

ATTACHMENT F

Cluster Development

King George staff requested a review of cluster development standards – including nearby benchmark communities. Specific concerns included the following items: developments increasing density of a rural area; meeting open space requirements by utilizing RPA, steep slopes, and other unusable areas; and not including enough buffer from adjacent lands.

The Berkley Group has conducted a review of the existing ordinance text relating to cluster developments, American Planning Association best practices, Code of Virginia, and several communities and summarized the information below. This information will be presented and offered for further discussion opportunity during the worksession.

APA Virginia

- While the following are not the only approaches to cluster developments, APA VA defines three techniques for cluster developments:
 - Percent of Land Developed. Specifies a maximum percentage of the parent parcel or tract that can be converted to non-agricultural or non-open space uses.
 - Lot Size Averaging. Specifies the average minimum lot size for a rural subdivision but permits the developer to achieve that average by creating some lots that are larger and some smaller.
 - Maximum Size of Building Lots. Sets a maximum, rather than minimum, lot size for rural subdivisions, thereby forcing a clustered layout. The percentage of open space remaining will be determined by the actual maximum lot size required in relation to the maximum overall site density required.

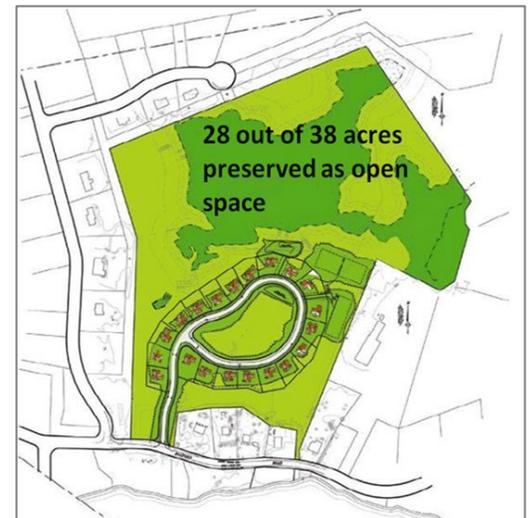
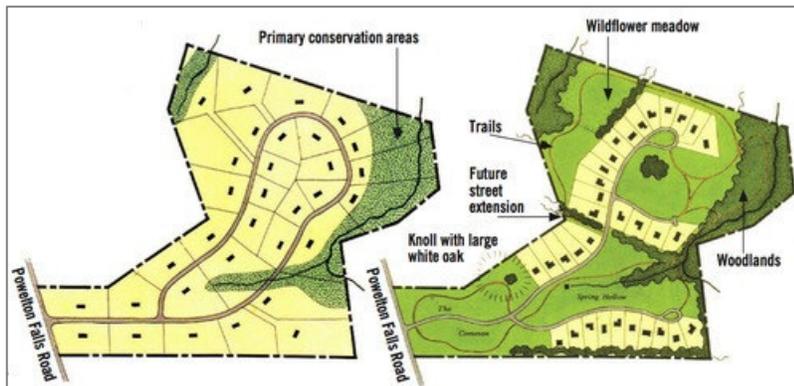
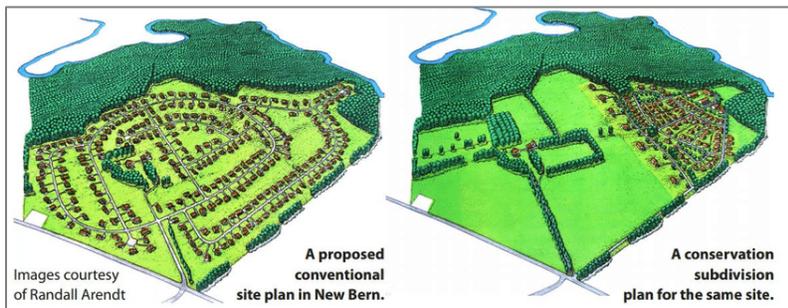
Code of Virginia

- § 15.2-2286.1 of the Code of Virginia
 - Mandatory for King George County (any county or city that had a population growth rate of 10% or more from the next-to-latest to latest decennial census year)
 - Provides that a rezoning, use permit or special exception may *not* be required in order to create a cluster development, unless there is a density increase involved in the request.
 - Mandates a locality cannot:
 - Require that open space include: identification of slopes, species of woodlands or vegetation and whether any of such species are diseased, the locations of species listed as endangered, threatened, or of special concern, or riparian zones or require the applicant to provide a property resource map.
 - Require such areas be excluded from the calculation of density or exclude land in such areas because of prior land-disturbing activities.
 - Prohibit stormwater management areas or roads from being located in such areas for purposes of access to the cluster development; or require that lots in the cluster development abut such areas or a developed pathway providing direct access to such areas.
 - Require that open space include: identification of slopes, species of woodlands or vegetation and whether any of such species are diseased, the locations of species listed as endangered, threatened, or of special concern, or riparian zones or require the applicant to provide a property resource map.

