MACHINE TRANSCRIPT · CORAGGIO CONSULTING

Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Environmental Committee, Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Date	Tuesday, December 12, 2023
Place	Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, Virginia
Length	1h 26m (video)

- Official meeting video (Fairfax County): https://video.fairfaxcounty.gov/player/clip/3146
- Official Board of Supervisors page (Fairfax County): https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/boardofsupervisors/

> Machine transcript (speech-to-text) produced by Coraggio Consulting. Not an official county record. Names and numbers may be misspelled; check the video at the timestamp before quoting.

Speech-to-text: whisper.cpp, model large-v3-turbo. Produced 2026-11-02. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:00:05] Hey, folks, if we can go ahead and get started, please. Thank you, everybody. I know we have a crowd here, and I know we need to get going because we have a lot of conversations.

[00:00:25] I'm sure a lot of folks who kind of want to weigh in as well. First off, I'm Dan Stork, the chair of the committee, and a couple housekeeping items to get started. First is we had an October 3rd, 2023 meeting summary. Were there any changes to that committee notes, the summary notes that we had?

[00:00:45] Okay. Are there any expected updates from last meeting that the board members have not received or received a follow-up response on? Okay. If there's no further comments or suggestions, let the minutes stand as really a record of our meeting, and we are going to go right into the next item, which is Lake Akatink report.

[00:01:09] And I'm going to ask the members to introduce themselves, and then we're going to go to a video. So a quick introduction, and then we'll go to the video. Then after that, each of them will be presenting, I know, briefly. And I'll start with the chairman. Sharon Bulova, and I've been chairman of this task force, was requested to do so by Supervisor Walkinshaw and Supervisor Stork and Chairman McKay.

[00:01:40] And so that was my previous job here in this room before Jeff. So thank you for this opportunity. John Cook, private citizen, member of the task force.

[00:01:58] I chaired the, what was it called, Future of Lake Akatink subcommittee. Sandy Collins, friends of Akatink Creek, and I chaired the subcommittee reviewing staff's recommendation not to dredge.

[00:02:15] Good morning. Gail Niddle, president of the Springfield Civic Association and 40-plus year resident of the area. I was the co-chair with my friend Alan here on the subcommittee that looked into the value of Lake Akatink to Lake Akatink Park and to the county. Alan Robertson. I was appointed to the task force by James Walkinshaw, representing the organization Save Lake Akatink. It's a pleasure

[00:02:46] to be here. Thank you. Martin Shepard. I'm representing Ravensworth Farm Civic Association to the task force. I'm a 60 plus year resident of Ravensworth Farm and have grown up next to the lake all my life. Thank you all very much for being here and more importantly thank you very much for your I'm sure hundreds maybe thousands of hours of work on this project. So with that we'll go to the video. Chairman McKay, Supervisor Lusk and I asked the board to establish the task

[00:03:26] force because we wanted to bring the community into the process because Lake Akatink is at risk and it's at risk due to the significant amount of sediment that we have entering the lake and the need to dredge the lake and the really substantial cost to do the project as originally envisioned, which was dredging the entire lake. So we established the task force to make sure that we have looked at every possible solution to have a sustainable lake that the community

[00:04:00] can continue to enjoy. In the past we've looked at either a full dredge or allowing it all to become a managed wetland. The task force is looking at some hybrid approaches where maybe we dredge a smaller portion of of the lake and have the rest of it be a managed wetland or a grassland and what would that look like. So they're looking towards the future to make sure that we've examined every possible creative solution before final decision is made. Supervisor Walkinshaw and chairman mckay both came to me and asked if i would convene the community if i would get folks

[00:04:36] together uh and uh and i really believe in giving the community a voice this is the community's reaction the community's response to a staff recommendation to not dredge the lake let it return to its natural state.

[00:04:55] I've done task forces before over the years. I broke them up into three groups, three subgroups. One to focus on, well, what is the value of Lake Akatink? Two, Lake Akatink Park and to the county, and really to the region.

[00:05:14] The second subgroup deals with staff's recommendation. What are issues and what are impacts associated with that recommendation. Our shorthand for that subgroup is a critique of the staff recommendation.

[00:05:32] Did they get it right? Should they have looked at some other things? And then the third subgroup, which is chaired by John Cook, looks at, well, if not a full traditional dredge, which was approved in 2019, what are some other options?

[00:05:52] What might we do instead? Essentially, what we were asked to do is say, are there other options between the current lake and nothing? And what are they? And in fact, there are a lot of options other than the current lake and nothing.

[00:06:10] And so we developed those around a few concepts. One is to preserve a smaller lake that reduces the dredging costs, and it also reduces the amount of dredge material because that's a big part of

the cost.

[00:06:28] What do you do with all this stuff you're digging up? And one of the, I think probably, principal findings of our group was that most, if not all, of the dredge spoils can be kept on site.

[00:06:44] - As part of the subcommittee that talks about the value of Lake Akating, we highlighted the health benefits that are associated with being in close contact to a water body such as Lake Akateng.

[00:06:59] There's recent studies, or even studies dating back decades in both the United States and internationally, that highlights the health benefits, lowering blood pressure, helping to relieve stress, and just bringing in a very more peaceful state of mind for those that are around.

[00:07:22] So what are the health impacts that would be removed, reduced, if we removed the lake? The task force was formed of several members of the community, people from civic associations, HOAs, but also subject matter experts.

[00:07:39] A professor from George Mason University and engineers were meeting, talking about the problem of dredging the lake and what to do with it in the future. This is a gathering place for families, celebrations, weddings, birthdays, just weekend picnics.

[00:08:02] And the park on the weekends when the weather's nice is absolutely packed. My family and I live not too far from here. We moved to this neighborhood originally because we love being able to walk to Lake Akatink. So I represent the lake and the community, but I'm also personally invested in the future of the lake and the park.

[00:08:25] That's a very impressive piece, and I want to particularly thank Channel 16. I know working with all of you, but it's a great overview and I think one that will be very helpful for our communities to help understand really the processes that you all have been going through and ultimately the decisions that will be made and why they may be made this way or that way.

[00:08:43] So with that, Chairman Boulogne. Thank you so much, and it seems strange to be on this side of the table. Here I am. This is what happens when you retire from the Board of Supervisors. Let's see, we're starting out, and I have never done this before, so here we go.

[00:09:05] All right, so far so good. This is a difficult slide to read, but if you could read it, you would see that this process has been going on for quite some time. And, in fact, there have been processes before this to assess the value and to, you know, to talk about how to dredge Lake Akatink.

[00:09:32] It shows the conversation about re-dredging. The process actually began as a remaster planning of Lake Akatink Park. And that was led by John Cook, who was the Braddock supervisor at the time. But then it morphed into or focused on the dredging of Lake Akatink.

[00:09:55] In October of 2019, the board, and I was chairman at the time, approved a financing plan for dredging. And in June 2020, staff applied for and then received $30.5 million in loan funding from the Virginia Clean Water Revolving Loan Fund.

