

Montgomery County - Water Quality Advisory Group Meeting

September 12, 2022 (7:05 - 8:12 pm) – DRAFT Minutes

Microsoft Teams Meeting

Staff Liaison Miranda Reid, DEP (miranda.reid@montgomerycountymd.gov)

| Member and affiliation | Present | | Others in attendance and affiliation |
|----------------------------------------------|---------|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | Yes | No | |
| Ken Bawer, Public-at-Large | X | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ana Arriaza, DEP, Program Manager - Partnership Engagement Janette Rosenbaum, Muddy Branch Alliance Susan Emery, Montgomery County Commission on Health |
| Keith Brooks, Public-at-Large | X | | |
| Bob Buglass, Public Agency, WSSC | X | | |
| Michael Carmel, Public-at-Large | | X | |
| Andrew Der, Public-at-Large | | X | |
| El Hadji Fall, Academic/Scientific | | X | |
| Michael McAvey, Public-at-Large | X | | |
| Pamela Rathbone, Co-Chair, Public-at-Large | X | | |
| Miranda Reid, DEP | X | | |
| Tracy Rouleau, Co-Chair, Academic/Scientific | X | | |
| Linda Silversmith, Public-at-Large | X | | |
| Tim Stemann, Business | X | | |
| Amy Stevens, Public Agency, DEP | X | | |
| Mark Symborski, Public Agency, MNCPPC | X | | |
| Allison Wright, Environmental | | X | |

| Agenda Item | Major Points |
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| I. Introductions | The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM by Chair Tracy Rouleau. Everyone introduced themselves so that new and old members would recognize each other. |
| II. Reading and approval of the minutes. | Minutes of the June 13, 2022, meeting were read. Ken Bawer’s motion to approve the minutes was seconded by Keith Brooks and the minutes were approved as read. |
| III. New Business | <p>Janette Rosenbaum, from the Muddy Branch Alliance (MBA), discussed the Alliance’s work, in partnership with the Isaac Walton League (IWL), to support native plant gardening. Using grant money, they took a large grassy area next to the local IWL headquarters and replanted it with native species. Wildflowers now bloom in the new meadow most of the year.</p> <p>Because they are native to our climate, the plants crowd out invasive species, have a deeper root system to channel rainwater to groundwater instead of sewers, and need less maintenance (watering, weeding, chemicals, and replanting) than grass and other plants. The MBA and IWL held public meetings on sustainable gardening that drew over 100 residents and resulted in 12 people applying for grants to start new gardens.</p> |

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| | <p>Ms. Rosenbaum encourages the county to start programs that stress the benefits of replacing lawns with native plants and pointed out that several local plant nurseries have sections devoted to native species. She also mentioned that Maryland recently enacted a law that bans Homeowner Associations from unreasonably restricting garden styles.</p> <p>In the following discussion, Amy Stevens said that the county and the Chesapeake Trust routinely install signs explaining that an area is being converted to native plants. There are many local environmental organizations that have programs supporting native plant gardening.</p> <p>Susan Emery from the Montgomery County Commission on Health suggested that the WQAG and her group have many similar interests and that a joint working group would be a way to focus more attention on common goals and avoid duplication of effort. Her suggestion was welcomed, and several areas of potential cooperation were identified: electricity v. gas for home appliances and heating; landscaping using native plants; planting more shade trees to lower summer temperatures in underserved neighborhoods; discouraging use of fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides, especially in neighborhoods with children; reducing use of salt on parking lots, driveways, and sidewalks; and strengthening enforcement of rules for disposal of pet waste. Tracy Rouleau will work with Ms. Emery to define the scope of the working group and find out the procedure for establishing such a group</p> |
| IV. Reports of Officers, Boards, | None at this time. |

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| <p>Standing Committees.</p> | |
| <p>V. Reports of Special Committees.</p> | <p>None at this time.</p> |
| <p>VI. Special Orders.</p> | <p>None at this time.</p> |
| <p>VII. Unfinished Business and General Orders.</p> | <p>The field trip scheduled for the July meeting has been postponed to the October 17 meeting. It will start at 6:00 to take advantage of the dwindling sunlight. It will be an in-person meeting to tour DEP’s Wheaton facility at 2425 Reddie Dr.</p> <p>The list of potential speakers and priority topics was reviewed. Several topics and speakers have already been covered. Members were asked to suggest new topics and speakers for the coming year. The county is about to release a major report on addressing climate change. An effort will be made to recruit a speaker on that topic.</p> |
| <p>VIII. Adjournment.</p> | <p>The next meeting will be at 6:00 on October 17, 2022 and will be a tour of DEP’s new Wheaton offices at 2425 Reddie Dr. The 6:00 start is to accommodate the early sunset.</p> <p>The next notetaker, in alphabetic order, will be Andrew Der</p> <p>The meeting was adjourned at 8:12 pm.</p> |