

Environmental Policy Commission Minutes  
January 25, 2010 Meeting

**EPC Members in Attendance**

✓	Danielle Fidler	✓	Keith Freihofer	X	Laura Medhurst
✓	Scott Barstow (Chair)	✓	Patrick Hagan	✓	Kurt Moser
X	David Boxer	✓	Patricia Hilgard	✓	Peter Pennington
✓	Jessica Bayliss Brown	✓	Jennifer Hovis	✓	Phil Voorhees

[✓ = In attendance X= Absent E=Excused Absence]

**City Staff**

Khoa Tran, Bill Skrabak, Valerie Peterson, Beth Carton, John Noelle, Bill Eger

Amila Angieli, Chamber of Commerce

**Begin 7:40 PM**

**Public Comment**

None

**Potomac Yard Plan**

- City Staff from P&Z, T&ES and RPCA provided an overview of the plans for redevelopment of the current retail center, one parcel of the larger PY area
- The draft master plan was released in November; it is focused on creating 'a 21<sup>st</sup> century community' with sustainability as a focus
- The City is still scoping 3 possible locations for a potential Metro station, cost is a significant concern. Office space would be located closest to any station, with residential furthest and retail mixed in.
- Open space will be 40% across the site, but only 10-15% at grade (the remainder will be green roofs, elevated recreational areas, etc.). Significant features include the linear park, improvements to Four Mile Run with a view to DC, and a Metro Park.
- Innovative approaches to stormwater management are planned, with the goal of reusing most on site; sewer/ASA capacity was raised by EPC members as a significant concern.
- EPC members commented that energy plans and building requirements may need to be more stringent if a goal of carbon neutrality is to be realistic.
- With respect to transportation, high capacity transit (BRT or streetcar) is planned thru the development to connect to Arlington. Some existing intersections will be opened to allow connectivity to surrounding neighborhoods.
- The last PYPAG meeting will be February 4; P&Z has a joint session with City Council in late February to discuss Metro financing options.

**Tree Care/Stewardship Project**

- City Arborist John Noelle led a discussion on possible areas for joint efforts with the EPC on tree stewardship.
- The current City priority is outreach and planting of trees on private property. Low cost tree sales have been an important tool; Peter suggested that more aggressive promotion is needed for the Earth Day tree sale.
- Watering and maintenance in the early life of a tree is most important; this is where volunteers are needed and the City needs to shift some focus from maintaining older trees.

- Patrick suggested that an initial pilot effort could be to focus aggressive efforts on one area (such as GW middle school) which has high visibility. This could also consider improvements to tree siting in order to cool buildings, etc.
- Another suggestion was to contact VA Tech to request assistance from graduate students to develop a stewardship program or GIS tools.
- Peter and Kurt recently discussed tree projects with the ACPS environmental committee; they are resistant to focusing efforts on trees due to maintenance requirements and safety issues.
- On February 5 there will be a round table discussion with other local jurisdictions on tree cover and credits given to developers (Lee Center).
- John intends to continue the annual tree survey (\$8K/year) to get a solid baseline in the City; this will assist EPC efforts on EAP indicators.
- The EPC tree subgroup will continue to develop the ideas discussed.

### **Committee and Staff Updates**

- Staff stated that the strategic planning exercise continues, a draft is with the City Manager. The effort is about a month behind schedule.
- The green food resolution will be discussed at the 2/1 Environmental Steering Committee meeting with the intent of arriving at the final version. EPC will be ready to formally take action at the 2/8 work session.
- Bill shared a message from the Health Department regarding an expo for eco-friendly restaurants in the city. Patricia will follow developments on this issue. The intent is for restaurants to learn how to green their operations.
- Peter reported that public participation on the waterfront process is focused on various themes, such as history, art, etc. There is a meeting on 1/28 focused on the marina.
- Bill highlighted an email sent to EPC which contained City comments to VDEQ on permits for Covanta and VA Paving.

### **Other Business**

- Minutes for November 16, December 7 and January 11 were approved.
- EPC agreed on a new process to ensure regular updates to the blog. Each meeting, a member will volunteer or be selected to post on the blog for the period leading up to the next work session/meeting. A goal is to post at least once a week. Kurt will cover the first period, until 2/8. Danielle continues to research other hosting options that will give us more flexibility on design.
- Keith informed the EPC that he will not seek reappointment when his term expires in February. This will also trigger a vacancy on the Transportation Commission for an EPC member.

### **Adjourn 10:00 PM**