

ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY CONSERVATION COMMISSION
c/o Department of Environmental Services
2100 Clarendon Blvd., Suite 705
Arlington, VA 22201

January 16, 2015

TO: Mary Hynes Chair, Arlington County Board
FROM: Scott Dicke, Chair, Environment and Energy Conservation Commission
SUBJECT: Environment and Energy Conservation Commission 2014 Annual Report

The Commission appreciates the opportunity to present a review of its 2014 activities and actions.

ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY CONSERVATION COMMISSION
2014 ANNUAL REPORT

E2C2 bade farewell to several dedicated Commissioners this year: Eric Harold, Shannon Cunniff, and Shannon Siart. The Commission thanks these members for their many years of service and commitment. The Board appointed three new Commissioners in 2014: Terry Whitehead, Eric Schneider, and Noor Khalidi. The following members serve on the Commission: Scott Dicke, Mike Hanna, Noor Khalidi, Patrick Kinney, Sarah Meservey, Christine Ng, Claire O’Dea, Alex Saunders, Eric Schneider, Gabriel Thoumi, Terry Whitehead, and Tara Zirker.

In 2014, the Environment and Energy Conservation Commission (E2C2) worked on a number of specific issues in the County and participated in numerous task forces and working groups with other commissions and citizens groups. In addition, Commissioners educated themselves on a number of environmental issues relevant to Arlington now and in the future. The Commission continues to seek opportunities to improve communications with Arlington Public Schools, which includes the new liaison link with Kate Marshall, ongoing communication with the APS Energy Manager Cathy Lin, and other APS staff. These efforts paid off with the inclusion of E2C2 commissioners in several Building Level Planning Committees and the Public Facilities Review Committee meetings.

Among the other advisory groups with which E2C2 worked most actively are the Site Plan Review Committee of the Planning Commission, the Urban Forestry Commission, the Park and Recreation Commission, and several project-specific task forces, including Envision Courthouse, Western Rosslyn Area Planning Study, and the Thomas Jefferson Park APS Planning effort. Finally, the Commission continued its tradition of hosting a public comment period at the beginning of each meeting. Several residents provided comments on a variety of issues throughout the year.

The Commissioners also wish to thank all County staff who provided information and support to

E2C2 in 2014. Staff members regularly attend E2C2 meetings, providing detailed reports and offering assistance in a timely manner. We are grateful to all staff who offered their time and expertise to the Commission this year.

Major issues addressed by the Commission during the year include the following:

Green Building and County Energy

- E2C2 heard an update on the County Energy Plan and the County's next steps.
- The Commission agreed a letter may be drafted in 2015 to support continued County Energy Planning efforts.
- The Commission heard a presentation on the proposed amendments to the Green Building Incentive program and provided detailed comments.
- The Commission wrote a letter to the Board in support of the final proposed Green Building Program changes to strengthen the award program and tie it more closely to the County's long-term goals for sustainability and greater energy efficiency.
- Shannon Cunniff and Scott Dicke served on the Community Energy Plan Implementation Review Committee.

Solid Waste Issues

- The Commission's liaison to the County's Solid Waste Committee, chaired by Tara Zirker, heard updates on the amendment to Chapter 10 (Garbage, Refuse, and Weeds) of the Code of Arlington County, Virginia - Article I, Section 10 - 8.A, relating to the Household Solid Waste Rate.
- E2C2 wrote a letter of support for the amendment that noted the positive environmental impacts and benefits that this potential amendment would yield, particularly as the County works towards established goals of becoming a zero - landfill jurisdiction by 2020 and zero - waste by 2038.
- The Commission also heard an update from staff to amend the recycling goals for the County of Arlington County, Virginia due to its track record of exceeding the original schedule as established in the 2004 Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP).
- The Commission wrote a letter to support the increased goals due to the positive environmental impacts, particularly as the County works towards its established goal of becoming a zero-landfill jurisdiction by 2020 and zero-waste by 2038.

Environmental Assessments

- The Commission and staff continued to work toward an updated Administrative Regulation 4.4 (the Environmental Assessment process).
- The Commission worked to revise and update the EA 4.4 checklist.
- Several Environmental Assessments were brought before the Commission for review.
 - Ashlawn School
 - ART Bus Facility
 - Mosaic Park
 - McKinley School
- The Commission engaged in ongoing projects and provided updates on the progress of the WRAPS project, Envision Courthouse Project, and the Thomas Jefferson School project.

Stormwater

- Three members (Alex Sanders, Mike Hanna, and Christine Ng) served on the Four Mile Run Joint Task Force.
- The Commission heard presentations about the Stormwater Master Plan, Water Master Plan, Stormwater Ordinance, and MS4 permit renewal. The Commission sent a letter of support for the 2014 Master Plan update to set the policy & infrastructure improvements needed to ensure that the County can meet anticipated growth & development.

