

Environment and Energy Conservation Commission

Draft

Summary of February 22, 2016 Meeting
2100 Clarendon Blvd, Azalea Conference Room

Members Present: Scott Dicke, Alex Sanders, Greg Miller, John Seymour, Sarah Meservey, Christine Ng, Gabriel Thoumi, Irwin Kim, Mike Hanna, Claire O'Dea

Members Absent: Patrick Kenney, Noor Khalidi, Kari Klaus

Guests: Eric Goplerud

Staff Present: Adam Segel-Moss (DES), Amit Sidhaye (DES), and Santosh Neupane (DES)

1. **Public comment**

Eric Goplerud is the Executive Director for the Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions. Eric expressed that he is looking to connect with others in Arlington to integrate environmental action into faith-based institutions. Sarah M. asked if they have worked with solarize program. He has not but noted that he would be interested and has been working with Interfaith Power and Light.

2. **Lighting Master Planning Process**

Amit Sidhaye and Santosh Neupane presented to the Commission on the Lighting Master Plan. They noted that the Lighting Master Plan Process is beginning with a focus on making the CIP process more clear. They are asking the County for more funds for streetlight program and need a more strategic approach to do so.

Amit and Santosh noted that the streetlight program goals are focused in the following key areas:

Safe: Enhance public safety (47% of the night time crashes are attributed to poor lighting)

Sustainable:

Reduce energy consumption

Reduce carbon footprint

Comply with Dark Sky/AASHTO guidelines

Compatible: Infrastructure consistent with plans

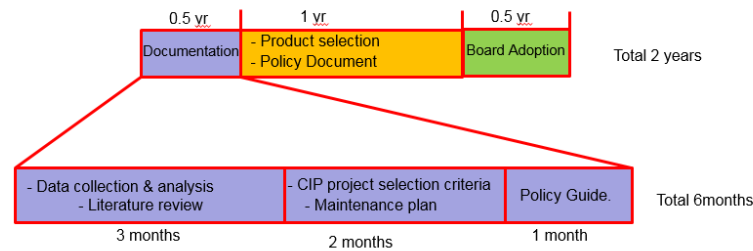
Smart: Improve technology to meet other goals

Maintainable: Reduce maintenance needs & improve reliability

Cost Effective: Minimize cost

Amit noted that there are 18,000 lights in County and that the County only owns 7,000. The remaining are owned and managed by Dominion Virginia Power.

Staff noted the following process for the Lighting Master Plan process:



The Master Plan Process can be divided into two phases. First, prepare technical documents and technical aspects of the program as well as CIP-related criteria. Staff envisions this being translated into a policy guide that will help decide how projects are being selected.

The second phase would be product selection and a final policy document that will go to the Board for approval. Staff also noted that the County has limited space for lighting materials, types, and inventory. That means that they are looking to keep one type of light as a preferred type.

Scott asked for an explanation of where the process is now. Amit noted that a consultant was recently brought on board to start the 'Documentation' process noted above.

John Seymour asked if the policy guide would be vetted publicly. Amit noted that there would not be public input in the first policy document.

Gabriel asked what the actual scope of the planning process is for. He asked if it was for only the 7,000 County streetlights or also including DVP lights and traffic signals. Staff noted that the County already has ~100% LED traffic signals, which are addressed through an independent program. It was clarified that the County streetlights have nearly all been retrofitted and would not be a target for additional retrofits at this time. Staff explained that rate increases following the conversion of DVP streetlights to LEDs through the DVP retrofit program leads to a total cost increase despite lower energy consumption. Therefore, staff is proposing an approach to retrofit DVP streetlights in conjunction with other County capital improvement projects and thereby take ownership of lights. Staff noted that previously the County was using 5,000,000 kWh annually for streetlights. After retrofits the new streetlights are using 700,000 kWh annually.

The Commission asked for further clarification on the master planning process, the contents of the policy document, and what input was being solicited.

Staff noted that Phase 1 would produce a GIS map that includes foot candles. Phase 2 would evaluate where additional lights were needed. Staff noted that when evaluating projects there isn't a way to decide where CIP funds should be allocated to implement street lights.

John Seymour asked if they are exploring warmer colors of LED and noted possible health issues of blue lights. Staff noted that health impacts haven't been included and that warmer LED colors aren't efficient enough at this point to explore. Staff also noted that the cool white LEDs don't have very much blue light in them.

The Commission asked if Dark Sky lights would finally be used and if glare would be reduced. Staff noted that the main goal is to identify streetlight projects. Currently the County light types are fairly set and now they are trying to better identify areas that need lights.

