

APEX ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date:
May 19, 2022
6:00p.m.



Hybrid Meeting
Apex Town Hall Room 3A
Microsoft Teams

ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS:

Katie Schaaf, Chair
Suzanne Mason, Vice Chair
Patrick Adams
Adam Efird
John Garrison

Bill Jensen
Jason Maynard
Kim Pierson
Greg Reger

Call to Order & Roll Call

The remote Environmental Advisory Board (EAB) meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Suzanne Mason at 6:04p.m. Members physically present were Vice Chair Mason, and Board members Patrick Adams and Jason Maynard. Members present remotely were Board members John Garrison, Adam Efird, and Greg Reger. Chair Katie Schaaf and Board members Bill Jensen and Kim Pierson were absent.

Councilmember Cheryl Stallings was in attendance. Town staff members present were Senior Planner Liz Loftin, Environmental Engineering Manager Jessica Bolin, Sustainability Specialist Valeria Mera, and non-voting staff secretary Sustainability Coordinator Megan Pendell. Members of the public had access to the meeting through the Town of Apex YouTube livestream page.

Approval of Minutes

Vice Chair Mason asked the Board if there were any comments on the Meeting Minutes from April 21, 2022 or if the Board would like more time to review the minutes since they were received only earlier that day. Board member Garrison made a motion to approve the Minutes, seconded by Board member Reger. Vice Chair Mason abstained and the motion passed unanimously.

Announcements

Staff member Pendell introduced Senior Planner Liz Loftin.

Committee Updates

The Tree Citizens Advisory Panel (CAP) last met on April 7th. The May 5th meeting was cancelled and the next meeting will take place on June 2nd. All meetings will be hosted at the Electric Operations Center going forward. Tree CAP will be discussing the success of EarthFest and how to be more successful next year, the Kudzu issue around trees in Town Parks, and the Bradford Pear Tree bounty.

The Bee City Committee last met on April 13th, and the next meeting is on Thursday, June 2nd. The Committee discussed the EAB Suggested Environmental Zoning Conditions List, expressed concern about the invasive plants listed in the Design and Development Manual, and will come with final recommendations at the next meeting. Additionally, work has continued in the Pollinator Garden at Apex Nature Park. An Apex Girl Scout Troop has done several plantings and are working to install native bee boxes, benches, and educational signage. On June 23rd, the Committee will be hosting a movie, "My Garden of a Thousand Bees" followed by a panel at the Halle Cultural Arts Center in honor of National Pollinator Week (June 20-26th).

UDO Amendment Workgroup Updates

The UDO Amendment Workgroup has met twice for an hour each time, and is made up by Vice Chair Mason, Board members Garrison and Adams, and Staff member Mayo. The workgroup is working on reorganizing the EAB Suggested

Environmental Zoning Conditions list into residential versus non-residential, plan to bring suggestions for the Board on which Conditions list items to remove due to Town capacity and enforceability, and are meeting again in a few weeks to discuss a guide that translates Board recommendations into enforceable conditions.

Councilmember Stallings highlighted the Council's interest in preserving tree canopy. She was recently introduced to the ideas of incorporating a 2-to-1 tree replacement policy and partnering with a local non-profit, Trees for the Triangle.

Pre-Application Meeting: Car Space Apex

Staff member Pendell admitted one representative for the rezoning project, Car Space Apex, into the remote meeting access. The project representative for Car Space Apex was Chris Rurkowski of TMTLA Associates.

Applicant Rurkowski explained that the project is blending three different concepts that work independently into one development space: A membership social club, co-working space, and car condo space. The space is tailored towards car enthusiasts and users of the co-working and car condo space must join as members. The developer is working on rezoning a total of 7 acres, of which 2.5 acres is developable due to the wetlands, overhead utilities, sewer easements, and stream buffers on the property. Since the site has not yet been fully engineered, it is difficult to recommend conditions, but close to 4.5 acres of tree canopy will remain since only 2.5 out of the 7 acres on the property can be developed.

