



**Minutes**

**EPC MONTHLY MEETING**

**October 21, 2024**

**City Hall, Conference Room 2000**

**[Zoom Meeting Recording](#)**

**7:30 – 9:30 p.m.**

**Attendance**

<b>EPC Members (13)</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Staff</b>
Kishla Askins	P	Adriana Castañeda, T&ES
Dan Beattie	P	Bill Skrabak, T&ES
Eldon Boes	P	Melissa Atwood, T&ES
Alexander Clark	P	Samantha Heitsch, Office of Climate Action
Benjamin Cuddy, Vice-Chair	P	Karl Moritz, P&Z
Jennifer Debias	P	
Charlie Garlow	P	<b>Guests</b>
Kathie Hoekstra	PR	Amanda Waters, AlexRenew
Philip Mobilia	P	Don Burke
Marta Schantz, Chair	P	
Julia Slayden	P	

**P:** Present; **PR:** Present Remotely; **A:** Absent - Unexcused; **E:** Absent – Excused; **N:** Not a Member

**1. Welcome & Introductions**

Chair Marta Schantz called the meeting to order; and introductions were completed for all attendees. New EPC commissioner, Charlie Garlow, provided a brief introduction and environmental background.

**2. Public Comment**

Don Burke, Chair of Park Place Condominiums’ Board. Interested in sustainability, specifically electric vehicles and getting EV charging infrastructure in place to support them.

**3. Overview of Development Docket Schedule**

Karl Moritz, Director of Planning & Zoning, has had ongoing discussions with the EPC to formalize the information available to the EPC regarding upcoming development

projects. Discussions include which projects may be brought to the EPC for a brief overview, generally at the Coordinated Development District (CDD) project level. Upcoming project, 1900 Beauregard, includes about 6 developable parcels in this site. Associated CDD needs to be amended to align with the new AlexWest Small Area Plan. This docket schedule would be provided twice a year to cover about a year's worth of upcoming projects for awareness.

In the city code, there is a requirement for developments in Resource Protection Areas (RPAs) to be seen by EPC.

#### **4. Update on Eco-City Homes**

Samantha Heitsch, Sustainability Coordinator for the Office of Climate Action, discussed launching of program and thanked EPC for their help developing it. Program is in the outreach stage, which started with a soft launch to city staff. Special thank you to Commissioner Hoekstra for completing the application in the early stages and supporting the program. Further outreach plans were discussed, with a goal of 200 applications by the end of CY24. Office of Climate Action requests all EPC members apply for the program and get at least two friends, colleagues, or residents to join. Program benefits include the sustainability aspects, as well as more affordable energy and more comfortable homes. Program includes a list of resources for residents that will be available on the website.

EPC commissioner recommended the Office of Climate Action partner with real estate agents to increase marketing.

As a related project, the information from the applications will be collected by a group of students in partnership with Worcester Polytechnic Institute to help OCA tailor outreach to encourage specific Eco-City Homes related actions.

#### **5. FY26 Budget Discussion**

Chair Schantz opened discussions to note various budget focused conversations had with city departments and call attention to the City Manager's letter that identifies key areas for budget investment, including community connection, employee attraction and retention, housing opportunities, eliminate community disparities, and economic strength, as explained in the letter. When generating the EPC's Budget letter, it would enhance the strength of each ask by connecting them to the city's key areas.

Chair Schantz included ideas obtained during discussions with various City departments and how they could be included in the EPC budget letter.

Discussion included:

- Transportation focus – Commuter Choice Program. Examine ways to maintain and grow transportation services through federal support or other means. Continue supporting affordable and accessible EV charging infrastructure.

- RPCA noted focus on pruning program and tree maintenance that requires many resources.
- If, and how, to include the following in the budget letter: leaf blowers, from a noise and air pollution perspective; heat islands, from an environmental justice perspective; and code enforcement, from a safety perspective.
- Reviewing all areas of the budget with a climate and equity lens.

Budget letter from the City Manager notes it could be a tight budget year, EPC will include items currently happening in the city that they want to support continuing, if budget cuts happen.

**Summary of EPC’s discussion, per Chair Schantz.** Write the budget letter to include an overarching summary of the Eco-City priorities for the whole city and looking at budget with a climate lens. Giving examples, each being aligned with the city’s key budget priorities, including (1) addressing deferred maintenance across Department of General Services, (2) supporting the cross-department Eco-City Coordinating Group, (3) healthy housing initiative, addressing extreme heat through parks and bus stops, (4) gas leaf blowers and actions related to their ban are adequately funded, (5) stormwater capital improvement plan (CIP) funding, (6) efficiency for all through Alexandria Residential Housing Authority (ARHA), (7) sufficient budget for the Housing Master Plan to include sustainability aspects, (8) trees and supporting the pruning program, and (9) staying strong on existing city programs that are in the EPC’s priorities listed above.

**Motion** to draft EPC budget letter in line with Chair Schantz’s summary (above): Ms. Jennifer Debias; **Second:** Mr. Al Clark; **Vote:** Unanimous approval. Mr. Ben Cuddy will draft the budget letter and Chair Schantz will proof-read.

## 6. Administrative Items

### a) Meeting Minutes

Vote on September 16, 2024, regular meeting minutes, for approval. **Motion:** Mr. Dan Beattie; **Second:** Ms. Philip Mobilia; **Vote:** Unanimous approval, with abstention from Ms. Jennifer Debias, Mr. Al Clark, Mr. Charlie Garlow, and Mr. Benjamin Cuddy.

### b) Reports from Commissioners/Staff

**Waterfront Commission (Mr. Eldon Boes):** Unable to attend the last meeting. Offered his position on this commission to other EPC members, if they would like. He is happy on this commission but wants to give others the opportunity.

**Transportation Commission (Mr. Dan Beattie):** Thank you to Chair Schantz and the Transportation Commission’s Chair, Melissa McMahon, for their collaborative work on getting legislative ask letters from EPC and Transportation Commission completed and complimentary of each other.

**Update from Chair Schantz:** At the end of the month (October), Office of Housing is providing tours of some of the larger affordable housing plans. EPC will be getting an update on the Housing Master Plan at the November 2024 meeting.

**Update from Ms. Jennifer Debias:** This week's Alexandria Times has a half page article on the reasons you should get a heat pump in your home.

- c) **EAP Steering Committee update:** Ms. Kishla Askins will walk EPC through the memo. Intent of memo was to create a bridge between the retreat and now, based on discussions had as a commission, as well as a possible implementation plan.

## 7. Adjourn

**Motion to Adjourn:** Mr. Dan Beattie

The meeting was adjourned at 9:31p.m.

**FY2025 Attendance**

Member	Sept 16, 2024	Oct 21, 2024	Nov 18, 2024	Dec 16, 2024	Jan 13, 2025	Feb 10, 2025	Mar 10, 2025	Apr 21, 2025	TBD (Retreat)	May 19, 2025	Jun 16, 2025	TOTALS
Kishla Askins	P	P										100%
Dan Beattie	P	P										100%
Eldon Boes	P	P										100%
Alexander Clark	E	P										100%
Benjamin Cuddy	E	P										100%
Jennifer Debias	E	P										100%
Charlie Garlow		P										100%
Kathie Hoekstra	P	PR										100%
Philip Mobilia	P	P										100%
Marta Schantz	P	P										100%
Julia Slayden	P	P										100%
James Vandeputte	E											100%