ALEXANDRIA
Environmental Policy Commission

Minutes

EPC MONTHLY MEETING

October 19, 2026
2800 Business Center Drive Conference Rooms
7:30 – 9:30 p.m.

Attendance

EPC Members (12)	Status	Staff/Presenters
Dan Beattie	PR	Melissa Atwood, TES
Eldon Boes	P	Jeff Farner, P&Z
Jennifer Debias, Secretary	E	Andra Schmitt, P&Z
Jordon Eccles, Vice-Chair	P	Sam Copelan, P&Z
Charlie Garlow	A	
David Hole	PR	**Guests**
Perrin Krisko	P	
Marta Schantz, Chair	P	
Rick Schneider	P	
Julia Slayden	P	
Olu Smoak	P	
Yanique Revers	E	

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

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1. **Welcome & Introductions**

   Chair Marta Schantz called the meeting to order once quorum was established and provided an overview of topics to be covered. Introductions were completed for all attendees.

2. **Public Comment**

   No public comments provided.

3. **Duke Street Land Use Plan update**

   Planning & Zoning (P&Z) staff Andra Schmitt, Urban Planner and Jeff Farner, Deputy Director, provided an overview of the Duke Street Land Use plan, status of planning process, and information on the current draft plan, which is the largest City plan covering about 10% of the City.

   As designed, Duke Street is a very car-centric street that will need to change in phases, over time, to achieve the ultimate results identified in the plan. The planning process started at the end of 2025 with community engagement to understand what was favorable and areas to

improve along the Duke Street corridor. This information was used as focus topics during community meetings, open houses, pop-ups, business meetings, resident engagement, and student feedback.

The presentation included a review of existing conditions, focusing on tree canopy and its benefits along with untreated parking lots and higher surface temperatures. Then they discussed opportunity areas for land use. Opportunities focused on not displacing current residents and small businesses, making the area safer, more convenient access to transit options, and having better connectivity for open spaces (pervious surfaces) and transit throughout the corridor.

The land use plan proposes nine acres of new parks, connected through greenways to the larger parks, Witter Field, and across Telegraph. There is also a focus on walkability, bike-ability, tree canopy, and adding more houses to address the supply needs, while also improving safety.

P&Z is scheduled to brief Planning Commission and City Council in October before having the plan on the December City Council docket. If Council approves, it will be followed by adoption of zoning ordinance changes for land use in this area.

EPC discussion and questions related to what was aspirational versus attainable, process of phasing plan in over a 20-year period, using other shade structures and trees, and how the plan includes the orientation of buildings near streets to provide shade. EPC also impressed the importance of tree maintenance, to ensure any planted trees continue to thrive long-term.

EPC cautioned feasibility that existing buildings would voluntarily retrofit with on-site solar and other efficiency improvements.

EPC also provided positive feedback regarding connectivity that will benefit bike bus to Douglas MacArthur and replacement of Witter Field infill to be natural filler.

Motion for letter of support, with additional considerations for increases in sustainability, for the Duke Street Land Use Plan updates: Ms. Perrin Krisko; **Second**: Mr. Eldon Boes. **Vote**: Unanimous. Commissioner Olu Smoak and Commissioner Dave Hole will draft the letter.

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4. FY28 Budget Letter

Commissioner Julia Slayden opened the discussion for Budget FY28 by sharing the City Manager's letter requesting budget input from Commissions and addressing the challenges for FY28 budget. This allows the EPC to prioritize items for continued funding accordingly.

Last year's budget was similar, focused on being defensive and maintained support for continued funding in areas like Eco-City Alexandria, DASH, sustainable elements of City Hall, Waterfront flood mitigation, and stormwater management. EPC's FY27 budget letter only included one new budget item for a Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) consultant.

Grassroots ALX provided a letter that encouraged EPC to support funding of DASH. Build our Future provided a letter requesting EPC recommend the City hire a consultant for all the state-level utility engagement that the Office of Climate Action is doing and recommending P&Z include sufficient staffing for the Green Building Plan work once development starts picking up again.

EPC members discussed general topics/areas to possibly promote, including Safe Routes to Schools, Eco-City Businesses with a tie-in to Duke St, DASH (with a contingency fund), CCAs, prioritizing state of good repair for City and School buildings, and continued support for Eco-City Alexandria and Office of Climate Action budget/team, including implementation of the EAP2040, ECCAP and EV programs.

