

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

**DATE: February 10, 2021
TIME: 7:18 PM – 9:33 PM
LOCATION: Online / WebEx**

EQAC Member Attendance

Name	Present Absent*	Name	Present Absent*
Stella Koch (Chairman, At-Large)	P	Larry Zaragoza (Vice Chairman, Mount Vernon)	P
Johna Gagnon (Lee)	P	Renee Grebe (At-Large)	P
Richard Healy (Mason)	P	Prasi Thapa (Student Member)	P
Ed Monroe (Dranesville)	P	George Lamb (At-Large)	P
Ken Lanfear (Hunter Mill)	P	Bryan Campbell (Braddock)	P
Alex Robbins (Providence)	A	Mike Zatz (At-Large)	P
Rich Weisman (Sully)	P	Clyde Wilber (Springfield)	P

* P indicates present; A indicates absent

Staff Attendance

Kelly Naylor
Kathleen Daley
Kambiz Agazi
Nicole Wynands
Tom Biesiadny

Visitor Attendance

Two phone callers 2022***99 and 7037***66 and 7037***11
Grant Scherling
Elizabeth Lonoff, PE

Agenda Items, Discussion, Decisions and Votes

1. Electronic meeting findings and determinations
Chairman Koch MOVED, and Mr. Weisman seconded, that each member's voice may be adequately heard by each other member of the Environmental Quality Advisory Council.
2. Presentation and Discussion - Active Fairfax Transportation Plan (AFTP) by Nicole Wynands
Ms. Wynands, the Program Manager for bike related programs and the AFTP ([see website](#)), provided a broad overview of this project. This project seeks to update and streamline comprehensive plan guidance for the development of active transportation

network, provide design and program guidance on active transportation safety and comfort, develop funding prioritization recommendation and performance measures, and develop policy and program recommendations for implementation. This project kicked off in 2020 and is expected to be completed in 2022. Phase 2 which we are in now includes the implementation with potential Comprehensive Plan amendments. Public release will be happening the week of February 15, 2021.

The biggest benefits of this project were described as¹ developing a state of the art active transportation network that appeals to more people, may be able to reduce impervious surface with the development of combined, shared use-paths, and the high return on investment of this project based on the amount of money they have to help the greatest number of people get around.

In terms of budget, the County is investing annually in bike and pedestrian facilities, but it is small amount compared to the need. Maintenance is a challenging topic overall (for active transportation trails and more broadly as well), and while there is some money allocated for this each year, there needs to be more set aside.

Mr. Lanfear highlighted the importance of the “necessary” (invisible) cyclists who must be considered. These are people who need to ride for work and often at odd times or in odd locations. Mr. Weisman highlighted EQAC’s report on the bicycle master plan and the suggestions for measuring data when evaluating the success of goals. Discussion also took place regarding recreational trips versus active transportation, and the need for sufficient, safe bicycle parking at destinations.

Community input will be sought to determine priorities via a visual community survey which will also have the opportunity for freeform feedback and interactive maps to see existing network to allow for easier feedback at the neighborhood level. The County’s consultant will summarize the feedback in a report to make recommendations for Phase 2.

3. Presentation and Discussion – Transportation Planning Efforts - Tom Biesiadny
Mr. Biesiadny, Director of Fairfax County Department of Transportation (FCDOT), provided an overview of the efforts the County is pursuing to meet the Board’s Environmental Vision for Transportation, projects and initiatives aimed at reducing single-occupancy vehicle (SOV) trips, the impact of the pandemic on transportation, and plans and activities related to the use of electric vehicles.

The prior presentation on the Active Transportation plan is one effort. Transit efforts include the expansion of metro, the use of express lanes, increased local bus service, improving bus stops and pedestrian access, as well as both short-term and long-term capital improvement projects. All new roadway projects include bike and pedestrian facilities. The County Comprehensive Plan directs that new density be focused in activity centers with more transportation support and more walkable, bikeable areas. Safety of

¹ 21 minute mark: https://www.ebmcndn.net/fairfax/fairfax-seal-viewer-cc.php?w=768&h=432&viewnode=EQAC_Feb10_2021BusinessMeeting

these transportation corridors is also a focus.

Pandemic impacts were also discussed. With a significant rise in telework, traffic initially dropped significantly, but is now at about 10-20% below pre-pandemic levels. Transit has also dropped significantly, with rail remaining around 80-95% below pre-pandemic, and Fairfax Connector ridership currently at -35% on weekday and -5% on weekends. At the same time, there has been a significant increase in biking and pedestrian activity. In general, some people have converted to SOV from transit, but others are people doing day-time trips during the workday. There appear to be more trips closer to home and fewer trips at peak times.

Electric vehicles (EV) were discussed at the November 10, 2020 Board meeting, with the Joint Environmental Task Force recommending all transit vehicles to be electric by 2030. Fleets are beginning to turn electric or hybrid including five hybrid Metrobuses, four electric Fairfax Connectors as part of a pilot program, eight electric buses for Fairfax County Public Schools, and a growing county fleet of hybrid and electrical vehicles. Council also discussed how to incentivize more EV usage and the challenge for battery storage overall and for buses specifically.

4. Continued Annual Report on the Environment (ARE) Discussion

Ms. Gagnon is working on a broader history of EQAC to be included this year to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Council. Chairman Koch proposed that we aim to have the ARE be 100-150 pages total this year and presented her abbreviated Water chapter format which was reduced from 40 pages to 14. Doing so may mean that we use more of the data appendix. Council should be making a list of County staff that you need data from, what you want, and begin doing that outreach. Council should aim to get the chapters done sooner than later, perhaps with a summer deadline. Another important aspect will be having chapter authors respond quickly to edits suggested by Mr. Lanfear at the final review stage. All chapters should be in their finalized state by October 2021.

Separately, but related to Chairman Koch's water chapter, Mr. Wilbur proposed sending a letter with water quality related questions for the Planning Commission. Mr. Wilbur moved the sending of the letter, and Mr. Zaragoza seconded.

5. Approval of meeting minutes (discussion; decision)

Minutes were approved with the recommendation to include the list of attendees (the full council attended that meeting). Mr. Wilbur moved, Mr. Lanfear seconded.

6. Chairman's items

We will need to come up with a schedule for completing the ARE. Council members should also look through the minutes of the annual public hearing to see which comments are relevant and should be included in their chapter.

7. Council members items

Renee Grebe

- Asked on timing for One Fairfax presentation to EQAC. Mr. Agazi will be inviting someone from the Equity office and will update EQAC soon.

Clyde Wilbur

- Presented an update on the County's litter task force and what the County can do internally with a concentration on what will require action by the Board of Supervisors (e.g. ordinance changes). The document shared by Mr. Wilbur has been included with these minutes. Council should send comments to Kelly Naylor who should collect and share them back with Clyde.

Public input

- None

8. Staff items

None

9. Adjournment

9:33pm (Lanfear, Gagnon)