



ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS BOARD

MINUTES

March 6th, 2019
Committee Room, 2nd Floor, City Hall
101 City Hall Plaza, Durham, NC

Voting Members – Matt Kopac (chair), Jessalee Landfried (vice chair), Roberto Valle Kinloch, Tyjuanna LaBennett, Rachel McIntosh-Kastrinsky, Matthew Herman, Matthew Pait, Laura Marie Davis, Wafa Khalil

Excused Absences – Donald Addu (Secretary)

Ex Officio Members/Staff – Laura Woods, Tobin Freid, Vicki Westbrook, Heidi Carter, Muriel Williman, John Baker

I. Call to Order at 6:04 pm

II. Amendment to February 2019 Minutes – Vicki Westbrook was present. Tobin Fried will send a link to be included.

III. Approval of Minutes, 9-0

IV. Announcements

- Durham Creek Week starting soon, information available at www.durhamcreekweek.com.
- Next Bull City Workplace Challenge Nosh and Learn will discuss transportation, with a focus on commuting to workplaces. March 14 from 9-10 at Emily K Center.
- At the first City Council meeting in April, the Mayor is issuing the annual Mayor's Challenge for Water Conservation proclamation.
- Stormwater Department has an ongoing collaboration with Duke Center for Advanced Hindsight, now collaborating with 85 businesses (up from five).
- Site selection for algal facility to help with nutrient removal is in progress now.

V. New Business and Continuing Business

a. Renewable Energy Resolution:

- City Council will consider EAB’s renewable energy resolution during work session at 1 p.m. tomorrow. They will also consider General Service’s alternative resolution, focusing on carbon neutrality.
- EAB members will attend to support our resolution.
- Public comments will occur before the meeting starts, with three minutes allowed per person.
- Tobin Freid is requesting funding from the County for the renewable energy plan that was laid out in the resolution. It makes sense to have separate City and County plans because these are going to be very detailed, and the different governments have very different facilities. But it would probably make sense to have one consultant prepare both plans so they are consistent.

b. Durham County Open Space Program – Jane Korest (Division Director) and Celeste Burns (Division Coordinator)

- The program has been in place since 2003.
- More than 3,400 acres preserved to date, combination of fee simple ownership and conservation easements.
- The program leverages grants and other outside funding in combination with County funds.
- Open Space plans provide direction and vision for this work .
- Planning Department prepares plans, then City and County implement.
- Comprehensive Plan provides the backbone for all other planning efforts.
- Adopted Open Space plans:
 - New Hope Creek (1991)
 - Little River (2001)
 - Eastern Durham (2007)
 - Urban OS (2017)
- New Hope Creek Corridor was one of the first open space plans in the state. That Corridor is important to preserve, because it has a highly rated ecosystem, and many stakeholders work together to make it happen.
- Land bridges are critical for habitat preservation.
- New Hope Collaborative is a new effort dedicated to new recommendations for preservation in that area.
- Eno River Corridor has been protected piece by piece, over 30 years. There is still a long way to go.

Notice under the Americans with Disabilities Act - A person with a disability may receive an auxiliary aid or service to effectively participate in city government activities by contacting the ADA Coordinator, voice 919.560.4197 or ADA@DurhamNC.gov, as soon as possible but no later than 48 hours before the event or deadline date.

- Durham Open Space and Trails commission priority is Panther Creek Rail Trail – would connect Falls Lake lands with City of Durham.
 - Conservation easements are an important tool in preservation.
 - There is no designated person in the City for the Urban Open Space plan – the County program staff don't know who to talk to about implementing that plan.
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- c. **Expanding Housing Choices** – Aaron Lubeck (developer and proponent of Expanding Housing Choices initiative):
- Mayor convened a “Practitioners Panel” to talk to Planning Department about the challenges builders were facing in building affordable housing. Lubeck was a part of that panel.
 - Lubeck says the Planning Department has done wonderful work on the Expanding Housing Choices (EHC) initiative.
 - Substantial proposed guts to the EHC policy have come in the last month – Lubeck feels that several elements are now worse than they were before, including imposing new height limitations. Under the existing code, Durham allows building 14 feet taller than neighbors, but these changes would make it basically zero. This also poses an environmental problem because if houses can't go up, they must go out, which increases stormwater runoff.
 - Proposed EHC ordinance now also includes lot coverage limitation of 40%.
 - Mike Stock notes that the coverage limitation of 40% was taken from the 1940 code.
 - Stormwater services has suggested downspout disconnection as a way to help runoff also – so the stormwater doesn't get piped down, it just goes to land.
 - Lubeck says ADUs should be allowed back on the duplex lot.
 - Planning Commission meets on Tuesday to discuss this, meeting is at 5:30 in Council Chambers. They will likely delay.
 - Ultimately Council makes the final call.
- d. **Work Session:**
- EAB votes to submit memo in support of EHC, with some changes, to Planning Commission, with a copy to the City Council.
 - EAB votes to hold June meeting at the Hayti Heritage Center.

V. Adjournment at 8:10 pm

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