

Draft

Rockville Environment Commission Minutes of the Meeting of Thursday, January 5, 2017

Diamondback Terrapin, City Hall,
111 Maryland Avenue, Rockville, Maryland

Attendance

Commissioners Present: Chair John Becker, Amanda Aparicio, Steve Cardon, Alicia Hosmer, Clark Reed, Lea Rosenbohm, Steve Sprague, Helen Triolo and Fedon Vyanis.

Commissioners Absent: None

Council Liaison: Mark Pierzchala

City Staff: Erica Shingara

Guests: Stephanie Riddick

Meeting Commencement and Introductions

The meeting convened at 7:00 pm by Chair Becker.

Approval of Agenda

Chair Becker requested additions to the agenda; including general updates and a review of term expiration dates for commissioners and the chair position. Commissioner Reed moved and Commissioner Aparicio seconded a motion to approve the January 5, 2016 agenda as revised. The motion passed (8-0). Commissioner Cardon was absent for the vote.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Hosmer moved and Commissioner Sprague seconded a motion to approve the December 1, 2016 minutes. The motion passed (8-0). Commissioner Cardon was absent for the vote.

Updates

Chair Becker noted the January Rockville Reports articles on hydraulic fracturing, the bikeway master plan, and the solicitation of nominations for Environmental Excellence Awards. He reminded Commissioners that nominations are needed next month for awards to be presented during Earth Month (April).

Expanded Polystyrene (Styrofoam) Ban

- Chair Becker thanked the Watershed Committee and Composting and Recycling Committee for researching polystyrene ban information and developing a draft position paper for review.
- Commissioner Aparicio reported that the Committees reviewed legislation from Montgomery County, Gaithersburg, Takoma Park and Washington D.C. and conducted research on expanded polystyrene to draft the position paper. She reviewed the draft position paper in support of a ban and addressed questions.
- The Commission discussed content of Montgomery County's Bill 41-14, which includes a ban on expanded polystyrene food service ware and loose fill packaging as well as requirements for food service businesses to use compostable or recyclable disposable food service ware.

- Councilmember Pierzchala noted that the County's bill appears to be more extensive than a Styrofoam ban and had questions about how it could be enforced. He indicated that Senator Kagan may be introducing legislation in the 2017 General Assembly Session for a State-wide ban on expanded polystyrene; however, the bill details were not currently available.
- The Commission discussed potential options, including City adoption of a ban similar to Montgomery County or City support for a State-wide polystyrene ban.
- Commissioner Sprague moved and Commissioner Hosmer seconded a motion that the REC recommend the Mayor and Council support a state-wide ban on polystyrene food service products and loose fill packaging materials. The Commission discussed the importance of clearly differentiating the types of polystyrene products (e.g., food service, loose fill packaging, insulation/building materials, etc.) and expressed interest in reviewing the details of a statewide proposal. The motion passed (9-0).
 - **Action Item:** Chair Becker will email the recommendation to the City Clerk and the staff liaison and request the recommendation be forwarded to Mayor and Council
 - **Action Item:** Staff will follow the status of proposed state legislation and update the Commission.
 - **Action Item:** The topic will be included on next month's agenda for discussion. Commissioners will work on modifying the draft position paper to include discussions on potential impacts to City facilities and operations, cost comparisons, description of enforcement, and reasons why it is important to the City.

Budgets

The Commission reviewed Committee requests from the FY17 budget:

- The Watershed Committee requested \$150 for the purchase of a rain barrel for outreach at Hometown Holidays
- The Composting and Recycling Committee requested \$300 to design and print recycling education stickers to affix to bins used at Hometown Holidays to improve signage and clearly identify recyclable items.
- The Sustainability Committee requested \$200 for the Community Wildlife Habitat event to be held in March.
- The Energy Committee indicated that no new supplies were requested at this time.
- EMD staff will check the stock of environmental awards plaques.

