

Howard County Environmental Sustainability Board Meeting
Robinson Nature Center - Columbia, MD
February 15, 2017
7pm-9pm

Attendees

Name	Affiliation
Olivia Farrow	ESB
Tom Paxton	ESB
Chris Tsien	ESB
Ann Strozyk	ESB
John Dove	ESB
Ned Tillman	ESB
Georgia Eacker	ESB
Betsy Singer	ESB
Elissa Reineck	OCS
Christine Conn	ESB
Nancy McAllister	ESB
Jim Caldwell	OCS
Mark Southerland	ESB
Jeff Klenk	HCPSS
Greg Maciulla	HCPSS
Scott Washington	HCPSS
Anissa Dennis	HCPSS
Olivia Claus	HCPSS
Diane Sweeney	HCPSS
Chein-Chi Chang	ESB
Paul Lin	ESB
Bill Mahoney	OCS
Margo Deusterhaus	Public
Charlie Goedeke	Public
Ed Wilson	ESB

Minutes

7:00pm

Ned Tillman invited the board and visitors to begin a round of introductions.

Ned Tillman and Mark Southerland met with representatives from the HCPSS prior to this meeting to discuss the Board's report, commissioned by the County Council, on the previously completed reports regarding indoor air quality at Howard County schools. They also discussed general HCPSS sustainability initiatives. Ned noted that the staff of Governor Hogan had inquired with Jim Caldwell, OCS Director, and Ned himself about the Board's report.

Olivia Claus gave an extensive overview of the green/sustainability initiatives, awards, and certifications of the HCPSS. Howard County Public School System has an array of policies and procedures designed to make schools safer and more sustainable. One example of a certification of excellence is the Green Seal of Approval. The school system uses integrated pest management strategies and green cleaners, as two examples of practices leading to Green Seal and other recognition. An indoor air quality (IAQ) component was added to their current sustainability plan.

An extensive discussion of the HCPSS sustainability measures began after the HCPSS representative's introduction. Some of the points of interest from that conversation are recorded below:

- School construction plans and processes are reviewed by school facility staff to ensure their understanding of the design and to provide them opportunity to comment.
- Currently 9 HCPSS schools are LEED certified and 6 that are in construction will be certified. 7 of the 9 LEED certifications came in above their initial design level; meaning, if a project was over-designed for silver to ensure that level of achievement, the project could, and often has, actually come in as gold.
- HCPSS is aware that there are LEED points to be had through locating schools near bus routes and other community resources, but HCPSS tends to focus their LEED designs to achieve points on the school grounds as it has proven an efficient method for achieving LEED certification for schools.
- If a school will undergo a full systemic overhaul the school will be redesigned to make LEED certification. If a school is adding an addition, or doing basic maintenance, LEED will generally not be sought.
- HCPSS considers nontraditional materials to improve lifecycle cost return values.
- The state only provides money for renovation of schools that are at least 15 years past their last renovation.
- HCPSS averages 23% recycling across the district. Four schools are recycling food scraps and other schools plan to adopt the program in the near future. Over 24 tons of waste has been diverted in the last 2 years. Compostable trays have been used for a few years now.
- Some competition exists between schools for improving energy use, however the variety of extracurricular activities available at different schools tends to washout the fairness of such competition. As HCPSS policy is to use schools to benefit as much of the community as possible, these activities take precedence over energy savings, and make such an energy savings competition difficult to achieve.
- 62% of HCPSS schools are MD Green School Certified through the MAEOE Green Schools Program.
- Administrators are getting rid of superfluous refrigerators and other electronics. They expect to see a cost and energy savings in the next year.
- Georgia Eacker outlined the typical issues surrounding the maintenance of raingardens at schools. She recommends PTAs be made aware of the issues and involved in the long term maintenance plans. Anissa Dennis asked for a list and location of the degraded gardens in order to follow up, and said PTAP meetings is one place where they might seek help.

Greg Maciulla has been through all the schools once to inspect issues of IAQ. He is gearing up for a second round. All concerns noted during the first inspection will be inspected again. Major issues have

had work orders issued and he will be looking to make sure those have been fulfilled. Staff are included in walkthroughs to ensure their understanding of the issues surrounding IAQ. Web based information on IAQ systems is increasingly available, including policy additions, to ensure that employees of all levels have the same information available.

- Semi-annual IAQ walkthrough data is posted on each school's website. The semiannual walkthrough checklists are on the websites.

- Many schools have the date of their next IAQ walks posted online so that parents can attend.

8:15

Ed Wilson summarized results of the Energy Task Force (ETF).

Various stakeholders including government, businesses and nonprofits convened each month to discuss current County energy policy and consider ways to improve energy efficiency for both financial and environmental reasons. The task force worked more on a qualitative level than quantitative, generally evaluating policies rather than specific projects.

The full Task Force Report is available online @ <http://livegreenhoward.com/green/energy/energy-task-force/>

10 general recommendations came out of the Task Force; five are listed here

- 1) Have a Director of Energy working at a policy level that reports to the Administration.

- 2) Add money to the capital budget for renewable energy projects.

- 3) Require County departments to pay for their own energy expenditures.

- 4) Explore ways the County can promote renewable energy. One is the community solar pilot program that was created by the State. There is a cap on how much can be done so it would be timely for Howard County to help the process along.

- 5) Secure emergency power for vulnerable populations and essential resources like the HC General Hospital

Representatives from Transition Howard County expressed an interest in promoting some of the recommendations.

ESB members approved the chair sending a letter to County Executive Kittleman supporting the ETF recommendations and the creation of a Director of Energy position.

8:45

Director's report

Jim Caldwell, OCS Director reported on the activities of the Office.

OCS is involved in conversations about the future of a tax credit for energy efficient homes.

OCS is helping the Nixon Farm renegotiate their tax break for their solar farm due to the expansion of Route 32 making it impossible for them to deliver the originally agreed upon 6 megawatts.

Elissa is working with Fleet Management to address life cycle cost savings by purchasing hybrid vehicles. Jim will make a case to MDE about getting TMDL credit for the nitrogen reduction associated with moving to hybrid.

OCS is working with Walmart to convert a stormwater pond to treat for more quantity and quality. The project would be credited at 20 acres. The project is in the Tiber Hudson watershed and costs roughly \$15k per acre of treatment, which is much cheaper than most stormwater management.

The septic program is moving forward. The County is giving \$100 to citizens on septic who submit proof that they have had their septic pumped. Septic pumping is another very cost effective solution at about \$3k per acre rather. Stream restoration averages \$65k per acre.

The Agriculture Round Table convened with OCS, DPZ, the Executive's Office, Soil Conservation Division and farmers. The group will meet biweekly to discuss agriculture issues. There will be a hoco farms.com or similarly named website forthcoming to serve as a clearing house and information sharing point for farmers who can advertise needs and resources to other farmers.

Roving radish goal this year is another increase, up to 300 meal kits per week and there will be a vegetarian option.

The READY Program recently won the Chesapeake Bay Trust's Melanie Teems Award, given to a program worthy of emulation by other County governments.

Jim also recognized Ann Strozyk, new ESB member, who was recently awarded the Above and Beyond Award by the Maryland Water Monitoring Council for her education, stewardship, and advocacy work.

Meeting Adjourned