

Howard County Environmental Sustainability Board Meeting  
 Robinson Nature Center – Columbia, MD  
 May 10, 2018  
 7pm-9pm

**Attendees**

Tom Paxton	ESB
Ann Strozyk	ESB
Carolyn Parsa	Safe Skies MD/Less Plastic Please/Sierra Club
Pat Hersey	Indivisible HoCo Environmental Action Plan
Mark Southerland	ESB
Georgia Eacker	ESB
Sonia He	ESB
Chris Tsien	ESB
Christine Conn	ESB
Kelly Hensing	ESB
Olivia Farrow	ESB
Bill Mahoney	OCS
Ed Wilson	ESB
Ed Dudek	Plastics
Dina Boogaard	Plastics
John Garber	Savage Community Association
Susan Garber	Savage Community Association
Joel Hurewitz	Indivisible HoCo Environmental Action Plan
Mariah Hughes	Resident
Kim Schaffer	Resident
Megan Johnson	Resident/Less Plastic Please
Alisa Niefeld	Indivisible HoCo/Less Plastic Please
Tim Lattimer	Indivisible HoCo
Mary Lynn Ferma	Indivisible HoCo
Richard Deutschmann	Indivisible HoCo/Less Plastic Please
Ashley Van Stone	Trash Free Maryland

**Minutes**

7:03 PM – Mark Southerland started the meeting and had everyone in the room introduce themselves.

7:05 PM – Ashley Van Stone from Trash Free Maryland (TFMD) began her presentation on “Addressing and Preventing Trash.” TFMD’s goal is to prevent litter, reduce waste, protect communities and ecosystems.

The focus of the presentation was on plastic. Over 300 million pounds of plastics are produced each year. According to the EPA, only nine percent of plastic in the US is recycled each year. It is estimated by 2050 there will be more plastic than fish, by weight, in the ocean. A study conducted by the

International Union for the Conservation of Nature found that 95% of plastic in the oceans comes from land.

Microplastic is another growing concern. Microplastics are small plastic pieces that are less than five milli-meters in length, which can be harmful to the ocean and aquatic life. A test was completed on twelve beers that used Lake Superior water and it found that an average of 4.05 pieces of microplastic were found per liter. In 2015, water samples were taken from the Chesapeake Bay and 100% of the samples collected contained microplastic. Legislation passed in 2015 to ban microbeads in personal care products in Maryland, which is the first state to do so. They are also starting to do studies on people that consume fish.

Ashley mentioned the complexity of litter. People are more likely to litter when trash is already in the area. Many think it is an isolated issue with an isolated population. Historical efforts to stop pollution from 2012 to the present are attempts to ban/limit plastic bags, various attempts to pass container deposit legislation, legislation to ban microbeads in personal care products, and legislation to ban Expanded Polystyrene Foam.

Other TFMD initiatives are supporting synthetic playground services, reducing mattress litter and the recycling of mattresses. Requiring public events of 200 or more people to provide recycling containers next to trash containers. Imposing of points on license when convicted of illegal dumping in Maryland. A current project in motion is foam legislation in Anne Arundel County and the City of Annapolis.

They have five community outreach tactics which are Agile, Framing, Tools, Visibility and Accessibility. Agile is to adapt to your audience. Framing is giving an invitation to join versus being exclusionary and combative. The Tools being used are social media, social capital and social systems. Visibility is to make progress visible and to tell stories of progress, so they can reinforce awareness, extend ownership and mature engagement. Accessibility by assessing barriers in attitude, infrastructure and circumstances.

One of their current projects is Trash Free Baltimore. They are looking at type of litter, how and where it is generated and where it ends up. The goal is to change the environment, change the problem and change the behavior. TFMD wants to take a more hands-on involvement with this approach and replicate it in other parts of the state.

They have a “Don’t Let the Summer Suck” Campaign that is going to start in June 2018 and run through August 2018. Individuals and restaurants can commit to the pledge. The goal is to raise awareness of single use waste that becomes pollution with the focus on straws. The idea is to create and encourage new norms.

For more information about Trash Free Maryland please visit. → <https://trashfreemaryland.org/>

7:51 PM – Pat Hersey and Carolyn Parsa provided information on the “Less Plastic Please” campaign. The goal of the campaign is to let the community know the effect of plastic use and its harmfulness to the environment. They want to lead by example, which in turn will hopefully create a ripple effect throughout the community.

One issue they brought up was plastic bag use. They feel that education and having a fee on the bags is the best way to help reduce, or eliminate plastic bag use. They have consulted with the Sierra Club and Trash Free Maryland to discuss how to get legislation passed. The Prince George's County Sierra Club completed a survey, which found that 8% of the people they surveyed came out of the stores with a reusable bag. In Montgomery County, where they have a fee, 57% came out of the store with reusable bags. They completed their own study in Howard County and found that 9% of the people they surveyed came out with reusable bags.

8:12 PM – Susan Garber of the Howard County Sierra Club, and her husband John Garber, spoke to the ESB about a proposed development in Savage, The Settlement at Savage Mill. They oppose the current plan to develop homes at this location. They also spoke about Howard County's Forest Conservation Act, arguing that Targeted Ecological Areas, Forest Conservation Areas, and other delineated land resources are not being adequately protected in Howard County. They provided the following website for those who wish to learn more about their position → <https://stoptheswap.weebly.com/>

After the Land Development presentation, Mark advised that Valdis Lazdins, the Director of Howard County's Department of Planning and Zoning, is going to attend a future Environmental Sustainability Board meeting.

8:45 PM – The Green Apple Award is an Environmental Sustainability Board award that will be given out to a teacher each year. It will go to a teacher who goes above and beyond their daily responsibilities to increase students' awareness of environmental issues. It is open to teachers from grade K through 12. The committee is still deciding on who will be the judges. They want to present the award to the teacher in front of the student body, if possible. They also discussed the potential of having two awards. One for Elementary School teachers and one for High School teachers.

8:55 PM – Mark moved to approve the April meeting minutes, Tom seconded and all other board members in attendance approved.

8:56 PM – Meeting adjourned.