



Minutes
EPC MONTHLY MEETING

March 19, 2026
Virtual Via Zoom
7:30 – 9:30 p.m.

Attendance

EPC Members (12)	Status	Staff/Presenters
Dan Beattie, Vice-Chair	PR	Melissa Atwood, TES
Eldon Boes	PR	Ryan Freed, Office of Climate Action
Jennifer Debias	PR	Tamara Jovovic, Office of Housing
Jordon Eccles	PR	Natalie Talis, Alexandria Health Dept
Charlie Garlow	PR	Sarra Mohamed, ARHA
David Hole	E	
Perrin Krisko	E	
Philip Mobilia, Secretary	PR	
Marta Schantz, Chair	PR	Guests
Rick Schneider	E	Laura Vanin, Grassroots Alexandria
Julia Slayden	E	Scott Barstow, Build our Future
Yanique Revers	PR	

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

1. Welcome & Introductions

Chair Marta Schantz called the meeting to order and provided an overview of topics to be covered. Introductions were completed for all attendees. Meeting was held all virtual pursuant to the electronic participation policy from Alexandria, VA.

Chair Schantz noted that Commissioner Hoekstra resigned.

2. Public Comment

No public Comment.

3. Alexandria Healthy Homes Program

Natalie Talis, Population Health Manager with the Alexandria Health department, provided a brief update on the Healthy Homes program, as well as looking at policies and procedures to improve indoor air quality and healthy outcomes for Alexandria residents, with a consideration of how that overlaps with the sustainability work of the EPC.

The Healthy Homes program was initiated six years ago as a program that residents specifically asked for in the 2020 Community Health Improvement Plan. This presentation focused on two aspects of the program: ALX Breathes and the Healthy Homes Action Plan.

ALX Breathes is a home visiting initiative where community health workers go into people's homes who (1) have asthma or Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) and (2) qualifying income to empower, educate, and advocate for them. Targeted outreach and program focus on zip codes where there are the largest number of preventable asthma hospitalizations, some of the highest temperatures, higher concentration of poverty, more residents on Medicaid and/or uninsured, or experiencing poorer health outcomes. Participants are of various ethnic backgrounds and include renters and homeowners. Program consists of home assessment and health assessment. Discussion highlighted areas of the program where there was success and areas for improvements. Program successes include: about half the water damage/leaks were corrected, many of the mold concerns were addressed, decrease in school/workdays missed in the past month, and decrease in nighttime disruptions in sleep from asthma and coughing. Areas for improvement and future focus include removal of rodents and insects. Program includes educating participants about green cleaning supplies which are better for your health and cost less; connecting residents to resources to assist in fixing home issues on given incomes; advocate on resident's behalf; and educate them on best practices to maintain good indoor air quality.

Healthy Homes Action Plan is a citywide approach to address health factors, with a focus on mold, Alex311, smoke, pests, and hoarding in collaboration with many City teams and organizations. This year, the focus is on mold and Alex311 strategies, such as: (1) Adding a new 311 category of mold and tracking requests for this and other health related 311 topics to determine hotspots; (2) Launching a new mold webpage that features resources and tools for resident to advocate for themselves; (3) Training of property managers, ARHA staff, and other entities to identify mold concerns, addressing the root cause, and their responsibility under Virginia Code.

EPC questions/discussion focused on:

- Number of in-home inspections completed. With 50 participants, about 30 completed the 3-month program
- For locations in the City with a lot of multifamily units, is there coordination with Office of Climate Action regarding the Eco-City's CHAMPS program or Multifamily Challenge Program to align with the Healthy Homes Outreach.
- Possible intersection between health and sustainability. Inexpensive ways to weave energy efficiency or sustainability into Healthy Homes is HVAC filter replacement, weatherstripping, and installing smart thermostats. Ensuring residents have operable windows that can be opened to let in fresh air. Integrating energy performance data with the Healthy Homes framework.

4. ARHA Sustainability Strategy

Sarra Mohamed, with the Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority (ARHA), provided a brief background on her work experience and presentation on ARHA's sustainability efforts. ARHA was established for the purpose of operating and owning affordable housing for those with very low income. There are around 800 public housing units and almost 2,000 public housing voucher tenants that live across the City. Presentation included information on decarbonized buildings, decarbonized transportation, crime and adaptation resilience, and environmental justice.

