



SUMMARY

Climate Protection Action Committee
Monthly Appointee Meeting
Friday, April 10, 2026 9:00 a.m.
Hybrid meeting: In-person & Teams

Appointees Present: Josey Cline, Cameron Cohran, Joyce Rose-Harris, Ben Marosites, Caroline Nagel, Bob Petrulis, Julie Seel, Dave Voyles, Dennis Wiehl.

Guests and Staff: Mary Pat Baldauf, Samantha Cornell, Jory Fleming, Samantha Yager.

Cameron called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

Bob Petrulis made a motion that the March meeting summary be approved. Dennis Wiehl seconded it, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Cameron called on the group for any report backs from the last meeting and/or environmental events. Dennis Wiehl said that he attended the first Congaree Riverfront District Public Meeting on April 1. He reported that there was a good crowd and one of the things requested from the group was how they would get to the new park when completed.

As far as an update for the bylaws, we're waiting for the Health Social and Environmental Affairs committee to approve them and refer them to City Council for final approval. Mary Pat said that the Committee will meet in May and tentatively have CPAC on the agenda for an update. The by-laws should be able to be discussed at that time.

Next up was an update on the Bloomberg Youth Climate Action program. Mary Pat reported that we're now waiting to hear plans for the next round of Bloomberg grants. The Mayor's Office hasn't heard anything yet, but the Mayor will be with some Bloomberg folks at a meeting in late April, so we might hear something back then.

Mary Pat reminded the group that the Earth Day Climate Action Fair is coming up on Saturday, April 18 at the intersection of Washington and Main Streets at Soda City. Mary Pat shared two lists from the event, as well as a copy of the pledge card that will be used for the rain barrel drawing and bag giveaway. Exhibitors received an information packet with details about the event this week. She has been recruiting volunteers for week. While registration numbers are strong, we can always use an

extra set of hands or two. Many of the student volunteers are from participants from the Bloomberg Youth Climate Action program; their engagement is yet another benefit of the program.

Jory Fleming then reported on the CPRG grant. The regional plan has been with the designer for a couple of weeks, and the target release date is Earth Day proper (April 22), but there's a chance it will be ready for the Earth Day Climate Action Fair. The plan will be 300 pages, but there are plans underway to create a 15-page version at a high school reading level with infographics to explain plan components. Jory reported that he would be employed by the Council of Governments through June, 2027 and would be available to assist the City on the development of a new climate action plan based on the regional plan. He also said that he'd be available to go through the final plan at a late summer CPAC working session. He also noted that the CPRG Planning grant will remain available through June, 2027.

In the CPAC subgroup update, Dave Voyles reported that the City's working Bee City Committee will hold quarterly meetings and that the next meeting will be held on April 13. Dave has asked to look into the possibility of accessing and/or creating a Columbia pollinator garden map.

Dennis Wiehl then reported on behalf of the Smart Growth Committee. He indicated that Richland County had published a draft plan and that he was inviting a representative of the County Planning Department to attend the next working committee meeting, which would be the April 17 Environmental Roundtable meeting. He hopes to schedule a time to update Cameron and Nicole soon. He also attended the recent meeting of SODA POP, a local chapter of Strong Towns, <https://www.strongtowns.org/>.

In staff updates, Samantha Yager reported that 212 vehicles came to the April 3 compost giveaway event. This weekend is the rain barrel/compost bin sale update at Historic Columbia. The department and the Recycling Wizard will be represented at the April 18 Earth Day Climate Action Fair, and the Wizard is scheduled for a Columbia Police Department walk on April 25. In response to a question, she reported that the City recycling hovers around 450 tons monthly, with spikes around the holidays, Spring cleaning and USC move in/move out.

Mary Pat reported that most of her time has been dedicated to planning for the Earth Day event. She also provided an update on the April issue of *Speaking Sustainability*.

In new business, Dennis mentioned his conversation with Osprey Rail, a company interested in developing high speed rail from Greenville to Charleston with a stop in Columbia. He also presented several news articles of interest.

Bob Petrulis announced that the Climate Reality Project would be hosting a free 20th anniversary showing of *An Inconvenient Truth* at The Nickelodeon Theater on Saturday, April 25 at 6:30 p.m. There will be a panel discussion following the showing.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:05 a.m.