

E-mail correspondence
June 28, 2016

Penny:

I'm writing to you as the chair of the County Supervisors' Environment Committee. I am deeply concerned by the draft "Environmental Vision." This comprehensive strategy is intended to guide the county's environmental policies for the next two decades. It seems incredible that the only mention of climate change is "plant trees to minimize climate change"(p. 6) – and this recommendation simply carries forward the exact wording from the 2004 Environmental Vision. If you'd like to read it, the full text of the plan is [here](#). The Fairfax Board of Supervisors committed in 2007 to the Cool Counties Initiative to cut energy use by 2% per year. We are lagging behind that goal.

The Environmental Vision ignores all of the scientific evidence of the past 12 years that climate change is real, having a direct impact of the health and welfare of people right now, that it will get worse, and that changes made now can avoid compounding and exacerbating the extreme weather events that Fairfax and the rest of the world will experience in the 20 year that the new vision statement is supposed to encompass. A good place to start to understand how climate change will impact Fairfax is Stephan Nash's Virginia Climate Fever <http://virginiacimatefever.com/> to see how the next 20 years will impact our area. It is astonishing that the draft Environmental Vision does not even consider the certain effects of extreme weather events such as extended heat waves or the flooding that is sure to occur frequently along the Potomac. The terms "global warming", "greenhouse gas", "resiliency" or "flooding" or "heat" or "efficiency" do not appear anywhere in the report.

For an alternative perspective on what an environmental vision can be, I suggest that the county consider the DC Sustainability Plan. http://www.sustainabledc.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/SDC-Summary-Document-2-19_0.pdf It's goals are inspiring, quantitative, and achievable because their commitments are accompanied by concrete plans.

It's overarching goal could be taken as the overarching goal of the Fairfax Environmental Vision:

BY 2032, the District will be the healthiest, greenest, most livable city in the nation by using sustainability solutions to address core challenges.

The DC Sustainability Plan sets out specific goals: reduce GHG emissions by 50% and plan for climate change impacts; cut citywide energy use by 50%; increase use of renewable energy by 50%; increase by 5X the number of jobs providing green goods and services; send zero solid waste to landfills; reduce total waste generation by 15%; increase waste diversion rate to 80%.

The bulk of the plan describes specific actions that DC commits to take to accomplish its sustainability goals – all of which could be included in the Environmental Vision for Fairfax and in the EQAC annual report goals:

GOVERNANCE

GOAL 1: Expand District government leadership to implement the Sustainable DC plan. 1.1 Dedicate District government staff and funding to implement the Sustainable DC plan, track progress, and make results publicly available.

- 1.2 Implement a process to collect, analyze, and report data to ensure progress toward goals and targets by prescribed dates.
- 1.3 Identify existing laws, regulations, and policies that conflict with sustainability goals and areas where new authority is required.
- 1.4 Expand public/private collaboration to meet sustainability goals.
- 1.5 Expand sector-based sustainability pledges and challenges to promote adoption of sustainable practices.
- 1.6 Continue annual "Budget Challenge" competition for innovative sustainability projects within District government.

CLIMATE & ENVIRONMENT

Goal 1: Minimize the generation of greenhouse gas emissions from all sources.

Target: By 2032, reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 50%.

- 1.1 Create online tools that allow people to view and share greenhouse gas emissions data and make more informed choices.
- 1.2 Create financial tools that support climate protection programs by capturing the environmental costs of products and services.
- 1.3 Report District emissions on a regular basis to track the reductions that can be attributed to specific initiatives

Goal 2: Advance physical adaptation and human preparedness to increase the District's resilience to future climate change.

Target: By 2032, require all new building and major infrastructure projects to undergo climate change impact analysis as part of the regulatory planning process.

- 2.1 Evaluate the vulnerability of the District's energy infrastructure to the anticipated impacts of climate change.
- 2.2 Prepare District emergency services to respond to severe climate-related events such as extreme heat, storms, and flooding.
- 2.3 Require adaptation solutions as part of planning consent for new developments.
- 2.4 Ensure transportation infrastructure can withstand the upper ranges of projected climate change impacts.

All of these could and should be included in the County's Environmental Vision and highlighted in the EQAC annual report. At this time of inspiring commitments by the nations of the world to the Paris Accord, by more than 100 cities worldwide that have committed to carbon neutrality, the County's Environmental Vision for 2024 needs to be inspiring, ambitious, practical and accountable.

Failing to address climate change means failing to protect our families and neighbors. It means decades lost in the struggle for a clean energy. It means Fairfax will be left behind. Behind other counties that are taking responsible actions to preserve their quality of life in their communities and strengthening their economies through clean energy and smart growth planning.

As taxpayers and as people of faith, we have an opportunity to correct this error. The Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions will support you and the Board to lead into our shared future.

The Environmental Vision can be improved in three ways:

- Identify "climate change" as one of the top three environmental concerns.
- Recognize that "NO, this document is not complete." A new section on climate change is needed.

- Specific sustainability goals and actions to implement them are needed within the Environmental Vision for leading the county to reduce greenhouse gases, increase use of alternative energy, and strengthen the resiliency of our county for its citizens and for our environment for the extreme weather events that are certain to occur during the next 20 years.

The 35 congregations and many hundreds of members of faith communities who make up the Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions will enthusiastically support your leadership. An Environmental Vision for Fairfax that recognizes climate change is important for all of us as county residents, persons of faith, and parents and grandparents.

Thank you.

Eric Goplerud Vice President

Public Health Department

NORC at the University of Chicago

4350 East West Highway 8th Floor, Bethesda, MD 20814

goplerud-eric@norc.org | office 301-634-9525 | mobile 301-852-8427



**COMMENTS ON FAIRFAX COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL VISION UPDATE
JULY 20, 2016**

My name is Debra Jacobson, and I live in McLean, Virginia. I appreciate the opportunity to provide comments as the Board of Supervisors undertakes an update of its 20-Year Environmental Vision -- also known as the Board's Environmental Agenda. My comments are grounded on my long career in energy and environmental law and policy, including co-teaching a course for 13 years on Energy and Environmental Law at George Washington University Law School and providing support to the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee and Fairfax County in their regional wind energy purchases in 2005 and later years.

