



Minutes

EPC MONTHLY MEETING

February 26, 2024

Virtual via Zoom

[Zoom Meeting Recording](#)

7:30 – 9:30 p.m.

Attendance

EPC Members (13)	Status	Staff
Kishla Askins	PR	Melissa Atwood, T&ES
Dan Beattie	PR	Ryan Freed, Office of Climate Action
Eldon Boes	PR	Bill Skrabak, T&ES
Alexander Clark	PR	Adriana Castañeda, T&ES
Benjamin Cuddy	PR	Yulia Fernandez Marcos, Office of Climate Action
Jennifer Debias	PR	
Kathie Hoekstra, Chair	PR	Guests
Anna Marino	PR	Scott Barstow
Philip Mobilia	PR	Bill Pugh
Theresa Romanosky	PR	
Marta Schantz, Vice-Chair	PR	
Julia Slayden	PR	
James Vandeputte	PR	

P: Present; **PR:** Present Remotely; **A:** Absent - Unexcused; **E:** Absent – Excused; **N:** Not a Member

1. Welcome & Introductions

Chair Kathie Hoekstra called the meeting to order, and introductions were completed. Ms. Kishla Askins, new EPC commissioner, and Yulia Fernandes Marcos, Office of Climate Action’s Community Engagement/Climate Justice Manager, provided brief introductions and background information to the commission.

2. Public Comment

Mr. Bill Pugh: Urban forestry masterplan updates will start soon. Identified areas of the plan to focus on and encouraged EPC to be engaged in process, which he will put into a letter to RPCA, with CC to the EPC.

3. Discussion with T&ES Director

Adriana Castañeda discussed answers to questions the EPC provided during the November 2023 EPC meeting. Ms. Castañeda also addressed overall takeaway from EPC questions received Friday, 2/23/24 about how to have more T&ES staff join EPC meeting to provide updates and current collaboration/open communication, especially with the Office of Climate Action. Mr. Bill Skrabak addressed the stormwater and flooding questions from a high-level perspective.

4. Administrative Items

a) Meeting Minutes

Vote on January 22, 2024, regular meeting minutes, for approval. **Motion:** Mr. Jim Vandeputte; **Second:** Mr. Dan Beattie; **Vote:** Unanimous approval, with Mr. Al Clark abstaining.

b) Reports from Commissioners

Updates from Chair Hoekstra:

Legislative update: House bills and Senate bills have been passed to each other. Several bills the EPC was hoping for did not pass. Save Bill, on energy efficiency is still possible.

Waterfront Commission (Mr. Eldon Boes):

Robinson Terminal North development is back in the pipeline. There is a plan for mixed residential/retail. Mr. Boes requested they attend an EPC meeting and discuss their energy and efficiency plans. Meeting also included a presentation on waterfront open space plans for PRGS site.

Updates from Ryan Freed:

- New Office of Climate Action staff member, Yulia, started last week.
- GBP Advisory Group should be established soon. Recommendations have been sent to the City Manager. Ryan is hoping to kick-off meetings in next couple of weeks.
- Climate Action is working on a ROW charging pilot with EV charging on sidewalks.
- Requesting Council's approval to apply for the Climate Push Reduction Grant (CPRG) grant.
- Working with delegate to get legislature to create an environmental impact fund. Legislature is through the House and Senate. Awaiting the Governor's decision to sign.
- Looking for EPC members to help expand the Green Business Recognition Program to landscapers.

Update from Ms. Marta Schantz:

Attended a couple City Council campaign kickoffs. Provided an update on each and their climate focused ideas.

c) EPC tabling at ALX Dog Walk and Sustainability Festival

Discussion on whether EPC wanted to host a table at the event on Saturday, April 20th. City is hosting an Eco-City table. Melissa will let Julie know EPC is interested.

5. Consideration of Arena letter

Mr. Ben Cuddy and Ms. Marta Schantz proposed the EPC write a letter related to the environmental metrics, ideas, and recommendations the EPC would expect to ensure sustainability and sets the standard for arenas and entertainment districts moving forward across the country. Currently, proposal for arena has not directly addressed sustainability. Letter would show what EPC wants to see come through with further entertainment district proposal information. Unsure, if arena, which is a state driven development proposal, would need to follow the Green Building Policy. Discussion included:

- Consider legal challenges and obstacles that need to be overcome before the proposal moves forward and we see what voice the City has.
- Consider short, very general terms making it clear any development should be consistent with Alexandria's plans to meet environmental goals.
- Possibly start with an initial strategic engagement letter, to collaborate long term.

Motion to move forward with an EPC letter in support of the sustainable arena development: Ms. Marta Schantz; **Second:** Mr. Ben Cuddy; **Vote:** 12 in favor; 1 against. Motion passed.

6. Proposal for EPC subgroup to work on Awards (Eco-City Homes Recognition)

Consider an EPC award, similar to the one provided by the Beautification Commission, for residential units that take sustainable actions and renewable energy, such as using a heat pump, solar panels, induction stoves, and EV charging. It would require the EPC to come up with criteria to be recognized for the awards or whether it is a program similar to the Business Recognition Program. The Office of Climate Action can help create graphics.

EPC recognizes this is specific to single-family homes, which use the most energy. After it starts and moves forward, it can be expanded to renters. Discussion started with possibly starting with a process, like ABC's that works, and/or whether it would include a community engagement piece where neighbors vote; metrics on growth of program; and collective homeowner associations. EPC agreed to give this a try.

7. Plan Retreat Topics/Focus Areas

- EPC discussed possible retreat topics and focus areas, such as what EPC wants to spend their time on throughout FY25, possible guest speakers on environmental justice and guest speakers from VA League of Voters and VA Energy.

- Focus on Climate Change issues: where City has been, where City is, and where City is going. EPCs role to help correct shortcomings and how to use resources on the Commission to move things forward.
- Communications – how, to who, and what platform we communicate through, including possible development of communication playbook for commission.

8. Adjourn

Motion to Adjourn: Mr. Eldon Boes; **Second:** Ms. Marta Schantz; **Vote:** Unanimous approval.

The meeting adjourned at 9:11p.m. Next regular meeting is Monday, March 18, 2024.

FY2024 Attendance

Member	Sept 18, 2023	Oct 16, 2023	Nov 11, 2023	Dec 11, 2023	Jan 22, 2024 <small>(virtual only)</small>	Feb 26, 2024 <small>(virtual only)</small>	Mar 18, 2024	Apr 15, 2024	Apr 27, 2024 <small>(Retreat)</small>	May 20, 2024	Jun 17, 2024	TOTALS
Kishla Askins						P						100.0%
Dan Beattie	P	P	P	P	P	P						100.0%
Eldon Boes	P	P	P	P	P	P						100.0%
Alexander Clark	P	P	P	P	E	P						100.0%
Benjamin Cuddy	P	P	P	E	P	P						100.0%
Jennifer Debias	P	E	P	P	P	P						100.0%
Cynthia Elliott	P											100.0%
Oleksandr Faryga	A	E										50.0%
Kathie Hoekstra	E	P	P	P	P	P						100%
Anna Marino	P	P	P	A	P	P						80%
Philip Mobilia		P	P	P	P	P						100.0%
Michael Olex	P	E	P	P	P							100%
Theresa Romanosky	P	P	E	P	P	P						100%
Marta Schantz	P	P	P	E	P	P						100%
Julia Slayden					P	P						100%
James Vandeputte	P	P	P	P	P	P						100%