

Environment and Energy Conservation Commission
Draft

Summary of December 18, 2017 Meeting
2100 Clarendon Blvd, Azalea Conference Room

Members Present: Claire O’Dea, Irwin Kim, John Bloom, Mike Mesmer, John Seymour, Jessica Skerritt, Gabriel Thoumi, Sarah Meservey, Christine Ng

Members Absent: Mike Hanna, James O’Connell, Kimberley Fedinatz,

Guests: Jim Spencer, Chris Tighe, Darcy Trick, Roger Foley, Molly Stevens, Chris Slatt
Staff Present: Adam Segel-Moss (DES), Ritch Viola (DES)

1. Public Comment

The Commission heard a presentation from the BMCA president Chris Tighe, followed by public comment from Roger Foley, Darcy Trick, and Molly Stevens, residents living in homes adjacent to the parking lot, and resulted in a Commission roundtable discussion.

The four homes that are the focus of concern are: One licensed day care that includes children with multiple sclerosis and asthma; one home caring for a 3-month old infant undergoing a series of heart surgeries; one resident with severely compromised lung function who is recovering from six months of hospitalization earlier this year; and one resident who has a chronic respiratory condition who was affected by snow melting operations in 2016.

The E2C2 Chair noted that DES was invited but declined to attend after staff felt that the meeting could not facilitate a productive conversation. She noted that staff offered to attend a future meeting in 2018 to talk more broadly about snow management and these issues.

Mike H. asked when the first snow melting occurred, why other sites near Bluemont park but away from homes weren’t use, and if the newly proposed 100 ft. threshold was reasonable as a policy countywide.

John S. asked if zoning looked into allowance of this activity in S-3A.

Chris T. noted that the community has few answers to questions. He indicated that County staff have generally been unresponsive and isn’t taking this issue seriously. Mr. Tighe noted that he and others have tried to meet with Board members but they are unwilling to discuss the issue. He indicated that the Board and staff have been given guidance by the County Attorney not to discuss the issue further due to past, present, or possible future litigation.

The result of the meeting was that the E2C2 voted unanimously to draft a letter reflecting points agreed upon below by the Commission at the meeting. The Commission felt like they didn’t have all the facts since DES wasn’t able to provide their perspective to counter community issues. That said, the Commission did feel that the presenters raised credible health concerns about the potential cumulative impact of diesel traffic in front and back of their homes and snow melting in the parking lot adjacent to their homes. The Commission agreed to propose a moratorium on use of this site for one year until further evaluation and community dialogue can occur.

The approximate draft bullets for the E2C2 letter are noted below:

- Community expressed concerns about potential health impacts to neighbors in the four homes adjacent to the parking lot from the diesel exhaust of dump trucks, the snow melter and related equipment, and from the snow-melting process itself.
- DES has committed to use a newer model snow melter, to locate it 100 feet from the nearest property line, and to operate the melter only 12 hours per day if circumstances permit.
- BMCA does not feel that these limitations are an adequate response to the health concerns raised.
- The Commission invited DES, but DES declined to attend citing legal concerns and a meeting frame that may not result in a productive conversation
- The Commission welcomes DES's offer to attend a future meeting to discuss this item and snow management more broadly
- The Commission feels that neighbor concerns are credible and serious enough to recommend a 1-year moratorium of site use until questions are answered and further evaluation completed

John Bloom volunteered to draft the letter based on the agreed upon bullet points.

2. Master Transportation Plan – Bike Element (Ritch Viola, DES)

Ritch Viola gave an update on the Master Transportation Plan and associated Bike Element. Ritch noted:

- Bicycle Element was adopted in July 2008 – Almost 10 years old
- Changes in technologies (bike share, electric bikes, automated counters) and facility types (protected bike lanes, bike boxes, NACTO guidance that are not in current plan
- New users and demographics in an emerging bicycling culture in Arlington and across the Washington, DC region have identified concerns about safety, access and comfort.
- Need to identify future facilities to be implemented

The current planning process is being split into two parts. The Goals and Policies Framework is in process from summer through fall 2017. The Implementation Section is being developed, including a proposed new bicycle network from winter through summer 2018. Staff expects County Board adoption of the complete document in fall 2018.

