

**COUNTY OF FAIRFAX
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ADVISORY COUNCIL (EQAC)**

MEETING MINUTES

DATE: October 8, 2025

TIME: 7:25 p.m. – 9:21 p.m.

**LOCATION: Fairfax County Government Center - Conference Room 4/5
(12000 Government Center Pkwy., Fairfax, VA 22035)**

EQAC Member Attendance

Name	Present/ Absent*	Name	Present/ Absent*
Larry Zaragoza (Chair, Mount Vernon)	P	Ken Lanfear (Vice-Chair, Hunter Mill)	P
James Albright (Mason)	P	Kathryn Alsegaf (Providence)	A
Bryan Campbell (Braddock)	P	Alexis Dickerson (At-Large)	V
Johna Gagnon (Franconia)	P	Eric Goplerud (At-Large)	A
Ken Gubin (Dranesville)	P	Andreana Lin (At-Large)	P
Kersey Manliclic (At-Large)	P	Nishka Shah (Student Member)	P
Rich Weisman (Sully)	P	Clyde Wilber (Springfield)	P

* P indicates present; A indicates absent; V indicates attended virtually

Staff Attendance

Matt Meyers Office of Environmental and Energy Coordination (OEEC)
Maggie Beetstra (OEEC)
Allison Homer (OEEC)
Saundra O’Connell, Land Development Services (LDS)
Adam Lipera (LDS)
Brian Nolte, Sully District Office
Dan O’Brien, Franconia District Office

Visitor Attendance

None

Call to Order

Chair Zaragoza called the meeting to order at 7:25 pm.

Chair Zaragoza introduced the requirements to allow EQAC to meet virtually. He asked that all members introduce themselves and following, he moved that EQAC certify that the virtual meeting comported with EQAC’s adopted policy for all-virtual meetings. He further moved that EQAC conduct the meeting electronically through a dedicated video- and audio-conferencing line, and that the public could access this meeting through the Microsoft Teams link provided on the agenda or by at dialing in by phone at 571-429-5982 with the phone conference ID: 323 865 155#. The motion was moved by Dr. Weisman, seconded by Mr. Campbell, and carried with a

vote of 10-0-0, with Ms. Alsegaf, Dr. Goplerud, and Ms. Lin absent from the meeting at the time of the vote (Ms. Lin arrived shortly after the vote was taken).

Agenda Items, Discussion, Decisions and Votes

1. Public Comment Period

There were no public comments provided during this period.

2. Resilient Trees Amendment to the Public Facilities Manual Presentation

Ms. Homer provided a presentation about the “Resilient Trees Amendment to the Public Facilities Manual”. PowerPoint slides from this presentation are available on the EQAC website. Ms. O’Connell provided additional information related to the slides about Table 12.14 (also in the PowerPoint presentation). County staff are planning to email the draft table tomorrow to EQAC members.

Mr. Campbell noted that this same presentation was given to the tree commission last month and was well-received. Chair Zaragoza noted the presentation should be helpful to county residents. Mr. Gubin asked if local nurseries were involved in developing the Public Facilities Manual (PFM). County staff said they consulted with two local nurseries and noted that the trees proposed to be added to the PFM are available in Fairfax County. However, county staff noted that the county does not have authority to influence what the nurseries sell.

Mr. Albright asked how well heat islands are defined by the county. Ms. Homer said the county map provides information at the level of a 30-meter grid cell. She noted that the tree guidance is intended to discourage planting of trees that are not well equipped to be in the county. Mr. Wilber asked about the approach for a developer who wants to get credit for use of PFM in heat island areas. Mr. Lipera noted that this is site-specific, and Mr. Wilber suggested that this feedback should be reflected in the PFM. Ms. Homer noted that developers would be unlikely to get credit for a heat vulnerable tree in the category of street tree. Mr. Wilber further suggested having a motion at tonight’s meeting to make sure the PFM recognizes heat islands and does not plant wrong trees for use; this was not further pursued.

Chair Zaragoza asked about the potential for EQAC to submit comments about the PFM and Ms. O’Connell noted that county staff are requesting comments to be submitted by the end of October. Chair Zaragoza noted that EQAC’s next meeting is on November 12 and could target providing comments soon after that meeting. Ms. O’Connell said getting EQAC’s comments the day after that meeting would be helpful. Chair Zaragoza solicited feedback from EQAC about drafting a motion for consideration at EQAC’s November meeting and EQAC members were supportive of this approach. Ms. Homer said the county’s plan is to get the PFM approved by June 2026 including board approval. Dr. Manliclic asked about the potential for pushback on the new policy. County staff said they are not expecting much negative feedback.