Glaring Omission of Climate Change & Clean Energy from 2007 Environmental Vision:

A glaring omission of the current Environmental Vision is its failure to include the critical areas of climate change and clean energy (particularly energy efficiency and renewable energy) as a central focus. The County has a critical role in implementing clean energy not only in its own operations but also in spurring actions by the private sector.

Currently, there are six theme areas in the Environmental Vision: (1) Growth and Land Use; (2) Air Quality and Transportation; (3) Water Quality; (4) Solid Waste; (5) Parks, Trails and Open Space; and (6) Environmental Stewardship. I recognize that the current Vision contains some scattered recommendations that are likely to help reduce carbon dioxide emissions (e.g., recommendations to expand public transportation and transit-oriented development and increase tree conservation). However, I strongly believe that the Board of Supervisors will fail to meet the needs of its residents unless the updated Environmental Vision includes climate change and energy as a separate major thematic area and addresses these issues in a much more direct and meaningful way. Actions by political leaders at all levels in the next 20 years will be pivotal in determining whether county residents face a future of increasing numbers of extreme weather events, more intense heat waves, escalating asthma cases, and other major adverse consequences of climate change.

I also recognize that the Board has issued several documents that complement the current Environmental Agenda by setting forth energy goals. According to the County's FY 2016 Sustainability Report,¹ the Cool Counties Stabilization Initiative, the 2009 County Energy Policy, and the Sustainable Development Policy for Capital Projects also impact county energy goals. However, these policies and initiatives were all adopted following the March 2007 update of the County's Environmental Vision. As a result, these policies are not integrated into the County's Environmental Agenda -- creating a sense of fragmentation rather than a clear vision.

Although the FY 2016 Sustainability Report seeks to bridge the gap between the county's environmental and energy policies, it fails to do so. For example, in discussing the Cool Counties Initiative, the Sustainability Report states that:

¹ See <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/living/environment/sustainability/sustainability-initiatives-report-fy-2016.pdf>

“Fairfax County’s climate change actions and initiatives are an integral part of the Environmental Agenda. They include: Reducing greenhouse gas emissions in county government operations through efficiency, conservation and education...”²

Unfortunately, climate actions and initiatives are not an integral part of the County’s Environmental Agenda document, and there is no direct reference to reducing greenhouse gas emissions in county government operations in the document. One could make the case that one of the recommendations in the “Environmental Stewardship” section of the Environmental Agenda indirectly supports this intent to reduce greenhouse gas emission in county operations. This recommendation states that “county operations will be pursued in an environmentally-sensitive manner, supporting local, regional, and global environmental protection and improvement.”³ However, this sentence is a far cry from a clearly articulated vision of supporting the reduction of greenhouse gases in county operations.

More significantly, the County’s actions do not appear to match the far-reaching goals of the National Cool Counties Initiative. According to a March 31, 2008 press release, Fairfax County was one of the founding members of this initiative, which was launched in July 2007, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions within the county by 80 percent by 2050.⁴ Yet, the efforts listed on the County’s web site for the Cool Counties Initiative seem to fall far short of the steps needed to reach these goals. The best practices of leading communities provide a framework to accelerate progress in Fairfax County, and the County needs to intensify its efforts.

Climate and Energy Recommendations for Updated Environmental Vision:

As a member of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOCG), Fairfax County can and should utilize MWCOCG’s regional climate change and energy framework to strengthen its county vision and action plans. Since the issuance of the 2007 update to the Environmental Vision, the Board of Directors of MWCOCG adopted the National Capital Region Climate Change Report,⁵ which includes significant greenhouse reduction goals for the region and 78 recommendations to help area leaders meet these targets. MWCOCG’s Climate, Energy, and Environment Policy Committee has issued periodic action plans to further the achievement of the region’s goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions 20% below 2005 levels by 2020.⁶ In addition, MWCOCG has been completing a Multi-Sector Working Group with recommendations for the next steps to move the region towards its greenhouse gas reduction goals. Fairfax County should be a regional leader in implementing the recommendations from this year-long process.

An emphasis on clean energy to combat climate change is extremely important not only for environmental reasons but also economic ones. During the past decade, the U.S. has witnessed dramatic cost reductions in solar and wind energy and major financing innovations for energy efficiency and renewable energy. These developments, that have greatly enhanced the cost-

² Id. at 33.

³ Environmental Agenda at 11. See www.fairfaxcounty.gov/living/environment/eip/bos_environmental_agenda.pdf

⁴ See <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/living/environment/coolcounties/declaration.htm>

⁵ Adopted on November 12, 2008. See http://www.mwcog.org/store/item.asp?PUBLICATION_ID=334

⁶ The most recent action plan was adopted in May 2013. See http://www.mwcog.org/store/item.asp?PUBLICATION_ID=469

competitiveness of clean energy options, are expected to continue. Moreover, corporate leaders, such as Google and Amazon, and government officials also have recognized the hedge value of renewable energy in protecting against the risks of volatile fossil fuel prices.⁷ Fairfax County's vision and action plan should capture these new opportunities.

A major example of the potential afforded to Fairfax County by recent developments in the clean energy sector is the approach of third-party financing of solar energy on buildings under a power purchase agreement. Under this approach, the county and a solar services company enter a contract under which the company owns the solar equipment and the county pays for electricity consumed. The county benefits because it does not need to provide the upfront capital to install solar panels, and the agreement is structured so that the cost of electricity to the county does not exceed previous costs and may even save money. In addition, the county benefits from a fixed rate with predictable electricity costs over the long-term.