Open Space and Natural Resource Issues

- Two members (Claire O’Dea, Alex Sanders) serve on the Parkland / Open Space Acquisition and Preservation Subcommittee.
- E2C2 signed a joint letter with the Parks and Recreation Commission noting concern that the use of several parcels of land for potential development of schools, housing and other possible uses would not be consistent with this key recommendation in the Natural Resource Master Plan (NRMP). The letter further urged the Board to reaffirm Recommendation #1 of the NRMP and reject consideration of parcels of existing natural lands for potential development.

Legislative and Fiscal Issues

- E2C2 provided comments to the Board regarding legislative agenda items for 2015.
- The Commission suggested that the following items be pursued:

Expand Power Purchase Agreements (PPA)

- Expand PPA Applicability to All Utilities.
- Replace the current pilot program for third-party power purchase agreements with a permanent

Implement Virginia Mandatory Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard (RPS)

- Implement a Mandatory Virginia-wide RPS.

Advance Net Metering

- Allow community net metering.
- Increase or remove the limit on rated generating capacity of customer-generators for which net metering is available.
- Raise the limit on system size eligible for net-metering.

Help Arlington’s Economic Competitiveness with Washington, DC and Maryland

- Establish corporate renewable energy tax credits.
- Establish a Corporate Tax Credit for corporate renewable energy production as a catalyst for Northern
- Implement state and utility rebate, sales tax and property tax energy efficiency programs for corporate, industrial, and residential customers.
- Support a Clean Energy Finance and Investment Authority (CEFIA) facility and a green bonding facility for financing and financial incentives for renewable energy and efficiency projects.

- Support improvements to the Virginia State Corporation Commission approved rate program for Dominion Virginia Power customers that install solar PV systems and increased incentives.

Reduce Economic Risk

- Direct State agencies to apply climate data to long-term planning.
- Direct State pension plans to apply climate data to long-term investing.
- Mandate all state and local planning and zoning commissions consider climate data in all coastal zone and floodplain zoning.
- Allow for community solar, a/k/a solar gardens, whereby multiple individuals can have an ownership stake in a large solar installation on a condominium or public building.

Waste Reduction

- Enable local communities to implement a small fee for disposable shopping bags

Transportation Issues

- The Commission met with members of the Bicycle Advisory Committee to improve future coordination and communication between the two groups.
- Two members (Sarah Meservey, Alex Sanders) served on the Parking Working Group.
- The Commission resent their letter to the Board regarding the Washington Boulevard Bike Trail. E2C2 felt that the proposed bike trail on the west side of the road would have an unacceptably negative environmental impact. The consensus of the Commission was that South Courthouse Road was a better alternative than construction of the proposed trail.

In other actions, the Commission:

- Met with Jay Fissette, County Board Liaison, Board member John Vihstadt, as well as Greg Emanuel, Director of the Department of Environmental Services, to discuss the County's environmental priorities.
- Heard updates on the Urban Agriculture Initiative and provided feedback during the process. Sarah Meservey represented the Commission on the Urban Agriculture Task Force.
- Wrote a letter in opposition to hydraulic fracturing in the George Washington Forest or other areas that may impact Arlington's water or air quality.
- The Commission provided comments and letter to the Board regarding the budget process. The Commission iterated that wise up-front investments made in energy, water, and solid waste budgets have resulted in lower operating costs for the County (over \$1M annually in avoided cost through energy conservation programs alone) and led to significant progress toward long term goals. The Commission urged continued focus and resources to focus on energy, water, and open space issues.

Commissioners were active liaisons with the following groups and task forces:

- Community Energy Plan Implementation Review Committee
- Parks/Open Space Acquisition and Preservation Subcommittee
- Lower Shirlington Crescent Special Study

- Western Rosslyn Area Planning Study
- Realize Rosslyn Planning Process
- Parking Working Group
- Envision Courthouse
- Bicycle Advisory Committee
- Four Mile Run Joint Task Force
- Solid Waste Committee
- Site Plan Review Committee of the Planning Commission
- Urban Forestry Commission
- Urban Agriculture Task Force
- Chesapeake Bay Ordinance Review Committee
- Little Pimmit Run Advisory Group on Downstream Impacts
- Public Facilities Review Commission
- Natural Resources Joint Advisory Group

We look forward to continuing the Commission's work and taking on new environment and energy issues that face Arlington in 2015.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott Dicke". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "S" and a long, sweeping underline.

Scott Dicke