

**Fairfax Federation of Citizen Associations Resolution:
Opposition to Proposed Plan Amendment PA 2018-IV-MV2 (PA)**

WHEREAS, Fairfax County is a leader in the protection and restoration of our local streams initiated by the Environmental Quality Corridor (EQC) policy that set aside stream valley buffers for protection, ultimately improving the Potomac River and the Chesapeake Bay;¹

WHEREAS, the purpose of the Floodplain Ordinance is “to protect against loss of life, health, or property from flood or other dangers”;

WHEREAS, the proposed PA includes two lots that are in the 100-year floodplain, Environment Quality Corridor (EQC) and Resource Protection Area (RPA);

WHEREAS, it is expected that the mid-Atlantic region will experience more intense storms in the future due to climate change;

WHEREAS, Fairfax County is one of just two (2) jurisdictions in Virginia with a FEMA rating entitling Fairfax County residents to a discount on flood insurance;

WHEREAS, the FEMA rating is based on the strength and vigorous enforcement of the Floodplain Ordinance;

WHEREAS, implementation of Fairfax County watershed improvement plans will involve hundreds of millions of dollars of expenditures of monies collected from the Stormwater Utility fee that is paid by every property owner in Fairfax.²

WHEREAS, land use decisions that allow for new residential lots within the Environment Quality Corridor (EQC), Resource Protection Area (RPA) and Floodplain (FP) without satisfying Comprehensive Plan Policy Guidance criteria jeopardize present stream protection will likely increase costs for future protection and restoration.

WHEREAS, there are other sites in the county with similar levels of degradation, this proposed Comprehensive Plan change has the capacity to create a precedent that would undermine EQC policy that has been in place since the mid-1970s.

WHEREAS, the EQC Policy has resulted in a significant number of acres of stream valley land being protected and remaining in a natural vegetated buffer state, providing ecosystem services in support of improved public health;

WHEREAS, the EQC guidance further states that disturbances should only be supported in “extraordinary circumstances” and result in a clear and substantial net environmental benefit;³

WHEREAS, in 1993 the County adopted a Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance in which lands adjacent to the perennial portion (as delineated by USGS maps) of streams were designated as Resource Protection Areas (RPAs);

WHEREAS, at this time, County staff cannot conclude that the proposed rezoning application would result in an overall environmental improvement;⁴

Comment [CL1]: In my opinion this whereas should be delete. It has limited to no relevance to the plan amendment and implies that the developer will get a discount on their flood insurance so their rates will be lower, therefore it should be ok to approve the plan amendment

Comment [CL2]: Delete this whereas, not specifically relevant to the plan amendment.

¹ <https://www.slideshare.net/fairfaxcounty/commitment-to-energy-efficiency-and-conservation-in-fairfax-county>

² www.fairfaxfederation.org/...FCStormwaterBudget2015PresentationRev.pdf

³ <http://newsletters.wetlandstudies.com/fieldNotesArticle.asp?id=234>

⁴ <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/planning-zoning/plan-amendments/8800-richmond-hwy>

WHEREAS, the staff report states that county staff do not recommend approval of this Comprehensive Plan Amendment.⁵

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, The Fairfax Federation of Citizens Associations urges the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors to deny this amendment to the comprehensive plan which potentially creates a county-wide precedent with significant adverse impact to local environmental and stream protections reversing policies that have been successful and risks that County residents may lose valuable flood insurance discounts.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, The Fairfax County Federation of Citizen Associations fully supports the August 2018 position of the Environmental Quality Advisory Council urging the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors to deny this proposed change to the Comprehensive Plan.⁶

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⁵ <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/planning-zoning/plan-amendments/8800-richmond-hwy>

⁶ <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/planning-zoning/sites/planning-zoning/files/Assets/documents/EQAC/Resolutions%20and%20Positions/2018/2018%2C%20August--EQAC%20position%20on%20proposed%20Plan%20Amendment%20PA%202018-IV-MV2.pdf>