

Environment and Energy Conservation Commission

Draft

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

Members Present: Mike Mesmer, Sarah Meservey, Jessica Skerritt, Claire O’Dea, Gabriel Thoumi, John Bloom,

Members Absent: Kimberly Fedinatz, John Seymour, Mike Hanna, Christine Ng

Guests: Rick Keller, Irwin Kim, Scott Brideau, Julia Battocchi, Scott Sklar, Jonathan Gritz, Charles, Girard, Scott Dicke

Staff Present: Adam Segel-Moss (DES), Joan Kelsch (DES) Rich Dooley (DES), John Morrill (DES), Demetra McBride (DES)

1. Public Comment

None

2. CEP Discussion and Update

John Bloom provided an update from the E2C2 Energy Committee (EC). John provided background on the formation of the EC’s evolution from the Community Energy Plan Implementation Review Committee (CEPIRC). It is an E2C2 subcommittee. The mission of the EC is to help Arlington achieve its CEP goals.

John noted that the EC has extensively reviewed and discussed the CEP for possible changes and amendments as it is updated. The approach to CEP review is as follows:

- Goal 1: Buildings – Scott Brideau, Scott Dicke, Jonathan Gritz
- Goal 2: District Energy – Irwin Kim, Scott Sklar
- Goal 3: Renewable Energy – Scott Dicke, Scott Sklar
- Goal 4: Transportation – John Bloom, Stephanie Burns
- Goal 5: County Operations – Stephanie Burns, Rick Keller
- Goal 6: Public Education – Scott Brideau, Rick Keller, Scott Sklar
- Crosscutting issues – John Bloom
- Combine all comments, share with staff, present to E2C2

Key questions asked by EC in its review:

1. What fundamental changes have occurred in the energy landscape that impact the CEP (science, technology, economics, policy)?
2. What can Arlington learn from similar jurisdictions?
3. What changes will advance Arlington’s leadership in energy and climate action?

John noted that the top 3 recommendations from the EC to staff are:

1. Revise Arlington’s overall GHG emissions goal
2. Expand from “District Energy” to “Distributed Energy Systems”

3. Adopt ambitious renewable energy goals

The top 3 themes of the EC's comments are:

1. Advance the Arlington community as a leader in energy and climate action
2. Make Arlington's energy strategy more flexible
3. Modernize Arlington's energy infrastructure

Specific EC made the following recommendations:

Strengthen the GHG goal and see how far that community can go.

Make a switch from District Energy to Distributed Energy Systems

- Goal Area 2 -- District Energy/CHP -- is not working out as planned
- Microgrids are a distributed energy approach that may be promising in Arlington
- Distributed energy systems can provide significant advantages over the grid in terms of energy security, reliability and resilience; some also may have cost and environmental benefits
- Each project requires its own complex cost-benefit assessment. No large projects currently are proposed
- This area is promising but we were not able to project the size of the contribution it can make

Be a leader in renewable energy:

- Retain the goal of making Arlington a leader in this space; update the specifics accordingly.
- Consider adding a utility scale goal.
- Explore a more aggressive MW goal for installations of solar electricity within Arlington's geographical boundary that will make it a solar leader.

Advance the Arlington community as a leader in energy and climate action:

- **Cross-cutting:** More ambitious GHG reduction targets
- **Goal 3** -- Ambitious renewable energy targets that position Arlington as a leader
- **Goal 5** -- Government sector leadership in key areas -- renewables, EV fleets, outreach and partnerships
- **Goal 6** -- Broaden CEP engagement and education efforts to BIDs, facility managers, APS, universities, trade schools, civic associations, etc.

Make Arlington's energy strategy more flexible

- **Goal 2** -- Replace "District Energy" with broader concept of "Distributed Energy Systems"
- **Goal 3** -- Include *offsite* renewable energy projects in Arlington's energy strategy
- **Goal 4** -- Expand transportation strategies to promote use of EVs of all kinds

Modernize Arlington's energy infrastructure

- **Goal 2** -- Optimize local energy infrastructure through use of microgrids, nanogrids, storage, management software and locally generated power
- **Goal 3** -- Promote adoption of onsite solar options

- **Goal 4** – Ensure that no Arlingtonian is prevented from using electric vehicles due to lack of charging infrastructure
- **Goal 5** – Electrify County fleets as soon as practical; partner with regional governments to promote EV use and deploy charging infrastructure

Rich Dooley provided an update on the CEP staff update.

He noted that an updated energy model is underway. This will also result in a new ‘wedge graph’ that shows each sector of emissions and possible reductions over time.

Rich detailed the process that staff is undertaking to revise the CEP, including EC input, community input via the web, AIRE team input, stakeholder group meetings, roundtable input sessions, and more.

