

Climate Change, Energy, and Environment Commission (C2E2)

Summary of Nov. 20, 2023

Virtual Meeting (2hr 40m)

Members Present Virtually: Joan McIntyre, chair; Carrie Thompson, vice-chair; Mark Greenwood, Cindy Lewin, Kevin Vincent, Eric Gibbs, Stephen D'Alessio, Mikaila Milton, Rob Sandoli, Elizabeth Whitney, David Evans, Suzanne Swink

Members Absent: Doug Snoeyenbos, Johnathan Morgenstein Majdi Shomali,

Guests Virtually: Bill Eger, Amber Fandel, John Bloom, Rich Dooley, Whytni Kernodle, Ryan Delaney

Staff Present: Demetra McBride (DES-OSEM), Jenna Peabody (DES-AIRE)

1. Introductions & Public Comments – No public comment.

3. 2024 Plans and Priorities (7:09 – 7:59) – Each commissioner said their priority. Carrie said she supports the county to update the GBIP and C2E2 participation in the SPRC. David moved to update CEP and move to a Climate Action Plan instead of a CEP. Elizabeth is interested in community choice aggregation, tree canopy, and forestry planning, bus electrification and vehicle electrification. Eric endorses Carries and Davids, supports CAP. Kevin would like to see the systemic integration of plans across all county operations to be zero emissions. Mark would like to fill out action items on heat island effects and stormwater and incorporate them in SPRC activities. Mikaila adds the environment, implementation of forestry plan and gulf stream project and agrees with heat island action items. Rob seconds Carries notes on SPRC checklist and documents those changes made by developers especially green buildings, capitalize on budget opportunities, strategize capital budgets. Stephen wants to focus on green space equity and when providing comments on SPRC, can we provide commentary sooner to make sure developers and County officials do not make decisions and hide behind the fact that plans have been finalized when we comment.

Suzanne would echo Arlington moving forward with CAP, wants to evaluate and take advantage of the funding streams that are coming out of the federal side of government IRA and infrastructure bills. Joan wants to work with other commissions in the community with the Climate action, have a whole of government approach and answer how climate change fits in with the county and the community, and better understanding of equity. Demetra provided a GBIP update; she had spoken with the county manager but had received instructions that would probably wait for briefings with the board after the first of January, pushing the issue to the new members coming on. In terms of CAP , years 3-5 roadmap will expand to cover heat island, waste management, etc. The GHG inventory will include the year 2023, also working through the roadmap and looking to integrate no regrets measures from the consumption strategies list, looking at a full year of. Received a grant award, may receive funding for a second one and submitting for a third one. There are 3 others in play that have to do with the green climate reduction fund, and the GHG reduction fund and green banks. We have NREL going on.

Working with the office of racial equity, environmental equity of the NRDC, working with NAACP, working with nonprofits and faith based organizations. Can provide more of a rundown at a future meeting. Cindy key priority agrees with the current list and would focus on climate change. Joan wanted to make the 1 priority more specific and tie it to the climate crisis. Made an edit. Cindy noted that Arlington has its own goals. Joan and Carrie say the recent goals do not fully integrate climate action. Commission reviewed. Robert suggested keeping both targets. Carrie does not want to limit guidance. Demetra noted the breakdown of the sub breakdown of the GHG emissions, with buildings being the greatest source. Carrie suggests leaving edits as is. In the table, commission reviewed. Demetra said the full process of the CAP will not be complete within the calendar year and to keep this in mind.

