

# **The Boonsboro Environmental Commission (BEC)**

## **First Annual Report**

*December 2012 - December 2013*

### **The First Six Months**

- Toured the Town's \$12 million Waste Water Treatment Facility to learn about its operation and significance in the community.
- Educated ourselves on the Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) and the Town's Comprehensive Plan by reading and discussing future projects that should be addressed by the Town.
- Met with the Washington County Soil Conservation District, Antietam Creek Watershed Alliance, Sustainable Maryland Certified, Valley Co-Op, and the Washington County Economic Development Commission's Agriculture Marketing representative on a variety of potential projects and challenges facing the Town and its surrounding environs.
- Facilitated Shafer Park Stream Clean-up in conjunction with civic groups, town boards and commissions.
- Attended a program about community service at Boonsboro High School in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King in January.
- Promoted the Governor's tree planting challenge to plant a million trees in Maryland.
- Received positive press for the Town in the local media.
- Appointed a Strategic Plan Subcommittee and started developing a Strategic plan; that includes goals and a timetable for the completion of projects.
- Registered to participate in Sustainable Maryland Certified; the first municipality in Washington County to do so.
- Established the Tree and Waste Reduction Subcommittees.
- Appointed member Amanda Whitmore as the main contact for the formation of the Green Team, a requirement of the Sustainable Maryland Certified program.
- Surveyed town residents on priorities for Sustainable Maryland initiatives.
- Proposed a Commission budget to be included in the Mayor and Council's FY2014 budget.

### **The Second Half of Year One**

- Facilitated energy audits to be performed on four Town buildings. Recommendations will be incorporated into the energy reduction and renewable energy action plan for the Town.
- Sponsored a Boonsboro Middle School teacher's attendance at the annual North American Association for Environmental Education Conference held in Baltimore, Maryland in October. The teacher reported her experience to the Mayor and Council in December.
- Obtained technical assistance from the University of Maryland to help develop a Stormwater Management Program for Boonsboro.
- Established an active Green Team; working toward completion of Sustainable Maryland Certified requirements.
- Coordinated efforts for a \$37,500 Maryland Environmental Administration Smart Energy Communities grant to be used on renewable energy and energy reduction projects.
- Met jointly with the Park Board to discuss and promote environmentally friendly actions for the park; including stream restoration, stream buffer and tree plantings, recycling, pet waste stations, and educational efforts.
- Worked cooperatively with the Park Board to require event recycling in Shafer Park. Boonesborough Days organizers reported saving approximately \$300 in landfill tipping fees because of the recycling efforts during the annual September event.
- Cooperated with the Park Board in promoting the installation and use of pet waste stations in Shafer Park.
- Continued working towards the completion of a Tree Canopy Survey. This project was organized and carried out by an intern who is a recent college graduate with a degree in Forestry Studies. The results of the study will be used to plan for urban reforestation projects and educational materials for residents.
- Mounted an effort to promote the Maryland Green Registry among local businesses and the Town government. The BEC chairperson made a special presentation in November to the Boonsboro Economic Development Commission.

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- Assisted with the Town-wide bulk trash (and recycling) clean-up in October and a stream buffer planting (279 trees) effort in Shafer Park in November.
- Devoted some budgeted funds for the fencing on either side of the new buffer area along the stream to help set off the natural area from the mowed area in the park.
- Attended the Washington, DC Green Festival in September. Members of the Green Team and the Commission have brought back many ideas for green initiatives; including the Green Fest, the idea of which sprung from a visit to the DC festival in 2008.
- Met with neighboring community to discuss progress on Sustainable Maryland Certified projects. The Brunswick Mayor and her Green Team visited the Boonsboro Green Team in November.
- Completed an Executive Summary of the Strategic Plan, including the Commission's goals, mission statement and objectives. Work continues on the more detailed document.

### On the Horizon

- Develop a conservation plan for the Town farm.
- Name creeks/tributaries within the Town limits, in conjunction with the Park Board, to help citizens know the importance of the waterways that spill into the Chesapeake Bay.
- Install an educational kiosk for the Shafer Park Stream Buffer project.
- Promote the completion of a walkability survey of the sidewalks and pathways and make recommendations to connect all neighborhoods for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Publish "The Green Times" with articles written by each of the commissioners for possible distribution with the Town's utility bills, beginning with the second quarter billing in 2014 and continuing periodically.
- Promote "Friends of Shafer Park" so fundraising can be conducted for park projects, such as an aquatics center.
- Develop an Educational Speakers Series (Audubon Society, Maryland Energy Administration) to be offered to the community; perhaps in conjunction with the Boonsboro Free Library schedule of programs.
- Promote increased residential recycling rates and make available recycling at all gathering places, including sports and recreation venues within Town limits.
- Work to obtain additional grant funding for energy, stream restoration, and planting projects.
- Work with the Crestview Homeowner's Association and Soil Conservation District to coordinate a clean-up/stream restoration for the open space parcel near Route 34 for Tributary 102.
- Work with The Department of Natural Resources TreeMendous Planting Program to coordinate a planting for the open space parcel south of Sycamore Run for Tributary 102.
- Advocate implementation of energy-saving projects in Town facilities, with proposed recommendations from the Energy Audit
- Begin work on an educational program for Town residents on the planting and care of trees, as a follow-up to the Tree Canopy survey
- Support efforts of the Green Team, including work towards certification through Sustainable Maryland
- Promote Watershed Implementation Plan, and work towards implementing recommendations including painting of stormwater inlets with "Drains to Chesapeake Bay"

Respectfully Submitted,

*Brigitte Mary Schmidt*

Chairperson

Boonsboro Environmental Commission