

Energy and Climate Change Task Force Meeting #1 Summary

July 27, 2021 | 6:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Zoom Virtual Meeting | [Meeting Recording](#)
[Task Force Webpage](#)

Attendees

Task Force Members

(*Present; **Absent)

Alyssa Abosompin*
Javier Bastos*
Leah Devendorf*
Mary Harris, Co-Chair*
Fiona Herbold**
Praveen Kathpal*
Raquel Nicora*
Marian Pegram, Co-Chair*
Josh Sawislak*
Marta Schantz*
Rose Stephens-Booker*
Stephen Walz*
Sangina Wright*

City Staff

Ellen Eggerton
Bill Eger
Jessica Lassetter

Members of the Public

Frederick Abbey
Satina Isaac
Matthew Johnston
Greyson Finlay
Kathie Hoekstra
Paul Kaplowitz
Stephen Koenig
Tiffany Porter

Charles Juris
Natalie Talis
Russell Bailey
Bill Pugh
Arthur Impastato
Frank Rathgeber
Judy Cooper
Nathan Bein
John Prevar
Sean Beckett
Scott Barstow
Donna Gold
Donald Burke
Joel Temme

Welcome and Introductions

The meeting commenced at 6:00 p.m. with Ms. Marian Pegram making opening remarks. The Task Force introduced themselves.

The Task Force discussed the requirement to move to in-person meetings beginning September 1, 2021, which aligns with the expiration of the Governor's Stay At Home Order. Ms. Mary Harris indicated that meetings will be in-person and discussed the process for absences and exemptions. The Task Force discussed the limitations of this requirement especially as it relates to members with different work schedules and other situations. It was clarified that the in-person requirement pertains to Task Force members only, not the general public. Accommodations will need to be made to allow the public to participate remotely and/or in-person.

The Task Force discussed the meeting start time for in-person meetings. Based on the survey results, there was no definitive preference for a later start time. To help resolve this, City staff will share an updated survey with Task Force members regarding the meeting start and end time preference.

Action Item: Share an updated survey with the Task Force members to help understand the preference for meeting start and end time when the shift to in-person meetings occurs.

It was noted that some Task Force members would like the Public Comment session to be moved from later in the agenda to earlier in the meeting. The Task Force discussed the different options available to allow for public comment during the meeting.

Action Item: Post meeting materials in advance of the meeting so the public can choose to provide comment and request them send in the public comment in advance. City staff will work to get items posted in advance.

Action Item: Staff has been requested to share an eNews notification of the Task Force meeting to help get the information out to the public.

Action Items: Staff will share the updated draft meeting schedule and community engagement event schedule with Task Force members.

Presentations and Task Force Discussion

MITIGATION PRIORITIES

Mr. Bill Eger discussed the City's involvement with the ICLEI Cohort, the "Temperate" tool to assist in climate vulnerability, and the "Race to Zero". Ms. Marta Schantz asked about the Science Based Target (SBT) around embodied carbon. Mr. Eger reported that the overview will be provided to the Task Force once available. Mr. Eger discussed ongoing work with the Science Museum of Virginia with regards to heat vulnerability in partnership with NOAA.

The Task Force discussed mapping products to help promote a greater understanding of heat vulnerability in the community. Mr. Steve Walz indicated that Arlington County is currently getting mapping done. Mr. Eger indicated that we will be working on a map product as well. Ms. Ellen Eggerton reported that the City has access to the NVRC database which includes information on temperature heat islands.

Action Item: Mr. Josh Sawislak indicated that he has contacts in Miami-Dade County and Chicago that City staff could use as a resource.

Ms. Eggerton reviewed the Environmental Action Plan and the Task Force discussed what is included in the "4 percent" number from "city operations".

Mr. Eger went over the Jamboard results from the initial meeting. It was clarified that these results will help City staff clarify priorities and help narrow down the focus, moving forward.

City staff discussed ongoing climate mitigation actions including Virginia's Building Code update which went into effect July 1, 2021; small area plan accomplishments; and referenced the Alexandria Mobility Plan update, available at <https://www.alexandriava.gov/MobilityPlan>.

Task Force Discussion and Ideas:

- Incorporation of community-wide and district-wide solutions such as micro grids, community solar.
- Address embodied carbon, not just operational carbon.
- Address high-impact emissions such as refrigerator emissions.
- Workforce development.
- Bonus offset program for City residents, similar to large carbon offset platforms.

EQUITY INTEGRATION

Mr. Walz presented on the diversity report which tied income to equity challenges as it relates to energy burden. The Task Force members were polled as to how best to incorporate equitable considerations into the Energy and Climate Action planning process.

- Ensure outreach information is in languages in addition to English.
- Consider how success is determined when reaching out to non-English speaking community.
- Staff indicated that the City's Race and Social Equity Officer has been engaged to help ensure equity integration into the process.
- The success of the Alexandria's Health Department in getting information out about the global COVID-19 pandemic was noted as a model that could be used.
- Move messaging beyond the webpage and focus on outreach to ensure more broad participation in the process.
- Consider developing "city outreach centers" to help engage more citizens into the process.
- Understand the challenges faced by residents in low-income housing to help understand where best to focus efforts (i.e., insulation, appliances, etc.)
- Consider unique impacts to renters and property owners with regards to weatherization.
- Consider use of American Rescue Act funding for energy efficiency improvements and retrofits.
- Utilities and energy efficiency appliances were discussed.
- The location of buildings adjacent to roads and highways was discussed as a factor relating to public health impacts.

Action Item: Staff was asked to look into the state-wide program that is funded through the gas and electric utility companies to understand the proportion of funds going to Alexandria. Staff was asked to look into the \$4.2 billion in funds received by Virginia for ARPA in addition to the \$60 million set aside for the City. Staff also was asked to look into state funding through RGGI. The overarching goal is to work to ensure funds are put into the hands of citizens who need it most in the City.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Mr. Eger provided an overview of the City's ideas regarding community engagement and opened the floor for the Task Force to weigh in with ideas and also a request for two task force members to support staff in the development of the community engagement events. The Task Force discussed three different areas that support might be needed: event support; messaging support; and survey support.

Event Support: Alyssa Abosompin and Raquel Nicora; *Alternative: Stephen Walz*

Survey Support: Mary Harris and Javier Bastos

Messaging: Mary Harris and Raquel Nicora

- Reach out to different community organizations and working to engage them as well as HOAs.
- Consider different approaches to engagement like coming to where the community is (i.e. annual Turkey Trot event) and surveys. Consider a pop-up event or a similar event instead of a traditional "workshop".
- Consider a hybrid type of event for the fall.
- Engage with the Federation of Civic Associations, ARHA, Condo Associations.
- Utilize graphics with thoughtful visualizations to help engage the community; strong graphics would reduce the need for different languages which seems difficult and expensive at this point.

SCOPE OF WORK REVIEW

Staff went through the scope of work discussion and due to time constraints, it was determined that Task Force feedback should be solicited via the chat function and/or emails to City staff.

Action Item: Task Force members should submit feedback on the scope of work by August 3, 2021.

Task Force Meeting Summary and Next Steps

Meeting summary and next steps were reviewed along with feedback received to date.

Public Comments

No public comment was received.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 8:49 p.m.

DRAFT