Joan said we lost the last 18 months doing anything. Demetra notes the roadmap is a measurable plea for an enormous amount of work to be done. Joan added in a section on promoting reuse. The Commission agreed. Added in edits to the document. Rob had a comment about clarifying the “how”. Joan said in the annual report we can look at this. Demetra noted in the planning commission, in the comments, they were directly incorporating recommendations. Carrie wants to use the Priorities and testimony to see the actions and activities. Joan wants to include the letters sent. Joan suggested edits. Commission reviewed. Demetra noted the CNTMP – on the county fleet and has future milestones and targets. Elizabeth noted that we want less and less fossil fuel and explore battery costs in the Renewable energy installed section. Demetra suggests double checking language. David noted that the other commissions work on things that involve climate, we need to work together to affect that result. Edits were made. Joan requested Rob to look through prior to next month. Eric will help Rob review.

4. Discussion with Bill Eger (8:00 – 8:25) – Bill has been checking in with Joan separately to discuss the goals of C2E2. It was enlightening to hear tonight’s breadth of focus of the plans. One of his key outcomes is to hear about how C2E2 prioritization can work with Bill’s work plan and the county’s work plan to make happen in the broader community. He provided an update on what is going on with the County. He spent a lot of time meeting with each department to learn more about their priorities across the board, and since it is all a government effort, he wants to know what is going on. He was building relationships across the organization for the past few months (since spring, when he last spoke to C2E2). Also he made relationships across the community. He looked for alignments across the community for the climate action goals. So far, he has created this position and set boundaries for C2E2, the original operational control, and his position is actually soft power, and he does not have immediate decision authority. This power is left up to the County manager and the County board.

His work relies on building relationships and using soft power techniques to effect change in the organization. He relies on the coordination across the organization built on his relationships to bring the board to address climate outcomes. So after his listening tour, some of the focus is working with the CM and CB to outline work plan details and metrics of success and who are the key partners that should be brought to the table to execute the work plan. He put together a public presence in the office of climate policy and has a clear presence for the community to rely on. This role is to support the collaboration across the community. After Jan 1/February, the CEP has recommended action to establish an intercounty climate resiliency

working group and has senior leadership bringing together the group. Will effect 3 things: bringing the WHY to all county agencies – why is the DES work important? The work of our departments are important for climate action work. The second is education and capacity building. How does it relate back to our climate action work? This is outlined in our CEP and roadmap. Beyond that, how to bring the system we currently have (procurement, budgets) , how we can make decisions on purchasing, and highlight dollar spent has positive or negative effects on impacts. Bring together senior leadership to approach business and sustainability goals. Externally, he can not release any details but he is working with community partners and CSR teams of corporate partners to find where they have alignments and social media presence, or function of their business model, how can we partner together to effect change. Partner with academic institutions such as AIRE doing with George Mason. How can they make community-based goals?

Other focuses like Demetra brought up were focus on years 3-5 in CEP, adopt FNRP in late December, this is how the work is supporting county programs. This gives a climate lens to help our departments move forward on implementation. There are a lot of opportunities for communication and engagement. DES has strong communications and engagement teams. At the CM level, there is a strong Comms and engagement team. This unifies depts. That is not focused on climate action. Also, the next general assembly session, and Climate action goals are stated, work with liaison to work with senators throughout the commonwealth for legislative initiative. Lastly, environmental justice and climate justice, prior definitions have come about. The AIRE team has received a recent grant through the EPA. Many departments have identified ways to bring climate development into their chapters. He is going to be bringing forward the climate nexus work. He would like to have an infrequent engagement with C2E2 – perhaps every other month. He enjoyed having coffee with multiple members of C2E2 and their peers separately and has invited each member to meet him separately to discuss their work and see how they can partner. Opened the conversation to questions. Joan asked about the budget – what are Bill's observations for the budget next year? Bill told the county manager to reduce their budget with a 7% reduction for FY – this means they have to determine with the CMO and the Board of what the budget will look like. Joan asked within the budget, what climate issues opportunities they have?

