

For Civic Federation Member Delegate Consideration on March 1, 2011 - Motion for Resolution on Community Benefits Information

Whereas, Arlington County grants additional bonus density, building height and similar concessions to builders in exchange for providing community benefits such as affordable housing, traffic mitigation or meeting energy efficiency standards,

Whereas, builders can often meet these requirements by a payment of cash rather than by direct provision of the community benefit,

Whereas, the community benefit or cash payment in lieu of the community benefit may be used anywhere in the community rather than in the neighborhoods most immediately affected by the bonus density,

Whereas, no public accounting is made after-the-fact of the how the community benefit requirements have been met,

Whereas, it is good public policy for government to inform civic associations, interested citizens and the press to be information about the outcomes and effects of government decisions about economic development, and

Whereas, in some cases, there have been reports that builders have not actually met the terms of the community benefit requirements.

Therefore, be it resolved, that the Arlington County Civic Federation requests that the County Manager provide a list with specific information about community benefits provided to the County in exchange for a specified increase in density for development projects in the County for the last five years including:

1. A description of the community benefit provided,
2. If the requirement is met by a payment of cash, the amount of such cash payment and its use by the County,
3. The location of the community benefit provided (i.e., whether it is within the same neighborhood area such as within 3-blocks, or the specific location if it is not provided within the same neighborhood),
4. The amount of additional density in square feet and or building height above by-right requirements, and above the site plan for projects subject to site-plan rules,
5. In cases where the county staff has prepared an estimate of the cost to the builder of providing a community benefit met in kind (such as on-site affordable housing units, meeting energy efficiency standards, etc), the county staff estimate should be provided, and
6. If available, the current rental rates per square foot for retail/commercial space and the average rent for apartments, and monthly condo fees when applicable.