



## ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS BOARD MINUTES

October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021  
Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

### Voting Members:

Chi Vo (chair), Juilee Malavade (vice chair), Wilson Salls (secretary), Ethan Case, Wafa Khalil, Chastan Swain, Sherry Taylor, Jillian Riley, Jennifer Hill Carrigan, Aissa Dearing, Melanie Allen, Matthew Kopac

**Excused Absences:** Bill Busa, Roberto Valle Kinloch, Katie Barnhill-Dilling

### Ex Officio Members/Staff:

Paul Cameron (General Services), Vicki Westbrook (Water Management), Michelle Woolfolk (Water Management), Summer Alston (General Services), Heidi Carter (County Commissioners), Jane Korest (Open Space)

Attendees & Panelists Total: 28

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- I. Call to Order at 6:08 PM
  - II. Approval of Minutes: Approval for September Minutes (10-0)
  - III. Announcements
    - a) Next EAB meeting is scheduled for November 3, 2021
    - b) [Imagine a Day without Water](#): October 21
    - c) City of Durham Water Management was awarded a [WaterSense Partner of the Year Award](#) by EPA for promoting water efficiency. Two Water Efficiency members attended the [WaterSmart Innovations conference](#), where the award was announced.
    - d) There is a new SWCD employee with a background in environmental education.
  - IV. **New Business and Continuing Business**
    - a) **Topic: PEACH Presentation**  
*Presenter(s): Leon Holloway, Lenora Smith (Partnership Effort for the Advancement of Children's Health (PEACH))*

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- The mission of [PEACH Durham](#) is to improve community health and economics by creating a sustainable workforce to reduce environmental hazards. Lead paint is a major focus.
- Durham Community Development Department has awarded PEACH contracts through HUD for marketing outreach, application intake, and training of low income residents for lead inspection.
- PEACH is reaching out to PAC and other neighborhood associations to help spread the word and share these opportunities with those in need.
- Partnering with low income neighborhoods through Neighborhood Preservation Program.
- Asking to encourage City to invest \$2M in Healthy Homes Initiative
- On October 28, PEACH is hosting a [Lead Poison Prevention Awareness program](#) at 800 N. Mangum Street in Durham, and invites the Board to attend.

**Comments:**

**J. Hill Carrigan:** Do you collaborate with Reinvestment Partners? How can we support both in the community?

- **Lenora Smith:** PEACH works with RP. RP is more about outreach, PEACH is more about building skillsets for career development of marginalized members of the community.

**M. Allen:** What is your request?

- **Lenora Smith:** Asking for endorsement for \$2M. Also advocacy push - reach out to local government to request use of ARP funding to address healthy homes issues. Partnership with several community organizations.

**M. Kopac:** What is the scale - how many houses would be supported with the proposed grant?

- **Lenora Smith:** Some funding would go toward training. City grant now includes 116 homes. This would be smaller but broader impact for those homes. Proposal is due Sunday; will send final numbers once proposal is finalized.

**J. Riley:** Have you presented to Citizen Advisory Board? Also sits on that board, and invites to present.

- **Lenora Smith:** Not yet - EAB is the first, but will be presenting to others soon. And yes, would be happy to be on the agenda.

**b) Topic: New Hope Audubon's Leave your Leaves Initiative**

*Presenter(s): Ellen Reckhow, Barbara Driscoll (New Hope Audubon Society (NHAS))*

- Leaving leaves helps air, noise, and water pollution, as well as climate resiliency.
- NHAS is a local chapter containing Durham, Orange, and Chatham Counties.
- Developing educational materials.
- Insects and wildlife have evolved to depend on leaves, and the loss of leaf litter is likely a major cause of bird and insect loss.
- [leaveyourleaves.org](http://leaveyourleaves.org)

**Comments:**

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**A. Dearing:** What is the community engagement strategy? Many people have feelings of duty and pride surrounding leaf removal.

- **Barbara:** We welcome your ideas. We're also working on a campaign to address these perceptions. Keep Durham Beautiful, Cooperative Extension handing out materials.
- **Ellen:** Also, Master Gardener's program.

