

Green Team Meeting Notes – September 14, 2015

Attendees:

MaryLee Haughwout
Jessica Love
Bryan Knedler
Veronica Owens
Joseph Jakuta
Brian Higgins
Jessica Higgins
Mimi McKindley-Ward
Shivali Shah (last 30 minutes)

Chesapeake Conservation Corps Volunteer

The City has a Chesapeake Conservation Corps volunteer that will be with Mount Rainier for the year. Jessica Love attended the meeting and provided an overview of some of the projects she has already started at the City. Part of her focus will be on outreach and engagement. She is working with Gerome and Veronica on “Envirominute” videos that provide helpful information on how to be more sustainable. The City is promoting and we are encouraged to help promote. MaryLee posted it on the Green Team facebook page.

Jessica is also working to organize a community event around the County’s “Clean Up Green Up” program where the City can get free native plants and trees. The community planting is scheduled for Oct. 17. We discussed planting locations and challenges with maintenance. Bryan noted the soil is very hard and dry making planting trees very difficult. We also noted that Thomas Stone is also doing an event for the Clean Up Green Up program. Jessica is coordinating with them. Jessica will let us know where she decides to hold the event. Jessica’s deadline to submit her plan to the County is September 18.

Veronica also suggested coupling the planting event with a storm drain stenciling project. MaryLee said Ann DeSanctis, a former Chesapeake Corps Volunteer at Anacostia Watershed Society, led a storm drain stenciling project in Mt Rainier a few years ago. Jessica was interested in contacting Ann. MaryLee has since sent Jessica Ann’s contact information and also information about the County Department of the Environment’s program to support storm drain stenciling.

2015-2016 Work Plan

We walked through some of the items in the draft work plan and discussed some items such as recycling, working with the schools and the 31st St pocket park. There is a lot in the plan and MaryLee is looking for feedback on items and interest to work on particular actions. Veronica suggested we focus in on 1 item for the year and see it to completion.

MaryLee agreed but suggested 2 or 3 to better reflect the Team's interests; e.g. some people are really interested in energy and not in natives/habitat, for example. Brian Higgins volunteered to look into wind energy suppliers for the City. Since the end of Clean Currents the City has not been purchasing wind credits. We also briefly discussed the solar panels on City Hall and the need for a meter. This could be an easy project if we could id grant funds; otherwise, we may need to work into a FY17 budget proposal.

ACTION: Look at the draft work plan and see if there is a couple projects you think we should focus in on for the year that are of interest to you. Ideally these are actions that need a sub-team to work on and make progress towards an accomplishment or goal. Be prepared to discuss at the next Green Team meeting.

Buchanan Green Street

Veronica gave an overview of the Green Street project and status. Broughton Construction was awarded the design build contract. Next week the company, the grant funders, Biohabitats and the DNR are meeting to discuss. The idea is to complete the design in the Dec/Jan timeframe. Before that they would come to the Green Team when they are at 60% design.

There was discussion about the PG Pool parking lot and whether that will be included in the project. Veronica said it is still uncertain but there is an upcoming meeting to discuss further. MaryLee mentioned the Rain Check Rebate incentive they could get for re-doing the parking lot with permeable pavers.

Veronica noted that the Perry Street Townhomes are likely to go in around Nov-Dec.

Green Team Chair

MaryLee will be stepping down from Chair in the next 1-2 months. She is having a baby in December and anticipates shifting priorities and not being able to manage the team. She plans to stay involved but likely will "disappear" for a period of time. She has spoken with someone already who is interested but if there is anyone else who would love to lead the team please let MaryLee know by 9/25.

Architectural Conservation Overlay Zone

Nathan from the Design Review Board attended the last part of the meeting to discuss the ACOZ. The idea is to create a guidebook to help residents to improve their home. Unfortunately this was presented to the community in a confusing way, as something that is set versus a work in progress. The idea is that the City will ultimately decide what we want to do, not the county. Nathan explained that the transitional nature of Mount Rainier presents risks to the character of the houses as more wealthy residents move in. The goal of the ACOZ is to preserve the character of the City's houses while allowing for adaptations. Nothing being considered under the ACOZ is moveable or involves

landscaping. For example, Joseph mentioned whether there would be issues with rain barrels. We then transitioned to discussing the environmental implications of the ACOZ such as limiting solar panels and maintaining historical concrete pathways, etc. Nathan clarified the wording in the presentation by the County was problematic. The City is not considering. Bryan shared three different examples of solar panels and mountings on area houses. One of which was not integrated with the roof line. Bryan asked for us to consider whether we may want to limit such installation practices. He and Nathan also asked whether there is anything we want to require – such as standards for greening for properties. The conversation concluded with a brief discussion about the County possibly backing out of this project because this was supported by Will Campos and not by Deni Taveras. We can voice our support to Deni. MaryLee mentioned that in general her sense was that the ACOZ in principal is about conservation and preservation of existing material, something the Green Team should support.

ACTION: Provide any comments to Joseph by Friday, September 25th on this presentation:

<http://www.pgplanning.org/Assets/Planning/Programs+and+Projects/Community+Plans/ACPACOZMTRainier/ACP+and+ACOZ+for+the+City+of+Mount+Rainier-7-15+meeting+Presentation.pdf>

and any ideas for environmental offsets we'd like to see incorporated into the City's ACOZ plans.

NEXT MEETING

Because of the Federal Holiday on October 12th City Hall will be closed. We are shifting our meeting to Monday, October 19.

Save the Date: October 17 for planting event organized by Jessica. Location and details TBD