3. Annual Report on the Environment (ARE) Discussion

Scorecard. Vice-Chair Lanfear reviewed previous EQAC discussions about the list of recommendations in the ARE from the September meeting. He provided suggested status and icons for each of the recommendations in the scorecard for consideration by EQAC members. Vice-Chair Lanfear also noted adding one additional recommendation about data centers under Climate and Energy (Recommendation 2025-14). EQAC discussed each of these items and minor changes were identified. For example, under Recommendation 2025-8, Ms. Gagnon suggested removing “initiate” in regard to Unified Sanitary Districts given that the BOS already has a board matter to that effect. Under Recommendation 2025-13, Mr. Gubin suggested use of alternate language about supporting the county’s EV Readiness Strategy. Ms. Lin described a workshop this past weekend about activities related to data centers in Virginia. Under Recommendation 2025-14, Mr. Albright suggested removing language about calling out hyperscale with an if/then clause and instead suggested that such information be provided in the ARE chapter.

MOTION: Ms. Gagnon moved adoption of the motion to approve Recommendation 2025-14. The County should adopt a strategy for the siting of data centers. If hyperscale data centers are sought, a technology campus will help to insulate communities from noise and other impacts of data centers. Mr. Gubin seconded the motion, and it carried by a vote of 12-0-0, with Ms. Alsegaf and Dr. Goplerud absent from the meeting.

Executive Summary. Chair Zaragoza introduced the draft Executive Summary that was circulated to EQAC. He noted receiving written comments on the draft by Mr. Gubin and Dr. Weisman. Some of the comments were substantive and some were editorial. For example, in the priority recommendation about climate and resilience, it was suggested to change the word “continue” to “maintain” in the discussion about funding for implementing CECAP and Resilient Fairfax.

Mr. Wilber requested that the Executive Summary should be a shorter list of issues and the reason for the BOS to be concerned about the issue. He said that he did not receive any feedback on the text he provided last month about his top 5 list of issues. These were as follows:

- Transportation – reduce single occupancy vehicle trips;
- Data Centers – implementation rules are needed;
- Forever Chemicals – threaten residents’ health;
- Heat Islands – threaten vulnerable people; and
- Zero Waste – relevant to advancing the BOS’ zero waste goal.

Several EQAC members suggested that the text in the Executive Summary was too long and should be shorter. Dr. Weisman suggested that priority recommendations should be phrased as actions rather than observations. Dr. Manliclic asked if the priority recommendations were in order of priority; Chair Zaragoza said this is for discussion. Mr. Wilber suggested including forever chemicals in the list of priority recommendations. He noted top priority recommendations should be about single

occupancy vehicles, forever chemicals, and data centers. Ms. Gagnon moved adoption of the motion to approve Recommendation 2025-14. Vice-Chair Lanfear suggested having a vote on a revised Executive Summary in November.

MOTION: Mr. Wilber moved that the Executive Summary should identify 5 issues for the BOS to be concerned about, why, and what to do about them. Mr. Albright seconded the motion. Mr. Wilber and Mr. Albright accepted a friendly amendment to change the number of issues from 5 to 6. The motion to identify 6 issues, why, and what to do about them carried by a vote of 12-0-0, with Ms. Alsegaf and Dr. Goplerud absent from the meeting.

MOTION: Mr. Wilber moved that the remainder of the Executive Summary be approved. Ms. Gagnon seconded the motion. The motion to approve the remainder of the Executive Summary carried by a vote of 12-0-0, with Ms. Alsegaf and Dr. Goplerud absent from the meeting.

Introduction. EQAC discussed the draft Introduction that was circulated to EQAC. Ms. Gagnon noted that the 3rd paragraph did not read well with regard to a chapter title. She suggested “Natural” should be revised to “Ecological” in the title description; Chair Zaragoza to revise as appropriate.

MOTION: Mr. Campbell moved to approve the Introduction and Ms. Gagnon seconded the motion. The motion to approve the Introduction carried by a vote of 12-0-0, with Ms. Alsegaf and Dr. Goplerud absent from the meeting.

Cover. EQAC discussed the revised cover that was circulated to EQAC. Ms. Gagnon gave kudos for the work on the cover.