[00:10:17] Yay! Arcadis was selected as the contractor and work began on the dredging program. Arcadis and county staff evaluated numerous potential options, all of which raised challenges.

[00:10:35] Arcadis also did a deep dive into costs, which had increased due to additional sediment that needed to be removed and much higher processing, trucking, and disposal costs than originally

estimated. More frequent maintenance dredging also was added in. And in fact, it was estimated that dredging would be required every five years, not every 15 years, which was originally believed.

[00:11:03] As a result, the costs were estimated to be $95 million for the base dredging and $300 million for the first 20 years after the base dredge, or $395 million over 25 years.

[00:11:20] County staff recommended that the lake not be dredged due to significant community and environmental impacts and the cost, and instead recommended restarting the park's master planning process with an emphasis on developing a sustainable vision for the lake and the park.

[00:11:40] When this information was presented to the community at meetings in February, residents were understandably upset, which is an understatement. They were angry, they were disappointed, and wanted to come to the table to be part of the process.

[00:12:02] The same information was presented to the board's environmental subcommittee in April. Supervisor Walkinshaw shared with the board how residents felt, and that the lake is a treasure, is loved by generations of residents, and that many feel that not every possible option had been explored.

[00:12:26] He then announced that he would ask the board to establish a task force on the future of Lake Akatink to review the studies that had been done, get more information about the managed wetland option under consideration, and explore the possibility of a hybrid approach that would maintain an open water feature, and former Supervisor Cook hates that term.

[00:12:52] Open water feature means lake. Membership. Supervisor Walkinshaw asked me to chair the task force. Former Braddock District Supervisor John Cook and 30 additional members were identified, and that included membership on the task force that was made up of community representatives who were here at the table with me, the NAACP, Earth Sanga, EQUAC, Northern Virginia Regional Commission, George Mason

[00:13:27] University, the Sierra Club, and more. The task force was created to ensure that community members were at the table to ensure that options were explored and the public's questions were answered.

[00:13:43] County staff were present only to provide information and to answer questions. The findings of the task force come from the community. The mission of the task force was to conduct a review and develop findings on the previous studies performed by Arcadis and WSSI on the dredging plan to ensure that all possible options have been considered to preserve Lake Agatink in

[00:14:18] the most sustainable, equitable, and cost-effective manner possible. Identify relevant information needs and questions that should be addressed should the Board proceed with studying a managed wetland option or a hybrid option for managed wetlands and a smaller lake. Findings should also consider the impacts to the environment, surrounding communities, recreational uses of the park, and

[00:14:47] financing included in ongoing maintenance. The task force began meeting on June 26. Meetings of the full task force were held here at the government center, all but one here in this room.

[00:15:05] so this is our room. Meetings were held in person and both broadcast and streamed on Channel 16. Time was set aside at the beginning of each meeting for public comment. One of the first things we did was to review the list of questions based on the concerns residents expressed at community meetings in February and the subsequent survey and to add additional questions for the new consultant, WSP Limnotech, to address as they looked at what a managed wetland could look like

[00:15:41] as an alternative to dredging Lake Akatink. It became obvious that the task force would benefit from breaking into smaller groups to look at topics in more detail, so I named three subcommittees.

[00:15:57] These subcommittees conducted research and worked on producing content for the final findings report. A fourth subcommittee was in charge of compiling, writing, and editing the subcommittee's reports.

[00:16:15] And that was chaired by Brian Campbell, who is not at the table but is with us, behind us. And he has represented on the task force friends of Long Branch Stream Valley. and editors were assigned from each of the subcommittees to work with him on the final findings report. In total, the full task force met nine times, the subcommittees met 21 times, and we held our final meeting on December the 4th. And with that, I would like to turn the meeting

[00:16:51] over to, or the presentation, over to Alan Robertson and Gail Niddle. They are the co-chairs of the first committee which looked at the value of Lake Akatank. Gail and Ellen. Thank you. The value of Lake Akatank cannot be determined by just the final cost of dredging. Lake Akatank has value to those with mobility issues who can appreciate the beauty and beneficial effects of the lake from their car or like Grace, the woman you see in the wheelchair in the picture,

[00:17:31] sitting there in her wheelchair at the water's edge, just a few feet from her car. Has value to the Special Olympics team members who practice at the lake. Has value to the local underserved trails for youth kids who kayak and learn the importance of the lake to the fish and the birds.

[00:17:51] Or to those who live in the economically disadvantaged neighborhoods within walking distance of the lake, like the immigrant from the Philippines, in tears as she shared her story. Quote, we relied on our trips to Lake Akatink to keep my siblings and me out of trouble.

[00:18:09] What I enjoyed most was sitting by the water. I needed the peace, and the lake brought me. I still need it. So many others like my family and me need Lake Akatink. End of her quote. Lake Akatink embodies and is a showcase for the county's one Fairfax policy.

[00:18:30] There is no price tag on social equity and justice. Teddy Roosevelt is a man who understood the value of outdoor recreation. Beginning in the 30s and through the 50s, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors also understood the value of outdoor recreation and discussed very early purchasing or acquiring Lake Akatink for its beauty and recreational value.

[00:19:05] And that discussion became more earnest, of course, in the 50s, and the county finally acquired Lake Akatink through a lease in 1960 and then purchased it in 1963. And when Fairfax County acquired Lake Akatink, it took on the responsibility, in the words of Sharon Bulova, open quote here, to protect and nurture, close quote, this Fairfax County treasure.

[00:19:39] Lake Akatink's recreational value extends from the water to every park amenity. As discussed in our report in a thorough statistical analysis by Ken Balbuena, a task force member, the Department of Public Works and Environmental Services' flawed public survey from earlier this year failed to capture useful and needed data.

[00:20:04] A new survey is needed. One of the features that brings visitors to the park is the wildlife that Lake Akatink supports. The lake is an invaluable asset to wildlife and the environment, a quality of life and financial issue that touches every Fairfax County resident and taxpayer.

[00:20:31] In addition to providing wildlife habitat, the lake is the greatest stormwater and sediment control facility between the concrete and asphalt jungle upstream and the Sussex Bay downstream. The lower acting sediment TMDL relies upon a 47% average trapping capacity of the lake.

[00:20:52] It would be costly if that trapping capacity is lost. Lake Akatink is more valuable today than ever before. The community, the environment need the resources Lake Akatink provides.

[00:21:10] And what a travesty it would be to lose the lake. And our next speaker is Sandy Collins, who is chair of the subcommittee reviewing staff's recommendation to not dredge.

[00:21:29] And I think in the room, we have a number of people from the task force, but the technical lead on this task force was Dr. Chris Jones from George Mason University Water Resources Group. But with that, Sandy Collins, I'll turn things over to you.

