



Forest Conservation Fees: In-lieu Fees and Administrative Civil Penalty Rate

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SUMMARY

- Staff recommends a \$0.05 increase to the forest conservation in-lieu fee amount to new rate of \$1.15 per square foot.
- Staff recommends a \$0.25 increase to the maximum administrative civil penalty allowable for forest conservation violations to a new rate of \$10.70 per square foot.

BACKGROUND

Staff is required by Montgomery County Council Resolution 15-1271 to assess the forest conservation in-lieu fee amount and the maximum administrative civil penalty every odd numbered year. The County Resolution indicates that this increase must be made by May 1 of each odd numbered year and applicable on July 1. The in-lieu fee amount is currently \$1.10 per square foot and the maximum civil administrative penalty is currently \$10.45 per square foot. These rates became effective on July 1, 2013.

Montgomery County Council Resolution 15-1271 (Attachment 1) requires the Planning Board to adjust the forest conservation in-lieu amount and administrative civil penalty based on the Consumer Price Index for the Baltimore-Washington Area. The County resolution indicates that increases shall only be based on the two most recent calendar years.

Analysis

The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics indicates that the Consumer Price Index increased by 2.78 percent between January 2013 and January 2015 for the Baltimore-Washington area (Attachment 2). The consumer price index from January 2013 was 150.845 and 153.376 in January 2015. The January 2015 index is a 2.53% increase from January 2013. Therefore:

- Based on Consumer Price Index the increase in the forest conservation in-lieu amount is \$0.0278 ($\$1.10 \times 2.53\% = \0.0278) per square foot. The new in-lieu fee rate would be \$1.1278 per square foot ($\$1.10 + \0.0278).
- Based on the Consumer Price Index the increase in the maximum forest conservation administrative civil penalty is \$0.264 ($\$10.45 \times 2.53\% = \0.264) per square foot. The new maximum forest conservation penalty rate would be \$10.714 per square foot ($\$10.45 + \$0.264 = \10.714).

The Council resolution requires all adjustments to be rounded to the nearest multiple of 5 cents. Common rounding practices will round the in-lieu amount from \$1.1278 to \$1.15 per square foot and the maximum administrative civil penalty rate will be rounded from \$10.714 to \$10.70 per square foot.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the direction provided in County Council Resolution 15-1271 staff recommends the in-lieu rate and the maximum administrative civil penalty set to the following amounts:

- In-lieu amount = \$1.15 per square foot
- Maximum administrative civil penalty = \$10.70 per square foot.

These new amounts will become effective July 1, 2015. County Council Resolution 15-1271 does not include a grandfathering clause therefore, applicants desiring to meet their forest conservation requirements via an in-lieu fee payment after July 1, 2015 must pay at a rate equal to \$1.15 per square foot regardless of when the plan was approved. Similarly, violations to the Chapter 22A of the County code can be assessed civil administrative penalties based on the higher rate.

Resolution No.: 15-1271
Introduced: December 6, 2005
Adopted: December 13, 2005

**COUNTY COUNCIL
FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND**

By: Transportation and Environment Committee

SUBJECT: Resolution to set certain penalties and fees under the County forest conservation law

Background

1. The County forest conservation law, in County Code §22A-16(d)(1), authorizes the County Council to set by law or resolution the maximum amount of the administrative civil penalty authorized by §22A-16(d).
2. The County forest conservation law, in §22A-12(g)(1), authorizes the County Council to set by law or resolution the [maximum] amount of the fee that the Planning Board may charge in lieu of afforestation or reforestation under §22A-12(g).
3. At a worksession held on December 1, 2005, the Council's Transportation and Environment Committee recommended that the maximum penalty and fee be set in amounts that would effectively deter violations of the forest conservation law, particularly willful violations.

Action

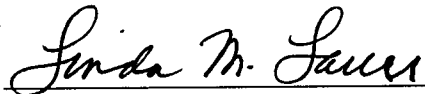
The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland approves the following resolution:

1. The maximum amount of the administrative civil penalty authorized by County Code §22A-16(d) is \$9/square foot for any [willful] violation of Chapter 22A or regulations implementing that Chapter[, and \$3/square foot for all other violations of that Chapter or regulations].
2. The [maximum] amount of the fee that the Planning Board may charge in lieu of afforestation or reforestation authorized by County Code §22A-12(g) is \$.90/square foot of the area of required planting.
3. Without further action by the County Council, the Planning Board must adjust each dollar amount in this resolution, effective July 1 of each odd-numbered year, by the percentage amount of the annual average increase or decrease (if any) in the Consumer Price Index for all urban consumers in the Washington-Baltimore


metropolitan area, or any successor index, for the two most recent calendar years. The Board must calculate this adjustment to the nearest multiple of 5 cents. The Board must notify the public of the amount of this adjustment not later than May 1 of each odd numbered year.


4. This resolution takes effect when Expedited Bill 27-05 takes effect.

This is a correct copy of Council action.


Linda M. Lauer, Clerk of the Council

Attachment 2

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Data extracted on: April 2, 2015 (11:38:55 AM)

Consumer Price Index - All Urban Consumers

Series Id: CUURA311SA0,CUUSA311SA0
 Not Seasonally Adjusted
Area: Washington-Baltimore, DC-MD-VA-WV
Item: All items
Base Period: NOVEMBER 1996=100

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Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	HALF1	HALF2
2005	121.3		122.7		123.6		125.0		126.7		125.4		122.8	125.8
2006	126.3		126.8		128.8		130.7		130.2		129.3		127.7	130.0
2007	129.956		131.945		132.982		134.442		134.678		135.151		132.000	134.927
2008	136.293		138.090		139.649		142.065		142.036		138.547		138.490	140.509
2009	137.598		138.620		139.311		140.810		140.945		140.718		138.777	140.850
2010	141.124		141.741		142.025		141.966		142.738		142.915		141.700	142.736
2011	144.327		146.044		147.554		147.747		147.658		147.565		146.259	147.691
2012	148.163		150.074		150.155		149.838		151.732		150.646		149.603	150.822
2013	150.845		152.188		151.908		152.657		153.532		153.160		151.798	153.203
2014	153.700		154.600		155.198		155.220		155.522		154.926		154.626	155.069
2015	153.376													

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