



ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS BOARD
MINUTES

March 01, 2023
2nd flr Conference Room, City Hall

Voting Members:

Juilee Malavade (chair), Wilson Salls (vice chair), Sherry Taylor (secretary), Jennifer Carrigan, Wafa Khalil, Matt Kopac, Chi Vo, Corie Hlavaty, Miran Bhima, and Torrie Swain.

Ex Officio Members/Staff:

Paul Cameron (General Services), Tobin Freid (Durham County Sustainability Manager), Amy Armbruster (City of Durham), Summer Alston, John Baker, Sydney Miller, and County Commissioner Heidi Carter.

Presenters: Chris Dreps, Linden Thayer, Crystal Dreisbach, and Brooke Roper
Attendees & Panelists Total: 21

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- I. Call to Order at 6:07 pm
 - II. Approval of February 01, 2023 Minutes
 - III. Announcements

- a) Next EAB meeting is scheduled for April 05, 2023, 6-8 pm, Virtually on Zoom

IV. New and Continuing Business

a) Update on Ellerbee Creek Dedicated Nature Preserve

Presenter(s): Chris Dreps, Ellerbee Creek Watershed Association (ECWA)

- The Nature Preserve has been adopted as a natural heritage area and ECWA has proposed for the City of Durham to adopt it as a natural preservation area.
- In December 2021, the EAB approved a resolution of support for the dedicated preserve.

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Staff Contact: Paul Cameron, Sustainability and Energy Analyst
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- The proposal for the dedicated nature preserve (DNP) was submitted to the City's Real Estate Department in January 2022. In December 2022, City Council was supposed to receive a brief from staff, but the brief was delayed indefinitely.
- The DNP supports the Comprehensive Plan by forwarding the goal of 30% open space, water resource protection, and reinforces many other parts of the plan.
- ECWA requests EAB's updated support for the project and ask for the City to expedite process.

Comments:

Juilee Maladave: How can EAB assist with this project?

- *S. Alston:* Please remind the City Council of your interest in the project.

Matt Kopac: Do you have any idea when this resolution may come before council?

- *S. Alston:* We are not sure when it could be on the agenda.
- *C. Dreps:* We received an email from David Fleischer that additional internal review started at the end of February.

Jennifer Carrigan: Are there any updates on the proposed highway (that was one of the major reasons for the DNP)?

- *C. Dreps:* Same as before. The road has not been adopted by Metro Planning Org, nor on DOT plan because the need for road hasn't been shown. The Heritage program said there could be coexistence between road and rookery as long as there was a 300 m buffer between the two. Let's worry about the road when there's a need for it.

Chi Vo: Have City Council members done a tour?

- *C. Dreps:* We have invited them all but not all have made it out. We want everyone to come out!

Jennifer Carrigan: The EAB should reaffirm our support via letter and encourage Council to visit the rookery.

- *J. Maladave:* We can bring the same letter as before to Council and speak about it.
- *C. Dreps:* I think that is a great idea. I will rely our plans to the Real Estate division.
- *M. Kopac:* We should consider a joint letter with Durham Open Space and Trails Commission (DOST).

Jennifer Carrigan: Motion to compose a letter utilizing our previous letter, invite DOST to co-sign, and encourage council members to visit, and deliver the letter after we understand where Council is in the process.

Motion Passes: 10-0

b) Waste Reduction in Durham Public Schools

Presenter(s): Linden Thayer and Crystal Dreisbach, DPS

- DPS is now engaging in food systems planning with a new position dedicated to asking students what they want and how to serve them better. It also includes layering in cultural foods and

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supporting BIPOC farmers in DPS nutrition services. DPS is also looking into how to reduce plastic and eliminate styrofoam.

- April 4, 2023 will mark the 11th anniversary of the first EAB meeting which produced the idea to regulate Styrofoam and plastic. EAB created a subcommittee on this topic, which eventually spun out to Don't Waste Durham.
- DPS used to have waste contractor. A request for proposals (RFP) was issued for a waste hauling contract to incentivize waste reduction. Now if DPS creates less trash, they pay less per month.
- DPS has a Pilot project with 4 schools Pearson town, Lyon Farms, Neal, Southern to implement new best practices from around the country for waste reduction. Through composting, one school saw a 800 lb/week reduction in waste.
- Another amazing way that schools can reduce waste is by using reusable trays and cutlery. The trays are metal but can come in a variety of colors. A charter school was successful in pulling together funding resources to fund a similar project.

Comments:

Corrie Hlavaty: Do you know where the charter school got the funding for their reusable tray/cutlery program?

- *C. Dreisbach:* They have several sustainability initiatives, so it's clearly a priority for them but I'm not sure on the funding source.

Wafa Khalil: How much do the reusables cost?

- *C. Dreisbach:* There *are* significant upfront cost including infrastructure, serveware, and labor. We would like for schools only to pay for service (pickup, washing, delivery). If we can get funding in place for everything else, schools would just pay for service (which is around cost of disposables).

Jennifer Carrigan: is the wash facility currently at capacity to take on more schools or is that part of cost needed?

- *C. Dreisbach:* Part of cost needed is for a larger capacity wash facility. We want it to be able to grow not just for DPS but also DBAP, other large food service facilities in Durham, etc. This project is green infrastructure, plus it employs the formerly incarcerated, people with autism, the vision impaired, and veterans.

c) Durham City County Planning - Growth Management Website

Presenter(s): Brooke Roper, Durham City County Planning Department

- The Growth Management team is sharing this website to request feedback, as it is still under development. The purpose of the website is to increase transparency on current planning issues, citizen input, and zoning/annexation cases.
- The website is accessible through the City County Planning homepage by click on Growth Mgmt Engagement Initiative.
- The Department would love to make the site more accessible to non-planners, Spanish speakers, and folks with disabilities.

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- If you click on the Current projects map page there is a link with instruction on how to submit comment, attachments, survey a project. You can also add comments and read other submitted comments.

Comments:

Juilee Maladave: The comment function are for current projects. Can you leave a comment on somewhere that is not for a project, e.g. put in a sidewalk?

- *B. Roper:* That is not the current intent of the comment function, but can add it in.

Ethan Case: A project is posted once when someone submits an application?

- *B. Roper:* Yes, and the page is regularly updated as changes occur.

Sherry Taylor: Is there a certain size project that becomes part of the growth management website? If a project is large but does not require a rezoning/annexation would it be on this site?

- *B. Roper:* Any project that requires a rezoning or annexation would be on this page. By-right projects would not be on this page.

Juilee Maladave: How will you integrate feedback from community responses?

- *B. Roper:* It's a little tricky. For example, the walkability text amendment received a lot positive feedback. Some of the specific feedback received is being incorporated into the amendment.

Adjourn at 7:36 PM

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