

PIEDMONT ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL (PEC) FOCUS GROUP NOTES – May 1, 2020

MEETING DATE	COMMUNITY GROUP/ADVISORY BODY	COMMENT
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Problems with enforcement. Violations are happening without consequence. Lack of meaningful fines. So low no incentive to follow rules. Lack of reporting when there are violations.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Concerned about energy use, fossil fuels, renewals. Submission requirements no different for regular use / special set of criteria for energy.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Helpful to have ordinance that covers all topic areas, reach out to [notify public for] all by-right development. Native plants and vegetation.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Enforcement should be more proactive. Process for filing complaint is onerous. Surprised by brashness of enforcement personnel. Ability to talk to someone in County, increase fines for repeat offenders. Developers, change in their pocket and continue with project.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	More incentives, clarity in ordinance. Better performance standards for uses in rural areas, traffic and water implications. Incentives to encourage higher energy standards, tree coverage, affordable housing.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Developer will postpone hearings, up to developer what will happen. Unfair, hard to get people interested and to go to meetings and then they are just canceled.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Narrow down what looking at, criteria, for land.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Problem with complaint based system. Inspector should be able to file the complaint themselves - not wait for citizens. Places neighbors against neighbors.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Allow remote participation for those who cannot drive down to the County and spend the evening.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Submission requirements should depend on use and energy used, some type of building standard specific for commercial properties. Level and extent of submission requirements should be commercial use based.

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5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	In Historic Villages, hydrogeologic studies should be required regardless of lot counts.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Availability of information. Difficult to go onto LOLA and link page for someone else. Difficult to share information.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Require proof of wetland or stream mitigation before permit issued.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	AR districts - current cohousing definition needs to be changed to meet GP, existing definition might not be appropriate. There is a need for farm workers in that sector as well.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	A lot have trails, but they are all private. Can we put something that requires HOAs to look at the big picture in design of trail and include parking areas?
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Steep slopes aren't as useful for farming. Mountainside overlay district consider using elevation...Historic overlay districts, densities do not match up with GP, align those to fit better.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Better layout of our subdivisions, reduced road widths, not as large setbacks, trail connectivity to next subdivision over, diversity of housing type - duplexes etc. increase density.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Concept of neighborhood, connectivity. Trails not publicly accessible. Can there be an incentive? Can County take over some of maintenance to tie neighborhoods together.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Need a variety of housing types.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Trails and neighborhoods - Brambleton pretty good job of connecting. Willowsford does not connect with trails. Big hope for bike commuting, safe routes to schools. Metro allows bikes on trains. This is the future. Should be written in - pedestrian and bicycle paths.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Trail overlay. Maintain broader view and stick with plan. Suitable areas, incentives for landowners and developers to incorporate trails.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Map existing conditions. Tree canopy, trails, natural assets in general, streams. Performance standards and trees - tree conservation plan, enhanced, native plants. 50% nonnative trees. Native vegetation as intended by GP.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Subdivision design include energy and environmental aspects to design. Smaller roads, paving - reduce runoff and pollution into streams. Solar, housing proper orientation. Make Loudoun sustainable. Effective land use, account for sustainability, environment.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Solar panels on data centers. Should be requiring it.

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5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Sidewalks, school walkability. Brand new schools, new neighborhoods and there are no sidewalks. Kids walk on the street. Should be in ordinance, don't know why it isn't.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	4 different districts in Aldie. Should have been fixed in 2001 Comp Plan and was not. Need to look at Villages in ordinance.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Energy on rooftops of houses. If house not built correctly have to put in yard. Address before they build.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Roads used for parking. Dated calculations on how many parking spaces you need. Need to be updated. Many generations living in the same house.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Utility scale projects (solar farms) identify some sort of overlay district. Show where they are appropriate. Ready before these businesses come in. Being built along streams, where forests are being taken down.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Set of definitions - solar farm etc. Prevents second use? Fluctuations with weather...if had another use, could have some stable income. Design in such a way can have second use.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Prime agricultural soils. Prevent preemptive cutting. Emphasize performance standards and what neighbors to south have done. Building codes being used. Virginia 2015 building code standards and there is a 2018 and a 2021 being working on. Need to have current building codes in place.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Biking viewed as a commuter. Much of language goes around recreation but more of a form of transportation. Students, commuters would like to have access to better trails. Efficient connections on trails. Not wandering around neighborhood. Update definitions to reflect and recognize commuter aspect.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Villages surrounded by AR2 - concerned about development. No longer have greenspace defining the village. Keep villages separate.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Cluster, density bonuses, three criteria - 1. Best farmland should be set aside after septic needs taken care of. 2. Best farmland prioritized for farmable portion left. Should be contiguous as much as possible and not just mowed. 3. Units of open space should have building right. Farm can buy it and have a house on it. Focus on Agricultural value of open space.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Look at current site and natural assets. Protect riparian buffers and wetlands. Adequate open space. How many houses for cluster? Performance standards are not robust enough. People picking loopholes to pack as many houses as possible.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Clustering outside of villages. Does it make sense to have them at edge of growth areas? Same for towns.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Citizens are confused - where do they take concerns about growth at edge of town? Town or County? Where do they go first? Explain that process when joint procedure.

