



Fiscal Year 2017 Annual Report

July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017

SUBMITTED August 18, 2017

1. Introduction

The Alexandria Environmental Policy Commission (EPC) was established under Chapter 4, Article M, of the City Code to “advise and make recommendations to the City Council and, when appropriate, to the Planning Commission and City Manager.” This report provides a summary of EPC activities during Fiscal Year 2017 (FY17).

2. Who We Are

The Alexandria City Council established the EPC in 1970 to advise and make recommendations to the City Council and, where appropriate, to the Planning Commission and City Manager, on matters relating to the following:

- Clean air;
- Land use;
- Noise pollution and abatement;
- Pesticides, herbicides and contaminants;
- Solid waste;
- Water quality and supply;
- Other matters referred to the EPC by the City and citizens; and
- Other topics relating to the conservation and protection of Alexandria’s environment.

The EPC consists of 13 members, including five members from the field of environmental sciences, five citizen-at-large members, one member from the field of urban planning, one member with experience in Federal or state environmental statutes/regulations, and one representative from the Alexandria business community. The EPC regularly works with other organizations to further the environmental aims of the City.

The following is a list of the Commissioners who served on the EPC during FY17.

James Kapsis (Chair)	Eldon Boes ²	Susan Gitlin ¹
Jessica Lassetter (Vice Chair)	Leslie Jones ²	Kyle Winslow ¹
Tyler Orton (Secretary) ¹	Praveen Kathpal ²	
Natasha Garcia Andersen	Brendan Owens ²	
Stephen Milone	Carolyn Schroeder	
Scott Barstow	Reid Sherman ²	
Carolyn Schroeder	Sean Wilson ²	
Geoffrey Goode	John Irizarry ¹	

Notes: ¹Term ended in 2017; ²Term began in 2017

The EPC meets twice a month: one working meeting and one business meeting. The Chair may call other meetings as deemed necessary. All meetings are open to the public and

notification of meetings is given in due time through the normal City routines. Minutes of these meetings may be found on the EPC City website:

<https://www.alexandriava.gov/EnvironmentalPolicyCommission.html>

Throughout the year, the EPC has been well supported by the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services (T&ES), Office of Environmental Quality. The EPC wishes to express its gratitude for the time, expertise and devotion to duty shown by T&ES leadership and staff.

3. FY17 EPC Annual Retreat

On September 10, 2016, the EPC held its annual retreat to discuss in-depth the following issues for review and action over the next year:

- Strategies for ensuring permanent funding and defining roles and responsibilities for the new Sustainability Coordinator position
- Identifying and prioritizing strategies for incorporating climate and energy goals into policy and developing new initiatives
- Understanding the role of the stormwater utility fee with regards to private property, green infrastructure, and credit policies
- Internal (other City commissions) and external (citizens) outreach opportunities for the EPC
- Opportunities for further developing urban agriculture in Alexandria

EPC members led and listened to presentations prepared by their fellow commissioners on each of the topics and proposed strategies and schedules for engaging the City staff, elected officials and other stakeholders to advance progress in each area.

4. FY17 EPC Activities

During FY17, EPC hosted eight (8) meetings and many working sessions. Throughout the year, EPC focused most of its time and effort on FY 17 priorities, while monitoring other issues that arose during the year. Of note was the passing of a new bill which effectively mandates the City of Alexandria to limit the overflow events from Combined Sewer System outfall 001/Oronoco into the Potomac River by 2025. In response to the introduction of House Bill 2383 and Senate Bill 898 during the Virginia General Assembly in Richmond, VA, the EPC Chair and six (6) former EPC Chairs submitted a letter to the Governor dated March 10, 2017.

Letters to Council

The EPC provided advice letters to City Council on the following topics:

Environmental Policy Commission recommendations for fiscal year 2018 budget,
December 13, 2016

Long Range Planning Work Program, January 23, 2017

*Green Building Policy and the Proposed Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 Interdepartmental
EPC Comments on the Old Town North and North Potomac Yard Small Area Plans,*
May 11, 2017

Commissions and Advisory Groups

Members of the EPC represented the EPC on the following City commissions and working groups:

- Waterfront Commission
- Transportation Commission
- Eisenhower West Small Area Plan Advisory Group
- Old Town North Small Area Plan Advisory Group
- Ad Hoc Combined Sewer System Plan Stakeholder Group
- Ad Hoc Fort Ward Management Plan Implementation Monitoring Group

Alexandria Earth Day

Alexandria Earth Day was once again celebrated at the Lenny Harris Memorial Fields on April 29th. The theme this year was "Clean Water Starts with YOU!" emphasizing the importance of keeping our watersheds clean and the role that people play. Though we were competing with several other events including the "Climate March" we had 1400 visitors from all over the greater Alexandria area and a few from out of town including Baltimore. The "Tent Talks" were back and focused on ways that citizens could help keep our water clean, topics included: water conservation, composting, and creating rain gardens. A highlight of the event was hearing poetry from the city Poet Laureate and the outgoing ACPS Poet Laureate.

Ellen Pickering Environmental Excellence Award

The 2017 Ellen Pickering Environmental Excellence Award went to Katharine Dixon, president and chief executive officer of Rebuilding Together Alexandria.

5. FY17 EPC Priorities

The EPC's FY17 retreat took place on September 10, 2016 to set priorities for the coming year. During FY17, EPC focused on the hiring of a new Sustainability Coordinator position; Green Building policy updates; continued discussion on recycling/composting; updates and discussion on the stormwater utility; EAP update targets in the context of the long range work plan; and combined sewer outfalls (all 3). EPC also discussed the Old Town North and North Potomac Yard Small Area Plans.

6. FY17 EPC Highlights

- Successful recruitment and hire of a new Sustainability Coordinator
- Incorporation of recommendations to the Old Town North and North Potomac Yard Small Area Plans to ensure that 2030 net zero goal for new buildings was included.
- Secured agreement to update both the Environmental Action Plan and the Green Building Policy in FY18 and FY19 with half of the EAP targeting completion and presentation to Council in June 2018.
- Implementation of a new stormwater utility fee in the budget

7. EPC Membership Recruitment

Eight members resigned and were replaced by seven new members. The current membership consists of 14 members.

8. Leadership

The commission elects four leadership positions (Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Earth Day Chair) on an annual basis. Elections for FY18 were held at the June 19, 2017 meeting. James Kapsis was elected as Chair; Praveen Kathpal was elected as Vice Chair; Brendan Owens was elected as Secretary; and Eldon Boes was elected Earth Day Chair. EPC would like to thank Susan Gitlin for her leadership in the EPC, especially regarding urban forestry, and her role as EPC Vice Chair during FY16.