

Climate Change, Energy, and Environment Commission (C2E2)

Summary of February 27, 2023

Virtual Meeting

Members Present: Joan McIntyre (Chair), Eric Gibbs, John Bloom, Stephen D'Alessio, Kevin Vincent, Majdi Shomali, Mark Greenwood, Mikaila Milton, Jonathan Morgenstein, Rob Sandoli

Staff Present: Rebecca Moser (DES), Demetra McBride (DES), Pierre Holloman (DES-Transit), Paul Mounier (DES-Transit), Lynn Rivers (DES-Transit), Hui Wang (DES Transportation).

Members Absent: Carrie Thompson (Vice Chair), Cindy Lewin

Guests: Mary Glass, Ruth Woollett, Terri Armao, Ryan Jones, Anne Bodine, Matthjis Broer, Maria Green, Fred Phillips (prospective C2E2 Candidate), Doug Snoeyenbos (new Commissioner starting in March), Clinton Edwards, Charles Moore (prospective Commission member), Tanner Prime, David Evans.

1. Introductions & Public Comment

The following members will be leaving the Commission: Shawn Norton, Gilbert Campbell, Joshua Griset.

Anne Bodine provided public comment about missing middle (MM) housing. She strongly disagrees with the notion that missing middle helps current residents of color and is asking C2E2 to support a reporting requirement for the Board to track the ethnic and socioeconomic diversity of EHO residents over 5 and 10 years. If the Board adopts new zoning, she asks C2E2 to oppose the option to allow EHO on lots over 1 acre as by-right. She requests the Commissioners read pages 43 and 52 in the report distributed from Arlingtonians for Our Sustainable Future. This report notes that missing middle will complicate key counting goals. MM reduces tree canopy to only 10% on 97% of land being rezoned, killing their goal of 40% tree canopy. She asks the Commission to support a compromise idea of duplexes county-wide, with three-plexes near transit.

Terri Armao provided public comment also on missing middle. She believes the County is on the wrong path and she disagrees with the Commission's position on missing middle. "Pursuing missing middle housing in Arlington County is a death sentence for the trees."

She states that there is no recovery from this and that Arlington residents will suffer from the noise, pollution, loss of trees and loss of wildlife, and children getting sick from asthma. She urges the Commission to not support missing middle housing.

Mary Glass provided public comment on Arlington's new tree canopy assessment, funded by private citizens. Research has been completed and the preliminary overview results were presented in a public webinar on February 13th, 2023. The study was conducted by the nationally recognized Green Infrastructure Center and used accepted and standardized data from 2021. Mary reviewed key takeaways from the study. The next public meeting on this will dive deeper into the study's findings and will be on March 25th, 2023. The consultants will provide recommendations for audience discussion, then break and go into breakout groups. Mary's slides were distributed to Commissioners.

2. Meeting Minutes

Meeting minutes for January were reviewed and a minor change under item number 4 (ARTBus Feasibility Study and Transition Plan) was made. The minutes were unanimously approved.

3. Transit Strategic Plan, Paul Mounier

In the process of updating this plan. It is required to update it every 6 years.

Service Highlights

- 2.1 million projected riders on ART in FY2023
 - 2.8 million riders in 2019 (pre-Covid-19 pandemic)
- 89% on-time performance in FY2022
- 78 buses in fleet
- 16 total routes
- New ART Operations and Maintenance Facility expected completion in 2025

Transit Strategic Plan Overview

- 10-year road map, required by the State of Virginia
- Provide an equitable network to remove barriers to transit travel to take people where they need to go.
- Guide to track Arlington's progress, operations, project delivery, and communications
- Designed to be flexible and responsive to changes in the County

A Sustainable Fleet

- Working to reduce emissions in ART fleet
 - ART fleet fully transitioned to CNG from diesel 20 years ago
 - Emissions include less particulate matter than diesel, meaning better air quality for the Arlington Community
- Future pilots
 - Recently applied for DRPT funding to pilot 4 Battery Electric Buses in 2025
 - Pilot 2-4 Hydrogen Fuel Cell Electric Buses in 2026

Gathered data from the public pertaining to service and analysis conducted on supply and demand. Also looked at connections to neighborhoods and community centers, activity centers, schools, and parks, figure out where people are going and identify areas of short supply. Meeting with Samia Bryd, Chief Diversity and Equity Officer, to look at the equity lens that the County uses and compare with title 6 analyses mandated by the transit industry to identify gaps in Arlington's service.

Engagement in Fall of 2022 via 8 pop-ups and an online feedback form.

- Public meeting – October 19, 2022
- 268 responses from online feedback form conducted October-November 2022
- 140 people reached through 8 pop-up engagements held throughout Arlington.

