

Environmental Quality Advisory Council

Annual Public Hearing—January 12, 2016

Written testimony and materials

Note: Formatting of some of the written testimony shifted as it was copied into this document.

Testimony before the Fairfax Environmental Quality Advisory Council (EQAC) January 12, 2016. Eric Goplerud, Executive Director, Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions

Thank you for your public service, for your courage to speak truth to power and to creative solutions.

The nations of the world unanimously agreed, 196 to zero, that climate change is a major problem, that human activities are a major cause and that time to do something about it. On April 22, nations will affix their signatures on the agreement at a historic signing ceremony at the UN. Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake (D), the current chair of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, says that "America's mayors have called on the nations of the world to act on climate change for over a decade, recognizing the threat that climate changes presents to our safety and security, regardless of where we live." Perhaps we are taking first steps on the long and uncertain path to finding solutions. Arlington opened the first net zero school. The Arlington Initiative to Rethink Energy has public energy display of every government building and school building in the county. DC does too. Arlington and DC joined the Compact of Mayors, pledged sharp reductions. The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOC)'s annual report on air and climate, Partners on Progress, does not mention a single outstanding or notable action by Fairfax.

From the Fairfax Environmental Quality Advisory Council's annual report for 2015, it is hard to see any change in its commitment to act on climate change or any urgency to accelerate its energy management. Over the last five years of EQAC's annual reports, the lack of change to the text of the Climate Change and Energy chapters is startling and distressing. The critical Facilities Management paragraph has not changed one word in five years. The paragraph still claims the same one percent per year energy use – without any evidence of the truth of this statement which has not changed in five years. The text of the Vehicle Services paragraphs changed only one word in five years – in 2015 gas savings from the County's hybrid vehicles dropped from 60,000 (the number from the four prior years) to 16,000 – without explanation. Only one paragraph describes climate and energy action by the schools, despite \$42 million the schools spend on electricity and gas.

Eric Goplerud's statement to EQAC, January 12, 2016

Each year, the Environmental Quality Advisory Council (EQAC) makes recommendations to the County on climate change and energy and scores progress made on the previous year's recommendations. Here's a summary of the County's performance:

Year	Topic	Complete
2015	Integration of environmental improvements into routine budget	Yes
	Alternatives to waste incineration and landfill, more recycling	No
	Continue work of Private Sector Energy Task Force, engage businesses	No
	Identify impact of climate change on County to aid mitigation, adaptation	No
	Publicly display energy use of all county government buildings	No
2014	Promote periodic evaluation of building and facility GHG footprints	No
	Fund Energy Action Fairfax to educate residents on energy conservation	No
	Continue work of Private Sector Energy Task Force, engage businesses	No
2013	Integrate environmental improvements into routine budget, prioritize	Incomplete
	Alternatives to waste incineration and landfill, more recycling	Incomplete
	Promote periodic evaluation of building and facility GHG footprints	Incomplete
	Fund Energy Action Fairfax to educate residents on energy conservation	Incomplete
2012	Integrate environmental improvements into routine budget, prioritize	Yes
	Alternatives to waste incineration and landfill, more recycling	No
	Promote periodic evaluation of building and facility GHG footprints	Incomplete
	Fund Energy Action Fairfax to educate residents on energy conservation	Incomplete
2011	Explore methods to reduce GHG in new building construction	Incomplete
	Educate residents and businesses on energy conservation	Incomplete
	Alternatives to waste incineration and landfill, more recycling	Incomplete
	Promote periodic evaluation of building and facility GHG footprints	Incomplete

Of 20 recommendations made in last five years, EQAC scored **2** completed, **10** incomplete, and **8** not addressed. In 2014 and 2015, only one of 8 recommendations was met.

In 2015, EQAC made 4 recommendations, all but one had been previously recommended. EQAC report card scored none as “complete” in previous years. Is there any reason to expect a different result in next year's EQAC scorecard?

2015	Recommendations in 2015 Annual Environmental Report
1	Evaluate and address impacts of sea level rise (<i>new this year</i>)
2	Publicly display energy use of all county government buildings
3	Continue work of Private Sector Energy Task Force, engage businesses
4	Alternatives to waste incineration and landfill, more recycling

In 2014 the Yale project on climate change communication reported results of a large public opinion poll. The poll estimates that 68% of Fairfax county residents believe global warming is happening, 64% that global warming will harm future generations, 80% support funding research into renewable energy, 74% support regulation of CO2 as a pollutant, 66% set strict limits on existing coal-fired power plants, and 63% require utilities to produce 20% of electricity from renewable sources.

We ask you to urgently request that the County and the Schools step up to the challenge of climate change. The public energy display of all county buildings and county school buildings is a first step which Chairman Bulova promised in April 2015, and EQAC has recommended for four years. We recommend that a specific date be requested from the County for releasing the energy dashboard. Earth Day 2016 would be wonderful date for unveiling the public display. Schools should also be included in a public energy display.

Pope Francis, in his encyclical said: "the Earth, our home, is beginning to look more and more like an immense pile of filth. Yet all is not lost. Human beings, while capable of the worst, are also capable of rising above themselves, choosing again what is good and making a new start."

Climate change is already affecting Fairfax County. It is urgent that we act together to reduce our greenhouse gas pollution, and to prepare our community to adapt. Thank you for your commitment to finding solutions.

EQAC Climate Change and Energy Chapters – No Change in 5 Years!

2011

Facilities Management

A decade ago, the county's Facilities Management Department set an internal goal of a one percent annual reduction in energy use per square foot (kBtu/square foot) for the buildings in its inventory. Because annual savings are cumulative, reductions of over 10 percent in energy usage per square foot are expected over a 10-year period. Recent numbers show FMD achieving or exceeding this goal, despite a substantial increase in square footage. During the period Fiscal Year 2001 – FY2010, FMD's energy reduction efforts resulted in a cost avoidance of more than \$7 million.¹ The magnitude of the energy savings is illustrated by kilowatt hours avoided: in 2005, FMD's actions saved 4,232,639 kWh and saved an additional 2,398,036 kWh in 2006. Additionally, during these same years natural gas consumption was reduced by 111,440 therms per year. FMD took a wide range of actions to achieve these savings, including: the installation of energy management control systems; right-sizing heating, ventilating and air conditioning equipment; and installing efficient lighting and lighting controls.

2012

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2015

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Included with Eric Goplerud's statement to EQAC, January 12, 2016

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Jean Wright's statement to EQAC, January 12, 2016

Rev. Dr. Jean Wright
12104 Greenway Court
Fairfax, VA 22033
E-mail: revdrwright1@gmail.com

TO: EQAC Board Members

FROM: Jean Wright

RE: Comments to EQAC, Public Hearing, January 12, 2016

My name is Jean Wright. I'm an American Baptist clergy and member of the Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions. My commitment to reduction of GHG pollution with the eventual ending of fossil fuel use arises out of my Biblical understanding and call to be trustees/stewards of the Creation - including one another, and all species.

Equally, my commitment to end carbon pollution comes from growing up in Raleigh County, WV, as part of a family including generations of coal miners, and seeing first-hand the devastation to families' physical and emotional health, to the land and rivers, and to the WV economy that coal mining created. And, this was all before mountain top removal which has only intensified the devastation.

Currently, CO₂ppm in the atmosphere stands at 402. The projected trajectory continues ever higher and more rapidly. Most of us know and accept that global warming, with its attendant consequences of climate change, is happening. We believe the science. We know the need to act. We know that even with an increase of 1.5 degrees C major

changes will occur. Questions of survivability emerge. We know that morally and ethically we must act.

2015 has brought 2 events galvanizing the world. The first was Pope Francis' Encyclical "*LAUDATO SI', mi' Signore*" – "*Praise be to you, my Lord*" - "On Our Common Home". The second, happened December 12, just a few weeks ago, when, amazingly 196 countries unanimously agreed to the Paris Climate Agreement. Each country has agreed to meet levels of reduced CO2 pollution and will report every 5 years on their progress with the plan being to reduce GHGs 50% by 2030 and be carbon neutral by 2050.

Alongside this astounding action of the nations, Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions is encouraging people of faith and their congregations to take the Paris Pledge which invites individuals and congregations to reduce their GHG emission 50% by 2030 and be carbon neutral by 2030. The congregation which I attend, Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax, has just developed a Paris Pledge Project Team to begin the process. We hope to formally launch the project on Earth Day, when the United Nations will begin the nations formal signing of the Paris Climate Agreement.

Given the urgency of the climate change crisis, - and 196 nations signing the Paris Climate Agreement is a signal of that crisis - and reading your EQAC Annual Report

through the lens of global warming climate change - and applauding what has been done thus far – it isn't enough. Much more is needed. We must pick up the pace of our efforts if Fairfax County is to be resilient, adaptive, and sustainable into the global warming future.

With the Paris Agreement and the Pope's Encyclical the ball has been kicked far down the road on climate change; this is a new day, with new opportunities for climate change action and solutions. Now is the time to energize ourselves around real, visible, measurable, progress in cutting GHGs and carbon pollution. Measurable goals are needed.

Thus, my asks are 2:

1. That the Energy Dashboard be on the County website no later than May. The pace must be speedier.
2. That EQAC Call upon the Supervisors to create a task force - similar to Chairman Bulova's Private Sector Energy Task Force - whose task would be to develop a Fairfax County Comprehensive Energy Strategy along with goals and dates for implementation. And with an especial focus upon energy efficiencies. Without a comprehensive energy plan, without measures against which to strive, it seems unlikely that the work needed to guarantee a resilient, adaptive, sustainable Fairfax County would happen.

