

Rockville Environment Commission

Minutes of the Meeting of Thursday, June 6, 2019

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

Meeting Attendance

Commissioner	Present	Absent	Reason, If Given
Chair John Becker	X		
Sy Garte (last REC meeting)	X		
Susan Koester	X		
Clark Reed	X		
Monica Saavoss	X		
Steve Sprague	X		
Pavitra Srinivasan	X		
Ted Stauderman	X		
Fedon Vayanis	X		

Council Liaison:

City Staff: Lise Soukup (Staff Liaison); Erica Shingara and Mark Charles (DPW Environmental Planning Division); David Levy (Department of Community Planning & Development Services)

Guests: Mark Pierzchala, Councilmember; Steve Cardon, Watershed Committee representative; Stephanie Riddick, Will Ollison, residents.

Meeting Commencement

Chair Becker convened the meeting at 7:02 p.m. with five REC members present.

Approval of Agenda

The Environment Commission voted 5-0 to approve the agenda, with the provision that the Chair Report and Committee Reports be moved to earlier in the schedule.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

The Commission voted 6-0 to approve the May 2 meeting minutes.

Community Forum

Chair Report

Chair Becker is preparing a draft of the FY 2019 annual report to the Mayor and Council, which will be distributed to the REC for comment later this summer. He thanked Commissioner Garte for his service, since this was his last meeting with the REC. The Chair reminded the REC to try to attend the annual work planning session at the July meeting, and that the REC would not have a scheduled meeting in August.

Councilmember Pierzchala chose winning tickets from the REC's raffle of 3 solar chargers that were entered at Hometown Holidays. Ms. Soukup will arrange delivery of these to the winners.

Chair Becker left early to attend another meeting; Commissioner Reed took over as Acting Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

Committee Reports and Requests to REC

Watersheds Committee (WC):

No report.

Climate Action Committee (CLAC):

Commissioner Saavoss announced that the CLAC reviewed and prepared comment on the Draft Comprehensive Plan at its May meeting.

Energy Committee (EC):

Ms. Soukup announced that the City joined the EPA Energy Star program on May 20. This had been a request from the REC in Spring 2019.

REC review and approval of comments for Draft Comprehensive Plan

The REC completed its task of preparing written testimony to submit to the Planning Commission on the Draft Comprehensive Plan. The REC reviewed a table of their combined comments about the Plan that they had developed over the past six weeks, with a goal of clarifying their comments and agreeing on each comment to pass onto the Planning Commission.

In all, 53 comments were included by majority vote. The table of comments will be forwarded with a cover letter from the REC Chair to the Planning Department staff by June 14 before the close of the public comment period. The Planning Commission will review all comments after the public hearing stage and make its decision about final changes prior to sending the plan to the Mayor and Council.

Environmental Management Division (EMD) Report

Ms. Soukup thanked the commissioners who participated in the review process for revisions to City Code Chapter 24, "Water, Sewers and Sewage Disposal". Commissioner Vayanis submitted comments, and Commissioners Srinivasan and Saavoss attended an information session.

The City's Plastic Straw Ban Ordinance is scheduled for Mayor and Council adoption on June 17.

The Rockville Solar Co-op is again offered between May 3 to July 31.

Ms. Soukup will order final REC purchases for the FY 2019 budget, including additional trash-grabbers requested by the Watershed Committee for stream cleanups.

Ms. Soukup covered upcoming items for REC meetings, including an REC annual planning session and an overview of the new “FAST” improvements to the City’s development review/permitting process in July, and a review of planned energy-related City facilities improvements in the CIP schedule in September. Due to other more time-sensitive items filling the agendas through September, the REC’s review of the environmental content on the City website will be postponed to the Fall.

Old/New Business

None.

Adjourn

Acting Chair Reed adjourned the Commission by acclamation at 9:20 p.m.

Next Commission Meeting

The next Commission meeting is scheduled on **Thursday, July 11 at 7:00 pm**. (Note: this meeting has been rescheduled to July 25.)