

Rockville Environment Commission

Draft Minutes of Thursday, March 3, 2022

WebEx Meeting

Meeting Attendance

Commissioner	Present	Commissioner	Present
Hande Apaydin	X	Clark Reed, Chair	X
Scott Fazekas	X	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, Chief, Environmental Management Division

Council Liaison: Monique Ashton

Guests: John Becker

Meeting Commencement: Chair Reed convened the meeting at 7:03 p.m. and welcomed attendees.

Approval of Agenda and Prior Meeting Minutes: The agenda was approved with no changes. The prior meeting minutes were approved with a few changes that will be addressed before re-posting.

Community Forum: Mr. Becker introduced himself.

Chair Report

The Chair volunteered to host the Earth Day and Earth Hour Proclamation at Mayor and Council. Ted Stauderman, Susan Koester, and Hande Apaydin volunteered to table at the March 19th Go Electric event that is hosted by the County with Rockville as a partner.

Many commissioners are interested in tabling at the Rockville Farmer's Market to promote the Solar Co-op and Climate Action Plan, as well as at the Hometown Holidays event May 28th. The April Stream Clean-up already has many registrants.

If any Commissioners are interested in being Chair, let Amanda Campbell know. Elections will be held in June.

Mayor and Council Report

Councilmember Ashton shared that a follow-up discussion on the future of RedGate park is planned at the Mayor and Council meeting June 6. She encouraged everyone to participate in supporting items that they would like to be included in the FY 2023 City Budget, by completing the budget survey, or submitting comments as a group or individually. The current draft budget contains funding for a Sustainability Program Manager, electric vehicle infrastructure capital

improvement plan, and electric vehicle plan, for example. The flooding presentation at Mayor and Council last Monday pointed to the need for the City to be more flood resilient. A Flood Resiliency Master Plan and flood mitigation grant program is proposed in the FY 2023 budget.

Councilmember Ashton announced that she helped lead negotiations with Montgomery County that resulted in a resolution of tax duplication issue, with the City gaining \$2.5M for FY22, \$6.5M in FY23, and \$8M annually thereafter. Some of this funding could be used to fund sustainability initiatives if Mayor and Council agrees.

City of Rockville Proposed FY 2023 Budget

Page 15 in the proposed FY 2023 City Budget summarizes most of the new items in the Draft Budget related to the environment and the Climate Action Plan, including:

- 1 FTE Sustainability Program Manager
- \$300,000 for a pilot flood mitigation grant program,
- \$792,500 for Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (GA23),
- \$1.0 million for LED Streetlight Conversion (TA22),
- \$1.5 million for the Flood Resiliency Master Plan (SA23),
- \$200,000 for the Storm Drain Analysis and Spot Repair: Potomac Woods (SB23), and
- \$450,000 for Stream Restoration Spot Repairs: FY21-FY25 (SB21).

The Rainscapes program was also slated to receive \$10,000 in additional funding. Since the Draft Budget is still undergoing discussions and changes these programs are not guaranteed unless they remain in the budget through the final budget adoption. Environmental Management had proposed a compost drop-off facility and facility energy efficiency funding that were not included in this latest draft.

The EV Infrastructure CIP would entail installation and maintenance of several charging stations a year to serve the City fleet as electric vehicles are incorporated in the light duty vehicle replacement cycles, following the fleet plan in the Climate Action Plan. Members discussed solar canopies to support the fleet, resiliency planning, and support for CAP initiatives, including actions highlighted by the Climate Action Committee. The Commission unanimously voted to submit testimony to the Mayor and Council supporting these initiatives. Ted Stauderman and Clark Reed volunteered to compile and submit comments.

Environmental Excellence Awards

Environment Commission members discussed the nominations for Environmental Excellence Awards. Several members suggested that the Commission clarify the criteria for the awards. Five members volunteered to re-examine the awards criteria. After discussion, five Award recipients were chosen. Staff will work to identify a date on the Mayor and Council schedule to present the awards. Commission members will present them.

Maryland Legislation Update

Regarding the SB528 – Climate Solutions Now Act, the City's lobbyist is reviewing the over 700 pages of testimony and the fiscal policy notes in order to be thoughtful about the City's comments and position. The City is also monitoring the progress of other environmental bills

including HB706, creating a state Office of Resilience, the producer responsibility bill, and a coal tar bill.

Committee Reports

Energy Committee: The Energy Committee is continuing their researching and writing white papers on net zero building codes and leaf blower bans and did not meet this month.

Climate Action Committee: The group discussed the need for additional public trash and recycling receptacles and is working on a white paper on that topic. Staff shared that contamination of recycling in public receptacles has been an issue in other municipalities.

Watersheds Committee: The Committee is helping host a Brewshed event at True Respite and will share with the Environment Commission and the City are working on. They are working on a proposed article for the Environment & Sustainability Newsletter. Staff can coordinate with Shannon Philibin, the outreach coordinator.

Staff Report

- **Climate Action Plan:** Staff presented briefings to several COG committees and the Montgomery County Climate Leadership team. A presentation is scheduled at the COG Climate Policy Committee on March 23. Several new CAP initiatives are included in the proposed FY 2023 budget and staff is developing an action status tracking sheet (similar to the Comprehensive Plan). A Climate Solutions Speaker Series is planned for this Spring.
- **The Future of RedGate Park:** City staff is revising the concept plans following Mayor and Council discussion and instruction on February 7.
- **Building Tune-up** for City Hall: Staff is working with the contractor to implement the proposed measures to optimize energy use.
- **City Hall energy efficient lighting update:** Work will begin shortly on the 2nd floor upgrades. Staff expects to hear about the grant application to Maryland Smart Energy Communities for 3rd floor lighting upgrades, window film and thermostat in the spring.
- The Maryland 6 Taft Court and Maintenance Facility **solar/microgrid feasibility assessment** is expected in the next few months.
- Staff will meet with Pepco to reassess **electric vehicle charging station** options in March.
- **The FY 2023 Budget is in development.** The Annual Budget Survey link is found here: <https://www.rockvillemd.gov/951/Budget-Financials>.
- The flood resiliency presentation is rescheduled for the March 7th Mayor and Council meeting. The City is applying for grants to help support flood resilience and is preparing for the release of new FEMA floodplain maps. A [flood resources webpage](#) includes a form to apply for flood damage assistance.
- The February 7th Mayor and Council meeting included a presentation by Montgomery County regarding their plans for properties located along Seven Locks Road (including a proposed bus depot) and the Tree Zoning Text Amendment.

New Business: No new business.

Adjourn: Chair Reed adjourned the meeting at 9:26 p.m.