MOTION: Vice-Chair Lanfear moved that the ARE cover be approved and Mr. Wilber seconded the motion. The motion to approve the cover carried by a vote of 12-0-0, with Ms. Alsegaf and Dr. Goplerud absent from the meeting.

4. 2026 EQAC Meeting Schedule Finalization Discussion

Chair Zaragoza discussed a draft meeting schedule for 2026 including a public meeting on January 14 and meeting with the park authority on April 8. He requested feedback about the number of virtual meetings to include for the year. Mr. Wilber expressed an interest in not having any meeting scheduled as virtual. Ms. Gagnon suggested targeting one virtual meeting per quarter. Dr. Beetstra noted that EQAC can change meetings to be virtual in case of emergency such as for inclement weather. Mr. Campbell noted an interest in having August as a virtual meeting to accommodate personal interest. Mr. Meyers noted that some BACs do not meet in August. Dr. Beetstra noted that EQAC members have the option to attend on a virtual basis (unlimited number) in case of illness or family emergency. Vice-Chair Lanfear suggested having August as a virtual with a potential to cancel if nothing urgent is identified for EQAC to discuss. EQAC will not invite outside speakers to an August meeting. EQAC members expressed a preference to

reschedule a tentative November 11, 2026 meeting (Federal Holiday) to November 18 rather than November 4.

Dr. Beetstra indicated that EQAC did not need to vote on this schedule.

5. Approval/Acceptance of Meeting Minutes

MOTION: Ms. Gagnon moved to approve the September 2025 minutes, minutes and Mr. Gubin seconded the motion. The motion to approve the September minutes carried by a vote of 12-0-0, with Ms. Alsegaf and Dr. Goplerud absent from the meeting.

MOTION: Mr. Gubin moved acceptance of the minutes from an October 5, 2025 meeting of the Climate Crisis Forum (attended by several EQAC members) and Chair Zaragoza seconded the motion. The motion to accept the minutes carried by a vote of 12-0-0, with Ms. Alsegaf and Dr. Goplerud absent from the meeting.

6. Chair's Items

Chair Zaragoza and Mr. Gubin are planning to join a meeting of the planning commission on October 9 concerning updates. Chair Zaragoza noted some expected improvements but also some anticipated omissions (e.g., about battery storage systems). He also noted anecdotal information about data centers in Europe achieving 35 dba vs a U.S. standard of 65 dba. Chair Zaragoza noted uncertainty about the schedule for closing the document. Chair Zaragoza noted a concern expressed by Dr. Goplerud to discuss smart growth, land use, and transportation. Chair Zaragoza suggested seeing conflicting directions among county departments.

7. Council Member Items

Vice-Chair Lanfear expressed appreciation to all EQAC members for their work on the ARE, noting an expectation it would be a total of less than 100 pages.

Mr. Campbell noted that the Braddock District 3rd annual climate action conference will be taking place on October 18. Speakers to include elected officials. Also, that he attended a transportation career fair and met staff from Clean Air Partners; he suggested such staff be invited for a briefing to EQAC. Mr. Meyers noted that Fairfax County staff have ongoing communications with staff from Clean Air Partners.

Mr. Albright noted work on the Annandale green the greenway to build native plant repositories along Columbia Pike. Also, about a local art festival the weekend of October 11-12.

Ms. Dickerson noted the county seed collection activity is ongoing until October 15. Chair Zaragoza said that most supervisors' offices have collection locations.

Ms. Gagnon asked if the county will be able to provide hard copies of the ARE, such as for each of the BOS offices. Dr. Beetstra said a limited number of copies can be made available by the county.

Dr. Weisman noted a prior suggestion for EQAC to schedule a meeting that focuses on FCPS given the feedback about lack of progress in addressing the JET recommendations. Chair Zaragoza said such planning was in progress.

Other council members said they had no input at this time.

8. Staff Items

Dr. Beetstra referred to an invitation to be sent out to EQAC about an event concerning solar energy on October 21 (in-person only).

Dr. Beetstra provided a reminder that the Environmental Excellence awards will be on October 30 from 5-7 PM in the board auditorium.

9. Adjournment

The meeting ended at 9:21 p.m. following a motion for adjournment by Ms. Gagnon, which was seconded by Mr. Campbell and carried by a vote of 12-0-0, with Ms. Alsegaf and Dr. Goplerud absent from the meeting.