

Environment Committee Meeting, June 10, 2021 (via Zoom)

Present: Barton Rubenstein, David Kathan, Donna Harmon, Ralph Wooden, Andrew Bartley, Patty Friedman, Marnie Shaul, and Stephen Surko.

1. Minutes of the April 7 meeting was approved. Andrew Bartley moved their approval, and Donna seconded.
2. Committee recognized and thanked Marnie for her long service to the town.
3. Due to the election of Jack Frink to the Town Council, he will no longer be a member of the Committee. Barton announced that Yogesh Rajkotia has been appointed to join the Committee.
4. Barton described a Sierra Club pledge letter for Maryland Mayors for 100% Clean Energy that Jeffrey Slavin would like to sign. Barton urged the Committee to recommend to the Council to consider. David moved to recommend signing. Donna seconded. Motion approved.
5. Barton described a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty that goes beyond the Paris Accords and he recommends that the Town be a signor of the treaty. Barton urged the Committee to recommend to the Council to consider. Ralph moved to recommend signing. Andrew seconded. Motion approved.
6. Barton started a discussion of the Town's recycling contract, particularly whether we would like to contract with Plastic Tree, and the company's unique reuse approach. Barton argued that single stream recycling is a problem. Discussion about the lack of data about single stream and agreement that we need to look at alternatives, including possible use of the County's system. Barton asked Ralph to look into recycling again for the Committee (including contacting the County), and will bring it to the next meeting.
7. Stephen reported that the Town has signed an agreement with the beekeeper to put an apiary in Town parkland near the creek, and has authorized funds to cover liability insurance for her. He also reported that the hives should be ready shortly. This will be a one-year pilot, and the Committee will reassess the pilot later in the year.
8. Barton would like the Committee to support the timing of the next Shredding event on September 18th. A volunteer is needed to help, especially with taking light bulbs and batteries. David moved that the Committee recommend September 18. Donna seconded. Committee approved the motion.
9. Barton discussed the EV charger proposed by PEPCo to be installed at the Town parking lot near the tennis courts. The Committee discussed the Committee's interest in the EV charger, including the Town's interest in negotiating a shorter than 20 year contract.
10. Barton raised the idea of the Town going with a 100% renewable provider of electricity (already formally recommended to the Town in a previous meeting by the EC). He likes Clearview Energy. Andrew said he will look into it and do more research.
11. Dave described his idea of a light bulb exchange that Montgomery County DEP runs. They do events across the County, and DEP is interested in doing it with the Town. Dave suggested that either the shredding event or the New Town Resident party. The Committee preferred the shredding event, and Dave will look into it.
12. Barton introduced the leafblower pamphlet that he prepared and distributed. Agreement to add a new point about the Town working to educate small and minority businesses.

Dave will draft this point. Barton would like the pamphlets to be distributed door to door by the Environment Committee members, mailed, and inserted into the Town Journal. A call to action will be included into the pamphlet.

13. Meeting was adjourned at 8:49pm.