

Natural Resources Joint Advisory Group Meeting Minutes 6-4-2018

The meeting was called to order at 7:10pm in the auditorium of Long Branch Nature Center.

In attendance were: Caroline Haynes, David Howell (Park & Rec), Gabriel Thoumi, Sarah Meservey (E2C2), Phil Klingelhofer, Evelio Rubiella (UFC), and Alonso Abugattas (DPR).

Guest: David Howell, Park & Rec Commissioner

Minutes from May 7, 2018 meeting were accepted with one minor edit.

How Arlington Could Become a Biophilic Community

David Howell, Park & Rec Commissioner, provided a presentation discussing how Arlington County could become a biophilic community possibly as part of the Biophilic Cities movement. Mr. Howell provided some background and history of Biophilic Cities as well as a definition of biophilia: “the innate human affinity for and connection with nature.” As humans evolved with nature, urban jurisdictions need to recognize that incorporating nature into good policy and good design results in what is best for human habitat. This commitment to a natural urban environment is what Tim Beatley used to initiate the Biophilic Cities Project which is now worldwide, including places such as Singapore and Edmonton, but also Washington, DC and Reston more locally. Such a biophilic approach has positive human benefits including medical, economic, and developmental attributes.

Staff Updates

Alonso Abugattas provided the following updates:

- The native plant nursery and greenhouse have been upgraded with a new irrigation system, but unfortunately a water leak is affecting the ability to water the plant stock.
- The NOVA PRISM grant has been extended to allow for Fall planting in the project sites which will provide better survivability of the restoration plantings.
- The final 2 individual natural resource management plans for the Natural Resource Conservation Areas (NRCA) have been signed. Now all 7 NRCAs have their individual management plans approved and accepted.
- September 15, 2018 has been chosen as the date for the second Arlington Bioblitz which will be restricted to one site (Glencarlyn Park).

Member Reports

- David Howell reported that Arlington Urban Forestry chief Vincent Verweij provided an update on existing tree ordinances but pointed out the lack of authority in many circumstances such as on private property.

- Caroline Haynes noted that the County Board supported option 1 for the Jennie Dean Park Master Plan of the Four Mile Run Valley project framework.