[00:21:49] Good morning. So as Sharon said, our subcommittee evaluated the staff's recommendation not to dredge, but instead to resume the master planning process for Lake Akatink Park. And we evaluated two different areas.

[00:22:08] The first was the cost and environmental impact associated with the recommendation. And the second was the process and the authority for reaching that recommendation. And unfortunately, much of the request for information that was submitted for that second line of research had to go through the FOIA process, and we did not receive enough information in time to present findings with respect to that.

[00:22:39] But we did have three key findings. Actually, we had numerous findings, but three key findings. The first was that the county's analysis of cost for the initial dredge and the subsequent maintenance dredging relied on very conservative assumptions, and that all evaluation of alternatives, including that of dredging, really needs to be based on the best available information and the same best available of information so that you can compare all the

[00:23:15] alternatives on an apples-to-apples basis so that they can be considered equally. The second is that through our review of all of the information and the consultant's reports, it became very clear how important it was for the community to be involved in the master planning process, for the review of alternatives, for the review of conceptual design documents and cost estimates. All of this obviously being consistent with the park authority procedures.

[00:23:52] And third, as Alan was saying, understanding the importance of the lake to the entire Akatink Creek system, the downstream system in particular. So that stream restoration is incredibly important to maintaining the health of the lake and the system, Akatink Creek system as a whole. But that stream restoration efforts really need to focus on those areas that have the greatest erosion, so the greatest input of sediment to the system, regardless of whether or

[00:24:27] not those areas are on county-owned property. And with that, I'm going to hand you over to John to talk about the findings from his subcommittee. John Cook. Thank you. So we were asked to look at options other than the full dredge and the no dredge option. And we did find that the choice between a full dredge and a no dredge is a false choice, that there are, in fact, options that would preserve a lake of a size to be determined that can be preserved in an economical fashion that

[00:25:01] serves the community interests that you have heard about. There are three land features in the lake area, right? You have lake, you have wetlands, and you have grasslands. And we looked at each of

those. We considered the value of biodiversity. We considered environmental impacts. We considered the community and social impacts of a lake and various options and studied them. And they're written in our report. Some context. The original lake was 110 acres. The current lake is 49 acres.

[00:25:34] We ran scenarios for a 41-acre lake, a 33-acre lake, and a 22-acre lake. I don't know if you can see this picture, but 41 acres is essentially the round area. It's what you can see from the marina, if you know the area.

[00:25:51] 33 is a somewhat arbitrary number, but it does track where some of the sediment inflow would be at a certain period of time. 22 acres is more for comparison's sake. It's really, I think, too small to do some of the things that, you know, we're looking at.

[00:26:08] But, for example, we have a chart of cost numbers in the appendix. Dredging a 41-acre lake costs $33.8 million. Now, that does not include the cost of what you do with the dredge spoils, which leads to the next finding that we made, which is that most dredge spoils can and should remain on site.

[00:26:31] One way that they remain on site is, for example, if you dredge, just to pick random numbers of the math works, if you were to dredge 35 acres, well, half of that material could be used to fill in the other 15 that you chose not to dredge, and that would take care of half your material right there.

[00:26:48] We have options for building islands in the lake, and you can study them in our report. That's a way to obviously take dredge spoils, pile them up, and you can also do things with wildlife and other ecological diversity by forming islands. We considered having dewatering sites adjacent to the lake. You know, you can spread out several feet of dredge materials right next to the lake, and when they dry, you put seed on top of them, and in one cycle, one growing cycle,

[00:27:23] you have a grassland, and your dewatering site is completely taken care of. And then we also explored sites that are adjacent to the park that have been mentioned in the past but not fully studied as places to take some of the dredge materials. The issue of the final dredge, final lake size and the mix between lake wetlands and grassland is something that needs to be determined and studied with community input. There is a regulatory requirement of no net loss of wetlands so that has to be factored in can't dry up the existing wetlands there needs to be preservation

[00:28:02] of that there also needs to be a study of the future of the dam regardless of what happens with the lake there are impacts to the dam that are going to be need to be dealt with and and lastly maybe most importantly is you need to make a decision now that doesn't mean today but in the next few months because time is not on our side. It's not on the community side. And the lake is constantly changing. And so you can't wait until you have the perfect answer and then start the process of work because by the time you start, things have changed. So there should be a direction

[00:28:39] given now. Dredging should start in two years. You can put together a group to decide as you work through this with experts how you want that dredge to look. But the starting point is in this report, and the data that you need to get started is here. The value of the lake's been described, and preserving it is an absolute essential. Thank you. Thank you, John. And lastly, one of our task force members chose to do some additional research on a potential processing site

[00:29:17] and transportation hub. The task force unanimously supported his work and included his report as an addendum to the findings report. And with that, I would like to call on Martin or Shep,

Shepard, for a few words about what he found. Shep. Thank you, Sharon. I'm Shep. And after serving my time on John Cook's subcommittee, I wrote the findings on the use of Robinson Terminal as a dewatering

[00:29:53] and transportation hub for Lake Akatink dredging operations. You've heard about the task force and its good work. We found value in the lake. We asked questions about the analysis. We came up with some alternatives to a full dredge. The county brought on WPS and Limotech to answer the question, what's this wetland thing all about? No one was looking, however, at how the county

[00:30:29] could approach a full dredge and its projected maintenance and make it work. Two big issues with the dredge, where to dewater and how to get rid of it. From there, there were a couple of scenarios that came about in the Arcadis analysis. One was to cut a swath of trees out of the watershed, leading to Wakefield Park. The other one was to dewater in a local industrial area,

[00:31:08] but both had trucks carrying the material away. And the worst of those scenarios had trucks, 95 trucks round trips per day going down narrow neighborhood streets. The worst is that DPWES took advantage of the community's rejection of those plans, added a tremendous cost increase

[00:31:42] on the initial dredge, introduced a 20-year payout for maintenance, called it too hard, and pushed it off to the Park Authority to come up with a plan for a swamp. On the map, Robinson Terminal is close to the lake, allowing a pipeline to take the slurry along the same Norfolk Southern right-of-way used in a previous dredge. No trees lost. The terminal has rail sidings which can be used to load rail cars and take them to parts of southwestern Virginia and

[00:32:20] other states who need the type of fill to use in coal mine field reclamation projects. The terminal also has a non-residential access road, no trucks on narrow neighborhood streets. Moving dredge material by rail reduces carbon footprint for the equivalent truck travel by 87% at a lower per ton per mile cost. Innovative approaches outlined in my findings provide a partial payback for

[00:32:59] operational expenses if managed properly. Robinson Terminal is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Bayos organization. It happens to be on the same road as the Washington Post. We learned in August that management was seeking a lessee as it planned to cease warehousing operations. We informed county staff about these plans and they contacted terminal management. The county proposed site use again

[00:33:35] requiring demolition of buildings. Building demolition does not align with the management's leasing plans for the property. And recently, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has been doing studies on dewatering inside of buildings. That information is still incoming, and I will share it as soon as I get it with county staff. In conclusion, the task force finds the Robinson