In recent months, the leadership of the Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) has undertaken an active pursuit of third-party solar energy in targeted facilities. This effort demonstrates how the use of a third-party financing approach can work even in a state with relatively low electricity costs and serve as a hedge against future higher costs. The County should follow the FCPS lead with its own facilities.

Fairfax County also should urge the Virginia General Assembly to remove all restrictions on the use of third-party financing for renewable energy projects in the Commonwealth. Current legislative authority in Virginia limits this financing approach to a pilot program and contains restrictions on the total aggregate capacity as well as the capacity of individual facilities. All of the States leading in solar development have relied largely on third-party solar financing to fuel this growth. Without legislative change, both the county government as well as businesses located in the county will face limits on the potential growth in this key financing tool.

Another action that Fairfax County should pursue is to recommit to its prior leadership in purchasing wind power. For example, Fairfax County could sign on as a purchaser of wind power from the Apex Clean Energy wind project being developed in Botetourt County, Virginia. The price of wind power has declined by more than 60 percent in the U.S. in the past six years (and following Fairfax County's last wind power purchase). The County's Environmental Vision should recognize the important role that wind power should play in its energy future.

Conclusion:

The bottom-line is that Fairfax County needs both a clear vision and a strong action plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Its residents deserve no less.

Debra Jacobson

⁷ For a discussion of the hedge value of wind power, see Mark Bolinger, *Revisiting the Long-Term Hedge Value of Wind Power in an Era of Low Natural Gas Prices*, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, March 2013, available at <https://emp.lbl.gov/sites/all/files/lbnl-6103e.pdf>

Comments

- Q1 1. The vision needs to include something on deer as a pest.
2. On infill development it would be good if we could require that the runoff from the property does not increase from the previous development
- Q3 3. The AQ data is very out of date and needs to include greenhouse gasses.
- Q3 4. The existing "vision" document isn't really visionary. I think that once you get into the process a little further you will find that there is so much that will need to be changed that it will be easier to start from scratch.
- Q3 5. The Washington Council of Governments' environmental goals should be incorporated in the vision

Name (optional)

Flint Webb

Email (optional)

FedEnvironmentChr2016@
FairfaxFederation.org

Date

20 July 2016

Phone (optional)

0:571-526-7706 C: 703-582-8094

Stay up to date with the update to the Environmental Vision by visiting our website:
<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/news2/help-us-update-our-environmental-vision/>

(over)

6. You should attribute pictures - present presentation comment

7. Include picture or table on every page - makes the document more accessible

July 27, 2016

Dear Mr. Agazi:

I appreciate the opportunity to follow up with you to include written comments on the Board's Environmental Vision update. This is helpful because new information raises new concerns.

One of the challenges for you seems to be how to apply the concept of vision, which is a personal trait, so that the Board's outlook for the future is conveyed with unity and authenticity.

I expect that individuals acting on their personal vision are continuously reviewing their progress and amending their strategies as necessary to get to where they want to be. This is my perception of persons we think of as visionaries. They operate collaboratively to great effect without compromising the power of their personal vision. The first question that arises in this context is, "How may the individuals of a group gain personal ownership in their collaboration on a vision?" There is a second question specific to the County Board, which is, "How may the public be convinced a majority of the Supervisors have a personal stake in the success of the Board's Environmental Vision?" In other words, how may we in the public be persuaded the Board's Environmental Vision is genuine and not mainly about the public relations of a green image?

A vision of where the County should be at some future time indicates the need for change and transformation, as a necessity of moving away from the present condition. Transformation requires considerable determination and courage to make the changes necessary to realize the future that is envisioned. I infer from the thoughts expressed in the previous paragraph that some structure is essential in order for the concept of a "vision" to work when a group such as the Board of Supervisors seeks to profess one. Thus, is it not imperative for groups to adopt an organizing structure that reflects how their intentions will be made genuine? In part, such a structure would likely include an annual staff report to inform the Board on how well the County is progressing in realizing each component of the Board's Environmental Vision. Such reporting would engage Supervisors routinely in processes of acknowledging their Vision and the state of its progress.

As to adding climate change as a new topic to the Vision, I would like to add these thoughts to what I heard stated at the Luther Jackson School meeting.

- The Vision should express a few tangibles for where Fairfax should be in 10 years. Here are two examples: 1) Embrace solar roofs on a production level scale, such as 50,000 installations by 2027, to be realized by Board actions promoting installed solar on residential roofs and at strip malls. 2)

Promote the share of energy efficient buildings in the County's communitywide inventory such that construction to net zero is emerging as the mainstream energy profile by 2027.

- Commit to reliance on an economic framework that includes such actions as adopting the tax incentives for energy efficient buildings (VA code 58.1-3221.2) to drive the transformation.
- The Vision for climate change should encompass consideration of Board resolutions and communications about policies impacting climate change. These can range from promoting the adoption of a stronger residential energy code for Virginia, to objecting to capital projects that increase fossil fuels dependence such as natural gas pipelines intended for LNG export. When it is abundantly clear that public policy requires a preference for leaving natural gas and all other fossil fuels in the ground, the Board should express its objections to the continued deployment of advanced extraction technologies such as hydro-fracking of the Marcellus shale and the associated transport.
- The Vision should also embrace an egalitarian approach that recognizes everyone is required to participate in the solution for a sustainable Fairfax. A past example of this is the 2009 Charity Works Greenhouse in McLean that by its design, engaged people representing a wide range of professions including interior design artists and civic groups.
- The issue of course is how we source and use energy, so the Vision should be clear about what the Board means when it claims it is responding to climate change.

I want to reiterate what I mentioned at the meeting that there is a need for establishing and funding a unit, adequately staffed, which is dedicated to the task of responding to the climate change challenge and to fulfilling the County's adoption of the CoolCounties Declaration. These actions are consistent with and required by the current Vision's governing principle to "provide the necessary resources to protect our environment".