The Commission asked staff that they consider better downlights that are Dark Sky compliant as part of this process. They also asked that broader Dark Sky model ordinances be explored as part of this process.

Scott asked if staff is looking for support from the Commission. Staff responded that they are looking for support from the Commission to fund the Strategic Planning process in this budget cycle.

Staff noted that the working group was still being formed.

The Commission expressed thanks for including them in the planning process. The Commission expressed that they are finalizing a lighting position paper. The Commission agreed to share the paper with staff to help inform the process.

3. Lighting Letter

The Commission's Lighting Position Paper was circulated and discussed. The Paper is expected to be a living document that would help articulate the Commission's position for current and future projects and inform others. The letter includes a focus on light pollution mitigation and the importance of maximizing environmental benefits. Greg also noted that the Commission is revising the EA process and considering lighting enhancements as part of that process.

Christine asked what else this might apply to. Greg answered that there aren't specific Arlington County procedures and policy.

Scott Dicke noted that we've all had a chance to look over this. There is plenty that the Commission could opine on, but encouraged the Commission to review and vote on it in its current state. He asked commissioners if there were any major changes required (there weren't). He also noted the potential for community members to use it as a tool to obstruct projects but indicated that shouldn't prevent the commission from moving forward, and reminded everyone that it is a living document that can be amended.

Alex noted that he feels this is an excellent document. He has concern about putting this under the EA process. The ability of the Commission to influence the EA, this will likely not have impacts in the EA process. He doesn't feel that the EA process would be ideal for lighting.

Mike Hanna noted that this will be useful as an internal guideline document. It fills an aspirational place of a County ordinance.

Scott stated that the purpose of the paper is to assert the Commission position and assess County deficiencies. The County doesn't have a standard ordinance or policy. Scott asked the group whether it wants to carve out lighting in a revised EA process or not.

John Seymour noted that the EA should include lighting. Christine noted that E2C2 is currently exploring the overlap between EA process and lighting impacts. The current County practices, Parks lighting, and streetlight fixtures do not adequately meet the expectations of the Commission as an ordinance or non-ordinance guideline.

The Commission expressed concern that the Lighting Master Plan is focused on safety and efficiency. The Commission feels that there is a professional bias of the Parks staff and streetlight program team simply to include more streetlights with the assumption that safety is the main issue. They noted pride in the efficiency gains, but that the current lighting and glare are of concern to the Commission.

Scott Dicke agreed that these are good points and should not be forgotten as the Commission engages in the Master Plan process. He thanks Greg for all his work on this position paper and made a motion to approve it.

Greg seconded the motion.

The Lighting Position Paper was approved unanimously as amended.

4. Bike Element letter

The Commission discussed the letter briefly.

Christine motioned to approve.

Greg seconded the motion.

Approved unanimously.

5. Budget

Scott Noted that the budget has been released. The Commission will write a letter and give public comment. Scott solicited input from commissioners for the public statements and budget letter.

6. POPS Letter

Claire noted concerns with the POPS input process. She expressed concern of natural lands being given equal weighting as other items. Claire explained the position and opened it up to Commission discussion.

Rather than sending a letter, the Commission discussed staff engagement. The Commission discussed this item at length and decided to reach out the Jane Rudolph and others to discuss this item first, before sending the letter. The Commission agreed and no motion was made to approve a letter.

7. Meeting Summary Review – December 2015

Approved as amended.

8. Old/New Business

Alex noted that the Wilson School PFRC is still delayed. The budget is \$80 million and the design is \$100 million. At this point, this project appears to be very static despite a need get this school open. Alex noted that one issue may be a short staffed APS. With Scott Prisco leaving much falls to John Chadwick.

John provided an update on the Williamsburg Lighting Workgroup. Neighbors and others have expressed a desire to have an EA happen at the same time as the Workgroup process. APS is evaluating an EA even though no project has been decided upon. They are expected to decide in March.

Christine noted that Commission members had an EA meeting with Joan, Adam, and Rich Dooley. Claire, Greg, Kari and Gabe were there in person or via phone. The main concern was that we feel we get input too late. In some cases, the Commission feels they should have gotten EAs but were never notified. Attending the individual project meetings was identified as the best way to integrate into the process. There was talk about creating a form-based process for EAs. Staff and Commission members continue to explore workable ways forward

Greg attended the last Williamsburg Workgroup meeting. DPR gave a presentation on field utilization. They planned to do 30 foot candles at 68 feet, which would cause significant glare. There was discussion about raising the poles to 80 feet at 20 foot candles. They would need a zoning exception in order to do that.