

Joint Environmental Taskforce
MEETING SUMMARY
9/2/2020

Committee Members in Attendance: Supervisors Dan Storck and Penny Gross, School Board Members Elaine Tholen and Karl Frisch, Greg Ulses, Ire Kim, Karen Campblin, Meg Mall, Richard Aiken, Rick Clayton, Smita Chandra Thomas, and Susan Stillman.

WELCOME/UPDATES

- Supervisor Dan Storck welcomed JET members to the electronic meeting.
- JET members received copies of the draft JET final report and the draft subcommittee reports in advance of the meeting.

SUBCOMMITTEE DRAFT REPORTS & DISCUSSION

- Energy
 - Supervisor Dan Storck provided an overview of the Energy Subcommittee recommendations, which included:
 - Recommendation 1: Be carbon neutral by 2040.
 - Recommendation 2: Adopt subgoals to achieve recommendation 1, including:
 - Achieve 50% emissions reduction by 2030 using the 2019 baseline.
 - Produce 25% of energy use from in-county renewable energy generation by 2030 and 50% by 2040 using the 2019 baseline.
 - Adopt building energy performance standards for existing buildings. Decrease total energy use in county facilities by 25% by 2030 and 50% by 2040.
 - Adopt a Net Zero Energy commitment. All new county buildings and major renovation projects beginning planning and design in 2021 and beyond must achieve Net Zero Energy performance. In instances where this may not be possible, staff would need to report to their respective Boards and explain why.
 - JET members and guests discussed the recommendations of the Energy Subcommittee.
 - The subcommittee explained that it would hope to achieve recommendations with in-county renewable energy generation and help from the grid, as Dominion has committed to move to clean energy. However, off-site clean energy generation may be considered moving forward.
 - The impact of these recommendations on Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) was discussed. A major challenge for FCPS will be eliminating the burning of fossil fuels as many sites use natural gas for heating fuel. Heating systems will need to be replaced. Ultimately, the recommendations are achievable but may require additional funding.
 - JET members discussed if and how these recommendations would be implemented in accordance with the One Fairfax policy. It was suggested that the prioritization of facilities (for energy efficiency upgrades and/or renewable energy installations) and allocation of resources be carried out with a focus on the county's low-income communities. JET members also discussed the trade-offs between improving air quality in schools and reducing energy use and

whether or not the scope of the recommendations should be expanded. It was ultimately decided that the baseline recommendations of the Energy Subcommittee would remain as drafted. More specific considerations related to implementation would be left to the Board of Supervisors and School Board if and when these recommendations are adopted.

- Solid Waste/Recycling
 - Supervisor Penny Gross provided an overview of the Solid Waste/Recycling Subcommittee recommendations, which included:
 - Recommendation 1: Fairfax County Government (FCG) and FCPS should adopt a goal to be Zero Waste by 2030.
 - Recommendation 2: A plan for achieving Zero Waste by 2030 must be prepared by staff by June 30, 2021.
 - Recommendation 3: Conduct a trash and recycling audit.
 - Recommendation 4: Review purchasing practices and develop a sustainable purchasing program. Given that many employees and students are teleworking/distance learning with the pandemic, this review should include electronic devices and what happens to them when they are broken or obsolete.
 - Recommendation 5: Encourage expanded composting in public and private venues. Undertake an education program in multiple languages on waste and recycling for the general public.
 - Recommendation 6: FCPS has a formal partnership with the National Wildlife Federation. FCPS should continue to address consumption/waste through their ECO-Schools program and other similar environmental auditing programs.
 - The subcommittee noted that, due to the pandemic, many things have changed from when the JET first started meeting to the time these recommendations were drafted. The pandemic may delay implementation of some of these recommendations.
 - JET members and guests discussed the recommendations of the Solid Waste/Recycling Subcommittee.
 - There was discussion on whether the composting recommendation would require the development of infrastructure. It was decided that it may be an outgrowth of the recommendation, but each of the Boards would need to have that discussion.
 - There was discussion around the recommendation related to a trash and recycling audit. The audit would include waste from the general public; it would not be exclusive to FCG or FCPS. The audit would be conducted on what comes through the county's collection of solid waste.
- Workforce Development
 - School Board Member Elaine Tholen provided an overview of the Workforce Development Subcommittee recommendations, which included:
 - Recommendation 1: Work with guidance counselors and career center staff to develop a standardized toolkit to speak with high schoolers and middle schoolers about the range of green careers and the background necessary to enter those careers. Ensure the presence of green career professionals in career days and student interview days.
 - Recommendation 2: Work closely with solar installers as we move forward with installations at county and school facilities. Work with the installers on hiring

graduates, determining which kinds of trainings are needed for job entry, and how those jobs can be advertised to potential employees.

