

Hyattsville Environment Committee (HEC)

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, September 14, 2021

7:00 pm to 8:30 pm

Participants: Janet Nackoney, Dawn Taft, Brie Welzer, Rich Canino, Ben Simasek

Guests: James Ball, Maira Delao, Thaddeus Waterman

Agenda Items:

1. Welcome, Committee Roll Call, & Guest Orientation.
2. Approval of [August 2021 meeting mins](#). **Approved**
3. Discussion of elections for Chair (Rich).
 - According to new guidelines, the Chair serves for a year
 - Rich happy to serve as new Chair
 - Weltzer & Nackoney in full support, thank you Rich!
 - Rich will serve as Chair going forward through the Aug 2022 meeting and will share that information with the city.
4. Discussion on requesting council support for state legislation in 2022 session (Rich).
 - We would pass a motion to encourage the City council to support state legislative bills of environmental significance
 - Would be ideal for HEC to understand which env policies are coming up and how determine how much of a priority they might be
 - Mike Hunninghake could be a good person to ask
 - Would also be good to look at County bills as well. For example, energy efficiency might be more impactful at the County level.
 - Brie recommended that we discuss committee environmental priorities, potentially at next month's meeting.
5. Discussion on recommendations for environmental projects from the American Rescue Plan Act (Rich)
 - Danny mentioned in his newsletter that he supported using money from ARP to increase City tree canopy. Rich posed the question of whether we wanted to support this initiative or whether HEC had another recommendation(s) to use some of this money on.
 - Ben stated that \$15M needs to be obligated by the end of 2024, fully spent by end of 2026. He also stated that the city is currently looking to develop an advisory group that would make recommendations on how to spend this money.

- Ben: stormwater mitigation and other green infrastructure could be other great opportunities
- City is hiring a Grants Manager to help identify priorities for funding
- Priorities should be identified around March for budgeting in May for FY23.
- Might be best to advocate for solutions that solve multiple community issues, for example trees as part of stormwater management and “complete streets”

6. Announcements or Notices.

- Route 1 Pollinator Corridor [virtual event](#) (registration required) on Thurs 9/16, 4:00-5:30pm. **Rich will attend.**
- Dawn’s updates:
 - Just had a tree care workshop last night taught in Spanish. 17 ppl attended. Also Forest Bathing class in Spanish Oct 23 followed by tree identification walk. Will be doing the tree identification walk in English too at a later date.
 - Getting together a self-led tour of tree identification. Looking for ideas to encourage people to finish the whole loop (passport idea?)
 - [Upcoming events](#)
 - Just got a new grant to plant 75 additional trees (Dec/Jan planting) in public right-of-way.
 - Will be planting 40 trees on residential property Sept/Oct
 - [Tree care resources](#)
 - [Defensores de la Cuenca](#) (Watershed Defenders) helping with Spanish curriculum and hoping to work more closely with them to build out more trainings
- Ben: Upcoming park cleanup on Saturday, Oct 2 at 3 PM at UHills/Lane Manor. Organized by Neighbors of the Northwest Branch. Will set up registration through the city volunteer portal. Meet at 3400 Stanford Street
- Two new HEC members are looking to become members for our October meeting: James Ball and Thaddeus Waterman. Thank you!

7. Adjournment.