

Approved by EQAC, August 11, 2010

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
COUNTY OF FAIRFAX
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ADVISORY COUNCIL (EQAC)
MINUTES**

DATE: July 14, 2010

TIME: 5:13-10:10 PM

LOCATION: Room 232, Fairfax County Government Center

MEMBERS PRESENT

Stella Koch (Chairman, At-Large)

George Lamb (Vice Chairman, At-Large)

Linda Burchfiel (At-Large)

Frank Crandall (Dranesville)

Frank Divita (Braddock)

Ned Foster (Springfield)

Johna Gagnon (Lee)

David Ouderkirk (Hunter Mill)

Kevin Sun (Student Member)

Rich Weisman (Sully)

MEMBERS ABSENT

Marie Flanigan (Providence)

Robert McLaren (At-Large)

Glen White (Mason)

Larry Zaragoza (Mount Vernon)

STAFF SUPPORT

Kambiz Agazi

Noel Kaplan

OTHERS PRESENT (INCLUDING MEMBERS OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE)

Michelle Brickner

Bhesh Dhamala

Dave DuVal

Diane Hoffman

Davood Majidian

Vicky Monroe

James Patteson

Clara Quintero-Johnson

Heather Schinkel

Dan Southworth

Leonard Wolfenstein

Jim Zook

This was a two part meeting. The first part was a joint meeting of the Fairfax County Environmental Quality Advisory Council (EQAC) and the Environmental Coordinating Committee (ECC). The second part was EQAC's July 2010 meeting.

Joint meeting of the Fairfax County Environmental Quality Advisory Council (EQAC) and the Environmental Coordinating Committee (ECC)

Matters Discussed:

- The meeting was convened at 5:13 P.M. in Room 232, Fairfax County Government Center.

- Chairman Koch welcomed all those in attendance, provided introductory remarks, and asked EQAC and staff members to introduce themselves.
- Kevin Sun was welcomed as the new EQAC Student Member.

Update on the Fairfax County Park Authority's Natural Resource Management Plan

- Heather Schinkel from the Fairfax County Park Authority provided an update on 2010 activities/accomplishes of the Fairfax County Park Authority Natural Resource Management Plan (NRMP)
- The NRMP is an agency wide work plan that was first developed in 2004 and covers natural resource management planning, vegetation, wildlife, water resources, air quality, human impact on parkland, and education.
- Implementation of the NRMP requires significant funding and staff resources.
- Some 2010 Accomplishments
 - Developed Program Plan and estimated costs to remove non-native invasive plants
 - Revised Policy 301--Protection of Lands and Facilities
 - Developed Best Practices Guide to manage non-native invasive plants
 - Completed the Natural Area Geospatial Model feasibility study
 - Developed Natural Resource Action Plan guidelines: resource for park managers
 - Managed major volunteer projects
 - Used bond funding to fund a project at Ellick Woodlands Natural Area Preserve
 - Expanded deer management program
 - Continued partnerships with agencies including the Department of Public Works and Environmental Services, the Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District, etc... to share resources and pursue joint projects
 - Developed portable exhibit booth
- Implementation Plan for FY 2011
- Mr. Lamb asked what was the average to develop and implement a Natural Resource management Plan and a typical facility. Ms. Schinkel responded that a typical cost to develop a plan might be about \$50,000. Implementation costs vary greatly. That cost might be as high as \$100,000 for a 100 acre park. It can take up to 3 years for permanent removal of invasive plants.
- Chairman Koch asked how many parks do we have in Fairfax County that over 100 acres. Ms. Schinkel answered that is hard to say, but would guess that there are about 40-50.
- Mr. Weisman commented that it was an interesting concept to use county bond funding for removal of invasive plants. Ms. Schinkel commented that this is appropriate when a capital project can be identified. Usually after initial project is completed, volunteers can often be mobilized to perform maintenance. She hopes to identify future projects that are appropriate to fund using bond accounts.

