

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: SEPTEMBER 11, 2018

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR & MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: VICE MAYOR JUSTIN WILSON, COUNCILMEMBERS WILLIE BAILEY, JOHN CHAPMAN, TIM LOVAIN & PAUL SMEDBERG

SUBJECT: ADDITIONAL PUBLIC HEARING

Since 1963, the City Code has specified that the City Council shall hold 10 public hearing meetings per year, in each month other than July and August¹. In 2018, Alexandria is now the only jurisdiction in Northern Virginia to take a two-month recess².

While the extended recess is certainly valuable to both policymakers and staff, the impact of this recess is to prevent any action on land-use matters from occurring for a three-month period. This impacts commercial activity, particularly that of small businesses, throughout our City.

Council has worked in recent years to transition additional uses to administrative approvals. While these efforts can reduce the caseload, our September docket is evidence of the significant quantity of minor changes that continue to require full hearings before the Planning Commission and City Council. Forcing applicants to wait from June until September is out of sync with the region and unfair.

As we prepare our 2019 schedule, we would request that the City Manager propose appropriate timing for an additional public hearing for both the Planning Commission and City Council in the summer of 2019. In conjunction with this change, we request that the City Manager bring forward revisions to City Code to accommodate this schedule revision.

Cc: Mark Jinks, City Manager; Karl Moritz, Director of Planning & Zoning; Mary Lyman, Chair of the Alexandria Planning Commission; Joanna Anderson, Acting City Attorney; Gloria Sitton, Clerk of the City Council

¹ Section 2.1-42
(https://library.municode.com/va/alexandria/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=PTIITHCOGEOR_TIT2GEGO_CH1THCO_ARTBRUPR_S2-1-42REMEPUHE)

² Arlington County, Fairfax County, Prince William County, Loudoun County, City of Falls Church, City of Manassas, City of Manassas Park, and the City of Fairfax all have shorter summer recesses than Alexandria.