Meeting Notes
Greenscape Committee
Wednesday, October 26, 2022, 7:30 pm
Kensington Town Hall

Committee Chair: Ann Lichter

Attendees: Alison Oppenheim, Gloria Capron, Katherine Wood, Beth Pierce, Helen Wilkes, Jon Gerson, Mayor Tracey Furman, and Yvonne Gurney.

1. Parks – Creating a Sense of Place

- Major redesign of Clum Kennedy is done. Now need to let plants mature and grow. Town will add electricity to enable pumping water from Silver Creek to water plants and to support events.

2. New Initiatives

- Trees
  - Discussed ways to create a renewed focus on protecting and enhancing the tree canopy in Kensington. This is increasingly important given loss of aging trees, and climate change effects including intense rains and extreme temperatures. We could have a dual focus on trees on town property and educating residents and businesses about trees on their property. Specific ideas discussed:
    - Create tree inventory
    - Identify champion trees in town and create a tree walk
    - Create educational opportunities for homeowners about tree care, street tree options, county programs to subsidize planting native shade trees, etc.
    - Include educational info about trees in the Town Newsletter, set up tree talk/table at Farmer's Market

- Enhancing greenspace
  - We talked briefly about the idea of working with homeowners and businesses to educate them on how to enhance greenspaces with pollinator gardens, rain gardens, greenery, etc. as well as helping them know which county programs they can use to help subsidize these projects.
  - We talked about the idea of growing herbs in the Howard Avenue Park that residents could harvest themselves.

- Sustainable Maryland – TOK "Green Team"
  - The Town recently established a new committee called the "Green Team" to help the town become certified under the Sustainable Maryland program. To earn certification, a community has to implement a number of actions under different goals tied to energy efficiency, and environmental and climate resilience. It may be that some of the goals the Green Team wants to pursue intersect with Greenspace Committee work (e.g., trees, pollinator gardens, etc) and Greenscape committee work could contribute to our sustainability goals.

3. Next Steps

- Ann will set up a meeting with Alex Marini to discuss the town's process and budget for managing our tree canopy. Alex is the assistant to Town Manager Hoffman and she was recently certified as a state arborist and which means the town can manage the inventory of street trees more actively and not have to wait for the county. If there are particular questions you have for Alex, please share them ahead of time.
- Alison, Katherine, and Gloria volunteered to create a tree inventory of trees on town property. They will coordinate with Alex to make sure the information collected aligns with what would be helpful for her use as well.
- Yvonne Gurney volunteered to call MoCo Division of Environmental Protection to learn more about the Home Tree Care 101 program with arborists. Ideally we could have a Zoom educational program about trees, county rebate programs, etc. this winter, and in person Tree Care 101 workshop in the spring.
- Alison Oppenheim volunteered to talk to Angie about adding herbs to the Howard Ave Park that we could label and let the public know they are free to harvest the herbs for personal use.

Resources Discussed During the Meeting:

1. Sustainable Maryland program – review list of qualifying actions so you can see what overlaps with interests of the Greenscape Committee
2. MC Atlas mapping tool that shows you boundaries of parks in Montgomery County
3. SDAT search tool to identify property owners
4. Weed Warriors Program – Montgomery Parks
5. Tree Montgomery program (includes link to a Tree Map)
6. Montgomery County DEP/Conservation Maryland Home Tree Care 101 program
7. List of Town approved trees for street planting

Adjourn