Briefing from Vicky Monroe, Wildlife Biologist, on the deer management Web site and related outreach efforts

- Development and distribution of a deer management survey to 1,900 HOA/Civic Associations
- Major Update to web site
- Accomplishments related to deer, geese, and other wild life management programs

Updates on the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Coordination Committee and efforts relating to the Cool Counties Initiative

- Dr. Agazi provided a briefing on the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Coordinating Committee and efforts relating to the Cool County initiative.
- Dr. Agazi provided handouts that listed Fairfax County Environmental Improvement Program projects accomplished from 2004 to 2010 as well as projects that relate to the Cool Counties Initiative.
- Committee's major accomplishment for FY09/10 include:
 - Development of an inter-agency committee
 - Adoption of a committee charter
 - Development of a countywide energy policy
 - Identification and capture of federal stimulus funding under the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program.
 - Dr. Agazi provided a list of the funding obtained by Fairfax County from the grant program. Total funding was \$9.6M.
 - A portion of this funding is being used to fund GHG emissions inventory project and subsequent energy efficiency/outreach projects.
 - Initiation of a greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions inventory for county facilities and operations
 - Selection of George Mason University to conduct a county-wide GHG emissions inventory
 - Revision to the county's environmental Web page to improve its overall utility as well as energy-related information
 - Involvement in regional coordination efforts
 - Several other efforts
- Chairman Koch asked who was going to use the GHG emissions inventory database and how will it be used to meet goals?
- Dr. Agazi answered that the countywide GHG emissions inventory will provide an emissions baseline from which to measure accomplishments. He stressed that the Cool Counties Initiative did not set short term GHG goals and that a process for achieving short, medium and long range goals was being addressed regionally at the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments.
- Chairman Koch stressed the need for definition of bigger picture goals for the county.

Motions made:

- None

Follow up actions:

- None

Fairfax County Environmental Quality Advisory Council (EQAC) Meeting

Matters Discussed:

- Jim Zook, Director of the Department of Planning and Zoning presented a briefing on the recently adopted Comprehensive Plan amendment for Tysons Corner
- The plan creates or includes:
 - a livable urban center with 100,000 residents and 200,000 jobs
 - one theme is more jobs, more housing, less parking
 - contain high density
 - urban parks and open spaces
 - will consider indoor and rooftop facilities for athletic fields
 - LEED storm water quality and quantity
 - expected LEED Silver for non-residential buildings
 - Future financial incentives for LEED Gold or Platinum building suggested
- Someone asked what was the real expectation in regard to LEED certification of new non-residential buildings.
- Mr. Zook answered that the county expects all new nonresidential building to be at least LEED Silver.
- Someone asked is green roof are encouraged. Yes, that is an option.
- Mr. Lamb asked if he recalls a discussion of zipcar-like bicycles. No, not particularly, but that is certainly an option. Certainly bicycle paths and use was discussed heavily, and while the details are not yet worked out, their use is expected.

Presentation on Virginia Department of Transportation's 527 review process

Matters Discussed:

- As the Virginia Department of Transportation representative was not present (due to unforeseen circumstances), VDOT's slide presentation on the 527 review process, which was provided to staff in advance of the meeting, was reviewed in VDOT's absence. Leonard Wolfenstein, Fairfax County Department of Transportation (FCDOT), provided guidance relating to VDOT's slides.
 - Passed by the General Assembly in 2006
 - Directs localities to submit to VDOT for review and comment development proposals that would significantly impact the state transportation system
 - Objective is to improve the coordination between land-use and transportation planning across Virginia by providing better information to decision makers and citizens
 - It is not support for or opposition to local development and/or land use decisions, just VDOT comments which are advisory.

- For development proposals that exceed certain thresholds in terms of trips generated, localities are required to submit these proposals and traffic impact analyses for VDOT review at three key stages of land use:
 - Comprehensive plans and amendments
 - Rezoning
 - Site Plans/Subdivision Plats/Plans of Development
 - 527 reports are on VDOT's Web site
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- Chairman Koch asked Mr. Wolfenstein what was Fairfax County's opinion of the 527 process and how did it affect the county's ability to approve projects.
 - Mr. Wolfenstein answered that while at first he was unsure how it would affect FCDOT, he generally sees it as a positive experience. It provides consistency in the way projects are evaluated and also ensures traffic information is provided. He finds that using uniform standards to evaluate projects is also positive. He noted that Area Plan Review nominations requiring 527 reviews do take longer to get through the public hearing process, but otherwise only the largest projects trigger the 527 process so this really does not delay schedules and therefore does not interfere with the DPZ process.
 - Chairman Koch noted that it seems to her that from what she heard, the process was beneficial overall.
 - Mr. Wolfenstein answered yes. The only real downfall to the process that he could see was that it added review time to the project.

