



Sustainable Forestry Council

580 Taylor Avenue - E-1 • Annapolis, Maryland 21401 • 410-260-8531

Gary Allen
Center for Chesapeake
Communities
Annapolis, MD 21401

Kim Finch
MNCPPC,
Prince George's Co.
Planning Dept.
Upper Marlboro, MD
20772

Kenneth Roberts
Verso Corporation
Westport, MD 21562

Alberto Goetzl, chair
Dream Catcher Farm,
LLC
Adamstown, MD 21710

Bryan Seipp
Center for Watershed
Protection
Ellicott City, MD 21043

Elizabeth Hill
Dorchester Forestry Bd.
Linkwood, MD 21835

Donnelle Keech
The Nature Conservancy
Cumberland, MD 21502

Bill Rees
Catonsville Tree Canopy
Committee
Catonsville, MD 21228

Tuesday, August 28, 2018
Tawes State Office Building,
580 Taylor Ave., E-1, Annapolis, MD 21401
Conference Call 1-888-450-5996

Minutes

Attendees:

Al Goetzl
Elizabeth Hill
Ken Roberts
Bryan Seipp
Gary Allen
Kim Finch
Donnelle Keech

DNR:

Anne Hairston-Strang
Don VanHassent
Dan Rider

Guests:

Ben Alexandro, MD League of Conservation Voters
Elaine Lutz, Chesapeake Bay Foundation

Action items:

- Update memorial description on MD/DE SAF web page donation link for Kirk Rodgers Memorial and distribute to SFC and others (Jack Perdue and Anne Hairston-Strang)
- Distribute no-net-loss tracking website content to SFC (Anne Hairston-Strang)
- Distribute draft forest planning guidance from MD Dept. of Planning to SFC (Anne Hairston-Strang)
- Follow up on AG opinion on Woodland Incentive Program and status of No-Net-Loss Tracking website content (Don VanHassent)
- Set up meeting and mill tour for Nov. 2 (Anne Hairston-Strang and Ken Roberts)
- Send December meeting poll (Anne Hairston-Strang)

Minutes:

Al Goetzl, Chair, opened the SFC conference call at 1:03pm. Donnelle Keech and Bill Rees were welcomed as official members as of May 23rd. The Council reviewed the minutes from the January 22nd meeting. Gary Allen moved that the minutes be accepted, Donnelle Keech seconded, and minutes were approved unanimously.

Don VanHassent, State Forester, provided a DNR update. He announced the recent retirement of the Eastern Regional Forester in June and the upcoming retirement of the Central Regional Forester in December, noting that positions are expected to be replaced. Budget preparation is being done in anticipation of flat funding. Don described the current effort for a memorial for Kirk Rodgers in conjunction with the Fire Tower display and interpretation at the Church Creek office location, near the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Visitor Center. Three fire towers have been dismantled

due to safety and nuisance concerns, and the top 20 feet of one is slated to be reinstalled for interpretive purposes. A display about the fire tower history is expected to include background about Fred Besley, Maryland's first State Forester, and continuing contributions by Kirk Rodgers, his grandson, and the Besley/Rodgers family. Anne reported that the MD/DE Society of American Foresters has been collecting donations towards this memorial recognition for Kirk; Al Goetzl said donations had come from the Forest Landowner's Association and the Rodgers family, in addition to previously reported donations by the MD/DE SAF chapter and other individuals. A public meeting on the Fire Tower proposal is scheduled for Sep. 12th. When asked about a timeframe, Don replied that mid-2019 was likely for tower and display.

Don reviewed the current effort to work with MD Dept. of Planning to carry out a requirement in the Forest Preservation Act of 2013, to develop guidelines, recommendations, and technical assistance on policies and standards to protect forest land and urban tree canopy from adverse effects. He explained that Jason Dubow with MDP and Anne Hairston-Strang from the Forest Service would be working on guidelines, with a draft expected in the Fall 2018. Gary Allen requested that the SFC have an opportunity to review and comment on the draft language. Anne agreed and suggested that Maryland Association of Counties and Maryland Municipal League also have opportunity to comment. She mentioned other work that has been undertaken, including MDP's Forestry Subcommittee of the Sustainable Growth Commission and a MD Forest Service pamphlet on forests and planning: "Forests for Healthy Waters, Sustainable Communities: Principles and the practices for using forests and trees in land planning" (<http://dnr.maryland.gov/forests/Documents/ForestsForHealthyWaters.pdf>). Gary Allen said that updates in MDP planning guidance were needed to reflect new laws and tools over the last decade, including the Sustainable Forestry Act, Chesapeake Bay Watershed Implementation Plans, and the septic tiers bill. He suggested that planning guidance be discussed at a meeting later this year.

