

Meeting Minutes (Draft)

Wicomico County Natural Resources Conservation Advisory Committee – March 8, 2022

Committee: Judith Stribling Alyssa Hastings Jared Parks Doug Stephens Will Dyer John Groutt

Planning & Zoning Representatives: Cassie Dyson & Jesse Drewer

Previous Minutes were not available for approval; committee will vote on them at the next meeting.

Old Business/Updates:

Earth Care withdrew its application for a biochar facility. This was a promising project; the processing of poultry waste and sewage sludge would have helped reduce loading to land and water, and the process would have converted 70% of the nitrogen to N gas. Biochar has a big market and is used to help clean polluted water because it absorbs heavy metals.

Signage for Pirates Wharf- Possibility of adding signage targeting ecological aspects under the current grant funding. Possible areas to highlight: different ecosystems, restoration, preservation of older forest, invasive species. Discussion of possible American Chestnut restoration project, most likely at Pemberton.

Invasive Species Project: A meeting has been scheduled for April 26th regarding Pemberton foliage treatment later in the Spring. Discussion for continuation of the program with options of including other counties, as well funding for PRISM coordinator.

Ms. Hastings discussed the forest conservation plan at Naylor Mill, including targeting invasive species. Mr. Dyer noted several problem species there. Management may be covered through a grant or existing City funds. NRCAC could write a letter of support.

Mr. Dyer was asked to provide feedback on the Gypsy Moth population. He mentioned that there is a limited ability to survey and treat; however, the entire Eastern portion of Wicomico County needs to be sprayed. A public information session will be held later in March.

Draft of Mission Statement: Ms. Stribling reminded the group to review

New Business:

Ms. Stribling described to the committee a study of the adverse effects when roads are salted and the impact on ecosystems. Natural streams and well water systems are included as a concern, and salinity in freshwater systems may be increased to an alarming degree. The article offered a few recommendations: Calibrating equipment, monitoring timing and quantities of salt deposited, and properly storing materials in a fully-enclosed building.

Ms. Hastings shared with the committee that she will be meeting with the Mayor to implement an Ivy Campaign City Wide for removal. The purpose is to educate homeowners through social media and public information sessions. She is also working with students from Salisbury University to develop a Community Engagement Focus Group/Outreach survey. Some of the questions covered:

- Green Space in Parks
- Access to fresh foods
- Community gardens
- Grocery stores

Ms. Hastings also announced the upcoming Earth Day at the Zoo on Saturday, April 23rd; starts at 9:00 a.m.

Future Meetings: Ms. Stribling informed the committee that next meeting will be April 12th in Room 306 at 3:00 p.m.

DRAFT