

**Climate Change, Energy, and Environment Commission
(C2E2)
Summary of July 24, 2023
Hybrid Meeting**

Members Present: Joan McIntyre (Chair), Mark Greenwood, Kevin Vincent, Doug Snoeyenbos, Jonathan Morgenstein, Stephen D'Alessio, and new members Elizabeth Whitney, Suzanne Swink, and David Evans

Guest Present: Emily Nochbar

Members Absent: Mikaila Milton, Majdi Somali, Carrie Thompson (vice chair), Cindy Lewin, Rob Sandoli

Guests Virtually: Eric Gibbs (member), Guest Judy Collins

Staff Present: Demetra McBride (DES-OSEM), Richard Dooley (DES-AIRE), Stephen Burr (DES-AIRE)

1. Introductions and Public Comment

No public comment.

2. June Meeting Minutes – approved with changes via prior distribution and added discussion on additional site plan proposals.

3. Decarbonization Tool Presentation (Stephen Burr).

Presentation began with an overview of the objectives and application of the Tool. Burr explained that this was to build decarbonization from the bottom-up, elevate collaboration between Facilities and AIRE, and to drive greater efficiency in the design of new buildings and existing building upgrades. The Tool also models back-end performance. Early development includes deep data mining on the building characteristics and performance analytics, interviews with contractors, data assessment, and intentionality in the selection of the first tranche of buildings (for best opportunity to reduce carbon emissions and enhance energy efficiency).

- Examples of data collection: AMI (30-minute interval data and EUI data).
- Modeling of options (systems, appliances, equipment, and enhancements) for their energy savings, customized to Arlington.
- Facility types were diversified (e.g., operations, fire, community center)
- Feasibility considerations and need for the Tool to include more qualitative assessment capacity. Note that each Facility had up to 12 models developed, with scenarios run for building performance. Scenarios include cost efficiency, EUI efficiency, carbon reduction efficiency.
- Madison Community Center and Quincy III will be the first facilities where the outputs from the Tool will be incorporated in the scope-of-work.

GHG emissions are being factored using the current year factor for both of the fuel types, focusing on annual and lifetime GHG savings.

Prior to the demonstration, there was a lengthy discussion regarding the grid, the Utility's energy profile,

and how or whether to factor in *assumptions* regarding the GHG emissions of the future grid and Arlington County's already achieved goal of meeting its electricity needs with 100 percent renewable electricity. Also, a discussion regarding the federal tax credits, which C2E2 wants to absolutely factor into the Tool, but staff noted that the tax credits also shift risk and liability to the government and that is being assessed by the County Attorney's Office as well as Finance.

Question was raised about what metrics are used under the Tool, and then deferred this question to the actual demonstration.

There were technical difficulties (again) with the technology of the Conference Room. Only those joining the meeting by remote were able to see the demonstration screen. There was, however, additional discussion on how the criteria was digested to arrive at recommendations – e.g., how carbon savings were measured against cost.

4. Legislative Priorities (Ilana Crenin)

This coming January will be a long session, with a 2-year budget to discuss. The Governor will remain but there is a comprehensive election cycle this year, with new maps drawn. It is difficult to predict how the elections will be distributed along party lines. In the primaries, NOVA lost some of its senior appropriations leadership. Arlington will have one new open delegate, and the candidate is running unopposed. We do lose Rip Sullivan under the newly drawn maps (his border will end at Fairfax County line). Board Chair Christian Dorsey has asked for the top three legislative priorities.

However, since this 2-year budget (through 2026) will be crafted by the Governor, he could form a budget that reflects decisions beyond the actual term (2025) of the Governor.

The Energy Committee has prepared a list of 14 priorities for C2E2, but a key focus is on building codes. Ilana noted that we have placed reach or stretch codes in the County's priorities for the past several years, but it is not likely we can pass this and even if passed, the Governor would likely veto it. However, that does not mean we should not press this discussion. All of our Arlington delegation backs this. Upon questioning, Ilana noted that other jurisdictions (such as Richmond and the Hampton Roads districts) do support this generally, but their delegations are split by party.

The C2E2 asked about how to prioritize from the list – Ilana recommended being as general as possible – “the broader the better” to allow Ilana to advocate for the items most important to C2E2.

Another perennial issue is benchmarking – Ilana, it is unlikely to pass but Arlington is going to keep it there.

For now, the first and second priorities remain the Virginia Clean Economy Act and for Virginia to remain in RGGI. If Democrats take back the Assembly, then it could be likely that they will “run changes through the budget”, e.g., re-allocating RGGI revenue.

Funding Metro is the key transportation priority.

A question was raised about PJM (the RTO that governs Virginia). McBride responded with information regarding our activity at PJM through the PJMCC but suggested that a more direct regulatory impact is available at the SCC (State Corporations Commission) – so that Arlington operates at the state and regional levels.