System-wide areas to address include:

- Frequency of service
- Span of service (more during mid-day and weekends)
- Reliable service
- Route design & planning (more bus stops and different routes)
- Accuracy of Real Time
- Better passenger boarding and waiting experience (stronger desire..?)
- Concern for underserved populations
- Fare affordability, reduced fares, free fares
- Roadway infrastructure (dedicated lanes or transit signal priority)

Getting ready to release a draft of the service recommendations (mid-March). Second round of outreach to present the service recommendations to the public and hear feedback that this is correct. Then, develop a constrained service plan and constrained financial plans. Submit to the Board. Once approved, submit to DRPT in Fall 2023.

Bulleted next steps:

- WMATA Better Bus Network (Release date: March 2023)
- Publish draft TSP recommendations (April 2023)
- Constrained service plan/financial plan (May 2023)
- Advertise final TSP (June 2023)
- TSP adoption (July 2023)
- Submit final TSP to DRPT (July 30, 2023)

Goals & Objectives:

1. Promote transit as an attractive transportation option

2. Maintain a safe and secure transit environment
3. Deploy infrastructure and services equitably
4. Exercise sound financial management
5. Create a resilient community through environmentally sustainable transportation
6. Ensure accessible communications
7. Create a safe and positive workplace
8. Proactively collaborate with regional partners.

10-year plan conducted every 6 years. This is a fluid plan to incorporate climate and resilience. Several variables change over time such as job growth, population, etc. as we try to account for these. Public engagement begins late April, early May.

>Was there any sentiment during public outreach that users preferred a clean, noise-free bus versus CNG? The types of buses were not really discussed much. It mattered to some folks, others were more concerned with the level of service. This study focuses on service, not so much on equipment. It is a service plan.

Two things that are happening in the transit industry now: 1. Autonomous vehicles. 2. Micro-transit. Vehicles that are operating in a particular neighborhood, on demand, picking folks up and bringing them to the closest main line for transit. Micro-transit is something that Arlington County is considering.

>Is the information on ridership enough to get a sense for how to plan micro-grid components? Part of the study looks at origin and destination. This information is included in how ART will look in the future. At this point, Arlington is looking at the bigger picture. Peak service times have totally changed. Frequency has increased and at all hours. The County does know where the activity centers are and uses this information accordingly. Right now, the County covers most of the schools.

4. Review ZEB Feasibility Study Letter

The Commissioners discussed the language drafted in this letter (either blunt or soft) and debated the appropriate tone to take. The Commission also discussed, at length, the order of the letter sections. Contextual Background was moved towards the end but before C2E2 Recommendations.

The supplemental fact sheet was reduced to one page from two and will be included to the County Board along with the letter.

Both documents were unanimously approved.

5. Update on Budget Spending, Demetra McBride

Demetra provided a budget review for the FY24 budget and the environmental aspects.

Stormwater: OSEM has put in several funding requests. The managers budget recommends a full time FTE employee. Additional positions will be added as necessity to support the stormwater utility program. There are additional maintenance needs for the system used. The Stormwater team is reasonably pleased, and they are on track to meet the second and third MS4 permit. The team has been successful in receiving grants.

AIRE: The AIRE team funding is far more complex as there are several pots of money. The management analyst position to support the new Climate Policy Officer (who was recently hired) was cut with no notice to the AIRE team. This position is housed under the County Manager's Office. With the AIRE budget, an additional 200k was added in anticipation of the federal grant applications. The CEP Action Fund is part of the County Manager's reserve budget. There is funding in there for public access and use for EVSE charging infrastructure on government sites. As well as energy performance upgrades to government facilities, and work for Community Choice Aggregation feasibility study. Discussing with local jurisdictions about potential interest in joining us, and if it's feasible in the Commonwealth.

\$1 Million Fund: AIRE put in several proposals for this. Awaiting final approval from the County Manager and DES Leadership. AIRE needs to shift focus to the community facing part of the CEP.

Joan McIntyre: The budget does not articulate a lot of details, and it seems as if some of the funding has been rolled back. What was promised last year is now no longer available.

6. Budget Review

Several work sessions are coming up. C2E2 will need to decide on the Commission's position/stance. The DES Budget workshop is set for Tuesday March 7th, 2023.

7. Stormwater Utility Letter

The Commission reviewed and unanimously approved the Stormwater Utility Letter.

8. FNRP Letter on Missing Middle

FNRP developed a letter on Missing Middle and discussed the changes. The Commission reviewed this letter. Joan McIntyre requested feedback from the Commission about sending a letter in support of the FNRP letter. The letter suggested incorporating trees into land for missing middle housing. Tying the number of trees to the lot size, so larger lots would have more trees. No Commission members voiced concern so a letter in support of the FNRP letter will be drafted and sent out.

9. Round Robin

Mark Greenwood: SPRC review process. Need coverage for the new projects coming down the pipeline.

Meeting ended: 9:40 p.m.