Bill thinks there is a problem with FNRP being passed and there are some potential interests in its implementation and operating budget of that and the CIP budget. Bill spoke with multiple groups and drew from his experience to explain that the potential of investments is large, it should narrow down to a few outcomes. He has some insight into this, but it is very high level. Supporting the DES is part of the CIP, and asked Demetra or Rich to speak more on this as they are more attuned to this. Bill has not seen any of the budget submissions come in but once he gets more information he can discuss in the future. Joan asked how we can take more advantage of these credits or grant opportunities. Bill said in his experience, that is one way to approach it but he does not have a window into the facility planning process or what is underway. Demetra or rich could elaborate on this as they know more about it at this time. Kevin said with the climate crisis, all things have to be done simultaneously. Organizational change and Change monuments, there is change. And Bill said there are a variety of approaches. There are numerous opportunities to leverage resources that come with tradeoffs. We have looked into

many, there may have been partnership opportunities that we have done in the past to pursue investments, but they are not necessarily free and we need to be thoughtful and consistent with the county's visions from a financial manner and achieve climate action goals at the same time. Bill offered to review this with the Commission to see what it would look like for the future. Bill and Joan have numerous meetings to bring other commissions together to spread priorities on climate action. He is highly encouraged to take an approach and it will be a strong way to leverage each commission. We need much investment and action to change the systems, there is much to be done on communications, he says that the C2E2 has a voice to serve as vehicles to make the community aware for individual households and the community as a whole. Joan has asked to get the commissions to meet together in a joint meeting from Bill to talk about Climate Change. Carrie concurs. Bill will float the idea to the Board. Joan will talk to Takis about this. Invited Bill to come back in Feb to talk about the budget. He offered to get coffee with people separately.

5. Update on the FNRP (8:25 – 8:32) – Ryan and Joan spoke about metrics and measures. Ryan provided an update. The request to advertise was approved in the October meeting. This is with the board to consider in December. Relevant changes – still in profession with the edits, some of C2E2 was present at the meeting earlier this month – he provides clarification on strategic direction for action 4.1 inventory recommendations from tree canopy, etc. 4.1.4 was amended in between the summer and oct. Board meeting. The plan is predicated on community action. There may be a virtual dashboard that keeps track of forestry programs. The language is not final yet. Joan and Ryan spoke last month to bring the community into this conversation.

6. Letters on FNRP (8:36 – 8:39) – Reviewed by commission. Motion to approve. Seconded. All in favor. No opposed.

7. SWMP/Zero Waste Plan Letter (8:39 – 9:18) – Reviewed by commission. Minor edits. Elizabeth Whitney discussed the plan. Joan mentioned this is a state mandated plan. Elizabeth and Joan concur to commend the planners. A lot of waste management is out of the control of what the county can do. Mikaila stated much of what we recycle ends up in the trash. Perhaps they could simplify the process to not mess it up. Joan discussed reducing food and plastics. Carrie mentioned they try to simplify the instructions but it's not specific enough. If the county does not accept single use plastics, then people would not buy it. Carrie discussed this letter to focus on the top tier of the plastic hierarchy. Perhaps they allow the SWMB to be more transparent about trash and recycling, which may lead to education around waste. Mark noted there is a federal statute that looks first at source reduction before recycling. Demetra noted we don't want to scare people away from trying to recycle, but more so educate on reducing. Potentially work with multi family homes to make it easier instead of working with signage. More edits made. Motion to approve. Second. All in favor. No opposed.

8. Letters on Gulf Branch Renovation (9:19 – 9:35) – Reviewed by commission. Carrie asked if we could send letters to the staff. Joan clarified that they send to staff and the Board, always cc'ing the Board. Carrie clarified language. David made a note to not support counterproductive actions. Mikaila conquered. Edits were made. Motion to approve. Second. All in favor. No opposed.

9. Updates (9:36 – 9:40) – Doug will take the lead of Zero Emissions Bus study for the December meeting. Joan made comments on the legislative agenda. They will be approved at the December board meeting. Topics include the extended producer responsibility and restoring funds for transit and multi mobility infrastructure. Motion to adjourn. Seconded.