissa Riggio
Alex Sanders