Stephen Smith, an economist from George Washington University and a friend of the Faith Alliance who was in Paris for COP21 wrote: “basic behavioral economics suggests that *“reference point setting can make a real difference. Local governments can build on the 1.5-degree goal as a framework for pushing policy and ...goals..”*

EQAC wrote in the 2015 report: “*..the development of an energy strategy remains important to Fairfax County.*”

Have a publicly visible Energy Dashboard and creating a task force to develop the Comprehensive Energy Strategy isn't just important to Fairfax County, it is critical to current and future generations of the County.

Thank you!

Testimony of Scott J. Cameron

Before the Fairfax County Environmental Quality Advisory Committee

January 12, 2016

Good evening, members of EQAC. My name is Scott Cameron, and I live in the Mount Vernon Magisterial District. I appreciate the opportunity to testify this evening. While I am a newly elected Director of the Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board, the views I express tonight are my own personal views, and do not represent official positions of the Board. That said, I am pleased to acknowledge tonight the presence of two of your EQAC members, one of whom is a current fellow Soil and Water Board Director, George Lamb, and an immediate past Director, Johna Good Gagnon, both of whom I am confident will keep me honest tonight, as they do routinely.

I would like to bring to the attention of EQAC and the Board of Supervisors a number of local issues that I believe have precedential value across Fairfax County, and several regional issues that are already significant county-wide. I discussed these issues during my campaign for elected office, and I plan on tracking them going forward.

First, I want to stress the importance of our being able to continue to reliably regulate future development in Fairfax County based on sound land use planning. The best case in point is the effort by the current majority owners of the Reston National Golf Course in the Hunter Mill District to break the Reston Master Plan and Fairfax County land use procedures and turn the golf course into a housing development. Such an unfortunate development would be wrong on multiple levels. It would be bad for environmental quality because it would increase stormwater management problems and reduce fish and wildlife habitat. It would diminish the private property rights of the homeowners who live in the area by reducing the value of their property. Finally, it would make a mockery of the County's ability to do land use planning and the ability of the public to have confidence in the integrity of that planning process. I support the efforts of Rescue Reston to protect the golf course, and I urge the Board of Supervisors to continue supporting Rescue Reston.

A related issue, in the Mount Vernon District, stems from the County accepting, some years ago, a donation of a nine acre parcel of wood land known as the Fairchild property in the Spring Bank community along Route 1 south of the Capital Beltway. The land was given to the County, and accepted by the County, for the express purpose of adding the land to the Fairfax County Park Authority system. However, a stream on the property needs to be rehabilitated, and the County's Department of Public Works and Environmental Services and the Park Authority have wasted years trying to pass each other the buck, even though they both report to the same Board of Supervisors and are agencies of the same county government. The County accepted the property under specific conditions, and it is long past time for the County to add the land to the park system and do whatever needs to be done to restore the stream. To fail to do so, is tantamount to the County admitting that it accepted the land under false pretenses; which would endanger the County's credibility in any future instances that might involve donations of real property for conservation purposes.

Second, I assert that it is important to share environmental responsibilities across the County and indeed across the entire Washington metropolitan region, and not allow any given community to bear a disproportionate or indefinite burden. In that spirit, it is important to allow the permit of the existing Lorton Landfill to expire when that permit is up in 2018. The permit should not be extended. The landfill currently accepts waste from a variety of sources across the region, and the people of Mount Vernon should not be asked or expected to continue to bear a regional burden indefinitely. Equity argues that it should be the turn of another jurisdiction to play this solid waste management role.

Thirdly, the County needs to do a better job of setting priorities for funding stormwater management projects and making the prioritization system more transparent. Recognizing that no prioritization methodology will ever be perfect, the reality is that the process of project selection now seems quite opaque. The 30 watershed plans across the County involve about 1,700 projects at a projected cost approaching \$1 billion, but at present we only have about \$40 million to spend annually. The 30 plans were developed over a number of years and vary greatly in their specificity about project costs and benefits, and whether there is any attempt at all in any given plan at prioritization even within a watershed, let alone across watersheds. If we are going to take taxpayers' hard earned money to provide public goods, then we need to be able to explain how we are making spending decisions and the environmental and economic benefits those decisions will produce for our citizens. The public deserves to be confident that the County is providing the greatest environmental benefit with the available funding. We need a systematic process with public input to establish criteria for evaluating these 1,700 projects, and then ranking them publicly based on their comparative environmental benefit per dollar invested. If other government agencies can rank projects in priority order, then so should we.

In the absence of such transparency, the County's decisions on stormwater projects may appear arbitrary and confusing. An example of the results of lack of transparency and accountability on project selection is the episode surrounding the County's decision last year to restore a reach of Dead Run in McLean Central Park in the Dranesville District. No one in the McLean community understood how and why that project was selected, why it was selected when it was selected, and why it involved cutting down dozens of trees that are valued highly by the community. The result was strong community opposition and the belated creation of a public involvement process that is still playing itself out.

Finally, I strongly urge the Board of Supervisors to enhance funding for and attention to managing invasive species across the County. Invasive species clog our lakes, ponds, and streams, threaten the ecological integrity of our forests and parks, damage our property values by killing trees lining our neighborhood streets, and pose public health risks. At the very least, the Board of Supervisors should not repeat last year's mistake of initially zeroing out the very low-cost (about \$150,000) Invasive Management Area (IMA) Program in the Environmental Improvement Program. The IMA attracts about six thousand volunteer hours each year. The value of those volunteer hours approximates the cost of the program, in the process yielding an enormous return on investment for taxpayer dollars, and helping to protect our northern Virginia ecosystems.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

Speaking Points for Mary Cortina,

At-Large Member of the Fairfax County Park Authority Board

EQAC Testimony -- January 12, 2016

Good evening and thank you for this opportunity to speak this evening. My name is Mary Cortina and I am pleased to be speaking on behalf of the Park Authority Board as an At-Large representative.

The Park Authority's 2015 Needs Assessment provided some very encouraging results which clearly reflected citizen's views that the Park Authority plays a vital role in protection of the environment. Preserving open space and the environment was ranked #1 with 60% of respondents saying it was the most important function for the Fairfax County Park Authority to do for the future of Fairfax County. Furthermore, they ranked it #1 for themselves and for their households, saying it was slightly more important than opportunities for their physical health & fitness. These results are significant and show residents value open space and the environment as they do other community endeavors like schools, roads and baseball teams.

The survey also asked respondents what they would fund with tax dollars and we found that restoring and maintaining natural areas was ranked third highest. We went further and asked what taxpayers would do for parks with \$100. Respondents were willing to spend \$18 of that \$100 to conserve and maintain natural and historic resources and another \$17 to purchase open space for a combined total of \$35, or \$6 more than the last time we conducted this survey 10 years ago. Our analysis of the findings: citizens want us to

purchase parkland for open space and fund the management of the natural areas in our care.

As many of us know, ownership is simply one step in ensuring natural resource protection. Managing our natural capital is critical to the success of sustainable preservation. Therefore, we sincerely appreciate the continued advocacy and support by EQAC of the Park Authority's Natural Resource Management Plan that provides the guidance for how we protect and preserve our resources.

Over the years, EQAC has steadfastly included requests for budgetary and staffing support from the County in order to implement the Natural Resource Management Plan. I am very pleased to report progress in meeting our staffing challenges. As you may recall, the Plan was divided into four management themes which include: inventory and planning, protecting our natural capital, managing wild populations and restoring ecosystems and fostering stewardship and expanding natural capital.

A strategic approach to the implementation of these four themes is to have a program manager oversee each of the areas. There is currently one ecologist who is managing one of the themes and in the next several months, we will be hiring two more ecologists to manage two of the themes as well as replacing our recently vacated IMA Coordinator position. This will bring the department from four merit ecologists to five merit ecologists in the current calendar year. The Natural Resource Management workforce is also supported and growing with several highly qualified seasonal ecologists.

How are we funding these positions? The Park Authority has continued to seek alternative funding for natural capital projects. In FY14, the Park Authority Board authorized 20% of revenue generated from telecommunications leases to be allocated for natural and cultural resource projects. This action by the Park Board, has resulted in funding of \$500,000 over the past two years. There has also been continued funding support from the county's Environmental Improvement Program and bond funding for large natural capital projects. And the Board of Supervisors continues to provide support for the Invasive Area Management Program (IMA). Clearly, the additional funding is making a difference in our ability to not just warehouse acquired property but to act as stewards of this land.

These annual reports to EQAC have included updates on the "Helping Our Land Heal/Forest Management" pilot project which was initially approved and funded in December, 2011. I am pleased to report that the project has resulted in the development of practices and processes that can be replicated in other parks and forest stands throughout the county. Our staff now has experience and the ability to apply these methods to promote natural regeneration, manage for natural species and communities and limit impacts from human activities, deer and invasive species. This model project will be replicated throughout the park system over years to come.

So that is the good news; but as always there are more tasks than dollars available to accomplish them. We are challenged to fully address the overall goals of the Natural Resource Management Plan. However, progress is being made, largely due to partners such as EQAC. You have kept beating the drum and we greatly appreciate your advocacy.

I would love to share other projects and initiatives that are underway but I recognize the time limits we have tonight. So I would like to conclude with a sincere recognition of the support and encouragement that EQAC provides to the environmental initiatives of the Park Authority. As the largest landholders in Fairfax County, where 70% of parkland is natural areas, our partnership and guidance from EQAC on environmental issues is critical to our success in managing these areas for long-term sustainability for our residents. Though there is still a long way to go in the continued stewardship of our resources, working in conjunction with all of you gives us great confidence in our future efforts.

Thank you.