SFC members inquired about the recent forest acreage protected through Program Open Space. Don said that for fiscal year 2018, 2,350 acres of protected forest were added to State Forests. Gary Allen asked about progress on the Attorney General opinion for the Woodland Incentive Program interpretation. Don replied that they had not had any reply yet, and he would follow up with Secretary Belton.

SFC members discussed a fall meeting and field tour to develop actions related to forest markets for healthy forest management, anticipated to be in Western Maryland. Anne noted that the Lower Eastern Shore tour suggested earlier in conjunction with Rural Maryland Council was not planned at this time, and that a western Maryland location would provide complementary background to the Upper Eastern Shore forest products panel at the MD/DE SAF meeting where SFC members had been invited to attend. Ken Roberts explained that a tour of the Verso paper mill in Luke Mill could cover the woodyard overview, paper production, and roll wrapping in 2 or 2.5 hours, and that a tour would be limited to 15 people, with a preferred group size of 10 to 14. A preferred date of Friday, Nov. 2 was identified, with October 30 as a possible backup. Donnelle identified Allegany College Continuing Education building as a possible location for a meeting for presentations and discussions on forest markets and management. Dan Rider suggested inviting a representative from the MD Dept. of Commerce covering resource-based industries, and Donnelle suggested some local economic development representatives. Discussion included a component for planning outreach in 2019 for the 10-year update to the Maryland Forest Action Plan, and recognizing prior SFC members for their contributions as part of the November meeting.

SFC members discussed conservation of forests in Maryland. Ben Alexandro from the League of Conservation Voters and Elaine Lutz of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation outlined issues related to no

net loss of forests and Chesapeake Bay Program mapping and modeling that identifies continued forest loss in Maryland; they requested coordination to improve approaches. Discussion covered sources of data on forest cover, the need for clear statements on data sources being used, responsibility for official forest canopy status and trend tracking, distinctions between forests and tree canopy relative to the 40% level identified in the 2013 Forest Preservation Act, and priority forests for protection. Methods of trying to identify forest quality were discussed, including contiguity, fragmentation, Maryland Targeted Ecological Areas, Green Infrastructure (state and local), invasive species, MERLIN, and buffers. Better information on fee-in-lieu fund implementation and transparency was suggested. The proposed website content on no-net-loss of forest/canopy tracking was brought up, since it would address some of these questions. Anne explained that the draft for a web page has been submitted for internal review. SFC members requested follow-up to encourage timely posting of this information.

Al Goetzl proposed a December meeting focused on incentives, regulations, and other approaches to conserve forests in Maryland, and what actions the SFC could pursue towards no-net-loss. He requested a written proposal from meeting guests on initiatives and actions that might be considered. Dan Rider suggested looking at incentives including ecosystem services and markets to retain forest cover and/or possible payment streams related to water quality needs, carbon sequestration, and other climate change mitigation measures recommended by the Climate Change. Beth Hill noted the increase in forest cover in USFS Forest Inventory and Analysis data in some of the counties with the most active forest products industry.

Anne requested initial thoughts on types of outreach for the 2020 Forest Action Plan update. Gary Allen suggested efforts specific to urban and community forestry, including attention to diversity that reflects changing demographics, building career paths and a jobs pipeline for minority populations, Green Classroom Governors Initiative, and connections with historically black colleges and universities. Anne requested that people think about venues where the Forest Action Plan could be presented to effectively reach stakeholders, and bring ideas to the Nov. 2nd meeting.

Al Goetzl adjourned the meeting at 3pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Anne Hairston-Strang
MD DNR Forest Service