

**Rockville Environment Commission**  
**Draft Minutes of Thursday, November 16, 2022, 7-9pm**  
 WebEx Meeting

**Meeting Attendance**

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

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

**Guests:** Garrett Fitzgerald

**Councilmembers:** Councilmember Monique Ashton

**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. Prior meeting minutes for October were approved with no changes.

**Community Forum:** Garrett Fitzgerald introduced himself as a citizen of Rockville who works for Montgomery County on state climate advocacy. Garrett shared that the City sent him a letter notifying him that a new tree would be planted in front of his home, not specifying what type of tree. After it was planted he discovered that the tree was a Chestnut Oak which grow to several stories high. In time, the tree would block his solar panels that are under contract to be installed. The shading would greatly reduce the amount of energy the panels could produce. He asked if the City could provide more flexibility in the Street Tree Plan, such as choosing a smaller species.

After discussion the Commission agreed to look at the issue starting with the committees and explore ways to balance solar and trees in the City.

**Chair Report**

- Thank you for participating in the October stream clean-up, which was a success.
- January’s meeting will be on the 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Mayor and Council Report**

- Discussed ways to promote solar such as a permit fee waiver for applications received during Earth Month

- The COG climate meeting highlighted the urgency of action on climate emissions and adaptation. The region is making progress on electric vehicles, equity, building codes, and how to increase action in the near term to reach emissions goals.
- The City's compost program is now live
- The Climate Action Plan is nearly 1 year old
- Please send her ideas for budget items for FY24

### **Committee Reports**

Energy Committee: EC will share the net zero buildings white paper soon. The committee discussed the leaf blower ban. Staff noted that the ban is still working through the County process and may be amended.

Climate Action Committee: CLAC is discussing climate metrics. The group discussed whether the City could allow citizens to maintain native plants in some medians or other areas where currently annuals are planted.

Watershed Committee: The committee is purchasing additional salt supplies and is planning to expand testing in coordination with the Isaac Walton League. The Brewshed hike was successful. The committee asked staff whether amounts of salt applied per lane mile could be reported. Staff responded that at this time exact amounts are not measured with the current system setup with 12-hour shifts. The City is looking into state training. Additional software or equipment would be necessary. The committee agreed to look into how Gaithersburg tracks salt usage.

### **Climate Action Plan Progress Update**

- [City Budget Process](#) – submitted items for the CAP
- Feedback on the EV Plan Open House Dec. 8. The Commission is invited to provide feedback on the new webpage and survey.
- Staff is planning a tentative annual progress update to the Mayor and Council in February. Commission is invited to discuss metrics feedback.
- The [Compost Drop-Off](#) program launched (C-18).
- The [Flood Mitigation Assistance Program](#) launched (C-20)
- Staff is distributing free [radon testing kits](#) and information on radon through community centers in sync with January Radon Awareness Month.

### **Commissioner Corner**

Hande Apaydin shared some findings from the United Nations climate change negotiations last week. Nations are focusing more on achieving the pledges that they've committed to. A fund was started for developing countries to pay for climate resilience. The US and Maryland have made important strides with the Inflation Reduction Act and the Climate Solutions Now Act. The City could consider strengthening its greenhouse gas reduction goals to Maryland's (60% by 2030) or Montgomery County's (80% by 2027). Members discussed the importance of supply chains that depend on coal and involving the private sector.

**New Business:** None.

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