



Environmental and Energy Stewardship Subcommittee

200 College Street, Room 310

September 20th, 2024

Meeting Minutes

Subcommittee Members Present

Chairman Newman, Commissioner Sloan, Commissioner Wells, Councilwoman Ullman, Josh Littlejohn, Bob MacDonald

Staff Members Present

Jeremiah LeRoy, Jennifer Harrison, Ashley Featherstone, Jackie Hamstead, Max Taintor, Angelica Tyler, Kristy Smith, Casi Lohmeyer, Tim Love, Amy Broughton

Commissioner Sloan called the meeting to order at 10:05 am.

Motion to approve the agenda and the meeting minutes passed unanimously.

Public Comment: No Public Comment

Water Quality Monitoring Update:

- Presented by the Director of Environmental Quality Institute, Anne Marie Traylor
- Volunteer Water Information Network (VWIN)
 - Stream monitoring program operating since 1990
 - 200 sites in WNC (15 counties, 7 river basins) sampled monthly by volunteers
 - Test for turbidity, TSS, nutrients, pH, conductivity, fecal coliform, phosphorus
- Geographic variety- Mainstem rivers and tributaries, rural and urban
- Water quality ratings from poor-excellent- use 36 samples over 3 years to determine rankings
 - Excellent and good: Ivy River, Dingle Creek, parts of the Swannanoa
 - Generally resilient to daily stressors and support wildlife
 - Average: urban Asheville sites,
 - more prone to impacts from stormwater runoff
 - Poor: some urban Asheville, northwest part of county,
 - heavily impacted by land alterations, low resilience
- Nutrients and bacteria- cause algae blooms and comes from septic, sewage, and livestock
- Flat Creek in Black Mountain has unidentified source of fecal coliform
- Conserving land and aiding landowners are good strategies for improving water quality, which the county is engaged in
- Buncombe has some of the best coverage of all counties- support from City, County, and MSD
 - Environmental Quality Institute is available for additional testing

Land Conservation Goal:

- Conservation focus areas established in 2023 to guide where to prioritize easements
- Big jump for protected lands from 2023-2024, impact of the bond
- Since 2005, the County has initiated the protection of 11,466 acres with an investment of \$11 million



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- History of goal setting
 - 2022: 20%= 84,096
 - Every 1%= 4,205 acres
 - Low hanging fruit has already been protected
- 2030 Strategic Plan Goal Decision Point
 - Shift from % goal to acres goal
 - Recommendation from staff: initiate another 700 acres/ year (3,500 acres over 5 years)
 - Average protected over last 5 years has been 730 acres/year but
- Discussion
 - Average parcel size is decreasing
 - Pisgah view, Warren Wilson were big acreage projects
 - Program is completed voluntary- owners must be interested and be able to afford
 - Greater environmental benefits when adjacent to other protected lands
 - Consider regulatory strategy in addition to programmatic- Land and Ag are working with Planning department
- Motion made by Councilwoman Ullman to recommend goal to be 700 acres a year. Motion passed unanimously.

Community EV Charging Infrastructure:

- Baseline:
 - 72 public charging locations/ 200 ports across Buncombe County
 - Ratio of EVs to charging ports across the county is increasing but still within recommended ration according to NREL
 - Seeing an increase in use of County EV chargers
- Projected need in 2030: Alternative Fuels Data Center tool is that 4.2% of charging needs will be met by public chargers, 1,038 level-2 charging ports
- How should the County factor in tourism? Who do we want to serve?
- There is a lot of private investment from developers- will meet anticipated DCFC need and 85% of level-2 anticipated need
- Considerations for County-owned infrastructure: available space, amenities, electrical infrastructure, cost, maintenance, equity, risk
- How do we fill in the gap for renters or folks who cant charge at home? As more affordable EVs come online, they are becoming more mainstream.
- Strategies for developing EV charging:
 - Level-2 Community charging- at public facing facilities (parking decks, libraries)
 - Workplace charging- (non public facing facilities, ie EMS stations)
 - Support private investment- home chargers, Electrify Asheville-Buncombe
 - Lease DCFC- high cost, outsource liability/ risk
 - Ordinance and Policy- EV ready requirements for multi-family or commercial, Charlotte has a good sample ordinance
- Goal setting- does this need to be its own goal in the strategic plan? If so should it speak specifically to # of EV chargers provide by the County?



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- Commissioner Wells made motion for staff to draft measurable goal for EVSE on County property in the context of the Strategic Plan. Motion passed unanimously.

100% Renewable Goal:

- Options for meeting the goal
 - Utility program- Green Source Advantage
 - RECS- through Duke or market
 - Fund utility scale project
- Brownie made a motion to affirm the 100% goal for government in the strategic plan. Motion passed unanimously.

Construction and Demolition Waste Update:

- Ran out of time to discuss, move to future meeting

Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned at 12:03.