

July 2024 Middletown Sustainability Committee Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: Tuesday July 16, 2024
5:00-6:30 Town Hall and via Lifesize

Attendance: Members Cindy Unangst, Kevin Stottlemeyer (Town Board liaison), Jamie Moore, Sean O'Keefe, Bill Steigelmann, Lexi Sassi, Bill Spare, Agnesanne Danehey, and Ann Payne (virtually)

1. June meeting minutes approved.
2. Bird City designation
 - South Mountain Outdoor Research Education group offered to build a Swift tower/chimney for Middletown with a cost of \$1,560. The location at Wiles Branch Park has been identified and approved. We discussed possibly adding more either at Wiles Branch or at/near Memorial Park. The tower will hopefully be installed in August.
3. Green Lecture series with library
 - Green Talks will be held on the third Saturday of the month at 1:00pm.
 - Last talk was June 15: Native and Invasive Plants in our Backyard with Kerry Wixted and there were 22 attendees. Kerry is a great speaker, and it was highly informative.
 - July 20: Stream Link Education and Planting Trees with Kylie Baker; just 8 attendees; Cindy gave presentation about Wye Oak as well.
 - August 17: Food Systems & Feeding Frederick with Alison Wexler & Sarah McAleavy; Sarah is now not available, so Emily from FCPL is working on getting a Hood College professor to replace her.
 - September 21 Wildlife Corridors with Karen Russell & Wildlife Habitat Advisors with Deb Portney. Karen has a conflict, so it will just be Deb presenting.
4. Outreach sub-committee report – Agnesanne reported on their last meeting which took place on the 9th; there was discussion about how to engage residents about protecting trees and potential ways to honor the Big Trees in Middletown. There was also discussion about reaching out to the local church green teams.

Cindy said that Mike Hunninghake plans to attend the September meeting, and Becky Axilbund (Main Street Manager) will attend either the August or September meeting to discuss collaborating on events.

5. Pollinator demonstration gardens
 - Village of Foxfield eyebrow and circle planting – plants look great; thistle was removed by the Public Works department at the circle; the lirioppe on the eyebrow was removed, need to determine planting for that area; wildflower seeds were sown on the slope of the trail west of North Pointe Terrace but have not seemed to germinate.
 - Agnesanne asked about planting some shrubs at the eyebrow in Foxfield or some herbs as there are bare spots that need some attention.
6. Compost project

Community compost bin is still getting great use. Rumor about Phil leaving Key City.

7. Tree plantings

- No maintenance being done during the summer.

8. Chesapeake Bay Trust grant –

- We already received the \$2,000 funding for the grant. Cindy found out that we will not receive the plaque for about 8 weeks which means we would not have it in time for the July Green Talk. She will give a presentation about the Wye Oak during the July Green Talk anyway.
- Pam added Jamie's photos to the brochure, and it looks amazing! Cindy will pick up the brochures to distribute at the Talk.

9. Tree trails

- Jim Roessler is working on text for Cone Branch tree trail. New trees to add to Wiles Branch tree trail – white ash and black willow. Cindy will try to revive this effort this summer before she leaves.

10. Tree City USA

- Both our Tree City and Growth Award applications were approved; only 15% of Tree City municipalities receive the Growth Award! Cindy will post on FB about our status.

11. Gift Tree Program

- Cindy talked to a woman who plans to have a tree planted for each of her 4 grandchildren this fall.

12. Recycling event – The next recycling event will be Saturday, October 19th after Cindy's retirement.

13. Trex plastic bag collection – we can still take plastic bags to MES. Also, there are bins behind the Middle School for textiles as a fundraiser through Helpsy.

14. Battery recycling at the Municipal building

- we can take in only lithium-ion batteries at this time.

15. Green Schools

- Karen is working with Nick Sizemore and Sharon Steger but was not able to attend the latest meeting with them. Cindy attended along with Carey Murphy from Mobilize Frederick. Also in attendance on June 6th was the high school principal and many students from the Science National Honor Society.
- Green school application is quite lengthy and complex (overwhelming)

16. Bee City – Burgess Miller read a Pollinator Week proclamation at the June workshop.

17. July meeting date – third Tuesday – July 16th

Meeting ended early at 6:05

GOALS FOR 2024:

PLANT 100 TREES IN 2024 – 60 planted on 3/8; 75 planted on 4.26; ✓				
GIFT TREE PROGRAM - GOAL OF \$1000 – \$600 taken in to date				
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