

**Draft**  
**Rockville Environment Commission**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of Thursday, October 4, 2018**

Mayor and Council Chambers, City Hall,  
111 Maryland Avenue, Rockville, Maryland

**Attendance**

**Commissioners Present:** Chair John Becker, Clark Reed, Lea Rosenbohm, Monica Saavoss, Steve Sprague, and Fedon Vayanis.

**Commissioners Absent:** Alicia Hosmer, Larissa Johnson, Sy Garte

**Council Liaison:** Mark Pierzchala

**City Staff:** Lise Soukup, Heather Gewandter,

**Guests:** Steve Cardon, Lila Bromberg, Sara Salini

**Meeting Commencement**

The meeting convened at 7:03 p.m. by Chair Becker.

**Approval of Agenda**

Commissioner Sprague moved and Commissioner Reed seconded the motion to approve the October 4, 2018 agenda. The motion passed (6-0).

**Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Commissioner Vayanis moved and Commissioner Sprague seconded a motion to approve the September 11, 2018 meeting minutes. The motion passed (5-0). Commissioner Saavoss abstained, due to not being present at the September meeting.

**Guests - Community Forum**

Two University of Maryland journalism students, Lila Bromberg and Sara Salini, attended to observe an REC meeting. Steve Cardon represented the Watershed Committee.

**National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit and Stormwater Management Program**

Heather Gewandter, the City's Stormwater Manager, presented an overview of the new NPDES-MS4 Permit requirements and the City's status on meeting those requirements. As of October 31, 2018, this State permit goes into effect. This item was presented to the Mayor and Council at the October 15 meeting. The agenda item may be found at

<http://www.rockvillemd.gov/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Agenda/10152018-2387>

The new permit covers the City of Rockville's management of stormwater discharges to streams within the City limits. The City has the responsibility to provide or oversee six minimum control measures: construction site stormwater runoff treatment, post-construction stormwater management, illicit discharge detection and elimination, public education and outreach, public participation and involvement, and pollution prevention and good housekeeping for municipal operations. Mandated tracking and documentation requirements for inspections and maintenance will increase with this permit.

The NPDES permit also requires Rockville to develop a plan by 2023 to treat 20 percent of the untreated impervious surface within city limits, and implement that plan by 2028. Based upon consultant analysis, staff believes the city has already met this 20 percent requirement through City-built SWM retrofits and stream restoration projects and through redevelopment projects that installed privately owned SWM facilities on previously untreated sites.

Although Rockville is well positioned to continue to meet the permit requirements, it will still need minor adjustments and limited staff increases in its stormwater program to comply with other aspects of the new NPDES permit and to meet the high pace of expected development. Staff is confident that these adjustments can be made while leaving the Stormwater Utility Fee at the FY19 rate of \$132.00 for FY20-FY21. It is staff's goal to keep the rate flat for an additional three years (FY22-FY24). However, further analysis will be done in future years to ensure that a flat rate is fiscally sustainable, given changing market conditions and potential program requirements.

In addition to the NPDES permit requirements that are solely focused on improving stormwater quality, the City's SWM program also has responsibility to mitigate and manage flooding, maintain the public storm drainage conveyance system, advise property owners on drainage complaints and other non-water quality functions.

Commissioners posed a variety of questions and provided feedback:

- Inquired whether the City has an online SWM manual for design and maintenance of facilities. Staff explained that Montgomery County has extensive information and standards on these topics, which the City refers to. The City also uses the County's Rainscapes guidance for its own Rainscapes program.
- Asked what effect this particularly rainy year has had on SWM. Staff described that many more drainage complaints have been handled by staff for both residents and non-residential properties. Staff provides advising only for these issues. Public funds may not be used to correct problems on private land. Staff also noted that no significant flooding or building damage has been reported in Rockville.
- Asked if the City will require existing developments to upgrade onsite SWM. Staff said that this occurs through the redevelopment regulatory requirements in Chapter 19 of the City Code. Otherwise, private development is not obligated to improve their onsite SWM systems.
- The Commission asked what stormwater-related items would be useful in a future Climate Action Plan for the City. Ms. Gewandter suggested considering how to prepare for resiliency against larger flooding events and how to plan with regional partners (Montgomery County, D.C., etc.) to leverage prevention and mitigation efforts.
- Councilman Pierzchala mentioned that Rockville has experienced many large storms and asked if more continuous assessments of stream conditions would be helpful. Staff said that we're using impervious area treatment as a proxy for progress against stream erosion, per the State's NPDES analysis requirement. However, very large storms cause more substantial damage than any level of SWM facility treatment will mitigate.

### **Committee Reports**

- **Watershed:** Steve Cardon reported that the committee was ready for the outreach booth at Rockobierfest on Oct. 6. The committee was also ready for a stream cleanup at Maryvale Park on Oct. 13. Commissioners were encouraged to volunteer at both events.
- On Nov. 7, the committee will partner with Croydon Creek Nature Center to host the Brewshed event at True Respite Brewery. The event includes watershed presentations, taste tests and watershed trivia. The committee requests digitized watersheds/stream adoption map on poster board.
  - **Action Item:** Commissioners will contact the Watershed Committee to arrange a volunteer schedule for events.
  - **Action Item:** Watershed committee members will contact EMD staff to review schedule of supplies for each event.
- **Climate Action:** Commissioner Rosenbohm shared the committee's 2-page draft climate action plan (CAP). The Commission discussed wanting City staff to move forward on developing a CAP. Erica Shingara of Environmental Management Division had explained in a previous email that the City is engaged in finishing the Comprehensive Master Plan (CMP) and is not ready to devote resources to a CAP. She described upcoming staff training through State CAP groups, and explained staff would be in a better place to begin this work in 2019. Councilmember Pierzchala and Lise Soukup mentioned that the 2040 CMP does have several discussion points about climate change, resiliency, and upgrading development standards once a better extent of the expected problems is known.

