



## Mount Rainier Green Team Minutes

April 8, 2019 7:00-9:00 PM

City Hall

### Attendees:

- Katie Huffling
- Julia Schryock
- Sarah Lifsey
- Rosio Latorre
- Mimi McKindley-Ward
- Kevin McNeill

### Action Items

- The Green Team will continue to publicize the Spring Greening Fair online; Public Works will hang the banner in the circle.
- For the Spring Arbor Day planting, planting will occur with the Tree Commission's street tree planting. Public Works will pick up the paw-paw trees for the 37<sup>th</sup> St. Park.
- Sarah will connect Katie, Julia and Rosio in a composting workgroup email for next steps on developing a city composting program; initial steps are to look at what the start-up costs of a small pilot might be based on the University Park model.
- Sarah will review mosquito control resources from the County or the Extension Office for the mosquito control workgroup.
- Sarah will reach out to the Tree Commission to discuss their thoughts on watering the trees replanted after the Allison Street Levee Project and about writing about street tree care for the Message.
- The Green Team will prioritize next steps for recycling education, including alternative recycling drop-off points, a sticker on recycling for the new recycling cans,

### 1. Events

#### a. Spring Greening Fair – Saturday, May 4, 2019 12-5pm

- i. The Green Team will continue to publicize this event on the website and the Facebook page. Joseph Jakuta has a 36x3 banner to hang up in the circle and will drop it off at Public Works on Tuesday.

#### b. 31st Annual Potomac River Watershed Cleanup – Saturday, April 13, 2019 @ 9am

- i. The Green Team and Joe's Stream Team will both be team leads on Saturday, with routes to be determined on site.

#### c. Spring Arbor Day planting @ 37<sup>th</sup> St. Park – Saturday, April 27

- i. Public Works will bring the paw-paw trees from Tremendous when they pick up the main order.
- ii. This event has been merged with the Tree Commission street tree planting on the morning of Saturday, April 27<sup>th</sup>. Gabe from the Tree Commission will send out more information on when and where to meet.

### 2. PG County Gateway Arts District Overlay Zone Revision

- a. New Brooklyn Farms has circulated an e-petition and asked for letters in support of urban farming. This update allows for crop-related activities only. There is also a joint public hearing scheduled for April 30<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm.
- b. There may be further discussions on animal agriculture (chickens) but currently county and city laws exclude livestock.

### 3. Solar Workgroup Update



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- a. The April 4<sup>th</sup> solar event for apartment dwellers heavily promoted but sparsely attended. The Solar Workgroup will consider why that might have been and how to reach apartment residents.

### 4. Compost Workgroup Update

- a. Katie and Julia are interested in supporting a citywide composting program. This has a history in Mt. Rainier: for almost 10 years, Jodi Beder researched citywide composting and nowhere near by would accept compost except for EcoCity Farms. Katie and Julia did research back when the city updated the trash and recycling cans and talked University Park. They know what bins and bags they have, how they work, their five gallon buckets, and that it's a volunteer program. They have all the details of what they do as an example and a simple model of what to use.
- b. Composting was brought up previously for last year's budget, it was rejected because of the city wanted to focus on the new trash and recycling program. Public Works is aware that the Green Team is interested in doing a pilot program and suggests bringing it up for the next budget. Before that, we should bring it in front of the Mayor and Council.
- c. The main concerns are the resources needed to provide these services. Right now trash costs the city \$60/ton and recycling costs \$27/ton. Showing a cost benefit would be a good argument. Run some numbers: what would it cost to outfit 80 households and one truck?
- d. The PG County pilot was over 200 homes but they haven't released their outcomes yet.
- e. Brentwood might want to share a pilot.
- f. Another thought is that the Stream Team could employ youth to help out with composting. They can hire through the Creative Works program for life skills training for youth.
- g. Restaurant composting is a separate issue. Could this count for the Green Incentive program? Rosio will send the Green Team information on the Pepco Small Business Program Incentive.
- h. Sarah will connect Katie, Julia and Rosio in a composting workgroup email for next steps on this idea.

### 5. Mosquito Workgroup Update

- a. With spring starting, the Mosquito Workgroup is interested in starting outreach for mosquito control. The group thought that all of these issues should start in the schools, the frontline for bringing stuff home to the families. Sarah will review her notes from Jodi Beder about resources like mosquito control coloring books that are available from the County. Other ideas included reaching out to the science teachers in the local schools to ask about doing a lesson or an assembly on mosquito control, emphasizing the STEM connection. Sarah will look into reaching out to the County or the Extension Office for resources.

