

Falls Church Environmental Sustainability Council

Thursday June 16, 2016 - 7:30 - 9:30 pm

Dogwood Room, G Corridor

Minutes - Prepared by Sarah Bayldon

1. Call to Order

Present: Ray Arnaudo (Chair), Sarah Bayldon (Member), Tom Cash (Member), Cory Firestone-Weiss (Member), Phil Skotte (Member); Tim Stevens (Energy Transition Subcommittee Chair); Dan Sze (City Council Liaison); Dave Snyder (City Council Member); Hannah Trauberman & Tika Wallace (GMHS Student representatives); Kate Walker (Staff Liaison); Jennifer Csaszi (Visitor, City resident)

2. Approval of Minutes

Minutes from the February and May meetings were approved.

3. Big Chimneys Park

Jennifer Csaszi briefed the ESC on current efforts to improve the Big Chimneys city park. Plans are being developed to highlight the cabin foundations and also install environmentally friendly lighting, a rain garden and some playground equipment. A performance area and a dog play area are also being considered. Harris Teeter has promised \$1 million to assist the development effort. Construction should start in 2017, with the remodeled park to open 2018.

4. Transportation Planning and Air Quality

Dave Snyder, City Councilman and member of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOC) briefed the ESC on current activities by the MWCOC. Dave is a member of several regional transportation groups and is the former Chair of the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee. He spoke on City efforts to attract transportation funding money and on air quality issues. Snyder noted that improvements to the region's air quality are paying off as pollution alerts are diminishing. He explained that the DC area air quality is better than many of the world's largest cities. He urged Falls Church to come up with its own plan to improve air quality and noted some communities are aiming at net zero increases.

5. Bus Rapid Transit

Tom Cash described WMATA plans for the Metrobus route from Alexandria to Tysons Corner along Broad Street.

6. Falls Church Environmental Vision Statement

Cory presented the latest version of the ESC's Environmental Vision statement. It reinforces the ESC's commitment to helping the City target the "Five Environmental Goals" set forth by VPIS, and to the MWCOC Climate Energy and Environment Policy Committee Action Plan. The role of the ESC in advising the City on plans to meet these goals and measure progress towards them is also addressed. Some suggestions were made for additional edits. It was proposed that the statement should be finalized at our next meeting.

7. Energy Transition Sub-committee

The ETS Chair Tim Stevens described efforts to improve the accuracy of greenhouse gas emissions data for the City generated by MWCOG. They are compiling a list of buildings in the City that already have solar power installations. The City is also gathering data for a geothermal study for new school site.

8. 600 South Oak Street development – Fellows Property

The City held a public session to discuss potential water runoff issues expected with the development of additional property sites on the Fellows property. The City is also considering options such as acquiring the property for use as an attachment to the Thomas Jefferson school site.

9. Streetscape Report

Cory reported on the Streetscape Task Force discussions about improving street access and function. The goal is to make the City more welcoming, and better for foot traffic, with such ideas as more bike racks, and more plantings of trees and mini-gardens. Next meeting: August 9.

10. Publicity idea

Tom Cash suggested increasing the City's efforts to publicize environmental protection and improvement ideas by expanding city newsletter distribution and more public outreach efforts on election days.

11. Staff updates

Kate encouraged all to attend the City visioning meeting on Saturday June 18th. She also asked for volunteers to assist with outreach efforts at the Farmers' Market on Saturdays.

Next meeting: 21 July 2016.

Adjourned at 9:30 p.m..