

Committee for a Better Environment
Davis Hall, College Park
March 24, 2014
7:00 PM

<u>Members</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Suchitra Balachandran	X	
Gemma Evans	X	
Benjamin Mellman	X	
Janis Oppelt	X	
Kennis Termini	X	
Donna Weene	X	
Macrina Xavier		X

Guests Present: Andrew Fellows, Mayor, College Park; Bill Gardiner, Assistant City Manager; Alan Hew, Councilmember; Steve Beavers, City Liaison; Denise M. Palmer, Contract Secretary; Grant Klein, Neighborhood Solar Bulk Purchase; Matthew Dahlhausen, University of Maryland; and Matthew Popkin, University of Maryland

Ms. Evans called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

1. Review and approve minutes 10/28; 11/25; 1/27; 2/24 meetings

The minutes from the October, 2013 November, 2013, January and February, 2014 meetings were approved. Ms. Evans reported that meeting minutes can be approved by the Committee via email, as long as a copy of the minutes is delivered to the City Clerk's office. This, however, cannot include financial or budget approvals.

2. Financial report

Mr. Beavers reported that there is \$9,329 remaining in the budget. CBE expenses incurred include administrative, printing costs, CBE events, and ICLEI dues. Mr. Beavers will update this report after final expenses have been received.

3. Guests

1. Sustainability Summit at UMD, in conjunction with Good Neighbor Day – Emily Paige Adams: Unfortunately, Ms. Adams was unable to attend the meeting.

2. Community Power Network, re residential solar energy systems and possible CBE sponsorship of meeting 4/1/14:

Mr. Klein introduced himself to the committee and gave an overview of Community Power Network and its mission as a non-profit organization since 2007. It works with groups of neighbors who are interested in adding solar panels to their homes and assists them by identifying contractors who bid on the project, using the concept of bulk purchasing. Mr. Klein passed out literature to the committee and explained the pricing and different options to purchase solar panels. Their next meeting is

scheduled for Wednesday, April 16 at City Hall at 7:30 p.m. He solicited the committee's help in spreading the word about the project and sponsoring its upcoming meeting. The solar panel project is not limited to College Park residents. There was some discussion about various property tax credits available from federal, state and local governments. Additional information is available on their website at www.communitypowernetwork.com, or by emailing grant@communitypowernetwork.com.

Ms. Evans made a motion to support the community event meeting on April 16, 2014. Ms. Oppelt seconded the motion and it was unanimous. CBE will sponsor the event and CBE will send forward the CBE logo to Mr. Klein. Ms. Evans requested that he forward a short paragraph description in order for CBE to advertise the event.

4. Events

1. Recap – Permaculture Workshop and Community Library Book Festival

Ms. Oppelt reported on the community library and express interest in doing a listserve to advertise the CBE donated books. “Courtesy of CBE” stickers are inside of the books. Mayor Fellows suggested linking future donations to the community library to local school curriculum.

Ms. Oppelt reported on the permaculture workshop and indicated the presenter, Mr. Lincoln Smith, was very knowledgeable. Ms. Evans also agreed the workshop was very informative with 14 people in attendance and would like to invite him to return for another workshop. The committee discussed using the presenter as a reference for the permaculture project. Mr. Beavers suggested consulting with him for a possible three-hour site survey and another five hours to prepare a proposal which can be presented to the council. Ms. Oppelt will follow up with the Mr. Smith.

2. Community Cleanup

Ms. Xavier will report at an upcoming meeting.

3. Future workshops – composting, rain barrels, native plants, etc.

Ms. Balachandran discussed Cheverly and its start with composting. The committee agreed to continue discussion at the next scheduled meeting.

Mayor Fellows mentioned the Sustainability Summit and the need to get as many people in attendance for the panel session as possible. The Mayor and Council have discussed a sustainability action plan that could be centered on energy, water, pesticides, and other ideas could be explored. He encouraged the University of Maryland and CBE to work together on the Summit scheduled for Saturday, March 29 and suggested that CBE have a table at the Summit. It would be a good recruiting opportunity and an opportunity for the city to adopt a sustainability plan.

Ms. Termini is interested in a native plants workshop and the details to be defined at a future meeting.

Guest Matthew Dahlausen suggested another workshop topic – “Priorities on environmental issues in the home.” Ms. Evans will follow up with him to discuss the workshop details.

4. Battle of the Buildings

The committee discussed an email sent by Mr. Jascourt on Multi-cities Environmental Committee group competition. Based on the information in the email, it was determined that, at this point, the committee will not pursue participating in the contest.

5. **Old Business**

1. Tree and Landscape Board representative: **Ms. Evans nominated Ms. Oppelt to be the representative. Ms. Balachandran seconded the motion and it was unanimous.**
2. Web page updates: Mr. Beavers will follow up and make sure the revisions have been made.
3. Business Recycling Committee: The committee met last week and has another date next week. They are moving forward and making progress.
4. CPAE Arts in Schools project: **Ms. Oppelt indicated a vote was needed for the Arts in the Schools project organized by the College Park Arts Exchange and local artist Lucy Dirksen. She made a motion to authorize \$500 for the project, which would be spent on supplies for students to complete posters or another project related to Earth Day. Ms. Weene seconded the motion and it was unanimous.**

6. **New Business**

Bike To Work Day – Mr. Beavers will research how much money CBE normally donates and will follow up.

Maryland Day is scheduled for April 27, 2014.

Ms. Balachandran reported on pesticides and her intent to conduct a small survey on the long-term use of compost bins distributed at a previous workshop.

Mr. Hew reported on the emissions report that was prepared previously and spoke with Mr. Jascourt about having someone update the data entry. Since the data is stored on a laptop, Mr. Hew suggested that Ms. Evans pass the laptop to Mr. Beavers and Ms. Evans will follow up.

Ms. Weene reported that Girl Scout Troop 2898 is collecting plastic bottle lids to benefit St. Jude's Center for Children.

There being no further business for discussion, the meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.
The next meeting is scheduled for April 28, 2014 at Davis Hall.

Minutes prepared by Denise M. Palmer, Contract Secretary