FACT SHEET: School Relocatables Zoning Changes

May 2019

Why Are We Amending the Zoning Ordinance for Relocatables?

- APS uses relocatable structures to manage rising enrollment while more permanent solutions are in development
- Currently, the Zoning Ordinance requires a use permit amendment to add a relocatable to an APS site. This is because school use permits prescribe a maximum number of students (design capacity) and a parking requirement tied to that number of students
- However, APS does not count seats added through relocatables in their capacity numbers
- The current use permit process takes considerable time and resources for both Arlington County and APS staff
- In 2018 the County Board asked staff to streamline the current process by developing an administrative review and approval process for relocatables

Proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendments

To allow relocatables as a permitted short term use to be reviewed and approved administratively:

- Clarify that seats added to a school through relocatables do not count toward the school’s design capacity
  - Removes the requirement for a use permit amendment when adding a relocatable to an APS site
  - Removes the need to amend the parking requirement based on the addition a relocatable
  - Aligns the Arlington County Zoning Ordinance with the APS Capital Improvement Plan in the treatment of relocatables when tracking school capacity
- Classify relocatable structures as a short-term use subject to administrative review and approval
  - Subject to three (3) year review and renewal period
  - Subject to the general standards for short-term uses which include but are not limited to maintaining parking standards and not resulting in hazardous traffic conditions
  - Subject to placement standards to qualify for administrative review and approval (County Board may approve deviations from these standards through a use permit amendment)

Relocatables shall comply with the following short-term use standards to qualify for administrative review and approval:

- Relocatables must be located:

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- Within the setback and less than maximum height of the relevant zoning district (for most schools, 45’ maximum height and 10’+ feet side yard setback and 25’ rear setback)
- On property owned by APS or on property in which they have written permission to use

- Relocatables may not be located:
  - Within a tree preservation area (the critical root zone of any tree greater than 8” diameter)
  - On or within 15’ of a middle or high school athletic field

**Next Steps and For More information**

- The County Board is scheduled to consider a Request to Advertise these proposed zoning ordinance amendments at its May 18 meeting, with requested action on the amendments by the Planning Commission and County Board in June

- Visit the Zoning Studies webpage at [https://projects.arlingtonva.us/plans-studies/land-use/zoning-studies/](https://projects.arlingtonva.us/plans-studies/land-use/zoning-studies/) for additional background information, links to additional staff reports and presentations, and schedule updates

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