Finally, as to the two governing principles, they should be preserved without alteration.

Sincerely,
Ross Shearer

July 27, 2016

Public Meeting Input from 7-9 PM
Environmental Vision Update
Fairfax County Board of Supervisors
South County Government Center
8350 Richmond Highway
Alexandria, VA

In re: Part IV Solid Waste/E/RRF/Lorton Trash Incinerator

Supervisors:

The State Implementation Plans agreed to by the EPA many years ago were recently found to be inconsistent with the Clean Air Act. The periods when downwind communities are most at risk from Lorton's incinerator's toxic emissions are during periods of start-ups, shut downs and malfunction operations (SSM) when air pollution control (APC) equipment is not efficient due to cooler operating temperatures. Unbelievably to me, these periods, up until now, were EXEMPT PERIODS from emissions monitoring/reporting. This has now changed. On May 22, 2015 the EPA issued a final action which clarified the EPA's SSM or start-up, shut-down, malfunction period monitoring policy. The State Implementation Plans (SIPs) submission deadline for each of the 36 states subject to action is November 22, 2016 and Virginia is included.

I am providing some miscellaneous documentation from my start-up/shut-down file in a computer disk format. I did not have an opportunity to comb through this material and present it more succinctly to Supervisors but I trust County staff, DEQ and Covanta managers were already aware of this and were in the process of updating the Virginia State Implementation Plan to meet this new requirement. Prior to these changes, SSM periods of high emissions of PM 2.5, PM 10, Dioxins and Furans, Mercury or NOx, etc. had NO statutory limits! (Covanta is operating under a "permit-by-rule" now which means they self-monitor and hopefully this regulation will provide an opening to begin again to enforce emissions limits during these periods.)

With regards especially to periods of start-up, shut-downs and maintenance, I am asking that under the revised "Environmental Vision" that Fairfax County staff conduct monitoring of the Covanta incinerator emissions and that Fairfax County would analyze incinerator ash on behalf of Lorton residents with results available to the community on a real time basis without residents needing an expensive and limited FOIA process -- as was the case for me. Once the full extent of toxins dumped into lungs and into the ground by Covanta are public knowledge only then will there be corrective actions commensurate with the risks to public health.

Yours truly,



Mary Jane Reyes
5929 Hallowing Dr.
Lorton, VA 22079

Enclosures:

6187 – Fact Sheet

6189 – Virginia

6190 – Memorandum to Docket EPA-HQ-OAR-2012-0322

6202 – Start-Up/Shut-Down Rules – SSM Pages 1-127 of 554 Pages

6217 – Federal Register Vol. 79, No. 180, Part III, EPA Wednesday, September 17, 2014

6236 – Federal Register Vol. 78, No. 36, Part III, EPA Friday, February 22, 2013

6277 – Fairfax County Annual Report on the Environment, Chapter III, AIR QUALITY (Year?)

Update the Board of Supervisors' Environmental Agenda

The Board is to be commended for thinking to have and to update an environmental agenda. Though the document posted under this name is antiquated and innocent of much ecosystem awareness, we must agree with its preamble:

“...everyone has a need and right to breathe clean air, to drink clean water, and to live and work in clean surroundings. A healthy environment enhances our quality of life and preserves the vitality that makes Fairfax a special place to live and work.... The environmental impact of every decision the county makes must be carefully and purposefully evaluated. Environmental concerns should not be trade-offs or compromises; rather they should be one of the essential decision making criteria.”

I wish to speak to just one environmental concern that should not be a trade-off or compromise – Litter:

Every Spring since 2001, The Friends of Little Hunting Creek have cleaned up trash in and along Little Hunting Creek.

It is unending and overwhelming.

Why?

To enforce litter laws, litterers must be caught in the act. That's unlikely to happen, and litterers know it.

There are no incentives for litterers to stop littering or for producers of littered material to prevent it from reaching our streams, roadways, and neighborhoods.

Clearly, current policies and laws do not work. Without incentives to change their behavior, litterers will continue littering.

Why should people who do not litter continue to pick up after people who do?

In 2011, the Mount Vernon Council of Citizens' Associations (MVCCA) passed a resolution in support of the Citizens' Action Plan for Litter Prevention and asked that Fairfax County take 10 actions to increase recycling and reduce litter.

The MVCCA asked Fairfax County to take the following six actions immediately:

1. Fully implement a recycling program in Fairfax County Public Schools, and use it to support education in environmental stewardship,
2. Revise the recycling ordinance to require all businesses to recycle cans and bottles, in addition to paper and cardboard,
3. Adopt a litter control ordinance,
4. Conduct anti-litter public information campaigns and increase enforcement of anti-littering laws,
5. Request that the Virginia Litter Control and Recycling Fund Advisory Board promulgate regulations requiring that litter receptacles be placed in public places, as provided by existing state law, and

6. Require recycling at county events, and should require users of outdoor park and school properties to remove all trash.

The MVCCA further asked the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors to add to the county's legislative agenda the following items to effectively address the litter problem over the long term:

7. Request state legislators to pass and the Governor to sign a bill that bans polystyrene and requires biodegradable packaging for take-out food,
8. Request state legislators to pass and the Governor to sign a bill that implements a beverage container deposit law,
9. Request state legislators to pass and the Governor to sign a bill that imposes a fee on single-use plastic or paper shopping bags, or that authorizes localities to do so, and
10. Request the Virginia Litter Control and Recycling Fund Advisory Board and the state legislature to raise the annual litter tax (which has been \$25 since 1987) and use the proceeds to fund litter prevention, cleanups and outreach.

As of 2016, none of these steps have been taken, despite some efforts.