**C. Vo:** How combatting HOAs?

- **Barbara:** One strategy is finding people to work within the HOAs to champion the cause in their neighborhoods.

**C. Swain:** Any strategy for reaching out to schools? Also, encourage you to work with ECWA.

- **Barbara:** Yes - toolkit for schools, then reaching out through Teaching Association to engage science teachers.
- **Ellen:** Also working with SWCD, who work with elementary schools.

**J. Hill Carrigan:** City fines for unkept yards. Are leaves on the ground fineable? If so, could talk to City about exempting.

- **Ellen:** City requires leaves to be removed from sidewalk, but not aware of requirement to remove leaves from yard.

**Summer Alston:** Encourage people to leave however many leaves they're comfortable with; some leaves are better than none.

**J. Riley:** Do leaves impact nutrients in stormwater?

- **Ellen:** Leaves in natural areas are actually good for water quality - slow down water moving across the landscape, allowing time to infiltrate into soil instead of running off.

**c) Topic: NC Natural Heritage Program**

*Presenter(s): Misty Buchanan (NC Natural Heritage Program (NCNHP))*

- The goal of NCNHP is to help establish nature preserves. [Map on website](#) shows areas of natural interest.
- Two basic types of land holdings: Registered Heritage Areas (agreements with landowners) and Dedicated Nature Preserves (permanent agreement to set aside land).
- The City of Durham parcel is contiguous with larger conservation efforts around Falls Lake.
- This waterbird colony along Ellerbe Creek is the most important in Durham County (see [video](#)).
- Most great egrets nest in the coastal counties; this is one of two sites inland in NC.
- Proposing a Dedicated Nature Preserve on this parcel, requiring approval from Council of State and Governor.
- Additionally, there is a [Stewardship Manager position](#) open with NC Natural Heritage Program.

**Comments:**

**J. Riley:** Are there other groups expressing support?

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- **Chris Dreps:** New Hope Audubon, DOST, but thanks to C.M. Freeman, Museum of Life and Science, neighborhood associations, DPS Foundation. Open to additional suggestions.

**C. Swain:** Anything unique with local governments to be aware of?

- Get information from city government on whether any future plans for the parcel to specify use for or leave out certain parcels.

**Jane Korest:** NC Heritage Program is one of the primary partners for City work on natural resources, especially for science support and maps.

**Vicki Westbrook:** Think it's a great project, but some parts border on North Durham Water Reclamation Project, and there is some aging infrastructure in the area that needs to be addressed. Will be working with Natural Heritage and ECWA to coordinate on these issues.

**Summer Alston:** This touches so many city departments. Hopefully Chris has the direction he needs to have decent of City staff to get it into queue and bring it before Council to get the staff

**J. Malavade:** Sharing draft resolution soon.

**C. Vo:** What's the timeline?

- **Chris Dreps:** Pass resolution at next meeting (Nov. 6); thus, get draft to EAB ASAP.

**d) Updates on Ongoing Projects**

**a. Durham Board of Education (C. Vo)**

**b. Recycling Ordinance (J. Hill Carrigan)**

- Chi will send an update.
- Concerns include dust particles and environmental hazards both within facility and neighboring residential areas.
- Will be included in November meeting agenda.

**c. Club Boulevard Community (M. Malavade)**

- Working on tree planting, riparian buffers, and impervious surface runoff.
- Watering for community garden: working improving current setup; just need a spigot.

**d. Initiative for Solar Schools (W. Khalil)**

- Durham chapter approved initiative.
- Will be meeting with commissioners.
- Resolution is drafted to present to School Board.
- Would like to secure time to give presentation to EAB.

**e. Followup on Heron Rookery (Chris Dreps)**

- Once resolution is passed and moving into City Council, develop ad hoc partnership.
- Recommends EAB send one or two members to represent the Board on the committee.

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- C.M. Freeman mentioned that work session will probably be pushed back a bit.

**Adjourn at 8:06 PM**

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