

**Draft Minutes from the Albemarle County  
Natural Heritage Committee (NHC) Meeting, 5:45pm  
October 3, 2024**

**Present:** Rob McGinnis, Chair, Christine Putnam, Vice-Chair, Mike Callahan, Secretary, Kaleb Notari, Lonnie Murray, Mona El Khafif, Ph.D., Megan Sebasky (new member), Joseph Rhames (new member) (The Committee has 3 open seats needing to fill its 12 authorized positions.)

**Absent:** Leah Jung

**Staff:** Scott Clark

1. Call to Order. The meeting was declared in-session at 5:48pm.
2. Establishment of a Quorum. Eight (8) committee members were present to open the meeting.
3. Welcome/Acknowledge Guests. Rob welcomed Megan and Joe to the committee, their first meeting as new members.
4. Review and Approve Meeting Agenda
  - A Motion to approve the Meeting Agenda was made by Christine. The Motion was seconded by Lonnie and approved with the correction by the members present.
5. Review and Approve September 5, 2024 Meeting Minutes
  - Motion to approve the meeting minutes was made by Christine. Mona seconded the Motion and it was approved unanimously by the members present.
6. Matters from the Public not listed on the Agenda. None.
7. Welcome new members
  - Megan and Joe were introduced earlier in the meeting. Megan is a Master Naturalist and has GIS mapping experience. Joe owns a 45-acre farm south of Charlottesville and is a long time gardener.
8. Staff Update (by Scott Clark)
  - The Planning Commission will be holding a working session on November 26 to review the Riparian Buffer Ordinance. The ordinance is planned to be put on the Board of Supervisors (BoS) agenda in December. Lonnie provided some background on the Riparian Buffer Overlay District; some of the details have been taken from the Water Conservation Ordinance.
  - Planning Commission work session upcoming next week (week of October 7) on the [Growth Management Policy of the AC44](#).

- Action Steps are pending for AC44. A Board of Supervisor’s (BoS) session is planned for October 16 and a session to discuss Land Development on November 6. This is an opportunity for citizens to submit letters of support for smart, sustainable growth.

9. A. Invasive plant management funding letter

- There was no budget included for Invasive Plant Management in the [proposed Albemarle County budget for 2026](#).
- Christine presented the “Budget Recommendation Letter” she had prepared for the Committee; several issues related to the proposed budget and process, to include no staff hires.
- Christine motioned for approval by the Committee; Mike seconded approval; the letter and plan to submit to the BoS was approved unanimously by the members present. The Chair will sign the letter and electronically submit to the BoS.

B. Solar Ordinance

- Rob expects the ordinance to be on a BoS Agenda this Fall, but there was nothing new at this time to report.

C. AC44 & Conservation Programs

- No expansion is planned in the Development Areas of AC 44. “Catalyst” projects are developed from the County’s priorities for the next 1-5 years. Priority projects included meeting the County’s Climate Action goals and Equitability goals. PEC is recommending conservation programs be considered a “Catalyst” project
- Christine, Megan, and Joe will work on a letter to the BoS, emphasizing which Conservation projects/programs should be considered as “Catalyst” projects.

10. Draft FY 24/25 Work Plan. Not discussed due to lack of time. (Carryover to November)

- A. Review Work Plan - actions & prioritization; Discussion of Member roles
- B. New Members

11. Old Business. Not discussed due to lack of time. (Carryover to November)

- Staff’s Annual Committee Report to BoS; Committee’s own Annual report
- Approach to regularly communicate with the BoS

12. New Business

- Mona gave a short update on the Biophilic Region task from the Work Plan, but asked that it be included in the November Committee Meeting Agenda to allow time for a more comprehensive update.

13. Adjourn

- The meeting was adjourned at 7:25pm.

**Note: Next NHC meeting will be held again in Room 235 on November 7, at 5:45pm.**