

APEX ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date:
October 20, 2022
6:00p.m.



In-Person Meeting
Apex Town Hall Council Chambers

ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS:

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

Bill Jensen
Jason Maynard
Greg Reger

Call to Order & Roll Call

The Environmental Advisory Board (EAB) meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Suzanne Mason at 6:01p.m. Members present included Vice Chair Mason, and Board members Patrick Adams, John Garrison, Bill Jensen, Jason Maynard, and Greg Reger. Chair Katie Schaaf and Board member Adam Efir were absent. Previous Board member Kim Pierson had since resigned from the Board.

Councilmember Cheryl Stallings was in attendance and arrived at 6:08p.m. Town staff members present were Planner II Shelly Mayo and Stormwater Engineering Manager Jessica Bolin. Non-voting staff secretary Sustainability Coordinator Megan Pendell was absent. The meeting was open to members of the public to attend in person as well as to watch via the Town livestream.

Approval of Minutes

Vice Chair Mason asked the Board if there were any comments on the revised Meeting Minutes from September 15, 2022. Board member Garrison made a motion to approve the Minutes, seconded by Board member Reger, and the motion passed unanimously.

Announcements & Open Discussion

The Stormwater Engineering Manager informed the Board of Kim Pierson's resignation. She also reminded Board members about the rescheduled bi-annual Apex Special Environmental Boards meeting between the EAB, Tree Citizens Advisory Panel, and Bee City Committee, scheduled for Wednesday, November 2nd at 6:00p.m. at Town Hall Room 3A.

Development Updates: Town Council Meeting Rezoning Results

Planner II presented a document showing which of the EAB's recommended zoning conditions had been accepted and approved on the Yellowbridge, Ten Ten Business Park, and 1039 Irongate Drive rezoning projects. She informed the Board that a document with a summary of the updates will be sent via email. Vice Chair Mason asked about the general sense of EAB recommendations that have not been included as conditions by developers from Staff. Green infrastructure was mentioned due to its generality and staff capacity. Planner II mentioned she would provide literature to the Board on green infrastructure to inspire more specific recommendations. Solar photovoltaic (PV) arrays on apartment buildings were also mentioned. Planner II confirmed the legality of solar on apartments.

Workgroup Updates: UDO Amendment Workgroup

Planner II updated the Board on progress with revising the EAB Suggested Environmental Zoning Conditions list, including additions of enforceable language and document formatting. The Workgroup will meet again before officially presenting to the Board for approval.

Pre-Application Meeting: Apex Gateway Phase 1 Amendment

The project representative for Apex Gateway Phase 1 Amendment was Walker Gorham, Triangle Market Leader for Beacon Partners and Development Manager for Apex Gateway. He identified the location of the property and explained

the background behind the zoning condition for tree replacement and subsequent amendment. Vice Chair Mason commented on the excellent conservation value of the property, including the number of very large trees, proximity to existing conservation lands, and high value to local bird populations. The project representative stated that the developer is committed to finding replacement property for tree canopy. The Board discussed the value of keeping the existing recommendation for replacing 18-inch hardwood trees. Staff and the project representative explained the difficulty that they were having finding sufficient space to replace the trees that would need to be removed in order to develop the property. After discussing the practical difficulties, Board member Garrison made a motion to change the tree replacement requirement from 18-inch diameter trees to 24-inch. Board member Adams seconded, Vice Chair Mason voted no, and the motion carried 5-1.

Summary of Recommendations:

- Adhere to a minimum tree replacement requirement of 24-inch diameter.

