

Annual Report of the Environment and Energy Committee April 17, 2017

The Environment and Energy Committee's goal is to help Chevy Chase Village become a sustainable community. It aims to do this by supporting efforts to reduce the Village's overall environmental footprint through, for example, conserving energy, reducing pollution and waste, enhancing the Village's urban forest and green space, reducing noise pollution and runoff, and greening residential and Village landscaping practices.

The E&E Committee raises awareness of these issues by sponsoring lectures, promoting food waste composting and recycling and working with other Chevy Chase Village Committees and neighboring communities to share good practices. These goals and objectives are included in the Environment and Energy Committee's updated Mission Statement, which was approved by the Board in January 2015.

Committee Membership

Marilyn Bracken, PhD and Marea Hatzios Grant, PhD. Co-Chairs

Members include Valery Amiel, Oliver Davidson, Jonathan Lyons, Diane Pape, Betsy Stephens, and Ralph Stephens

Board Contact: Gary Crockett

Activities in 2016

The Environment and Energy Committee:

- Organized a Sustainable Living Lecture Series designed to inform residents about current issues of interest around the theme of sustainable communities and sustainable living.
 - Healthy and Safe Lawns was the title of the fifth lecture in the series. Montgomery County Council recently passed Bill 52-14 Healthy Lawns, which restricts the use of certain pesticides on private lawns, and health care facilities and playgrounds. Two speakers discussed the ramifications of the new law and alternatives to the use of pesticides on residential lawns.
- Worked with the Board of Managers to prepare a letter to Village residents and the Chevy Chase Village Crier regarding the issue of noise and pollution from leaf blowers. Pollution from two-stroke engine leaf blowers is significant, causing exposure to carbon pollution and increased respiratory problems. Using the lowest possible fan speed on current equipment decreases the amount of noise and also decreases the amount of atmospheric pollution from allergens and bacteria.
- The Committee suggested that residents who use lawn services talk with their contractors about ways to reduce noise and air pollution. It was recommended that contractors consider switching to electric or battery powered machines when they are upgrading their equipment. Users should

employ the lowest setting possible when operating their equipment, blowers, mowers, etc. Use only one machine at a time to reduce the noise. Residents might remind lawn care services that equipment must be in compliance with Montgomery County noise regulations. Residents can look to see if there is an ANSI sticker indicating maximum decibel level on the equipment.

- Continued monitoring implementation of the **Montgomery County Healthy Lawns Bill 52-14**, which was enacted in 2016. The Bill calls for restrictions on non-essential uses of certain pesticides deemed harmful to human health and the environment. Homeowners will be subjected to the Law in 2018.
- Continued involvement with the Village to assess the effectiveness of recycling efforts, particularly related to the use of the new (larger) recycling bins distributed to households, and impacts on contractors' access.
- Collaborated with neighboring communities and organizations such as the Little Falls Watershed Alliance and Bethesda Green to identify good environmental practices, which could be shared with Village residents.
- Published articles in the Crier on Recycling, Responsible Pesticide Use..

Activities and Emphasis in 2017

The Environment and Energy Committee has agreed to focus its efforts around the following themes:

- Education and Outreach (e.g., through the Sustainable Living Lecture Series and regular articles in the *Village Crier*)
- Energy Efficiency and Conservation
- Green Energy Alternatives
- Recycling and Food Waste and other Composting
- Collaboration with neighboring communities on issues of common concern
- Measuring results

Submitted by the Environment and Energy Committee
April 17, 2017