
**MEETING MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL
ARLINGTON COUNTY FORESTRY AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION**

7/28/22

The **FORESTRY AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION** convened its meeting at **7:00 PM** on **7/28/22**.

PRESENT (VIRTUALLY) Commissioners Phil Klingelhofer, John Carey, Noreen Hannigan, Colt Gregory, Nat Ames, Stephen Sockwell, Caroline Haynes, Kit Norland, Kate Donohue, David Howell, Bill Browning, Josh Handler, Melody Mobley

ABSENT No absences

STAFF Vincent Verweij (DPR), Ryan Delaney (DPR), Steven Bernheisel (APS), Alonso Abugattas (DPR), Richard Tucker (CPHD)

GUESTS Libby Garvey (Arlington County Board Member), Lori Brent, Mary Glass, Royce Sherlock, Adam Theo, Bernard Berne

MOTIONS & ACTIONS/VOTES

Public Comment

Lori Brent lives in Forest Glen, and expressed concern about development impact.

Bill Richardson spoke about lot coverage as a solution to tree loss.

Mary Glass spoke about maintenance of landscape on a planting project by DES.

County Board Member Libby Garvey

Introduction from Libby

Discussions followed on pollinators, tree canopy estimates, inclusion in commissions of people of color, Missing middle, DES collaboration, follow-through, and staff resources, Clarendon Common and Crystal City Water Park tree removals, the Climate Chief, and how letters to the board are processed.

2023 Forestry and Natural Resources Plan Update

Ryan Delaney outlined the plan.

Chair Klingelhofer invited Ryan Delaney to September meeting to further discuss the FNRP.

Conversations followed about effectiveness and tree canopy assessment and lot coverage.

2023 Legislative priorities

Commissioner Carey described the letter. Commissioner Sockwell asked for clarification. Support was given by several members.

Letter was moved by Commissioner Haynes, seconded by Commissioner Norland. A unanimous vote passed the letter.

Commission infrastructure

A policy draft for hybrid meeting was presented.

A discussion followed about using winter months for virtual meetings, filtering, equity of in-person meetings, and how the virtual options may help the commission.

Commissioner Sockwell made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Haynes.

10 voted in favor, 2 opposed, 1 abstention. The policy was adopted.

Staff reports:

Staff reported, focusing on Barcroft apartments, maintenance map, George Mason, Shirlington, and Tree Steward Structural pruning.

Commissioner reports:

Natural Resources Joint Advisory Group (Caroline Haynes)

Both the July NRJAG and the Public Spaces Master Plan Implementation Advisory Committee meetings were canceled due to the delay in releasing the draft of the Forestry and Natural Resources Plan (FNRP). The FNRP draft is expected to be released on Monday, August 1 and we plan to do a deeper dive on the content at the NRJAG meeting that evening.

Park and Recreation Commission (Colt Gregory)

Due to scheduling anomalies, there were two PRC meetings prior to the July 28 FNRC meeting.

This update is for the second of those meetings and was held on Tuesday July 26, 2022.

The July 26 PRC meeting voted on a park naming and was briefed on a park renaming. This was followed by an informative update on the Forestry and Natural Resources Plan and a discussion on Biophilic Arlington.

Park Naming

Arlington Junction Park. Max Ewert (DPR) provided the naming brief on the park located at South Eads and Army Navy Drive known as the Teardrop project. The NCAC approved of the name Teardrop park while HALRB (Historical Affairs and Landmark Review Board) preferred Arlington Junction. PRC voted for the name Arlington Junction as representative of the historic aspect of the site.

Initiate Renaming of Beaver Pond / Ballston Pond park at Fairfax Drive and Glebe Road

The PRC received a presentation from Diane Probus (DPR) on the renaming of Beaver Pond Park to Ballston Wetlands Park, the most favored option selected during public engagement. PRC will revisit the naming after review by HALRB and NCAC .

Update on Forestry and Natural Resources Plan (FNRP) development - Ryan Delany (DPR) provided an update to the Forestry and Natural Resource Management Plan (FNRC) development now scheduled for release on August 1st. Draft strategic direction will focus on the areas of conservation, climate adaptation and resilience, biodiversity and operations /maintenance. The approach and format of the document is similar to the PSMP and will include detailed recommendations in each strategic area.