The resolution and supporting documents can be found at <http://www.mvcca.org/Resolutions/res-E&R-2011-04.pdf>

Paul Siegel, Treasurer
Friends of Little Hunting Creek (www.folhc.org)
8707 Stockton Pkwy
Alexandria, VA 2308
703 360 0691

From: Alexis Reid
Sent: Monday, August 01, 2016 1:52 PM
To: Agazi, Kambiz <Kambiz.Agazi@fairfaxcounty.gov>
Subject: Environmental Vision - comments

Greetings Dr. Agazi,
These are comments to add to the environmental vision. Thanks!

Missing from the environmental vision:

Progress report on the 2004/6 Vision. Where are we now? What progress has been made? What metrics are being used to assess progress? What were challenges to implementation or buy-in? How can residents help to advance these issues by engaging with the county and their communities? **Dashboard for continuous reporting of progress.**

Communication: A Simple platform for communicating Sustainability Initiative. This is an example of [DC's website](#).

Vision 2030: **Actions for Citizens:** Let Citizens and organizations make pledges and commitments, then highlight the progress that they are making

Vulnerability Risk Assessment of the entire county, mapping risk areas and populations, types of risks. This should then be broken down into prioritization projects, with respect to scope/scale of impact, economic feasibility, etc. Communicate to communities what THEIR risks are and how Fairfax is planning for their future.

Yard Waste Disposal: NO PLASTIC YARD BAGS! (This should be an easy win!)

Capacity and Resilience Building: Encouraging Green Jobs, clean energy jobs, green infrastructure and maintenance by creating workforce development programs to employ people within the county, particularly those who are economically vulnerable. We need to train people to do these jobs now so that Fairfax can be more self-sufficient and keep tax dollars circulating within the county. The EPA has outlined what [Environmental Workforce Development](#) can look like.

Engage communities in discussions about land use and planning BEFORE a plan has been developed. People are being DISPLACED by infusions of economic value into areas (new development, low impact development, green infrastructure, all of it!). They can no longer live there and enjoy the benefits. My rental costs have increased by \$700 PER MONTH since 2009 (\$8,400/yr). This is outrageous and unsustainable. #AffordableFairfax

Climate Emergency Plan: What's the plan, and how will residence know? (re: flooding, storms, earthquake, etc) With particular emphasis on vulnerable populations (children, elderly, disabled, resource poor)

Highlight [Fairfax Green Schools!](#)

~ Alexis D.



Friends of Huntley Meadows Park

3701 Lockheed Boulevard, Alexandria, VA 22306
703-768-2525, www.friendsofhuntleymeadows.org

August 5, 2016

Kambiz Agazi
Environmental Coordinator
Fairfax County

Sent via email to: kambiz.agazi@fairfaxcounty.gov

Dear Mr. Agazi:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and recommendations on the update to the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors' Environment Agenda. Described here are recommendations from the Friends of Huntley Meadows Park regarding the current update to Fairfax County Environmental Agenda

The Mount Vernon and Lee Magisterial Districts are poised for important redevelopment and revitalization as a result of recommendations from the Route 1 Multi-Modal Transportation Study finalized in January 2015. Of significant importance to this project is the need to complete an Environmental Assessment now in order to inform all aspects of the planning, decision-making and recommendations process. The Board of Supervisors Environmental Agenda should inform this and all re-development and re-vitalization efforts,

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- I. The goals, objectives and audience(s) need to be clearly described. Who is the audience? This is not clearly described. All technical terminology needs to be re-phrased with language that can be understood by the general public.
- II. Implement a NEPA-like process (if enabling legislation is needed, pursue this aggressively) requiring Environmental Assessment of current conditions county-wide in order to identify areas that may have special, rare or endangered plants, animals, or ecosystems that should be protected from any re-development now and preserved for the future.
- III. The concepts of protect, preserve, enhance, manage sustainably, and restore should be incorporated throughout the Environmental Agenda,

IV. Additional Sections under each topic area and/or combined as one section should be expanded on or are needed in the following areas:

- a. ACCOMPLISHMENTS that includes dates and specific actions completed dating back to the initial Agenda of 2004. In some cases actions that have been completed are listed but there are no dates included. This historical perspective can be very useful in seeing progress over time.
- b. ACTIONS required to improve environmental conditions should be a priority and this should be described throughout. Property owners and developers of all kinds, including by-right development, (private, federal, or county should be encouraged in all circumstances to improve environmental conditions on their properties.

This should include such things as:

- Tree conservation should be a high priority and should be encouraged in all circumstances, existing and re-developed properties,
 - Net decrease in impervious surfaces should be recommended in all circumstances and on all property types,
 - Installation of rain gardens, bio swales, and other stormwater absorption technologies on parking lots, privately owned and commercial rooftops, county and privately owned ball fields for sports (including those with artificial turf) should be encouraged in all circumstances. All property owners should be encouraged to go above and beyond County regulations,
 - Implementation of solar panels using best practice installation technologies, the best place for these is on rooftops, no land clearing for installation of solar panels on the ground should be allowed. With so little undeveloped land remaining this should be protected & conserved in all circumstances. Community solar gardens on rooftops of industrial or other business structures (especially flat top roofs) encouraging neighbors (including businesses) to work together to implement low-carbon technologies,
 - Use of Native plants in landscaping,
 - Minimizing/eliminating the use of herbicides and pesticides.
- c. MEASUREMENTS FOR EVALUATION AND SUCCESS need to be established, a process put in place for data collection and analysis, and this should be reported out formally to the BOS and released to the public on efforts implemented,

