



ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS BOARD MINUTES

June 2nd, 2021
Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

Voting Members: Laura Marie Davis (chair), Chi Vo (secretary), Wafa Khalil, Matthew Kopac, Chastan Swain, Roberto Valle Kinloch, Wilson Salls, Aissa Dearing, Melanie Allen, Juilee Malavade

Excused Absences: Ethan Case, Jennifer Hill, Tyjuanna LaBennett

Ex Officio Members/Staff: DeDreana Freeman (City Council), Heidi Carter (County Commissioners), Paul Cameron (General Services), Tobin Freid (Durham County Sustainability Manager), Scott Whiteman (City & County Planning), Summer Alston (Economic & Workforce Development), Vicki Westbrook (Water Management), Jina Prost (General Services), Michelle Woolfolk (Water Management), Laura Smith (Public Works), Wayne Fenton (Solid Waste)

Attendees & Panelists Total: 29

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- I. Call to Order at 6:02 PM
 - II. Approval of Minutes: Approval for April and May Minutes
 - III. Announcements
 - a) Next EAB meeting is scheduled for July 14th, 2021
 - b) First installation Club Blvd Recreation Center, June 12th;
https://www.durhamcan.org/club_blvd_garden_kickoff
 - c) [Now Streaming - Tulsa: The Fire and the Forgotten](#)
 - d) [Glennstone Nature Preserve](#): Public comments on 30-year plan
 - e) Video on Durham Rookery: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gTkkoz6U9vo>
 - f) Upcoming budget meetings for the [city](#)
 - g) Upcoming openings on the EAB
 - IV. **New Business and Continuing Business**
 - a) **Topic: Public Housing Environmental Review (519 E. Main St)**
Presenter(s): Ajax Woolley (Durham CAN), Bobi Gallagher, Regina Mays
 - 519 E. Main: Holden Towers Authority; multistory building

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- Slated for redevelopment.
- Durham CAN submitted public comment on environmental review board provided by community development by HUD requirement.
- [Rental Assistance Demonstration \(RAD\)](#): Takes formerly public housing and converts to private land.
- Environmental review report is a key component for engagement.
- [Durham CAN submitted letter](#) addressing that the public comment timeframe was too abridged.
- The city has to act as the responsible entity to provide report to HUD determining significant impact to human environment.
- This is an opportunity for public engagement and outreach, but the public comment timeframe was too short.
- Durham CAN would like to recommend that public comment period in the future be extended to at least 6 – 8 weeks rather than 2 weeks; this will give community ample time to be involved.

Comments:

M. Kopac: Where do we have the ability to exert more control between HUD and the city?

- This type of work has been ongoing across the nation. Developers taking a private interest in what was formerly public land. There's nothing in the HUD process that creates checks and balances unless local body politics are paying attention. HUD will not come to Durham to make sure we're doing the right thing, but that's up to us and the city.

R. Valle: I'd like to learn more about the equitable engagement blueprint to lead this engagement process. Is this disconnected from that process?

- **Bobbi Gallagher:** The list of places that were contacted did not include places of worship, urban ministries, or neighbors that lived around the community, so it seems that the list was too short. It needs to be broader. If EAB could help to challenge the brevity of the list of engaged people and the timeframe of public comment, that would be helpful.
- **Ajax Woolley:** Community Development and DHA did not respond to the letter yet.

M. Kopac: Community Development staff felt that they followed the HUD process and their due diligence, but they understand that the process can be limiting. They expressed a willingness to be more inclusive than what is prescribed by law. We can decide based on what we've heard to seek accountability and to accept the Durham CAN proposal.

J. Malavade: Regarding the document prepared, would we be meeting with this consultant? Is there someone else in mind for the review/revision process?

- Two points come to mind: the responsible entity is a status that is normally occupied by the municipal government. They hired a consultant which is an entity outside of Durham. It seems that there are people qualified locally to do this work. Whoever is doing the work needs to stop and listen to the residents and obviously impacted. For us, this is about

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accountability. In this process, the people who are impacted do not have the opportunity to use their power.

LM. Davis: EAB should make recommendations to staff based on this feedback. We could commit to engage with community members around public comment and community engagement. Work with them to write a formal memo and recommendation for staff.

CM Freeman: Or maybe a recommendation for staff reengagement based on transportation patterns and how environmental hazards will be handled.

Ajax Woolley: In 2017, less than a year after Anthony Scott arrived as CEO, Request for Qualifications (RFQ) was put forward. A small number of proposals was put forward; they were mostly in downtown Durham. We should question how our participation in the process contributing to a sense of value around some neighborhoods and not around other neighborhoods. Ultimately, this process is going to repeat itself. If we aren't prepared, then it will continue.

Regina Mays: As changes come through like RAD conversions, some of these residents have been moved around tons of times. This is a tight rope to walk because a lot of residents don't have the belief that community engagement isn't effective. It might even become a shouting match. Most of the residents out here have been through the DHA process many times. We need knowledge about why residents don't show up.

Established Working Group: Juilee, Wilson, Matt, Chi

b) Topic: Interlocal Agreement

Presenter(s): Laura Marie Davis

- There is language on the local agreement that isn't quite accurate to how we are living out the priorities of the board. We want to update it to meet the board's values and priorities.
- Amendments Committee: Track changes in the Interlocal Agreement; must be approved by city council and county commissioners.
- Our next steps are to actually write those changes. Our executive team will be stewarding that process.

Established Working Group: Executive Committee, Aissa, Chastan, Melanie

c) Topic: Elections

Chair: Chi Vo

Vice Chair: Juilee Malavade

Secretary: Wilson Salls

At-Large: Roberto Valle Kinloch

Adjourn at 7:32 PM

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