Mr. Viola noted that significant public engagement is occurring as part of this Plan update. Some of the outreach includes:

- 7 Community Events
- Working Group – monthly meetings
- Webpage & e-mail address
- Advisory group presentations
- ACCS focus group sessions
- Community surveys

The Major Take-A-ways from Public engagement

- There is a strong interest in more bicycling
- **The primary reason for not bicycling more often is a concern about safety on streets**
- **The best ways to enhance bicycling are to add more protected bicycle lanes and trails and improve the connectivity of the system**
- Protected bicycle lanes (using physical barriers) have almost the same perceived comfort and safety as off-street trails
- There is strong interest in separating bicyclists from pedestrians on trails and in using green paint to better distinguish bicycle lanes on streets
- Most respondents are dissatisfied with the number of bicycle lanes

The overview of proposed changes to the plan Outline of Framework includes:

1. Role of Bicycling in Arlington (**NEW**)
2. Summary of Current Conditions
3. Vision for Bicycling (**NEW**)
4. Goals of MTP & Bicycle Element
5. Policies & Implementation Actions
6. Performance Measures
7. Network Improvement Prioritization

Chris Slatt provided an update and noted the new vision for bicycling. He noted that bicycling is an integral part of Arlington’s equitable, multi-modal transportation system and provides safe, comfortable, convenient and reliable travel for persons of all ages and abilities.

Part of a multi-modal system

Safety and comfort are top priorities

Convenience and reliability are critical for regular use

Equity; all ages and abilities – everyone will be considered and provided for

Mr. Slatt noted 14 policies to meet new goals in the Plan:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Make existing streets and bikeways safer and more comfortable to use * | 9. Manage trails for safety with increased use |
| 2. Enhance safety by addressing unsafe behavior and encouraging safe travel * | 10. Make trails environmentally more sustainable * |
| 3. Expand the Safe Routes to Schools program | 11. Assure safe travel with inclement weather and construction * |
| 4. Provide a network of low-stress routes across Arlington and region | 12. Regularly collect data for users and crashes |
| 5. Provide higher-quality bicycling facilities | 13. Provide adequate bicycle parking at transit and public facilities |
| 6. Establish bicycling as mainstream travel mode | 14. Coordinate with region on bike sharing |
| 7. Require support facilities from new development | * NEW |
| 8. Manage trails as community assets for transportation and recreation * | |

Christine asked about next steps and the timeline moving forward. Mike H. noted that this is a critical document for E2C2 to meet energy goals and provide clear guidance of priorities. He noted the Washington Boulevard Bike Trail as an example of where an enhanced plan like this would help the community and staff make strategic decisions. He iterated the

importance of strategic planning to balance trees, transit, etc. Mike H. also noted that this plan is being created on a shoestring budget and commended staff.

Next steps:

- **Winter 2017-18** – Complete the Policy Framework document including more internal and commission outreach
- **Spring – Summer 2018** – Undertake next round of public outreach with a focus on improving the existing bikeway network. Develop proposed Implementation Section including Bikeway Network Map. Seek community review and feedback.
- **Fall 2018** – Finalize Bicycle Element (Policy Framework and Implementation Section) and hold public hearings for adoption.

Mike H. volunteered to aggregate comments and write a letter when to the Board when the time comes.

3. Meeting Summary Review – November

Approved unanimously

4. Old/New Business

Mike M. announced that he would officially be taking the baton on the Chair role for E2C2. Mike and Christine and working together on the transition.

Irwin noted that he would be stepping off the commission due to school commitment. He is looking for 4MRV surrogates for the working group. James O'Connell volunteered to support the 4MRV efforts for E2C2.

Christine provided an update on the Career Center Working Group scope, timeline, and next steps.

John B. noted that NVRC hired a consultant to look into solar power aggregation. John also noted that 5 schools have RFPs for possible solar arrays.

Jessica provided an update on Reed School. She noted various designs are being evaluated, site tours are occurring, solar is possible or a PPA, and the goal is to open the school in 2022.

John S. noted that the POPS meeting was a push and pull between constituencies on a variety of issues. He noted the biggest issue is simply managing growth, expectations, and community 'wants'. He noted that people want the highest and best use. To some that means vigorous sport actives while others prefer natural open space for contemplative bird watching. A decision must be made one way or another, there is little middle groups on many issues. John also noted the Streetlight Management Plan is running tests of new lights. Residents will be able to view and vote. More info to come.

Virginia attended the Long Bridge Park meeting. She noted there are several visions presented from different companies. The target is LEED Silver and the Board should act imminently to select one.