[00:34:11] and terminal opportunity has not been fully explored. We find that any future dredging alternative for the lake would be incomplete without a thorough and imaginative consideration. This approach aligns with our commitment to innovation, sustainability, and the preservation of our cherished Lake Akitake. Subject to your questions, this concludes my portion of the presentation. Thank you very much, Shep, and thank you for your hard work. Shep is bold enough to

[00:34:47] pick up the phone and call individuals with Norfolk Southern about the possibility of using tracks and right away and connecting to mine reclamation procedures in other parts of the state. And this is definitely out-of-the-box research, but something that we should look into more. So thank you, Shep. All right. The task force was not asked to make recommendations,

[00:35:21] but instead we were asked to provide findings to help inform the Board of Supervisors as they make a decision regarding the future of Lake Akatank. The findings report provides information on the value of the lake to residents, an analysis of the recommendation to not proceed with a full dredge, and an exploration of other potential options. The task force found that, and here are the summary of the findings, amenities and activities at Lake Akatink are not readily

[00:35:56] available at other nearby parks, which is especially important as the park is surrounded by and serves communities with a high degree of cultural and economic diversity, unlike any other county lakefront parks. This is a one Fairfax issue. When considering sustainable alternatives, a smaller lake is feasible as part of a stream lake complex, but a full dredge needs to be reevaluated and compared against alternatives under consideration. However, a plan that includes

[00:36:35] maintenance, dredging, and any lake option, and an invasive species management plan in all options will be essential. Lake Akatink Dam is over 80 years old, and any solution to the lake must take into account preserving future options to replace, repair, or remove the dam.

[00:37:01] The park's facility needs attention, and the larger issue of dredging stalled the master plan process. Identifying the desired experiences, amenities, and activities at Lake Eccatink Park will help to inform the alternatives.

[00:37:21] It is a finding of the task force that the community should and needs to be at the table during such discussions. The task force finds that conditions within the watershed continue to change and the lake continues to fill with sediment. The task force agrees that a decision about a general approach now will allow the master plan process to move forward while continued technical study of alternative runs in tandem. We are pretty much finished with our

[00:38:00] presentation and ready for questions, but let me just say thank you to the Board of Supervisors, and in particular, Supervisor Walkinshaw, Supervisor Lusk, and Chairman Jeff McKay for providing this opportunity for the community to review and to respond to the staff recommendation to not dredge. I want to thank you. I want to say thank you to staff, especially Charles Smith, Chris Harrington for their support. And I especially want to thank our consultant, WSP Limnotech. And I hope that we get to work with them in the future because they brought to the

[00:38:40] table some really interesting ideas and they were a pleasure to work with. Thank you to Marsha Pape, our support from Supervisor Walkinshaw's office. And she put in a couple of all-nighters working on the report and getting it posted.

[00:39:00] So with that, I will stop talking, and we're looking forward to hearing your questions. Thank you. Thank you, Chairwoman Boulava. And before we get to that, I just want to give context. We spent about half of the meeting time on this so far, and I know we will spend whatever we need to spend with board member input, but I just want to advise our Office of Economic and Energy efforts to look to shorten the next presentation by at least 20 minutes.

[00:39:33] So we'll have maybe 20 minutes to do an overview of the next one. So just for context, and we're going to go and we'll spend what we need to spend here, but I just wanted to make sure we're all aware of the importance of this discussion, which is where we're going to go to next. I'm going to turn to Chairman McKay for that. Thank you very much, Supervisor Stork, and also want to recognize Delegate Vivian Watts, who is with us back there in the corner.

[00:39:55] Thank you for joining us today. She was a member of the committee. Absolutely, and I want to thank all the members of the task force because I do think the quality of the report speaks for itself, and I appreciate the fact that these are findings and that specific recommendations obviously are going to fall in our lap with coordination with the community to have to make what obviously is going to be a tough decision.

[00:40:19] No matter what we decide, it's not going to be easy, and pointing out all the equity pieces I think is a critical part of the conversation, And I do think was a part of the conversation that was completely missing from the beginning. And I also want to acknowledge the community being upset with the recommendations of DPWS.

[00:40:39] And I want to extend that community to this board, too, because there was no member of this board that was not also upset with the recommendations that were made to us. And so I do have a couple questions, though. I just want to make sure that I understand, because in several occasions it's been mentioned that further study and analysis needs to be done.

[00:40:58] We know we need to do a master planning process, and we've talked about that. But we also know the sense of urgency in terms of time. So help reconcile, for me, the need for additional study with the urgency of making a decision sooner rather than later.

[00:41:15] Did you want to? Chairman McKay, I think what I would suggest is a design-build concept, right? So sometimes you can start building something before you have it fully designed because as you – once you have sort of a general plan, you're going to need to dig in there.

[00:41:37] And, for example, there are regulatory rules that we don't know fully, and you're going to have regulators step in and say, well, wait a minute. You can't do this. You can't do that. you have to look at different sizes well how much lake do you want how much grassland do you want what's the what's the net benefits plus and minus what are the costs and those things are going to adjust and shift as you go forward so you sort of have to do the specifics as you are designing what you're going to do because they're going to change and we don't know all the answers the dam

[00:42:13] i mean is a big unknown and you know the original thought at the beginning we were told well don't worry about the dam. Well, part of what I think we all determined was you can't not worry about the dam, but you're not also going to get a final answer. You could wait for years to get a state or a federal decision, and even then it could always change. So there needs to be a little flexibility going forward, but if you wait for all the answers, we'll be here 10 years from now having the same conversation again, and there won't be a lake. So you have to learn as you go along. Yeah. So is your sense in terms of how that lines up with the master planning process? Is it

[00:42:53] your sense that the master planning process has to contain inclusion of options then that mirror what was that? What I'm trying to understand is I know the lake is filling up fast. We know we've seen that. And I guess what I'm trying to understand in my own mind, if we made a decision today to go with a smaller lake, obviously that would profoundly impact what the master plan for the park would look like. If we made a decision today to do nothing, that would also profoundly impact. And so, is there a utility of doing a master planning process that incorporates both of those, or is it better to do some more additional technical analysis before even

[00:43:33] entering into a master plan process? And again, I don't speak for everyone on the committee, but I think all of our sense is you need to make a decision in the current time frame about the general picture. Do you want a lake or not? And whether it's 49 acres or 41 acres or 37 acres, you can figure that out as you go along. But if you're going to have a lake, you need to dredge it like in 2026. And so you need to start. And then you can have your master plan group and you can say, here's your parameters, here's your budget. Start with this and work on

[00:44:11] the specifics but if you don't make that decision about what your leg's going to look like then nobody knows what to do and you'll just end up with another report in two years and half the leg will be gone. Yeah I guess the reason I'm asking and this is a hard question because we're you know we're out of time we were out of time a while ago and in a lot of in a lot of ways and so you know what I'm trying to understand in terms of the master planning process itself is does that run in tandem with the additional technical analysis. And the reason why this is so important

[00:44:47] to us, I think, is because we were believing, you know, this report obviously could help inform the master planning process. And what the community needs to know is, through that process, if you end up with a smaller lake, here's what the overall park would look like.