Staff is targeting the following timeline:

Summer/Fall 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultant completes energy modelling, provides market research • Staff reviews EC recommendations and other stakeholder input regarding CEP update
Fall 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff edits CEP based on GHG inventory, updated energy modelling, market research, and stakeholders’ comments • October Input Charrette (see above description) • PC information item (other Commissions possible)
End of 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff provides CMO, CB with draft updated CEP
Spring 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • January Reaction Charrette (see above description) • Staff presents draft updated CEP to Commissions (E2C2, TC, PC, EDC) • Staff incorporates Commissions’ comments • Staff presents updated CEP for CB adoption

3. EA Update

Rich Dooley provided an update on the revised Environmental Assessment process. Rich noted that he previously met with the E2C2 EA committee members, Schools, and staff. He garnered input and collected common interests from stakeholders group interviews.

Rich iterated the reasons for the update, including:

- Outdated process does not work well for County staff, residents & Commissions

- Greater emphasis on community engagement, e.g., new CB report section
- County agencies and staff have changed
- Regulations & policies have been adopted
- Streamline environmental assessment process while adequately meeting community's expectations of addressing environmental issues

The input from stakeholder groups resulted in the following common interests:

- Protect the environment
- Do not increase the County project process timeline
- Do not increase the number of night meetings for County staff
- Do not increase County project costs
- Ensure County projects effectively take into account environmental issues early in the project design stage – use integrated design techniques
- Improve project cost estimations related to environmental issues early, i.e., before the project seems funding/County Board approval & funding, e.g., Stormwater BMP costs
- Allow for real-time updates for the public as projects undergo revisions
- Improve transparency - provide the public with timely replies to comments or suggestions
- Equitably and consistently conduct environmental reviews regardless of which department originates the project
- Institutionalize the environmental review process
- Create better projects

From the stakeholder input Rich detailed the proposed draft updated process and tools.

- Create a standard, County-wide environmental review system that would be applied the same across all departments and projects, regardless of project size or scope
- Would allow staff to create a uniform approach for use in routine, recurring County activities
- Would not apply to emergency projects, i.e., projects that lack a planning component
 - Find ways to integrate environmental protections into emergency project SOPs
- Quarterly Environmental Roundtable available for project teams to get advice early in project design
- Map of County projects (using BatchGeo or MapAList)
- Template form for Project Managers to complete
 - Provides a consistent set of questions to help ensure environmental issues are addressed
 - Links to relevant regulations, County policies, and topic experts on staff

John Seymour asked what would trigger an EA with this new proposed process. Rich noted that all projects would need to submit at the ~30%

design phase. This process would apply to all projects with a planning process but wouldn't cover items under the category of "emergency". Rich expressed that this would include items currently excluded under maintenance and replacement.

Rich also noted that this proposed process would be introduced as a pilot. Since it is blending in a variety of interests staff is interested to ensure that it can be amended after it has been used by several projects. It won't be a one-time policy, but will be amendable to include lessons learned to make it useful for staff and the community.

Sarah asked why the 30% design phase was selected. Staff noted that it was trying to target the "Goldilocks Zone" where there is enough project parameters to discuss but not too much that has been decided upon. This is also a standard design phase that projects are familiar with.

Claire asked when the final language will be written for the new EA. Staff noted that the final language will be drafted at the end of the process around the Winter 2018 - Spring 2019 timeframe.

John S. asked how accountability will be handled. Staff noted that they are still trying to clarify the process.

The proposed schedule going forward is as follows:

Stakeholder group meetings / identify interests	Spring/Summer 2017
Review various interests from all stakeholder groups & find common themes	Fall 2017
Create draft revised environmental review process and online tool	Winter/Spring 2017-18
Review, comment period for draft revised environmental review process and online tool	Summer/Fall 2018
Finalize environmental review process & tool	Winter 2018-19

4. Meeting Summary Review – July

Approved unanimously

5. Old / New Business

Mike M. noted that Parks staff reached out about E2C2 staffing a table at the Fair. Mike will send an email to see who is available. Mike noted that Kimberly will be staffing the solid waste subcommittee.

Sarah asked where the APS solar process stands. Adam will contact APS and County staff for clarity.

Jessica noted that the Westover School process is ongoing. The project exceeds current budget thresholds but the community favors the design. The community is pushing for net zero. Parking issues were not resolved. A parking facility can't be built and this remains an issue of contention.

John Bloom noted the need for another E2C2 member to join the EC. The EC will be returning to a normal function moving forward now that CEP review has occurred. The EC plans to meet with Alexandria environmental committees and possibly others. The goal is to increase interjurisdictional environmental coordination.

John Seymour provided an update on pops. A report is due out in August. John also noted that the County's Streetlight Master Plan is still in process.

Gabriel Thoumi raised the issue of an Arlington Boathouse. He asked what the County's stance is and if a letter from the Commission would be appropriate. After some discussion, the commission decided to forego a letter in place of individual members voicing their input to the NPS.