

Middletown Sustainability Committee Meeting Minutes: 5/16/2023

Time: May 16, 2023, 05:00-6:40 PM Eastern Time

Attendance (In-person and virtual): Lexi Sassi, Mark Carney, Cindy Unangst, Paul Mantello (new town manager), Pam McDonald, Kevin Stottlemeyer, Bill Spare, John Lane, Ann Payne, Sean O'Keefe

Meeting Minutes:

1. April meeting minutes approved.
2. Green Lecture series with library – Anna Twigg with DNR to talk about the 5M Trees initiative – 8 attendees—low attendance due to changing to a weeknight evening event; Bees 101 with Sara Gibson of the Frederick Beekeeping Association – Saturday, May 20th at 1:00pm; Then, composting workshop at Fox Haven in June. Need speakers for the fall—Cindy suggested a recycling talk for September that would include information about metals recycling program. The suggested speaker was to ask Bill Traub from the Knights of Columbus.
3. Little Seed Library – ‘Preparing your garden beds and when to plant specific plants’ - Saturday, April 29th at 2:00pm – was very well attended. Tigg from Master Gardeners presented the talk; next up is ‘Composting’ at Fox Haven Farm – Saturday, June 3rd at 10:30am.
4. Outreach sub-committee report – has not met since Green Expo
5. Green Expo – evaluation. Alpacas were a big draw. Mark reported the recycling aspect of the day (behind the bank) went well. There was metals recycling and electronics. Cindy reported that exhibitors were happy. Dempsey’s Grill was very happy and would like to return next year. Cindy discussed the Boonsboro swap and recycling event and list of participants. We will explore if we want to add more vendors to the Green Expo and/or our October recycling event.
6. Pollinator demonstration gardens – Village of Foxfield eyebrow and circle planting – planting event Saturday, May 6 was able to plant half of the plugs; Edamarie and two of her crew planted the rest of the eyebrow on Monday. Cindy will alert the town to water the gardens and to contact the Foxfield HOA re maintenance of the pollinator gardens moving forward. Ann reported that the HOA used to pay a landscaper to care for that area. Cindy will research further.
7. Compost project – compost bins available for purchase at municipal center—only four left! A pallet of bins is 40 bins from EnviroWorld and as of now that is what we would have to purchase as Greenbelt is not interested in purchasing a pallet. Discussed possibility of getting rain barrels and compost bins from Enviro World in a split pallet—20 and 20. Cindy will look into this as a possibility.

8. Tree plantings – tree planting maintenance/inventory schedule (see below). Next inventory will be Friday, 5/19 at 10 a.m.; Arbor Day tree planting on Friday, April 28th – 54 trees – big success. The rain stopped so the trees could be planted and there were plenty of volunteers. Fall project and goal: to get tree tubes on trees in need. Cindy reported she has not received as many of the photos of trees planted and will follow up. Cindy was also wanting to follow up to be sure the new tree owners knew how to remove bamboo stakes.
9. Tree City USA – we received recognition as a 2022 Tree City USA municipality as well as receiving the Growth Award. In addition, we received the PLANT award for 2022.
10. Gift Tree Program – flyer boxes at Wiles Branch Park, Memorial Park and on Cone Branch Trail will be replaced with QR code decals; the gift trees were planted on April 24th – one fringetree and one magnolia; new application came in for a redbud to be planted this fall; QR code decals have been ordered—where to add new locations? The other side of Cone Branch Trail (near the school) and Memorial Park, Foxfield trail, Town Hall, and Library are all good suggestions for the decals.
11. Recycling event – fall event will be held on Saturday, October 21st; we have moved the time frame for the October event to 9am - 12 p.m. and it will be held behind Town Hall as it has been in the past.
12. Trex plastic bag collection – need to discuss what to do during the summer. Mark will be looking into programs that Trex offers to make it convenient for residents to continue to recycle plastics. He will report back to the committee next month.
13. Battery recycling at the Municipal building. Mark networked with a group at the Climate Summit—[RecycleMybattery.org](https://www.recyclemybattery.org) (student run organization) and discussed the feasibility of having a pickup box at the town hall. The team decided this was a worthwhile endeavor. The group provides all set-up materials.
14. Climate Summit event (Mark attended). About 150 people attended and a nice group of exhibitors participated. The Green Schools initiative needs support. The Green team needs to engage with Middletown schools to get involved. Cindy noted that Frederick County does not have a Green Center and that this is an important component to assist the schools to reach the goals needed to become a Green School. Mark also reported that the county has a goal to reach 30% renewable energy by 2030.
15. Envision Frederick hosting Green Drinks in Middletown – Wednesday, June 7th at 6:00pm – The Main Cup – topic of being a Bee City with Ann Payne and Cindy Unangst.
16. Beekeeping—allowing bees to be kept by the Memorial Park Pollinator Garden. The committee decided ‘No’ due to liability. The committee will look at Bee City USA strategies and perhaps making bee houses for the gardens.
17. Dark Sky Initiative: Need to update design manual. Cindy reported that the Sustainability Committee will need to work with the Planning Commission to update standards to meet Dark Sky. Paul reported he is in conversation about buy back vs. replacing streetlights.
18. June meeting date – third Tuesday – June 20th

GOALS FOR 2023:

PLANT 100 TREES IN 2023 – 135 planted in April ✓				
GIFT TREE PROGRAM - GOAL OF \$1000 – \$358 paid in April				
QUANTIFY/SHOW PROGRESS ON 25% CANOPY BY 2025				
HOLD GREEN EXPO - ✓				
SUPPORT MES & MMS LOOL PROGRAM - VOLUNTEER SUPPORT -				
PROMOTE & SELL 20 COMPOSTING BINS – 7 sold				
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:

- Habitat advisor volunteers

TREE PLANTING MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE

- May 8 (Tuesday) 9:30-11:00am – check out shrubs at Cone Brach Pocket Park**
- May 12 (Friday) 10-11:30am -North Pointe–pruning & staking**
- June 3 (Friday) 2-2:30pm – Wiles Branch dog park**
- June 16 (Friday) 10-11:30am– maple tree pruning at Remsberg Par**
- June 23 (Friday) 10-11:30am – Cone Branch pocket park**
- June 27 (Tuesday) 9-10:30am – Cone Branch pocket park**