

AMENDMENTS – (Phase III)

Chapter 86 - LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

The purpose of these amendments is to resolve any discrepancies that currently exist; update sections based on amendments to the State Code of Virginia; amend sections to provide clarification, and consistent application of regulations. **THESE REGULATIONS APPLY THROUGHOUT ALL OF LOUISA COUNTY**; and are proposed pursuant to Va. Code §§ 15.2-2285 and 15.2-2286.

ARTICLE I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

DIVISION 2. DEFINITIONS

Sec. 86-13. Definitions

~~*Buffering or screening yard.* A yard or designated area with certain screening, like opaque fencing or landscaping materials, required between abutting zoning districts of differing use intensities or between adjoining land uses for decreasing the adverse impact of differing uses and districts.~~

Division, parcel. To divide a parent parcel into no more than two additional parts for the purpose of transfer of ownership or building development. Lots shall be divided from parent tracts, or the residue parcel that remains after a prior one-lot division, so long as such residue parcel has five or more acres ~~and a~~ **or** minimum of **4300** feet of existing state road frontage. For clarity, it is the specific intent of this provision to allow a maximum of three total lots, including the residual parcel, to be created from any parent parcel by division, if any. Divisions are not subject to the provisions set forth in the subdivision ordinance except for subsection [86-567](#) (11), private lanes. However, similar to the requirements of [section 86-587](#), a lot created by division shall be required to include provisions for the dedication of right-of-way when the property is adjacent to a state road that is less than 50 feet in width; provided that, this requirement does not apply to a residual portion of the parent tract that is five or more acres ~~and~~ **or** has a minimum of **4300** feet of existing state road frontage.

~~*Emergency shelter.* A facility providing temporary housing for one or more individuals who are temporarily or permanently homeless. A facility providing temporary housing and supportive services to individuals or families who are temporarily or permanently homeless. Emergency shelters must comply with all applicable state, and federal health, safety, accessibility, and operational standards. A religious assembly may operate an emergency shelter for the duration of a State or Locally declared State of Emergency, without benefit of a conditional use permit.~~

***Off-grid construction (residential)* - the practice of building a home without connecting to public utilities. Off-grid homes are self-sufficient and generate their own power and water, with no physical connection or relationship with any sort of utility service, and all the power it uses comes from an energy source that it generates and stores on its own. Off-grid**

construction shall be considered as conventionally constructed dwellings, in compliance with all requirements of the USBC.

Private lane. An access way for residential use ~~in divisions of~~ **serving** less than three lots only or for agricultural use which is within a 50-foot deeded right-of-way or easement and built to the design standards in [section 86-567](#)(11). Private lanes are restricted as to the hours of access by the public or by those who may use it and are maintained by the property owners association or by the lot or parcel owners who are afforded access to their lots or parcels by such private lanes.

Religious assembly. A use located in a permanent building and providing regular organized religious worship and related incidental activities. Primary or secondary schools are not included in this definition as a related incidental activity. Day care and day care centers, as defined, are permissible as an accessory use to a religious assembly when operated directly by a religious organization. **A religious assembly may operate an emergency shelter, as defined in this section, for the duration of a State or Locally declared State of Emergency, without benefit of a conditional use permit.**

Residue or residual parcel or lot. The remaining portion of a parent parcel or tract after division or subdivision takes place. Residue parcels are five or more acres ~~and~~ **or** have a minimum of **4300** feet of existing state road frontage. For determining if the splitting of land is either a division or subdivision, a residue parcel shall not be counted as a lot in **agricultural or** residential districts when the residue parcel is at least five acres **or** has at least **4300** feet of existing state road frontage. ~~, and has a VDOT approved access.~~ Residue parcels in commercial and industrial districts shall not be counted as a lot for determining if the splitting of land is either a division or subdivision, regardless of the lot size, existing state road frontage, or existing access.

Subdivision. Splitting any tract, parcel or lot of land into two or more parts, other than a division of a parent parcel or a family subdivision, for the purpose of transfer of ownership or building development. ~~Subdivided lots shall generally be less than five acres and front on less than 400 feet of existing state road frontage, but subdivided lots shall front on a road that meet VDOT specifications.~~ Consistent with this definition, any new road constructed to serve more than two lots shall be constructed to VDOT standards for subdivision roads. The residue tract after subdividing is not counted as a lot for the purposes of this definition. Subdivided parcels may not be further subdivided or divided unless the remaining division rights are noted on a recorded plat or in conformance with existing ordinances.