[00:45:03] And here are the opportunities to introduce new things. Here are the challenges with the smaller lake in terms of things that might be lost versus if you didn't do anything, you know, here's what the park would look like and here's how we could amenitize it. Because what is clear here is we're going to have a robust park here no matter what.

[00:45:20] What is unclear is what that park will look like. And I guess if this report is to inform the master planning process, it would seem to me like if we kicked off the master planning process, there need to be alternative master plans in there that can accommodate those visions.

[00:45:37] And I think one of the challenges for the community, that I have heard at least, is we all want to save the lake as a starting point without a doubt. If for some reason the lake looks dramatically different than it does today or no longer exists, what does the park look like and what is in it for the community?

[00:45:55] From our equity standpoint, what amenities are in there for the community to benefit from in the same way they have benefited for decades on the full lake that's there? I don't think there's anybody on our task force who supports seeing the lake go away.

[00:46:13] Now, you know, you guys have to decide how much money you can spend and what the ultimate general parameters would look like. And the options for looking at are in that report. So it's not that there aren't findings here. There's 150 pages of findings that can start a process.

[00:46:31] But if you just say to a master plan group, it's just a new group of people, you say, well, start from scratch, decide what you want. You'll get two years of study, and, you know, the study's been done. The community wants the lake, and you determine the budget, and that will dictate much of the mix between lake and other features.

[00:46:54] And then you have a group of people, and you say, here's your budget. Go build what the community wants. Okay. We were specifically asked not to make recommendations. So, but to dig a little bit more into, or a lot more, into the staff recommendation and present findings.

[00:47:16] I urge members of the board to read through the executive summaries, especially, of the subcommittee's reports. They're excellent. There's excellent, just phenomenal expertise on this task force.

[00:47:32] With some recommendations for, well, if you did this or did that, how much you could save from what the original staff estimates were or the original consultant estimates were. But it's up to really the Board of Supervisors to decide, let's move forward with a full dredge like we started out with and let's use some of, you know, these cost savings.

[00:47:59] Or let's consider an option maybe for a smaller lake, which could also provide, you know, some creativity for how to use other parts of what had been the original size of the lake.

[00:48:16] So, but that's something that we were not asked to vote on, but that's something that the board needs to look at and decide, you know, what they would like to do. Okay, and I think my last technical question, it doesn't need to be answered here because I think it's a staff question, but given the findings that are in this report, you know, there are financial ramifications that have been outlined.

[00:48:40] What's unclear to me is how those financial implications are guided by existing funding sources that we have or other grant or financing opportunities that may exist out there. And that's part of that regulatory conversation.

[00:48:56] We're going to have to dig deeper with staff because I need to, you know, I think all of us want to understand, one, how we can maximize available dollars to come up with a good solution here and how much of the design of what we're doing here can steer us in a more favorable direction.

[00:49:11] It was mentioned earlier on about the financing that we got from the state. You know, are there additional opportunities? I know there's some challenges with the Army Corps that have to be addressed. As Supervisor Cook mentioned, there's a number of regulatory issues here that we're going to have to sort out.

[00:49:27] And so we're going to need a staff response to the regulatory pieces, how we understand them, and how they might inform potential funding options for the board to consider as part of having to make a final decision on this. And I think that's an obvious next step.

[00:49:44] Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I'm going to go to Supervisor Waukesha and then the other board matter member, Supervisor Lawson. Yeah, thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I'll be briefed and make sure my colleagues have the opportunity to ask questions and share their comments. I've been immersed in this.

[00:50:02] I did all the thank yous last week, so I won't reiterate those thank yous. One of the things that I think was really valuable in this process was the opportunity for the task force to work alongside the consultants. and we will share the consultants deliverables with the board. And the questions they answered were the questions the task force posed. So throughout the process, the task force had the opportunity to say, we'd like to learn more about this. What about this? And what about that? And there are a few things in there that surprised me. And I think we're different from our original

[00:50:39] thoughts and impressions when this process started. One is in the do nothing scenario, not a scenario that I support, but in that scenario, the lake would not turn into a swamp or even what we usually think of as a wetland. It would slowly over time become what's called, this was a new word for me, an

anastomizing stream network, which is basically a braided network of streams. That work also showed that that would happen over the course of four to 50

[00:51:13] years, starting at the upper end of the creek, of the lake where the creek enters. So I won't define that as slow or fast, but as has been happening since 2008, it would continue to fill in and become that braided stream network with the area that's now the marina likely still being an open body of water as long as, as 50 years, a much smaller body of water, but still a body of water. I, in the board matter, asked the task force to look at the hybrid option, and John improved the marketing on that significantly and termed it a smaller lake option, which is a much

[00:51:52] better description. My gut was it had real potential, and I think the task force's work has helped us to illuminate that potential for that option. But it's important to say I think it's a potential option and one that we should, in my view, focus on and study more. If you go through the findings, you'll see there's a lot of different iterations of that option, a lot of options within the option. The cost estimates that we have at this point are rough. The maintenance dredging cycle is uncertain and would be temporary. And as John noted, there are real potential

[00:52:31] regulatory and permitting challenges. And I'll just quote from the WSP Limnotech deliverables. They said that placing fill in lakes and wetlands can be, quote, particularly challenging and is a, quote, extensive process that's new to regulators. So we're a little bit on terra incognito in terms of this permitting and regulatory process. So real potential. I do believe that we should focus in on it. We cannot start from scratch as we did in 2016 and study every potential option

[00:53:05] under the sun. But I think it's important for the community to hear that there's a lot more to learn about this option before we can promise that it is going to be the outcome. You know, that said, just in terms of moving forward, I'm excited to hear how my colleagues feel and what they think here today. We're going to have two new board members tomorrow night. So I've already talked to Chairman Bolivar about making sure that they are briefed on the task force's findings and hear them. It's my intention to come to the board with a board matter early next year to lay out the

[00:53:42] next steps in this process. It has to include broad community engagement, and I think some of the findings around surveys and community engagement are going to really help inform that process. And as I said, additional analysis of the smaller lake options in the hopes that that's a path that we can pursue. Thank you for the time today, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Supervisor Wachschott.

