

Joint Environmental Taskforce – Energy Subcommittee

MEETING SUMMARY

7/22/2020

Subcommittee Members in Attendance: Richard Aiken, Smita Chandra Thomas

Staff in attendance included Camela Speer (Director of Communications, Board of Supervisors, Mount Vernon District), Kambiz Agazi (Director, Office of Environmental and Energy Coordination), John Lord (Energy Management Coordinator, FCPS) Sam Kang (Staff Aide, Board of Supervisors, Sully District), Samuel Gaber (Fairfax County Health Department) and Kate Daley (Office of Environmental and Energy Coordination). Subcommittee members and staff met to discuss the draft goals of the subcommittee:

- Two approaches to goal setting: bottom-up or top-down.
- IPCC study states that everyone has to get to carbon neutral by 2050 and that estimate is likely conservative
- Fairfax County is expected to share leadership so should set carbon neutral deadline before 2050
- Once top-down goals are set, then figure out how we're going to get there
- One option for a carbon neutral goal is to require the county to be carbon neutral by FY 2045 with an interim goal of 50% by FY 2031
- A more aggressive option is to be carbon neutral in 10 years, reaching 50% in the first five years
- Fairfax County would need to ramp up several of the actions it is taking to reach this shorter-term carbon neutral goal, including LED light conversions, use of ESCOs, implementation of solar
- Other actions, which will have longer-term results, include increasing energy efficiency, adopting more electric vehicles in the county fleet and taking advantage of Dominion Energy's electric school bus pilot program
- Project management is crucial to implementing these actions, but will be a challenge
- Staff believe that the county is moving in the direction of many of the subcommittee's recommendations
- The recommendations are practical but financial concerns may be an issue with some of them
- Staff believe stretch goals are good; the longer-term carbon neutral goal is more feasible and gives the county more time to ramp up (the longer-term goal is to be carbon neutral by FY 2045, and reach 50% by FY 2031)
- To reach a carbon neutral goal, assistance is needed from state, utilities, other partners
- In addition to a carbon neutral goal, subcommittee wants to set goals on buildings, clean energy generation
- Fairfax County Government just put forward a proposed policy on adopting Net Zero Energy (NZE) standards for new buildings and major renovations of buildings of a certain size
- Subcommittee would like to see Fairfax County Schools adopt an NZE policy with a more aggressive timeframe than Fairfax County Government, perhaps requiring all buildings in design by FY 2026 to meet NZE standards
- For existing buildings, use ESCOs to ramp up energy efficiency measures

- Clean energy generation goals are desired, but more information may be necessary to set a timeframe (e.g. a status update on the county's solar power purchase agreement (PPA) projects)
- Subcommittee members expressed a need for the county to act locally on clean energy (generation of renewable energy in county is preferred over the purchase of renewable energy credits (RECs))
- Subcommittee is close to finalizing goals on:
 - Carbon neutrality
 - NZE policies for new and major renovations of buildings (perhaps with different timeframes for Fairfax County Government and Fairfax County Schools)
 - Requirements for existing buildings
 - Clean energy
- Once goals are set, then pathways can be established