Vegetative buffer. A vegetative buffer for screening purposes shall include a mix of trees and shrubs with varying heights and densities to provide maximum screening throughout the year, considering factors like evergreen vs. deciduous foliage. Wooden privacy fences and berms may be used to supplement existing and proposed plantings at the discretion of the zoning administrator; who may choose to forward the proposal to the planning commission for a recommendation. **The terms buffering or screening yard, or any variation of these terms, as used throughout the ordinance in conjunction with vegetative buffers shall include a yard**

or designated area with certain screening, like opaque fencing or landscaping materials, required between abutting zoning districts of differing use intensities or between adjoining land uses for decreasing the adverse impact of differing uses and districts.

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DIVISION 4. ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Sec. 86-114. - Short-term rental of a dwelling.

For only this section GAOD means all properties zoned residential limited (R-1); ~~and~~ residential general (R-2); **and resort development (RD)** located within the boundaries of a designated growth area as shown on the 2040 Comprehensive Plan. The following are requirements for use in R-1 GAOD; ~~and R-2 GAOD; and the RD zoning districts:~~

- (1) Owners of dwellings used for short-term rental shall provide contact information for the owner and/or any authorized property manager to Louisa County and the dwelling's subdivision governing body, if one exists.
- (2) The owner shall provide the current Louisa County Code chapters relative to noise (51) and solid waste (62) as well as the definitions for special occasion facilities and gatherings as part of short-term rental contracts.
- (3) Owner must notify tenants that events, rentals, special occasion facilities and related uses are prohibited, except with valid conditional use permit according to Louisa County Code.
- (4) Owner must comply with all Virginia Department of Health regulations.
- (5) The dwelling must comply with all applicable state building code and safety regulations.
- (6) Owners unable to meet all of the above requirements shall be prohibited from operating a short-term rental of a dwelling without obtaining a conditional use permit from Louisa County Board of Supervisors.
- (7) A violation under this section shall be enforced as provided in [section 86-11](#) and [section 86-11.1](#).
- (8) The effective date of this Code shall be January 1, ~~2024~~**2025**.

DIVISION 6. ZONING DISTRICTS AND LAND USES

Sec. 86-159. - Yard regulations.

In the agricultural (A-2) district, the yard regulations shall be:

- (3) Accessory structures shall be no closer than ten feet to any side or rear property line. ~~Any other permitted structure that exceeds 50 feet in height shall be no closer than 25 feet from any side or rear property line.~~

Sec. 86-198. - Frontage; minimum lot width.

In the residential general district (R-2), the minimum lot width at the building setback line shall be 125 feet; for two-family dwellings it shall be 175 feet.

The minimum road frontage shall be as provided in Section 86-118 of this chapter.

ARTICLE II. ZONING ORDINANCE AND MAPS

DIVISION 6. ZONING DISTRICTS AND LAND USES

Sec. 86-161. - Subdivisions.

To preserve and maintain agricultural and forestry activities; protect ground and surface water supplies; and conserve natural, historic and scenic resources, subdivisions in the agricultural (A-2) district shall comply with the regulations herein.

Restrictions on road extension. No road may be extended to a second parent parcel with the primary purpose of providing access for a subdivision; with the exception that a road may be extended when the total number of proposed lots for all parent parcels does not exceed seven. ~~plus any density bonuses that may apply as provided for herein.~~

(2) *Lot density.* Lot density shall be limited, ~~except where specifically stated otherwise herein,~~ to a maximum of seven lots per parent parcel.

a. ~~*Density bonuses.* The zoning administrator may allow up to three additional lots for a subdivision, for a total of up to ten lots, in the following circumstances:~~

1. ~~*Affordable housing.* A density bonus of three additional lots for a subdivision when at least three lots are dedicated for affordable housing.~~

ARTICLE III. SUBDIVISION

DIVISION 3. PLAT REQUIREMENTS AND STANDARDS

Sec. 86-567. - Streets and alleys.

All streets in the proposed subdivision shall be designed and constructed in accordance with the following minimum requirements by the subdivider at no cost to the locality. All street names shall be approved by the agent or agent's representative. The developer shall be responsible for all costs associated with the manufacturing and installation of signs for said streets, roads or lanes (public or private).

