

Middletown Sustainability Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: July 20, 2021

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

Participants: Cindy Unangst, Kevin Stottlemyer, Gene Fleeman, Pam McDonald, Mark Carney, Ann Payne, Agnesanne Danehey, Kaia Wynne, Erin Carney

July Green Team met in-person at Memorial Park pavilion nearest pollinator garden and offered Zoom option

Meeting minutes:

1. June meeting minutes approved
2. Has the FCPL pollinator video been launched by the library? No one has heard and we will need to follow up. Ann Payne offered to check in with library.
3. Mayors Monarch Pledge – Monarchs in the Rough. Free Milkweed offer—if over 2 acres needing plants, we can get free plants. We would just need to pay for shipping.
4. Girl Scout Gold Award project-Kaia reported about her project for Middletown, which will be happening in the fall. She will be creating a brochure about pollinators and will hand out seed packets to residents of Middletown. She is also creating a website/blog about her progress. Gene asked to be sure to get links to Middletown Green Team site.
5. BASECAMP projects:
 - Bee City USA (Mark)
 - **Pollinator demonstration garden at Memorial Park.** Initial planting completed and Ann and Pam reported on need to add spring and fall blooming plants. They have shared a list of recommendations with the team and will proceed with a plan. The Memorial Park garden will need a maintenance plan, border around garden, plant identification tags/signs. Fall planting date set for Saturday, October 9. Mark will post weekly North Creek order list on BASECAMP and we can pick what we want for fall planting. We have \$2,400 left in budget. Fall planting schedule: Set aside morning of October 9. For planning purposes, current Memorial park pollinator garden is 50 square feet.
 - Locations for next pollinator gardens: roundabout area at Foxfield is not well maintained; eyebrow at 55+ Foxfield near Rhoderick; area near bridge going into Remsberg Park. Need to carefully plan the gardens for visibility, soil conditions, sunlight, and seasonality of plants.
 - Common Milkweed leftover from Memorial Garden—Erin C. Planted milkweed in field behind active 55+ area at Foxfield.
 - Urbana Green Team is interested in our success with North Creek plants plugs.
 - Kevin Stottlemyer offered plants from his garden for pollinator garden—reports he has black eyed Susan's, Echinacea, and yarrow to share. Other members may have some native plants to offer as well.

- **Lunch out of landfills:** Joe Richardson contacted Cindy about getting Lunch out of landfills launched this fall. Cindy has left a message for him to connect.
 - Cindy presented about an Urbana Green Team project to help nurture native shrubs. They partnered with local farmer to help grow small shrubs/trees for village residents. Members suggested Ben-regenerative agriculture project in Middletown/Ann Payne knows. Phil Westcott/Key City Compost—possible person to help nurture trees for us?
 - **Compost project:** discussion of possible locations for community compost bin. Erin went to Gaithersburg to look at Key Compost set up. Erin shared photos of well-designed pad. Plan is for bin to be emptied once a week. We can increase number of bins over time as program becomes more popular. Locations discussed: 1) Chesterbrook Apartments—Would need to contact property manager; 2) Memorial park, or 3) behind Town Offices. Cost: \$1,500 for one bin picked up once a week for one year.
4. Loraxers subcommittee report. The Loraxers met at Ann Payne's and discussed starting a community tree program. Discussed concern over lack of tree canopy and many older trees in town dying and/or being taken down by residents and not replaced. The committee would like to develop a program that could partner with a university (Hood College?) and be able to apply for grant funding to increase the downtown tree canopy. Discussed linking increased tree canopy to health benefits for the community. Nothing in our town code that says that developers must put in trees in their development projects. Thurmont is an example of a town with minimum landscaping requirements. The county has a plan that is better than the state plan for forest conservation act compliance, according to Ann. In addition, Cindy reported that 20-25 acres of new senior development will be under town management and it would be important to get native trees in this area.
 - Cindy presented about Boonsboro's free tree program for residents through partnership with Potomac Edison. Contact at PE is Michelle Dillinger—forester for First Energy. Company will supply seedlings for reforestation projects: 5-gallon trees at \$8/each up to 500 trees. Boonsboro program allows residents to get up to 3 trees with tree planting training program and they must sign a pledge for care of the tree. Town will plant a matching tree in one of their parks. Green team members agreed this would be great for Middletown to have such a program.
 5. Compost bins: Greenbelt has extra that we can purchase, but we would need to pick them up.
 6. Middletown Neighbors magazine article and photo op: Members were reminded to send Robin answers to her email questions, if desired. Photo Op: Wednesday August 4 at 10:30 a.m. Rain date is Friday, August 6.
 7. August meeting date: Third Tuesday, August 17th.