Backgrounder and Attachments for Fairfax Open Space Committee Meeting 10/26/21
Councilmember Chance Cutrano
Town of Fairfax

BACKGROUND

Since 2018, the Fairfax Open Space Committee (FOSC) has been aware that there are Town owned parcels (used as open space) currently zoned residential (see Attachment 1). Members of the public have attended FOSC meetings to discuss this issue. Further, members of the public have expressed that they would like to clean up the zoning since these parcels are used as parks.

Under SB 330 the Town cannot rezone the parcels from residential to open space without concurrently changing other parcels so that there is no net loss in residential capacity. The fact that the parcels are zoned as residential makes them part of the Town's "residential capacity," and per the opinion of the Town attorney's team, there is no exception that the Town would not use the parcels as residential because they are used for open space. It is possible, as part of the Housing Element Amendment, to rezone other parcels with sufficient density to result in no net loss in residential capacity when the Town parcels are rezoned open space.

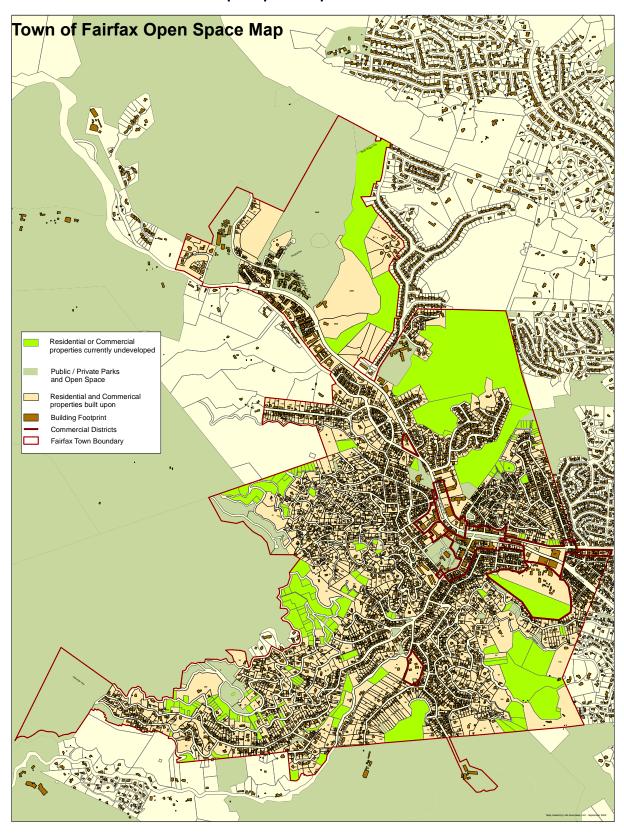
When the topic first arose, then-Town Manager Garrett Toy had instructed FOSC to confirm a complete list of parcels that FOSC requested to be rezoned so that the Town didn't have to go through the process multiple times. Town Manager Toy reiterated the legal interpretation from the Town attorney's team, that while SB330 prohibited "down-zoning" parcels without "upzoning" other parcels until SB330 expired on January 1, 2025, this process may be possible during the Housing Element discussion (i.e., as we develop a plan for re-zoning parcels in Fairfax).

As previously discussed at the July 28, 2020 Fairfax Open Space Committee, then-Committee member, Chance Cutrano, presented an update on the inventory of town owned parcels/parks that are presently zoned Residential (RS-6). The inventory of Town owned parcels (see Attachment 2) identified the mis-zoned Town-owned parks (RED), the parcels that fall within the Priority Conservation Areas that the Fairfax Open Space Committee was responsible for identifying in the General Plan (GREEN), as well a series of Town-owned parcels that were donated or acquired by the Town (which are contiguous or abut open space) but needed further research (YELLOW) (see Attachment 3).

POSSIBLE ACTION

Now that the Housing Element process is underway, FOSC may revisit this issue. FOSC could take an action to formally recommend that the rezoning of these town-owned parcels take place during the Housing Element.

Attachment 1 – Town of Fairfax Open Space Map



Attachment 2 – Town Owned Parcel Inventory





Note: The inventory of Town owned parcels (*see Attachment 2*) identified the mis-zoned Town-owned parks (RED), the parcels that fall within the Priority Conservation Areas that the Fairfax Open Space Committee was responsible for identifying in the General Plan (GREEN), as well a series of Town-owned parcels that were donated or acquired by the Town (which are contiguous or abut open space) but needed further research (YELLOW)

Attachment 3 – Map of Town Owned Parcels Highlighted in Inventory in Attachment 2