Items and questions discussed with the Board include:

- Transmission Line. Board member Adams stated that it was allowable to develop under the transmission line.
- Designated Resource Conservation Area (RCA). Though still in preliminary planning stages, the developer will not impact any of the existing RCAs. If the RCA is ultimately impacted, the developer would look at designing part of Lot 6 for additional RCA. Vice Chair Mason recommended that if any of the currently designated RCA is impacted, apply a 2:1 per square foot ratio replacement area.

Summary of Recommendations:

- Preserve tree canopy and prioritize medium to large, healthy, desirable species.
 - Preserve existing trees (percentage-based)
 - Replace canopy (percentage- or DBH- size- based) where there is sufficient space.
- Increase biodiversity.
 - Plant pollinator-friendly flora.
 - Plant native flora (Refer to the Apex Design & Development Manual for approved native species).
- Include landscaping that requires less irrigation and chemical use.
 - Plant warm season grasses for drought resistance.
- Increase the number of native hardwood trees species planted to 3, probably 4.
- Add information signage or other marking at the boundary of lots when they are adjacent to a wooded or natural condition resource conservation area (RCA) indicating that the area beyond the sign is RCA and not to be disturbed.
- Include energy efficient lighting in building design.
 - Lower maximum foot-candles outside of buildings.
- Install timers or light sensors or smart lighting technology.
- Incorporate natural lighting techniques into building design.
- Include International Dark Sky Association compliance standards.
 - Outdoor lighting shall be shielded in a way that focuses lighting to the ground.
 - Lighting that minimizes the emission of blue light to reduce glare shall be used.
 - Lighting with color temperature of 3000k or less shall be used for outside installations.
- Installation of rooftop solar PV system of minimum size based on one of the following specifications.
 - 1) A 20 kW DC solar PV system be installed on the building.
 - 2) A solar PV system that will provide at least 90% of the expected yearly electricity usage.
 - 3) A solar PV system that fits on the rooftop.
- Tree clearing, SCM, or infrastructure shall not occur or be placed in either zone of the riparian buffer, except as necessary for the installation of Town of Apex utilities.

- A minimum of 75% of the plantings used to meet the landscaping requirements for Section 8.2 of the UDO shall be species native to the eastern US and there shall be a minimum of four different hardwood tree species installed.
- Existing trees greater than 18” in diameter that are removed by site development shall be replaced by planting a 1.5” caliper native tree from the Town of Apex Design and Development Manual either on-site or at an alternative location approved by Town Planning Staff, above and beyond standard UDO requirements.
- If any of the currently designated RCA is impacted, apply a 2:1 per square foot ratio replacement area.

Board member Garrison made a motion to approve the rezoning recommendations, seconded by Board member Adams and the motion passed unanimously.

Open Discussion

Board member Adams asked if there was a way the Board can get more information or see more of a site plan for these rezoning meetings. Senior Planner Loftin explained that Planning cannot require a site plan with a rezoning, or else the applicant would be legally committing to that site plan. Vice Chair Mason recommended going overboard with recommendations with the hope that some of them make sense to include with the site plan that is ultimately developed. The Board discussed the potential of developing additional language that addresses land grading to add to the Suggested Environmental Conditions list.

The Board talked about Apex EarthFest and the success of focusing on Dark Sky education. The giveaway items were a big success, and new items to buy for future events will be discussed at a future meeting. Vice Chair Mason thanked the Board members and Councilmember Stallings for representing the Board at EarthFest.

Councilmember Stallings asked for updates on the Mayor’s Monarch Pledge, a program through the National Wildlife Federation, overseen in Apex by the Bee City Committee. Staff member Pendell reminded the Board that if they wanted a local group to present to them for more information, such as Trees for the Triangle or National Wildlife Federation, Staff can organize a presentation ahead of time upon request.

Adjourn

Board member Adams made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Board member Maynard. The motion was approved unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 6:38p.m.



Katie Schaaf, Chair

ATTEST:



Megan Pendell, non-voting staff secretary