



*Protecting and restoring the lands and waters of the Virginia Piedmont,
while building stronger, more sustainable communities*

March 13, 2024

Fauquier County Board of Supervisors; Richard Gerhardt, Chair

c/o Fauquier County Community Development Department, 10 Hotel Street, Warrenton, VA
20186

Re: TEXT-24-021435, Zoning Text Amendment to Amend Uses and Approval Processes in
the PCID Overlay District

Dear Board of Supervisors,

We are writing in support of the proposed zoning text amendment that would require a Special Exception for any new structure with a footprint exceeding 50,000 square feet and for retail sales with floor area totaling 10,000 square feet or greater within the Planned Commercial Industrial Overlay District (PCID).

We support this text amendment on the grounds that it advances the broad public purpose of protecting the character of the Vint Hill PCID and historic district. The text amendment as proposed does not preclude any development permitted under the existing ordinance, it merely provides more opportunity for staff, the Board and the public to evaluate significant additions to the PCID.

Regardless of its impact on any potential data center sites within the PCID, we believe the text amendment advances policy that is in the public interest by further aligning the PCID with its original purpose and intent to attract mixed-uses, limit the intensities of all commercial and industrial uses, and encourage small-scale retail. We are supportive of the latest proposed changes that extend the special exception requirement to groups of structures exceeding 50,000 square feet in aggregate and retail sales greater than 5,000 square feet as it further achieves this end.

However, we believe that allowing County staff, the Planning Commission and Board to exercise their discretion in reviewing potential and anticipated data center applications in the PCID via the special exception process would also be in the public interest in light of a data center industry whose growth is [out of pace with the energy infrastructure needed to support it](#). In Vint Hill, it is

questionable whether proposed energy infrastructure could support the full buildout of potential data center space in the PCID which could consist of well over 1.5 million square feet.

While the majority of data center load demand comes from outside Fauquier, we believe that it would be prudent to adopt any policy that would allow the County to better evaluate and mitigate the impacts of possible contributions to this load demand within Fauquier in lieu of a statewide framework addressing the data center industry's impacts to the electrical grid, nearby communities and historical/cultural resources.

Sincerely,

Kevin Kask, AICP
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