

Howard County Environmental Sustainability Board Retreat
Howard County Conservancy at Mount Pleasant - Woodstock, MD
September 7, 2017
6:30pm-9pm

Attendees

Mark Southerland	ESB
Olivia Farrow	ESB
Ed Wilson	ESB
Sonie He	ESB
Chris Tsien	ESB
Ann Strozyk	ESB
Georgia Eacker	ESB
Tom Paxton	ESB
Bill Mahoney	OCS
Elissa Reineck	OCS
Matt Hoover	OCS

Summary

6:30 PM – Ann gave a tour of the Howard County Conservancy at Mount Pleasant. The tour consisted of history of the Conservancy and a walk around the facility.

7:12 PM – The Meeting was started by Mark and a discussion of a sustainability award began. Some questions were, who should be able to receive the award and if it should have several categories. The board wants to see if it can get the County Executive to have a day and present the award to the recipient or recipients. Another question brought up is how to promote the award. A suggestion was made that if a teacher won the award to have it be given to them at one of the school's ceremonies. An award committee was put together which will consist of Georgia, Ed, Tom and Sonia.

7:30 PM – Mark gave an update on the Bird Building Collision Committee. They currently have a two-page spec sheet. It was stated that solutions are out there to help minimize bird building collisions. Mark spoke to HC Planning & Zoning and Calvin Ball regarding the BBC. Mark had a meeting with Greg Fitchitt and his staff at Howard Hughes regarding bird building collisions. It was stated during that meeting that businesses like the glass buildings. A new committee was started by the BBC called Blue Skies and the goal of the committee is to set up and give presentations for companies. Christine Sheppard of the American Bird Conservancy and Ann Lewis, the Director of Lights Out DC, are going to speak at Sustainability Day on October 18.

Mark advised that a resolution for amending the Green Neighborhood standards was going up for legislation. Developers asked for changes to Green Neighborhoods, to make it easier to obtain the status. They want to get more potential credits on the list and more flexibility with the requirements. Some questions are, should they add new credits or should some things be worth more credits. Currently a developer needs to meet about fifty percent of the credits to qualify. Some believe there is no incentive if there are too many overall allocations. John Weinstein and Calvin Ball are currently reviewing this.

A discussion of incorporating raising monarchs into the 3rd grade Howard County curriculum was started. The current program is currently not working. One reason it doesn't work is because of the time of year the program begins. The school should have milkweed and if it does not, it should be grown. Signage should be posted for where milkweed is growing. They need sources to help fund the program and one possibility would be to get a grant. A suggestion was to contact Xerces Society because they used to give out milkweed and may help schools with obtaining it.

Announcements

Howard EcoWorks is trying to get people to plant in Ellicott City via a program called EC Soak It Up. The new Watershed Action Team will be encouraging EC Watershed residents to plant by using grants to lessen the cost to the resident.

September 16th the Watershed Palooza will be held at River Hill from 12:00 PM to 2:00 PM.

September 16th Drive Electric Week Showcase and Tailgate will be held at Clarksville Commons from 12:00 PM to 4:00 PM.

September 17th Robinson Nature Center Anniversary Open House will be held from 12:00 PM to 5:00 PM.

October 1st Horizon will hold its third annual Open Streets on Columbia Road. The goal is to get people to walk or bike down to Dorsey Hall Drive. The event is from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM.

A question was brought up to see if there was any legislation about plastic bags coming up. Kenya, Hawaii, Austin Texas and DC currently have some type of bans on plastic bags. There is no good data yet that measures the benefits. On Route 40 there are plastic bags that are covering plants. It was noted that not everyone is opposed to disposable plastic bags.

Possible future topics

- Waste
 - Plastic Bags
 - Take back programs in Europe

- Bans
 - Fees
 - Elimination of automatic straws
- Cars Mills Site for solar panels
- Downtown Columbia Traffic
 - Land Use
 - Connectivity
 - Trying to make people aware of projects
 - Bike Share
 - Electric Buses
- Food Policy (James Zoller)
 - New Restaurant Distribution
 - HoCo Fresh idea
- Calculating the return on conservation investment and restoration investments
 - Completing a progress report
- Idea of working with small group of stake holders
 - Community members
 - Look for other opportunities to incorporate ecosystem service thinking into
 - Decisions
 - Policy
 - Funding
- Are there opportunities to leverage Green Infrastructure thinking into the county's public works capital funding
- The PPP (Planet Partnership Program)
 - Who is leading
 - Reconnect with the group
- Evaluation of ESB progress to date
 - Complete a progress report
- Promoting better ways to get to work
 - Cost studies of active transportation and benefits in dollars
 - How to coach employees on best practices to get to work
 - Census bureau has list on how people get to work
- Have someone from Howard County come in to speak about traffic/transportation
- PACE
 - Status of program
 - Program needs more attention
 - Get someone from PACE to come in
- Get people from the development community to come in
 - One topic discussed was how often could 20 acres or more of grading occur?
 - Jamie Frasier as a possibility
- Long Reach update – possibly in spring

- Wild Lake Middle School
 - Field Trip – net zero energy tour
- Update on Complete Streets
- Mark gave format of meeting
 - 2 half hour talks
 - Time for questions after each presentation

October 12

- Christine will speak on DNR climate policy
- James Zoller will present food policy progress in HC
- Clive Graham will present Transit Development Plan

November 9 TBD

- Option 1 Transportation case study from Exelon/Constellation
 - Ed will ask colleague
 - Chris will ask for HC speaker
- Option 2 Development Community
 - Mark will ask Jamie Fraser
- Option 3 Forest Conservation or Carrs Mill Solar Project

December 14

- DNR on ecosystem service accounting
- Bill will give presentation on Green Infrastructure Network
- Forest Conservation Act update if it is ready

9:00 PM Meeting Adjourned