



Discussion Points for EQAC Bylaws

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EQAC's Purposes (Article II)

- Purposes pulled over from 1981 Charter
- Staff recommends EQAC revisit several of the purposes listed.

1. Purpose: Article II (A) in Draft Bylaws:

- 1981 Purpose:
 - “Determining through study on a continuing basis, the quality of the physical environment of the County and the forces or actions which affect, or could affect such quality;”
- **Discussion point:** Should EQAC add language noting examples (but not limited to) of county policies that guide EQAC's studies?
 - Ex: “Determining through study on a continuing basis, the quality of the physical environment of the County and the forces or actions which affect, or could affect such quality, **and how they relate to the goals or areas noted in the Environmental Vision, One Fairfax Policy, Countywide Strategic Plan, or other guiding initiatives, policies, documents, and their successors.**”
 - **Rationale:** Improves clarity on how EQAC frames “environmental quality”. This proposed addition would not limit or restrict EQAC from advising on new or emerging issues.

EQAC's Purposes (cont.)

2. Purposes: Article II (C, D, E) in Draft Bylaws:

- 1981 Purpose:
 - C: “Providing a channel within which all aspects of County environmental quality may be brought together for common understanding and consideration; and”
 - D: “Providing a means by which attention may be directed toward resolution of environmental quality matters which merit particular attention or which require timely County action; and”
 - E: “Providing means of communication between public and private sectors on matters of County environmental quality; and”
- **Discussion point:** Should EQAC streamline its purposes by combining purposes C, D, and E into purpose D with the removal of “resolution of”?
 - “Providing a means by which attention may be directed toward ~~resolution of~~ environmental quality matters which merit particular attention or which require timely County action; and”
 - **Rationale:** The word “means” provides a range of ways in which EQAC may act (communicate, engage, recommend, report) and with whom.

EQAC's Purposes (cont.)

3. Purposes: Article II (G) in Draft Bylaws:

- 1981 Purpose:
 - “Acting as the advocate of preserving, protecting and enhancing the physical environment in matters under consideration by the Board of Supervisors, the Planning Commission, the Board of Zoning Appeals, the School Board, and all County and County-related agencies.”
- **Discussion point:** Should EQAC update this purpose to reflect agencies with which EQAC works closely? This could include the removal of the Board of Zoning Appeals and the School Board and adding Fairfax County Park Authority.
 - “Acting as the advocate of preserving, protecting and enhancing the physical environment in matters under consideration by the Board of Supervisors, the Planning Commission, **the Park Authority**, ~~the Board of Zoning Appeals, the School Board,~~ and all County and County-related agencies.”
 - **Rationale:** Updating to reflect the organizations/agencies of interest to EQAC.

Mission Statement (Article III)

4. Mission (Draft Bylaws, Article III; 1981 Charter: 4a)

- “The mission of EQAC is to advise or appear as an advocate on matters affecting the quality of the physical environment of the County before the Board of Supervisors, the County Executive, and other County and County-related agencies and EQAC shall have direct access to the Board of Supervisors and the County Executive.”
- **Discussion point:** Should EQAC either remove or work this language into the Purpose section of the proposed bylaws?
 - **Rationale:** The new Bylaw format does not include a separate “Mission” section. This could be an opening statement before listing the specific purposes.

Term Limits (Members/Officers)

5. Draft Bylaws - Article IV: Membership and Term of Office – “Appointments”

- Section is where EQAC member appointments required is described.
- **Discussion point:** Does EQAC want to add term limits for members?

6. Draft Bylaws - Article V: Officers and their Duties

- Section is where officers are described.
- **Discussion point:** Does EQAC want to add term limits for all officer positions?
- **Rationale:** It is not uncommon for BACs to have term limits for members (ex: Advisory Social Services Board, Disability Services Board, Community Services Board) and officer position term limits (ex: School Board, History Commission) . A term limit for members may be, for example, three, three-year terms. A term limit for officers may be, for example, two or three consecutive terms.

New Officer Position - Secretary

7. Draft Bylaws – Article V: Officers and their Duties

- Model bylaws and other Boards, Authorities and Commissions (BACs) have a “Secretary” position.
- “Secretary” could be responsible for recording the minutes of meetings, alerting the Clerk to the BOS to vacancies, and/or assigning meeting minutes to EQAC members.
- **Discussion point for EQAC:** Does EQAC want to add a Secretary position?
 - **Rationale:** The role of Secretary may aid to streamline efforts through peer-to-peer coordination. Staff liaison would continue to support to ensure VFOIA requirements are met.

Annual Report

8. Draft Bylaws – Article X: Annual Report

- Annual Report section pulled over from 1981 charter:
 - “EQAC shall prepare an annual Environmental Quality Report which shall include but not be limited to:
 - A. Findings on the status of the physical environment of the County.
 - B. Evaluations of existing efforts to achieve and maintain or improve environmental quality in the County.
 - C. Proposed policies or programs which are designed to assist in further improvement of the environmental quality in the County, including the relative priority of each such proposal.

This report shall be provided to the Clerk to the Board of Supervisors for distribution to the members of the Board of Supervisors and to the County Executive.”

- **Discussion point for EQAC:** Does EQAC want to specify a timeframe for the Annual Report to add into the bylaws?
 - **Rationale:** Provide clarity on reporting cycle.

Annual Report (cont.)

9. Draft Bylaws – Article X: Annual Report

- Purpose C:
 - “Proposed policies or programs which are designed to assist in further improvement of the environmental quality in the County, including the relative priority of each such proposal.”
- **Discussion point for EQAC:** does EQAC want to add specific direction and purpose for EQAC based on the Annual Report?
 - Perhaps adding this sentence: “Proposed policies or programs which are designed to assist in further improvement of the environmental quality in the County, including the relative priority of each such proposal. **Three to five top priorities shall be identified in each report and shall provide a strategic focus for EQAC each year.**”
 - **Rationale:** Reflect a new process adopted by EQAC to focus recommendations presented to the BOS.

Public Comment

10. Draft Bylaws – Article VI: Meetings – VFOIA:

- “EQAC shall hold public comment at least once a year and may report its findings to the Board of Supervisors on EQAC issues that affect the public interest.”
- 1981 Charter, “The holding of public hearings related to the purposes set forth under paragraph 2 above [purposes of the Council section].”
- **Discussion point for EQAC:** does EQAC want to explore changing how often public comment is held? Should public comment be held more frequently or only once a year in January?
 - **Rationale:** proposed bylaws language allows for EQAC to hold public comment as normal, but also allows flexibility. EQAC can hold public comment at each meeting, every other meeting, or at other intervals if it so desires to meet requirement in bylaws. Allowing public comment at additional meetings may help EQAC receive more feedback from the public.