### 6. Allison Street Levee project and trail improvements update

- a. The County will be planting trees to replace the ones cut down for the project but the group wondered who will be responsible for watering and update. Can the Green Team lead a watering project? An adopt-a-tree project? This could contribute to the sustainability profile of the city. Casey Trees includes two years of "water me" tree alerts with their trees—can we do something similar? Sarah will reach out to the Tree Commission to discuss their thoughts on this issue and next steps.

### 7. Grants

- a. Sarah will review the language and grant application for the Maryland Department of Natural Resources Funding Available for Resilience, Restoration and Stewardship.
- b. PG Litter Reduction and Citizen Engagement Mini Grant Program - Tabled

### 8. Outreach



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- a. The Message
  - i. June (due 5/11/19) – Joseph will write on air quality
  - ii. July (due 6/11/19) – During hot and weather, solicit help to water the city trees? Sarah will touch base with the Tree Commission about this topic
  - iii. August (due 7/11/19) – Message may be on hiatus
  - iv. Upcoming topics
    1. Lead (Joseph, already drafted)
    2. Wish-cycling
- b. #GreenIsLife Videos
  - i. Sarah has talked with Doug Adams about filming a higher quality film on the Stream Team/banalong in the early summer. Doug has also reached out to the Mt. Rainier economic director and sustainability and the owner of the hemp store on 24<sup>th</sup> Street. Other topics include wish-cycling, composting, and visiting the Glut and the importance of bulk-buying. Sarah will reach out to the Glut.
  - ii. A video on what you can do in your yard and how to do a yard survey for preventing mosquitos might be good; we did a mosquito short last year but it could be expanded.

## 9. Waste Reduction Updates

### a. Alternative recycling drop-off points

- i. These are places where people can drop off items that can be recycled but can't be included in regular recycling pick-ups like CFLs, batteries, etc. The Green Team is interested in establishing some alternative drop-offs. It shouldn't be duplicative (i.e. no e-west since Public Works has that covered). We can't do hazardous waste, no we can't collect old paint/paint cans. The drop-off could collect small items like batteries and light bulbs that can be dropped off at MOM's.
- ii. One question is whether we would want to have set drop-off hours so volunteers can see what is being dropped off and make sure there is no contamination issues. One possible location is the Bike Co-Op/Tool Shed property. This could go hand in hand with bringing back the Tool Shed to existence too. Public Works property could be an option too if they are amenable to that.
- iii. The Green Team will continue to discuss this idea.

### b. Public trash cans and recycling cans

- i. The Green Team discussed ways to encourage recycling in Mt. Rainier. Public Works regularly receives calls from people who want to use their recycling cans and trash cans, and has not seen a change in the amount of recycling versus the amount of regular trash since the rollout of the new trash cans.
- ii. One thought is targeting homes that are not recycling and providing education such as home visits from a recycling expert.
- iii. Are there parts of town where we really need to do education? Green Team members would be motivated to work on this, go out and meet people: that's where the change needs to happen. This could dovetail with the Stream Team's "call to action" and plan to go block-by-block to encourage recycling and trash pick-up.
- iv. How do we get the people who aren't doing these things to start doing it? Tie it to money such as "pay as you throw" programs. Can people be fined for throwing recyclables in the trash? The downsides are that it is resource-intensive to go through people's trash and would be invasive.
- v. People are often confused about what is and is not recyclable (i.e. plastic bags, plastic #6). Originally the new recycling cans were going to have printed



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information on what is and is not recyclable but that was not included. Could the Green Team make a sticker that could be added showing what you can recycle and what you can't?

- vi. Another piece of education (for a flyer or a Message) is information on where you can take items like batteries, CFL, paint, etc.
- vii. Would it be possible to get a TerraCycle drop-off at the Glut or in the schools?
- c. Kaywood Gardens Recycling update - Tabled
- d. Cassette Tape Recycling – Joseph will ship these out on April 16<sup>th</sup>.
- e. Next Styrofoam E-Waste Event – Saturday June 15<sup>th</sup>
- f. Stormwater update – Councilmember Luke Cheseck found a parishioner at St. James who is going to speak to the Pastor directly about the county stormwater program for faith-based organizations.

### 10. Community Needs Assessment Survey

#### 11. Topics for a Later Date

- a. Art Workgroup
- b. Plastics Reduction
- c. Economic Development Fund
- d. Parks - 31st Street Park, Rogers Park
- e. Green Development Fund/Development Projects
- f. LED for Buildings
- g. Parks Plan - Fee in Lieu Of
- h. Art walk from Joe's to the elementary schools (painted crosswalks)
- i. Rain Check Rebate follow-up and blog

Upcoming Events/Dates

Next Meeting: May 20, 2019