Overview of 2017 Potential Projects

Erica Shingara reviewed upcoming projects in 2017 that may involve the Commission:

- **Climate Action Plan and stakeholder process:** The Mayor and Council have an initiative to work with stakeholders to create a community climate action plan. Staff distributed a [draft Regional Climate and Energy Action Plan, 2017-2020 from the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments \(COG\)](#). COG researched best practices across the country and compiled a list of potential actions that regional jurisdictions could voluntarily pursue to help reduce emissions from government operations and the community overall. The Commission discussed using this document as a starting point in the development of Rockville's Climate Action Plan. To some extent, Rockville is currently implementing many of the action items identified in this document and other actions may be future actions for consideration or may not be relevant.
 - **Action Item:** Each committee will review the COG's draft plan and identify sections that align with their mission and expertise. The committees will also start brainstorming

- potential processes for working with various community stakeholders over the next year to develop our climate action plan.
- In December, the Maryland Department of the Environment re-issued the [NPDES Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System \(MS4\) Phase II Permit](#). A draft is available for review and public comments are accepted through March 30, 2016. This permit will govern Rockville's stormwater management program for the next five years.
 - **Action item:** The Watershed Committees will review the draft permit and provide any questions and comments to staff.
 - The City's three year Sustainable Maryland Certification is valid until December 31, 2018. In 2017, the Green Team must complete actions and work on the application for recertification.
 - **Action item:** Erica Shingara will forward the [City's previous Sustainable Maryland application to the Sustainability Committee to review.](#)

Committee Reports:

- ***Watershed and Composting and Recycling Committees:*** Commissioner Aparicio indicated that the Watershed Committee and Composting and Recycling Committee held a joint meeting to discuss the polystyrene ban. They reviewed legislation from Montgomery County, Gaithersburg, Takoma Park and Washington D.C. and conducted research to draft the position paper discussed at this meeting.
- ***Energy Committee:*** Commissioner Reed reported that the Committee continued to review their 2017 action plan. They anticipate it will be available to share at the next Commission meeting.
- ***Sustainability:*** Commissioner Hosmer reported that Helen Triolo is now on the Sustainability Committee. They did not meet in December but are coordinating with the National Fish and Wildlife Federation to arrange a Community Wildlife Habitat certification celebration on March 23 at 7 pm.
 - **Action Item:** Commissioner Hosmer will coordinate with NWF and staff on organizing invitations and planning the event.

Environment Management Division Update

- Erica Shingara noted that the floodplain ordinance will have Discussion and Instruction and possible adoption on January 9th. If adopted, the ordinance would go into effect on July 1, 2017.

New Business

- Chair Becker noted his one-year term serving as chair ends in March. He volunteered to serve another term as chair and also invited others to volunteer to serve in this role.
- Reviewed 2016/2017 term expiration dates for various commissioners:
 - October 1, 2016: Term expiration for Commissioner Reed and Commissioner Hosmer.
 - February 1, 2017: Term expiration for Commissioner Aparicio and Commissioner Sprague.
 - June 1, 2017: Term expiration for Chair Becker.
 - December 1, 2017: Term expiration for Commissioner Cardon.
 - Other commissioner terms expire in 2018 and 2019.
- Commissioner Reed inquired about the City's participation in MWCOG's EV charging project. Erica Shingara indicated that the City submitted information to participate in COG's upcoming grant application to fund electric vehicle charging stations around the region. The Commission

discussed potential locations for charging stations at City facilities, example protocols from other jurisdictions, benefits of visibility, types of charging stations, and rate options.

- Commissioners discussed the schedule and room locations for upcoming committee meetings.
 - **Action Item:** Erica Shingara will schedule rooms for 2017 committee meetings.

Executive Session

The Commission adjourned to an Executive Session to discuss vacancies and the appointment process associated with the terms that expiration on October 1, 2017 and February 1, 2017.

Adjourn

The Commission adjourned by acclamation at 9:20 p.m.

Next Commission Meeting

The Commission will tentatively meet on **Thursday, February 2, 2017 at 7:00 pm in the Diamondback Terrapin Conference Room at the Rockville City Hall**, 111 Maryland Avenue, Rockville Maryland 20850-2321. The public is invited to attend.