



**Minutes**

**EPC MONTHLY MEETING**

**March 20, 2023**

**City Hall, Conference Room 2000**

**[Zoom Meeting Recording](#)**

**7:30 – 9:30 p.m.**

**Attendance**

<b>EPC Members (13)</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Staff</b>
Dan Beattie	P	Felipe Ip, T&ES
Eldon Boes	P	Melissa Atwood, T&ES
Alexander Clark	PR	
Benjamin Cuddy	P	
Jennifer Debias	P	
Cynthia Elliott	A	
Oleksandr Faryga	P	<b>Guests</b>
Kathie Hoekstra, Chair	P	Julie Chapman, ALX Dog Walk
Michael Olex, Vice-Chair	P	
Theresa Romanosky	A	
Marta Schantz	P	
James Vandeputte	P	

**P:** Present; **PR:** Present Remotely; **A:** Absent - Unexcused; **E:** Absent – Excused; **N:** Not a Member

**1. Welcome & Introductions**

Chair Kathie Hoekstra called meeting to order that was followed by introductions for all attendees.

**2. Public Comment**

No public comments.

**3. Julie Chapman, ALX Dog Walk**

Ms. Julie Chapman introduced herself and provided background on how the ALX Dog Walk was initiated with a focus on plastic pollution. Her organization uses creative, light-hearted ways to grab attention, promote messaging, and work with residents through creative activities, such as plastic free kitchen workshop and providing kits for litter cleanup. It then donates money to local environmental activities.

Discussion included different ways to get messages out to increase engagement, such as with the unique T&ES social media and FloodAction messaging; Recognition of Ellen Eggerton's efforts; art to advocacy ideas; reduce the use of plasticware at restaurants for those eating in; and promoting individual action from the bottom up (bubbling up effect).

#### 4. Administrative Items

##### a) Meeting Minutes

Vote on February 27, 2023 meeting minutes for approval. **Motion:** Ms. Marta Schantz; **Second** = Ms. Jennifer Debias; **Vote:** Unanimous approval, with Mr. Oleksandr Faryga, Mr. James Vandeputte, and Mr. Benjamin Cuddy abstaining because they were not present or voting members at the last meeting.

##### b) Reports from Commissioners

- Open Space Steering Committee (Mr. Michael Olex): Upcoming meeting to discuss changing zoning related to types of permissions that need to be received at various natural areas of parks. Right now, all changes require a special permit. Looking to allow more routine work/requests to make repairs/updates more expeditiously.
- Taylor Run Meetings (Mr. Michael Olex): Final set of recommendations written related to minimalist approach for protecting sanitary sewers and what to do where water enters Taylor Run. Most discussions focused on who was going to lead the ecological restoration after the construction project. Consensus not reached for several proposals. Led to a more general statement focused on this group's involvement during construction and ecological restoration phases. This was citizen's group initiative without IEN facilitating.
  - EPC further discussed challenges of controlling stormwater runoff upstream of Taylor Run. EPC members indicated they were not supportive of a large, expensive cistern being developed for stormwater management, especially since the one under the High School has yet to be repaired. Area is highly developed but water can be controlled with new development and new stormwater requirements along that route, such as Minnie Howard High School and future Duke St work.
- Strawberry Run (Mr. Eldon Boes): Strawberry Run site is more rugged, less developed. Almost completed an item-by-item consensus agreement process with minimalist approach focused on using large wood design. Two properties affected and looking to see if City would protect and/or restore them from further erosion. Mentioned how to involve John Fields into discussions.
- Transportation Commission (Mr. Oleksandr Faryga):

- Voting on the letter of support for the DASH program. Applied last year and didn't get it. Purpose of grant is to upgrade and replace 10 diesel buses with electric buses. Other funds for installing chargers and build electric capacity at the DASH station. Replace 5 trolleys with electric trolleys. If we don't get funding, they will use available money to get 10 more diesel buses because initial cost of electric buses is more even though operating costs are less than diesel.
- Duke St transitway: provided roadmap for Duke St, which included curb running, center running, mixed traffic, and hybrid running options from Van Dorn to King St. Compare near-term alternatives with long-term vision. Posters along Duke St with QR codes where they ask users questions to see if location is preferred.
- Ad Hoc Stormwater Committee (Ms. Jennifer Debias): Flooding at the Braddock Rd Metro. Restoration was discussed but is on hold. City said cost to mitigate problem would be \$10 million and does not provide residents with greater benefits. Alternatively, some development is occurring in the area and City is requiring developers to provide greater stormwater management than required through City ordinance in hopes of providing some relief. Committee's annual report will be approved during April meeting and will request either renewal or permanent continuation of the committee.
  - Flood Action Twitter provides great information and will continue.
- Waterfront Commission (Mr. Eldon Boes): Next meeting is Tuesday, March 21, 2023. Nothing else to report.
- Report from Chair Kathie Hoekstra: As a member of the Virginia League of Conservation Voters, she was invited to join them at Capitol Hill for lobbying. Highlighted organization of meeting, to include talking points, focus on specific bill, and science behind opposing it. Lesson learned from their lobbying effort is that support from larger number of voices (having more attend City Council meetings) plus the science will get us further to gain support from City Council.

