



HOWARD COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY BOARD
3430 Court House Drive ■ Ellicott City, Maryland 21043 ■

Ned Tillman, Chair

<http://www.howardcountymd.gov/OES/OES Board.htm>

2013 Annual Report of the Howard County Environmental Sustainability Board

To the Howard County Executive and County Council:

It is my privilege to submit to you the 2013 Annual Report of the ***Howard County Environmental Sustainability Board***.

We believe that the county has developed an effective process for pursuing the goals of the 2007 Howard County Commission on the Environment and Sustainability. Howard County has clearly made progress in the area of becoming more sustainable. The Board commends you for your leadership in this area. We believe that in addition to the high-profile projects that the county has taken that there is a culture of sustainability that is growing throughout the rank and file of county employees. This is encouraging because we still have a long and very important way to go. We appreciate and strongly encourage your ongoing leadership and support in helping all aspects of our community to embed good sustainability practices into everything we do.

We welcome the opportunity to meet with you collectively and individually to discuss this report and our ongoing role in advising you over the next year on the major issues facing the county in the future. Please select a time to meet and discuss the report and our plans for the future. We will continue to meet on the second Thursday of the month at the Robinson Nature Center and certainly welcome your participation if you would like to join us.

Sincerely,

Ned Tillman, Chair
Environmental Sustainability Board
Of Howard County

The Howard County Environmental Sustainability Board

2013 Annual Report to the Executive and County Council

Introduction

The Environmental Sustainability Board (the Board) was created in 2008 and currently consists of the following members:

Ned Tillman, Chair	Sherman Howell	Sandi Olek
Cathy Hudson	Olivia Farrow	Chein-Chi Chang
Betsy Singer	Georgia Eacker	Christina Mudd
Mark Southerland	Naureen Elahi, Student	

Josh Feldmark, Director of the Office of Environmental Sustainability, is the Executive Secretary of the Board. Other ex-officio members include Jim Caldwell, Lindsay DeMarzo, Susan Overstreet, Elissa Reineck, Beth Burgess, Mark DeLuca, Ann Elsen and Laura Miller. The board also met with other members of the administration as appropriate and the community to ensure we are in contact with the key people on relevant topics of interest.

The primary responsibility of the Board is to advise the Executive and County Council on matters related to environmental sustainability and track the county's progress towards goals initially established in 2007 by the Commission on Environmental Sustainability. As part of that duty, the board is submitting this 2013 Annual Report of our past year's activities through April of 2013 and the county's progress relative to sustainability initiatives. This document will be distributed to you and the public at large.

Our major effort this past year has been on stormwater management issues. We also continued our efforts on our Healthy Communities Initiatives and began work on enhancing local food production and distribution. As in the past we were called upon to review and provide input into a number of other topics and supported a number of informational outreach efforts. We have summarized these efforts below.

We welcomed one new board member and several new ex-officio members to our board:

- Olivia Farrow – Board member
- Beth Burgess, Chief, Resource Conservation Division:
- Mark DeLuca, Chief, Bureau of Environmental Services:
- Ann Elsen, Energy Manager with OES
- Jim Caldwell, SW manager with OES

We tracked progress of CSX proposed Intermodal facility in accordance with CC resolution until the site moved to Baltimore.

Stormwater Management

1. The board continued to encourage the county to develop a guaranteed source of funds for maintaining our stormwater infrastructure and reducing the negative impacts our current system is having on our streams, lakes and the bay.
2. The board reviewed and provided comments to DPZ on their Watershed Improvement Plan (WIP a.k.a. Bay TMDL "Diet") and commended them on the final product.
3. The board reviewed the progress by DPW (Steve Gerwin, Chief, Bureau of Utilities) on the upgrades to the sewage treatment plant in Savage
4. The board tracked progress of Stormwater Advisory Committee and supported the concept of a stormwater subcabinet
5. The board supported the Youth Conservation Corps concept and provided input and support to the Alliance for the Bay's *Restoring the Environment and Developing Youth* program (READY)
6. The board recognizes the need for local Stormwater Groups around the watersheds.
7. The board supported the concept and initiation of the Howard County Watershed Stewards Academy

Health and Food

1. The board recognizing that health is a critical part of the county's sustainability, created a task force to pursue initiatives that would complement the other work we are doing.
2. The task force identified the concept of adding a community health assessment screening into the zoning process and met with DPZ to see how this could be best done.
3. Some of the recommendations were incorporated into the General Plan.
4. Food was selected this year as a new focus area to include finding ways to encourage more production of local food, and the distribution of it directly to consumers, via CSAs or a regional food hub.
5. The board connected Horizon Foundation with the Office of Environmental Sustainability to pursue outside funding for this topic of joint interest.

Technical Review

The board tracked, critiqued, and reviewed progress of:

- a. HC Department of Rec and Parks 5-year Comprehensive Plan
- b. OES - County energy team
- c. 2030 General Plan
- d. County success in creating a sustainability culture
- e. Green Central Station update
- f. Plans for Belmont
- g. Bike Master Plan – Bike Howard

- h. Green Infrastructure Network
- i. Patapsco Heritage Greenway certification from the State. A Charette is planned.

Outreach - ESB co-sponsored and/or offered its support to the following outreach events:

- GreenFest – Hosted at HCC and attended by over 2000 people
- Two programs with NASA Goddard Space Flight Center and Howard Community College, “Observations from Space, Earth and Climate Change” for students on March 21 and a Community Event on March 24 for the general public
- DILP Conference on Energy upgrades
- Earth Forum – monthly seminars and workshops
- YouthEco

Focus for 2013

During 2013, the board plans to

- track progress of the implementation of the Stormwater restoration efforts to ensure it is done in an efficient and logical manner.
- follow the Comp Zoning process
- track and encourage progress on food, health, and transportation issues.
- Implementation of the Green Infrastructure Network

The ESB passed the following Resolution on 1/12/12

Model Stormwater Management Neighborhoods

In support of the comprehensive, long-term effort to restore the health of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, the Howard County Environmental Sustainability Board resolves that:

☐ There is an urgent need for innovative approaches to stormwater management to meet the challenging requirements of the County's new NPDES MS4 (stormwater) permit and Chesapeake Bay TMDL WIP (watershed implementation plan). These requirements include unprecedented levels of treatment of impervious surfaces and reductions in nutrient and sediment loadings to downstream waters.

☐ The County should undertake an initiative to create one or more model neighborhoods where the widest range of stormwater management practices are implemented in conjunction with other infrastructure repairs needed in the communities. Specifically, the County should identify one or more neighborhoods that agree to implement a comprehensive suite of stormwater practices, including Environmental Site Design features (e.g., pesticide and fertilizer source reduction, riparian and urban tree planting, downspout disconnection, cisterns, dry wells, rain gardens, grassy swales, and pervious pavement). Ideally, this initiative should involve the landscaping business community which may be integral to implementing stormwater practices on private property.

☐ The goal of this effort is to effect a substantial and maintained improvement in established Howard County neighborhoods that were constructed without concern for stormwater management. Creating one or more model stormwater management neighborhoods will "show what it looks like" and demonstrate that such practices can be acceptable and successful elsewhere in the County.