Pre-Application Meeting: Apex Gateway Phase 2

Project representative Gorham also represented the project Apex Gateway Phase 2. He explained that the characteristics of the land area and that the same proposed conditions for Phase 1 were applied for Phase 2, including 24-inch diameter tree replacement. Vice Chair Mason spoke about birds in the area and the close proximity of the property to Jordan Lake State Recreation Area. She stipulated additions to the Board’s earlier recommendations for Apex Gateway Phase 1 that she desired on this property, including 30-feet of additional riparian buffer, attenuation of the 100-year storm, wetlands buffered with 50-feet and ephemeral streams buffered with 30-feet aligning with Chatham County rules, and no tree clearing within riparian buffers with the exception of required Town utility purposes. Board member Garrison added a Dark Sky suggestion, to require lights be at a color temperature of 3000-Kelvin or less. Board member Adams inquired about the possibility of narrowing of roads when crossing riparian buffers to reduce their impact. Board member Maynard added that he would like for pollinator-friendly landscaping to be added to the list of recommendations and agreed that it could be incorporated into the drought-tolerant native landscaping requirement. Board member Jensen requested a solar PV array condition. Lastly, Board member Reger brought up the idea of a green building certification. Board member Jensen made a motion to approve the list of recommendations, seconded by Reger, and the motion passed unanimously.

Summary of Recommendations:

- Post development peak runoff shall not exceed pre-development peak runoff for the 24-hour, 1-year, 10-year, and 100-year storm events in accordance with the Unified Development Ordinance.
- The project shall install at least one (1) sign per SCM about not using fertilizer near an SCM drainage area. The sign(s) shall be installed in locations that are publicly accessible, such as adjacent to amenity centers, sidewalks, greenways, or side paths.
- The project shall preserve a minimum of 15% of the existing tree canopy. Preserved areas may include, but are not limited to, RCA, perimeter buffers, riparian buffers, and/or common area in the development.
- To improve energy efficiency, the project shall plant evergreen trees on the northern side of all buildings to act as a windbreak. This shall not apply where loading docks are proposed along a building facade.
- To improve energy efficiency, a combination of large and small deciduous shade trees shall be planted on the southern side of any buildings. This shall not apply where loading docks are proposed along a building facade.
- The project shall plant only drought tolerant native plants which will also support pollinator and bird species. Landscaping shall be coordinated with and approved by the Planning Department at the time of Site Plan or Master Subdivision Plan review.
- At least one (1) information sign or other marking shall be provided at the boundary of an area dedicated as Resource Conservation Area (RCA) indicating that the area beyond the sign is RCA and is not to be disturbed.
- The project shall install light timers or other smart lighting technology on at least 50% of the fixtures in the parking lot so they are automatically turned off or reduced in level of lighting when the business is closed.
- Outdoor lighting shall be shielded in a way that focuses lighting to the ground.
- Trees measuring 24-inch in diameter or greater shall be replaced at a 1:1 ratio using 1.5-inch diameter trees taken from the Town’s Design and Development Manual.
- Increase riparian buffer widths by 30-feet above with is currently required by the Town of Apex.
- To match Chatham County’s regulations, wetlands shall be buffered by 50-feet and ephemeral streams by 30-feet.
- There shall be no tree clearing within riparian buffer zones with the exception of required Town utility purposes.
- Lighting with a color temperature of 3000-Kelvin or less shall be used for outside installations.
- Narrow the roads across the riparian buffers to limit environmental impacts.

- Buildings that are sold to an end user shall have a min solar photovoltaic system of 20-kilowatt hours (kWh). If a building cannot support a 20-kWh system, then a system shall be sized which the building can support.
- Apply for green building certifications, such as LEED, Energy Star, BREEAM, Green Globes, NGBS Green, or GreenGuard; The project shall be designed to meet the requirements for the green building certification. A third-party consultant shall be hired to evaluate the project and certify to the Town of Apex that the project meets the standards for the certification. The applicant shall forward a copy of the certification application to the Town of Apex Planning Department to verify that the application has been submitted.

Adjourn

Board member Jensen made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Board member Maynard. The motion was approved unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 7:44p.m.

Katie Schaaf

Katie Schaaf, Chair

ATTEST:

Megan Pendell

Megan Pendell, non-voting staff secretary