

# Rockville Environment Commission

## Draft Minutes of Thursday, January 7, 2021

WebEx Meeting

### Meeting Attendance

Commissioner	Present	Commissioner	Present
Hande Apaydin	X	Clark Reed, Chair	X
Scott Fazekas		Monica Saavoss	X
Justus Getty	X	Pavitra Srinivasan	X
Susan Koester	X	Ted Stauderman	X
William McClain	X		

**City Staff:** Amanda Campbell, Staff Liaison; Erica Shingara, Environmental Management Division Chief

**Mayor and Council:** Monique Ashton

**Guests:** Will Ollison

**Meeting Commencement:** Chair Reed convened the meeting at 7:04p.m. and welcomed attendees.

**Approval of Agenda and Prior Meeting Minutes:** The agenda was approved with no changes. Prior meeting minutes were approved with a few minor changes.

**Community Forum:** No speakers.

### **Mayor and Council Report**

Councilmember Ashton recognized the Commission's efforts in developing and running the Climate Action Plan Open House in November. She reported that the plan can cross-reference the other plans the city is developing including a Social Justice Plan and a Pedestrian Plan. Councilmember Aston reminded the Commission that she is the Vice President of the Montgomery County Maryland Municipal League (MML). Similar to MML, the Mayor and Council are prioritizing climate change and renewable energy, and will be looking for Environment Commission recommendations on Maryland bills on climate, energy, streetlights, and electric vehicles.

The Mayor and Council are interested in working towards goals on sustainability such as increasing solar system installations by 25%. In the pandemic, door hangers can be an effective mode of outreach. The budget survey this year included climate change actions among the options. In response to the councilmember's question, staff shared that the city is receiving technical assistance this year that will recommend strategies to integrate more clean energy vehicles in the city's fleet. Staff is also working with Pepco on looking at additional charging stations.

### **Chair Report**

- GenOn plans to shut down the Dickerson and Chalk Point coal-burning plants in Maryland in the coming year.
- The Electric Vehicle Buyer's co-op issued a request for information in December and Chair Reed submitted information from prior REC research. The county has reportedly identified an organization to coordinate the co-op.
- The Environmental Awards can be presented in April. Commissioners agreed to review last years' awards for the Mayor and Council presentation.

### **Maryland Legislation**

Pavitra Srinivasan shared that so far, about 600 bills are on the docket in the Maryland House and 400 in the Senate. Some bills include:

- Clean Cars Act
- EV parking
- Low income multi-family housing energy efficiency
- Community Choice Energy act is expected to be introduced soon
- Zero emission buses
- Net zero homes
- Tax credits for indoor air quality equipment
- Recycling bills
- Coal transition act
- Plant-based food purchasing for climate change
- Environmental rights

Chair Reed added that the Climate Solutions Now act which strengthens the state's greenhouse gas reduction goals to 60% by 2030 is gaining support. Ted Stauderman added that the Climate Crisis in Education Act establishes a crisis council and greenhouse gas goals also. Councilmember Ashton asked the Environment Commission to develop a one to two-page summary for the Maryland bills highlighting connections to Rockville's priorities for the handful of bills worthy of the Commission's support. The Commission is following bills at this link: <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/174RHjM83EVoSBOML-2vOsyJiU2NUVBv5njw8JOTpdMO/edit?usp=sharing>

### **Environment Commission 2021 Work Plan**

The Environment Commission reviewed and discussed the proposed work plan working document and added parking to the list of potential topics.

### **Sustainable Maryland Certification**

The Commissioners are continuing to volunteer to draft descriptions of sections in the Sustainable Maryland re-certification.

### **Climate Action Plan and Committee Reports**

Climate Action Committee

CLAC reviewed the climate action strategies and identified their top six priorities based on input from several members:

- Aggregate green power purchase
- Commercial building energy retrofits
- Community electric vehicle adoption (vehicles and charging station network)
- Increased tree planting
- Bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and safety
- Increase energy efficiency requirements for new buildings

In addition, CLAC members proposed several additional strategies that the plan should incorporate:

- Promotion of/Conversion to Plant-based foods e.g., through City procurement
- Increase Carbon Sinks
- Enhance Resilience
- Improve Public transport (e.g., circulator bus)

Watersheds: The Watersheds Committee discussed road salt issues and heard a presentation on salt in waterways. Thirty-six volunteers attended the stream cleanup on December 5<sup>th</sup>.

Energy Committee: The energy committee discussed the EV buyers co-op and Sustainable Maryland.

### **Staff Report**

- Coal Tar Sealant recommendation next steps
- The Mayor and Council are tentatively hearing a briefing on the Montgomery County Climate Action Plan at the Feb. 8 meeting.
- The Mayor and Council will discuss Pesticide Law at February 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting.
- Mayor and Council 2021 state legislative priorities include climate change.
- The City Hall energy audit project with Pepco received internal approval to proceed to apply. The City will issue an RFQ to approved Pepco Service Providers in coming weeks.
- The City's application to receive technical assistance to plan for solar and microgrid is undergoing internal review.
- Staff reviewed COG's Rockville 2018 greenhouse gas inventory fact sheet and provided input. Staff also provided feedback on a COG survey on energy and climate topics of interest to the city.
- Staff is examining plans for spring outreach and looking into a plogging campaign.
- The CAP survey is now up in Chinese and Spanish
- A new online permitting system upgrade will incorporate improved tracking of electric vehicle charging permits and solar system permits in Rockville.
- Upcoming events:
  - o February 22 Mayor and Council Meeting – tentative pesticide law [Since moved to March 15]
  - o February 8 Mayor and Council Meeting -- County Climate Action Plan

**New Business:** No new business.

**Adjourn:** Chair Reed adjourned the meeting at 9 p.m.