

Memorandum

To: Middletown Sustainability Committee

From: JJ Hartner, Staff Planner

Date: October 14, 2024

RE: September Sustainability Committee meeting - Tuesday, September 17th 5:00pm in person and via Lifesize

Meeting link

<https://call.lifesizecloud.com/12429552>

Passcode

21769

Phone

United States:+1 (312) 584-2401

Meeting discussion items:

1. September meeting minutes approval
2. Tree plantings – tree planting maintenance/inventory schedule (see below);
3. Recycling event – The next recycling event will be Saturday, October 19th after Cindy's retirement. Bill Traub (metal recycling), Helpsy (textile recycling) and Yuck Old Paint have confirmed their attendance. Cindy will reach back out to Eric Zimmerman (electronics recycling). Lithium – ion batteries will also be collected.
4. Next Green Talk is on Saturday, October 19, 2024. "Green Schools with Carey Murphy"
5. Green Schools – Karen continues to reach out to Nick Sizemore and Sharon Steger about helping them with the high school application to become a Green School.
6. We are in discussion with Silviculture regarding tree plantings for a food forest at the new portion of Wiles Branch Park (Harris Property).
7. Next meeting date – third Tuesday – November 19th

TREE PLANTING MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE

- Late winter is best time to prune dogwood trees (Memorial tree grove and Remsberg Park)
- Late winter/early spring is best time to prune serviceberry trees at Remsberg Park
- Early spring is best time to prune redbud trees at Memorial Park and Remsberg Park
- May/June is best time to prune magnolia trees at Memorial Park and Memorial tree grove
- May – July is best time to prune sugar maples at Remsberg Park
- Late autumn is best time to prune black gum trees at Remsberg Park
- November – December is best time to prune white oaks at Remsberg Park

DRAFT September 2024 Middletown Sustainability Committee Minutes

In Attendance: Cindy Unangst, JJ Hartner, Agnesanne Danehey, Kevin Stottlemyer, Mark Carney, Sean O’Keefe, Bill Spare, Bill Steigelmann, Lexi Sassi, Jamie Moore, Kerri Hesley (all in-person!)

Date: Tuesday, September 17, 2024

Time: 5:00 p.m. - 6:10 p.m.

Meeting minutes:

1. Cindy introduced our new planner JJ Hartner, who has already started in his position.
2. August meeting minutes approved.
3. Bird City designation – The new chimney swift tower at Wiles Branch Park has been installed. The town installed the concrete foundation. Lisa Baird of SMORES contacted Cindy to match paint colors of pavilion with the tower. Cindy reported that Shepherd University has a tower and hosts events about Chimney Swifts. We can follow them on social media and see what they are offering as the town will need to provide residents with education about the tower. It will also need signage onsite.
4. Green Lecture series with library – unfortunately not a good turnout on August 17th for the Food Council of Frederick County talk; next up is a talk about Wildlife Corridors on September 21st with Karen Russell and Deb Portney; Bill Steigelmann will be there to introduce the speakers. Some ideas for 2025 include: Maryland Bottle bill; Chimney Swift tower education. The October 19 Green Talk is the same day as the Recycling event and we will need to rotate signage on the sandwich board—At town hall in the morning for the recycling event and then moved to the library with the Green Talk side showing. Carey Murphy will be talking about the Green Schools movement in Frederick County.
5. Outreach sub-committee report – Pam reported on the group’s meeting to plan for Heritage Day. They will focus on how residents can work within their neighborhoods to link native plantings to encourage native wildlife. They will include Doug Tallamy’s Backyard National Park information and have iPads available to help residents sign up. Handouts will be flower and butterfly cutout seed paper with native wildflowers. They will also have a sign up sheet to get more volunteers for the Green Team and its subcommittees. The table will also feature information about our town Wye Oak with brochures. The committee also discussed creating more partnerships with other green teams in the valley at local churches. Linking to sustainable businesses and farms like Mazzoroth Vineyard, Orchid Cellars, The REED Center for future collaboration.
6. Pollinator demonstration gardens – Memorial Park garden maintenance. Still an issue that all of the butterfly weed did not come back this year and will need to be replaced. Village of Foxfield eyebrow and circle planting – plants look great; the liriopoe on the eyebrow was removed and we need to determine planting for that area; wildflower seeds were sown on the slope of the trail west of North Pointe Terrace but don’t seem to have taken root.

