

**FAIRFAX COUNTY FEDERATION OF CITIZENS ASSOCIATIONS
RESOLUTION
RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT CRITERIA**

(Approved by the Federation's General Membership 9/19/2013)

Background: The Federation recognizes that housing is needed for those who are elderly, handicapped, and newly entering the labor market. We are not aware of any analysis of the existing and forecast demand as a function of the percent Area Median Income. We also are not aware of any analysis of the available supply as found in retirement communities, assisted-living facilities, nursing homes, family residences, and apartments in multi-family buildings as a function of the rental costs.

The Federation also recognizes that people are justified in expecting the character of their neighborhoods to remain stable. We do welcome the proposed changes to the Zoning Ordinance that require Studio Units to be in buildings that conform to the existing style and usage of other buildings in the neighborhood.

The Federation realizes that allowing studio units provides more flexibility and choices in the housing market; however, the Federation has reservations about the currently proposed amendment. In particular,

Resolution:

WHEREAS to conform to the neighborhood, buildings with Studio Units should also conform to the Zoning Ordinance open-space requirements (15% open space that is not contained in individually owned lots) and to the neighborhood density limits and parking limits;

WHEREAS the proposed changes permit Studio Units in all residentially zoned areas, providing no protection for existing neighborhoods (residents do not have the authority to deny Special Exceptions);

WHEREAS all other jurisdictions in Virginia have limited Studio Units to areas zoned for multi-family buildings or zoned industrial, institutional or manufacturing (see Table below);

WHEREAS all other jurisdictions in Virginia have limited the number of residential studio units in any single dwelling to no more than 60 units;

WHEREAS 28% of current residential units are multi-family apartments and condominium units;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations supports the proposed amendment to the Zoning Ordinance to permit Residential Studio Units so long as the following conditions are included in the ordinance:

1. Studio Units should be permitted by Special Exception, but only in planned, commercial, and multi-family-residential zones.

2. The conversion of single-family-detached homes or townhouses into Studio Units should be prohibited.
3. The amended ordinance should remove the staff proposal that “All residential studio developments and their accessory uses shall not be subject to or included in the calculation of the maximum density (dwelling units or persons per acre) or intensity (floor area ratio) provisions specified for the zoning district in which located, whether a stand-alone use or when collocated on a lot with any other use.”
4. Open-space requirements should be applied in accord with the existing county standard (e.g., Zoning Ordinance Section 3-2009).
5. Parking requirements should be applied in accord with existing county standards for multifamily units (Section 11-103).
6. Studio Units should be permitted primarily in areas with adequate open space, convenient access to neighborhood retail services, and along major thoroughfares served by established transit routes, but not along connector roads that run through neighborhoods nor on the borders of neighborhoods.
7. An assessment should be made of the need for affordable apartments over and above those available in existing facilities and multi-family units, including the rental rates for the existing units. This assessment should include an estimate of the maximum number of studio units that could be built within the limits of the proposed ZO changes as modified by the statements in this Resolution.
8. To ensure compatibility with existing neighborhoods and the reasonable expectation of those who live in those neighborhoods that the character of their neighborhood will not be adversely affected, studio units should only be permitted by Special Exception in Residential Districts R-20 and greater, and the number of dwelling units should be limited to the maximum number of units permitted in that district.
9. Studio units in other than residential districts should be limited to a maximum of 60 units per dwelling, as they are elsewhere in the Commonwealth of Virginia.
10. Studio units shall be at least 90% single occupancy. No unit should have more than 2 occupants.
11. Studio units should not duplicate the objectives and intents of other Special Exceptions uses such as Independent Living and Congregate Care.
12. Studio units should be located proximate to retail, medical, recreational and other uses necessary to support the residents.
13. Studio units should be located within one-fourth (¼) mile walking distance to an active transit stop (rail stop (Metrorail, heavy rail, light rail or Virginia Rail Express) or bus stops located on major arterial streets).

14. Buildings with a studio unit must be at least 1000 feet from any other building with a studio unit.

15. The County should make all conforming changes to other Uses in the Zoning Ordinance.