- d. Climate Change an important topic area needs to be discussed. Further this topic impacts many areas of the Environmental Agenda and should be discussed throughout.
 - e. Biodiversity and sustainable management of natural resources should be discussed with an emphasis on net gains in all circumstances.
 - f. High value conservation areas should be identified and protected. Those with special status based the presence of State or Federally protected rare and endangered plants and animals, or ecological habitat should be protected for future generations.
- V. An explanation of how this Environmental Agenda informs the environmental work of Fairfax County Agencies, Boards, Commissions, and Committees needs to be explained. In addition, how this Agenda should informs the work of the business community and individuals is not described.
- VI. This BOS Agenda should result in the establishment of collaborative partnership teams/working groups at all levels within (a) Fairfax County Government, (b) Neighboring County (or State) Agencies whose activities will in all circumstances indirectly (or directly) impact FC's environment, and (c) State and County Agencies beyond our region (including internationally) to share and gain expertise from best practice projects and strategies from outside FC (such as through the 8 80 cities initiative found at www.880cities.org), leverage both technical expertise and capacity, and, budget for maximum impact of County-wide efforts, What is the role of this Environment Agenda in pulling together the overarching goals for these partnerships and working groups?
- VII. Active engagement with Environmental Quality Advisory Counsel and other County Advisory Committees and Commissions that advise the BOS on Environment matters needs to be described. How does the Environment Agenda contribute to the establishment of goals and objectives of these groups? How do the goals and objectives of these groups contribute to the Environmental Agenda? This needs to be described.
- VIII. A clear strategy and timeline for dissemination and implementation of this Agenda is needed. What is it? How is this used? How is it implemented? Who is implementing it? How is the work reported on? How do we ensure that it is implemented across Fairfax County?
- IX. Lead by example in order to show commitment and proof by example (of course using only those technologies supported by current scientific research) should be shown by Fairfax County Government and all County owned properties of all kinds (including

school and administration buildings, parking garages/lots, storage facilities, police and fire facilities and the like).

Best practice solutions for improving environmental conditions in all topic areas covered in the Agenda should be identified, implemented, the success of these should be measured and reported on widely. This should be implemented on ALL County-owned properties (office buildings, schools, board of supervisors' owned properties, FCPA properties, donated properties, Fire and police facilities, County owned facilities of all kinds (including parking garages, parking lots, storage facilities) all need to showcase the implementation of best practice solutions for improving environmental conditions.

Fairfax County Government should on its properties lead by example and show a net increase in tree cover. Installation of rain gardens (and other cutting edge stormwater management technologies) around the perimeter of all parking lots and in medians in all parking lots, collection of rainwater for re-use in watering garden plantings.

- X. Priorities for Fairfax County Environmental spending should be based on where the environmental quality problems are the worst. Worst comes first.
- XI. Environmental quality investments should be compared based on their environmental cost-effectiveness, i.e.: benefits gained per dollar invested.
- XII. Invasive species need to be addressed as a threat to public health (e.g. Zika Virus/Asian tiger Mosquito link), the environment (due to ecosystem degradation), and the local economy (e.g. public and private costs associated with removing trees killed by emerald ash borers, English Ivy).
- XIII. Deer need to be recognized as a potential source of environmental degradation and property damage in areas of Fairfax County where their populations exceed the carrying capacity of the wild food resources, and those deer populations should be managed to reduce the risk of that degradation and damage.
- XIV. Pesticide and herbicide uses should be aggressively reduced in all areas of the county. Continued use results in a pesticide treadmill, a dependency on continued use, a significantly negative (and expensive) impact. The natural ecosystem should be allowed to balance itself. Environmentally friendly methods of pest management should be aggressively pursued in all fronts to protect our environmental resources.

- XV. Targeted Tree canopy should be 40% on average, and no magisterial district should be below 35%.
- XVI. County agencies should take all available steps to constrain developers from removing trees.
- XVII. The average of County watershed plans should be no more than five years old, and no individual watershed plan should be more than eight years old. Watershed plans should include the benefits and costs for all contemplated projects. Watershed restoration projects should be viewed as opportunities for public-private partnerships.
- XVIII. Fairfax County should include provisions for a net decrease in impervious surfaces, a net increase in permeable surfaces.
- XIX. Encourage the business community to sell native plants for landscaping and discourage the business community from selling non-native plants.
- XX. Learn from our prior activities/experiences. Use these to inform actions (or non-actions) going forward.
- XXI. A technical edit of the full document is needed.

We look forward to the next draft of the Board of Supervisors' Environment Agenda and continuing to provide recommendations to improve this very important material.

Sincerely,



Catherine C. Ledec
President

Aug. 8, 2016

Kambiz,

We have met many times. I am a member of the Community Council of Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions and a ruling elder and deacon at Providence Presbyterian Church in Fairfax. I very much appreciate the efforts you and your staff have made to involve citizens in the update of the county's Environmental Agenda. As you said in your introductory talk at Luther Jackson Middle School, at the very least it is in need of updating.

I fully support the comments provided to you by Norbert Pink of the Sierra Club. His comments are right on target. Permit me to add the following comments of my own.

The document needs a section on climate change. There is excellent material in EQAC's annual report, chapter 1 that would fill the bill. The county must recognize that climate change is real, that it is largely human caused, and that it poses a threat to the citizens of the county. For example, the melting of the polar ice caps will flood areas of Alexandria and along Four Mile Run. Vulnerable populations will face higher utility bills that they may not be able to afford. These risks are documented in the most recent report of the COG.

I am also concerned that between the Environmental Agenda and the county's Sustainability Initiatives for 2016, there does not appear to be a vision on why we are doing all of this fine work for the environment. To my mind what is lacking then is a statement of principles of environmental stewardship that will guide county employees as they go about their very important work.

Permit me to provide a possible example of guiding principles from a statement made by the National Council of churches, an organization of nearly 40 Christian denominations in America. (see <http://www.nccusa.org/news/14.02.05theologicalstatement.html>). After reviewing the environmental crisis we humans have largely created the statement calls for churches and all society to adopt the following "guiding norms."

I have provided below a "secular version" of the guiding norms that might be more appropriate for a county government to consider. For example, the county has already embraced the notion of sustainability.

