

Hyattsville Environment Committee (HEC)

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, April 12, 2022

7:00 pm to 8:30 pm

Participants: Rich Canino (chair), Janet Nackoney, Thaddeus Waterman, Dawn Taft (staff), Ben Simasek (Council), Edouard Haba (Council)

Guests: Christopher Koya, Daisy Bett, Melissa Schweisguth

Agenda Items:

1. Welcome, Committee Roll Call, & Guest Orientation.
 - a. Quick intros
 - i. Melissa Schweisguth: on NNWB Board, adopted segment of NWB, was on similar committee in Ashland, OR
 - ii. Daisy Bett: recent graduate in env, interested in trees and sustainability
2. Approval of [March meeting mins](#) **APPROVED** Canino/Watterman
3. Pollinator Action Plan (Rich/Janet)
 - a. Rt 1 Green Teams have an opportunity to meet together to start a Rt. 1 corridor pollinator action plan. Who might represent and participate as part of this process? Dawn is the liaison for our Green Team in this consortium. Hasn't heard any follow-up, but could be that we need to initiate follow-up. Unsure who is taking initiative– but heard about a potential event in June. Potential for one of us on HEC to be a representative (Dawn is too over-committed already). **ACTION:** Rich will reach out to the contact in Greenbelt and brief us at next meeting. We can determine if there is volunteer interest in HEC at that point.
4. Debrief of Chesapeake Climate Action Network (CCAN) Ivy Removal efforts (Thaddeus)
 - a. Thaddeus and Dawn met with Jesse from CCAN last week who is initiating an ivy removal effort in Takoma Park.
 - b. Discussed the issue about lack of insurance for volunteers– CCAN might be able to take on this liability for us.
 - c. CCAN does a lot of policy advocacy. This effort is likely an offshoot effort currently just in Takoma Park.
 - d. [Recording](#) available
 - e. If this can go forward, we can increase our reach to remove residential ivy from trees beyond just HAP residents.

- f. DT: [Thriving Earth Exchange](#) also has an interesting program that could help with this. Currently working with them on flooding issues and tree education.
 - g. BS: [Neighbors of the Northwest Branch](#): do cleanups and water quality monitoring throughout the summer. Mostly they likely work on park property, but scope is the whole watershed
- 5. Introduction of Christopher Koya, Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Energy Fellow, potential collaboration on social impact project (Ben)
 - a. Christopher is Ward 3 resident. Reached out to Ben with potential collaboration idea.
 - b. Congressional Black Caucus Foundation– works for congressperson in Louisiana.
 - c. Would like to do a service project in Hyattsville related to renewable energy and env justice. Has till end of Dec 2022.
 - d. BS: One major City initiative coming up next year is the renewal of the City Sustainability Plan. Public engagement should begin in the fall. Hoping HEC could help advise how to strengthen the Sustainability Plan around env justice, accessibility, sustainability, etc. How to set City-specific targets?
 - e. Another idea is getting involved in the City Rescue Plan. First round might be emergency relief, leading to long-term resilience. Stormwater management, tree canopy efforts included. Patrick Paschall leading the effort. Public engagement around this and better idea of longer-term spending plan should be happening in the fall.
- 6. Announcements
 - a. Dawn will be taking on 12 students for 6 weeks through the Student Youth Employment Program (SYEP) to work on invasives, food forest work, etc. Opportunity for them to also hear from environmental professionals, so Dawn might ask us to share our perspectives. Graduating in mid-Aug 2022.
 - b. Dawn looking for a volunteer (or 2) to help with mulching, invasives, trash removal this Sat 10-2pm– help lead other volunteers in some capacity
 - c. May 21st: Celebrate the opening of the new Dept of Public Works building. Anyone from HEC interested in volunteering? Kids' activities, env education activities, yard habitat assessments, tree care, plant sale, education about DPW, etc.
 - d. TW: Could give a report-out on the MD Congressional Assembly meeting during next HEC meeting.

- e. BS: City sent a letter in support of the disposable food container bill. Regarding plastic bag legislation, might take some time to work on this with City.
 - f. JN: Tree planting behind Melrose Park last weekend with Anacostia Watershed Society Watershed Steward graduates. Around 17 trees planted behind the soccer fields and around the bridge connecting to Melrose Park. Thank you to the City for logistical help and leadership!
 - g. DW: Arbor Day paw-paw planting in a few weeks
 - h. Check out the [City env sustainability webpage](#) for upcoming env-related volunteer opportunities
7. Adjournment.