



# ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS BOARD

## MINUTES

September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019  
Committee Room, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, City Hall  
101 City Hall Plaza, Durham, NC

Voting Members – Matthew Kopac (chair), Laura Marie Davis (secretary), Donald Addu, Jessie Birkhead, Casey Collins, Matthew Herman, Jennifer Hill, Rashmi Joglekar, Tyjuanna LaBennett, Jasmine Stammes, Roberto Valle Kinloch, Chi Vo

Ex Officio Members/Staff – Paul Cameron, Vicki Westbrook, Tobin Freid, Lance Fontaine, Heidi Carter, DeDreana Freeman

**I. Call to Order at 6:02 pm**

**II. Approval of Minutes, 9-0**

**III. Announcements**

- a. World Wildlife Federation held their We are still In meeting in support of EO80. Climate and Energy discussion that included businesses, non-profits, governments and other stakeholders. C. Collins and T. Freid both attended.
- b. New Hope Creek Watershed planning is in the initial phase. Watershed improvement plan will be presented to the EAB in the future for New Hope Creek.
- c. C. Vo represented the EAB at the Durham Public High School fair and engaged with youth about the EAB as a part of our growing community outreach.
- d. Extinction Rebellion will hold marches in Durham and Chapel Hill on Friday September 20th.
- e. Summer Alston will be joining the EAB as an ex-officio from Economic Workforce Development starting in October. Summer brings additional expertise to the board through her work with brownfield sites across Durham.
- f. Oct 23rd will be "Imagine a day without water." Ideas to highlight the importance of water quality and availability are welcome.
- g. Don't Waste Durham is a finalist for the MIT Solvers program. Please vote for DWD through the their website for the Green to Go program at:  
<https://solve.mit.edu/challenges/circular-economy/solutions/8037>
- h. TreesDurham will be hosting a community forum at the Hayti Heritage Center on Friday October 4th from 2:30pm to 7:00pm. The forum includes free dinner and child care and all are welcome to attend. You can register for free at:  
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/treesdurham-forum-all-about-trees-in-the-bull-city-tickets-71774590733>

#### IV. New Business and Continuing Business

- a. **Concern about “Beneficial Fill”** – Ruth McDaniel, Resident:
- R. McDaniel shared a presentation with photographs of the “beneficial fill” site in question and communications with County staff in Storm Water and Erosion Control
  - Made requests for specific actions to be taken by County staff and State DEQ staff
  - M. Kopac suggested that members of the EAB will schedule a meeting with Ryan Eaves (Durham County Storm Water and Erosion Control)
- b. **City Franchise Agreement with Duke Energy** – Tom Campbell, Grandparents and Parents for Action on Climate Change
- T. Campbell requested that the EAB make recommendations to City Council when negotiating the City’s franchise agreement with Duke Energy including:
    1. The City’s right to purchase energy directly from renewable energy suppliers
    2. Installation of electric car charging stations
  - Also requested support for a resolution calling on Duke Energy to transition to renewable energy sources
  - T. Freid commented that the language in the County’s resolution already includes specific language pointing out the importance of Duke Energy transferring to renewable sources in order for the County to reach their resolution’s goals. This provides an opportunity to follow-up on the implementation of the resolution that the EAB worked hard to pass just last year.
- c. **Transit Update** – John Hodges-Copple, Planning Director, Triangle J Council of Governments:
- ½ cent sales tax for transit will be directed by the County Transit Plan
  - City-County Planning Department is the lead agency for developing the Plan, convening with liaisons from the County, City, GoTriangle, Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro MPO, and the Triangle J Council of Governments
  - Initial briefings with steering group began this summer; Scope of work is scheduled to be finalized in October.
  - ENGAGEDurham will facilitate community engagement as the plan is developed through 2020.
  - Goal is to have the transit plan completed by end of 2020, whereas the Comp Plan will take longer.
  - D. Freeman noted that all of the liaisons for the steering group are white. Also emphasized the trade-off between community guidance in terms of transit needs and actions that need to be taken to achieve greenhouse gas emissions.

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- d. **Bird Friendly Habitat Designation Program** – Lynn Richardson, New Hope Audubon Society:
- Improves habitat for birds and people; Dovetails with other programs and organizations including Bee City USA and Trees Durham.
  - L. Richardson requested a positive recommendation to the City Council and County Commission to promote and implement the program.
  - L. Fontaine pointed out that City departments already offer programs to incentivize native plants, and the Soil & Water Conservation District provides educational programs around native plants and grants for residents to install rain gardens
  - M. Kopac made distinction between passing a resolution to implement the Designation Program, versus taking steps to enhance existing programs and partner with City & County staff.
  - Green Infrastructure Committee is also prioritizing biodiversity through engagement with the Comprehensive Plan.

**V. Work Session**

- a. M. Kopac noted that the City Council passed the Expanding Housing Choices Initiative, and one resident specifically referenced our recommendations in encouraging Council to pass the proposal.
- b. City Attorney evaluated the proposed plastic bag ordinance and determined that the City has legal authority, which is a good sign for moving forward. T. Freid noted that a County ordinance would include the City as well.
- c. M. Kopac requested that Committee Chairs re-send their priorities documents with a clear timeline and potential budget requests to be discussed in future Work Sessions.
- d. R. Valle and J. Birkhead volunteered to meet with Ryan Eaves to discuss the “beneficial fill” situation and follow-up with the rest of the Board at a future Work Session.
- e. Time Management for regular Meetings and Work Sessions:
- Should we add additional Work Session time? Should we get a timing device? How can we better manage time allotted to agenda items?
  - M. Kopac pointed out that keeping to time is sometimes a challenge of monitoring the time of the speaker, and sometimes a matter of needing more time for Board Members to ask questions.
  - J. Hill recommended that we test the use of a timing device to improve self-monitoring for speakers, and if additional time is still needed then discuss adding another half hour for Work Session.
  - T. Freid pointed out that with the expansion of the Board, we may need more time for questions. Could also plan for speakers to meet with Committees before full meetings to condense presentations.
  - R. Joglekar requested time on the agenda to discuss “Old Business”
  - M. Kopac asked who among the returning Board Members has completed racial equity training, as we made it a goal last year to ensure all Members have completed a racial equity training.

**Adjourn 8:25pm**

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