Other Communities

- King George’s existing cluster provisions overall are aligned with other benchmark localities.
- Additional setbacks from the street and adjacent lands have been included in the proposed ordinance text for consideration.
- The table on following page(s) provides cluster measures from three localities:
 - Stafford County
 - Spotsylvania County
 - Prince William County

Examples



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Community	Open space considerations	Lot size	Buffer
<i>Stafford</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The required open space land for a cluster subdivision shall not be used to satisfy any buffer requirements. All cluster subdivision plans shall be reviewed by the subdivision agent or his designee for compliance with the provisions of this chapter and chapter 28 of the County Code. This shall include review of the open space land and its designated use for compliance with applicable industry and county standards for minimum area, configuration, functionality, and other requirements for such use and to ensure it furthers the goals, policies and objectives of the comprehensive plan. 	<p>Agriculture (A-1 District)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Minimum lot area:</u> 1.5 acres <u>Minimum lot width:</u> 100 ft <u>Minimum yards:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Front yard:</u> 40 feet. <u>Side yard:</u> 10 feet. <u>Rear yard:</u> 35 feet. Cluster designed subdivisions are permitted on parcels within the boundary established on the map “Cluster Subdivision Areas” 	No details provided.
<i>Spotsylvania</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residential (R-2 District): Cluster subdivision: 30% required Development standards of general applicability: Cluster subdivision: 15% required Rural District: Cluster subdivision: 20% required 	<p>Residential (R-2 District)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Minimum lot area:</u> Single-family detached dwellings in cluster subdivisions: 15,000 square feet. <u>Minimum lot width:</u> Cluster subdivision: 80 feet. <u>Minimum public road frontage:</u> Cluster subdivision: 80 feet, 50 feet on a cul-de-sac. <u>Minimum yards:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Front yard:</u> 25 feet. <u>Side yard:</u> 8 feet, but a total minimum of twenty 20 feet. <u>Rear yard:</u> Twenty-five 25 feet. 	No details provided.

Community	Open space considerations	Lot size	Buffer
<p><i>Prince William</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> That portion of the gross acreage of a rural cluster development that is not developed as residential lots and as internal street(s) shall be provided as open space. The open space shall not be less than 50% of the gross acreage of the rural cluster development. Open space in rural cluster developments shall be laid out so as to provide adequate setbacks and other appropriate transitions to and from surrounding land uses. 	<p>Residential Use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum 3 acres Maximum 5 acres Except that some lots may exceed 5 acres in size to accommodate topographic features, fit within a particular road layout, or address other design considerations. 	<p>A 100-foot wide buffer shall be created and maintained between any external street and the edge of the rural cluster development. This buffer shall be used for the purpose of partially screening the view of a cluster -lot subdivision from the public right-of-way external to the rural cluster development and from an existing farm or a historic house on the property. If an existing farm or historic house is to remain on the property along the frontage of the external street, the buffer shall be placed between the farm or historic house and the cluster lots. This screening shall be achieved in one of the following ways:</p> <p>(a) Where the 100-foot wide buffer already contains existing healthy trees, shrubs, or other vegetation adequate to provide the equivalent of a 100-foot wide rural buffer, the existing vegetation shall be retained during the development process and maintained in perpetuity.</p> <p>(b) Where the buffer does not already contain vegetation, native landscaping in accordance with Table I-2 of the Design and Construction Standards Manual shall be provided adequate to screen the development from the external street, existing farm, or historic house, appropriate to a rural location and maintained in perpetuity. Landscaping shall be appropriate to a rural location and may include vegetation types such as old field successional trees and shrubs, flowering meadows, and meadow grasses. The provisions of the DCSM 802.12C and D shall not apply to rural cluster buffers.</p> <p>(c) Only stone walls, brick walls, split-rail fences, and board rail fences are allowed, in the required buffer in conjunction with plantings or tree preservation areas.</p>