Commissioner Rosenbohm described a set of charts the CLAC has prepared as a basis for recommendations. She said it focused more on reducing energy consumption than increased flooding risks and preparing for infrastructure resiliency. The Commission discussed whether the planning already done by the CLAC would be sufficient to develop into formal CAP recommendations. Commissioner Becker and Councilmember Pierzchala thought the CLAC should move forward with their work.

- **Action Item:** Councilmember Pierzchala was asked to get more clarity from Councilwoman Palakovich-Carr about her earlier request for a Climate Action Plan Task Force, and her thoughts on timing and regarding a new task force vs. using the CLAC for this.

The CLAC has a meeting scheduled for Oct. 16.

- **Energy:** Commissioner Reed reported the committee did not meet in August. The committee is still reviewing several sample CAPs from other jurisdictions. Several commissioners discussed benchmarking for energy efficiency of City buildings. Commissioners Reed and Sprague want more data from City staff. Commissioner Vayanis pointed out that this is a complex, time-consuming effort. The Commission debated next steps for this.
  - **Action Item:** The Commission requested that City staff, including the Recreation and Parks Facilities Manager, give a report to the REC on the status of energy consumption and efficiency in City facilities (buildings, not fleet vehicles). Staff will try to arrange this for an upcoming REC meeting.

- **Action Item:** Commissioner Reed asked that the City staff complete a questionnaire about the City's energy efficiency program. Staff will find out which staff members have the knowledge to do this.

The committee has a meeting scheduled for Oct. 18.

### **Mayors' Monarch Pledge**

This item was postponed due to Commissioner Hosmer not being present.

### **Budget**

A \$150 purchase for a rain barrel giveaway at 2019 Hometown Holidays was approved by the Commission. This leaves \$850 in the REC budget for FY2019.

### **Chair Report**

Chair Becker provided the following updates:

- Chair Becker asked about the status of the State's proposed widening of I-270 through Rockville. Councilmember Pierzchala explained that this is in the very early stages of evaluation, but that the Mayor and Council have expressed its opposition in an Aug. 23, 2018 letter to MD DOT. No further action is needed at this point.
- Chair Becker asked that the REC attendance policy be discussed at the Nov. meeting and requested attendance records for the REC members.
  - **Action item:** Staff will send the City's attendance policy for Boards and Commissions members and 2018 attendance records to the members in advance of the Nov. meeting.
- Chair Becker stated that the City's new website is confusing and missing key information. Other commissioners agreed. Councilmember Pierzchala offered to mention this to the City Manager.
- Commissioner Rosenbohm's term ends in September. The vacancy has not been advertised on the website or Rockville Reports yet.
  - **Action item:** Staff will check with the City Clerk about the advertisement and process.
- Chair Becker asked for an update on proposed changes to the City's Forest and Tree Preservation Ordinance (FTPO) that were presented to the REC in January, 2018.
  - **Action item:** Staff will ask the City Forestry staff for an update.
- Chair Becker asked that staff get the REC roster and contact list updated.
  - **Action item:** Staff will send out the roster to REC members for their corrections before the November meeting.

### **Environment Management Division (EMD) Update**

Staff reported:

- The Sustainable Maryland Certification program typically recognizes jurisdictions at the Maryland Municipal League fall conference. As members of the Green Team, two Commissioners are welcome to join the SMC recognition event on October 12 in Annapolis. Commissioners Johnson and Sprague have volunteered to attend on behalf of the REC.
- The Rockville Brewshed event will be on November 7 from 7 to 8:30 p.m. While the event is free, registration is required. For more information and to register online, please visit:

<http://www.rockvillemd.gov/Calendar.aspx?EID=5934&month=11&year=2018&day=7&calType=0>

- Lise Soukup started as the new Commission staff liaison from the Environmental Management Division. She will be attending future meetings and preparing minutes and agendas. Please remember to include her in all future Commission emails.

### **New Business**

- Commissioner Saavoss suggested that the REC members consider marching in the 2019 Memorial Day Parade at Hometown Holidays for more visibility. Chair Becker asked that this be on the November meeting agenda for discussion.
- Chair Becker asked for a status report at the November meeting on filling the vacancy of Commissioner Rosenbohm, who has resigned as of October 5. This leaves one vacancy on the REC. Commissioners expressed interest in reconsidering past applicants to the REC who were not selected.
  - Action item: Staff will obtain application status from the City Clerk's office and ask the City Clerk's office about procedures to reconsider previous applicants.

### **Adjourn**

The Commission adjourned by acclamation at 9:17 p.m.

### **Next Commission Meeting**

The next Commission meeting is scheduled on **Thursday, November 1, 2018 at 7:00 pm.**