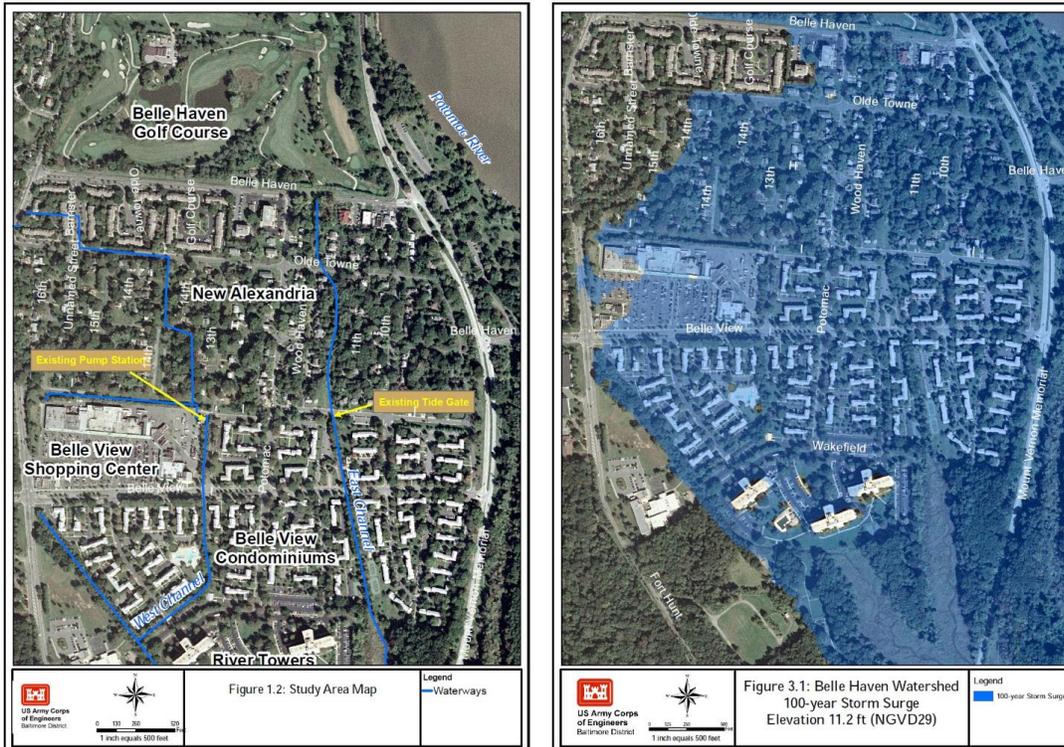
Presentation to Fairfax County Environmental Quality Advisory Council (EQAC)

January 12, 2016

Steven A. Larsen
6413 Potomac Avenue
New Alexandria, Fairfax County

Ladies and gentlemen of the Council, Fairfax County Staff and audience members:

My name is Steve Larsen. I am a 25 year resident of the New Alexandria/Belle View community. I'd like to thank you for the opportunity tonight to address the Council on the issue flooding.....and the impact that sea level rise and rapidly escalating flood insurance cost has on our community.



New Alexandria/Belle View lies at the far eastern edge of Fairfax County just south Olde Town Alexandria and borders the Potomac River. Our roots go back hundreds of years – first as farmland and subsequently as a bustling industrial town in the late 19th and early 20th century complete with a hotel, post office, and factory worker homes.....and a trolley stop on the line from downtown DC to Mount Vernon. The developers of New Alexandria owned the line. The authorization of the

George Washington Parkway in the 1920s doomed the rail line and New Alexandria went bankrupt. The north half became what is now the Belle Haven Country Club. Individual owners began purchasing lots in the southern half as vacation property. However, it was quickly realized that this community with its close proximity to Alexandria city and Washington, DC was a great place to build a home & raise a family in a rural setting.....right on the shores of Potomac River.

The earliest present-day homes date to early 30s. I purchased my 1930 home from the original family over 2 decades ago. The post war boom and subsequent infill now account for nearly 250 single family homes in New Alexandria represented by two citizen's associations. The land south of New Alexandria was developed first as the Belle View and the River Tower apartments. They have subsequently converted to condominium ownership with nearly 1,500 units combined. A shopping center occupies the western edge of the community. New Alexandria/Belle View has a rich history and great sense of place. In all.....it's an amazing place to live.

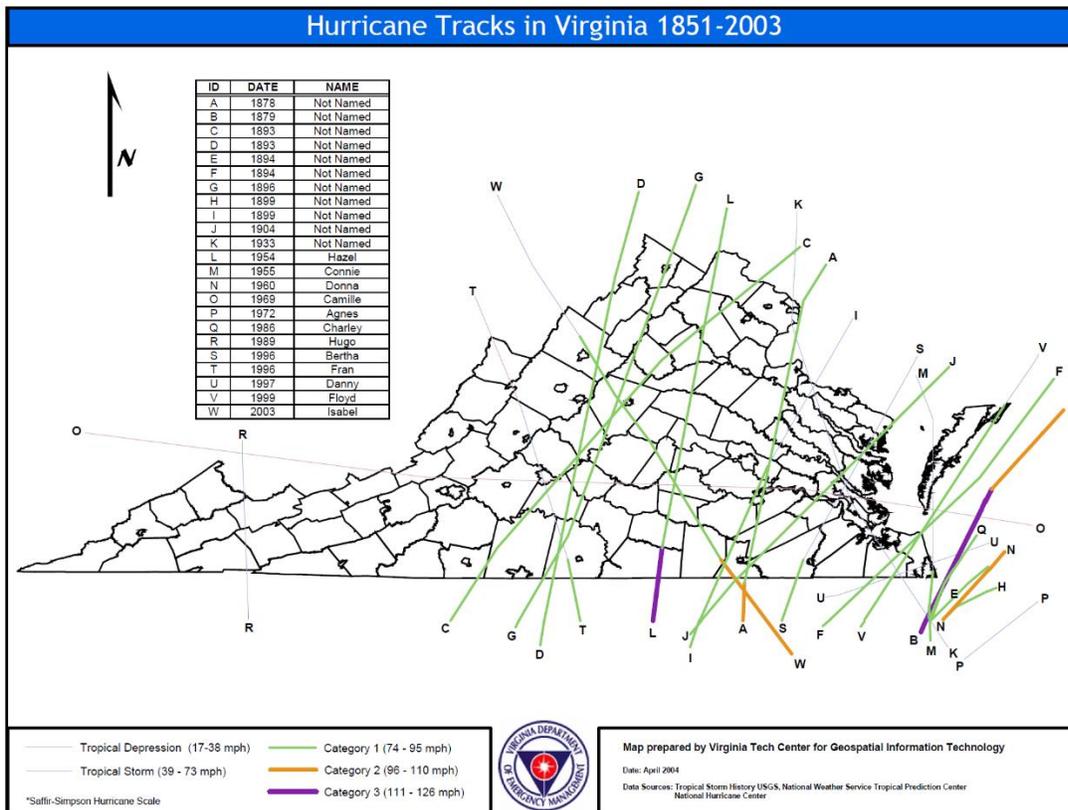
The graphic on the right shows the extent of the hundred-year flood plain, delineated at 11 feet above sea level. Tidal creeks transect our community from south to north. Much of the land lies between 7 & 10 feet above sea level.....however some is as low as 4 or 5'. The County funded a levee, flood gate & pumping station project in the 80s & 90s to protect lowest lying homes on 11th, 13th, 14th & 15th and I Streets to about 7.5' above sea level. This system and the 8' elevation of the GW Parkway constitute our current level of protection from the Potomac River.

After the tidal surge from hurricane Isabelle in 2003 inundated the New Alexandria/Belle view community, we have studied the issue of whether we should protect ourselves from future floods, and if so how. Most residents agree that something should be done. Isabel's 6 and ½' tidal surge pushed the Potomac's waters to over 9 and ½ feet above sea level - a foot and half higher than the elevation of the GW Parkway. Damage to property exceeded tens of millions of dollars.....in addition to the economic cost of businesses closed for extended periods of time and displacement of residents while repairs and reconstruction were made over the following months and years.

In the early years that followed Isabelle, now retired Supervisor Hyland met with residents to address the flooding problem. Gerry went to bat for us and obtained funding in 2006. Fairfax County Stormwater Management Division under the leadership of Don Demitius has led the effort

with the US Army Corp of Engineers to design feasible protection systems for the community. The Corps has completed multiple preliminary designs.....all include various combinations of levees, walls, gates and pumping stations. A few years ago, Mr. Hyland appointed representatives from each of the effected communities to a task force.....with the charge of evaluating USACE proposals and gaining additional feedback from residents. I represent New Alexandria on this Task Force. Additionally.....since we border National Park Service property, input & coordination from & with the Park Service is necessary. The Task Force has met with our previous and current Congressional Representatives, Jim Moran and Don Beyer. I won’t be addressing specific attributes of the designs.....the Corps reports are available on the County Website.....there are many pros and cons with each. What I will speak about this evening is the effect that sea level rise and rapidly escalating flood insurance premiums has on us. Opinions vary throughout the community. But as a trained scientist, and experienced designer and building contractor.....I am of the opinion that we must act soon. Several facts are sure.....

Virginia Historical Hurricane Paths



At the present time.....our greatest danger is tidal surge from tropical storms. The above graphic shows hurricane paths dating back to the mid 19th century. When these counter-clockwise rotating storms track to the west of the Chesapeake Bay, southerly winds push and hold water in the Bay and its tributaries....including the Potomac. Over a dozen such storms have had this trajectory dating back to 1851.

