
**MEETING MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL-ONLY
ARLINGTON COUNTY PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

April 8, 2025

The **Park and Recreation Commission** convened its meeting at **7:00 p.m.** on **Tuesday, April 8, 2025.**

PRESENT (VIRTUALLY)	PRC Chair, Jill Barker PRC Vice Chair, Gary Shinnars Commissioner Erika Allen Commissioner Andrew Damitio Commissioner Nelson Dimpter Commissioner David Earley Commissioner Daniel Garay Commissioner Neal Hunter Commissioner Claire Pascocello Commissioner Adam Rasmussen Commissioner Alex Sanders At-large Commissioner Gerald Brandt, Arlington Public Schools
ABSENT	Commissioner Melissa Riggio Commissioner William Way
STAFF	Marco Rivero, DPR, PRC Staff Liaison Bethany Heim, DPR Christin Conaway Jolicoeur, DES Aileen Winquist, DES
PUBLIC COMMENTERS	None
OTHER ATTENDEES	None

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- [Link to Teams Recording](#)
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SUMMARY OF PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSIONS

Chair's Introduction and Review/Approval of Meeting Minutes

- *Commission consideration of the March 25, 2025 minutes.*
 - *The March 25 minutes were adopted as prepared with no objections.*

Public Comment

** Park and Recreation Commission public comment is open to all with a 3-minute limit per person.*

- No public comment was provided at this meeting.

Briefing on Amendments to the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance

Aileen Winqvist, Department of Environmental Services (DES), briefed the PRC on amendments proposed to the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance. Items include but are not limited to overview of changes (as it relates to a 2020 Virginia General Assembly bill allowing amendments on trees and climate change), tree conservation in Resource Protection Areas (RPAs) and Resource Management Areas (RMAs), climate change adaptation, nature-based adaptation measures, and schedule of pending actions.

PRC discussion included but was not limited to understanding dead, dying, or diseased trees or noxious vegetation removal and requirements set forth for this activity. Ms. Jolicoeur described that the language tries to limit removal of healthy trees in situations where they are not warranted but encourage replacement of non-native vegetation with native species. RPA requirements and differentiations for what is allowed in the private versus the public realm. Education/outreach to homeowners dealing with diseased trees and other vegetation and outreach in other languages. Ms. Winqvist detailed the County's webpage and materials are in English, but they can investigate this further for any language updates. Federal property standards cannot be applied directly on RPAs but should be following equivalent standards through their own standards/procedures (National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), etc.).

Staff provided examples of new climate change/tree amendment standards as they relate to residential properties. Staff further detailed invasive plant management requirements. Ms. Jolicoeur detailed staff usually begins with vines in trees to begin the removal process. Conditions for denial of an exception request were also discussed, and Ms. Jolicoeur detailed that there may be a situation where the requestor proposes something and the County details that the mitigation procedures are either acceptable or unacceptable, and if unacceptable, the County will provide other options to consider. Land Disturbance Area (LDA) permits may also trigger many associated standards and mitigation measures.

Request to Advertise would occur in May 2025 and full consideration by the County Board in June 2025. The PRC will provide a letter.

- [Presentation Link](#)

Review of 2024 Bill Thomas Park Volunteer Award Process and Awardee

- *PRC Vote on Awardee*

Commissioner Claire Pascocello provided a summary of the 2024 Bill Thomas Park Volunteer Award review process, scoring, and selection of proposed awardee. Commissioner Pascocello provided a review of this year's nominees (3 total). The review Committee's selection this year was for the Tree Stewards of Arlington and Alexandria, for their dedicated service to the County's parks and natural resources, including the various programs they sponsor for tree preservation and maintenance. Invasive species removal workshops are also provided by the Tree Stewards, various advocacy, and education opportunities, and working with County staff on a guide facilitating solar panel installation and potential considerations with existing tree canopy. Commissioner Pascocello detailed the selection committee rubric and the methodology for selection.

PRC discussion included but was not limited to discussing the recent history and activities of the proposed nominee organization. Commissioner Sanders detailed that the Tree Stewards were a nominee for last year's award and scored highly then as well.

The PRC considered nominating the Tree Stewards of Arlington and Alexandria for the 2024 Bill Thomas Park Volunteer Award, with Commissioner Rasmussen moving to approve the nomination, seconded by PRC Commissioner Sanders. The vote was **11-0 (of those attending virtually at the time of adoption)**.

Staff Reports

Staff reports were not provided for this month given the brief period between the March 25 and April 8 PRC meetings. Staff reports will be provided to the PRC in preparation for its May 13 meeting.

Commission Member Reports

Additional items discussed during this section included:

- Inn of Rosslyn – SPRC Coordination Items
 - PRC Chair Barker detailed the notice issues that have been occurring on recent site plans. Commissioner Earley provided a general overview of what was done to coordinate with the SPRC chair and County staff for future notices and materials posted to date.
 - Commissioner Earley also provided a general overview of the Inn of Rosslyn project and the issue regarding a lack of open space on the site. Commissioner Earley will reach out to County staff regarding any comments to date on this project.
- Public Spaces Master Plan (PSMP)-Implementation Advisory Committee (IAC) Update
 - PRC Chair will participate as co-chair of the PSMP-IAC along with DPR Director, Jane Rudolph. PRC Vice Chair Gary Shinnars will also be the PRC representative to the committee. The first meeting will occur in May 2025.

Other Business

- Letters to the County Board
 - 2024 Bill Thomas Park Volunteer Award
 - Commissioner Pascocello will draft this letter in time for the County Board's Tuesday, May 13 recessed meeting.
 - Gulf Branch Stream Restoration
 - Commissioner Sanders provided an overview of the Gulf Branch Stream Restoration project. A draft letter was provided ahead of the April 8 PRC meeting, will be finalized accordingly, and distributed to the County Board.
 - Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance Amendments
 - PRC Commissioner Damitio will draft potential language for a PRC letter to the County Board. Mr. Rivero will reach out to DES staff to request a redline copy on the proposed language to the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance (for PRC review).

MOTIONS & ACTIONS/VOTES

As recorded earlier in the meeting, the PRC moved **11-0 (of those attending virtually at the time of adoption)** to approve the nomination of the Tree Stewards of Arlington and Alexandria for the 2024 Bill Thomas Park Volunteer Award. The motion was made by Commissioner Rasmussen and seconded by Commissioner Sanders.

Meeting adjourned at **8:50 p.m.**