

---

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

MAY 26, 2022

The FORESTRY AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION convened its meeting at 7:00 PM on MAY 26, 2022.

**PRESENT (VIRTUALLY)**

Commission Chair Phil Klingelhofer  
Commissioner Bill Browning  
Commissioner Colt Gregory  
Commissioner David Howell  
Commissioner John Carey  
Commissioner Josh Handler  
Commissioner Kate Donohue  
Commissioner Kit Norland  
Commissioner Nat Ames  
Commissioner Noreen Hannigan  
Commissioner Steve Sockwell

**ABSENT**

Commissioner Caroline Haynes  
Commissioner Melody Mobley  
Commissioner Liliana Duica

**STAFF**

Vincent Verweij, DPR, Staff Liaison  
Erik Beach, DPR  
Kellie Brown, CPHD  
Matthew Ladd, CPHD  
Richard Tucker, CPHD  
Robert Capper, DPR  
Steven Bernheisel, APS

**MOTIONS & ACTIONS/VOTES**

*Guests, Commissioners and Staff – Introductions and Sign-in*

*Public comments*

*Missing Middle Housing Study – Matthew Ladd, Kellie Brown, and Richard Tucker*

A letter on the missing middle housing study was proposed and approved, to be drafted by Commissioner Handler for a future vote.

*Capital Improvement Plan – Erik Beach*

A letter on the Capital Improvement Plan was proposed and approved, to be drafted by Commissioners Hannigan and Gregory

*Northern Virginia Conservation Trust – Matt Gerhart*

*Tree watering – Vincent Verweij*

This presentation was deferred, for time.

*Commission Infrastructure (Work Plan, Annual Report, Memberships)*

Staff Reports

*Commission Member Reports (Taken in order of Action Items first)*

*Natural Resources Joint Advisory Group (Caroline Haynes)*

Rachael Tolman, Manager of the Conservation and Interpretation section of DPR Parks and Natural Resources, provided an update on the Nature Centers. Discussion focused on the reduction in hours of Gulf Branch and Long Branch Nature Centers and the impact that has had on visitations and opportunities for more informal environmental education. A new requirements that two staff have to be on site at all times when the buildings are open to the public has constrained the flexibility of the nature centers. While staff has maintained visits to all first Arlington Public Schools, opportunities for drop in visitation has been significantly reduced. Rachael also noted that there will be a special celebration for Long Branch Nature Center in November in celebration of its 50th anniversary.

We anticipate having an overview of the Forestry and Natural Resources Plan at the June 6 NRJAG meeting, though the draft document likely will not be available until the end of June.

*Park and Recreation Commission (Colt Gregory)*

The May meeting of the Park and Recreation Commission began with a park naming presentation from DPR rep. Diane Probus. She provided 4 proposed names for the public space at 11th street and North Danville. The public engagement efforts to date have favored the name "11th Street Park".

The Commission also received a presentation from Park Development Div. Chief, Erik Beach, on the park portion of the upcoming 2023-2032 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). Of significant interest to the commission was the funding request for natural resource protection and enhancement activities -- The Natural Resiliency Program (8.5M). This request is important because it begins to treat our natural resources as Natural Capital and is now, for the first time, included in the CIP request. The Natural Resiliency Program aims to *improve natural environments with support including forest restoration, stream improvements, large scale invasives removal, and implementation of biophilic principles*. Public Comment was received on the park as well as request for PRC to support an additional \$25K for staff to keep the Nature Centers open six days a week. PRC agreed to draft advisory letters on both the CIP and Nature Center staffing.

*Public Spaces Master Plan Implementation Advisory Group (Caroline Haynes)*

No report

*Planning Activities/SPRC (Steve Sockwell and Caroline Haynes)*

No report

*Langston Highway (Caroline Haynes)*

No report

*Tree Stewards (Noreen Hannigan)*

Not an activity per se, but a recent conversation on the Tree Stewards' ListServ about Plant NOVA Trees (PNT) prompted Alonso to chime in saying that the PNT "Tree Rescuers" group should team up with the Tree Stewards/ARMN "Choke Hazard" [ivy] group. Alonso sent the message to both Tree Stewards and ARMN ListSers. (I don't know whether the groups have responded.)

Another noteworthy event was a massive Upper Four Mile Run cleanup event on Saturday, May 21, organized by Tree Steward/ARMN Park Steward Jo Allen. Although only a handful of volunteers signed up to cover the distance starting in Crossman Park in Falls Church down through Dominion Hills (just west of Bon Air), Jo recruited the landscape company that maintains her townhouse development. The owner of the company graduated from last semester's Tree Steward training and has been earning volunteer hours helping Jo at Brandymore Castle, etc. (Note that this was a separate event from the WUSA Channel 9-sponsored event with the FMR Conservancy that took place on Lower FMR the same day. The scheduling was coincidental, owing to the Upper FMR event being rained out on May 7.) In addition to Tree Steward support, ARMN members (including yours truly) also volunteered for the very hot, dirty work (anybody read "River Of Doubt" about Teddy Roosevelt's harrowing adventure in Brazil's Amazon jungle?). We removed approximately 15 large "contractor" bags of trash and a big pile of scrap metal and machinery parts. Sadly, two dead beavers were found along the banks on the Dominion Hills stretch. Jo's writeup on the Friends of Brandymore Castle website can be read at the link below. (Jo did contact county officials, including Alonso, afterwards to report the dead beavers.)

A couple of us did take pruners with us and managed to cut some bittersweet vines growing from the water's edge. The event was noteworthy and helped improve a little slice of Arlington's natural space.

<https://friendsofbrandymorecastle.org/announcements/how-to-make-a-duck-quackle/>

*Tree Canopy Fund (Kate Donohue)*

All of the Spring 2022 trees have been planted; the contractor is now inspecting trees from last fall and this spring which have been reported as having problems to see if they need to be replaced.

There are about 20 applications for trees to be planted in Fall 2022; most applications come in over the last week before the deadline, which is June 24.

I have made two requested visits and scheduled a third, including Tree Steward interns as possible.

*Bicycle Advisory Committee (Noreen Hannigan)*

The Bicycle Advisory Committee met Monday, May 2, 2022. Members of the Arlington County Fire Department, including the Chief Fire Marshal and Fire Chief, attended to answer a list of questions that had been submitted in advance. Committee members were interested in such topics as how curbs, lane dividers, and other road infrastructure are designed for fire equipment requirements, whether the "20-Foot Clear Width Rule" is leading to bike lanes and sidewalk safety features being eliminated from road design projects without public input, lack of enforcement when vehicles park in fire lanes, etc. The panel of ACFD reps gave thorough answers and were well received.

The BAC also had County Staff Liaison, Leah Gerber, follow up on some additional road-safety questions for the Dept. of Transportation left over from April's conversation with DOT director Dennis Leach.

The BAC is compiling a list of intersections with lights that lack bike-detection capability and will submit it to the County with a request to install the technology at those places.

There was also a brief discussion of VDOT's Route 1 meeting in April. The BAC has concerns about the wisdom of the project.

*Northern Virginia Urban Forestry Roundtable (Vacant)*

No report

*Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee (Phil Klingelhofer)*

No report

*Climate Change, Energy, and Environment Commission (Liliana Duica)*

No report

*Virginia Department of Forestry (Jim McGlone)*

No report

*Arlington Public Schools (Jim Meikle)*

No report

*Virginia Cooperative Extension (Kirsten Ann Conrad)*

No report

Meeting adjourned at 9:39 PM.