

SRAC

Sustainability and Resilience Advisory Committee

MEETING MINUTES

April 1st, 2026 – 6:00pm

Western Government Center, 4301 E. Parham Road

County Manager's Conference Room (3rd Floor)

- I. Welcome & Call to Order
 - a. Chair Becky Lakin called the meeting to order at 6:03pm.
- II. Roll Call & Recognition of Visitors
 - a. Each SRAC member re-introduced themselves to the group. Ms. Fiona Wissell introduced herself as the consultant from ICF who is working on Henrico County's Climate Action and Adaptation Strategy.
- III. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes
 - a. Chair Lakin called for a vote to approve the meeting minutes from the previous meeting. There was unanimous consent to approve the minutes.
- IV. Unfinished Business
 - a. Climate Action and Adaptation Strategy Update & Preliminary Survey/Engagement Results
 - i. Ms. Sam Hudson provided an update on the Climate Action and Adaptation Strategy (CAAS) and stated that the public and staff surveys are now closed.
 - ii. Ms. Wissell gave a presentation on the CAAS survey results and provided summaries on the initial takeaways. She said that there had been broad support for steps towards carbon neutrality in Henrico County, and that respondents had ranked walkability and safe bike infrastructure, the expansion of local solar, and urban greening for adaptation and mitigation as top actions that they were interested in. She noted that cost and affordability were consistently ranked high as

a significant barrier to taking action. Data centers, energy costs, and land use were common concerns for many respondents. There was a brief discussion about constituents' concerns regarding data centers, and Mr. Yob added that the Board was not approving any additional data centers, but there are ones that were already approved in the past that are in the pipeline. Ms. Wissell noted that some respondents had concerns about climate action, including concerns about the efficacy of climate action, distrust of climate science, questionable use of taxpayer dollars, and that meaningful consideration of the opposition's perspective would be given.

- iii. Ms. Wissell also noted that the CAAS public survey received almost double the number of respondents compared to the number of respondents from Henrico County for PlanRVA's survey from two years ago.
- iv. Ms. Wissell included information about the extreme heat assessment and how survey respondents were able to provide feedback related to this topic as well. Specifically, the survey found that most respondents had experienced health impacts due to extreme heat, especially transit riders. There was a brief discussion about bus shelters and the different types of shelters, including trees versus manmade shelters, and the barriers associated with implementing or installing them.
- v. Ms. Wissell highlighted that around 80% of all respondents in all zip codes said that tree plantings are a top priority.
- vi. One of the meeting's virtual participants, Chelsea, shared that there was a lot of concern about trees being cut down in a specific area in the Fairfield District. Mr. Steve Yob said that these were cut down because they are installing a new water main along that road, and they will also be adding bike lanes and sidewalks to this corridor.

V. New Business

- a. Legislative Report – 2026 Virginia General Assembly
 - i. Chair Lakin pulled together a legislative report for all SRAC members. A copy of this report can be found on the SRAC webpage under the "Additional Materials" section for this meeting.
 - ii. There was a discussion about the legislation surrounding solar, especially solar canopies for parking lots.

- iii. Ms. Beth Kreydatus noted that a lot of the language in the bills gives localities the ability to do something, but it does not require them to do it.
- b. Member Updates – Key Activities, Highlights, & Areas of Community Interest
 - i. The Nuckols Farm reforestation was recently completed, and several constituents said that they were excited about the new trees.
 - ii. Several constituents had expressed their excitement for Solar Access Henrico.
 - iii. The Brookland District recently had a tree planting at Echo Lake Park and at the newly acquired Jenkins Farm property, which is adjacent to Echo Lake Park.
 - iv. The Land Lovers lecture at Glen Allen Library was well attended.
 - v. Mr. Elliott Reed asked about the farmland in Varina and if all of the farms are being actively farmed. Chair Lakin said that the farms are still being actively farmed.
 - vi. Chair Lakin said that there has been concern from community members about PFAS in the well water in Varina. Mr. Yob said that the County has tested over 300 wells, and they have installed many filter systems for residents so far.
 - vii. Chair Lakin highlighted the Runnymede Community Farm.
 - viii. Chair Lakin also highlighted how the County is working to preserve more land for greenspace. She said that a group of Varinians had come together to create a plan for this rural conservation/preservation effort.
 - ix. Composting was mentioned. Maybeury Elementary School has expressed interest in a composting pilot project.
 - x. Ms. Danna Flaherty said that she had spoken with someone from Arlington County about their composting projects and programs. Arlington currently has a curbside pick-up program for composting, and they have 24 BigBelly drop-off points across the County.
 - xi. Ms. Hudson highlighted the work that the Sustainability Division has done. This update can be found under the “Additional Materials” section of this meeting on the SRAC webpage.
- c. Additional discussion
 - i. Chelsea, one of the virtual participants, said that there is a sterilizer that is currently being used at a hospital consortium and at a medical facility. There is growing concern over the use of this chemical, especially as federal EPA rules are becoming more lenient.

1. <https://rvamag.com/community/viral-video-sparks-questions-about-cancer-causing-gas-in-richmond.html> - This article looks at the growing concern over the use of the chemical in the Richmond area.

VI. Adjourn

- a. Chair Lakin motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:46pm.