

Middletown Sustainability Committee Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: January 19, 2021

Time: 5:00 p.m. to 6:20 p.m.

Zoom Meeting. This meeting was recorded and is archived on BASECAMP.

In attendance: Cindy Unangst, Bill Spare, Mark Carney, Ann Payne, Sean O’Keefe, Jessica Elder, Gene Freeman, Erin Carney, Chris Goodman, Pam McDonald

1. December meeting minutes were approved.
2. Bee City USA (Mark) – BASECAMP project (education/habitat creation/IPM plan)— Mark showed BASECAMP homepage and all groups that are now on BASECAMP. Integrated Pest Management is called “IPM” on the site. No one is on this group yet. Mark let team know that anyone can be added to any of the groups on BASECAMP. If you are not on a group and would like to be, let Mark know and he will add you.
3. Public Education campaign working group—Jessica Elder shared her addition to BASECAMP with a spreadsheet for Green Team Facebook post tracker. She has shared the spreadsheet through Google Docs so we can all edit it and add ideas. She has tabs for Jan and Feb so far, plus an “ideas” tab, where we can list brainstorming ideas for future posts.
4. Green Talks via Zoom with the Library – film project. Mark shared files on BASECAMP for the video project. Mark is going to change the mechanism with how to view and edit the storyboard using Google docs. Ann will integrate images from her pollinator presentation into the video. The committee will continue to meet to further this project along.
5. Compost Bins – Greenbelt has extra that we can purchase, but we would need to pick them up. These are not needed yet.
6. Tree City sign locations and application. Our current Tree City Flag is in tatters and needs to be replaced. They cost \$25/each and Cindy will purchase several as Drew Bowman said they are lightweight and will not last a year. The Tree City program supplies new flags every other year on even years. Tree City USA must be applied for every year—Cindy will follow up with the application.
7. Tree ID trail, Memorial Tree program, tree planting projects—These town projects will allow us to apply for a special Growth Award designation with Tree City.
8. Online Resource Center – Gene Fleeman. Gene took us on a tour of the new website that he is developing based on information that he using from the town site, our comprehensive plan, and resources being listed on BASECAMP. Gene is waiting for feedback from town on subdomain name. Website has capacity to set up email form for folks interested in learning more or joining the Green Team.
9. Comprehensive Plan Sustainability chapter—The Town has still not had time to review the sustainability chapter and Cindy removed it from the agenda for this evening. Suggestion from Gene: Move EV under sustainable energy section.
10. Foxfield Section 6 FRO and walking trails. Cindy reviewed plans for this development and current forested area and areas dedicated to town for future forestation. These areas could be planted with trees through other grants or developers. Cindy reviewed 100 foot buffer to protect the stream/swale on new development plan that will be the responsibility for the town and there will be putting up a permanent fence to divide this area from the homeowners. This area is not to be mowed and could also be planted with trees. Mark mentioned

developing pollinator garden in the area and developing a plan for the town to approve. Cindy mentioned asking the town for funds for this project. Chris wondered if a community garden plan was a possibility—and wondered if the developer would put in water source for this.

11. The Wye Oak: Cindy discussed the young oak tree descended from the famous Wye Oak. The Wye Oak was the state tree and died in 2002. The tree is located near rain garden on north part of Cone Branch Trail/East Green Street.
12. Mayors Monarch Pledge. Cindy noted that town would need to Commit to 3 actions items every year as a minimum. Burgess will need to renew this. Proclamation for protecting the monarchs; Engage local partners (Social media) and groups—community garden groups (wiles Branch and FoxField); Revise maintenance and mowing plans in neighborhoods were suggestions that would be easy to start with as we are already working on these actions in the town.
13. Goals for 2021-Team discussed Green Fest. As it is usually in April, we will not be doing in person events yet in the town. Chris Goodman suggested a virtual Green Fest and suggested reaching out to vendors to see if they would be interested in doing 5 minute video clip that we could post on Facebook throughout April. Minimal work for team as each vendor would prepare their own content and we would share on Facebook and on our web site. Jessica volunteered to help with this.
14. Memorial Tree program —increasing marketing. Pam suggested creating and presenting a nice certificate to someone buying a tree earlier in the year as marker for tree being planted in the fall.
15. Middletown needs a new rain barrel supplier and Cindy asked for group members to let her know if they have leads. Also, looking for possible grants to help pay for rain barrels. The town has subsidized costs of rain barrels to residents in the past.
16. MUMFC grant for more trees to plant. Cindy is applying again this year.
17. Ann let team members know about upcoming virtual presentations by experts in native and pollinator landscaping: Doug Tallamy virtual presentation on Sunday, March 21 at 7 pm and Kerry Wixted's "Wildscaping with Native Plants" webinar on April 18 at 7 pm sponsored by MAC.
18. Ann talked about Audubon society training for home garden advisors for native gardens. Ann will try to engage Central Audubon to bring this program to Frederick county, Middletown in particular.
19. February meeting date – third Tuesday – February 19th by Zoom at 5 p.m.