Reminders that economic incentives are limited by the Dillon Rule, so there are not any environmental incentives for small businesses to "go green" and align with environmental and business goals.

Possible future meeting topic on encouraging the City to look at broader, more comprehensive ideas around permitting and sustainable technology. The commission also noted interest in PFAS as a topic, but not a budget item.

Budget letters must be submitted by November 20th. Next EPC meeting is Nov 16th. Ms. Slayden will send the draft letter to commissioners by November 9th. Thoughts and topics for budget consideration should be sent to Ms. Slayden by Nov 6th.

Ms. Atwood will send commissioners last year's budget letter for reference.

5. Administrative Items

a) **Approval of Meeting Minutes for September 28, 2026**
Motion to approve meeting minutes for September 28, 2026: Mr. Rick Schneider; **Second**: Vice-Chair Jordon Eccles; **Vote**: Unanimous approval.

b) Staff Updates
Ms. Melissa Atwood noted that the Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience (MWEE) fall program is underway, including discussion of the purpose and highlighting topics students learn about, such as climate & carbon, invasive species, water quality, and stormwater management, and how those affect local watersheds. Partnership with Alexandria City Public Schools.

c) Commissioner Updates
Update from Chair Schantz
Work session to discuss the Nextera/Dominion merger is scheduled for Monday, October 26, 2026 from 6pm – 7pm. It is a collaboration with Arlington's Climate Change, Energy, and Environment Commission. Staff from Arlington and Alexandria will present joint testimony, provide status on the merger, discuss impacts of the proposed acquisition, and provide status of the joint intervention that Arlington and Alexandria are working on together. It will end with questions from attendees and information on how the public can engage in the process.

The lease for Great Waves Waterpark expires soon. Land is City owned. Discussion on whether they will extend their permit another 5 years or reuse the land for other purposes.

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Met with P&Z and Office of Climate Action regarding the status of the Green Building Plan implementation guide. City is working to refine the draft and identify the purpose clearly. Larger update will occur in December when P&Z attends the EPC meeting.

Youth seat is bundled with other changes Council is considering and scheduled to be considered in November.

Legislative priorities were completed and submitted. New legislative director, Fatimah Dandashi, has been hired and starts at the end of the month.

Vice-Chair Eccles completed the draft letter for the update to the EV charging strategy, which is with Chair Schantz for final review and submittal.

Faith Action for Climate Solutions group has an event on Thursday focused on Extreme Heat at the GMU campus in Arlington.

Waterfront Commission – Mr. Eldon Boes
Meeting tomorrow, Tuesday, October 20th, will focus on Maritime Museum, talking about proposal for a maritime museum in Alexandria. At the last meeting, it was discussed that the Robinson Terminal North project is on hold due to lost funding.

Transportation Commission – Mr. Dan Beattie
Transportation Commission may be able to include Safe Routes to School as a priority.

Commissioner Perrin Krisko
The City is hosting the West End Transportation Open House at Minnie Howard on Thursday, October 29. Ms. Atwood will forward link to commissioners for this event.

d) Schedule monthly Public Hearing EPC Commissioner Updates

- Secretary Debias attended October meeting and it went well.
- November 14. Vice-Chair Eccles, with Ms. Yanique Revers as backup.
- December 12. Mr. Boes, with Ms. Revers as backup.
- Ms. Perrin Krisko noted she can cover February.

6. Adjourn

Motion to Adjourn: Mr. Eldon Boes

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FY2027 Attendance

Member	Sept 28, 2026	Oct 19, 2026	Nov 16, 2026	Dec 14, 2026	Jan 11, 2027	Feb 8, 2027	Mar 15, 2027	Apr 19, 2027	May 1, 2027 (Retreat)	May 17, 2027	Jun 21, 2027	TOTALS
Dan Beattie	P	PR										100%
Eldon Boes	P	P										100%
Jennifer Debias	P	E										100%
Jordon Eccles	P	P										100%
Charlie Garlow	P	A										50%
David Hole	P	PR										100%
Perrin Krisko	P	P										100%
Marta Schantz	P	P										100%
Rick Schneider	P	P										100%
Julia Slayden	P	P										100%
Olu Smoak	P	P										100%
Yanique Revers	P	E										100%

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