

APPROVED February 20, 2024 Middletown Sustainability Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday, February 20th in person and via Lifesize

Time: 5:00- 6:15 p.m.

In Attendance: Agnesanne Danehey, Lexi Sassi, Emily and Jerica (both from the library), Waneta Gagne, Amanda Stone-Gines, Cindy Unangst, Pam McDonald, Sean O'Keefe, Teresa Forsyth

Meeting discussion items:

1. January meeting minutes approved
2. Bird City designation – committee and application. Cindy began application process and had some questions about access to the portal online for inputting our information. A Bird City committee is being formed. So far, Cindy Unangst, Deb Portney, and Pam McDonald are on the committee. The first committee meeting will be Friday, March 15 at 3 p.m. at the town hall. The town will get to choose a town bird! The committee discussed getting students and the community involved to choose a bird. Waneta suggested using the library as a central location to get kids to vote on their favorite bird.
3. Green Lecture series with library – first Green Talk of 2024 will be May 18th with a talk by Deb Portney about birds and World Migratory Bird Day at the newly opened library. The theme for 2024 Bird Day is Birds and Insects. The team would like to plan a bird walk for the day and will need to decide on other activities.
4. Green Expo – it will be held on Saturday, April 20th at Memorial Park; lots of early interest from past participants, plus have some new exhibitors that Cindy has contacted from the Climate Summit. Janet Fox has created a save the date poster. New and returning vendors include: Advanced Biofuels, Third Act, Potomac Edison, Valley school, Mosquito Hunters, Maryland Bird Club, Maryland Bluebird Society, UUCF Native Plants sale, Auto lawn, Composting Resources and Bee Hotels, Mazzaroth Vineyards, Orchid Cellars (pending), SMOREs, Neighborhood Sun, Atlas Home Energy Solutions, Audubon Society, MUMMC children's activities.
5. Outreach sub-committee report – preparation for Wellness Expo. Pam shared with the committee the preparations for the Wellness Fair booth. Ann is providing the Tree scroll and the Tempestry to engage the community around the value of trees and climate change. Pam is creating some materials about Wellness and Nature and ideas for a nature meditation. Agnesanne has designed a poster to articulate the many ways the community can engage with the Green Team.
6. Pollinator demonstration gardens – Memorial Park garden maintenance volunteer sign-up—Ann has sent out Sign up Genius link for Green Team members to sign up. Please do! The team discussed putting the sign up on the Green Team website so residents could volunteer, however they would need to go out with a green team member to get trained; Village of Foxfield eyebrow and circle planting – plants look great; thistle is still an issue at the circle, and Cindy will talk to the Public Works crew about removing the Liriope on the eyebrow this spring. Will need to decide what native plants need to be added to the Foxfield gardens.
7. Compost project – two more compost bins available for purchase at municipal center; we have one for raffling off at this year's Green Expo. Community compost bin is still getting great use. January weight: 670 lbs for the month. Key City compost reports that the bins hold 300 lbs and our bins are averaging around 200 lbs/week so we do not need to add another bin at this time.

8. Tree plantings – tree planting maintenance/inventory schedule (see below); letter of support sent for SilvoCulture grant request – haven’t heard anything yet?; Healthy Forests, Healthy Waters tree planting will take place this spring; McClintock Distillery employees will be planting 60+ trees at Remsburg Park on March 8th. Arbor Day tree planting will be Friday, April 26th at Remsburg Park where we will plant 50 trees. Janet Fox has created a Save the Date flyer for the event. We will plan to do free tree give away to town residents again this year, offering 60 trees this year. Trees choices will be: Dogwood, Red Bud, Sweet Bay Magnolia, Serviceberry, Pin Oak and River Birch.
9. Chesapeake Bay Trust grant – we were awarded \$2,000 for a plaque and educational materials in relation to the Wye Oak tree planted on East Green Street (located before Cone Branch—almost across the street from Woodmere Circle). Cindy shared text for plaque. We will plan to do the plaque unveiling on Arbor Day, Friday April 26. A professional photographer will take photos of the tree and the unveiling of the plaque. Then, we will need to create educational materials about the tree. We will feature the Wye Oak at the Green Expo. As part of the grant, we need to document the number of people who learn about the tree from our efforts.
10. Tree City USA – State coordinator review has been completed for Tree City application; next is Arbor Day Foundation review.
11. Gift Tree Program – Adam Stanzione might be submitting an application, and there is potential for another application being submitted.
12. Recycling event – next event is Saturday, March 9th, from 9-12. Thanks to those who have said they can volunteer that day; we also have high school students who will volunteer again as well as the Girl Scouts. Cindy is still interested in getting more volunteers as needed. Cindy has organized the flow of the event.
13. Trex plastic bag collection – we can still take plastic bags to MES.
14. Battery recycling at the Municipal building – we have one high school student helping out that is very committed; he is also planning some battery drives at the high school. February 9: Middletown had a 51 lb box of batteries sent.
15. Solar panel study for property adjacent to water tank off Layla has been approved.
16. Frederick County Sustainability Commission meeting – municipal Green Team forum set for 5-7pm on February 21st. Bill, Mark and Cindy will attend for the Middletown Green Team; agenda includes understanding each jurisdictions needs and break-out sessions related to opportunities and barriers to success.
17. Bee City – annual report is due at the end of the month; will be submitted by the 21st. Bill Spare and Cindy attended a Bee City webinar about pesticides and you.
18. Middletown Health and Wellness Expo – March 2 from 10am – 2pm at the Middletown Firehall Activities Center. We have 6 volunteers to cover the morning and afternoon.
19. March meeting date – third Tuesday – March 19th – First Day of Spring!

GOALS FOR 2024:

PLANT 100 TREES IN 2023 – I					
GIFT TREE PROGRAM - GOAL OF \$1000 –					
QUANTIFY/SHOW PROGRESS ON 25% CANOPY BY 2025					
HOLD GREEN EXPO -					

SUPPORT MES & MMS LOOL PROGRAM - VOLUNTEER SUPPORT -					
PROMOTE & SELL 20 COMPOSTING BINS –					
PROMOTE & SELL 25 RAIN BARRELS (GRANT REQUEST)?					
EVALUATE & RECOMMEND STREETLIGHT BUYBACK PROGRAM TO TOWN BOARD					
CREATE 2 AC POLLINATOR MEADOW NEAR SOLAR ARRAY					
EDUCATION ON STORMWATER PERMIT PROGRAMS					

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

- Dark Sky policy

TREE PLANTING MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE

February 16 (Friday) 9:00-10:30am – FRO area at Wiles Branch Park

February 23 (Friday) 10-11:30am – FRO area at Wiles Branch Park

February 27 (Tuesday)10:30-Noon – FRO area at Wiles Branch Park