

Rockville Environment Commission
Draft Minutes of Thursday, September 4, 2025, 7pm – 9pm
Virtual Meeting

Meeting Attendance

| Commissioner | Present | Commissioner | Present |
|------------------------|---------|--------------------|---------|
| Jen Hawse | X | Bijal Patel | |
| Deborah Landau | X | Clark Reed | X |
| Cindy McCabe | | Pavitra Srinivasan | X |
| William McClain, Chair | X | Summer White | X |
| Sasha Mushegian | X | | |

City Staff: Amanda Campbell, Staff Liaison; Denzel John, Sustainability Program Manager

Guests: No guests

Meeting Commencement, Welcome Attendees: Chair McClain convened the meeting at 7:01 pm and introduced the new Sustainability Program Manager, Denzel John. Members introduced themselves.

Approval of Agenda and Prior Meeting Minutes: The agenda was approved. Prior meeting minutes were approved.

Chair Report

- The group discussed chair elections. Will McClain was recommended to continue to serve as the Chair.
- Committees should review the Annual Report slide deck and provide any comments.

Committee Reports

- **Energy Committee:** The Energy Committee discussed methane detection and launching a broader program this fall. Clark Reed will extend the sign-up through July and August. The Committee also discussed the curbside charging process. Staff shared that the internal process to develop an agreement is proceeding. Next steps is to gain feedback from the engineers and then to share it with the legal division for their review before bringing it to the Mayor and Council for approval. An agreement for Clark Reed's project may move forward concurrently with a more general template.
- **Watersheds Committee:** The Watersheds Committee is setting dates for the cleanups this fall.
- **Climate Action Committee:** CLAC discussed the Farmer's Market outreach and methane detection and ideas for sustainability with the Recreation and Parks Advisory Board.
- **Recreation and Parks and Advisory Board:** Summer White attended this Board and discussed fireworks alternatives, and other potential areas of collaboration and ways to incorporate sustainability in Recreation and Parks.
- **Human Services Advisory Committee:** Sasha Mushegian and Amanda Campbell are drafting a survey to landlords to understand their needs for communication around programs available to them to upgrade HVAC systems while addressing tenant complaints that the City receives. The

survey will gauge whether fliers, electronic mail, virtual live, or in-person outreach is the most helpful.

Draft 2023 Greenhouse Gas Inventory Update

Staff presented the draft Greenhouse Gas Inventory for the City of Rockville for 2020. The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments produces greenhouse gas inventories for the city every few years based on data analysis from many sources. Rockville achieved a 34% reduction in emissions from 2005 to 2023, despite regional increases. The region met its 2020 greenhouse gas reduction goal. The regional 2050 goal is 80% below 2005 levels, with varying local jurisdiction targets. Data centers significantly impact emissions, especially in Loudoun County, which has the highest density of data centers. The inventory covers only scope one and two emissions, excluding scope three, purchased goods and materials. Overall, progress looks promising, and there's more to do to meet our goals. A more detailed version of the City's greenhouse gas inventory including a contribution or cause analysis will be provided in early 2026.

Environment Commission Annual Report

The Commission discussed the draft Annual Report that will be submitted to Mayor and Council by September 30 as a PowerPoint slide deck. The following are the draft Work Plan priorities for FY26-FY27 for Commission review:

Home-based Energy Incentives Pepco Home Performance with Energy Star

- Electrify MC
- State IRA rebates (starting soon)
- EV and EV charger incentives
- Promote Affordable Solar with Switch Together

Other Outreach and Community Engagement Initiatives

- Stream clean-ups and salt monitoring
- Potentially revamp Environmental Excellence Awards*
- Review and comment on new Rockville Website
- Earth Day Proclamation*
- Fugitive Methane Leak Detection
- Working to support Human Services Advisory Commission in their efforts to connect landlords to HVAC equipment upgrade resources
- Outreach to the Recreation and Parks Advisory Board

Plans

- Ongoing Climate Action Plan implementation support
- Flood Resiliency Master Plan development*
- Support EV Readiness Plan implementation including curbside charging guidance
- Explore feasibility to consider solar access in the Street Tree Master Plan
- Support Green Space Management Plan development*

Policies and Procedures

- Environmental Items in City Budget*
- Contribute to Justice Equity Diversity and Inclusion in Rockville environmental protection
- Maryland 2026 environmental legislation advocacy*

- Support development of Sustainable Procurement Policy
- Research/support efforts to reduce single-use plastic bottles

Codes

- Zoning Ordinance (Chapter 25)*
- Chapter 10 - City Floodplain Ordinance Updates (M-13)*
- Consider opting in to the County's Bring Your Own Bag law*

*Potential Mayor and Council agenda items

In addition, there are some more recent topics that the Commission is exploring such as reducing water bottles, environmental alternatives to fireworks, and working with the Human Services Advisory Commission on outreach to landlords on HVAC upgrade incentives.

Attendees inquired about the water bottle reduction resolution discussed at a previous meeting. Staff shared that the new Chesapeake Corps member (intern) is researching portable water bottle filling stations for public events. The Climate Action Committee recommended providing staff with several choices among high quality re-usable water bottles if there's a giveaway or if they're provided to staff. Another idea is to gamify use of water bottle filling stations to encourage their use with reusable bottles. Care is needed in serving the needs of staff working outdoors or at summer camps. In some instances, disposable plastic bottles are the best and safest option.

A final draft of the full slide deck will be shared for review. Please provide comments by September 24 to meet the due date.

Staff Updates

Program Updates

- Transportation staff expect to install four bicycle fix-it stations this fall.
- Energy tax credits wind-down:
 - Consumer electric vehicle tax credits expire September 30, 2025.
 - Residential solar panel purchase tax credits expire December 31, 2025; residential solar lease use of credits expires June 30, 2026 since they are considered commercial.
 - Residential energy efficiency and electrification federal tax credits expire December 31, 2025. State IRA rebates that in are expected in January and existing utility programs and Electrify MC will help offset them.
 - Commercial EV/energy/solar tax credits last a bit longer (2026-2027).
- A fourth compost drop-off station is planned at Potomac Woods Park.
- Two high school students completed summer internships collecting non-native invasive plant and habitat data in city parks. The interns completed over 80 surveys of more than 20 acres of city park area. The interns were paid and received coaching by a local non-profit that helps provide meaningful work to people with disabilities.
- Fleet charging: Applied for funding for Swim Center fast chargers, received proposals for four Level 2 chargers at 6 Taft Court, supported site assessments for six chargers (20 ports total) for Carbon Reduction Program grant.
- On August 5, 2025, submitted draft RFP for Lincoln Park Community Center Rooftop Solar (funded by DOE grant) to Procurement Dept.
- Developing draft curbside charging guidance and standards undergoing internal review. Additional materials are being developed (agreement, process steps and requirements, etc.).

- County's leaf blower ban went into effect as written on July 1.
- Staff will begin reviewing the plastic bag ban and opt-in options for leadership consideration.

Events

- **Oct. 5, 1 - 2:30 PM:** Taft Center/Hybrid Rain Ready talk with City staff and Chesapeake Bay Trust on flood rebates and RainScapes conservation landscaping
- **Oct. 23 (in-person) and Nov. 5 (virtual), 6 – 7:30 PM:** Flood Resiliency Master Plan Open Houses. The project website includes an interactive map for residents to share flooding experiences and a flooding survey.
- **Stream Clean-ups: September 21 and October 12**

New Business: Due to the Yom Kippur holiday, the October meeting was confirmed for Tuesday, October 7 at the regular meeting time.

Adjourn: Chair McClain adjourned the meeting at 9:07pm.