

HARFORD COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD

APPROVED MEETING SUMMARY – March 19, 2019

Members Present: Paul Gartelmann, Dennis Kirkwood, Roland Beckman, Sally LaBarre, Tami Imbierowicz, Doug Kopeck, Michael Charlton

Ex-officio Members Present: Julie Mackert, Matt Kropp, Paul Magness, Jeff Schoenberger

Review / Approval of February 19, 2019 Meeting Summary

A motion to approve the February 19th meeting summary was made. The motion was seconded; the Board unanimously approved the meeting summary.

Native Butterfly Program at Ladew Topiary Gardens – Ms. Sheryl Pedrick and Ms. Sue Myers

Ms. Pedrick started the presentation by introducing some background information about the butterfly house, which was added to the 220 acre facility six years ago. The 30 x 50 foot house utilizes a mesh cloth exterior that is also 50% shade cloth to protect the caterpillars inside. Native plants specific to the dietary habits of native caterpillar/butterfly species are located inside the house, providing shelter as well as food until the caterpillars reach maturity. Once the caterpillars reach maturity, they are released to the on-site meadow.

The mission for the butterfly house is to showcase butterflies and caterpillars as the ambassadors in understanding relationships between insects, plants, and people, and the need to protect and restore wild habitats and their native plants. Butterflies have been coined as the “gateway bug” by Ladew staff due to their aesthetically pleasing characteristics and non-stinging nature. Introducing butterflies to the public leads people to be more appreciative of insects, overall.

Leaflets were distributed to the group, outlining the specific plant species needed for particular butterflies to thrive. For instance, if we want to increase the population numbers of our declining state insect, the Baltimore Checkerspot Butterfly, we should plant white turtlehead flowers for the butterflies to lay their eggs on, and allow the caterpillars to eat from, until maturity. Many butterfly species were listed on the leaflet, correlating to their supportive plant counterpart. Most of the listed species of both plant and butterfly are found in the Ladew butterfly house.

In closing, Ms. Pedrick left the group with some informative tips. “One of the differences between a butterfly and a moth is its protective barrier; a cocoon or chrysalis.” A butterfly caterpillar forms a chrysalis, which is secreted from its body and hardens as a barrier until it sheds that outer layer as a butterfly. A moth caterpillar forms a cocoon, not secreted from its body, but is spun from its own silk to form a protective barrier until it reaches moth maturity. Another great piece of knowledge imparted to the group is that although butterfly bushes do attract loads of butterflies, the bushes are not only invasive, but they are also not very advantageous to the butterflies. “The butterfly bush is the sugary junk food of the wild. Butterflies love it, but there’s very little nutritional value to them.”

Departmental Updates

DPW – Jeff Schoenberger reported that DPW had a Harford Streams Open House on March 12, 2019 and had over 40 citizens attend. He updated the group on the Bynum Run stream restoration project at McPhail Road, and the stormwater management retrofit at Homestead Wakefield Elementary. He mentioned that the County collected over 458 tons of tires from the agricultural community and had 249 participants. Scarborough will begin extending hours beginning April 4th, 2019.

Park and Recreation – Paul Magness reported that a stream restoration project will begin this summer at Annie’s Playground. They will also be making water quality improvements at Magnolia Middle School and at the Fallston Library. Mr. Magness also mentioned Segment 1 of the Ma and Pa trail work has begun running from Williams Street to just across Main Street. Roadwork is expected to begin in early April.

Health Department – Julie Mackert reported that the even though Harford County has no official bathing beaches, the Department will still be testing water quality throughout the summer. The areas being tested will include Mariner Point Park, Rocks State Park, Kilgore Falls, and Flying Point Park. The Health Department has been working with the Maryland Department of the Environment on the process of testing and notification of results. There was discussion on how Harford County is unique in that the County does not have bathing beaches as most other counties.

Planning and Zoning- Matt Kropp and Tami Imbierowicz discussed the Arbor Day Planting that will be held on April 19th, 2019 at the Harford Community College. The planting area will be behind the historic Hays-Heighe house. Details will be sent out regarding the event, but it usually begins around 9:30am and is a great way to get children and civic groups out and involved. Tami also discussed how HCC was going to meet with Mr. Frank Lopez of DNR to discuss vegetation management and maintenance on campus.

New Business

Matt Kropp mentioned that next month’s meeting will be held at the County’s Agricultural Center in Street. Mr. Bill Tharpe will be presenting on how the agricultural community has been doing their part in satisfying EPA Chesapeake Bay water quality requirements (Watershed Implementation Plan). He also mentioned that the EAB has 4 vacancies, and encouraged member to consider people who may be interested in serving on the County’s EAB.

Adjourn: Meeting was adjourned at 7:56pm.