

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

Summary of September 30, 2020 Meeting  
Virtual Meeting

Members Present: Mike Hanna, Claire O’Dea, Carrie Thompson, Timothy Effio, Jonathan Morgenstein, Carol Rakatansky, Teresa Leonardo, John Bloom, Gabriel Thoumi, Joan McIntyre, Kevin Vincent, Shawn Norton, Mike Mesmer

Members Absent: None

Guests: Megan DeCesar, Bernard Berne, Liliana Duica, Stephen D’Alessio. Carolyn Lang, Phil Klingelhofer (Urban Forestry Commission)

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

**1. Public Comment**

Bernie Berne provided public comment on the Green Building Incentive Program (GB). He asked that the Commission provide specific comments on Biophilic elements and elements in the GB program to the Board.

**2. Charter Discussion with Urban Forestry – (Phil Klingelhofer, Chair - Urban Forestry Commission)**

Phil Klingelhofer provided an update on the inception of the Urban Forestry Commission (UFC) Charter revision and next steps to work with E2C2 to revise both charters.

Phil noted that approximately a year ago an UFC member approached the Chair with interest in expanding the Charter. The goal was to more broadly address natural resources in Arlington. Urban Forestry members felt that they were too narrowly focused to effectively support the entire ecosystem in Arlington. They felt a change in their work was needed. Phil feels that trees and Arlington’s natural ecosystems are greatly at risk due to development. This includes wildlife, plants, and environmental systems that are struggling to survive in this urban setting.

The UFC feels that all commissions need to focus more on this issue to council the County Board and others to make more strategic development decisions. Simultaneous the Forestry and Natural Resource Master Plan just started off and combined to make this change to UFC’s charter timelier.

Another impetus of this Charter revision was the County Board’s commitment to become a Biophilic City and principles to development.

Lastly, the terms 'natural resources' did appear in the current and former UFC charters. Previous UFC Chairs took a broader view of the UFC purview.

The UFC spoke with Board member de Ferranti. He was supportive of this change and now the E2C2 and UF are discussing which groups should address issues and how to resolve conflicts should they arise.

The UFC drafted a revised charter and circulated it with E2C2. The goal is to work collaboratively to best support the natural environment and clearly define roles and responsibilities with both groups.

Gabriel asked where invasive species land as an issue. Phil noted that it is a huge issue for UFC. If invasive go unchecked, the natural areas could be overrun. The UFC sees this as an issue that they will be pushing on very hard and welcome collaboration and support with E2C2.

The E2C2 also discussed their revised Charter to reflect changes that could include a new name as well as their scope of work. E2C2 is considering adding or changing their name to include words such as climate, climate change, sustainability, energy, and efficiency.

Teresa noted that the title should be something that clearly communicates what they do and draws the public to us. The UFC has tremendous public comment as compared to E2C2. 'Climate and sustainability' would clearly communicate what E2C2 does to the public.

The Commission went section-by-section and made edits to the Charter. The Charter will continue to be revised and amended as UFC and E2C2 continue coordination.

### **3. Stormwater Discussion**

Demetra McBride provided an update on stormwater, flooding, resilience, and climate adaptation. Demetra noted that there has been iterative flooding, historic flooding, and the need to revisit stormwater with the focus toward flood resilience.

The pathway to a more flood resilient Arlington includes:

## A Path to a More Flood Resilient Arlington



The pathway includes capacity improvements, water quality, and maintenance capital. There was an assessment last year pre-COVID to value the system. All assets were valued at 1.7 billion. That is a gross underestimate because it assumes you can get to all assets, which generally is not the case.

Flood resilient Arlington is being looked at through 3 common lenses – public infrastructure improvements, re/development standards, residential & commercial property owners:



### Advanced Approaches for Public & Private Implementation

Some additional strategic and programmatic updates provided by Demetra include:

## Strategic & Programmatic Updates

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**Stormwater Master Plan (SMP)** remains a living document following numerous updates since 1957.

**Risk Assessment and Management Plan, or RAMP** (2021 Q1) provides updated climate projections (2040 and 2070) and new capacity studies to identify system gaps. The RAMP maps critical community facilities in all sectors, to support vulnerability and risk assessments. The result is multi-resource asset for resiliency planning, high-performance blended engineering solutions, and measuring the “cost of inaction”.

**Stormwater Interdepartmental Working Group** (formed Nov 2019), to inform Emergency Planning/Response, Enhanced Communications, Strategic Engineering and Capital Programming, and Policy Innovations for Re/Development.

**Conceptual Engineering Plans.** Blended or hybrid approaches that meet 10-year design storm + model overland relief paths in critical watersheds.

**NEW: FEMA Update to Countywide Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMS).**  
Estimated schedule for draft plans, October 2020.

**Updated Land Disturbance Activity Program (LDA 2.0).** Program enhancements that expand developer options for on-site controls of runoff, streamlined templates and processes, and piloting new measures to incentivize and increase on-site effectiveness.

