



Town of Leesburg Environmental Advisory Commission
Meeting Minutes
July 20, 2023

The Town of Leesburg's Environmental Advisory Commission (EAC) met on July 20, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall at 25 West Market St., Leesburg, Virginia.

Call to Order: Chair Sheaffer called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Roll Call:

Present: Paul Sheaffer, Julie Bolthouse, Leigh Anne Faugust, Katherine Murphy, Patricia Hatfield

Absent: Ami Mason, Deanna Glick

Petitioners: Sydney Aquilina

Observers:

Staff Representatives: Deb Moran, Heather Schmidt

Paul Sheaffer stated: "It is the practice of the Town of Leesburg to record meetings of the Town's standing boards and commissions. All Town Council, Board, and Commission meetings are recorded and can be found on the Town's Web Site at www.LeesburgVA.gov.

Approval of Agenda: The agenda was approved 4-0-3 (motion by Bolthouse, second by Sheaffer).

Approval of Minutes: The meeting minutes of June 6, 2023 were not approved 3-0-4 (motion by Bolthouse, second by Faugust). They will be brought up again at a later meeting.

Chairperson's Statement: Welcome to our new Commissioner Katherine Murphy.

Petitioners Time: Ms. Aquilina presented to the Commission her proposal to install a land acknowledgement in a prominent place within the Town of Leesburg. She explained that the Town of Leesburg was and is the homeland of many tribal peoples. The Acknowledgment would be a formal statement of the past, present, and forward relationality of the area with native peoples, to show respect and honor for the original inhabitants, visibility for indigenous people, and awareness of local tribes. Ms. Aquilina provided examples of several Acknowledgements and discussed the different funding requirements based on such variables as location, materials, design, and which indigenous artist is chosen. Mr. Scheaffer recommended that Ms. Aquilina also reach out to the Public Art Commission and Ms. Schmidt recommended contacting the Town's historic preservation department.

Staff Items:

- **Welcome New Member:** Katherine Murphy.
- **FOIA Training Video:** Watch and send a confirmation to Ms. Moran at her email address or her new town cell phone number: (571) 209-9358.
- **Historic Preservation:** Ms. Schmidt provided an overview of her goal to include requirements for deconstruction (instead of demolition) for historic district buildings in the next version of the town ordinance. She explained that deconstruction supports sustainable preservation by repurposing the elements of existing construction instead of simply destroying and dumping at the landfill. In addition to deconstruction, Ms. Schmidt is also considering how to integrate renewables and energy efficiency into the zoning ordinance.
- **“Green” items going to Council on July 24th:** Ms. Moran alerted the EAC that the next Town Council meeting was going to be focused on environmental matters and that the topics would include: (1) electric vehicles; (2) recycling program (including glass recycling); (3) community composting; and (4) solar capability of public buildings.
 - Recycling – Ms. Moran has spoken with Patriot about a bin tagging pilot to last a limited time. This pilot would tag recycling bins containing disallowed items with a note explaining the error and that the bin would not be picked up until it is compliant. Faugust offered the idea of including a competition element between Town districts or homeowners’ associations and the need for sufficient notice to Town residents through social media and a week of “practice tagging” where the recycling would still be picked up but the bins would be tagged with the notification that the tagging program would begin the following pickup.
 - Community composting – The Town Council has asked about community composting. Ms. Moran has specifically focused on food waste as representing a significant amount of solid waste contributing to greenhouse gases. In addition to promoting backyard composting, the Town will consider using a food waste drop off site, which are already successfully used in several locations in the Washington, DC area. The EAC discussed curbside collection; however, at this time that would be cost prohibitive but as Town residents become accustomed to composting, it could be an expansion of the program in the future. Bolthouse suggested the EAC consider moving funds it would typically spend on the water barrel program to a composting education program.
 - Solar panels on public buildings – The Town Counsel asked about public buildings capabilities for solar. The Town did an assessment of which buildings would be good by using LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging), a remote sensing method used to examine the surface of the Earth, along with a GIS (Geographic Information System) map to identify areas with solar potential. Most areas in the Town are too small to attract a power purchase agreement or energy service contract, so the Town is also considering areas for ground mounted solar.

- **Zoning Ordinance Re-Write:** The Town is in a two-year process to rewrite the zoning ordinance. A consulting company will be visiting the town several times over the next two years to engage with the local community and determine what to include in the drafting. The consultant is seeking EAC input and will also incorporate the Legacy Leesburg and several other existing ordinance-related documents to ensure a single, consolidated, ordinance. The consulting company will also have the rewrite program in real-time online to facilitate comments and feedback from the public. Bolthouse requested a presentation from the consulting company.

Old Business:

- a) **Review of Strategic Plan Task:** Sheaffer asked that everyone review the strategic plan tasks prior to next meeting.

New Business:

- a) **Contacts for environmental issues.** Hatfield stated she had seen reports on social media of a blue sheen in the Harrison area of Town Branch. Ms. Moran informed the EAC that similar environmental issues should be reported to the Town Police non-emergency number and the Department of Public Works.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:58 pm approved 4-0-2 (motioned by Bolthouse, second by Hatfield).