(4) *Construction requirements.* All construction of streets, private roads or streets must comply with the requirements and specifications of the state department of transportation for subdivision streets, which may be found on file at the office of the resident engineer of the county department of highways. This includes all new internal subdivision streets for agricultural; residential; commercial; industrial; resort developments; or planned unit developments.

g. Prior to approval of any subdivision plats where a new internal subdivision street is proposed for acceptance into the state road system, **a performance agreement and** interim road maintenance agreement shall be provided for approval by the county attorney and must be recorded with the final subdivision plat. The **performance agreement and** interim road maintenance agreement must identify the responsible party for construction and continuing maintenance of the road improvements; and include the language found in subsections [86-567\(10\)g.](#) and h. The **performance agreement and** interim road maintenance agreement shall remain in effect until the roads have been accepted by the Virginia Department of Transportation/Commonwealth Transportation Board.

h. Prior to approval of any subdivision plats where a new internal subdivision street is proposed to remain private after approval of a private road waiver by the planning commission, **a performance agreement and** road maintenance agreement shall be provided for approval by the county attorney and must be recorded with the final subdivision plat. The **performance agreement and** road maintenance agreement must identify the responsible party for construction and continuing maintenance of the road improvements; and include the language found in subsections [86-567\(10\)g.](#) and h.

i. Dedication of rights-of-way for streets, alleys or other public use as shown on an approved and recorded subdivision plat; and the County's obligation to install or maintain any such facility, shall be as provided for in State Code Section 15.2-2265.

Nothing in this section shall obligate the locality to install or maintain such facilities unless otherwise agreed to by the locality.

(11) *Private lanes.* Lots accessed by roads in subdivisions of less than three lots can be accessed by private lanes which do not meet VDOT subdivision street standards and are approved by the agent. Lots in subdivisions of less than three lots must have the minimum frontage requirements on a deeded access way or easement which is owned by the property owners association or developer or by the lot or parcel owners who are afforded access to their lots or parcels by such private lanes of such subdivision. **There shall be permitted a maximum of two (2) separate private lanes in a subdivision.** All plats describing lots served by private lanes shall include language found in [section 86-587 \(10\) g.1-3.](#) Subdivision roads serving less than three lots shall be approved by the zoning administrator and shall meet the following minimum standards:

(Road Minimum Standards chart intentionally excluded.)

Sec. 86-576. - Security.

Before any subdivision plat will be finally approved by the agent, the subdivider shall, in lieu of construction, furnish security to be approved by the governing body and county attorney, in an amount calculated by the agent to secure the required improvements in a workmanlike manner, and in accordance with specifications and construction schedules established or approved by the appropriate engineer, which security shall be payable to and held by the governing body. Such security may be posted in the form of a surety bond, letter of credit or cash escrow.

Letters of credit will only be accepted from financial institutions approved to do business in the commonwealth.

In order to ensure that sufficient security is maintained throughout project construction and completion; the security/guarantee shall renew every twenty-four (24) months for the duration of the project. The guarantee shall increase or decrease by an amount equal to the most recent quarterly Construction Cost Index published by Engineering News-Record. (from Greene County Ordinance)** This ensures that the estimated costs escalate as the Construction Cost Index escalates so that the security amount reflects the most current cost to perform the improvements.

In the case of default, the county shall follow the last policy adopted by the Board of Supervisors for liquidation of any security/guarantee held by the County. In no event, however, shall the county be bound to supplement the performance guarantee funds with other county funds in order to complete the improvements.

For Information Purposes Only

****Link to Engineering News-Record – Requires Paid Subscription****

https://www.enr.com/?_gl=1*yw9txh*_ga*NTQ0NzAwNzI2LjE3NDEyNzI2NDQ.*_ga_CH7QLSK31E*MTc0MTI3MjY0NC4xLjEuMTc0MTI3MjY2Ny4zNy4wLjA.

DIVISION 5. PLAT APPROVAL

Sec. 86-614. - Final plats.

(15) All plats, contracts of sale and deeds for a lot in a subdivision with a new internal subdivision street shall contain language which clearly discloses to a potential purchaser the following minimum information:

- 1. Until such time as the new internal street(s) shown on this plat has been accepted into the State secondary road system, the lots are served by a privately maintained road and will not be maintained by the state or county. Any costs necessary to bring the road to a condition qualifying it for acceptance as part of the secondary system of state highways shall be sustained from resources other than those administered by the state department of transportation and the county or any other public agency.**
- 2. School bus service is not provided by the county along private roads, lanes or streets;**
- 3. United States postal service is not provided along private roads, lanes or streets;**
- 4. The expense and responsibility for maintaining the roads within the development will be paid for and borne by the lot owners and/or developer, as the case may be; and**
- 5. It shall be the responsibility of the developer for the initial construction and subsequent maintenance, if any, of the roads, the responsibility of the buyer, and the ownership of the roads. If the roads are to be maintained by a property owners association or other legal entity, the disclosure must clearly so inform the buyer.**

(16) All plats must contain a note stating, “An entrance permit must be obtained from the Virginia Department of Transportation for access to each lot shown on this subdivision plat.”

ARTICLE IV. – SUPPLEMENTARY REGULATIONS

DIVISION 4. - LAKE ANNA SHORELINE USE AND DESIGN STANDARDS

Sec. 86-655. - Statement of intent; policy guidance.

