



Environmental Advisory Committee MEETING AGENDA

Thursday, June 1st, 2023, 3:00pm

In Person: King Street Meeting Room - 100 North King Street

Present members: Neil Brown, Jay Naparstek, Nancy Diaz, Joe Criscione, Sissy Owen, Chris Berg, Stephen Tillotson

Others present: Amy Schmitte, Marilyn Chapman, Austin Phillips, Harold Clark

Start time: 3:01pm

- 1. Approval of June Agenda – Unanimous approval for agenda**
- 2. Approval of April Summary – Unanimous approval for agenda**
- 3. Informal Public Comment N/A**

4. New Business

- a. NCDOT litter discussion: Marilyn Chapman-Henderson County Adopt-a-highway Coordinator gave summary of the NC DOT adopt-a-highway program.
 - i. Program started in 1988, first group was in Henderson County. Currently 60 groups in Henderson County. Requirements are: must pick up once every 3 months, must report clean ups, and must clean up 2 miles of roadway on a state maintained road. Each group receives 2 adopt-a-highway signs at each end of their route. All supplies provided by NC DOT.
 - ii. Groups have the option to recycle items with reversable orange/blue bags.
 - iii. EAC interested in adopting a highway-high need roads: Jeffress, Howard gap, sugarloaf, lakewood road (Typically Roads closest to fast food establishments)
- b. Austin Phillips-Division Environmental Roadside Engineer-
 - i. Contracted litter removal within the county covers 297.25 shoulder miles picked up every other month. Pick ups usually scheduled before mowing to avoid scattering litter. Problem items include: plastic bags, Styrofoam cups, aluminum cans. Contracted services not typically separating trash and recycled items, all items trashed time/cost factors in this. In Henderson County approximately \$82,000 per year for pick up services. Possible solutions: enforce fines, increase signage, report hotline, cameras in problem areas, enforcing/fining untarped or unsecured loads from the solid waste facility.
 - ii. Discussion around litter and illegal dumping- Illegal dumping typically in consolidated spots vs roadside litter more spread out. When illegal dump sites are reported, signs can be put up to help deter. Cost for waste



disposal may be cost prohibitive for low income individuals/families. Can there be programs for low income individuals to dispose of their trash at reduced/low costs?

- c. Harold Clark-Henderson County Transportation Supervisor-
 - i. Coordinates pick ups from Adopt-a-highway programs. DOT employees set aside time to participate in litter cleanups, Spring and Fall litter sweeps. Also supervises teams that pick up larger items, couches etc. They have run into situations where unsanitary/hazardous materials are found, staff wears protective gear to protect from unknown dangers. Typically picking up 2-3 adopt-a-highway locations per week. Run into problem areas where larger items are found on a regular basis. Setting up cameras is not allowed. Uptick in littering during the height of covid especially in areas of close proximity to fast food establishments.
 - ii. Discussion of the possibility to require businesses whose consumers contribute to high quantities of the litter to have a certain number of trash receptacles provided on their property. City/County ordinance or business development requirement. Harold gave example of a park n ride in Haywood county that when trash receptacles were provided, many people were mis-using and taking advantage the trash receptacles, dropping of household trash and larger items. Is it possible to engage these businesses that contribute to the litter in the County encourage them to adopt-a-highway near the business, reduce the items offered to consumers that contribute to litter (condiment packets, napkins, straws, etc.)?
- d. Action items:
 - i. Participate in Spring and Fall Litter Sweep
 - ii. EAC adopt-a-highway, choose a location close to meeting location to conduct litter clean up after meetings.
 - iii. Nancy suggested members help to increase reach by encouraging their churches and other groups they are associated with to adopt-a-highway. Work to get 2 groups in their network to join the program.
 - iv. Henderson County to create a how-to video for litter clean ups, link to the County website
 - v. Award program to encourage local groups and businesses to participate in the litter clean ups. Have a list of road ways that need to be adopted. Start with litter sweep participation then encourage to join adopt-a-highway.
- e. Subcommittee groups summaries
 - i. Tree Canopy Preservation-Hendersonville has established at committee with 14 members to draft a tree ordinance with a focus on developments and preventing clear cutting. City has contract to complete drone survey of tree canopy. Last survey completed around 2003. Will lend as a comparison to the new survey.
 - ii. Single use plastic ban-Next steps to get someone from NC Plastic free



coalition, Mountain True, and Asheville sustainability advisory committee to talk about their experience, approach to the issue, and how they drafted language for the ordinances. Focus in Asheville has been a push to reduce litter not as much of a push to reduce single use plastics or environmental concerns. HC could look at similar approach. Asheville started with banning plastic bags for leaf litter collection.

1. Nancy gave brief summary of the work that's been done at MountainTrue. Recycling team had a Plastic free hendo initiative working to recruit downtown businesses to work on reducing plastics. Campaign is currently on hold but moving forward will be discussed with the City and Waste reduction team (previously recycling team). Asheville merchants and retail association have been a barrier with the plastics ban initiatives. Look into small changes on the County level (events, transfer station, etc.)
- iii. Transportation-No major updates on transportation at this time
- iv. Flood Plain/Residential Commercial development-No major updates at this time. Request for current floodplain guidelines and contact person at the County.

5. Old Business

- a. ECO Heroes award-3 submissions received since the Spring push for new submissions. Amy will send out received submissions for the EAC to vote on. Suggestion to post on social media info about the nominated individuals to encourage more county residents to submit nominations. Work to make nominations as submissions are sent in. All nominees will receive a letter of recognition. Suggestion to send to the schools in the beginning of the year to county schools for teachers to submit students/teachers for program.
- b. Field trips/guests-Bullington Gardens June 6th at 9am
- c. Committee members-Recruitment needed. EAC will have 4 open spots July 1. Working with PIO to advertise open spots. Would like to have input from the board at meetings from Board representative.

6. Environmental Programs Update

- a. HHW-Fall dates-
- b. Hard 2 Recycle-June 10th tentatively-At Mud Creek Baptist Church from 10am-2pm.
- c. Foam collection
- d. Compost Program update
 - i. Compost bin sale
 - ii. Schools
- e. Charger update
- f. Grants
 - i. DEQ-FWR



- ii. EPA-SWIFR
- iii. USDA
- g. Community events

7. Adjournment-4:27