[00:54:06] Supervisor Lesk. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to also thank the task force for the exceptional work that they did in bringing forward these findings. And I'll say I'm particularly appreciative of the small lake options. I think that's going to be helpful and understand there's a lot of work that still needs to be done to determine if that's going to be possible. But just appreciate that that is a conceivable possibility. Second, I wanted to ask, and just thinking about the impacts to the neighborhoods and hearing Mr. Shepard talk about the number of vehicles, and I'm

[00:54:45] re-traumatized here thinking about that, the 95 vehicles per day that would be traversing through neighborhoods and acknowledging that in the full dredge option, we would be doing that every five years. Do we have any thoughts, and I didn't see this yet in the report and the findings, but clearly with the three different lake options, there's going to be some maintenance schedule for each of those options. And I guess the question is, do we have any sense of what that maintenance schedule might be? And if not, then I guess that's going to be a part of the research and analysis that will be going forward from here.

[00:55:25] If I could just address that, I think Limna Tech suggested to us some sort of five-year time period for some sort of mini-maintenance dredge-type operation. So it is, you know, obviously the more often you do something, but remember, that's not a tens of millions of dollars thing.

[00:55:47] It's a much smaller number. And in fact, we had a presentation about, which like, was it like Barcroft? They do maintenance every year. Basically, it's just part of what you do. And if you do that, you prevent the big buildups that have the super cost.

[00:56:05] And that was extremely helpful for us to see. And it's a cost, just like you put a roof on a building like this and you do a new HVAC every few years. You have to maintain a lake. Did they provide any cost structuring for those options then in each of the three different iterations?

[00:56:25] For your question. So the three different lake options, the 41, the 31, and the 22. It would depend on, you know, the more often you do it, the less you have to dig. So you're pulling. I mean, there are costs per cubic yard of sediment in the appendix.

[00:56:43] But that depends. How big is your lake? Right. And are you doing this every five years, every 10 years? I got the sense from Limnotech that doing less and doing it more often seemed to be what they were talking about in the last presentation. Okay, which is what Lake Barcroft does.

[00:57:01] And so they purchase their own equipment, and so they just use their own equipment, and, you know, they constantly do maintenance of the lake, and that way there's, you know, less that they have to do. It was a really fascinating presentation.

[00:57:24] They're a much smaller lake, but they pay for the lake, and they pay for the maintenance themselves, and they've learned a lot. So anyway, you should read a little bit more of the findings to learn a little bit about it.

[00:57:41] But they purchased their own equipment, which was interesting. Mr. Chairman, if I could weigh in a little bit on Lake Barcroft, after Lake Barcroft was lost in Hurricane Agnes in 1972, the community came together and established themselves under Section 319 as a watershed improvement district.

[00:58:08] They are of their own local governing body. The WID. And so the WID is governed by a board. And all of the residents of Lake Barcroft pay, I think it's about $500 a year as part of their being in the WID.

[00:58:29] And that helps pay for the maintenance of the rather extraordinary dam at Lake Barcroft and the dredging. And because of the way Lake Barcroft is, it's sort of like a great big U with a lot of little coves. They tend to look at doing this particular section of the lake this year and then this particular section of the lake next year.

[00:58:50] So they're not doing a full lake dredge. They're doing sections of it over time. And, yes, they used to hire a contractor to do it. And now they have, because they've been able to break it into smaller chunks, if you will, They have their own dredging materials, and they have dewatering site on site also.

[00:59:16] And a WID is probably not feasible for Lake Akatank or a much larger watershed. And, you know, we're comprised of, you know, shopping centers and highways and, you know, a lot of transportation that flows into the watershed.

[00:59:35] Lake Barcroft, I think, is the only WID in the Commonwealth. There may be one other. And if I could just jump in real quick, the frequency of dredging really needs to be determined. You know,

everything that was in the Linnotech report was really a high-level evaluation, and one of our primary issues was really making sure we understand what is our rate of deposition, because that is really going to, you know, inform what size lake.

[01:00:07] Is it going to be the full lake? Is it going to be a smaller lake? How much is coming in? Over what period of time? What depth you want to achieve? And then you'll have some understanding of your frequency of maintenance dredging. Okay. And Shep? Supervisor Lusk, remember, trucks don't have to be in your neighborhood.

[01:00:28] Right. Okay? If a permanent dredge facility and dewatering facility is established at Robinson Terminal where there is rail that can move it out, you have that opportunity.

[01:00:44] Likewise, if rail is decided not to work, it is a non-residential road straight in. So if the county determines that it can do dewatering in buildings and doesn't have to demolish them, or if the county purchases the property for use as a long-term facility, for use for other dredge opportunities, and even for having Lake Barcroft bring their dried materials to us and have us ship it out,

[01:01:22] then there are a whole set of circumstances that can be established in there without having trucks in their neighborhood. Now, I was going to say that's my last question, is I was going to commend you for what you were recommending. I really like this idea of using the Robinson Terminal, but I do want to clarify, when the staff reached out to them, they said, no, we're now recommending we go back.

[01:01:50] Do you have any additional information from conversations with them that would indicate that they are now supportive? I'm just trying to understand where are we, at least in the conversation and discussion. If we could make that very brief, because we do need to move on and give other people an opportunity. Mr. Smith and I had great conversations about Robinson Terminal.

[01:02:09] The county's proposal to Robinson Terminal is we'd want to use your facility. We'd like to lease it, but we have to demolish buildings. That is unacceptable to Robinson Terminal Management. Like I said, Army Corps of Engineers has been doing research and has actual experience now in Massachusetts on doing dewatering operations inside large structures similar to the warehouses that are there.

[01:02:40] Those things still need to be worked out, but it is a possibility that the lease could occur, Or, if the county so desires, a long-term transportation hub for all countywide dredging operations can be established through the purchase of the property.

[01:03:04] Okay. Well, I'll say this. I appreciate that clarification and that information. Thank you. Yes, sir. Staff should also, I think, reevaluate, do they have to demolish, you know, the warehouse, you know, or may, you know, So more of a discussion and a reevaluation needs to take place.

[01:03:24] Thank you. Other board members? I'm just going to very quickly add my thanks to both Chairwoman Boliva and Jeff, the whole task force. It's not the first time that citizens have brought together, you know, brought to the table some pretty interesting solutions to this problem.

[01:03:46] And I think there's a lot more that needs to move forward to where I'm sitting. I haven't seen that it's hard to do it without seeing the numbers, but we got to at least have that small lake there. It is too important, too important a resource. And I think it's going to take a long-term investment.

[01:04:03] The dam is something, too, that we can't forget about it. But for the county, I think it's clearly a lesson in maintenance and how we need to take a regular look at the assets that we've got here before we

go build shiny new ones. We've got to make sure we're taking care of what we've got.

[01:04:20] Thank you. Supervisor Alcorn. Just very quickly. Yeah, I do, as a board member who doesn't represent any area close to this, I do look forward to getting more details, more information on the various proposals and the costs.

[01:04:37] And not just the costs, but the financing as well for how those costs will be covered. So I do look forward to that. I actually had one quick question. Did the four bay issue ever? Yeah, the problem with the four bay, there's a concern that in a big storm it would wash out and everything would just be pushed into the lake.

