ADU Draft Changes

9/28/2026 skg

Yellow Highlight: New or amended

Red strikethrough: Deleted

Existing Article 22, Definitions - proposed replacement text follows

ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT (Proposed amendment): An attached or detached dwelling unit located on the same lot as an existing or proposed primary residence that provides complete independent living facilities for one or more individuals, including facilities for living, sleeping, eating, cooking, and sanitation. The accessory dwelling unit is accessory to the primary residential use and shall be subject to the following parameters:

A. The accessory dwelling unit shall remain on the same lot as the primary dwelling and shall not be sold separately or subdivided from the primary dwelling. Owner occupancy is not required.

~~B. Reserved (Revised 7/23/13)~~

C. An accessory dwelling unit is permitted as an accessory use on a lot with an existing or proposed single-family dwelling in the Agricultural A-1, Conservation C-1, Residential R-1, Residential R-2, Senior Residential SR, and Planned Unit Development PUD zoning districts, subject to the requirements of this definition and the lawful approval of the primary residential use.

D. The accessory dwelling unit must be a complete, separate housekeeping unit, independent in function from the principal dwelling. (Revised 7/23/13)

E. An accessory dwelling unit permitted under this definition shall not be counted as an additional principal dwelling unit when calculating residential density, minimum lot area per dwelling, division rights, or an allocation of principal dwelling units under this ordinance in any zoning district. This rule applies whether the calculation is made for a parcel, subdivision, age-restricted community, or planned unit development. An accessory dwelling unit does not authorize a separate lot, a separately sold dwelling, or an additional principal dwelling. An occupied accessory dwelling unit in the SR district shall be counted as a separate occupied residential unit for purposes of the age-restriction requirements of Section 6A-2. This paragraph does not waive applicable building, utility, parking, lot coverage, setback, or other development requirements, or amend an express proffer or condition of a prior approval.

F. Not more than one accessory dwelling unit may be established on the parcel, excluding those structures built under 16-1-5; see H. (Revised 7/23/13)

G. An accessory dwelling unit may be located within, attached to, or detached from the primary dwelling, subject to the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code and other applicable requirements identified in paragraph L.

H. In the A-1 and C-1 zoning districts, an accessory dwelling unit approved under this definition is an accessory use and shall not be considered an additional single-family dwelling authorized by Section 16-1-5. The acreage, density, and principal-dwelling setback requirements of Section 16-1-5 do not apply to an accessory dwelling unit. A dwelling authorized under Section 16-1-5 is

a separate principal dwelling and shall not be classified as an accessory dwelling unit solely because it is located on the same parcel.

I. An accessory dwelling unit shall contain no less than 200 square feet and no more than 1,500 square feet of accessory dwelling unit floor area, calculated in accordance with paragraph J. All space used as a dwelling unit shall comply with the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code.

J. For purposes of the floor area in paragraph I, accessory dwelling unit floor area means all space designated for or used exclusively by the accessory dwelling unit, measured to the interior face of its enclosing walls. It includes living areas, bedrooms, kitchens, bathrooms, closets, hallways, laundry areas, storage areas, and stairs within or serving only the accessory dwelling unit, whether finished or unfinished. Space retained for the principal dwelling or genuinely shared by both dwellings is excluded only if it is identified on the approved floor plan and accessible without passing through space used exclusively by the accessory dwelling unit. Space accessible only through the accessory dwelling unit, or reserved for its occupants, shall be counted regardless of its label on the floor plan. The applicant shall submit a dimensioned floor plan identifying the accessory dwelling unit boundary and floor area. Any later incorporation of additional space into the accessory dwelling unit requires zoning review.

K. One dedicated off-street parking space shall be provided for the accessory dwelling unit. Any parking required for the primary dwelling that is eliminated by construction of the accessory dwelling unit shall be replaced.

L. All Health Department, State and County Code requirements shall be met. (Revised 7/23/13)

~~M. Reserved (Revised 7/23/13)~~

~~N. Reserved (Revised 7/23/13)~~

O. A qualifying manufactured home may be used as a detached accessory dwelling unit subject to the same zoning standards applicable to a detached site-built accessory dwelling unit and compliance with Virginia Code § 15.2-2290 and applicable building and installation requirements.