Motions made:

- None

Follow up actions:

- Chairman Koch and the group discussed how EQAC should respond to Supervisor McKay's request that EQAC comment on the 527 process. The Council decided that George Lamb and David Ouderkirk would draft a letter to the Board of Supervisors and share it with the EQAC for discussion prior to transmittal.

Discussion of EQAC participation on the Fairfax Joint Local Emergency Planning Committee

Matters Discussed:

- Johna Gagnon led a discussion regarding whether or not EQAC should continue to have a role on the Fairfax Joint Local Emergency Planning Committee. She described EQAC's historical role and recommended that EQAC not have a member on the FJLEPC. Noel Kaplan reviewed the process through which EQAC was initially appointed to the committee and noted that EQAC could opt to discontinue its involvement at its discretion. He noted, however, that the Board of Supervisors had initially accepted a nomination of EQAC as a member of the committee and that consideration should be given to informing the Board of any changes in representation.

Motions made:

- None

Follow up actions:

- It was decided that Noel Kaplan would circulate an e-mail to EQAC members see if any EQAC member is interested in serving as EQAC's representative on the Fairfax Joint Local Emergency Planning Committee. By agreeing to serve, the member would be committing to attending FJLEPC meetings, which are held on the second Thursday every two months, during daytime hours (from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM) in Fairfax City.

Development of EQAC recommendations for the 2011 legislative session

Matters Discussed:

- Recommendations must be provided in the proper format and approved at the next EQAC meeting.

Motions made:

- None

Follow up actions:

- Ned Foster plans to submit an EQAC recommendation addressing visual blight. He will bring his recommendation to the August meeting.

Report from the Environmental Excellence Awards Committee

Matters Discussed:

- Four categories for award are considered: County Resident, Business, County Employee, Organization.
- The following awards were recommended by the Committee
 - County Resident: Maureen Goble
 - Business: Project Performance Corporation
 - County Employee: Meghan Fellows

Motions made:

- Ned Foster moved approval of the three awards as recommended. Frank Divita seconded the motion.

Record of the vote:

- Approval by unanimous vote, with a consensus supporting deferral of consideration of a possible award for the organization category until the August 11 EQAC meeting.

Approval of the minutes of the June 9, 2010 meeting

Motions made:

- Frank Divita moved approval of the minutes. Johna Gagnon seconded the motion.

Record of the vote:

- Approval by unanimous vote.

Noel Kaplan provided a status update on the 2010 Annual Report on the Environment

Matters Discussed:

- Noel Kaplan provided a status update on the 2010 Annual Report on the Environment.

Motions made:

- None

Follow up actions:

- Information to be provided to chapter authors as it is received. Outlines and/or chapter drafts due to Noel Kaplan one week prior to EQAC meetings; a goal is to have at least initial drafts in advance of the September 7 meeting.

Chair and Council Member Items

Matters Discussed:

- Chairman Koch requested that the Northern Virginia Regional Commission be invited to an upcoming meeting to discuss its conservation corridors project. It was agreed that the October meeting would be preferred. Noel Kaplan will follow up.
- Chairman Koch requested that watershed planning staff be invited to the November or December meeting to provide a presentation on the wrapping up of the watershed planning process and next steps, including consideration of policy recommendations.
- Dr. Divita expressed concern that there were so few nominations for Environmental Excellence Awards. Noel Kaplan noted that there was a significant reduction from last year. It was agreed that outreach efforts would be discussed at the August meeting.
- Linda Burchfiel mentioned that on Saturday the Oakton Library was hosting a discussion on Virginia native plants.
- Johna Gagnon reported that the Accotink Watershed proposal should be publically available in September.

Motions made:

- None

Follow up actions:

- As listed above.

Staff Items

Matters Discussed:

- Kambiz Agazi mentioned that he hopes that EQAC would nominate a member to participate in the Education, Outreach, and Residential Energy Audit Steering Committee. This should be done in August.

- Noel Kaplan reminded EQAC that the next meeting will be held in conference rooms 4 and 5 at the Government Center.
- Noel Kaplan noted a July 27 public hearing on a Plan Amendment addressing disturbances to Environmental Quality Corridors. Chairman Koch stated that she'd prepare a letter in support of the effort.
- Noel Kaplan noted that Ben Swanson would be coming to the August meeting; he asked for volunteers for food and drink. Chairman Koch offered to bring a cake or cookies.
- Noel Kaplan read through the agenda for EQAC's August meeting as well as other future meetings.

Motions made:

- None

Follow up actions:

- None

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 p.m.