

Rockville Environment Commission
Draft Minutes of Thursday, February 5, 2026
Virtual, 7:00pm – 9:00pm

Meeting Attendance

Commissioner	Present	Commissioner	Present
Jen Hawse	X	Pavitra Srinivasan	X
Deborah Landau	X	Summer White	
Cindy McCabe	X	Vacancy	
William McClain, Chair	X	Vacancy	
Clark Reed	X		

City Staff: Amanda Campbell, Staff Liaison; Erica Shingara, EMD Chief

Guests: Max Sanborn, Sarah Salazar, Anusha Dharmasena

Council: Councilmember Van Grack

Meeting Commencement, Welcome Attendees: Chair McClain convened the meeting at 7:01 pm and welcomed attendees.

Approval of Agenda and Prior Meeting Minutes: The agenda was approved with no changes. January meeting minutes were approved with no changes.

Community Forum – Guests introduced themselves.

Chair Report

Chair McClain reminded members of various initiatives in 2026:

- Zoning Ordinance feedback
- Maryland Legislation
- Environmental Awards
- Stream Clean-ups, Farmer’s Market
- REC Budget expenditures
- City Budget
- Methane Detection
- Salt Testing – the Commission will be looking to see what testing shows regarding salt in streams after the snow melt.
- Coming soon: Green Space Management Plan, Flood Resilience Plan, Environmental Guidelines

Mayor and Council Report

Councilmember Van Grack emphasized that timely recommendation of environmental bills to support in the Maryland General Assembly is helpful in meeting the legislative process deadlines.

Congressional Funding Applications

The Commission reviewed and approved several letters of support for Public Works participation in city applications for funding for several Congressional earmark projects, including a Water Treatment Plant Critical Infrastructure Flood Resilience Feasibility Study wastewater collection system rehabilitation in southeast Rockville disadvantaged communities.

Zoning Ordinance Re-Write Draft

Staff Amanda Campbell explained how the Zoning Ordinance describes what type of development is allowed in different areas of the City, including aspects such as allowable primary and accessory land use, building heights, setbacks from front, side, and rear yard, parking minimums and maximums, maximum buildable area, density, and more. Staff summarized more specific relevant areas of the Draft Zoning Ordinance for Environment Commission awareness. These include:

- Zoning changes to residential medium and high density allowing slightly more density around urban corridors and transit
- More flexibility in the mixed-use transit district building heights
- Including electric vehicle charging stations and renewable energy in the definitions
- Specifications for solar canopies (p. 212)
 - 10 foot setback
 - Screening required
- Removing unnecessary requirements for EV charging stations and solar canopies (minor amendment rather than major one)
- Renewable energy on roof does not count towards building height limits
- Renewable energy (geothermal, rooftop solar, wind) height limit of 20 ft.
- Includes requirement to include accessible EV charging parking spaces aligned with Chapter 5 and Maryland Accessibility Code
- Requirements for signage at EV charging stations
- More exemptions from parking minimums such as near transit, and reductions for offering EV charging stations.

After incorporating revisions, adoption is tentatively planned for late spring 2026. Mayor and Council work sessions occur April to May.

Key links:

- Highlights: City of Rockville Staff Draft Zoning Ordinance <https://engagerockville.com/25887/widgets/88678/documents/75891>
- Zoning Map: Interactive webmap, [here \(External link\)](#).
- Draft Zoning Ordinance feedback form [here](#). Draft Zoning Map feedback form [here](#).

In response to a question about stormwater in the zoning ordinance, staff clarified that other ordinances deal with tree mitigation, flooding, environmental reviews to meet stormwater mitigation requirements, impervious surface fees, and more. Also the planning staff plan to do a parking assessment to ensure optimal land use and balance benefits to accessibility, the economy and the environment. The Environment Commission discussed developing a letter of support for the Draft Zoning Ordinance at the March meeting.

Committee Reports

- **Energy Committee:** The Energy Committee discussed potential Maryland legislation including ‘balcony solar’. One member shared that they discovered a methane gas odor near their home that they reported to Washington Gas, who is monitoring it but not reportedly fixing it soon as it was determined not to be urgent.
- **Watersheds Committee:** The spring stream clean-up is scheduled for Sunday May 3. The group is considering moving it to Thomas Farm instead of Maryvale due to beaver activity. This committee is now meeting quarterly. Their next meeting is April 13 at 7:30pm.
- **Climate Action Committee:** Ms. Salazar provided the update. The group discussed the Bird City application. Maryland data center legislation discussions included questions about data center energy use and water use and how to reduce their impact. Other legislation discussed included balcony solar and the bottle bill for plastic reduction. They’re partnering on a Go Green event in April. The next meeting is April 18.

Maryland Legislative Priorities

Members discussed environmental legislation such as the Maryland Climate Crisis Equity Act, The Maryland Transit and Housing Opportunity Act (SB 389/2026), The Maryland Transportation Investment Priorities Act of 2026 (SB62/HB230), Data center energy reduction legislation, Transportation and Climate Alignment Act (“TCA”), the Starter and Silver Homes Act, Metro funding, Maryland Beverage Container Recycling Refund and Litter Reduction Program (SB 346/HB 232). Also discussed were a few bills that would address data center electricity demand and replace some of their demand with renewable energy generation.

The Environment Commission ultimately voted to recommend that the Mayor and Council support the Transportation Climate Alignment Act, the Affordable Solar Act, and the Community Choice Aggregation Pilot Program for Montgomery County. Several members volunteered to draft the language to send in an email to be forwarded to Mayor and Council.

Staff Updates

Program Updates

- MD Dept. of Agriculture public EV charger registration and fee payment extended to July 1, 2026.
- City Equity audit launching internal work this month
- Rockville Housing Enterprises electrified 8 single unit homes
- Recreation Services 4-port chargers targeted for construction in March.
- City received \$2,500 for participating in EVSmart Fleet program.
- Staff is evaluating RFP responses for Lincoln Park Community Ctr. solar
- Rockville Watershed Grants:
 - The University of Maryland Environmental Finance Center was awarded \$42K to support Rockville HOAs, civic associations, and community associations in developing sustainable action plans.
 - The Izaak Walton League of America was awarded nearly \$30K to continue the Salt Watch citizen science and outreach program and expand road salt pollution training to salt applicators in the city.
- Staff provided a flood resiliency planning and private property incentive presentation for the Twinbrook Community Association Jan 20.

Mayor & Council

- Feb. 2 Curbside Charging Agreement
- Feb. 2 International Green Construction Code (commercial) and National Green Building Standard (homes)

Rockville Environment Commission Meeting Minutes

Page 4

- Apr. 13 Earth Month Earth Hour Proclamation
- Apr. 27 Climate Action Plan / EV Plan Annual Report

Events

- Feb. 24 Let's Talk About Community Solar, Solar United Neighbors
- Mar. 9, Mar. 23, Apr. 13 City Budget Hearings
- Mar. 4-Aug. 19 Solar Switch Together Campaign
- Apr. 28-29 Montgomery County Energy Summit
- May 2 or 3 REC Stream Clean-up
- May 7 Switch Together Solar Webinar/REC Meeting?

New Business: No new business.

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 9:03pm.