7. Compost project – Community compost bin is still getting good use. February – 905 lbs.; March – 683 lbs.; April – 810 lbs.; May – 835 lbs.; June – 908 lbs.; July 554 lbs. (3 pickups); August – 918 lbs.
8. Tree plantings – tree planting maintenance/inventory schedule (see below);
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! Brochure was printed, and plaque arrived last week. Presentation about the Wye Oak tree took place at the library on July 20th. The plaque will be unveiled on Wednesday, September 18 at 3 p.m. at the Green Street location.
10. Tree trails – Jim Roessler completed text for Cone Branch tree trail. New trees to add to Wiles Branch tree trail – white ash and black willow, and many of the tree tags there are missing. QR code issue as well. Need volunteers to move the tree trail projects forward. Pam contacted Gary Madonna who provided the tree tags for the Wiles Branch Trail and he is willing to help with identifying the trees that are missing tags. He shared his resources for purchasing new tags. Number of trees on Cone Branch Trail—need to get from Cindy. Lexi will walk the Wiles Branch trail and inventory the tags for the 15 trees. Cindy believes that Arboretum Tags—National Band and Tag Company was used.
11. Tree City USA – Both our Tree City and Growth Award applications were approved; only 15% of Tree City municipalities receive the Growth Award.
12. Gift Tree Program – Cindy talked to a woman who plans to have a tree planted for each of her four grandchildren this fall. A gift tree (Willow Oak) was added to the tree grove to honor Cindy Unangst for all of her achievements as the co-chair of the Sustainability committee.
13. Recycling event – The next recycling event will be Saturday, October 19th after Cindy's retirement. Bill Traub (metal recycling), Helpsy (textile recycling) and Yuck Old Paint have confirmed their attendance. Eric Zimmerman (electronics recycling) also will be there—strict list of items that they will take—computers, printers, game systems. Lithium-ion batteries will also be collected. Cindy shared a sign up for volunteers to help at the event.
14. Trex plastic bag collection – we can still take plastic bags to MES. The Honor Society members are now taking care of weighing and transporting the plastics to Safeway. Also, there are bins behind the Middle School for textiles as a fundraiser through Helpsy.
15. Battery recycling at the Municipal building – we can only take in lithium-ion batteries at this time.
16. Green Schools – Karen continues to reach out to Nick Sizemore and Sharon Steger about helping them with the high school application to become a Green School. Sharon Steger retired at the beginning of the school year. No one knew if she would continue to be involved in helping with the Green School initiative.
17. Bee City – Pollinator Week was June 17-21st

- 18. Heritage Day booth – Saturday, September 28th; we will need volunteers to man our booth. Our booth will be outside the Municipal Building—will check to see if we have WiFi.
- 19. Bottle return bill legislation (Kerri Hesley) Sierra Club Catoclin Group. Bottle Bill—5.5 billion beverage containers sold/year/person! Only about 25% are recycled—4 billion left in the environment or incinerated. With the passing of the Bottle Bill, a small refundable deposit is added to the price of beverages in glass, plastic and metal containers. 10 to 15 cents added to price and refunded when they are returned to a retailer or redemption facility for recycling. 10 states with bottle bills and 30 countries have bottle bills. Has a huge impact—up to 90% reduction in trash. Savings for local governments—for both trash and recycling. The Maryland Bottle Bill will be up for a vote in 2025. Please check out the Sierra Club’s website to find the link to support the bill.
- 20. Next meeting date – third Tuesday – October 15th

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

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2024 FALL RECYCLING EVENT SIGN-UP

Saturday, October 19th 9am - 12noon

Time		Number of Adult Volunteers Needed
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8:30am - 9:00am	Set-up	4
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Set-up signage and cones/barriers

9:00am - 10:30am	Direct traffic	5
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Direct folks into site

10:30-12:00noon	Direct traffic	5
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Direct folks into site

High school students?

Names

AGNESANNE DANHEP 8:30-10:00
Mark Crowley 8:30-9:30
Sean O'Keefe (8:30-11:00) (12pm)
 Bill Steigelmann (until about 11:30am)

↓ ↓

Lexi Sassi 240-687-3787
Ann Payne (Tentative)