

Rockville Environment Commission Draft Minutes of Thursday, May 6, 2021 Needs Review

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, Chief, Environmental Management Division

Councilmembers: Monique Ashton

Guests: Will Ollison

Meeting Commencement: Chair Reed convened the meeting at 7:01p.m. and welcomed attendees.

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

Community Forum: Guests introduced themselves.

Chair Report

Chair Reed thanked everyone for their work on the Environmental Awards.

The next steps on the Pesticide Law is to work with the county on education and outreach, including information sessions, and outreach to homeowners' associations. The Commission can assist with sharing information.

The city is offering a city academy training May 18 to 27th.

Chair Reed asked members to sign up for timeslots to the Farmer's market as part of Solar Co-op outreach. The Commission will transport materials, but the city will provide a table and a tent. Chair Reed offered to bring solar panels to exhibit. The Commission discussed ways to reach out to low and moderate income communities at community centers or swimming pools.

Mayor and Council Report

Councilmember Ashton suggested reaching out to the Rockville Housing Enterprises and the Housing and Community Development staff to discuss outreach on solar for low and moderate income residents.

Councilmember Ashton thanked the group for their work to support the adoption of the Pesticide Law. She is following the city's progress on renewable energy development, fleet electrification, and energy audits, and mentioned the environmental element in the 2040 Master Plan. She suggested that the salt testing program could involve student education.

Committee Reports

Climate Action Committee: The Climate Action Committee discussed the 2040 Master Plan, developing Sustainable Maryland narratives, and the wildlife corridor project.

Energy Committee: The energy committee discussed the 2040 Master Plan and recent energy-related Maryland legislation.

Watersheds: The Watersheds Committee proposed that the Commission fund a citizen science program to test three Rockville streams for salt. The testing equipment would cost \$633. The monthly testing would help provide a baseline and would hopefully show progress over time. Testing could be potentially coordinated with the state. Several volunteers on the committee and in local watershed groups are interested in conducting the testing. Results would be compiled in an annual report. Private property owners are the main target of salt education and outreach and the information on water quality could be used in communications. The kits would test pH, turbidity, and chlorides. The proposal and budget request passed unanimously.

Rockville 2040 Master Plan

The Environment Commission discussed potential comments on the 2040 Master Plan. As the Commission and environmental staff provided extensive content and comments on the 2040 Master Plan drafts, most of the group's priorities – climate change, resiliency, green space protection, watersheds -- are already included in the plan albeit in more general language. The Climate Action Committee will share their comments. The Commission can consider submitting individual comments or a joint letter of support, if needed, at the June meeting.

Sustainable Maryland Recertification

The Commission discussed the Sustainable Maryland re-certification process. New actions on public art, historic preservation, and a few others will be added to the online platform. Actions will be labeled "Planned" while the documentation is finalized, and "completed" when the write-up and documentation is completed. Draft narratives would be appreciated by mid-May for staff to review.

Staff Report

Climate Action Plan – Progress is being made on the Climate Action Plan in preparation for an August 2 briefing to the Mayor and Council. Staff shared the initial greenhouse gas emissions projection tool developed by the contractor. The group discussed the following:

- finding creative ways to incentivize renewable energy and energy efficiency in commercial buildings
- expanding the number of green roofs in the city
- the effect of the community aggregate energy pilot in the county

- following the COVID relief funding for local governments and potential infrastructure bill funding for energy initiatives such as electric vehicles and chargers.
- opportunities and challenges for installing Pepco chargers and converting the city fleet.

Project Updates

- Pepco Rebates – The city applied for a Pepco rebate to offset \$13,240 of energy efficient lighting upgrade costs at the Dogwood Park.
- City Hall Lighting Grant Application – The city was awarded up to \$35,000 from MEA to upgrade City Hall lighting. Staff is working on budget approval and next steps.
- Intern -- The city is in the process of reviewing applications for an intern to assist with the Climate Action Plan, Sustainable Maryland, and other projects.
- City Hall Energy Building Tune-Up – The city met with the consultant and initiated the project application process.
- Fleet Technical Assistance – Following receipt of the technical report, staff is developing a proposal for a near-term replacement plan for an initial set of a few dozen vehicles, including examining placement of chargers, training, and other challenges. A new city fleet manager will be hired soon.
- Solar and Microgrid Technical Assistance – The city received Maryland Energy Administration (MEA)'s award agreement letter March 19 and it is awaiting the city manager's signature pending internal discussions.
- EV charging stations – The city and Pepco are analyzing additional potential charger locations including several on-street locations and may be able to bring stations for Mayor and Council approval by summer.
- Streetlights – The city is planning to submit comments on the proposed Pepco-owned streetlight LED conversion plan contingent upon Mayor and Council approval May 3.
- Metro Station Study – WMATA is conducting a study of the Rockville metro stations and is seeking input. Next visioning meeting is May 13, 6-7pm on zoom.

Outreach Campaigns and Events

- Solar and EV charger Co-op 2021 launched April 1. Eight Rockville sign-ups so far!
- Rockville Solar Co-op Info Session May 13, 6:30-8pm.
- [Saving Nature Now](#) children's activity booklets available through Croydon Creek Nature Center.

The Mayor and Council

- Budget Hearing on May 10
- Additional 2040 Comprehensive Master Plan hearing scheduled for June 14.
- August 2: Rockville Climate Action Plan briefing. Montgomery County's proposed Building Energy Performance Standards (BEPS) will likely be shared with the Mayor and Council in memo form.
- June Environment Commission meeting: presentation on the BEPS and the Tree Conservation Ordinance.

New Business: No new business.

Adjourn: Chair Reed adjourned the meeting at 9:05 p.m.