[01:04:59] So I think county staff suggested that the four bay was not going to work, if I got that right, Charles. Any other comments from my colleagues? I would just add to that. I know that the state has been focused very heavily on dams and water retention, and I think that's changing in terms of their expectations and the regulatory view.

[01:05:23] So I think that comment earlier was one that's very important to this process, and I agree. And the last piece is what I think we all recognize, which is there clearly is some downstream impacts of this. And, you know, I, of course, would think about that given the impact on Mount Vernon District and obviously Akatik and the bays and the river that it flows into.

[01:05:45] So these issues do matter not just for Akatik but also for the greater community and Chesapeake Bay automatically. So with that, I don't see anything. Actually, if I could, I should have done this in the beginning. A lot of folks are here who have been part of the task force, and if they could just stand and be recognized, I would appreciate that.

[01:06:10] Tremendous expertise. You all have given your own time. Thank you all, and our deepest thanks to the task force for what you've brought to this conversation.

[01:06:27] And obviously we have tough decisions to make, but we have, I think, a lot more clarity about what our options are and appreciate very much the work we've done. Thank you. And we are going to take just a few more minutes to have staff do a quick, it will be a very, very quick overview of something that's pretty dense and complex, but I think they can at least give you an overview that will give you a sense of what is coming and what's available to our communities.

[01:06:54] And they will not do this justice, but at least they can flip through the slide deck and give you a sense of what's out there. And then we'll look for the next Environment Committee meeting to further drill down. There's also information that's been presented to you all previously.

[01:07:14] So this should just reinforce previous conversations and presentations that you had. And with that, I'm going to let John Morrill do the update. You'll see the progress that we've made in the presentation about how we are tracking our results.

[01:07:32] Results have been a key part of our conversations in previous environment committee meetings and how do we track our goals and results. And I know committee members have spoken about that a great deal. This data is going to our climate dashboard and the climate dashboard will be our major source of how we share this information to the community.

[01:07:52] And I would ask folks who just came from this meeting, if you could take your conversations outside, please. If you could take your conversations outside, we'd greatly appreciate that so we can

complete the conversation. And we will stay at least a few minutes over, but I recognize that we're going into lunch and then we have a special guest that we all need to recognize and we can't afford to miss that.

[01:08:14] We'll be on the naughty list. So thank you. Mr. Chairman and members of the Board of Supervisors, I'm John Morrill, Acting Director of the Office of Environmental and Energy Coordination. Happy holidays to you all.

[01:08:30] I'm joined by Matt Myers and Allison Homer, two team members who are very familiar with this material and they're here to help out with questions as needed. Pleased to give this presentation as a very high-level summary of how we're doing. Additional highlights are included with this packet as an addendum and a staff report detailing this year's activity will be sent to you early next year. I will note that when we presented to you a year ago, we spoke of plans to launch pilots and programs. I'm happy to report today that multiple programs have been launched as

[01:09:09] described in the addendum, and the county is very engaged with residents in the private sector on climate action, and we have significant momentum for future gains. As you know, the county is working to address both the cause and effects of climate change. On the cause side, we're doing our part in the global effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the community. That's the community-wide energy and climate action plan, and in government operations in the operational energy strategy. On the effects side, we are adapting and building resilience to the impacts

[01:09:45] of climate change that we experience locally, such as extreme heat, severe storms, and flooding. True to our name, the Office of Environmental and Energy Coordination coordinates interagency efforts on implementation of these plans. Over two dozen agencies and well over 100 staff are involved in this activity, as well as many stakeholders in the community. Many actions I'll be speaking of in the progress report are implemented by multiple agencies or agencies

[01:10:21] other than OEEC. We're merely the messenger today and we'll give credit where it's due. First, I'll describe how we're doing the work, and then I'll describe the results or outcomes to date from this work. The county is responsible for implementing all three climate plans simultaneously, each with dozens of priorities and strategies. There are certain themes that appear in all three plans, such as development codes or natural resources. Additionally, the staff across county agencies responsible for implementing these plans are very similar, if not the same

[01:11:01] people. Therefore, for greatest efficiency, OEEC organized the 158 strategies from all three plans into a consolidated matrix, combined duplicates, and considered implementation responsibilities.

[01:11:17] Six groups emerged, shown here, ranging from Group 1 of funding, coordination, and legislative, and all agencies are part of that, through to community age, education, engagement, and incentives. Group 5 is county facilities and operations, and Group 6, data and research.

[01:11:38] Now, the hundreds of strategies and action items from all three climate plans have been organized and consolidated for clearer for our internal progress tracking. This image presents the 22 high-level what we call strategy roll-ups.

[01:11:58] And so these 22 strategies dispersed across the six groups roll up all the implementation actions from the three plans. So, for example, in the middle under group three, purple row, top purple row, incentives for communities strategy actually includes six strategies, which collectively have 23 implementation actions.

[01:12:28] Twelve of those implementation actions are underway, or 52%. But it's important to note that the status of strategies should not be interpreted as being equivalent to outcome metrics. For example, completing two out of four actions from the plan for promoting solar incentives, or 50% of actions for that strategy, does not mean that 50% of the county is now operating on solar power. So for clarity, the metrics are tracked separately and

[01:13:03] will be discussed in the upcoming slides. And again, a detailed progress report with descriptions of each action item, strategy, and strategy roll-up will be provided to the board in January once all the end-of-year numbers are in. For expediency, I'm going to transition from the work process to the results or outcomes. This slide presents a state of the county with respect to climate metrics, the CCAP goals. The headline goal is carbon neutrality by 2050. And the top

[01:13:40] bar on this chart shows community carbon emissions down 30% since 2005. Slightly behind the pace of where we should be if we make linear progress, but still doing well. That 30% reduction is due to a cleaner grid, and reduced energy use in buildings. Yes, in 2022, total electricity and natural gas use in buildings across Fairfax County, homes, businesses, and industry is down 8% since 2010, and that's in the face of economic growth, population growth, and so forth. And that's

[01:14:20] not just a pandemic effect. 2019 energy use was lower than 2010 as well. Similarly, here are progress bars for county operations or implementation of the operational energy strategy. We're making good progress toward carbon neutrality with successes in some areas and challenges in some others. We're making strides in energy efficiency and have strong results in green building construction, including the county's first lead platinum building delivered by capital facilities

[01:14:54] from DPWES, which was the Woodlawn Fire Station. Installation of renewable systems were slow to begin with, but with our first four projects completed this year, we are gaining momentum. And those were done in collaboration with Capital Facilities, the Park Authority, Department of Housing, and the Fire Department. Resilience means being able to bounce back fully from shocks and stressors that come our way without suffering permanent loss. There are

[01:15:29] dozens of performance indicators in the resilient Fairfax plan. Here we show a few key metrics for each of the major hazards. Note that some of these have a goal of decreasing, such as buildings at risk of flash flooding, whereas others have a goal of increasing, such as cooling centers near heat islands. So we added directional arrows to indicate the desired movement for each metric on the right hand side. It is also important to note that our resilience efforts may seem like running on a

