



Agricultural Districts and Uses

Proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment
Item Type: Overview & Direction

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Background

Community Gardens and Sales of Garden/Farm Products are listed as First Tier, Priority 1 items on the 2017 Zoning Ordinance Amendment Work Program.

Board Input

Staff is seeking guidance regarding the following:

- Should community gardens be allowed as a principal use in all zoning districts? (Small-scale by TSP, larger-scale by SP)
- Are lot size and permit time limits the appropriate tools to ensure compatibility? Are there other tools?
- Should sales be permitted at a community garden, including in residential areas?
- Should minimal structures (~ 120 sq.ft. shed) be permitted by right and all larger structures require a Special Permit for a community garden of any size?

What is a Community Garden?

Land that is cultivated by members of a common community to provide plant produce to the gardener, for charitable donation, and/or for on-site sales to the local community. This includes gardens composed of individual plots rented by different gardeners and for communal gardens tended by multiple gardeners.

Community Gardens



- Community gardens are not currently a principal use in the Zoning Ordinance
- People want to be more connected to their food
- Provide educational and healthy lifestyle opportunities
- Currently, community gardens are operating in Reston, Burke Centre, and 9 FCPA sites, among other locations

Sales of Garden/Farm Products

- Includes wayside stands and farmers' markets
- The Zoning Ordinance currently restricts items sold, duration and location of farmers' markets under the Temporary Special Permit regulations



Factors to be Considered in the Development of this Amendment

- Use of accessory structures such as sheds, fences, hoop-houses/greenhouses, and structures associated with sales
- Limits on types of products to be sold
- Traffic and/or parking concerns, particularly in residential areas
- Scope of activity and scale of sales in determining use compatibility, particularly in proximity to residential uses

Opportunities

- Good use for land in transition and unbuildable parcels
- Can provide fresh food to areas that are lacking in access
- Promotes healthy living
- Encourages community involvement

Arlington County

Arlington has implemented a program promoting community gardens and sales of garden/farm products involving:

- Community and rooftop gardens,
- Keeping of bees
- Farmers markets, mobile markets and open air markets
- Collaborative projects between County, Cooperative Extension and Food Assistance Council

Proposal for Community Gardens

Allow community gardens in all zoning districts:

- As a principal or accessory/secondary use on a vacant lot less than $\frac{1}{2}$ acre by Temporary Special Permit (TSP), limited to 2 years ($\frac{1}{2}$ acre for discussion purposes)
- As a principal use on a vacant $\frac{1}{2}$ acre or larger by Special Permit
- As an accessory or secondary use on $\frac{1}{2}$ acre or larger when located with a school, place of worship, office, or other principal use (excluding single family dwellings) by Special Permit

Proposal Regarding Sales

- **Farmers' Market**
 - Allow by TSP in all zoning districts
 - 2 year permit with year-round operation
 - Amend regulations on types of food and other products to be sold
- **Wayside Stand** – amend provisions to allow on lots smaller than 2 acres and in more zoning districts
- **Food-trucks** – amend regulations to address mobile markets

Outreach to Date

Multiple meetings with:

- Cornerstones Reston
- Arlington Friends of Urban Agriculture



Additional Outreach

- Cooperative Extension
- Fairfax County Park Authority
- Fairfax County Neighborhood and Community Services
- Fairfax County Health Department

Next Steps

- Continue outreach efforts
- Proposal and text development
- Revisit with DPC – Summer/Fall 2018
- PC and BOS hearings – Fall/Winter 2018

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Questions?