A question was raised about Community Choice Aggregation – McBride responded that while the full framework for a CCA does not likely exist under Virginia law, an upcoming analysis will address both CCA as well as options under retail choice.

5. Plan Langston Boulevard – Comment Letter (can be found on website)

Is climate change clearly articulated as a core principle/foundation of the PLB? Rich Dooley responded with his experience at the PLB Design Labs, with reference to Section 3.2.3 (Sustainability Section).

The Chair noted that the comment period ended this week. McBride added that CPHD was looking

to take the RTA to the Board in September, with additional outreach Sept-Oct. C2E2 noted that their comment letter would represent the Commission's input.

Question was raised whether concepts of embodied carbon were integrated into PLB, e.g., the carbon comparison of demolition and rebuilding vs. adaptive reuse. Staff confirmed it is not specifically called out in PLB. The Commission asked that this be added to their comment letter.

Additional issues reviewed: traffic mitigation (C. Thompson comments), stormwater/flood mitigation (J McIntyre and McBride), micro-mobility, urban heat islands (McBride confirmed that she has provided CPHD with language on UHI in both Section 3.2.3 and "preface" language (a one-sheet), and pedestrian safety. Joan motioned to vote. Changes were accepted unanimously.

6. Transit Strategy – Comment Letter (can be found on website)–

Letter background: "C2E2 urges the County to adopt an ATSP that is more attuned to the transportation needs of all community members for convenient and affordable transit and can serve to reduce reliance on single-occupancy vehicles." Joan mentioned it is what a strategy should be and a technical analysis on current ridership instead of climate action in the community energy plan. Doug Snoeyenbos made a comment about grammar changes. Eric Gibbs suggested that the last paragraph be moved up in the letter. Joan and Doug agreed to move it to the second paragraph. Doug suggested approximately 40% GHG emissions instead of 39%. He suggested grammar edits to the next line of the paragraph. Joan accepted changes. Doug suggested grammar edits. Joan accepted. Doug asked about the last time the calculation was done. He thinks the numbers have changed. Joan asked if they were going to update the numbers to Demetra. Demetra said there will be questions brought back to the group. Doug invited the group to join the next Energy committee meeting. Another member made suggestions to the paragraph to word it better. Joan motioned to vote. Unanimous approval of the changes to the document.

7. Forestry and Natural Resources Plan – Comment Letter (can be found on website)

Letter background: "commend the Department of Parks and Recreations for a well-developed second draft and look forward to seeing commission recommendations incorporated into the final version." Joan said that they have been reviewing this for a year and a half and there are changes. A member asked if there were any metrics to suggest. Joan mentioned that the letter recommends setting tree canopy targets for neighborhoods with higher share of to low income households – she thought they needed more ambitious targets in every area. The call for specifics was brought up as a suggestion. Joan agreed that a good set of quantitative metrics was important. They should be tracked and report on it regularly. They discussed how to report on progress in implementing that plan that goes further than saying "ongoing". Demetra asked how the county measures the new planting canopy vs. losses or mortality or removal. Joan said that they do not really, but they work with the calculating residential developments with how many get planted or get taken out. 2016 was the last time a full assessment of the tree canopy was completed. Elizabeth Whitney suggested adding to a paragraph recommending incentives for homeowners for installing sustainable landscape practices, in a sentence to add details to further explore. There could be more space given to the control of invasive species on privately held land and monitoring of land between privately held properties. Joan proposed to add the sentences as discussed. They mentioned a survey about deer that is ongoing. Light pollution is important, Joan stated. Most plans tend to be vague on reporting. Joan motioned to the changes accepted. Unanimous approval.

8. Weed Ordinance - Comment letter (can be found on website)

Letter background: "strongly endorses the proposed amendments to the Conditions of Property Ordinance" Environmental missions have been asking for a decade. If grass is over a certain length, then the county can come to cut it which has led to removal of native

plant landscapes following complaints from neighbors. The county moved to change the ordinance in January, but they didn't change the part the commission wanted and so the commission pressed for more extensive changes. They agreed they would make changes. Changes to the ordinance will be considered by the County Board in September. Members asked how this interacts with HOA requirements. Joan said there aren't a lot of HOAs, so don't really interact. Elizabeth Whitney asked if this was an existing weed ordinance. Joan will clarify that in the letter. Joan asked if there were any additional changes. Members asked about grammar questions. Motioned to vote. All in favor, accepted changes.

Round Robin – Updates and Comments

Co-Chair Carrie Thompson noted she will bring a full update on the Solid Waste Master Plan / Zero-Waste Proposal to the Commission in September. Joan mentioned it will go out for public review and comment this fall. Asked the commission to look it over in the next two months. Joan asked if others had anything pressing to report.

Meeting adjourned: **9:30 pm**