[01:16:06] treadmill that is getting faster. As we continue to face warmer, wetter, weirder conditions, we are working to enhance our resilience to such conditions. Therefore, unlike emissions reduction, there may not be such a thing as achieving 100 percent resilience. Nevertheless, the county's resilience efforts are crucial to ensuring we do not fall off the back of the treadmill, which in this metaphor would mean permanent loss of life, property, and resources. All of these

[01:16:41] metrics and more raw data will be provided on the updated Climate Action Dashboard, or what we're calling version 1.5. We aim to have this dashboard updated for viewing on the county website by the end of this week. And last, in framing priorities for calendar 2024, I'd like to emphasize that emissions reduction is a national and global effort, and much is beyond our control or even influence. For emissions reduction, we'll be more clearly defining the factors beyond county control

[01:17:18] to better calibrate our efforts and expectations to ensure that we are focused on making the most of what the county can do best. And just as a reminder, if we want to electrify our fleet, but we can't purchase equipment if the vehicle manufacturers don't make it. On the other hand, boosting resilience and adaptation is a very local activity and something the county has more control over and the county is a first responder. For resilience, we'll continue to build upon the

[01:17:54] foundation of work in place to enhance flood risk reduction, heat risks, and improve storm resilience. And finally, for both emissions reduction and resilience, we'll continue to grow our community facing programs at broader scale and enhance the visibility of all of our activity and results.

[01:18:15] Thank you. Thank you very much, John. And I think the point of this is that this is a funnel and we start with cause and effect. I think a great way to summarize how the county is approaching this CCAP and our operational energy strategy is the, if you will, how we move forward and how do we address the effect is the resiliency plan that we put together. I think the county, The board, we're well positioned with our goals, and I think the approach is how do we get this stuff done, which is really the nuts and bolts of what John and the team has put together and how we work this through.

[01:18:52] And as you can see, it is incredibly complex. You can see – I love – I thought of it as the European Union flag. I don't know if you've ever seen the European Union flag. They have all the individual country flags around it. That's not unlike what we're doing here with the county logo and then all the different county departments that particularly are involved with this.

[01:19:13] So very complex and very difficult to keep all these things moving forward. But we are moving it forward. And with that, I want to turn to the chairman and see if you have any comments. We're going to keep them brief because we know Santa is waiting for us. No, you just walked in.

[01:19:31] No, I'm actually just wanted to thank John and the team for presenting this in a really clear way for us. I mean, I particularly like the graphs that are tracking progress and making us aware of the asterisks of what is within our control and what is in our ability to influence.

[01:19:50] And I do think as we start looking at, you know, this important question of how the community can help us, Tracking that is going to be a lot more difficult than what we're doing internally, but so necessary because we know without their engagement and involvement, we can't achieve these overall goals.

[01:20:09] And so I just really appreciate the way it's been presented and the update that we have here and looking forward to continuing to see the progress in these areas and the good work that you're doing. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, Sir Alcorn. Just very quickly, on slide seven, by the way, I love the way you presented these slides that showed, like, where we should be and, you know, what our goal is.

[01:20:31] The transport one, EV registrations, charge up Fairfax. I know we're out there. We're pushing it. You know, it's going in the program phase. I'm really glad we're doing that, but I see this since half of our residents basically don't live in a place where there's overnight charging.

[01:20:49] As you come back, as we go into the program, I'd encourage you to also be thinking and come back with any additional thoughts on how we can help move that needle because EV is going to be one of our biggest challenges going forward. Hello, colleagues, and if not, I have a couple of notes.

[01:21:08] We had kind of our JET Joint Environmental Task Force kind of informal group we met yesterday, and it was an excellent meeting. There's a new leader on the part of the schools that is very knowledgeable.

[01:21:23] She previously was essentially that leader for D.C. schools and very knowledgeable and very impressed with her. And I know, I think, as most of us were. A couple of things that came up. The one is that, John, you mentioned something that I was surprised about, and then it was reiterated, I think, by the schools.

[01:21:44] And I just want to make sure the group was aware of this and see if there's any legislative issue that we need to address. But if you could address the solar insulation challenges that we continue to have. Thank you. One of the latest hurdles has been Dominion Energy requiring essentially dark fiber, fiber optic cable from large solar installations to the nearest substation.

[01:22:18] And they argue that they need that for safety because they want to know if the output from this large solar system goes down. And they want the customer to pay for that fiber installation.

[01:22:35] And so this was something that they raised in the spring, and a number of solar installers sued and brought a case to the SEC. And the SEC put it on hold for smaller systems, but it still applies to larger systems.

[01:22:54] So this is something that is still, Dominion's the only utility that we know of in the country who calls for this and puts the cost on the customer. So this is a matter that continues to possibly face litigation and is a hurdle because it increases the cost of solar systems, whether the county were to buy it directly or through a power purchase agreement.

[01:23:29] And, John, this wouldn't necessarily involve an individual homeowner, but it would involve pretty much any county or school project. I just want to give people context for that. Yes, it doesn't apply to a small residential or small commercial system, but generally above 200 kilowatts, I believe.

[01:23:46] So our fire station roofs would be? The fire stations are okay, but a possibility that things like the monument garage or certainly a school-sized installation would be subject to this. Thank you.

[01:24:02] And just a couple of closing comments, and then I know we'll get going. We had a NIP that was out, the Litter and Zero Waste Update from the county executive, so just make sure you're aware of that and take a look at that.

[01:24:20] Again, we looked at the waste, transportation, energy, and workforce development, had a lot of good information on that. We're going to get back together again in about six months. With that, the last comments have to do with two amazing environmental leaders that we have.

[01:24:36] i know i see i see penny muttering to herself sorry penny but we know we know the environmental impact that both of you have in in somewhat different ways but but i think it goes to the core of the board and the value of the individual elements that each of us bring to these conversations and the power of the collective of us working together as a board to get outcomes that we otherwise wouldn't get penny supervisor gross your work on so many regional authorities um and and obviously your chesapeake bay and water amazing amounts of work over decades and that

[01:25:15] we all are building on top of that so my deep thanks and your your previous uh chairing of this committee for for a long time as well and then supervisor faust in your work and your advocacy And,

frankly, your help with me to get me fully understanding of the opportunities that we had, particularly when it came to climate change, and your advocacy, your constituents' advocacy to help, I think, inform all of us about how we can move those things forward more aggressively.

[01:25:44] And we've done just that. So both of you have had major impacts, major imprints on what we do and how we do it. So my deepest thanks to you all for that work. Thank you. Supervisor Stork, before we leave, if you're participating in the public safety Santa photo, it is now, immediately.

[01:26:04] Not five minutes from now, not ten minutes, it is now. So go directly there and then we'll come back in for lunch before the Transportation Committee at 1.30. Meeting is adjourned.

