



The Mount Vernon Council of Citizens Associations, Inc.

P.O. Box 203, Mount Vernon, VA 22121-9998

<http://www.mvcca.org>

**Jacqui Kamp, Planner III
Zoning Administration Division
Fairfax County Department of Planning and Development**

October 17, 2025

**RE: MOUNT VERNON COUNCIL OF CITIZENS' ASSOCIATIONS (MVCCA)
Resolution on Large Scale Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) Zoning Ordinance
(MVCCA, E&R 2025-05)**

Dear Ms. Kamp,

The Mount Vernon Council of Citizen's Associations (MVCCA) represents citizens' associations within the Mount Vernon Magisterial District and has reviewed the draft Large Scale Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) Zoning Ordinance and has provided comments in the attached resolution.

As the resolution shows, the MVCCA supports BESS, which will be important to help reduce the need for additional power plants. Should you have any questions on the resolution, please contact our Environment and Recreation Committee Chair, Larry Zaragoza at 703-577-7466.

Sincerely

**Scott Taylor
Co-chair, MVCCA**

**cc: Cameron Bishop, Deputy Zoning Administrator
Dan Storck, Mount Vernon District Supervisor
Peyton Smith, Mount Vernon District Development & Land Use Liaison
Fairfax County Board of Supervisors**

Attachment: Resolution

**MOUNT VERNON COUNCIL OF CITIZENS' ASSOCIATIONS (MVCCA) Resolution
on Large Scale Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) Zoning Ordinance**

(MVCCA, E&R 2025-05)

WHEREAS, the use of large scale (600–10,000 kWh) BESS is expected to grow; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Clean Economy Act directs Dominion Energy to acquire 2,700 MW of energy storage capacity by 2035; and

WHEREAS, BESS fires have resulted in evacuations, environmental contamination, and community outcry; and

WHEREAS, the American Clean Power Association (ACP) has developed safety blueprints to guide the development and operation of BESS facilities; and

WHEREAS, Fairfax County published draft BESS draft Zoning Ordinance text on June 10, 2025;

WHEREAS, the ACP has published a blueprint for BESS safe design and operations; and

WHEREAS, county staff have reviewed multiple safety standards and available ordinances from other local government agencies to develop an ordinance that would not only provide for additional protections beyond the protections that would be in place without the ordinance; and

WHEREAS, the draft ordinance language includes ranges for properties adjacent to both residential and nonresidential areas, which generally span the range of setbacks employed by other jurisdictions or the Dominion Energy Model Ordinance.

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT a zoning ordinance is needed to provide residents and businesses from experiencing negative impacts of BESS facilities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the 8-foot maximum height limit on screening will be inadequate to mask BESS facilities that are at a different elevation than either single family or multi-family residential housing, so this limit should be raised, and large trees should be provided to help mask these facilities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the county ordinance be clear on the kWh that triggers the classification of large-scale BESS and if there is an upper limit; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the county consider adopting an ordinance that considers the size of the BESS so that distances are adjusted; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Fairfax County Environmental Quality Advisory Council (EQAC) expects that the high end of the residential setbacks may not be adequate to

allow quiet enjoyment of their homes and strongly supports requiring noise studies for BESS facilities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the county consider adopting a more comprehensive ordinance that addresses all of the different sized BESS systems that may be housed in the county (including electric vehicle battery storage systems); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT complaints about BESS should be reviewed to see if adjustments to the ordinance are needed in the future.

Approved by the MVCCA General Council on July 23, 2025