



# **Fiscal Year 2016 Annual Report**

**July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016**

**SUBMITTED NOVEMBER 3, 2016**

## 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 2016 (FY16).

## 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 table below identifies the Alexandrians who served on the EPC during FY16.

James Kapsis ( <i>Chair</i> )	John Irizarry
Susan Gitlin ( <i>Vice Chair</i> )	Aaron Karty <sup>1</sup>
Tyler Orton ( <i>Secretary</i> )	Jessica Lassetter
Natasha Garcia Andersen	Stephen Milone
Scott Barstow	Annika Moman
Jed Bullock <sup>1</sup>	Carolyn Schroeder <sup>2</sup>
Geoffrey Goode	Kyle Winslow <sup>2</sup>
Patrick Holnam <sup>1</sup>	Ryan Wojtanowski <sup>1</sup>
Notes: <sup>1</sup> Term ended in 2016 <sup>2</sup> Term began in 2016	

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: <http://alexandriava.gov/EnvironmentalPolicyCommission> 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. FY15 EPC Annual Retreat**

On August 23, 2015, the EPC held its annual retreat to discuss in-depth the following issues for review and action over the next year:

- Proposing the creation of a new Sustainability Coordinator position in the FY2017 budget.
- Improving Urban Forestry policy coordination and implementation
- Supporting the creation of a Storm Water Utility (SWU);
- Updating the Environmental Action Plan (EAP) 2030;
- Updating the City's green building policy;
- Updating the Environmental Indicators/Metrics used to annually report the City's sustainability progress
- Advocating for additional Green Infrastructure to support MS4 and CSO pollution reduction goals.

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. FY16 EPC Activities**

Throughout the year, EPC focused most of its time and effort on FY 16 priorities, while monitoring other issues that arose during the year. Brief summaries of activities and accomplishments are described below.

The EPC's top priority for FY16 was to work with the City Council and City staff to design a new Sustainability Coordinator Position and secure funding for such a position in the FY 2017 budget. The EPC was successful in securing support for this position, which will begin work in the second half of FY 2017 to coincide with the updating of the EAP.

#### **Letters to Council**

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

- [Sustainability Coordinator Position](#) - November 17, 2015
- City Budget [Budget Letter](#) - December 23, 2015
- [Urban Forestry Work Group](#) - April 18, 2016
- [Old Town North Small Area Plan Eco-District Concept](#) - April 26, 2016
- Combined Sewer Overflow [CSO Long Term Control Plan](#) - May 4, 2016

#### **Commissions and Advisory Groups**

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

- Waterfront Commission
- Transportation Commission
- Potomac Yard Metrorail Implementation Working Group
- 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 2016 was celebrated at the Lenny Harris Memorial Fields Park on April 29, 2016. The Alexandria Earth Day Committee selected the theme “Choose to Reuse- Your Choices Matter” emphasizing the value of reuse. The event included educational exhibits and demonstrations, activities for children including the annual Trash and Fashion Show.

### **Ellen Pickering Environmental Excellence Award**

The St. Stephens/St. Agnes School received the 2016 Ellen Pickering Environmental Excellence Award.

## **5. FY17 EPC Priorities**

The EPC’s FY 2017 retreat took place on September 10, 2016 to set priorities for the coming year. The priorities identified include but are not limited to:

- Ensuring the successful hiring of a new Sustainability Coordinator for the City;
- Supporting the establishment of a Stormwater Utility and advising the City on policies, such as a credit program, that will help more equitably and cost effectively to reduce stormwater pollution;
- Launching a review and update of the EAP, as called for in the approved Long Range Work Program.
- Advising the City on the potential creation of an Eco-District, including the piloting of new green building policies, in Old Town North;
- Advising the City on its plans to address its CSO permit requirements to reduce sewage flows into our waterways.
- Advancing the City’s urban forestry priorities and how to improve coordination and implementation across the City;
- Improving coordination between the EPC and other City Commissions, Civic Associations and Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS).

## **6. EPC Membership Recruitment**

Three members resigned and were replaced by three new members. Sadly, long time commissioner Ryan Wojtanowski, who represented the business community, passed away shortly after renewing his term. The current membership consists of 12 members. The business community slot remains open.

## **7. Leadership**

The commission elects four leadership positions (Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Earth Day Chair) on an annual basis. Elections for FY 16 were held at the June 16, 2016 meeting. James Kapsis, Tyler Orton and Natasha Garcia Andersen were re-elected as Chair, Secretary and Earth Day Chair, respectively. Jessica Lassetter was elected Vice-Chair.