(Only the third paragraph included for amendment purposes)

The standards set forth in this division are mandatory unless a waiver is granted. Applications that meet all of the ordinance standards will be reviewed administratively by staff. Applications should include site plans that meet the criteria included in the "Lake Anna Shoreline Site Plan Requirements Checklist," to include an approval statement by Dominion Energy for proposed development on Dominion Energy's shoreland or shoreline. Where criteria is not clearly illustrated on a site plan, a survey shall be required to demonstrate compliance with the ordinance, or in order to process special exception requests. If a waiver is requested, then the application will be reviewed by staff (per section 86-22– 119 of this chapter). If a waiver is denied, applicants may resubmit a revised waiver at any time or appeal staff's decision to the board of supervisors.

Sec. 86-656. - Use and design standards

(b) Safe Navigation

(7) *Common areas.*

- a. Common area ramps shall be constructed of reinforced concrete with a minimum thickness of six inches and shall be a minimum distance of 75 feet from designated swimming areas.
- b. **If determined to be necessary by the Department of Fire/EMS during site plan review, common areas are required to have a dry hydrant in a location to be determined on the site plan in coordination with Community Development; Department of Fire/EMS; and Dominion Energy.**
- c. Common area boat ramps shall be placed or positioned to minimize wave interference from boats passing nearby through high concentration navigation choke points as determined by the county during site plan review (i.e., cove entrances, narrow channels, sharp bends, bridges, etc.).

(c) Neighbor policies

(4) *Common areas.*

- a. **If determined to be necessary by the Virginia Department of Health, restroom facilities are required in areas with structures for persons or watercraft for common areas with 25 or more lots. and shall be placed in a location to be determined on the site plan in coordination with Community Development; the Virginia Department of Health; and Dominion Energy.** Restrooms are not allowed within the Dominion Energy easement without their approval.

- b. All structures in a common area shall maintain a 100-foot side setback from residential and agricultural zoning districts (not part of the subdivision), and a 50-foot side setback from resort development, commercial, and industrial zoning districts.
- c. 25-foot vegetative buffer between the common area and adjoining property owners (not part of the subdivision) shall be required. Buffers shall consist of evergreen vegetation but may also include deciduous species. County staff may grant a special exception to this requirement on a case-by-case basis.

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DIVISION 5. TELECOMMUNICATIONS REGULATIONS

Sec. 86-674. - Development standards for freestanding antenna support structures greater than one hundred feet in height.

- (i) *Sounds.* No unusual sound emissions such as alarms, bells, buzzers, or the like are permitted. Generators shall not be ~~stored or~~ operated at WCFs except during power outages **or during testing.**

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ARTICLE V. SIGNS

Sec. 86-683. - General provisions.

(a) *Prohibited signs.* The following types of signs are prohibited in all zoning districts:

(1) Flashing signs; which include any illuminated sign on which the artificial light or lights are not constant in intensity and color at all times shall be prohibited. This prohibition shall not apply to signs giving public service information such as time, date, temperature, weather or similar information; or message board, when such sign does not constitute a public safety or traffic hazard. (i.e. - electric message sign for schools, churches, etc.) **Refer to (c) below for Illumination requirements and restrictions.**

~~(5) Any sign or illumination that causes any direct glare into or upon any building other than the building to which the sign may be related.~~

~~(6)~~(5) Any sign that violates any provision of any law of the state relative to outdoor advertising.

~~(7)~~(6) Political signs posted on county property.

~~(8)~~(7) Signs that violate state or federal laws, whether or not identified in this ordinance as being permitted.

(c) ~~*Location; Illumination.*~~ No sign shall be located or illuminated in such a manner as to cause a traffic hazard. Where a permit is required, the permit shall not be issued until the location and illumination, if any, of the sign are approved by the zoning administrator. ~~All lighting must comply with dark sky lighting standards.~~

(1) **Signs may be illuminated, either internally or externally, as permitted by this ordinance, provided that the illumination is fully shielded and directed at the sign and not in a manner as to cause a traffic hazard.**

(2) **All lighting must comply with dark sky lighting standards.**

(3) **No light from any illuminated sign shall cause direct glare onto any adjoining piece of property, right-of-way, or building other than the building to which the sign applies to.**

(4) **Electronic message signs may not flash, scroll, move, or change at timed intervals of less than twenty (20) seconds.**

(5) **All electronic message signs must be equipped with an automatic dimmer that controls the intensity of the light source. The intensity of light allowed for all illuminated signs shall be eight five percent (85%) by day and fifty percent (50%) at night.**