

**MINUTES FOR THE GREENBELT ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY MEETING**

Monday, February 2, 2009 – Community Center, Room 114

Members present: Jim Kelly, Marti Galvin, Ed James, Maggie Cahalan, Matt Berres, John Lippert.
Staff liaison: Luisa F. Robles. Guest Speaker: Judith Ott (on behalf of Leta Mach)
Excused absences: Konrad Herling. Absent: Joyce Griffin, Mary Chapman

The meeting was called to order at 7:34 pm.

1. *Approval of minutes.* Minutes from the month of January were approved.
2. *Sharing of information.* Luisa reminded members that they can have 50% off annual individual or family Aquatic & Fitness Center passes. Also, in the month of September Green ACES will meet on the second Monday of the month (Room 103) due to the Labor Day holiday.
3. *Trash can issue.* Guest speaker Judith Ott addressed the committee on behalf of Leta Mach. Judith mentioned that at a Boxwood Civic Association meeting it was discussed that trash cans left on the street can be a hazard as they blow onto the street with storms or high winds. Judith mentioned that in North Carolina they have a 24 hr law relating to trash cans. If a trash can is found on the curb outside of the allowable 24 hr period, it is removed and a fine is placed. Green ACES members commented that perhaps the specific homeowners that are leaving their cans out should be addressed individually; perhaps mediation or other steps would be appropriate as a first approach. Educating the public by including a leaflet with their bill would be another way of addressing the issue. Green ACES members were confused as to why this issue is being brought to them. If this is a safety issue, then the Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC) should be addressing it.

Green ACES recommends talking with the infringing neighbors first. If they keep leaving the trash cans out, try the mediation process. Regarding general awareness on the issue, a note on best practices regarding trash cans can be added to the City's website, a note can be placed in the City's Newsletter, a note can be written for the News Review. If the problem persists then PSAC should address the making of the ordinance as it is a safety issue.

4. *Potomac River Watershed Cleanup:* Green ACES has decided to participate in this year's cleanup to be held on Saturday, April 4 from 9:00 am to 12:00 noon. Maggie Cahalan volunteered for the Springhill Lake site at Cherrywood Lane. Ed James and Jim Kelly volunteered for the Braden Fields Stream site. Matt Berres volunteered for the Spellman overpass woods on the Gardenway side. Luisa said she would help with the Springhill Lake Elementary cleanup on Friday, April 3. Luisa will attend the volunteer training on February 18 from 6:30 to 8:30 at the REI in College Park. No other member wanted to attend the training, so Luisa will bring back the information to the next meeting.
5. *Earth Day plans.* Green ACES decided to hold the Earth Day T-shirt Design Contest again. Logistics were discussed as to how to make this happen. It was decided to move the date of the next meeting to March 16 (instead of March 2), to give enough time to

advertise the contest and receive designs, and leaving enough time for the T-shirts to be made. The theme for this years design is: Serving Greenbelt, Helping the Environment.

The City of Greenbelt will celebrate Earth Day on April 25 by holding a hands-on workshop on rain gardens at the Youth Center, and a tree walk. These events are organized by Lesley Riddle. The T-shirts with the winner design can be given away to the people that volunteer at the workshop.

6. *Demonstration Gardens.* Maggie Cahalan talked about the possibility of having a demonstration garden at the Community Center. She spoke to the “glass” group at the Community Center to generate pleasing art to decorate the garden. She talked with Kim Rush Lynch, who organizes the farmers market about perhaps speaking to our group. Maggie will with Megan Young, the curator of the Victory Gardens about addressing Green ACES.
7. *John Lippert, Chair.* John asked Green ACES to think of ways to encourage Greenbelters to use alternative energy. Coal generated energy is too damaging to the environment. Perhaps Green ACES could have a signing campaign at the Green Man festival where people commit to get their energy from alternative sources, purchase credits (such as through the Electric Vehicle Association), etc. Comments were made that MOMs, Kinkos, UPS, FedEx, Google, and perhaps other companies are getting their energy from wind power. Wind power generated electricity is about 15% more expensive than coal generated. However, coal does not take into account the negative environmental and health externalities of its production. Wind generated energy does not have such negative externalities.
8. *COG Meeting Report.* Luisa Robles talked about the January 15, 2009 Council of Governments meeting she attended. The meeting dealt with how to measure recycling rates and the importance of recycling in the workplace. Luisa distributed a COG flier that stated they had launched their “Go Recycle Campaign” in an effort to empower and educate local residents to extend their home recycling practices into the workplace through radio spots that use humor to affect behavior change, and through a television PSA. The COG flier said that “recycling is the most universally accepted green activity that Americans do every day. Studies have found that recycling contributes a significant reduction to greenhouse gas emissions in the United States and can contribute more savings if expanded. With at least 50 percent of all waste generated in the workplace, focusing on recycling at work can yield big gains for the environment.”

Green ACES would like to make the recommendation to Council that it is imperative for all City of Greenbelt employees to recycle at the workplace. City employees should be models to the rest of the community, and City offices should be equipped with appropriate recycling bins.

The meeting adjourned at 9:40 pm.