

Environmental Policy Commission Minutes

April 7, 2014

City Hall, Room 1101

EPC Members in Attendance

✓	Scott Barstow	✓	Jim Kapsis		
✓	Sam Gaugush	✓	Tyler Orton		
✓	Susan Gitlin	X	Monica Starnes		
✓	Geoffrey Goode	✓	Ryan Wojtanowski		
✓	Patrick Holman				

City Staff

Khoa Tran, Dan Imig, Melanie Mason

Begin 7:00 PM

Welcome and Introductions

- Kurt Moser previously announced his resignation from the EPC via email
- Tyler Orton was welcomed as the new citizen member of the EPC

Public Comments

- None

City's Stormwater Public Education and Outreach Program – Dan Imig, P.E., Civil Engineer IV, T&ES Infrastructure and Environmental Services

- As part of the MS4 permitting process, the city is conducting outreach activities focused on three high priority water quality issues: pet waste, fertilizer and petroleum products. In each of these areas, the city is responsible for conducting outreach activities designed to reach 20 percent of the target group (also to be identified by the city). The three focus areas are also the focus of regional activities, including activities carried out by Clean Water Partners, a non-profit outreach organization..
- City staff is soliciting input on target pollutants (the three identified, as well as others), as well as the appropriate audience and the conduct of outreach activities. The deadline for input is end of May 2014, as the information will be included in the City's permit submission to the State of Virginia by July 1, 2014.
- EPC members questioned whether other pollutants were considered, including sediment and a finer split among fertilizers. There was a general concern about being redundant with previous efforts.
- There was some discussion on the ability to define and reach a given pollutants target audience. In the case of sediment, the builder community was suggested as a more definable universe that was very reachable.

- City staff stated that the State of Virginia would be willing to work with the city if a more challenging pollutant with a more difficult to define target audience was identified. Discussion also questioned whether AlexRenew efforts could be leveraged.
- There was discussion on the degree coordination between the City and Clean Water Partners, including ad tracking, and analysis of response rates from targeted groups.
- City staff clarified that there is no formal approval of the pollutants, but that they are integrated into the final permit plan.
- A member of the public attending the meeting suggested including pet waste as a pollutant. Issues associated with animals in the Mount Jefferson Greenway area, and specifically related to the current and proposed relocation of a dog park were discussed. There was general agreement that outreach to vets and the Park Department might work if pet waste was included as a pollutant.

Earth Day Planning Activities – Jennifer Hovis, Earth Day Chair

- Jen Hovis gave an overview of Earth Day events, focusing on EPC's role in helping set up and manage parking for both exhibitors and attendees. She outlined the events leading up to April 26, including a City Council Proclamation (that would be read at the event), the annual upcycling events, and exhibitors (of which there are several new ones).
- With regards to parking, attendees are encouraged to ride DASH to the event or to park at George Washington Elementary School.
- EPC members should plan on arriving by 8am to help set up tables, and staying the entire day to help man the EPC booth and manage parking.
- There was additional discussion on involvement with schools, particularly with regards to a photo contest. There was general agreement that anyone who sends in a photo will be entered into a drawing for "sustainability prizes." However, the question of where to exhibit was unresolved and is pending consideration of how many entries are received.
- Geoff Goode announced that the Ellen Pickering Award winner was chosen from among six nominees. This is being kept as a surprise.
- With regard to trees sold at Earth Day, Susan Gitlin reported that she had spoken to the City Arborist and no invasive trees were among those being sold at Earth Day. However, there were additional questions as to how the vendor was selected and how EPC might encourage a more environmentally-friendly selection in future years.
- There was additional discussion of what activities would be featured at the EPC booth. Three questions were chosen from the quiz to be mounted on large poster boards so visitors could vote on answers and EPC members could use for teachable moments. An additional placard regarding the sources of electricity in Virginia will be used.

Commission Members and Staff Update

- A brief discussion of an EPC letter to City Council on the FY 2015 budget was discussed. City staff advised that EPC send a letter no later than late April. Scott Barstow and Jim Kapsis agreed to work on this letter.
- There was a brief discussion of potential fracking activities in the George Washington National Forest, and how EPC might go about expressing its opposition. A member of the public in attendance also expressed opposition to fracking. The path forward determined was to inform council that EPC had a position and recommend action.

- Sam Gaugush volunteered to take over EPC representation on the Eisenhower West Small Area Plan, which will next meet in late April. A survey has been performed that resulted in 400 responses; the City has bids out for a consulting team to support the process.
- Geoff Goode volunteered to take over EPC representation on the Potomac River Generating Station Monitoring Group. The next meeting is April 23 to discuss a recently released report regarding contamination at the site.
- EPC lauded the decision of the City Council on King Street Bike Lanes. Sam Gaugush volunteered to draft a letter of thanks to City Council.
- Khoa Tran gave a brief update on budget and reorganization of City infrastructure and environmental services. The City is creating a new division on infrastructure, given the major expenditures on CSO and stormwater. It is unclear how environmental services will fair, including whether air quality monitoring will be continued. EPC requested a briefing on these changes and the budget in the near future.
- Khoa Tran provided a brief overview of the EPA Consent Order against the owners of the Hunting Point Apartments for violations involving asbestos removal. A stop work order was issued after it was found the contractor performing renovations had not taken proper precautions/procedures regarding asbestos removal and testing conducted by the EPA. A member of the public in attendance to the meeting, who was also a resident of the apartment complex, recounted his frustration with the process of engaging EPA and other officials on the issue. City management is involved and is taking this as a high priority issue. Two key questions were raised by the community – 1) what was the City’s responsibility in this matter; 2) why did it take so long for the EPA to issue the stop work order, when complaints extend at least back to January (perhaps as far back as October).

Adjourn 9:15pm