Chart of Flood Elevations and Impact of Sea Level Rise – New Alexandria/Belle View

Tidal** Events since 1846: New Alexandria/Belle View						
Date	Flood Elevation Normalized*** 1963 Report or Actual for New Alexandria	Sea Level Rise			Storm	Notes:
		1 foot	2 feet	4 feet		
1933, August 23	10.5	11.5	12.5	14.5	Chesapeake & Potomac Hurricane of 1933 Cat 2	No available damage reports, but 11 inches higher than Isabelle. 200+ homes, BV condos and shopping center would be under water.
2003, September	9.6	10.6	11.6	13.6	Hurricane Isabelle	Widespread damage, Federal Disaster declared
1893 October 13	9.3	10.3	11.3	13.3	Un-named	Comparable to Isabelle. Wide spread damage although few structures existed at that time
1954, October 15	8.2	9.2	10.2	12.2	Hurricane Hazel	13th, 14th and parts of 11th and 15th Street saw flooding.
1996, September 4	7.5	8.5	9.5	11.5	Hurricane Fran	Post current levee, pumping station. Significant damage to homes damage would have occurred to homes on 13th, 14th and parts of 11th and 15th Street
1876, September 18	7.4	8.4	9.4	11.4	Un-named	Unknown damage
2011, September 5	7.0	8.0	9.0	11.0	T. S. Lee	River flooding @ full moon high tide. Water came within 1 foot of topping Belle Haven Road levee. Modest damage throughout community would have resulted.
1896, September 30	6.5	7.5	8.5	10.5	Un-named	Unknown damage
1955, August 18	6.5	7.5	8.5	10.5	Hurricane Diane	Unknown damage
1846, October 13	6.4	7.4	8.4	10.4	Un-named	Unknown damage
1955, August 12	6.1	7.1	8.1	10.1	Hurricane Connie	Unknown damage
1893, August 29	6.0	7.0	8.0	10.0	Un-named	Unknown damage
1952, September 1	6.0	7.0	8.0	10.0	Un-named	Unknown damage

NOTES

** In addition to tidal events, fluvial (rain) events have affected New Alexandria, most notably Agnes in 1972, Great Potomac Flood of 1936 & Great Flood of 1889. Large portions of 13th and 14th Streets were under water during Agnes.

*** Data taken at Pier 4, US Coast Guard and Geodetic survey gauge (formerly Lighthouse Wharf on the Washington Channel) May 15, 1963 US Army Corps of Engineers Report. The 1963 report normalizes flood elevations for observed floods at New Alexandria 0.5' lower than Pier 4 datum.

Shading Key:

	Up to 8.0' ASL
	Up to 9.0' ASL
	Up to 10.0' ASL
	Up to 11.0' ASL
	Up to 12.0' ASL
	Over 12.0'

7.5: Hurr. Fran and TS Lee would have caused widespread flooding w/o 1980s Fairfax County flood control measures.

7.0: Flood gate, pumping station and levees protect to approx. 7.5-8' ASL

The above chart illustrates the past 170 years of storm data in New Alexandria/Belle View. The second column shows historical river elevations. As you can see.....Isabelle recorded the only the second highest elevation at 9.6’ above sea level. The Chesapeake and Potomac Hurricane of 1933.....prior to all but a handful of current homes..... rose to 10 and ½’. Over this period.....our flood plain has experienced 4 tidal surges over 8’ above sea level.....an average of

once every 43 years. 8' is considered our 50 year flood elevation for our community and the elevation of the GW Parkway.

Most East Coast municipalities are now using planning models that anticipate a 1.5 to 2 foot rise by 2050, and a 2 to 4 foot rise by 2100. The latest Chesapeake Bay and Tidewater reports indicate even potentially higher levels. The next three columns on the chart illustrate projected river elevations given a 1, 2 and 4 foot sea level rise. The darker the shading.....the higher the river. By mid-century, with a 2 foot rise, we might expect a GW Parkway-topping flood every 13 years on average. With a 4 foot rise, we'd regularly flood with each high tide. I'd also like to add that..... extreme rainfall events coupled with sea level rise could pose a future problem with only minor tidal surges on the order of 2-4'.

Home values and flood insurance premiums. Flood insurance is mandatory for any home with a mortgage. Presently, to fully insure structure & contents of an older home with the National Flood Insurance Program it costs between \$2,200 and \$3,500. This is double the rate paid before Isabelle. With the passage of the Biggert-Waters Act in 2012 and its revisions, all Federal subsidies will disappear over the next several years. Barring additional costly hurricane seasons on the Eastern Seaboard.....that could push rates even higher.....we've been informed to expect a near doubling of present rates over the next several years. My home's current, unsubsidized rate is already over \$5,000. Some insurance experts are projecting 5-figure rates for communities that share our flood rating. A decade ago.....when premiums were in the \$1,000 range.....insurance was an inconvenient nuisance....a relatively small cost to live here. However, at some point in the not so distant future.....when they become 15, 20, or 25% of carrying costs.....they will likely have a very large negative impact on home values.

Once every 43 years.....or once every 13 years.....flooding has an enormous impact on us. Our question is.....at what point when it becomes a regular event.....do we do something about it.

I was delighted to see that your 2015 Annual Report lead with a discussion on sea level rise and greenhouse gas reductions. While sea level rise will have many implications for Fairfax Countythis community of 3,000 residents, dozens of businesses, and a tax base of over \$500,000,000certainly stands out as the one with the largest at stake.

Fairfax County has studied, funded and begun to implement the \$30 million flood mitigation solution for the Huntington Community. Congress has approved and partially funded the \$200 million Dyke Marsh restoration project.....our neighbor to the southeast and south. I urge this Council to continue keeping us at forefront of your discussions and reports to the Board of Supervisors. 2050 is a mere 34 years away. Projects like this take decades to design, approve, fund and implement.

I'd like to thank the Council for the extra time you've afforded me tonight.....and I'll answer any questions you may have.

Question: Have other protections besides walls and levees been considered.

Answer (SAL): Yes, the USACE reports studied flood proofing homes, filling in basement and elevating homes. Large, down river surge protection system like those in London and elsewhere have not been directly studied. Those systems might protect us with today's river elevations, but according to the Corps they will have little effect with a higher sea level. Dyke Marsh is to the southeast and south of New Alexandria/Belle View with tidal creeks running through our community. The Dyke Marsh restoration project will have a somewhat of a positive benefit with small tidal anomalies, but would have done nothing for us during Isabelle. The surge exceeded the elevation of the Parkway. Nothing but an elevated barrier surrounding the community.....and flood gates/pumping stations on these tidal creeks to the south will protect us.

Question: You mentioned raising homes. What about that?

Answer: The 2008 report addressed a cost to raise homes and fill in basements. It estimated the average cost at around \$120,000 per home. In reality, most of the homes constructed from 1930 through the 1970s are un-reinforced brick and block construction. Their estimate was very low. In most cases, the cost far exceeds the value of the structure....if feasible at all for some homes. Raising the Belle View Condos was not calculated. But as an experienced builder, I can attest that it would be cost-prohibitive.

Question: Are the Condos included in your \$500,000,000 estimate of tax base?

Answer: Yes, I used a rough calculation of current selling prices for Belle View and River Towers.

Additional comments from SAL: As I mentioned earlier, I'm speaking tonight as a resident of New Alexandria. I and the task force will be briefing our new Supervisor, Dan Storck on the issue in the coming weeks and months. This is a very complex issue with 3 communities represented by 4 homeowner's associations.....and a shopping center. Additionally, we border National Park Service land, and we'll need their support to solve this issue with an environmentally and aesthetically sound solution.

My name is Kris Unger, and I am the Primary Conservator for the [Friends of Accotink Creek](#), a local watershed group dedicated to protecting, promoting, and restoring the Accotink Creek Watershed. We work with schools, communities, companies, government entities, NGOs, and volunteers on projects including stream cleanups, stream and habitat restorations, citizen science, advocacy, education, community engagement, and plant and mussel rescues.

Our motto is "Find just one other person who cares", and I definitely feel like I'm among people who care here. As a watershed advocate, I'm not used to coming to meetings and standing up and speaking out with the message "Carry on!", but that's what I'm going to do today.

The Friends of Accotink Creek fully support [EQAC's priority recommendations to the Board of Supervisors](#), namely continuing and increasing funding for environmental programs, and developing policies to address climate change.

We especially appreciate the EQAC report's emphasis on the importance of working with the Park Authority to support more resources for, and focus on, Natural Resources, starting with implementing Phase 1 of the Natural Resources Management Plan.

I often describe Accotink Creek as an ecological jewel in Fairfax County, one that despite the thousand cuts of human impact remains a very special and important place. I spent a few days this fall wading through Accotink Creek with scientists, as part of a freshwater mussel survey. We have been rescuing mussels stranded after floods for years, and I fully expected to find that they were just barely hanging on, since we only ever say a few at a time.

To my amazement, the State of the Freshwater Mussel in Accotink Creek is Strong, an estimated 10,000 individuals. And they're amazing beings, living up to 80 years, using American eels to travel. The female mussels lure in the eels by mimicking prey, and then squirt out fertilized eggs, which attach to the eel and drop off in a new location days later. And American eels are catadromous, they swim out to the Sargasso Sea (which is now a trash vortex) to breed, and the babies swim being to Accotink Creek. So you have a stationary being that uses an ocean migrator to travel in the Creek!

Amazing. I just wanted to give you a taste of some of the wonderful things going on out there. Experiences like this drive my commitment to working for nature, and I'm grateful to the many partners in this room and throughout the County who are working to protect the environment. We are stronger together!

When I'm working with youth in nature, I often find myself forced to explain the things that have resulted in the Anthropocene, an era of mass extinctions and devastating climate change caused by human activities. It's hard to find a message of hope within that narrative, but what I tell them is "Nature always wins". The only way for us to create a sustainable path forward for us and all the trillions of beings that we share this world with is for us to work with nature.

We are stronger together!

I've been to California and Seattle recently.

Californians grow food in their front yards. They have solar panels covering their high school parking lots.