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5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Land within subdivision should be contiguous. Current road will separate a subdivision.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Performance standards conservation design. Viewshed. Environmental aspects. Prioritize ag etc.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Come up with a form of development, housing lots as small as possible. Become a leading example to variety of sensitive issues. Forefront of standards, apply, values to inform everything.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Goose Creek Scenic River, overlays too small and too specific. Go back to 2003. Much bigger and better defined then. Environmental key to scenic river, water quality.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Certificate of Appropriateness to allow HDRC or another public body to make sure development in line with overall district whether historic or something specific to environment. How being addressed and should they be further looked at.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Permit to bulldoze? Is it byright? Catocin Mountain cleared woods for parking lot brewery.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	River stream corridor - look at wildlife corridors. Reduce vehicular collisions. Riparian buffers make wider, better water quality. Overlay for linear parks and trails, combine with riparian buffer overlay district as well. Recreation and protecting wildlife is a natural fit. No referral agency to keep an out for implementing such a strategy.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Emerald ribbons concept would align with 2003 Goose Creek Scenic River overlay.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Route 50 monarch butterfly corridor maintained by VDOT, provide incentives for data centers or others to benefit environment. Gray areas between roads and neighborhoods, creative plant ideas.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Wildlife corridors not just for mammals - pollinators. Beneficial to have. Require higher percentage of plants.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Prime soils in rural areas. Overlay or incentive to encourage development to be sensitive and avoid those soils. Includes event areas - be sensitive to that.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Redevelopment - opportunities. Impervious. As redevelop, increase native and green spaces within them. Having guidelines would be useful.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Rural subdivisions include dirt roads. Do they all have to be paved?
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Make all recommended plants native. Why would we need to use non-natives? Have native plant nurseries here in Loudoun.

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5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Overlay districts and stream and river corridors keep in mind ecosystem. Buffer too. Avoid fragmentation of ecosystem. On one property - where is it on the other property. Big overview. Identify and protect similar to wetlands.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Berming integrates plantings for screening outside of Leesburg. Heavily planted. Good scale plantings to hide subdivisions.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Take overlays seriously. Especially limestone too.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Regarding parking, encourage bike racks where neighborhoods connect with commercial. More convenient to door. Attractive designs out there like sculptures. Direct routes. Trails do not have to be paved. Can be crushed limestone. Ride on protected trails, where it is safe, and not roads.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Parking for horses to use trails. Consider in design, permitting access through HOAs.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	More shared parking especially in mixed-use settings. Church/offices. Improvement of our intersections. Innovative designs. Columbia and Brazil - colorful. Make Loudoun unique and pedestrian/bicycle friendly, safe.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Rural Policy Area performance standard compatible road from subdivision road to rural road. Require subdivisions to not have paved?
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Safer streets by design. Not as big. Not as conducive to speeding.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Make people centered. If want to get people out on their bikes and walking want to give them reason to come out. Enjoyable and positive experience. Allow for creative design at intersections.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Recommend solar panels under powerlines.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	How can zoning play a part in transportation and parks. Performance standards for intersections? Make them more compatible.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Ashburn Village Blvd. Have bike trails that end in neighborhoods right across from metro.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	More compact neighborhoods, plan well, and have more open space. Protect open space that does exist. Should it be an easement? Make requirement to be put under conservation easement with a land trust.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Encourage keeping historic character of villages. Not just in villages though. Many historic places are privately owned. Nice if county could have an inventory of historic properties. Concerned about historic assets.

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5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Zoning Ordinance never lives up to General Plan.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Affordable dwelling units, modest lots and homes. Compact villages.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Make sure to remove invasive species in performance standards.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Enforcement - can ordinance be clear and have a checklist or something when get to FSM. Things get overlooked. Make sure ordinance can be enforced. Seamless through all county documents/plans.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Hope ZO takes bigger picture/view, protect miles of trails not segments.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Make it easier to navigate to find something quick.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Unique opportunity to get type of development we hope to see around metro. Provide green spaces. TPA important to maintain open space and put open space parcels in some kind of easement. Continuity of trails to create an enjoyable to and fro. Look at cluster subdivision loopholes. Treat villages as assets and align with GP.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	See more sustainability in ordinance. Encroachment happening on our parks. Banshee Reeks etc. Development getting closer and closer. Does not feel like parks anymore. Feel like walking through peoples backyards. Encroachment on wetlands and historic resources. Recognize and appreciate our history and not do the minimum (put a fence around it). Put a plaque, understand history.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	More visuals in Zoning Ordinance. Picture is worth a thousand words.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Affordable housing - plan for differently in areas. Accessory units. Where and how appropriate.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Tighten up zoning to effectively use incentives. Additional density to incentivize.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Like county to look at through different lens. What we do with our land or plan - what we do to our environment. Renewable sources of energy and jobs.
5/1/2020	Piedmont Environmental Council	Affordable housing, lower income, have good connection for bicycles, pedestrians. With COVID so many people appreciating the outdoors. Will not go away anytime soon. More room to walk, bike, go to the parks. Keep them available for the future.