

Environmental Sustainability Council/Energy Transition Subcommittee Meeting Agenda

July 20, 2023 ❖ 7:30pm

300 Park Ave, Dogwood Room, Falls Church, Virginia 22046

- Joseph proposed a motion to allow Jon Ward to participate remotely, pursuant to the ESC remote participation policy. Michael second the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Attendees: **ESC Members:** Joseph Schiarizzi, (Chair), Jon Ward (Vice-Chair, ETS Chair-via video), Michael Trauberman, John Ferris, Jennifer Tabola, Christopher Behr, Sarah Bayldon, **City Council Liaison;** Debbie Hiscott **Planning Commission Liaison:** Tim Stevens, **Student Representatives:** Lilja Anderson, Serena Binkowski **City Staff:** Andrew Young (ESC Staff Liaison). Amy Crumpton (Chair-HRTG) Sandy Terpinian-HRTG. **ICF:** Fiona Wissell and Susan Elliot. Jason Douglas, public.

- Public Comment Period: There were no public comments.
- Approval of [June 15, 2023 ESC Meeting Minutes](#)
 - 2 changes were made to the draft minutes: Joseph requested that the minutes reflect an added discussion of the request to relocate the beaver that is living at Herman Park be relocated safely. Added Catherine Holt to the list of attendees.
 - Joseph moved to approve the June meeting minutes with the proposed changes. Chris second the motion. Motion to approve the June minutes with the two modifications passed unanimously.
- [Community Energy Action Plan Town Hall Preview](#) – ICF

Town Hall to discuss the virtual town hall to discuss the Community Energy Action Plan scheduled for Tuesday, July 25, 2023. There will be no in-person component of this Town Hall.

Significant number of invitations to the town hall were distributed through the community (flyers distributed to 30+ businesses), invitations to local committees and via media.

As of 2020, transportation represents approximately half the greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) in the City of Falls Church. Residential and commercial buildings represent approximately the other half.

The draft Community Energy Action Plan includes potential actions (e.g., vehicle electrification, reduction in vehicle-miles traveled (VMT), building efficiency, rooftop solar) the City of Falls Church take to reduce GHG emissions and models the impacts of these actions towards meeting the city's goal of reducing the GHG emissions by 2030.

Tim Stevens noted additional actions including green power purchasing to be included and requested a financial cost for Virtual Power Purchase Agreement (VPPA) as a way to close the gap.

Jennifer requested that the Town Hall include information for community members can do now, and in the future, to influence GHG reductions. For example, the choices and incentives for community members to reduce GHG emissions. Also, Jennifer requested color-coding to assist participants to follow the discussion.

Chris requested clarification on the 100% electric vehicle assumption by 2035 (the assumption is based on California electric vehicle purchasing goals). The methodology is based on vehicles owned by city residents, not vehicles going through the city. Chris recommended clarifying that the assumption is that all city residents purchase electric vehicles by 2035. The information should show that if this assumption is not reached, other actions will be needed to reach goals.

Jason Douglas, noted that the Plan treats the vehicles as a binary choice and requested information that community members purchase more efficient gasoline powered vehicles. He also asked if it was permissible to provide incentives to buy more efficient vehicles and if property tax take into account vehicle emissions. Joseph said he would check with vehicle attorney.

Joseph noted that there are no zero emission vehicles, since it does not take into account the emissions associated with the generation of electricity.

Michael noted that Virginia has adopted the California law, and that according to this law, car dealers in Virginia will only be able to sell electric vehicles by 2035. Michael noted that VMT data used for the Council of Governments is based on Fairfax County data.

Chris requested clarification on the estimates regarding heat pumps. Falls Church has 3500 residences, so he was wondering if the city is within the scope of converting heat pumps and water heaters to achieve the 150-200 conversion each year. This assumption is not based on actual Falls Church data but what it would take to achieve the GHG goals.

Sarah requested that it include new buildings and if they include electric heat pumps, but there is no data on that.

Joseph recommended that the Town Hall include ways to include comments virtually, even if community members cannot attend the Town Hall at the time of the meeting.

Jennifer requested what is specifically wanted by the Town Hall. This includes: What ideas are resonating, any new ideas not in the draft plan, and how can some of these ideas be implemented. What is the City planning will be helpful.

