

Howard County Environmental Sustainability Board Meeting
Robinson Nature Center - Columbia, MD
May 11, 2017
7pm-9pm

Attendees

Keith Ohlinger	Farmer/WIN
Chris Tsien	ESB
Tom Paxton	ESB
Raul Delerme	HoCo Rec & Parks
John Byrd	HoCo Rec & Parks
Olivia Farrow	ESB
Georgia Eacker	ESB
Mark Southerland	ESB
Ann Strozyk	ESB
Paul Lin	ESB Student Rep

Summary

7:10 pm – Mark started the meeting and everyone gave a brief introduction of themselves.

7:15 pm – John Byrd from the Howard County Department of Rec & Parks discussed the LPPRP (Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan). Their goal is to have a more realistic sense of what the community wanted. They did various surveys and public meetings to find out what the community wanted from the plan. Some consistent feedback they received is to have more indoor and multi-use facilities.

Things they had to consider when drafting the plan were easements such as historical and agricultural. They also want to help preserve the Green Infrastructure Network. Their goal is to not disturb the ecosystem, except for building construction where mass grading would be necessary. They are also working with the Maryland Department of Planning and Zoning. They wanted to make parks more accessible to walking and riding bikes to help coincide with the Bike Plan.

Concerning Blandair Park, they said their goal is to not disturb the ecosystem in the northern section, except for building construction where the only mass grading would be needed. They are partnering with the school system on Mission Road to make better use of the facilities. They are starting to address run off when designing new fields. There are currently no plans to build more fields, at this time. They have been discussing adding Community Gardens and it is included in the plan. They are currently open to new ideas regarding the Blandair Festival Lawn since the initial plan was created a while ago.

Their goals are to not build anything that won't be used in the future and make better use of smaller acreage. They are trying to go in the direction the rest of the County is going and the biggest thing they want to do is to make sure the plan fits.

Howard County Recreation and Parks/Planning <https://www.howardcountymd.gov/LPPRP>

7:55 pm – Keith Ohlinger went over the benefits of soil health. Some benefits are cleaner air, cooler land, and the ability to raise the water holding capacity of the soil. There is a lot of potential to add organic matter into the soil and if we raise organic matter in soil it will be cheaper. Individual homeowners can do it themselves and an example provided was letting grass grow taller. There are some hurdles, such as how some people in the community will view the processes to increase the soil health and the cost of soil testing.

8:17 pm – Mark provided an update on the BBC (Bird Building Collision Task Force). There is a plan to do data research. The BBC is trying to preserve a natural habitat for birds throughout the county, especially in Columbia. They want to get architects involved with the Task Force. The Task Force is thinking of completing a one to three paged document to present to the council. He presented the idea of the BBC being a committee for ESB. The board took a vote and it was unanimous that the BBC would be a committee for ESB.

8:31 pm – Paul Lin gave an overview of the 2017 Howard County Environmental Symposium for Howard County High School students.

Guest Speaker: Tim Foresman – Former UN Program Director of Earth Warming

Booth Attendance

- 35 plus in support
- 20 plus in physical attendance
- 15 plus providing pamphlets
- 3 national attendance booths
- 7 local, state and National Government Booths
- 4 College & University booths
- 25 plus volunteer opportunity booths
- 10 plus internships

Speakers

- Opening Speaker – Former UN Program Director of Earth Warming, Tim Foresman
- Student Speaker – Senior of Marriotts Ridge High School, Sachi Rai
- Conclusion Speaker – Vice President of AKRF, Mark Southerland

Student Attendance

- Over 40 students

- 7 of 12 Howard County High Schools represented in attendance
- 6 of 12 Howard County High Schools represented in leadership

Groups broken down for discussion

- Recycling
 - Bin differentiation
 - Social pressure
 - Increase access
- Energy Usage
- Awareness
 - Clubs
 - Volunteering

Projects/Blueprints – Paper towel composting in bathroom as sample

- Laid out plan/guidelines to make easier
- Gave contact information for the project for assistance
- Have ten projects that are being shared between schools
- Goal is to make it easier for schools to start their own projects

Project/Goals

- Booths
- School Project Books – 10 so far
- Student ideas to be taken back to each school
- Students that attend become leaders at their school
- Conference future

He thanked the board for the assistance with the Symposium

8:56 pm – Meeting Adjourned