



Fiscal Year 2014 Annual Report

July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014

SUBMITTED OCTOBER, 2014

1. Introduction

The Alexandria Environmental Policy Commission (EPC) was established under Chapter 4, Article M, of the City Code to “advise and make recommendations to the City Council and, when appropriate, to the Planning Commission and City Manager.” This report provides a summary of EPC activities during Fiscal Year 2014 (FY14).

2. Who We Are

The Alexandria City Council established the EPC in 1970 to advise and make recommendations to the City Council and, where appropriate, to the Planning Commission and City Manager, on matters relating to the following:

- Clean air;
- Land use;
- Noise pollution and abatement;
- Pesticides, herbicides and contaminants;
- Solid waste;
- Water quality and supply;
- Other matters referred to the EPC by the City and citizens; and
- Other topics relating to the conservation and protection of Alexandria’s environment.

The EPC consists of 13 members, including five members from the field of environmental sciences, five citizen-at-large members, one member from the field of urban planning, one member with experience in Federal or state environmental statutes/regulations, and one representative from the Alexandria business community. The EPC may work with other organizations furthering the environmental aims of the City.

The table below identifies the Alexandrians who served on the EPC during FY14.

Scott Barstow (<i>Chair</i>)	Aaron Karty ²
James Kapsis (<i>Vice Chair</i>) ²	Annika Moman ²
Patrick Holman (<i>Secretary</i>) ²	Kurt Moser ¹
Wendy Adams ^{1,2}	Tyler Orton ²
Chris Gamache ^{1,2}	Josh Sawislak ¹
Natasha Garcia Andersen ²	Ryan Sloan ¹
Samuel Gaugush ¹	Monica Starnes
Susan Gitlin ²	Steve Walz ¹
Geoffrey Goode	Ryan Wojtanowski
Rebecca Jablon ¹	

¹Membership expired during FY13.

²Membership began during FY13.

The EPC is very grateful for the help and assistance given by past members.

The EPC meets twice a month, a working meeting and a business meeting. Other meetings may be called by the Chair as necessary. All meetings are open to the public and notification of

meetings is given in due time through the normal City routines. Minutes of these meetings may be found on the EPC City website: <http://alexandriava.gov/EnvironmentalPolicyCommission>

Throughout the year, the EPC has been well served by the staff of the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services (T&ES), Office of Environmental Quality. The EPC wishes to express its gratitude for the time, expertise and devotion to duty shown by T&ES leadership and staff.

3. FY14 EPC Annual Retreat

On September 7, 2013, the EPC held its annual retreat to review past progress and set goals for the coming twelve months. During the meeting, the EPC discussed:

- Developments in flood mapping capabilities and resources by federal agencies, which could be of interest in gauging Alexandria's potential vulnerability to increased flooding risk due to climate change, including changes in sea level and storm surges
- The importance of and methods for engaging with City staff on the City's budgeting process, and the potential for gaining the funding increases needed to move Alexandria closer to environmental sustainability
- Exploring and supporting actions and concepts that drive individual citizens to reduce energy usage and greenhouse gas generation.

4. FY14 EPC Activities

The EPC wrote to the City Council, or to other City commissions on issues including:

- The City's proposed legislative package for the Virginia legislature;
- The City's FY15 operating budget and capital improvement program;
- Extension of the City's agreement with the Covanta Waste-to-Energy Facility;
- Support for the King Street traffic calming and bicycle lanes project;
- Opposition to allowing hydraulic fracturing and drilling for natural gas within the George Washington National Forest.

During FY14 EPC worked with several other City commissions and groups to address water quality, energy, air quality, green building, transportation and open space issues facing the City. Members of the EPC serve in an official capacity on the following City commissions and working groups:

- Mirant Community Monitoring Group (recast as the Potomac River Generating Station Monitoring Group in December 2012);
- Earth Day Planning Committee;
- Waterfront Commission;
- Potomac Yard Metrorail Implementation Work Group;
- Transportation Commission;
- Four Mile Run Joint Task Force;
- Ad Hoc Fort Ward Park and Museum Area Stakeholder Advisory Group; and
- Ad Hoc Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan Advisory Committee.

In addition, EPC members attended planning meetings, Alexandria City Public School meetings and other commission meetings, such as the Affordable Housing Advisory Commission and Parks and Recreation Commission, in an informal capacity.

Alexandria Earth Day

Alexandria Earth Day 2014 was celebrated at Ben Brenman Park on April 26, 2014. The theme for the 2014 Earth Day was "Are You an Eco-Citizen?." Hosted by the Department of Transportation & Environmental Services (T&ES), Office of Environmental Quality, Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities and EPC, the event included educational exhibits and demonstrations, hands-on activities for children, an annual tree sale, and the 4th annual Trashion Fashion Show, where Alexandria City Public School students showcased 'upcycling' through fashion, art, or song. This year's Earth Day event was attended by just under 2,500 people, a significant increase over the previous year.

Ellen Pickering Environmental Excellence Award

In FY09, the EPC partnered with the Alexandria Sanitation Authority (now AlexRenew) to establish the Ellen Pickering Environmental Excellence Award. This is the first award program in Alexandria to formally recognize outstanding citizens who have demonstrated their commitment to protecting the natural environment and promoting sustainability. In addition to citizens, an Alexandria group, club, organization or corporate neighbor were also eligible to be nominated. The award is named in honor of Frances Ellen Pickering's lifelong dedication to preservation and conservation in the City of Alexandria.

As part of the annual Earth Day celebration, the EPC and AlexRenew announced the selection of the UpCycle Creative Reuse Center, as the recipient of the sixth annual Ellen Pickering Award. UpCycle Creative Reuse Center was founded in the summer of 2011 by Kelley Organek and Susan Miranda. UpCycle CRC's goal is to collect and redistribute reusable materials for art and learning purposes, reaching a variety of groups within the Alexandria community. UpCycle offers programs for people of all ages, and its collection of materials is available to the public at reduced prices. The organization encourages citizens to think of materials and everyday objects in different ways, and to move from the mindset of "disposable" to "valuable." UpCycle actively solicits donations of materials from the community and provides a home for large quantities of items that might otherwise become refuse, such as bottle caps, paper, and electronics.

5. FY15 EPC Priorities

The EPC will hold its annual retreat in early September 2014 to determine its priorities for the new fiscal year.

6. Recruitment Plans

During FY14, EPC experienced a higher than usual degree of membership turnover. Over the course of the year there were 3 member resignations and 5 new appointments. The current membership consists of 12 members with one vacant position being advertised, and expected to be filled soon. Since there is a good base of environmental professionals living in the City, the commission keeps track of a list of potential members and encourages them to participate in EPC meetings and activities while waiting for vacant positions.

7. Leadership Plans

The commission elects leadership positions (Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Earth Day Chair) on an annual basis and elections normally take place during the end of the fiscal year. Since environmental impacts and issues permeate every facet of our economy and society, even those EPC members not in one of the elected leadership positions take on leadership responsibilities in covering specific issues, and serving as liaison for us with other advisory groups and organizations. This ongoing work helps EPC achieve smooth, seamless, leadership transitions for the elected positions each year.