Progress on Transportation Decarbonization. All sites are in a walkable community, close to bus stops or a metro station. ARHA fleet includes 4 electric vehicles and as cars are purchased, more will be added. Added one telework day to decrease commute time for employees.

Progress on Building Decarbonization. All offices have occupancy sensors to save energy from lighting. Full remodels for more energy efficient buildings are challenging as ARHA gets their budget authority from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). ARHA makes small changes to more energy efficient appliances and environmentally friendly amenities/materials in homes when replacements are necessary. Discussed possibility of testing Charlie systems, which convert gas stoves to electric without a full electrical system change needed. Charlie system is expensive and limits ARHA's ability to utilize as a standard.

Discussion addressed various ARHA buildings across the City and the environmental approaches integrated into their design and development, as well as the balance between operational costs, mortgage payments for construction of the buildings, resident preferred features in units, integrating environmental upgrades in building design, and obtaining qualified maintenance personnel for all the systems.

EPC questions focused on:

- What sustainability goals ARHA has planned, such as emissions reductions targets or energy efficiency? Noting a possible connection to the Department of Energy's Better Building Alliance, where best practices and recommended environmental goals are shared.
- Value of Solar Renewable Energy Certificate (SREC) in DC (\$373) and Virginia (\$22.25)
- Climate risks of flooding and extreme heat. Current buildings, even those closer to the water, have not experienced flooding from the local waterways. All units visited are confirmed to have air conditioning, but not all units in the City have been visited.
- Consider promoting the City's Healthy Homes Program to residents of Samuel Madden when it opens in November 2027.

5. Draft 2040 Housing Master Plan

- Review the sustainability elements
- Discuss how the EPC would like to respond with a letter of support-commentary

Goal of discussion is to determine the content EPC agrees to include in the letter and entrust a designated EPC member to author it and submit.

Commissioner Yanique Revers led the discussion and provided a quick overview of materials provided prior to the meeting.

EPC discussion included:

- Possible gap: there is no requirement for existing buildings to improve their energy performance. It is voluntary. The City does not have the authority to require improvements because of the Dillon Rule, where local jurisdictions have only those powers that have specifically been conferred to them. If an existing building is going through a retrofit that is large enough to trigger code, then minimal levels of energy efficiency improvements can be required. For affordable housing, energy efficiency improvements are scheduled into their refinancing of retrofits.
- Information in Housing 2040 plan is largely covering things the City is already doing versus presenting new ideas/programs.
- Supportive of the new sustainability goal #10.
- Interested in getting energy benchmarking from multifamily homes to understand the energy burden. Office of Housing does not own many buildings, so they can't require energy benchmarking, but it is part of the Housing 2040 plan to look at benchmarking opportunities where possible.
- The Housing 2040 plan does not seem to identify flooding and heat as Alexandria's most significant climate risks. Resilience seems to be mentioned/addressed only at a higher level. Staff noted that heat is included as *extreme temperatures* in the plan and that Planning Commission stated the plan was wordy, so Office of Housing is working toward brevity.
- Goal #1 of the Housing 2040 plan supports converting underutilized office/commercial spaces to residential. The Green Building Plan notes there are different requirements for conversions versus new buildings. Repurposing an existing building versus constructing a new building is a significant environmental win from an embodied carbon perspective, so there is more flexibility from the energy use intensity (EUI) and other Green Building Plan requirements.
- Discussion on whether the City will be able to achieve all the goals. It is a 15-year plan, with some elements that will be more aspirational than others.

Ms. Tamara Jovovic, Housing Program Manager for the Office of Housing, noted that there is a robust pipeline of projects that is unfunded, some preservation projects and some new construction. Office of Housing does not have the resources for large-scale retrofits of properties in the City. There is a small home rehab loan program that operates with income-eligible homeowners, where the focus is making sure the home is safe, livable, and accessible. Energy efficient improvements can also be done through that program.

