

**Environment and Energy Conservation Commission**  
**Draft**

Summary of April 23, 2018 Meeting  
2100 Clarendon Blvd, Azalea Conference Room

Members Present: Mike Hanna, Jessica Skerritt, Mike Mesmer, James O’Connell, Christine Ng, John Seymour, John Bloom, Sarah Meservey, Gabriel Thoumi, Kimberly Fedinatz

Members Absent: Claire O’Dea

Guests: John Reeder, Josh Handler, Rob Dvorak

Staff Present: Adam Segel-Moss (DES), John Morrill (DES), Joan Kelsch (DES), Demetra McBride (DES), Erik Gutshall (Board)

**1. Public Comment**

John Reeder provided public comment and asked the Commission for support regarding more energy efficiency measures in energy codes. He noted that other jurisdictions are enforcing the code more stringently and he asked the Commission to push the Board for support to tighten standards on verifiable air leakage, duct sealing, and more.

Josh Handler provided public comment about Upton Hill Park and proposed changes. He noted that, since last month, there is now a tree plan. The plan shows that more than 80 trees are proposed to be cut to make room for the climbing structures and parking. He raised issues with the MS4 permit.

He asked that the Commission, staff, and Board look into this and act now before it is too late.

**2. Erik Gutshall Roundtable**

Erik Gutshall introduced himself and gave some background on his education and work experience. Erik is the Board liaison to the Commission.

Mr. Gutshall noted that the last budget was not as kind as it should have been to the AIRE program. He noted that this year is not the end of Arlington’s commitment to sustainability.

Erik Gutshall noted that between Community Energy Plan (CEP) adoption and economic viability of solar, more efficient lighting, transit, and other technology – things have changed significantly in only 5 years. He noted that there is reason for celebration. If the community really wants to become sustainable, the County needs to be a leader. He also noted that LEED Platinum certification and sustainability in general are also economic drivers to attract businesses, residents, and employees.

John Seymour asked what Erik's biggest surprise has been since being on the Board, sustainability or otherwise. Erik noted that he wants to be in sponge mode, refine notions about the way things work, etc. One surprise is that he's been kindly and warmly received. He feels that residents have been very forthright about conversations and staff about sharing insights and knowledge.

He also noted his surprise at just how little communication can occur between Board members, and communication between the County Board and School Board. That is by law, but it does create an impediment to timely collaboration to address issues.

Erik noted that Arlington is growing, and we've been growing for decades now. Our community isn't completely built out but the R-B corridor is 85% built out. In terms of where we are as a community currently, we've crept up or past the point where we aren't a suburb anymore. Mr. Gutshall noted that longstanding plans that have been in place for some time are critical to him and to guide decisions.

Mike Hanna asked how Erik would judge the health of the 'Arlington Way'. The County has some serious bruises from previous actions. Not one action, but death by a thousand cuts. Bus stops, planning processes, many people playing with a play-to-win mentality instead of participating to build consensus, or playing to build our community together.

Erik noted that there have been tough times but he and the rest of the Board are committed to honest, impactful, broad dialogue with all businesses and residents.

Christine asked how the Board can cast a wider net throughout the community, to get participation on working groups, commission, etc.

Other topics briefly touched on by Erik and Commission include:

- Commission diversity
- Bikes
- Solar
- Tree canopy
- Arlington Way and engaging more and broader community
- Growth and urbanizing
- APS, schools, and seats, funding
- AIRE and sustainability commitment
- Connection to the Potomac in Rosslyn
- Connection to nature
- Parks
- Budget

Erik thanked all Commission members for serving. He noted his commitment to the environment and the AIRE program. He requested that the Commission reach out anytime for any reason.

### **3. CEP Update**

John Bloom introduced the energy committee (EC) members that are present and provided a historical perspective on the group.

- Evolved from CEP Implementation Review Committee (CEPIRC)
- Now an E2C2 subcommittee
- Mission: Help Arlington achieve its CEP goals

John Bloom talked about the EC approach to the CEP update.