In Seattle they are using "SEA Streets"= Street Edge Alternatives, which are beautiful, to reduce the flow of water from their roadways into Puget Sound...there are many opportunities to live better in our County. I had a different talk planned but with a strong late research effort by NK, I have refocused to two of my pet peeve's which are being solved in California and Seattle.

1) we need more edible landscaping, especially fruit trees. According to an NPR report in "Salt on your Plate" from May 21, 2015-- food forests are cropping up in many cities."Fruit trees produce food, but also provide shade, keep greenhouse gases out of the atmosphere, improve water quality and may even [deter crime](#). Advocates say they also have a longer lasting impact on communities than vegetable beds." Fairfax County needs to start planting fruit trees.

2) Our streams are still handling too much water too fast when it rains. Can FC please begin to build "SEA Streets" and LID parking lots without regular storm drains? New buildings should not increase water run-off to our streams. We need to implement the same water wise restrictions used in DC.

We have the opportunity to feed people with our public spaces if we turn them into food forests. It's time we stop growing grass. And we must slow down and filter our water. The C-Bay needs us to accomplish these two tasks.

Thank you. Kay Fowler

A License to Destroy: Fairfax County is giving Auto Service Stations a License to Destroy Revitalization Areas by Approving Exterior Auto Lifts that allow vehicles to be repaired outside constantly in Commercial Districts.



What does it look like?

Initially ? First, done illegally, then Court order, then through Special Exception Amendment in hopes to get the owner to clean site, but mistakenly, it is a license to harm.

Why is it silent? Gets approved at a land use committee without public notice, not normally near a residence, business and commercial property owner voices not heard, adverse impacts not understood, and expert advice is ignored.

Adverse Impact?

1. Noise Pollution – Repair cars on lifts and tools exceed the Maximum Noise Volume standards
2. Visual Pollution – No buffering around lifts, other than a row of tree on the property line, lifts tower above trees, and inherently more visual pollution for parts, tanks, tools, parts, etc., and usually comes with unscreened storage containers.
- 3.Environment Pollution – chemical and toxin release directly into the ground water and storm water, no enclosure around exterior lifts; toxins directly into the air, harmful smells
4. Public Safety – Oil spills, parts, tools, around the lifts, with no screening to prevent bystanders from walking into the area and slipping or tripping, major OSHA violations
5. Zoning Ordinance – violation of Zoning Ordinance 9-006(3) not harmonious with and adversely affects the use of neighboring properties
- 6.Parking – can get around parking tabulation by “stating fewer employees” and thus more lifts, accepted argument by County staff

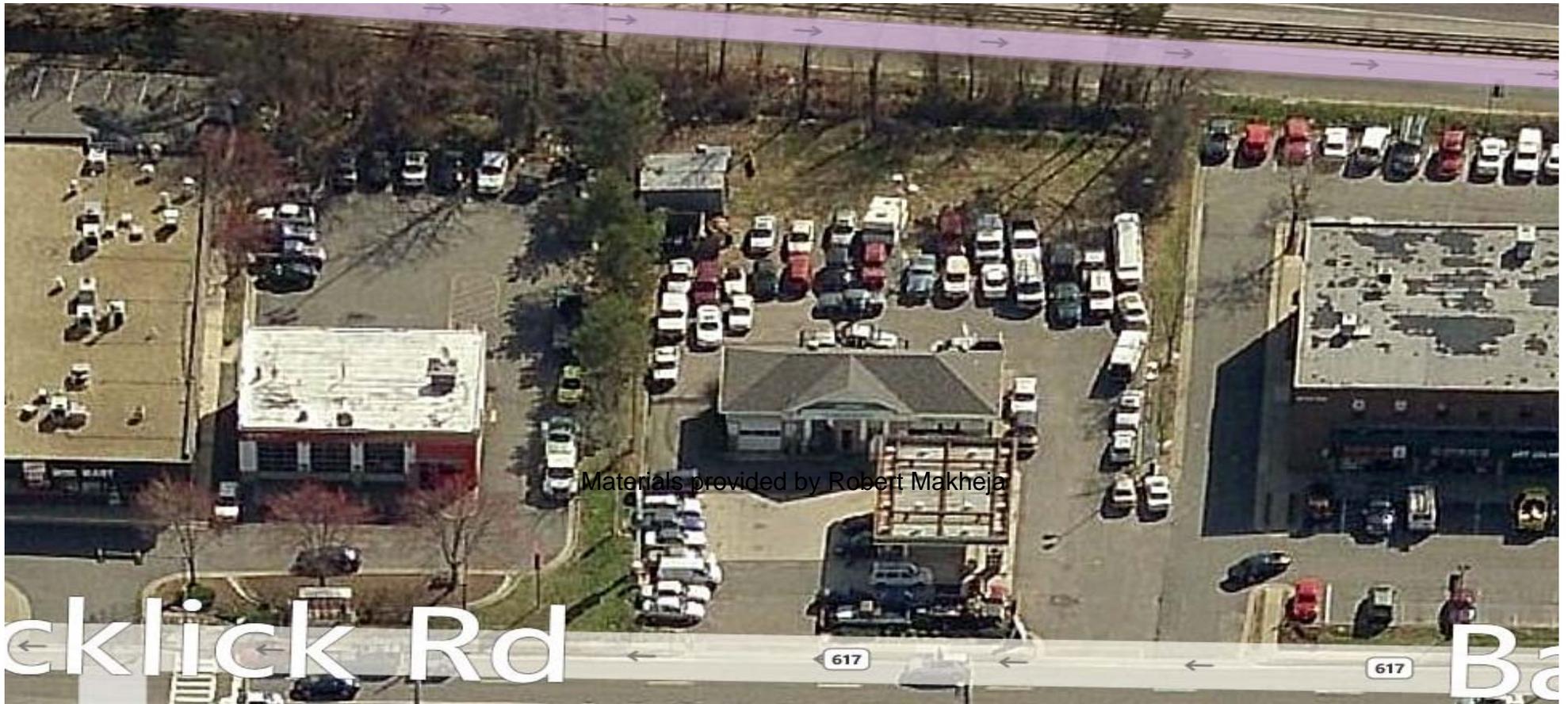
Code Enforcement? Ineffective as resolution is temporary, and delay for enforcement is 4 weeks before they even come to site, harm done.

Gas Stations with Exterior Lifts and the collateral damage that comes with It.



Materials provided by Robert Makheja

In the heart of commercial districts – next to offices, restaurants, and shopping



What can EQAC do to help the community ?

- Recommend to your District Supervisors to defer any Special Exception Amendments on exterior lifts until EQAC or a task force can do a full study on them
- County Department of Planning and Zoning, Office of Community Revitalization, and Chamber of Commerce consistently oppose outdoor lifts, yet these pleas are often ignored.
- Passing the next one up for vote with the Board of Supervisor in February will set a precedence, and open the flood gates for many more applications.
 - SEA 87-L-012-02 Lee District – 6703 Backlick Road, Springfield, Virginia
- Many gas station owners are watching the outcome of above Special Exception and if Board of Supervisor approves it in February, then they have the precedence to get all of them approved in any commercial district, regardless of visual, noise, environmental, safety, zoning requirements and with minimal development conditions.

Surprise in the High Arctic

The storm came from the Pacific ,threw _tornados at Texas, passed Greenland pulling a thousand mile warm winds west of Spain, and then past UK, up beyond Iceland, over Svalbard and into the high Arctic itself. Temperature just missed above freezing two weeks ago at the North Pole.

Is this the beginning of the end of winter increasing the emission threats in the Artic? This storm looks like the storms in James Hansen's book "The Storms of my Grandchildren." Dr. Jennifer Francis said, In fact, we have more than enough indicators at this time to show that something is quite dreadfully wrong.

With increases in storms, flooding, droughts, mega fires, permafrost melt, and new changing climate surprises, we need to pause to evaluate our priority actions.

We must combine the ending of use of fossil fuels along with the removal of fossil fuel emissions from the atmosphere and safely sequester them into the earth, and it must be done now. We need to act before our planet gets too hot.

Definitely the majority at Paris saw the path we need to do, but there were no binding commitments, nor a carbon tax. Yet we have good renewables and we are just beginning to ramp up as Wall Street begins investing more in solar and wind.

However, there is not a turn to the right as our State fossil fuel industry is requesting 4 new pipelines and multiple gas power plants, and our country with low cost oil practically all of the 17 million cars bought last year are running on fossil fuels.

The removal of atmospheric emissions is just begging. There is a little movement, but to get 10 gigatons yearly will need all methods to capture and sequester the carbon dioxide safely. However, there's concern of enough placement, and how long will it take to ramp up to speed, as even if we start now at 10 gigatons a year, it will take 200 years to take down the current 2,000 gigatons already above.

Please help our country and the world to mobilize immediately to move to renewables and remove the emissions from the atmosphere before our tenacity gets broken in the ruins of our lives as the amplification of ravaging heat is now upon us threatening our civilization, and life on Earth.

N. Bjork

1. 11.2016

1gigaton of CO₂ is a billion tons in perspective: 12,000 pound elephants tusk to tail from here to the moon and half back = 418,000 miles.

The Climate Mobilization

Finally there's an organization acknowledging a worldwide **Emergency** demanding mobilization in tackling our greatest global threat: climate disruption. Both fossil fuel reduction and atmospheric CO₂ removal must be addressed by our government immediately, and the task must be similar to what Roosevelt did after our country was seriously threatened by Japan's and Germany's declarations of war.

Worldwide harmful impacts are increasing at an alarming pace. What will we have to do to have a successful solution? **The Climate Mobilization** supplies powerful procedures for immediate action – it's our best way to address this oncoming catastrophe. In this upcoming 2016 elections they will be involved with all levels of candidates from city governments to our presidency.

