

**Committee for a Better Environment  
Via Teleconferencing through Zoom  
May 22, 2023  
7:00 PM**

<u>Staff</u>		<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Janet McCaslin		X	
Susan Whitney, Councilmember			X
<u>Members</u>	<u>Term Expires</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Alexa Bely	6/30/2025	X	
Brendan Hall	6/30/2024	X	
Alan Hew (a 7:10pm)	6/30/2023	X	
Wentao Guo	6/30/2024		X
Todd Larsen	6/30/2023	X	
Nikki Pancho	6/30/2025	X	
Donnie Scally	6/30/2023		X
Holly Simmons (a 7:10pm)	6/30/2023	X	
Stacy Teng	6/30/2025	X	
Caroline Wick	6/30/2023	X	

Also Present: Sheryl DeWalt, Contract Secretary

The meeting began at 7:03pm by Todd Larsen, Chair.

1. The agenda was accepted by Mr. Larsen without exception.
2. The April 24, 2023, minutes were reviewed. Ms. Bely motioned to accept the minutes. Mr. Larsen seconded. **Motion carries 6-0-0.**
3. City activities:
  - a. There is \$3,450.46 currently in CBE’s budget. Monies have been allocated for tree signs.
  - b. Ms. McCaslin has been working with the GIS Technician on creating new QR codes for the tree signs. She has priced out stickers that can be placed on the signs. Mr. Larsen made a motion to order the new QR code stickers and spend up to \$150.00. Ms. Wick seconded. **Motion carries 8-0-0.**
  - c. The City’s communication office as well as the Economic Development office has been sending out information on the Better Bag Ordinance. It’s been on the City website, the Municipal Scene, social media, “Here and Now” newspaper, coverage on a couple news channels and information passed at all events; they are creating two direct mail pieces, that should be mailed out in July, one for residents and one for commercial businesses. Reusable bags are on order for residents through the City. Reusable bags are on order for commercial businesses through the Economic Development Office. Bags should be arriving in early to mid July. Brief discussion about ensuring that the senior citizens, especially those living in Attick Towers and Spellman House, are given reusable bags. A suggestion was made to have an event at the senior residences making a T-shirt into a reusable

bag. Ms. Wick and Mr. Larsen will reach out to the grocery stores and other anchor stores about having a box for “Bring a bag, Take a Bag” concept to ensure that everyone has reusable bags.

4. Better Bag Ordinance. Prince George’s County is moving forward on the bill. There is a public hearing on May 30, 2023. It’s Bill 32-2032 and is supported by Tom Dernoga and Eric Olson. It is very similar to College Park except that the county bill is exempting restaurants from charging the 10¢ per paper bag. You are welcome to the public hearing, and you can also reach out to your county council delegates to encourage them to support this bill.
5. May 6<sup>th</sup> parade went well. CBE was accompanied by Bee City and TLB committees. Mr. Larsen thanked everyone who attended the parade.
6. Green Awards. Brief discussion on submitting and reviewing Green Awards two times during the fiscal year. Mr. Larsen suggested November and May. The committee present seemed to think those months would be appropriate for Green Award discussions. Ms. Wick offered to update the Green Award brochure.
7. Stormwater drains. Copies of the painted drains were attached to the agenda. Three of the four spring drain paintings are completed. The final one is at City Hall, and it will be completed shortly. The storm drain paintings were discussed at a recent Council of Government meeting which Ms. McCaslin and Councilmember Mackie attended. The attendees were also shown painted drains from the City of Gaithersburg and a discussion about how Gaithersburg advertises the information on their website and the contest they are doing for painting the drains. Councilmember Mackie offered to connect CBE with the contact for Gaithersburg.
8. Trolley Trail Trees. There are four more trees that need signs. Ms. Bely will try to have them installed in the next 10 days so they will be done for Trolley Trail Day. Trolley Trail Day is scheduled for June 10. Mr. Larsen, Ms. Bely, and Mr. Hew are the committee members representing CBE with the partnership group. Ms. Bely will not be available on June 10, but Mr. Larsen and Mr. Hew will be there. Ms. Bely suggested having a handout, kind of a scavenger hunt, to locate trees of the same species that have signs on them. She will be glad to put something together and Ms. McCaslin will make copies. This may also be something that can be added to the CBE website page.

Once the new QR code stickers arrive, the signs will need to be cleaned and the stickers added to them. Ms. McCaslin volunteered to handle the northern part of the trail and Ms. Bely volunteered to handle the southern part of the trail.

9. Climate Action Plan. Information has been updated on the City website. In the next few months, the committee will begin working on a plan for the City and sending it to Mayor and City Council for review, discussion, and approval.
10. A copy of the revised letter on Electric Leaf blowers was attached. It will be sent to Mayor and City Council in June, via Ms. McCaslin.

11. The Sustainability Survey is still on schedule to send out in the fall. Mr. Larsen, Ms. Bely, and Ms. Teng will be working through the questions. Once the committee is satisfied and approved the questions, CBE will work with the City's Communication coordinator to send out the survey to the residents.
12. Electric Vehicle Event: showcasing electric cars and electric bikes. The event will be held at the Hollywood Farmer's Market (by Mom's) on September 23, with a rain date of September 30. With the limited space, there probably will only be 5-6 vehicles on display. It would be great to have vehicles of various sizes. Proteus Bikes will be taking part by having test rides on E-bikes at their store. Mr. Larsen will reach out to other E-bike vendors in the city to inquire about participating in the event. Information will also be made available for residents to obtain a pass and ride the UMD electric buses.
13. Bee City update – continuing to work on solidifying the June 17 pollinator event which will be held at the University of Maryland Arboretum Center with the film “Garden of a 1000 Bees” being shown at the Clarice Center. The event is scheduled from 1:00pm-4:00pm, rain or shine.
14. Municipal Scene:
  - a. June – Plastic bags – Ms. Wick
  - b. July – Why dog waste is bad for the environment – Ms. DeWalt
  - c. August/September suggestions: Not using pesticides, Appropriate height of grasses.
15. TLB Update:
  - a. Public Works received five permit requests to remove trees from residential homes. Three of the five requests were approved.
  - b. There have been quite a number of requests received for tree planting.
  - c. An RFP for a tree canopy assessment has been sent out. The assessment is done every five years with the last one being done in 2018.
  - d. Working with Park and Planning on the trees at the College Park Airport and removing dead trees that could be a hazard.
  - e. Working on a tree giveaway for the fall.
  - f. Looking at a program on Adopting a Park.
  - g. Request made for a native garden near Narragansett and Lackawanna. The requestor was asked to reach out the Bee City Committee.
16. The committee was kind enough to thank Ms. DeWalt for her 10 years of service as a contract secretary to CBE.
17. The next CBE meeting will be on June 26, 2023, at 7:00pm. Instructions will be sent out via email prior to the meeting date. Ms. Bely motioned to adjourn. Mr. Hew seconded. **Motion carries 8-0-0.** The meeting adjourned at 8:20pm.

Respectfully submitted by Sheryl DeWalt, contract secretary.