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**HOUSE BILL NO. 1029**

Offered January 11, 2012

Prefiled January 11, 2012

*A BILL to amend and reenact § 15.2-2212 of the Code of Virginia, relating to the requirement that certain members of a local planning commission be owners of real property.*

Patrons—Englin and Scott, J.M.

Referred to Committee on Counties, Cities and Towns

**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**

**1. That § 15.2-2212 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**

§ 15.2-2212. Qualifications, appointment, removal, terms and compensation of members of local planning commissions.

A local planning commission shall consist of not less than five nor more than fifteen members, appointed by the governing body, all of whom shall be residents of the locality, qualified by knowledge and experience to make decisions on questions of community growth and development; ~~provided, that at least one-half of the members so appointed shall be owners of real property.~~ The local governing body may require each member of the commission to take an oath of office.

One member of the commission may be a member of the governing body of the locality, and one member may be a member of the administrative branch of government of the locality. The term of each of these two members shall be coextensive with the term of office to which he has been elected or appointed, unless the governing body, at the first regular meeting each year, appoints others to serve as their representatives. The remaining members of the commission first appointed shall serve respectively for terms of one year, two years, three years, and four years, divided equally or as nearly equal as possible between the membership. Subsequent appointments shall be for terms of four years each. The local governing bodies may establish different terms of office for initial and subsequent appointments including terms of office that are concurrent with those of the appointing governing body. Vacancies shall be filled by appointment for the unexpired term only.

Members may be removed for malfeasance in office. Notwithstanding the foregoing provision, a member of a local planning commission may be removed from office by the local governing body without limitation in the event that the commission member is absent from any three consecutive meetings of the commission, or is absent from any four meetings of the commission within any 12-month period. In either such event, a successor shall be appointed by the governing body for the unexpired portion of the term of the member who has been removed.

The local governing body may provide for compensation to commission members for their services, reimbursement for actual expenses incurred, or both.