

**AGENDA FOR THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY
MEETING AND GREEN TEAM MEETING**

Tuesday, October 25, 2022 - 7:30 pm – Virtual Meeting

Members present: Ron Bjorkland, Rhema Bjorkland, Erica Hernandez, Larry Hilliard, John Lippert, Steve Skolnik, Jane Young

Liaisons: Luisa Robles (staff liaison), Kristen Weaver (council liaison)

Visitors: Tom Taylor, Bill Orleans

Excused Absences: Matt Dirksen, Xochitl Zamora-Thompson

Absent:

Call to order: 7:03

Updates from Sustainability Framework / Green Team Circles.

a. Energy / Alternative Energy Circle –
EVIPG-updates

- No updates currently. Steve offered congrats on the success of the EV Event. Lessons from this event is a lot of parking space is needed. That would be a logistical challenge. Also need more assistance. There was some feedback and suggestions to have more people involved with social media, word of mouth, and onsite help if we hope to have a larger turnout.

For the next EV Event--Do we want to start planning another event in Greenbelt West, or Central? A suggestion to approach the management in the development next to the Courthouse. Also, Beltway Plaza. OR the Office Park area. Timing--plan for a late Spring event. Promotion needs to be ramped up. Question--Would WMATA allow the event in Park & Ride? A: WMATA has a lot of rules. The space is not that large; need a dedicated space for EV vehicles only. Other suggestions: Library parking lot and lower Youth Center section. Would need permission to demarcate. Also St Hugh's school parking lot.

On a separate note--plans are underway for chargers at Police Station; a meeting with the Police leadership is needed in the future for EV awareness.

A PhD student at the U. of MD has a survey to determine interest of low-income population interest in EVs. On Labor Day Information Day 4 people signed up and brought their EVs to the EV Event, and 2 people came as visitors as result of the information given. Also, suggestion to investigate getting dealers involved.

Food Systems / Sustainable Land Care/Pollinators Circle. Xochitl and Luisa set up the Display Case in the Community Center. Go visit it! Green ACES/Green Team is asked annually to do this. Thanks to Xochitl & Luisa.

Pollinator circle--Looking for help to write articles for the News Review on leaving leaf litter through the Winter to support wildlife, fall blooms, etc. Melissa Sites is a writer for the NR; she can help.

Organizing volunteer events to control invasives in a path between Ridge Rd and Lakeside – October and November. NOTE: November 5th workday (between Bridge & Lakeside)- to plant pollinator plants and trees. Kevin already has some paw paw trees and other plants that can be used.

Event on Permaculture and Foraging in the woods. No updates. Xochitl had wanted to make contact with Bowie connection. Foraging for Paw Paw popularity has grown. A seed bank has been set up by CHEARS.

The pollinator circle has a new member.

- b. **Green Building** – We have also talked in the past about writing articles. An article on Weatherization would be good. Now is a good time to do it. Some things could even be done in GHI. On hold for now.
- c. **Land Use** / - No update
- d. **Transportation**. No update
- e. **Local Economies - Time Bank Circle**. Time bank Circle planning group will meet next week. Buy Nothing Greenbelt is a similar concept.
- f. **Waste Management / Zero Waste Circle** –

Martha Ainsworth from Sierra Club gave a presentation to City Council on Municipalities enacting a “best practice ordinance” to ban plastic bags and allow commercial entities to charge for the paper bags they issue. Does Green ACES want to recommend Council to come up with such an ordinance? Can Greenbelt get consensus with our neighbors? To be discussed at the next Four Cities meeting. Some ordinances are focused on grocery stores. What about enforcement? NOTE: City Council seemed receptive. Martha sent John a link highlighting the effort in Easton, which met with unanimous support. It was promoted by an active “Plastic Free Easton.” John will share the link.

College Park will vote shortly on such a ban.

Working with Berwyn Heights, New Carrollton and Hyattsville. [Good to compare with Easton] Kathy Bartolomeo (member of the Green Team’s Zero Waste Circle) shared that Kristen will ask Council to schedule a meeting to talk about the best practice ordinance for the banning of plastic bags.

Might focus on grocery stores to begin with. [A productive work session would have a draft ordinance to review.]

Action item: Get copies of the language of the bans in various jurisdictions and decide on specifics of what Greenbelt should do.

A work session could be scheduled after Green ACES has thoroughly reviewed the options. Co-op Manager Dan may have some valuable insights. The annual Co-op meeting is November 12th in the Community Center gym at 10:30 am. Comment: To promote bring your own bag, one idea is to have kids decorate the “family” bag. This could be incorporated into the Co-op meeting. Another venue for such activity could be holiday events. Or Buy Nothing Greenbelt could set up a collection for reusable bags. It was noted that maintenance of a drop-off site may be an issue.

John proposed a series of short “Did you know” articles and to include information on plastic pollution. Perhaps A “Plastic Free Greenbelt” may be a goal.

-USDA Composting, food producing, soil amelioration grant with Compost Crew, City Gardens, and CHEARS – grant was submitted. We will hear in November if we are awarded a grant with a January start date.

CMON and Compost Crew have been working to get Firebird Farms involved. UDC’s Director of Environment has been broached about land for a compost facility that would be set up and operated by Compost Crew. CMON has had discussions with several Four Cities officials.

A food recovery article was published in the News Review.

- g. **Water / Streams** – GHI task force has been tasked with researching permeable surfaces. Will meet with Terry Hruby to learn from the city’s experience. Also, discussion with Mount Rainier.

1. **Events/Other: Dinner for Committees and Boards**. The Dinner took place on 10/16 at the Community Center. It was a good event, smaller than past years. Vegan options were fairly limited.

Adjournment: 8:39