Michael asked if the contractors have seen anything different in other communities. While the plan does not have any blind spots, the size and location of Falls Church makes it

unique. Some communities looking at financial incentives. Green banks also promising. Joseph noted his hope that Falls Church establish a green bank.

Jon requested if the respondents could identify if they were residents, business owners, etc. Andy will post slides and timeline on the ESC website.

Andy noted that it will take significant actions to achieve the City's GHG emissions goals. We will need to work with other committees and commissions to identify their focus areas to see where we can work together.

- Composting Update – Andy Young, Environmental Sustainability Coordinator

Public Works department held a competition on the curbside composting program. City currently subsidizes the program, but the costs have gone up. Participant costs will raise from \$6 to \$8. For reference, Alexandria costs over \$20.

Sarah and Chris are on the Solid Waste Management Plan Advisory Committee, working on a 10-year plan. Chris noted that the Committee has not addressed an overall strategy, but increasing composting is a goal. Discussions include having composting as a general principle of the plan as well as the carbon component benefits of diverting wastes from the landfill.

Council Member Hiscott noted the use of tipping fees in the overall economic analysis of the benefits of composting.

Andy highlighted Arlington's Organics Waste Management program as a potential path forward. Arlington has added a third bin to include compost materials. If there is interest, Andy will invite Arlington program to future ESC meeting for discussion. Andy will send the website for Arlington's program to the ESC.

Falls Church community center has a compost bin that is free to use. The compost bin is full, but no data on specific uses.

Michael requested Loni attend a future meeting of the ESC to discuss composting **and recycling**. There is a public composting workshop on September 22 from 2-4. Bins provided by HRTG are for yard waste.

- Subcommittee/Liaison Report-Outs
 - City Council – Council Member Debbie Hiscott

Public utility commission meeting last night (stormwater and sewage) current program with Rain Smart/rain barrel, which we can give more resources in the future for rain gardens—City entering into a new Memorandum of Understanding to support the program.

We don't publicize things like composting well enough. We need to do a better job of explaining to residents how and why such actions (rain gardens, heat pumps, EVs) to get to the WHY we are requesting the change.

City is making zoning changes in fat, oil and grease (FOG). Changing zoning to reduce FOG going into wastewater. Need for basic communications that FOG should not be put into drain but disposed as solid waste.

T Zones walking tour on Monday. Seeking something to promote infill housing. ESC has already presented a letter in December. City density promotes a more walkable "15 minute city." August 7 is the first reading for T Zones.

The budget at the state level, \$10 million earmark for stormwater projects did not get into the state budget.

City has had to raise the cost in Capital Improvement Projects. Council will relook at all the projects (including geo-thermal) of CIP to review added costs.

- Planning Commission – Tim Stevens

Andy presented the Community Energy Action Plan to the Planning Commission. Commission supports the goals of the plans. Commission discussed what it can do to support the City's GHG emission reduction goals, such as special exception including LEED Gold, Electric power and solar ready roofs.

Problem is with smaller by right, where the City doesn't have the flexibility. Potential to work with working with contractors, potential revision to reduce parking requirements and density.

- Habitat Restoration Task Group – UFC Chair Amy Crumpton

Melissa Teats, the longtime volunteer coordinator for communications and email list has moved. Sandy is the liaison with National Wildlife Federation for wildlife habitat certifications. The certification was a 10-year process and needs to get recertified every year.

Need for more leaders to assist with the administration of the HRTG including managing 300 volunteers.

The beaver continues to live in Herman Park. Public Works continues to make it more difficult, such as breaking up dams. Police does not want to exterminate. Convened meeting and agreed not to exterminate but cannot trap and move. Public Works trying to make it more inhospitable so that the beaver leaves.

- Education Task Group – Sarah Bayldon

No update—School is on summer vacation and will reactivate in September.

- Energy Transition Subcommittee – Jon Ward

Subcommittee wrapped up the Government Energy Action Plan. Requested that the contractor provide metrics to repeat analysis. Strategy includes 8 components. Each one of the 8 components contains barriers including staff time. Requests for ways to keep the volunteer component in mind.

Jon requested asking COG how they are going to count renewable energy credits (RECs). Jon has some follow-up questions on the use of RECs in the Community Energy Action Plan.

- Adjourn