Motion to have Commissioner Revers pull together a summary of tonight’s discussion into a letter for Chair Schantz’s signature. Letter will include endorsement of the good goals found in the housing plan and expressing concerns related to the lack of local authority because of the Dillon Rule: Mr. Dan Beattie. **Second:** Ms. Jen Debias. **Discussion:** Mr. Eldon Boes recommends the letter be short and high level, no more than one page, where the letter is more positive than challenging. **Vote:** Unanimous approval.

6. Administrative Items

a) Approval of Meeting Minutes for February 23, 2026

Vote on February 23, 2026, regular meeting minutes, for approval. **Motion:** Mr. Phil Mobilia; **Second:** Mr. Dan Beattie; **Vote:** Unanimous approval.

b) Ellen Pickering Award Update (Mr. Eldon Boes & Ms. Yanique Revers)

Ellen Pickering Award nomination period was scheduled to close on Monday, March 16th, but there was discussion on extending it. Nothing was confirmed. Melissa Atwood will follow up with AlexRenew on nomination deadline.

c) Youth Engagement (Ms. Krisko & Mr. Boes)

Chair Schantz and Commissioner Krisko researched other commissions with youth seats and found the Park and Rec Commission has two youth seats that are quorum and voting eligible. The Transportation Commission submitted a letter asking for some changes to their bylaws, including the addition of a youth seat. EPC will be requesting the addition of a youth seat that includes voting and quorum. Once approved, EPC bylaws will need to be changed and voted on for approval of the bylaw change.

d) Flood Resilience Plan (Secretary Phil Mobilia & Ms. Julia Slayden)

The City has completed about 80% of the Flood Resilience Plan. It is expected to be draft ready in June for public comment, followed by council review and a goal of Council adoption in September 2026. There is a public meeting on April 16th at Charles Houston Recreation Center that will include an informational presentation followed by Q&A. Commissioner Mobilia plans to attend the April 16th meeting.

e) Council Public Hearing EPC Remarks 9 March signups

Chair Schantz provided public comment at City Council’s March Public Hearing that included a PFAS update and EPC’s uncertainty of impact from sewage spill in the Potomac River on our Waterfront and soil. Public meeting regarding sewage spill is also tonight, March 19th, and a recording will be available to watch.

EPC members signed up for the following meetings:

- April 18th – Mr. David Hole
- May 16th – Mr. Jordan Eccles
- June 13th – Mr. Rick Schneider

f) Staff/Commission Updates:

Transportation Commission – Vice-Chair Dan Beattie

Transportation Commission met on Wednesday, March 18th and got a report on the 2025 Resident Transportation Needs Assessment Survey. There was a finding that the number of residents reporting access to a bicycle has fallen from 57% in 2016 to 40% in 2025.

Waterfront Commission – Mr. Boes

The National Park Service said the City cannot build a pump station in Waterfront Park. As they consider other sites, there may be environmental issues that arise.

Update from Chair Schantz:

- Vice Chair Beattie and Chair Schantz put together a plan for the EPC retreat based on recommendations and feedback received. Retreat is May 2nd at Business Center Drive. Starting at 8am.

7. Adjourn

Motion to Adjourn: Mr. Eldon Boes

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35p.m.

FY2026 Attendance

Member	Sept 15, 2025	Oct 20, 2025	Nov 17, 2025	Dec 15, 2025	Jan 26, 2026	Feb 23, 2026	Mar 16, 2026	Apr 20, 2026	TBD (Retreat)	May 18, 2026	Jun 15, 2026	TOTALS
Dan Beattie	PR	P	P	P	P							100%
Eldon Boes	P	P	P	P	P							100%
Benjamin Cuddy	E	E	N	N	N							100%
Jennifer Debias	P	P	P	P	P							100%
Charlie Garlow	P	P	P	P	P							100%
Kathie Hoekstra	P	P	P	PR	E							100%
David Hole	P	P	P	P	P							100%
Perrin Krisko	P	P	P	P	P							100%
Philip Mobilia	P	P	P	P	P							100%
Marta Schantz	P	P	P	P	P							100%
Rick Schneider	N	N	P	E	P							100%
Julia Slayden	P	P	P	P	P							100%
Yanique Revers	P	P	P	P	E							100%