



Carroll County Environmental Advisory Council (EAC)

Josh Hatkin, Chair

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Brenda Dinne, Staff Liaison

2013 Annual Report

2013 WORK PLAN PROGRESS

Energy Use & Cost Savings:

The Environmental Advisory County (EAC) is still in the process of updating the 2008 study, and it is included in the 2014 work plan. After losing the volunteer working on this project, the project was put on hold while the EAC members served on the Stormwater Fee Advisory Group and the Solar Energy Subcommittee. Josh Hatkin, EAC Chair, took over the lead on the project from EAC member Kim Petry and will push the project forward in 2014.

Stormwater Fee Advisory Group:

Three of the five sitting members of the EAC at the time served as the core members of this Advisory Group from February to June. Additional members, representing the agriculture, business, municipalities and the development community, served on the Advisory Group along with the EAC members. The Advisory Group met at least once a month from February to June, for a total of seven meetings, to evaluate options for how a rate might be structured if a stormwater fee were to be adopted. The Advisory Group submitted a report to the Board of County Commissioners with its findings and recommendations in June 2013.

COMPLETED

Solar Facilities: Locating & Financing:

The Board tasked the EAC with studying location and financing information related to solar panels/farms. The following tasks were to be completed. The EAC anticipated the final work product to be a memo or report to be forwarded to the Board.

- *Task 1:* The EAC will research best practices for siting solar farms constructed for the primary purpose of generating electricity to sell back to the grid. This may include researching what other jurisdictions, particularly in Maryland, have done to address this use. Findings on standards and best practices for siting commercial solar operations and recommendations to the Board for those that should be incorporated to the draft ordinance will be reported to the Board. The information resulting from Task 1 was to provide background to staff that have been directed to propose Code changes to implement the siting recommendations. This report was completed in August and forwarded to the Director of Land Use, Planning and Development (LUPD). Proposed Code changes were presented to the Planning Commission. Staff is addressing Commission concerns. **COMPLETED**
- *Tasks 2 and 3:* Research will include grants that might be available to property owners for siting solar panels on their property. The EAC also will evaluate options for property owners to obtain credits from utility companies and State and federal agencies. Upon completion of Task 1, a representative of Maryland Energy Administration briefed the EAC members on some of the basic requirements and issues with solar energy in Maryland, as well as providing information on grants and credits. The Solar Energy Subcommittee is awaiting implementation of Task 1. Upon its completion, the Subcommittee will prepare a recommendation to forward to the Board regarding information to provide to citizens

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relevant to solar energy for individual properties in Carroll County.

ACTIONS TAKEN

- ◆ *Stormwater Fee Advisory Group:* The Advisory Group met seven times from February to June 2014. A report was prepared and forwarded to the Board with the Advisory Group’s findings and recommendations for a rate structure that could be used if a stormwater fee were to be adopted.
- ◆ *Solar Energy Locating and Financing:* The Board of County Commissioners requested the EAC to evaluate and recommend options for siting solar facilities that staff would then use to draft proposed Code changes. A report was forwarded to the LUPD Director. Proposed Code changes were presented to the Planning Commission.
- ◆ *Bylaws:* The bylaws were reviewed and updated to reflect some minor process changes and to strengthen the language regarding attendance.
- ◆ *Solid Waste Work Group:* The Solid Waste Subcommittee member that served on the Solid Waste Work Group periodically updated the EAC on the status of the implementation of the Work Group report.
- ◆ *Environmental Awareness Awards:* The Awards Subcommittee reviewed the process for the 2014 awards and the nominations forms and criteria to support it. The materials were updated and ready by the end

of December so they could be rolled out and distributed in early January 2014.

- ◆ *Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan “Listening Session:”* The EAC members participated in a listening session to provide input to the process to update the Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan.
- ◆ *Annual Report and Work Plan:* The EAC prepared its 2013 annual report to the Board and drafted a work plan of proposed projects for 2014 in preparation for the annual joint meeting with the Board scheduled for January 23, 2014.

CITIZEN CONCERNS/ISSUES

The following concerns or issues were brought to the EAC’s attention. The EAC responded or referred the individuals to the appropriate agencies.

- ◆ *January:* Potential for unwanted critters in composting bins
- ◆ *April:* Stormwater fee considerations
- ◆ *August:* Open burning in residential areas

INFORMATIONAL BRIEFINGS RECEIVED

- ◆ *March:* Legislative Update on Bills Pertinent to EAC Projects or Issues
- ◆ *April:* Legislative Update on Bills Pertinent to EAC Projects or Issues
- ◆ *August:* Introduction to Accounting for Growth (AfG)
- ◆ *September:* Overview of Solar Energy in Maryland – Considerations for Carroll County
- ◆ *November:* Overview of Open Burning Requirements in Carroll County

MEMBERS

<u>Member</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>Term Expiration</u>
Suzanne Hill	Resigned February 18, 2013	September 30, 2015
Sandra Zebal	Reappointed	July 5, 2017
George Schooley	Fill remainder of Suzanne Hill’s term	September 30, 2015
Melvin Baile	Replaced Robyn Gilden	September 30, 2017
Ellen Cutsail	Replaced Brian Rhoten (resigned December 8, 2012)	July 5, 2017
David Hynes	Replaced David Pyatt	October 31, 2017