### **c) Approval of Proposed Change to EPC Bylaws**

Vote on change to bylaws allowing flexibility in date for retreat. **Motion:** Ms. Marta Schantz; **Second** = Mr. Michael Olex; **Vote:** Unanimous approval.

### **d) Update on EPC Candidates for Vacant Positions**

Still have one opening for a small business owner or someone with experience with a small business. If you know someone, reach out for them to apply.

## **5. Possible Letter of Support for Upcoming DASH FTA Grant Under the Low and No Emissions Bus Grant Program**

Discussed updating last year's letter for this year's support and adding a statement about how support of DASH grant also benefits the most vulnerable. **Motion:** Ms. Marta Schantz motioned to approve draft letter with the equity inclusion; **Second** = Mr. Oleksandr Faryga; **Vote:** Unanimous approval.

Suggestion to copy our federal delegation on the letter as a courtesy and to ensure their awareness. Chair Kathie Hoekstra will ask.

## 6. Discuss Retreat Topics

### Four areas to consider for EPC retreat discussions:

- a) Three most important things EPC needs to focus on next year:
- Buildings (new and existing, residential, and commercial): Large number of commercial buildings being converted to residential, specifically multifamily. How to help drive permits in City to get them to be developed using the most energy efficient methods.
  - Transportation
  - Energy
  - Plus add outreach as a subset of each of these. Focus on Community. City only controls 3-4% of what happens in the city, community controls 96-97% of the environmental impacts. Outreach focus on residents, community groups, and private sector to help identify where to find information and possibly assistance.
- b) What do we want to ask for in the FY25 budget?
- Discussion on how last years extra pool of money was implemented or used and how EPC can coordinate on priorities with Office of Climate Action.
  - Consider how to advise on CIP budget and operating budget.
- c) What are the EPC's legislative asks of the General Assembly?
- Need to have list of legislative to Sarah, voted on and approved, before first meeting of FY24 (generally September).
  - Suggested having 2 lists: one for if each political party becomes/holds majority.
  - Legislative ask: Assistance overcoming restrictions residents encounter when trying to have solar on their property. DC has car tax equal to the value of the car plus miles per gallon. Provides tax relief for those with more efficient cars.
- d) What EPC members need more information (i.e., education) on?
- Metrics from the City on how they are performing on the EAP2040.
    - Chair Kathie Hoekstra confirmed she has discussed this with Ryan Freed (Climate Action Officer) and he is working very hard to have the update complete before the retreat. Learning progress City is making would help EPC understand where more focus may be needed to help with initiatives.

#### Other Retreat Information:

- Discussed Office of Climate Action attending the EPC retreat. Chair Hoekstra will reach out to Ryan Freed to discuss his involvement in the retreat, whether OCA agrees attendance would be beneficial, and availability on April 29, 2023 (current date) or May 6, 2023 (alternate date).
- The City is spending a lot of money and focus on transportation and flooding. Help residents see how work is already being focused on fighting the climate crisis.
- Retreat topics EPC requests:
  - OCA to discuss how their suggestions from the \$1.85 million last year was used versus what EPC suggested.
  - EPC is interested in seeing and discussion how Office of Climate Action evaluated all capital projects in CIP budget based on climate impacts.
  - EAP2040 updates, with associated context.
  - Possible speakers at the retreat: Mike Town from League of Conservation of Voters; or Chris. Could also become an educational meeting in the future. Julian. Transportation authority to discuss master plan for DASH. Climate Officer at a neighboring jurisdiction (or other) that is Dillon Rule (Fairfax County, Ann Arbor, Michigan)

#### **7. Discuss Possible Educational Virtual Meeting on Current Plans for Low/Moderate Income Households on Energy Efficiency/Electrification**

EPC members expressed interest. Possibly in May or June.

Other possible presentation/discussion from the team helping build the net zero Samuel Madden building.

#### **8. Adjourn**

Additional announcements: climate rally in DC sponsored by Third Act and Housing for All events are both Tuesday, March 21, 2023.

**Motion to Adjourn:** Mr. Dan Beattie; **Second:** Ms. Marta Schantz; **Vote:** unanimous approval.

The meeting adjourned at 9:38 p.m.

## **FY2023 Attendance**

Member	Sep 19, 2022	Oct 17, 2022	Nov 21, 2022	Dec 19, 2022	Jan 10, 2023	Jan 23, 2023	Jan 30, 2023	Feb 27, 2023	March 20, 2023	TOTALS
Eldon Boes	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	100.0%
Kathie Hoekstra	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	100.0%
Marta Schantz	P	P	P	E	E	P	P	P	P	77.8%
Jennifer Debias	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	88.9%
Benjamin Cuddy	P	P	E	P	P	P	E	E	P	66.7%
Michael Olex	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	100.0%
Cynthia Elliott	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	A	77.8%
Oleksandr Faryga	P	P	A	P	P	P	E	E	P	66.7%
Dan Beattie	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	88.9%
Theresa Romanosky			P	P	E	P	P	P	A	71.4%
Alexander Clark	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	100.0%
James Vandeputte									P	100.0%