Guiding Norms

Justice-creating right relationships, both social and ecological, to ensure for all members of the Earth community the conditions required for their flourishing. Among human members, justice demands meeting the essential material needs and conditions for human dignity and social participation. In our global

context, economic deprivation and ecological degradation are linked in a vicious cycle. We are compelled, therefore, to seek eco-justice, the integration of social justice and ecological integrity. The quest for eco-justice also implies the development of a set of human environmental rights, since one of the essential conditions of human well being is ecological integrity. These moral entitlements include protection of soils, air, and water from diverse pollutants; the preservation of biodiversity; and governmental actions ensuring the fair and frugal use of creation's riches.

Sustainability-living within the bounds of planetary capacities indefinitely, in fairness to both present and future generations of life. The concern for sustainability forces us to be responsible for the truly long-term impacts of our lifestyles and policies.

Bioresponsibility- We do not determine nor declare creation's value, and other creatures should not be treated merely as instruments for our needs and wants. Other species have their own integrity. They deserve a "fair share" of Earth's bounty- a share that allows a biodiversity of life to thrive along with human communities.

Generosity- Humans are not collections of isolated individuals, but rather communities of socially and ecologically interdependent beings. A measure of a good society is not whether it privileges those who already have much, but rather whether it privileges the most vulnerable members of creation. Essentially, these tasks require good government at all levels, from local to regional to national to international.

Frugality- restraining economic production and consumption for the sake of eco-justice. Frugality connotes moderation, sufficiency, and temperance. Many call it simplicity. It demands the careful conservation of Earth's riches, comprehensive recycling, minimal harm to other species, material efficiency and the elimination of waste, and product durability. Frugality is the corrective to a cardinal vice of the age: prodigality - excessively taking from and wasting creation. On a finite planet, frugality is an expression of love and an instrument for justice and sustainability: it enables all life to thrive together by sparing and sharing global goods.

Solidarity-acknowledging that we are increasingly bound together as a global community in which we bear responsibility for one another's well being. The social and environmental problems of the age must be addressed with cooperative action at all levels-local, regional, national and international.

Solidarity is a commitment to the global common good through international cooperation.

Compassion-sharing the joys and sufferings of all Earth's members and making them our own. From compassion flows inclusive caring and careful service to meet the needs of others.

(<http://www.nccusa.org/news/14.02.05theologicalstatement.html>)

David R. Kepley

Date: Aug 8 2016

By: Norbert Pink

Thank you for extending the deadline for submitting comments on the Fairfax County Environmental Vision statement to Aug 8. This demonstrates a very willing desire by the county to make the updating of the vision statement as encompassing as possible for the best results. I hope this attitude continues in the updating process.

The existing vision statement has two guiding principles which are conservation of our limited natural resources natural resources must be interwoven into all government decisions and continue to provide resources to protect our environment. These principles need to be continually supported and expanded in the implementation of the updated vision statement. A concern that I have is no matter how good the vision statement is, if it is not followed by the County and its citizens, then the first guiding principle is not being followed.

Much of the natural resources we are using are not renewable so the amount we have is all there is every going to be. If we waste these resources there will be less of these resources available for later generations to use and will be more difficult and expensive for them to extract. So, we must reduce our demand for these resources with more energy efficiencies and the expanded use of renewable resources.

One of the areas that needs to be expanded is education of the public in better stewardship of the environment and for the county to provide the resources to accomplish this. This can be accomplished with promoting compact, mixed-use, transit-oriented development to reduce greenhouse gas emissions that is being demonstrated with the redevelopment of the Tysons Corner area, but more needs to be done. Smarter traffic signaling with a green wave effect needs to be implemented especially with the possible of the coming computer assisted navigation and driving of vehicles. Smarter mass transit systems need to be implemented.

We need clear goals or benchmarks that are clearly understood and can be measure against the vision goals. For example, the county should include an assessment of greenhouse gas emission as part of its modeling when it prioritizes transportation projects. We need to expand the education of the public, like we have with the waste recycling program, to so many other areas like the collection of yard clipping and leaves, which should be left in place, to eliminate the need for extra fertilizer.

We must review other successful organization visions statement, like from other Cool Counties initiatives, and use their successful ideas that are working and providing a benefit. There is no point in trying to invent something that is already invented.

A 20-Year Vision is too little, too late. We need to focus on what can be done now to address critical environmental issues. The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors should take action immediately to:

1. **Improve Water Quality--Require development and redevelopment projects in the Transit Station Areas to comply with “new” Virginia and Fairfax County Stormwater Ordinances. All land use projects in Fairfax County should meet Best Management Practices for current Environmental Amendments through 4-29-2014 in the Comprehensive Plan.** Developers and County Staff should commit to these higher standards now instead of grandfathering prior standards. Also, developers should not be allowed to opt for contributing to a county escrow that addresses stormwater problems downstream. Commitment to current BMP’s is essential to prevent erosion and improve water quality control.
2. **Improve Land Use--LEED Gold certification should be the standard for obtaining a Green Building Escrow. We need developers to commit now to higher building standards and “state of the art best management practices for stormwater management and better site design and low impact development...”** (Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, 2013 Edition Land Use—Appendix, Amended through 4-29-2014, Policy Plan, p. 26). The 20—Year Vision document acknowledges that “most of the County Streams are polluted and degraded due to poor land use planning in previous decades...” We need to control and reverse this trend now.
3. **Reduce Parking--Parking for proposed developments in the Transit Station Area (TSA) corridor should be reduced.** A parking ratio of 1.8 cars per housing unit is plenty and will encourage people to walk/bike and use the Metro. For developers who say they cannot sell condos, townhouses, or multifamily units without a 2.3 or higher parking ratio, The Board of Supervisors should tell developers, “No” and demonstrate full commitment to successful, vibrant mixed-use TSA. As stated in the 20-Year Vision, “We do not meet federal air quality standards for ozone and particulates.” Air quality is a critical issue and The Board of Supervisors must act now on the large number of development and redevelopment plans being submitted in the TSA.

