

Mount Rainier Green Team Minutes  
November 9, 2015 7:00-8:30 PM  
City Hall

Attendees

Joseph Jakuta  
MaryLee Haughwout  
Veronica Owens  
Patricio Llerena  
Bernadine Sandy  
Serenella Linares  
Jessica Lawrence

Agenda

**1. Welcome**

**a. Introduction**

Joseph introduced himself as the new Green Team Chair and thanked MaryLee for her work as chair prior.

**b. Logistics**

Joseph discussed the new google calendar he set up that would hopefully improve RSVPing for meetings and some of the technical glitches he found and hope to get resolved. The team agreed to keep meeting on the third Monday of the month.

**2. Nature Center: Spring Green Fair**

Serenella and Bernadine attended the meeting in order to discuss ways to collaborate with the Green Team on the Spring Green Fair that is being held on April 16, 2016 at the Nature Center. The fair has a fairly solid education base, including collaborations with Anacostia Watershed Society, but is in need of greater outreach. They are already doing some work online and do have a focus on conducting more outreach at the schools. We discussed getting other Mount Rainier committees (e.g., Bike Coop and Community Garden) involved. MaryLee suggested having an activity involving the RainCheck rebate program and Veronica suggested holding raffles.

- We can help Nature Center with outreach through the Healthy Living section of the Message and our Facebook.

- The Nature Center will schedule a Meeting with all of the Mount Rainier Committees to further develop a plan.

**3. Long Term Goal: Carbon Footprint Reductions**

**a. Renewable Purchasing**

Joseph provided updates on Bill's work obtaining quotes for switching Mt Rainier power purchasing to wind power. The next step is to provide Groundswell with the most recent Pepco bills for all city buildings and the street lights. There was question as to whether we should obtain the quotes prior to collecting the data, but the quotes cannot be provided. Veronica was concerned that switching to

wind would increase the cost to the city, but it was determined that it was best to provide the cost differential to the council with a recommendation on how to proceed since they expressed interest in our sustainability efforts and the carbon footprint in particular.

- Veronica will have Jessica Love enter the bills into ICLEI and get the necessary copies for Bill.

#### **4. Long Term Goal: Pay as You Throw**

##### **a. Recycling Updates**

Joseph discussed conversations he had been having with the Recycling Partnership concerning was to improve the municipality's recycling program: using household trash cans instead of purchasing blue bins is problematic due to issues of contamination, residential confusion, weekly trash/recycling storage, and branding; 32 gallon bins are problematic because materials cannot always fit in them; there may be ways to reduce costs through truck retrofits and replacements due to worker compensation savings; and education and enforcement shouldn't be a problem given what the city has recently done.

MaryLee pointed out that other nearby municipalities have regretted purchasing 32 gallon cans. Serenella suggested that any carts be printed with pictures allowed of recyclable materials and Patricio suggested including nonrecyclable materials in the pictures.

- Joseph will look into that more information was needed on the costs of truck retrofits, truck replacements and time schedules, and worker compensation cost with Veronica's help.

Veronica brought up the idea of looking into grants concerning recycling infrastructure improvements. Joseph mentioned that Recycling Partnership has grants available in the spring and MaryLee discussed WalMart's Closed Loop Recycling Fund 0% loan program that was available with rolling submissions. Veronica pointed out the need to have a comprehensive proposal that included cans, trucks, education, and collaboration with other Mt Rainier based partners.

- Joseph will also look into the grant funding opportunities.

MaryLee also discussed ways to include the recycling handout in the Message.

- Veronica will look into including it in a future Message.

##### **b. Plastic Bag Ordinance**

Joseph presented a draft ordinance banning distribution of plastic bags at businesses in Mt Rainier as well as a one pager concerning the ordinance.

There were concerns that more research was needed as to what was occurring at the state level and that businesses in particular and the public at large would likely be opposed to such an ordinance. Whether this should be placed high in the list of Green Team priorities was also discussed. The determination was that the ordinance should be tabled.

##### **c. Enviro Minute - skipped**

#### **5. Recent Events**

**a. Green Infrastructure Lab - skipped**

**b. Sustainable Maryland**

MaryLee provided an update on the Sustainable Maryland award that Mt Rainier received. MaryLee, Joseph and Mayor Miles traveled to Cambridge to receive the award at the Maryland Municipal League conference. The award was earned for being recertified through the Sustainable Maryland program. Mt Rainier was one of four cities recertified this year in the first group of recertified cities and received the most points in the application.

**c. Cleanup Green Up**

Veronica Owens provided the update on the event. City staff, green team members, and youth removed bushes, picked up litter, and planted daffodils, native flowers and grasses near the community service monument as part of a county-wide day of beautification.

**6. Upcoming Topics**

**a. Development**

**i. Flywheel Netzero - skipped**

**ii. Menkiti**

Jessica Lawrence gave an update on the MUTC Meeting that was held with Menkiti earlier. Details on how Menkiti would approach LEED Silver were not too detailed and Jessica recommended we ask the Mayor to get that information. They are expected to have solar panels, solar hot water, low flow plumbing and energy efficiency at 10% above code. Stormwater issues were unclear, though there definitely will not be permeable surfaces. Sometimes municipalities can essentially require a higher level LEED through ordinances, called "stretch codes," but it would be too late for this to occur for the Menkiti project. We also need to look into obtaining the proposal to the redevelopment authority, namely the Land Disposition Agreement, which would likely occur through the Mayor as well. There is also a public meeting with Menkiti in December scheduled.

- Jessica will work on a draft letter to the Mayor that Joseph will present at an upcoming council meeting.

- Jessica will also start to look into a "stretch code" ordinance.

**b. Mayors' Conservation Challenge - skipped**

**c. Green Purchasing - skipped**

**d. Bike Grant**

Joseph mentioned that he discussed the bicycle infrastructure grant with Samantha who said that the work plan had just been submitted to the state with the help of Jarrett and the Green Team should be prepared to review whatever is available in the January timeframe. Veronica also discussed a meeting with the company that runs bikeshare program in College Park concerning opportunities to expand to other communities in Prince George's County.

**e. Backyard Agriculture - skipped**