**System Asset Inventory.** Updating inventory to use age as a proxy for condition. Supports more strategic allocation of maintenance and capital maintenance funds.

**Utility Feasibility Study (2020-21),** as an option for expanding funding/financing mechanisms and options, where rates are tied to scale of impervious.

**Capital Project Execution.** Refining project roles & responsibilities for improved execution.

The Stormwater Working Group provided recommendations to greenlight Flood Warning Installations in several areas where flooding is frequent.

Strategic Upgrades to CIP and Engineering Design includes:

- Increase capacity
- Engineering changes – performance, flexibility, long-term cost-effectiveness
- Revisit storm design standards
- Improve execution framework

Policy in Re/Development includes:

Modify re/development for flood resilient design/construction  
Inform private sector application of measures  
Risk mitigation approach  
Consider practice and policy updates  
Use inundation maps as ‘urban floodplanes’

The below list includes the skinny list of key projects proposed. It reflects the projects that would be up for a vote on November 3<sup>rd</sup>. If the bond is not approved then only the Four Mile Run dredging, Ballston Pond project, and Tributary B. All other projects would be suspended.

### CIP FY 21/22 Sampling of Project List

Program Section	Location / Type	Purpose / Impact
Infrastructure / Capacity	Spout Run Detention (phased)	Reduce flooding to residential/commercial, transportation, affordable housing, and other key facilities
	Spout Run Overland Relief	Hybrid element increasing flexibility & capacity
	Torreyson Run Detention (phased)	Flood management in residential, economic center, transportation, and other key facilities
	Lubber Run Capacity Improvements (phased)	Engineering Studies/Surveys, engineering design, and early targeted flood mitigation
	Targeted Flood Risk Reduction/Capacity Projects	Engineering research and design, plus targeted flood mitigation countywide
	Property Acquisition	Establish overland relief/detention for flexible management
Water Quality	Donaldson Run Trib B	Stream restoration; secure infrastructure, rehabilitate assets
	Ballston Pond	Water Quality, watershed retrofit, rehabilitate natural assets
Capital Maintenance	4 Mile Run Dredging	Federal requirement; channelization & capacity
	Dumbarton Culverts	Multi-infrastructure rehab and replacement
	Outfall Repair/Rebuild	Multi-site rehab and replacement

Timothy asked about the residential program related to Stormwater Wise. He asked where that program stood and if it was coming back. He felt it was a very powerful program that could have a large impact. Demetra noted that the program was put on pause. It may come back in 2022 or 2023.

The commission discussed ongoing support and input focused on stormwater.

#### 4. Budget Discussion

John Bloom provided a brief update on the projected revised budget. John noted that there is a budget gap in the order of \$42-60 million dollars. John asked Demetra if cuts are expected to stormwater and the Rethink Energy program. Demetra noted that additional funds are not likely to be available for many things. Additionally, at this time, funding may be cut once more is known but not enough is known currently. Demetra noted that she does not expect AIRE staff cuts so that institutional knowledge is retained, and the program remains strong in the years to come once we are in a post-COVID world.

#### 5. Administrative and Work Plan Update

The Commission discussed and briefly reviewed the Work Plan. Minor edits were made but the Commission decided to revisit the Work Plan once more new members were on Board.

John Bloom also noted that there are several new openings coming on E2C2 in the next 6 months. He noted that it will be important to revise the Charter so that E2C2 knows where focus and expertise will be most needed.

#### 6. Old / New Business

Demetra noted that AIRE staff continue to work on the Green Building Policy update. Staff are targeting the completion of the update by the end of the year. The

Community Energy Plan Implementation Framework update continues to move forward. That is expected to be completed in Q1 2021.

Joan McIntyre provided an update on the Solid Waste subcommittee. The County is in preliminary talks with hopefully having a contract for the Board to approve in calendar year 2020 for food waste composting to go into place in July 2021. A plastic bag tax continues to be explored but nothing has been finalized yet.

Jonathan Morgenstein noted that the ART Bus O&M facility was an issue that was raised. Jonathan noted that there was inaccurate information circulated at the Board meeting about the EV. There are about 78 CNG ART buses. The plan currently is to keep replacing CNG buses with CNG buses. The Energy Committee is interested to explore electric buses and move away from CNG. Jonathan also noted that the Landmark Block development by Greystar is moving forward. The EC plans to meet with the applicant to address issues outside of the SPRC process.

Teresa Leonardo noted that there was more discussion at Urban Forestry about the Charter changes. The conversation was fairly high level and continues to move forward with E2C2. One of the larger topics of discussion was also the tree canopy fund, where money may be used more for maintenance. This is a new use of funding within the canopy as a pilot.

Claire noted that the neighborhood conservation program update continues move forward. Claire circulated notes to the commission in advance of the meeting.

Mike Hanna provided an update from the Bicycle Advisory Committee. Mike noted that the last meeting focused heavily on diversity. Samia Byrd, the Chief Equity and Race Officer for Arlington presented and discussed diversity issues with the BAC.