Take a look at **Climate Mobilization's** website.

- In the first slide "Introducing the Mobilization" please click Intro Slide Show. Then scroll down a bit in the black page and click the arrow on the right to see all the 20 slides. Please note: to get to the last picture and then back to front page click the arrows in the pictures on right side.
- When the first slide again comes up click the blue button HOME.
- Back at the front page again, scroll down passing one full black page to the slide "Read and Take the Pledge."
- Note on scrolling down some of the 7 slides there are links to more information to consider to take the pledge.
- Look under: **About Us** see the Team, Advisory Board, Endorsements, Press, and Mobilized Elected Leaders.
- Look under: **Learn More** read "The Transformative Power of Climate Truth," and the "Case for Climate Mobilizations," and the Blog of The Climate Mobilization.
- Look under: **Mobilizers** see Actions Pages, Discussion, Materials, and Event Calendar.

www.theclimatemobilization.org/

Immediate action now is our best chance to save us and our planet. Please Help.

Mayor R. Rex Parris

Included with Nils Bjork's statement to EQAC, January 12, 2016

Elected Mayor: April 2008

Re-elected Mayor: April 2010 and April 2012

Term Expires: April 2016

Lancaster native R. Rex Parris became the City's third directly-elected mayor in April 2008. His immediate aggressive stance regarding the overall well-being of Lancaster residents quickly generated dramatic results which have gained nationwide recognition. Due to his fervent dedication to progress, strong leadership style and many accomplishments toward the evolution of his hometown, Parris was re-elected in 2010 and 2012. The latter extended his mayoral duties for another four years.

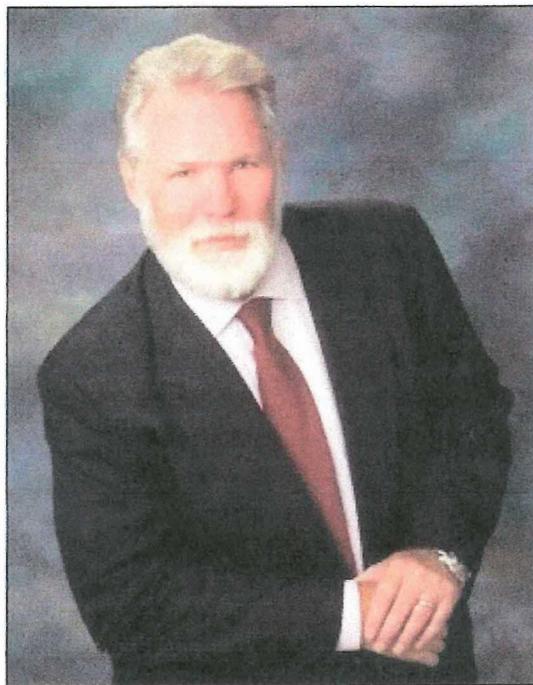
Upon taking office, Mayor Parris embarked on a mission to dramatically reduce Lancaster's crime rate. As a result of his steadfast resolve, the City's crime rate plummeted nearly 40% since his election.

Community health and wellness issues have also been at the top of the Mayor's list. He has worked aggressively with City staff, the medical community, and faith-based organizations in Lancaster to foster a three-pronged approach to tackling total-health problems facing neighborhoods with high needs, primarily due to socio-economic status. The result is an extraordinary presence in eight local areas which now have Neighborhood Impact Homes, Wellness Homes and Community Gardens.

Maintaining a tight-knit community focus, Parris served as the catalyst for Lancaster's downtown renaissance which completely transformed the heart of the city into a massive cultural epicenter. This community gathering place not only hosts annual mega-events such as the Streets of Lancaster Grand Prix, BooLVD Halloween & Harvest Festival, and Magical BLVD Christmas; it also offers seasonal concerts, a weekly farmers market, and daily one-of-a-kind shopping and dining experiences.

The municipal fortitude demonstrated during the worst economic downturn in more than 75 years was taken up a notch with the repositioning of Lancaster as a global leader in the alternative energy realm. This shift came about when Mayor Parris developed and implemented his vision of making Lancaster the Alternative Energy Capital of the World. His numerous successes in this arena have garnered worldwide media attention on an ongoing basis.

Mayor Parris has led the City into forward-thinking unique partnerships with leaders from all over the world. The City of Lancaster worked very closely with eSolar to bring its 20-acre 5MW Sierra SunTower solar project from conception to completion in just 14 months. In August 2009, eSolar proudly held the grand opening of the nation's only operating solar thermal power tower plant in the United States. China-based technology and manufacturing giant Build Your Dreams (BYD), one of the world's largest suppliers of advanced battery technology, was paired with KB Home, one of the nation's premier homebuilders, to create a never-before-attempted affordable solar energy housing community. Having facilitated this project, the City of Lancaster was able to unveil a modestly priced energy-efficient home designed to generate more power than it uses. The grand opening event was held in July 2010 at KB Home's Alamosa community in West Lancaster. Multiple communities have since followed suit.



The solar journey continued when all of the City's municipal buildings were converted to solar power. This jump-started the Solar Lancaster Program implemented in partnership with Solar City to provide an affordable solar financing program for homeowners, business owners and nonprofit organizations. The Solar Lancaster program was designed to simplify the process of going solar by reducing energy bills, offering several financing options and discounting solar pricing, while providing custom solar system designs and monitoring.

Additional solar partnerships spearheaded by Mayor Parris include entering into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) and a power purchase agreement (PPA) with US Topco Energy, Inc. Parris also expanded the City's relationship with clean-energy investment firm Beautiful Earth Group to embark on making Lancaster one of the first "Net Zero Cities" in the world. By bridging local assets and development interests with viable international partnering opportunities in the "green" space, Parris has effectively generated endless possibilities for Lancaster's economic future.

Outside of his municipal reigns, Parris is the co-founder of the R. Rex Parris law firm, which he established in 1985 with his wife Carrol.

A graduate of Antelope Valley Community College, as well as the prestigious Scholar's Program at the University of California - Santa Barbara, Parris earned his Juris Doctor Degree from Southwestern University School of Law. He was admitted to the California State Bar in 1980.

Thankful for their continued blessings, Carrol and Rex generously support local charities, law enforcement, and educational scholarships.

Included with Nils Bjork's statement to EQAC, January 12, 2016

Fairfax County Environmental Quality Advisory Council

January 12, 2016

Comments provided by Monica Billger

Virginia Conservation Advocate, Audubon Naturalist Society

Thank you for your service to our community and for giving concerned citizens, organizations, and businesses the opportunity to speak with you today. I would also like to express my deep appreciation for all the effort that goes into creating *The Annual Report on the Environment*. It is a valuable resource for citizens and organizations in the county and beyond.

I'm here tonight as a concerned Fairfax County resident, as well as the Virginia Conservation Advocate for the Audubon Naturalist Society, the oldest independent environmental organization in the Washington region. A pioneer in linking conservation activities with environmental education – ANS is committed to remaining “on duty” in Fairfax and NOVA in advocating for local clean water protections, building on the huge foundational work done over the years by Stella Koch.

- ANS programs and community outreach efforts in Virginia are dedicated to supporting/ensuring the success of the Fairfax County stormwater permit program.
- ANS believes continued funding for stormwater retrofits - to implement the County's MS4 stormwater permit - is crucial. This permit requires 30 retrofit projects to be completed by 2020. We stand ready to continue to support robust funding and public engagement.
- In supporting the implementation of the 30 watershed plans, ANS will be engaging citizens through a multi-year, layered effort throughout Fairfax County. Our targeted approach correlates with the division of Human Services Regions. Our community outreach, grassroots advocacy and environmental stewardship program (Communities for Clean Streams) will pilot within Region 1 this year.

Many organizations and environmental activists today lament what appears to be a decrease in activism and a homogenous body of traditional environmental groups. There is a drive to increase outreach and to diversify the environmental advocacy community. But I ask, how can we connect individuals with the environment and diversify our advocacy community when urban neighborhoods and schools lack adequate tree cover, woodland parks, and other natural areas? Within the county there exists a visible discrepancy between median income areas and outdoor/environmental connectivity. Schools within higher income communities are developing outdoor learning centers and pursuing green curriculum, yet those in lower income areas often have limited outdoor learning opportunities, if any. The negative impact of decreased access to outdoor exploration, education, and recreation has ramifications far beyond environmental literacy.

“The term “nature-deficit disorder” was coined by author Richard Louv in his book “Last Child in the Woods” to describe what happens to young people who become disconnected from their natural world. Louv links this lack of nature to some of the most disturbing childhood trends, such as the rises in obesity, attention disorders, and depression.”

Recommendation I.

- **ANS strongly recommends the county implement the natural landscaping policy on county and public school properties** as outlined in a 2005 report at the direction of then-Chairman Gerry Connolly. Implementing this policy would increase the capacity for ALL schools in the county to provide outdoor learning opportunities, not just those in more affluent communities. Natural landscaping would also improve stormwater management as well as a host of other ecological services.

Recommendation II.

- ANS believes Fairfax County's tree canopy is a vital county asset that reduces stormwater runoff, improves air quality, reduces the county's carbon footprint, enhances quality of life, contributes to savings on energy bills, and serves as habitat for wildlife. For these reasons, we **strongly urge the county to update the tree action plan by strengthening the tree ordinance and canopy goals.**

Recommendation III.

- Maintaining a healthy environment is central to increasing quality of life. Poor environmental quality has its greatest impact on people whose health status is already at risk. For a more comprehensive view, environmental status reports should also address the societal and environmental factors that increase the likelihood of exposure and disease and improve health and wellness. **ANS would like to see additional information in the *The Annual Report on the Environment* that correlates public health information with environmental data** (i.e. increased asthma incidence in areas of high development/low tree canopy). It would also be beneficial if an EQAC member was able to represent public health interests as they relate to the environment.