- Goal 1: Buildings – (March) Scott Brideau, Scott Dicke, Jonathan Gritz
- Goal 2: District Energy – (May) Irwin Kim, Scott Sklar
- Goal 3: Renewable Energy – (May) Scott Dicke, Scott Sklar
- Goal 4: Transportation – (May) John Bloom, Stephanie Burns
- Goal 5: County Operations – (June) Stephanie Burns, Rick Keller
- Goal 6: Public Education – (June) Scott Brideau, Rick Keller, Scott Sklar
- Crosscutting issues – (June) John Bloom (tracking)
- Combine all comments and present to E2C2 in July

Some of the key questions considered by the EC are:

What fundamental changes have occurred in the energy landscape since 2010-2013?

1. **District energy** - does not appear to be happening.
  - Revise or delete this goal area? Group leans toward a goal area focused on microgrids, nanogrids and other resilient forms of locally generated energy
2. **Renewable electricity** is cheap and getting cheaper – large-scale solar projected to fall to less than 3 cents/kWh by 2030; wind and storage prices also falling.
  - Group leans toward asking that a transition to net 100% renewable electricity by 2035 be modeled and adopted as a target
3. **Electric vehicle** projections keep going up – now expected to dominate passenger vehicle market nationally by 2050.
  - EC will assess whether this brighter outlook should lead to more ambitious CEP targets for transportation emissions
4. **The United States** adopted a goal of reducing GHG by 80% of 2005 levels by 2050 through the Paris Agreement. The Arlington County Board adopted a “we’re still in” resolution in 2017.
  - Energy Committee is considering whether Arlington’s current overall GHG goal remains relevant and demonstrates energy leadership

John noted that electric vehicle adoption projections continue to accelerate. There is general agreement that they will be a dominant force in the next 20-30 years.

John noted that the EC is looking at what energy leadership should or could look like over the next 5 years.

Rich Dooley provided a timeline for CEP review and technical recalibration. He noted that consultants are working on updates to data and more information will be forthcoming over the coming months. He expects that in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2018 a draft will be released, with a final analysis by the end of 2018.

The EC and E2C2 will continue to work closely on CEP update issues. Rich noted that as the input process moves forward that E2C2 will undoubtedly be central to that input to craft the final update.

#### **4. Introduction to New Bureau Chief for Office of Sustainability and Environmental Management (OSEM)**

Demetra McBride is the new Bureau Chief for OSEM. She introduced herself and provided a brief bio. She let the commission know that she has only been on the job for a few weeks but already is amazed at the quality and focus of work being done within OSEM. She looks forward to working with and staying connected to the E2C2.

#### **5. Budget Letter Review / Approval**

Approved unanimously

#### **6. Meeting Summary Review – February**

Approved unanimously

#### **7. Old / New Business**

John Seymour noted that the Solids Master Plan is still in process. He noted that an air emissions study was requested by the neighbors. The report is very detailed and shows significant NO and CO and particulates, and with common air control devices, it shouldn't exceed standard ambient levels. John noted that he would draft a letter for a future meeting and circulate it.

Jessica Skerritt provided an update on the Reed School project. She noted that the main areas of conflict on the issue are if the existing school should be torn down, despite it being relatively new, and how parking will be accommodated. She noted that the next meeting is happening on May 15<sup>th</sup> and again in June regarding the school and parking planning.

John Bloom noted that the Sierra Club is looking to have a June 20<sup>th</sup> meeting and said he would forward info to the Commission in advance.

Mike M. noted the recent budget action by the Board. He noted the importance of the commission to stay engaged as the next budget cycle starts next year.

Christine provided an update on the Career Center Working Group. She noted that they are trying to wrap up by the end of the summer. Many of the site layout issues have been discussed but haven't formed consensus among staff or the community. The County is going to look at possible space and land acquisitions. The Public Facilities Review Committee (PFRC) review process will start in the fall timeframe.

The Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committees had a joint meeting and discussed Vision Zero – zero traffic fatalities and severe injuries.

Kim Fedinatz provided an update from Urban Forestry. She noted that the County still has funds in the tree canopy fund and urged commission members to spread the word about free shade trees.

Sarah M. noted that a Bioblitz is coming up on the 27<sup>th</sup> and encouraged others to join the effort.