- Recommendation 3: Develop a comprehensive plan to offer one or more green career/ economy-related programs for high school students to encourage participation in the emerging job market. FCPS Career and Technical Education (CTE) staff has been working closely with the subcommittee to put together this recommendation, looking at a variety of ways to get information out to students on internships, apprenticeships, and after-school programs. Long-term, the subcommittee discussed developing a full course around green careers and skills that students can learn. The subcommittee also generated a list of the certifications needed in various industries.
- Recommendation 4: Develop a plan to utilize buildings as learning tools as net zero practices and renewable energy is adopted in county and school facilities. The subcommittee discussed learning opportunities, such as signage, dashboards and interactive models for building occupants and/or visitors.
- The subcommittee stated that many of their recommendations play into resources, best practices and industry standards that are already in play. There are relatively low upfront costs associated with many of the recommendations; to implement many of them, it may just require linking up with willing partners.
- JET members and guests discussed the recommendations of the Workforce Development Subcommittee.
 - The JET discussed how these recommendations play into conversations that have taken place at the regional level, particularly with the Northern Virginia Regional Commission and Northern Virginia Community College. Coordination with these groups moving forward would be beneficial.
 - The JET discussed the scope of the Workforce Development recommendations. The subcommittee explained that they decided early on not to focus on elementary and middle schools, just because it would have made their scope too broad. However, in their work, they have come across some opportunities for elementary and middle schoolers, which they have shared with the FCPS Get2Green program administrators.
- Transportation
 - School Board Member Karl Frisch provided an overview of the Transportation Subcommittee recommendations, which included:
 - Recommendation 1: Replace bus fleet with electric alternatives. The Fairfax Connector fleet shall be transitioned by 2030 and the FCPS fleet by 2035.
 - Recommendation 2: Determine which non-bus fleet vehicles have electric alternatives and transition them by 2035. Develop a plan for mitigating the carbon footprint of the other vehicles.
 - Recommendation 3: Necessary charging infrastructure shall be installed to scale as fleets grow. Wherever possible, charging infrastructure should serve both FCG and FCPS.
 - Recommendation 4: Take advantage of grants. Transitioning the fleets will be an expensive endeavor with upfront capital expenses. The county needs to take advantage of financing programs and all of the opportunities it has. Staff will have to work to identify opportunities and grab them.
 - Recommendation 5: Develop a plan to fuel electric vehicles using carbon-free fuels and offsets with a complete transition to carbon-free fuel by 2030.

- Recommendation 6: Vehicle stipends and take-home vehicles for FCPS staff should be contingent on the use/purchase of electric vehicles.
- Recommendation 7: Encourage staff and students to transition to hybrid or electric vehicles. Encourage the consideration of reserved or marked parking spaces at facilities for hybrid or electric vehicles.
- Recommendation 8: To the extent possible, the rollout of electric Fairfax Connector and FCPS buses will occur first in socioeconomic diverse areas and will be prioritized using the One Fairfax lens.
- Recommendation 9: Consider transitional costs using the social cost of carbon along with fuel, upkeep and other reduced costs to assess potential savings and determine break even points.
- Recommendation 10: FCG and FCPS should coordinate electrification and share charging infrastructure whenever possible. Each entity should also develop legislative packages for the General Assembly to achieve recommendations.
- Recommendation 11: Improve options for safe biking and walking. The upcoming Active Fairfax Plan should prioritize increasing safe, well-designed, ADA compliant, and interconnected (including with mass transit) options for biking, walking, and running.
- Recommendation 12: Develop a safe, continuous, and interconnected system. Enhance lighting, signage, and other safety features, i.e. lower speed limits where applicable. Work with VDOT to expand bike lane markings to interconnect trails and bus and metro stops with roads.
- Recommendation 13: Increase access to grid-improved bike-share systems. Review and mitigate legal and other constraints to promote access and use of bike-share systems, especially in underserved communities beyond the typical commercial hubs.
- Recommendation 14: Encourage use by students, workers, and other residents. Expand and promote programs that incentivize biking and walking to school and work. Ensure adequate bike racks at schools and transportation hubs. Hold county-wide events promoting trail systems, including bike rides, walks, etc.
- Recommendation 15: Improve the user experience. Develop a plan for adding porta-potties or other restroom options; publicizing and marketing trail systems maps, to businesses, schools, and the general public; increasing tree canopy for better shade and shelter.
- Recommendation 16: To the extent possible, roll out enhanced biking, walking, and alternative transportation options first in socioeconomically diverse areas, prioritizing equity and the One Fairfax lens.
- Recommendation 17: FCPS and FCG should coordinate their efforts internally and with neighboring jurisdictions for a region-wide network. Each should develop legislative packages for the General Assembly to help achieve these recommendations. Additional funding sources such as Smartscale and Northern Virginia Transportation Authority should be used.
- While not incorporated in the report, the subcommittee has research they have collected to make their case.
- One suggestion made was that, as FCG and FCPS proceed on issues recommended by the JET, subcommittee members can stay engaged and help provide expert input (e.g. in the form of testimony).

- JET members and guests discussed the recommendations of the Transportation Subcommittee.
 - The JET discussed the consideration of hydrogen in addition to or in place of fleet electrification. Several JET members suggested the county wait and see what the market does on hydrogen as infrastructure is still in the early stages. It may be useful down the line for heavy vehicles for which there are no electric vehicle alternatives.

JET NEXT STEPS

- JET members who have comments on subcommittee reports shall submit their comments directly to the Executive Committee members overseeing that particular subcommittee by September 11.
- JET members who have comments on the JET final report shall submit their comments to Camela Speer by September 11.
- The Executive Committee will meet the week of September 14 to discuss the JET final report, which will be submitted to the Board of Supervisors and School Board.
- The report will be presented to the two Boards likely in early October.

OTHER NOTES

Meeting Dates: First Wednesday of each month

Next Meeting: Wednesday, October 7, 2020 – if needed