Recommendation IV.

- **Currently SLAF is zeroed out in the Governor's budget. We are asking EQAC to encourage a patron to put forth a budget amendment asking for \$50-million annually for the next two year (2016/2017).**

The Stormwater Local Assistance Fund (SLAF) provides matching grants to local governments for the planning, design, and implementation of stormwater best management practices that address cost efficiency and commitments related to reducing water quality pollutant loads. Fairfax County received approximately \$4.5-million in funds in FY2015, with an additional half million provided to Fairfax City. This is a critical program for localities.

V. Final Point of Interest/Concern: Fort Belvoir has issued a Supplemental Environmental Assessment for a proposed housing plan that would account for a loss of 31 vegetated acres. It would also increase impervious surface in a region categorized by Fairfax County as a watershed protected area. In accordance with comments from Catherine Ledec, President of Friends of Huntley Meadows, we respectfully request the county work with Fort Belvoir in order to receive a full environmental impact statement for the proposed project.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Written testimony for EQAC's public hearing—Randy Atkins (e-mail submitted December 14, 2015)

-----Original Message-----

From: randy.atkins@cox.net [<mailto:randy.atkins@cox.net>]

Sent: Monday, December 14, 2015 1:13 PM

To: EQAC@fairfax.gov

Cc: Thrasher, Tiffany J.

Subject: Fwd: Fwd: Environmental Quality Advisory Council public hearing

I would like the Fairfax County Environmental Quality Advisory Council to be made aware of the issue I outlined in the Washington Post piece at the link below...

Tysons Corner road plan runs counter to visions of a green city:

https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/tysons-corner-road-plan-runs-counter-to-visions-of-a-green-city/2014/07/11/15df93a0-0771-11e4-8a6a-19355c7e870a_story.html

The attachment I have included in this email illustrates the point, clearly showing current plans to run a major 4+ lane roadway right through the Chesapeake Bay Resource Protection Area (see "RPA LINE").

I would be eager to discuss details with anyone who might be interested.

Thank you,

Randy Atkins

office: 202-334-1508



[Opinions](#)

Tysons Corner road plan runs counter to visions of a ‘green’ city

By Randy Atkins July 11, 2014

“Imagine a Tysons Corner built for people, not cars.”

Those are the first words in the Tysons Land Use Task Force’s “[Transforming Tysons](#),” which lays out ambitions for a “green” city as a potential 21st-century model for the nation.

Unfortunately, as shown in The Post’s July 4 [report about planning roads for new development](#), it is now clear that cars will still rule in Tysons.

The “Transforming Tysons” document says there will be a strong focus on the environment, and it specifically includes [this bullet item](#): “3c. Restore existing streams. Scotts Run, Old Courthouse Branch, and other streams in Tysons will be restored to create spaces for recreation as appropriate, to maintain environmental protection, and to preserve and enhance buffers to surrounding residential communities.”

Nevertheless, in 2012 the [Greater Tysons Green Civic Association](#), of which I am a member, and a coalition of other neighborhood associations had to work very hard to persuade the Fairfax County Department of Transportation (FCDOT) to take its anti-environment “Preferred Option 3” off the table in a campaign dubbed “[Save Tysons Last Forest](#).” This plan would have run an extension of Boone Boulevard from a ramp off the Dulles Toll Road through a section of the stream valley parkland, clearing trees in the process. Local politicians called the eventual killing of Preferred Option 3 “a no-brainer,” and they were right.

We thought we had indeed saved Tysons’ last forest. Unfortunately, I was shocked to learn that wasn’t so when I saw recent schematics. Instead of cutting through the forest, now FCDOT is planning to run a major boulevard along its edge in another location. This is a slap in the face to those who worked on the campaign, and it is an irreversible, long-term environmental and aesthetic disaster in the making.

While FCDOT will say that the current alignment of Boone Boulevard doesn’t touch the parkland, that is disingenuous. This four-plus-lane road runs just inches from the parkland trees and feet from the stream valley — upstream from the “saved” area. In addition, the current plan has the road running right over the Chesapeake Bay Resource Protection Area (RPA) line. According to Fairfax County, these areas are “corridors of environmentally sensitive land that lie alongside or near the shorelines of streams, rivers and other waterways which drain into the Potomac River and eventually into the Chesapeake Bay. In their natural condition, RPAs protect water quality, filter pollutants out of stormwater runoff, reduce the volume of stormwater runoff, prevent erosion and perform other important biological and ecological functions.” As the “Transforming Tysons” document states, such areas should be restored, not plowed through.

The Tysons Comprehensive Plan, the Parks Authority Plan and the Tysons Task Force document all call the parkland a “buffer” between the new development and existing neighborhoods. The current alignment of Boone Boulevard is antithetical to that principle. The surrounding residential communities and park-goers will be subjected to noise and sight pollution.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/tysons-corner-road-plan-runs-counter-to-visions-of-a-green-city/2014/07/11/15df93a0-0771-11e4-8a6a-19355c7e870a_story.html

The environmental concerns are just as obvious, including runoff and litter that could have far-reaching effects. Perhaps it is true that, as the FCDOT director told me, roadways run alongside waterways all over the country. But that should not be the vision for this 21st-century city.

The developers' application includes a new recreational area, which is surrounded by roadways. I suggested abutting the recreational area with the existing parkland and running Boone Boulevard on the other side, but FCDOT rejected that idea.

I understand that trade-offs and compromises need to be made in major development projects. However, the history of this one has, despite the rhetoric, showed a lack of prioritizing toward protecting existing natural resources. There are certainly more creative solutions than the planned alignment for Boone Boulevard. This is an opportunity to enhance not only the quality of life in Tysons but also the natural ecosystem as well.

Unfortunately, moving traffic — i.e., cars — still reigns over all else in Tysons.

The writer lives near the potentially affected area.

Dear Sir:

Here is my written testimony in support of your Environmental Quality Advisory County Event.

I look forward to provide additional "wisdom" and "knowledge" to help strengthen the mission/actionables for "creek restoration" on a neighborhood basis at Fairfax county and also collaborate on bigger challenge of Chesapeake Bay Natural Resource Protection for quality of life in everyday living for most citizens of Fairfax County, VA DC Hub Community.

As an example, The "Sea Food Industry" of Virginia is a \$40 Million Dollar Export Earner for Virginia's Economy. This includes shell fish, crabs, clams, oysters, and fish. Coastal Fishing adds much value to our economy here in Fairfax, VA with quality restaurants who serves such sea food and sometimes Virginia caught fish to their customers.

This "economic value" would not be possible if the Chesapeake Bay environment is further protected with "Creek Restoration" and Potomac & James River are restored further with suitable vegetation and plants, as a critical priority for economic and environmental reasons.

Public Education is critical to motivate "Community Wealth Building" via creek restoration projects on a neighborhood basis, working with Fairfax County Public School System if possible.

[Avi's brief Slide presentation 01 at Slideshare.net relating to this topic . public at Slideshare.net](#)

[Prized fishes of cb new](#)

<http://www.slideshare.net/icptwin45/prized-fishes-of-cb-new>

Avi Dey
Cafe Twin
Fairfax, VA C2C
Phone: [703-281-1358](tel:703-281-1358)

About Me:

<http://twin.waldenthree.net>

Comments of the Audubon Society of Northern Virginia to the Environmental Quality Advisory Council

January 12, 2016

Thank you for your service to our community and for the opportunity to comment on the county's environmental challenges.

We appreciate your attention to global climate change, ecological resources, environmental stewardship, recycling, stormwater projects, wildlife, and invasive plants, among other topics.

The Challenge

The mission of the National Audubon Society and its local chapters, including the Audubon Society of Northern Virginia, is to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity. In this rapidly urbanizing county, preserving and restoring natural ecosystems is a real challenge and as you note, there are few opportunities left to do so. We have lost most of our biodiversity to development.

The report, *Birds in Northern Virginia*, by the Audubon Society of Northern Virginia documents negative trends in abundance and distribution of many birds, particularly those that depend on quality natural habitat. Thus, loss of habitat, largely due to development, is a key contributor to the decline of birds in Fairfax County. We hope you will increase your attention to stemming these trends.

WATER QUALITY

Over half of the county's streams are in fair to poor condition. The Potomac River has again received a grade of C. The river continues to harbor trash, from tires to cigarette butts to Styrofoam bits. Many county streams are on the Department of Environmental Quality impaired waters list for problems like E. coli, mercury, and PCBs. As you note, many streams have TMDLs.

Litter continues to scar many roadsides and is washed into streams during storms.

Many species of waterfowl and other wildlife and organisms rely on clean water for survival. We are blessed with the Potomac and Occoquan Rivers, but litter and pollutants can make them inhospitable and unhealthy for waterfowl.

Recommendations:

- Support full implementation of and funding for the county's 30 watershed plans.
- Support a litter action plan.
- Urge DEQ to aggressively enforce all TMDLs.
- Stop all untreated sewage from flowing into streams, like the releases into Holmes Run which resulted in a consent decree.
- Continue efforts to clean up the Chesapeake Bay.
- Encourage and undertake efforts to plant vegetation along stream banks.

CLIMATE CHANGE

The National Audubon Society has identified addressing climate change as a high priority. It is the most serious threat to the planet.

Climate change is creating great disruption in our natural environment today in many ways. Audubon's landmark 2014 report, *Birds and Climate Change*, found that 314 North American bird species are at risk because of climate change and that diminishing and shifting ranges could imperil nearly half of U.S. birds in this century.