Discussion on Biophilic Arlington - PRC Commissioner David Howell and FNRC Commissioner Caroline Haynes provided PRC with presentation on Biophilic Cities and creating a Biophilic Community in Arlington. Arlington County joined the Biophilic Cities network when the Board adopted the Biophilic Resolution in Dec of 2019. Of the many points developed in the presentation a key one for me is using nature and biophilic concepts as an ally to bring the natural environment into our built environment.

Public Spaces Master Plan Implementation Advisory Group (Caroline Haynes)

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Planning Activities/SPRC (Steve Sockwell and Caroline Haynes)

The County now has 5 active site plans plus another 8 preliminary site plans that may be accepted soon. So, we may be busy in the fall. Of the active plans two plans — redevelopment of the Silver Diner site and the Ballston Holiday Inn site may offer opportunities to plump for additional trees. Both have SPRCs in September and the Holiday Inn site currently has a public comment period open until Aug. 4th. Of the preliminary site plans, several may present tree or other issues, like the YMCA project, we'll just have to await more firm plans to get involved.

Public Facilities Review Commission (Kate Donohue)

The PFRC met for a second session to review the schematic designs for the new Career Center on Walter Reed Drive. A third session is scheduled for August 31, prior to the School Board's September meetings on this topic.

Students were interviewed, and they were very excited for the proposed green spaces, trees, and the options for socializing and learning out of doors. The committee expressed great support for planting trees, maintaining the trees and green spaces after project completion, and especially for protecting the large canopy trees currently on site.

The proposed design provides for terraces which may be leveraged for biophilic elements, which is another avenue for promoting natural green spaces. The details for the landscaping will be discussed later in the project, and based on current levels of interest, I expect strong support for planting and maintaining the outdoor space.

Langston Highway (Caroline Haynes)

Nothing to report

Tree Stewards (Noreen Hannigan)

Tree Stewards have been active in July holding various tree walks, invasives removals, and vine rescues from Arlington and Alexandria parks. In addition, the Summer Membership meeting/brunch was held outdoors at Fort Ward Park, during which interns who completed their 30 hours for certification received their TS polo shirts.

Tree Canopy Fund (Kate Donohue)

Arlingtonians submitted applications for 175 trees from the Tree Canopy Fund this cycle. The Review Committee has met once, and will meet again next week to complete their review before letters are sent to the applicants.

Bicycle Advisory Committee (Noreen Hannigan)

The Bicycle Advisory Committee met on Monday, July. Here is a link to the agenda, which includes short summaries of each item.

<https://www.arlingtonva.us/files/39642597-a281-4db7-9dfa-9aaada4d9f59/July-2022-BAC-Meeting-Agenda.pdf>

I would note the topic of the VDOT Long Bridge Project, which (along with rail) will include a bike/pedestrian bridge coming from DC into Arlington. I listened to the video recording for that part of the meeting (at 1:05:11) in which Leah Gerber (county staff) notes that Arlington won't be able to control a lot of aspects of it, but BAC members express sentiment for wanting the path to be wider than the proposed 14 feet to accommodate coming development (Amazon, Boeing, et al.). Leah says that Arlington Parks staff in on the planning discussions (regarding where it will connect on the VA side, landscaping questions, etc.). Is this expected to be of interest to the FNRC?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vk7lD3a3y1g>

Northern Virginia Urban Forestry Roundtable (Vacant)

No report

Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee (Phil Klingelhofer)

No report

Climate Change, Energy, and Environment Commission (Shawn Norton)

No report

Virginia Department of Forestry (Jim McGlone)

No report

Arlington Public Schools (Jim Meikle)

Staff Reported on trees down and tree near playground and Career Center. Commissioner Norland asked about APS landscaping budget and a report on management and maintenance of acres of APS land.

Virginia Cooperative Extension (Kirsten Ann Conrad)

No report

New business:

Commissioner Handler mentioned FOIA request about tree canopy on Missing Middle Study.

Meeting adjourned at 9:13 PM