

Environmental Policy Commission Minutes  
June 17, 2013 EPC Regular Meeting

**EPC Members in Attendance**

X	Josh Sawislak (Chair)	✓	Sam Gaugush	✓	Kurt Moser
✓	Chinling Chen	✓	Scott Barstow	✓	Geoffrey Goode
✓	Steve Walz	✓	Ryan Sloan	✓	Rebecca Jablon
✓	Ryan Wojtanowski	✓	Monica Starnes	✓	Jim Kapsis
✓	Patrick Holman				

[✓ = In attendance X= Absent]

**City Staff**

Khoa Tran, Bill Eger, Bill Skrabak

**Begin 7:35 PM**

**Welcome and Introductions**

- Tim Bagley, local citizen and Adrienne Fancher from AlexRenew were welcomed to the meeting.

**Public Comments**

- None.

**Discussion on EPC ideas on “The Path Forward for the Eco-City Alexandria Program”**

- Green Business Recognition Program
  - o Rebecca introduced the program to the newer EPC members, and stressed the need for expansion of the program and more EPC help to get the program running smoothly.
    - The program was set up with the Alexandria Convention and Visitor’s Association (ACVA) to recognize establishments located within city limits that have achieved green business certification. Those businesses that can demonstrate they earned certification are displayed on the ACVA website. (The program does not certify businesses itself.)
  - o Earth Day could be a good marketing opportunity for this program.
  - o The EPC could work with a community business association which could spur on other businesses.
  - o The program should be considered as part of other ideas raised today, particularly Eco-Districts.
  - o Literature should be developed to easily convey the program to neighborhood associations and others
  - o Ryan W. volunteered to work with Rebecca on the initiative.
  - o **Action Item:** Set up a meeting with ACVA to discuss next steps (if the EPC meets with the ACVA, Khoa should be informed.
- Eco-Districts Alexandria
  - o Jim suggested that the idea brought up by Joe at the previous meeting is one worth exploring, and that it may be possible to have the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) come to an EPC meeting to speak on the idea.
  - o Patrick raised the idea of reaching out to homeowner’s and neighborhood associations to help identify a community that would be interested in the concept.

- Steve stated that the Northern Virginia Home Performance with ENERGY STAR (which analyzes how homes can be more energy-efficient) already has financing and a framework that the EPC could tap into.
    - Bill E. explained that the City is marketing the program in a boot-strap fashion – engaging with the faith community and targeting communities such as Del Ray.
    - The program began in April 2012 and has engaged more than 500 homeowners. Thirteen or fourteen households have put in retrofits.
    - Bill stated that, at a future meeting, he will prepare a presentation for the EPC.
  - Bill S. warned against the perception of preferential treatment when focusing in on neighborhoods.
  - Bill S. noted that each small area plan (SAP) contains a sustainability chapter, so promoting the concept with the SAPs may be redundant.
  - Ryan W. discussed the idea that Robinson Terminal or the Eisenhower West SAP may provide opportunities to seek out and attract light manufacturing for the City.
  - Perhaps the EPC could serve as a liaison to the SAPs and business community.
  - Bill E. stated that Planning & Zoning has a “What’s Next Alexandria” initiative, to promote and improve civic engagement. The Eisenhower W SAP could be a benchmark.
  - **Action Item:** Engage Virginia Tech, perhaps Joe Schilling could provide a training session.
- **Eco-City Budgets**
    - Jim suggested that the EPC should really get to understand the City’s budget and look for areas that align with Eco-City objectives, which could then be marketed as the Eco-City budget.
      - Khoa and Bill S. explained that the budget is normally developed every October, and that the place to get new ideas into the budget is at the October public hearing.
      - The idea is for the EPC to be more proactive than our usual annual letter every year.
    - **Action Item:** Jim, Patrick and Scott volunteered to look into the budget and develop ideas.
- **Green Streets**
    - Jim asked whether the City was already utilizing the concept of “green streets” (which focuses on environmental sustainability within the roadway network).
    - Bill S. stated that the City uses the “complete street” concept (which focuses on the functionality of the roadway network for all users – pedestrian, bicyclist, transit and motorist).
      - The EPC requested that the Transportation Commission incorporate a green component into the City’s “complete street” initiative. The Transportation Commission rejected that request.
      - However, the City is doing what it can, particularly with bioretention and stormwater.
    - **Action Item:** The EPC should not let the Transportation Commission off the hook, and continue to request consideration of green streets. Josh, as the EPC representative on the Commission should raise the issue.
    - **Action Item:** City will provide EPC an update on accomplishments and progress.

- Recycling at City's Athletic Fields
  - o Kurt raised the idea of finding a way to provide recycling bins and water bottle filling stations at the city's athletic fields.
  - o Khoa stated that the City's Solid Waste Division obtained funding for FY2014 and FY2015 to install recycling containers in parks and athletic fields (with a goal of 200 containers installed).
  - o The idea of water filling stations should be passed on to the Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities Department.
  - o An app is in the works called Tap It, which would identify places in the City where water bottles can be refilled.
  - o **Action Item:** Kurt and Steve will work on a letter to the Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities Department.

#### **Commission Member and Staff Updates**

- Chinling announced that today's meeting is her last, as she is moving away. She thanked her fellow EPC members and City staff.
- Bill S. stated that VDEQ is close to putting the CSO permit out for public comment. If they do so over the summer, while the City Council is not in session, the City requests that the EPC help host the information session.

#### **Administrative Items**

- The minutes from April 15 and May 6, 2013 were approved.
- The July 1, 2013 work session is cancelled.
- The Fort Ward Advisory Group requests an EPC representative – the representative does not have to be a Commission member.
  - o They meet the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of every month
  - o Ryan W. volunteered and asked that other EPC members fill in as needed.
- Elections will be held at the next meeting on July 15<sup>th</sup>.
  - o It was requested that EPC members seeking to nominate themselves or others email Rebecca with nominations for Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary.

#### **Adjourn 9:00 PM**