The Metropolitan Council of Governments (COG), the Governor's Commission on Climate Change, the McAuliffe Commission's update and others have documented impacts of climate change already occurring in our area. If we continue "business as usual," total greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions will grow by 35% by 2030 in the D.C. region, according to COG.

There are costs of inaction, especially in responding to extreme weather events, like flooding.

Recommendations:

- Update the County's analysis of the impact of sea level rise along the Potomac River shoreline and its tributaries.
- Start resiliency planning now to adapt and plan to let wetlands migrate inland so that wetlands can absorb floodwaters.
- Factor climate change impacts into all land use and public facilities decisions.
- Create more incentives to discourage driving (e.g., driving children to school) and to increase use of public transit. Stop giving permits for big, impervious parking lots, many of which are never full. Continue our bus system.
- Support more smart growth with mass transit, walkable, bikeable communities. EQAC should analyze current county ordinances and policies for change with these goals in mind.

ECOLOGICAL RESOURCES & PARKS

We support your recommendation of a county-wide natural resource inventory and your recognition that we cannot consider all parkland and open space as valuable natural habitat. Commendably, EQAC recognizes that open space does not guarantee ecological integrity or provide vibrant ecological services. We have stressed this point many times and we are pleased that you agree.

We continue to believe that Park Authority budgets and staff are grossly misaligned, as we have commented many times.

Recommendations:

We urge EQAC to advocate for --

- a better balance of the budget and staff resources in the Park Authority to bring natural resource restoration, preservation, and enhancement to a higher priority;
- park planning and acquisition to increase connectivity between natural areas;
- conduct biological surveys before developing in parks; and
- support the national parks and refuges and state parks in the county and work for more connectivity to them to create more natural corridors. In many ways, federal public lands managers have managed their properties with stronger conservation approaches than has the county.

As the county reaches buildout and there are few opportunities to conserve land remaining, the imperative to preserve and restore our natural resources becomes more urgent.

Natural Landscaping

In 2004, at the direction of then-Chairman Gerry Connolly, the Urban Forestry Division and other county agencies identified county properties for implementing natural landscaping approaches on county and public school properties. Implementing this plan could reduce expensive and polluting mowing of grass, reduce energy use, create more carbon sinks, and provide the ecological services cited above.

Recommendations:

- Urge the county implement the June 22, 2005 plan detailing staff findings and recommendations. By implementing this plan, the county's own properties could help restore stream health, create habitat and show the county as a good environmental steward.
- Urge the county to coordinate with our Audubon at Home program.

Tree Cover

Trees are of particular interest to Audubon because many birds perch, nest, feed and raise their young in trees. Trees provide many valuable ecological services.

We commend the tree action plan and tree canopy goal of 45% by 2037; however, American Forests recommends that suburban residential zones have at least 50 percent tree cover because tree cover is directly related to environmental quality and a sound "green infrastructure." **Fairfax County's** tree cover has declined from around 75 percent in the 1970s.

A Potomac Conservancy study concluded that there are not enough forests to ensure high water quality and that forest health is declining. A 2007 study, *The State of Chesapeake Forests*, recommended that the watershed have 65 percent tree cover and six percent impervious surfaces near streams for excellent health and 60 percent tree cover and 10 percent pavement for good health.

Development has fragmented forests. "This valuable green network is a necessity, not an amenity, that only functions effectively when developed as a system rather than a series of isolated parts," the Potomac Conservancy study asserts.

Grading and filling harm trees and the soil and water they depend on. Heavy construction equipment compacts the soil and damages root systems which ultimately kills mature trees.

Our chapter receives many calls from alarmed people who oppose the destruction and/or clear-cutting of mature trees.

Recommendations:

- Update the tree action plan.
- Instruct grounds maintenance crews on county properties to stop destroying native plants and to eliminate non-natives.
- Strengthen the tree ordinance and canopy goal.
- Plant more trees.
- Tighten up on tree preservation, both the ordinance and enforcement of the existing ordinance, during construction activities.
- Stop volcano mulching of trees on county properties.
- Stop the broadcast spraying of insecticides for the fall cankerworm, a native and beneficial insect. Redirect funds now spent on cankerworm spraying to forest health enhancement.
- Base all pest management efforts on science.

- Direct the Urban Forestry Division to designate a staffer to advise people on options to respond to citizen requests to stop tree destruction.

CATS

Fairfax County does not require the licensing of cats and the animal shelter releases cats to groups that then release cats into the environment.

These unowned, feral cats cause many problems. For example,

- Roaming cats spread diseases like rabies and toxoplasmosis.
- Cat feces are difficult to clean up and usually are not cleaned up.
- Roaming cats kill between 1.4 and 3.7 billion birds and year and other animals like squirrels and chipmunks. Many bird species have been in steady decline in Northern Virginia for the last 20 years. Nationally, two-thirds of all bird species are in decline.
- Cats in the wild follow their instincts, to kill. Even a well-fed cat hunts and kills birds and other wildlife.

Cats are non-native, imported animals, not part of the natural ecosystem here. They did not evolve in the United States or Virginia.

Recommendations:

- Urge the county animal shelter to stop giving cats to organizations that release cats into the environment without owners.
- Urge the county animal shelter to provide the public with more information on the benefits of keeping cats indoors.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Carl Kikuchi, President

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DATE: January 12, 2016
TO: The Environmental Quality Advisory Council (EQAC)
FROM: Joyce Harris, Chairman of the McLean Trees Foundation
RE: Homeowner Tree-Planting Initiatives

“To fully enhance the tree canopy in Fairfax County, tree planting must occur on privately-owned residential lots, as County-owned and commonly-owned open spaces are limited,” according to Keith Cline, Director of the Fairfax County Urban Forest Management Division. “Residential lots have the most space for planting new trees in Fairfax County,” states Cline, “and trees are more likely to thrive with a homeowner caring for them.”¹

Many jurisdictions, including Washington D.C., Arlington, Falls Church, and Fredericksburg, sponsor tree-planting programs for homeowners to help increase and diversify their tree canopy. These programs provide native trees to homeowners at reduced costs or at no charge. Additionally, the trees provide numerous environmental, health, and economic benefits to homeowners.

Fairfax County lacks a county-wide homeowner tree-planting program.

Over the last year, the McLean Trees Foundation (MTF) has developed the *McLean Neighborhood Tree Program*, the first of its kind in McLean and in the County. The program encourages homeowners to become actively engaged in the selection, planting, and care of their trees.

With support from the County, the program could become a template for other groups in the County and hundreds of native trees could be added to our landscape every year.

Let's plan for the future and make sure that tree planting outpaces tree removal. Please encourage the County to support and promote homeowner initiatives that preserve, increase, and diversify our tree canopy.

¹ McLean Trees Foundation News Release, July 21, 2014

DATE: January 12, 2016
TO: The Environmental Quality Advisory Council (EQAC)
FROM: Joyce and Henry Harris
RE: Amplified Prerecorded Sound

Please encourage the County to develop regulations that control amplified, prerecorded sound broadcast over loudspeakers, public address systems, and portable devices in *all* recreational areas in the County. Many of these areas are in residential districts, where broadcast sound can make it impossible for residents to enjoy their own property in peace.

This is a county-wide concern and it pertains to school grounds, parks, and other recreational facilities and to groups bringing their loudspeakers to these facilities.

While the County's new noise ordinance does address the use of amplified, prerecorded sound on school grounds by school groups, it does not address the issue in parks or other recreational facilities; nor does it address the use of amplified, prerecorded sound on school grounds by outside groups.

At levels beyond 55 decibels, amplified, prerecorded sound takes away the most basic and fundamental right of property owners to the peaceful enjoyment of their yards and homes.

Protecting the rights of residents in a residential neighborhood should be a primary goal of the ordinance.

More attention needs to be given to this issue. A video showing the impact of amplified, prerecorded sound in a residential neighborhood is available for review.

Joyce and Henry Harris
Members, West Lewinsville Heights Citizens Association
1710 Westmoreland Street
McLean, Virginia 22101

Written testimony for EQAC's public hearing—Elizabeth Lonoff
(excerpt from an e-mail submitted January 22, 2016)

Thank you Madame Chair, Council members, and staff for this opportunity to comment on Fairfax County's environmental efforts. I have two "asks."

First, in reading your annual report, I see that the County's multi-year transportation plan is to be revised annually. Please apply your comprehensive outlook to current Route 1 transit plans. While I support removing all the auxiliary strip-mall roads (just accidents waiting to happen), I don't appreciate a politician's implicitly telling a Mt. Vernon District-based group this month that the members' area will gain traffic flow at the expense of urbanizing Lee District - and relocating people living in affordable housing - and that the express bus lanes will take years to go into effect only for that bus service to be abandoned for a [hugely] expensive Metrorail extension. For one thing, this doesn't give the more-flexible bus service a chance. For another, it ignores that widening traffic lanes will induce additional traffic and how the County could change besides the impacts of the growing use of Fort Belvoir. Additionally, as Ms. Cortina of the Park Authority board generally mentioned during EQAC's public hearing, we should be concerned about potential impacts to Huntley Meadows after working on it for 30 years. The visitors center is located half a mile from Route 1.

Second, I request that you have the County update its webpage on its Cool Counties, <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/living/environment/coolcounties/>, fixing broken links and adding links to superseding webpages and a climate-change commitment/progress dashboard - or incorporating this into an active webpage. It's hard to tell what information has been added since the County signed the declaration on July 16, 2007. Certainly the 2010 solar tax exemption is newer, but any interested County resident would wonder if that still is valid.

Respectfully submitted,
Elizabeth Lonoff, Professional Engineer
Lee District homeowner for >20 years
Current environmental-quality columnist for the League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area
Former transportation planner, wastewater-treatment outreach coordinator, and air-quality web content manager