FCPS is showing environmental stewardship by recently organizing its first Stakeholders Meeting (June, 2016) to partner and collaborate on environmental ideas. The Get2Green website and comprehensive work headed by Elaine Tholen is reaching schools and students across the County. I would like to see a model green school in Fairfax County the likes of College Park Elementary School in Virginia Beach; Manassas Park City School in Manassas; or Discovery Elementary in Arlington. We are far behind other states and counties on green building. The recent Energy Star project and data by FCPS is a good step toward demonstrating the importance of recycling to administrators, teachers, parents, and students.

There are good things happening in Fairfax County, especially educational programs sponsored by the Fairfax Park Authority. The students get it. Now we need to catch up. I request the BOS to address pollution, climate change, poor water quality, etc. through growth and land use actions (above) now.

Thank you for your consideration, Sue Straits

Greetings Kambiz! Thank you for extending the deadline for County Environmental Vision input as I have been unable to attend the public meetings.

Here is my input on the much needed updating of the 2007 Environmental Vision. To put it mildly, tremendous changes have occurred since 2007. The playing field on environmental stewardship has changed drastically due to increased scientific knowledge and understanding of how fossil fuel use impinges upon environmental eco-systems and public health. Increasing global warming along with subsequent climate change consequences even now and will continue to present challenges to us all.

Thus, reducing carbon footprint is central to environmental stewardship and sustainability and needs to be included in the 2017 Environmental Vision.

Neglecting to not incorporate such understandings into the elements of the 2017 Environmental Vision would seem to be irresponsible given the necessity for response and action now as we keep future generations in mind. And not only future generations but the viability of Fairfax County in terms of job creation, public health, and livability. County citizens are already experiencing environmental effects of global warming/climate change; effects which I won't enumerate at this time because we already are aware of them.

Thus, my comments, respectfully are:

There needs to be a third principle in the statement addressing the core threat to environment in Fairfax County which is carbon pollution and its consequences. Thus:

1. 3rd principle in the environmental vision. A strategic plan to reduce greenhouse gases yearly with 2020, 2025, 2030 and 2050 goals. This would be displayed on the public-facing energy dashboard. Data indicating implementation and movement toward the goal would be available. In my opinion, such a goal is essential to successfully fulfilling and implementing principles 1 and 2.

Reducing carbon footprint must be the central organizing principle of the Fairfax County Environmental Vision. Again, much has changed in understanding global warming/climate change since the Environmental Vision was written in 2007.

Business as usual is not effective public policy given what we now know about the interplay of carbon pollution and environment. Solutions include knowing that energy efficiency is the first fuel; energy efficiency is the most cost-effective and rapid way to reduce GHGs, thereby improving environment. Instituting and tracking energy efficiency throughout all county programs, particularly heating and cooling, lighting technologies, sustainable energy sources, and education of County staff and residents needs to be part of the 2017 Environmental Vision.

Reducing GHGs as the organizing principle for the Environmental Vision needs to be incorporated into each of the 6 categories with a 7th category added focusing solely on implementing the above suggested Principle 3.

Reducing carbon emissions and inhibiting global warming/climate change needs to be named and included in the text of each category. Global warming and sea-level rise, along with increased precipitation rates, is even now effecting Fairfax County environment.

Some examples of integrating are:

I. **Growth and Land Use:** Not only does development effect carbon emissions and public health, it also diminishes biodiversity and animal and plant habitats and migration routes thereby reducing resiliency in all natural systems. Imbalances in the eco-system occur which is harmful to all life. All development needs to be include energy efficiency, including affordable housing where a disproportionate amount of the family budget is spent on energy/utilities and water.

II. **Air Quality and Transportation:** Carbon emissions, including methane, are particularly important to air quality, smog, and particulates. Thus, measurements of methane leaks and repairing of leaks are highly important. Air quality is directly related to public health issues such as asthma, heart, lung and other diseases, including strokes. Child and adult asthma is increasing. Better measuring systems are needed, communication to the community, and greater involvement of the health community are need. Reducing carbon emissions by more diversity in transportation and encouragement of it are especially important. Dispersing of employment centers, having them nearby to housing sectors, is important.

III. **Water Quality:** Run-off and loss of water in the Fairfax County watershed area is a major issue and will continue to be so particularly with heavier rainfalls and droughts – these are directly related to climate change/global warming. Thus, ways to capture and store water within the County, thereby reducing erosion and soil and water loss will be important. Loss of watershed charging and re-charging capacities will have serious consequences for County water tables, life and sustainability. Education of the community about consequences of erosion, soil and water loss is necessary.

IV. **Solid Waste:** Update technology to remove harmful emissions as well as metals and other environmentally unhealthy toxins. Particularly construct landfills so that no seepage occurs and have additional checkpoints and data related to landfill emissions. Utility companies and businesses need to have increased fines and other consequences if caught illegally dumping and/or mishandling toxic materials.

V. **Parks, Trails and Open Space:** Incorporate migration routes into planning and refurbishing of trails, parks, etc. Incorporate sustainable land use practices and planning into the system, along with habitat supports such as plantings which attract pollinators, butterflies, etc. And use native and sustainable, low-water need plants and trees. Provide more community garden spaces throughout the County which reduce travel time to the garden spaces. This reduces GHG emissions. Consider all inhabitants (biodiversity) in policies related to parks, trails, open spaces, etc. Plantings and water systems need to retard mosquito habitats. Any spraying, fertilizers, additives need to be eco-friendly and environmentally non-toxic.

VI. **Environmental Stewardship:** Caring for the environment most essentially means reducing carbon emissions. All are threatened because no environmental component is free of global warming/climate change consequences. Highlighting the immediate positive effect of energy efficiency to reduce carbon footprint is essential and necessary.

(New Category) - VII. Carbon Footprint Reduction – a 1% reduction per year, tracking and sharing of data related to carbon reduction, air quality, energy efficiency.

Thank you for the opportunity to share these thoughts and concerns regarding the 2017 Fairfax County Environmental Vision.

Sincerely,

Jean Wright