

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

Summary of December 16, 2019 Meeting  
2100 Clarendon Blvd, 311 Conference Room

Members Present: Mike Mesmer, Joan McIntyre, John Bloom, Claire O’Dea, Carol Rakatansky, Jonathan Morgenstein, Mike Hanna, Teresa Leonardo, Shawn Norton

Members Absent: Gabriel Thoumi, Timothy Effio

Guests: Doug Snoeyenbos, Carrie Thompson, and Frederick Blemano.

Staff Present: Adam Segel-Moss (DES), Demetra McBride (DES), Joan Kelsch (DES), Jessica Abralind (DES), Joanne Gabor (DES)

### **1. Public Comment**

Doug Snoeyenbos provided public comment and noted a March 24<sup>th</sup> event where Jay F. will moderate. The event will be a public forum focus on the Community Energy Plan.

### **2. SPRC / PFRC Coordination Continued Conversation**

Mike Hanna detailed the process and engagement for the Site Plan Review Committee (SPRC) and Public Facilities Review Committee (PFRC). He also touched on the Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC) and Building Level Planning Committee (BLPC).

Mike noted that the PRC is for private development. Projects work with staff to negotiate site plan conditions. Mike noted that this is where the requests and agreements start outside of the ‘by-right’ process. By-right is what is allowed for private land owners to develop up to specific heights/densities.

The County allows for additional density for specific community amenities. This is only for larger projects.

Mike noted that the Planning Commission (PC) has asked E2C2 to be more involved. Historically the PC has been more focused on massing, density, architectural elements, and not as much on energy, zero carbon, or carbon neutral.

Mike noted that given the recently updated Community Energy Plan, the E2C2’s participation is increasingly needed and important.

Mike noted that E2C2’s role on SPRC includes:

- Green Space (as opposed to “open space”)
- Biophilic design
- Stormwater – meet county standards, with natural systems if possible

- Energy efficiency:
  - Beyond meeting LEED level
  - Focus on impact on CEP
  - Gas vs Electric
- Exterior lighting/dark sky compliance
- Building and window design to protect migratory birds

Mike also detailed the follow E2C2 role regarding PFRC:

- Unique role with a focus on environmental and energy issues
- Reference County – “Principles of Civic Design”
- Energy efficiency -- consistency with CEP and with the County’s “Facility Sustainability Policy for New Construction and Major Renovation,” which requires net-zero ready construction unless a waiver is obtained
- Biophilic design
- Up not out (or down not out) construction
- Conservation and (hopefully) creation of open space
- Solar energy, green roofs, geothermal energy – other design elements
- Often perceived conflicts with community interests in parking, transportation improvements, other amenities

Mike noted the following keys to success for the E2C2:

- Be knowledgeable
- Talk to staff
- Showing up matters
- Write letters and testify (as a Commission)
- Be especially attentive to issues for which E2C2 is the only voice at the table; look for opportunities to work with and reinforce other commissions on common interests
- Look for opportunities for systematic change – remember that our role as a Commission is more on policy than implementation

The Commission is working to track SPRC projects and assign members to follow each project. A goal was discussed of having an E2C2 representative attend the first meeting for all projects. From that point commissioners will evaluate possible ability or need to affect change to the project.

Mike Hanna volunteered to draft a list of questions and talking points to engage with SPRC and PFRC.

### **3. Workplan**

The Commission discussed and updated the 2020 E2C2 Workplan.

#### **4. Old / New Business**

Mike Hanna thanked the Commission for their input on the Amazon project. He noted that the Board made one small tweak to require that Amazon report back by 2030 to confirm carbon neutrality for the approved project.

Teresa Leonardo noted that she attended the Board meeting on the W&OD trail. She gave public comment on the possible project. She noted that the Board approved the partnership to pursue funding and there was an agreement to do an EA as part of the exploration of the project.

Teresa also noted that she attended the last Urban Forestry meeting. She noted that there was robust public comment and engagement. She also noted that draft language was created by an UF member for tree protection.

Carol Rakatansky provided an update on Plan Lee Highway. She noted that an existing conditions report is being completed. It is more than 100 pages and is extremely comprehensive. The process is still in the input phase and a January input and community workshop is planned.

Michael Mesmer noted that the Utility Rate Study group met. This was their third meeting. A survey is being released soon to gather input from the Community. Mike also suggested that commissioners and residents tour the Water Pollution Control Plant to learn about the biology, chemistry, and all that it takes to handle Arlington's waste water.

Jonathan Morgenstein provided an update on the Energy Committee. He noted that he will be stepping into the Chair role for the EC. The EC is prioritizing the CEP implementation items. Items are being ranked for interest and assigned based on volunteer interest. A draft action plan will be created for implementation issues. He also noted that legislative and budget items are also going to be a focus of the EC over the coming year.

Joan McIntyre provided an update from the Solid Waste Subcommittee. She noted that there are now additional drop-off sites for glass recycling. Staff is starting the zero-waste plan. She also noted that a food composting facility will be coming online in 2021. There will need to be support in the budget for composting but that it will be an option for the County to act on in 2020. In addition, support will be needed for zero waste planning.

Claire O'Dea provided an update on the NC Advisory Committee. She noted that the group is still in the discovery phase. They are analysis data on projects, location, funding per project, types of projects, etc.