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SENATE BILL NO. 268

Offered January 9, 2008

Prefiled January 8, 2008

A BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered 15.2-2304.1, relating to affordable dwelling unit ordinances; permitting certain densities in the comprehensive plan.

Patron—Deeds

Referred to Committee on Local Government

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered 15.2-2304.1 as follows:

§ 15.2-2304.1. Affordable dwelling unit ordinance in certain cities; permitting certain densities in the comprehensive plan.

A. The governing body of the City of Charlottesville may provide in its comprehensive plan for the physical development within the city, adopted pursuant to § 15.2-2223, for densities of development ranging between a floor area ratio (FAR) of 1.0 FAR and 10.0 FAR, or greater, and as such, the governing body may adopt as part of its zoning ordinance requirements for the provision of (i) on-site or off-site "Affordable Dwelling Units," as defined herein, or (ii) a cash contribution to the city's affordable housing fund, in lieu of such units, in such amounts as set out herein, as a condition of the governing body's approval of a special exception application for residential, commercial, or mixed-use projects with a density equal to or greater than 1.0 FAR, or an equivalent density based on units per acre. Residential, commercial, or mixed-use projects with a density less than 1.0 FAR, or an equivalent density based on units per acre, shall be exempt from the requirements of this section and the city's zoning ordinance adopted pursuant to this section. The city's zoning ordinance requirements shall provide as follows:

1. Upon approval of a special exception application approving a residential, commercial, or mixed-use project with a density equal to or greater than 1.0 FAR, or an equivalent density based on units per acre, the applicant shall provide on-site Affordable Dwelling Units as part of the project, the total gross square footage of which units shall be 5 percent of the amount of the gross floor area of the project that exceeds 1.0 FAR or an equivalent density based on units per acre. For purposes of this section, "applicant" shall mean the person or entity submitting a special exception application for approval of a residential, commercial, or mixed-use project in the city and shall include the successors or assigns of the applicant.

2. As an alternative, upon approval of a special exception application approving a residential, commercial, or mixed-use project with a density equal to or greater than 1.0 FAR, or an equivalent density based on units per acre, the applicant may elect to provide any one of the following:

a. Affordable Dwelling Units at an off-site location within one-half mile of the residential, commercial, or mixed-use project, as provided in the city's zoning ordinance, the total gross square footage of which units shall be 7.5 percent of the amount of the gross floor area of the project that is over 1.0 FAR, or an equivalent density based on units per acre;

b. Affordable Dwelling Units at any other off-site location in the city other than those provided in the city's zoning ordinance in accordance with subdivision a, the total gross square footage of which units shall be 10 percent of the amount of the gross floor area of the project that is over 1.0 FAR, or an equivalent density based on units per acre; or

c. A cash contribution to the city's affordable housing fund, which contribution shall be calculated as follows for each of the density tiers described below:

(1) One and one-half dollars per square foot of gross floor area for the first tier of density between zero and 1.0 FAR, or an equivalent density based on units per acre.

(2) Four dollars per square foot of gross floor area for the tier of density in residential projects between 1.0 FAR and 3.0 FAR, or an equivalent density based on units per acre, and \$4 per square foot of gross floor area for the tier of density in commercial projects above 1.0 FAR.

(3) Eight dollars per square foot of gross floor area for the tier of density in residential projects above 3.0 FAR, or an equivalent density based on units per acre.

(4) For mixed-use projects, cash contributions shall be calculated by applying the proportionate amount of commercial and residential gross floor area to each tier.

The cash contribution shall be indexed to the Consumer Price Index for Housing in the Charlottesville MSA as published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and shall be adjusted annually based upon the changes made in January to such index.

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SB268

59 3. The applicant shall provide the city manager or his designee, prior to the issuance of the first
60 certificate of occupancy for the residential, commercial, or mixed-use project, a written plan of how the
61 applicant proposes to address the provision of Affordable Dwelling Units or cash contribution as
62 provided in this section and in the provisions of the zoning ordinance adopted pursuant to this section.
63 The city manager or his designee shall approve or disapprove the applicant's plan in writing within 30
64 days of receipt of the written proposal from the applicant. If the city manager or his designee
65 disapproves of the applicant's plan, specific reasons for such disapproval shall be provided.

66 4. An applicant may submit a written plan to be considered by the governing body or its designee to
67 address the provision of Affordable Dwelling Units or cash contribution as provided in this section and
68 in the provisions of the zoning ordinance adopted pursuant to this section that deviate from the
69 requirements of this section and the ordinance. Any such deviations may be approved in accordance
70 with the procedures established in the city's zoning ordinance, which procedures shall include a
71 provision for an appeal to the governing body of any administrative decision relative to the written plan
72 submitted by the applicant.

73 5. The ordinance adopted by the city pursuant to this section may provide that, in the discretion of
74 the governing body and with the agreement of the applicant, at the time of consideration of the special
75 exception application, the above requirements may be totally or partially substituted for other
76 compelling public priorities established in plans, studies, policies, or other documents of the city.

77 6. Applications for a special exception approval of a residential, commercial, or mixed-use project
78 that results in the demolition and rebuilding of an existing project shall be subject to the requirements
79 of this section and the zoning ordinance adopted pursuant to this section at the time of redevelopment;
80 however, only density that is replaced or rebuilt and any increased density shall be subject to the
81 requirements. This section and the city's zoning ordinance adopted pursuant to this section shall not
82 apply to rehabilitation or renovation of existing residential, commercial, or mixed-use projects.

83 7. For purposes of this section "Affordable Dwelling Unit" means units committed for a 30-year term
84 as affordable to households with incomes at 60 percent or less of the area median income.

85 B. This section shall apply to an application for a special exception approval for a residential,
86 commercial, or mixed-use project with a density provided for by the city's comprehensive plan
87 designation for the property that is the subject matter of the application. This section shall further apply
88 to such an application that requires rezoning of the property that is the subject matter of the application
89 to permit a use provided for by the city's comprehensive plan designation for the subject property.

90 C. The ordinance adopted by the city pursuant to this section may provide that an application for
91 approval of a special exception for a residential, commercial, or mixed-use project that requests an
92 increase in density that exceeds the density provided for by the city's comprehensive plan designation for
93 the property that is the subject matter of the application shall be subject to an affordable housing
94 requirement in addition to the requirements of this section and the zoning ordinance adopted pursuant
95 to this section.

96 D. The ordinance adopted by the city pursuant to this section or other provisions of law may provide
97 that an application that requests to amend the city's comprehensive plan designation for the subject
98 property to a higher density designation may be subject to an affordable housing requirement in
99 addition to the requirements of this section and the zoning ordinance adopted pursuant to this section.

100 E. The ordinance adopted by the city pursuant to this section may provide that applications for a
101 special exception approval for residential, commercial, or mixed-use projects that result in the
102 elimination of existing units affordable to households with incomes equal to or below 80 percent of the
103 area median income address replacement of the eliminated units as a condition of the governing body's
104 approval of the special exception application.

105 F. With the exception of the authority under § 15.2-2305, this section establishes the legislative
106 authority for the city to obtain Affordable Dwelling Units in exchange for the approval of a special
107 exception application for a residential, commercial, or mixed-use project in the city, and a special
108 exception may not be used in combination with any other provision of law in this chapter to obtain
109 Affordable Dwelling Units from an applicant. Nothing in this section shall be construed to repeal the
110 city's authority under any other provision of law.