

Environmental Sustainability Committee August 10, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Dan Fogel, Dana Hicks, Priya Jayaram, Anne Marie O’Neill, Tim Sanborn, Diane McLaine, Trisha Knight, Natalie Paavola

Members Absent: Jeremy Shook

Commissioners: Mayor Pro Tem Jennifer Hunt (board liaison)

Staff: Bobby Williams, Assistant Town Manager (staff liaison)

Vice Chair Diane McLaine **called meeting to order** (3:31).

Approval of July 2025 Minutes – Dan Fogel motioned to approve, seconded by Tim Sanborn. Trisha Knight called out that she wanted to make sure her concern regarding Solarize was the only vendor chosen was noted. As stated in July minutes “Some concern was expressed by ESC members that only one company was chosen to do installs.”

Motion carried unanimously.

No Agenda changes.

Public Comment:

Ahmid Kargbo shared concerns about zoning resulting in sprawl, concern the town’s lower density is causing it to earn less money than Davidson in taxes.

Business Items:

ESC Tabling – See attached memo. A number of residents stopped by and were happy to know the town has an ESC (and didn’t know it existed previously). It was noted that it helped having two people there, along with the “box” of recommended items of a chair, water, snacks and pens, etc.

Tim Sanborn shared it was a hot day and ESC members still saw a good number of residents willing to stop by and were quite willing to chat. Going forward, look forward to using approved colors and seeing them on signs. Variety of comments, including concern about the Colonial “oil spill.” It was noted for clarification that the spill was gasoline. Mayor Pro Tem Hunt shared a brief recap of her and Chris Matthews, with Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation recently discussing that topic on WSIC and the various information available through [NC DEQ’s dashboard](#).

ACTION ITEM – Box to be left with Bobby until the next team needs it. Can be made available for pickup as needed (at town offices). A table cloth is still needed. Tim said he’d follow up with Ethan after the meeting (to order after approving colors).

Next Dates for the Growers Market are August 16 (Dan), August 23 (Dan) and August 30.

Surveys – Suggestion to keep it simple. Vice Chair McLaine asked to clarify purpose of the survey and there was some discussion about tabling this item since Jeremy was not there. Trisha Knight shared that she and Jeremy had some discussion about the purpose of the survey and engaged the committee for their feedback.

For now, it was decided the survey at the growers market is a good idea. If there's another purpose, tell the public and put out the survey. Trisha said she agreed with Jeremy and sees another survey in our future. Right now, it's a tool to guide communication. Sanborn added the survey could be part of a bigger element using communications to gauge effectiveness and roll out. As discussion wrapped, McLaine stated that surveys are always better if there's a clear purpose. Sanborn expressed interest in getting data and the need to know how to use it.

Goal Updates:

See **attached** Goal Sheet.

COMM – 1 – Dan updated that no separate website will be created, will use existing town site.

COMM – 2 – done

EWV – 1 – Priya spoke to Kris Steele about food waste collection in communities via Crown Town Compost. Mecklenburg County's recent food waste collection efforts were also shared.

EWV – 2 – Dana shared he walked Pottstown with Augustin and identified areas steep into creek beds for potential future clean up (more of a tactical cleanup, will need chainsaws). He also affirmed the opportunity for periodic litter pickup. Huntington Green was mentioned as another potential underserved area to complete similar activities. Related to North Meck Park, he spoke to Assistant Parks and Rec Director Tracy Houk as North Meck Park has not yet been adopted. From visiting the park, it looks like it needs more recycling and trash pickups. Sports season exacerbates the trash problem. North Meck Park will be an active construction site until late 2025 with construction of a new trail on the property. Could make sense once complete. Also on his to do list, contacting Greg Nantz (Riverkeeper) and identifying resources (bags, gloves, litter sticks, etc.) and no date set yet to coordinate cleanup with the Riverkeeper.

Vice Chair McLaine asked for an update on the water treatment plant tour – a total of 21 attended, including many from the ESC and all came away impressed. Dana offered a similar request for the wastewater treatment plant (and warning to bring nose plugs).

Tim Sanborn stated appreciation for the water quality but wondered if there was a chance to speak to someone regarding the use of ATVs for security checks and the impacts they have on the ground underneath and hopes it doesn't adversely impact the new greenway.

E&I – 1 – Trisha skipped for later.

E&I 2 – Diane McLaine shared a powerpoint presentation on the Treasure Trees program as an opportunity to help preserve trees, sharing background and a recap of recent meeting on this topic with the Davidson Lands Conservancy. She also noted costs less than \$10,000 per year for them to run the program and also noted that its not a guarantee to save all trees, as some numbered trees in their program no longer exist. Their program has been around for 10 years at this point. Questions coming out of that meeting – first, formation of a tree board – would that be a subcommittee of the ESC? (where should it sit?) Second, the DLC does a lot of the infrastructure from website, to maintaining the database to communications, etc. – would this fall to the arborist from the Town? It was noted this could likely be tied to the town’s website, could see assistance from the arborist (once hired) and could be funded by the town and/or sponsors. Early tree candidates include the trees at Grand Oak Elementary and the Cedar Tree on the downtown greenway among others, with a goal to start small (5-10 trees) and create a process for nominations as part of this additional effort to create more deterrents for removal, such as those identified by resident Heiner Dornburg in Buckeye Cove has some trees that are 250 years old.

Interest was also expressed in seeing the town become a Tree City USA as another step to support local tree efforts and community forestry.

ACTION ITEM – a number of other questions were thrown out there and Diane and Anne Marie are going to schedule a follow up meeting with Bobby and Mayor Pro Tem Hunt to discuss logistics further, identify criteria like NC Champion Trees, etc.

E&I 3 – Anne Marie shared that we just don’t have much infrastructure related to deconstruction. Habitat has some resources, but is limited.

E&I 1 – Trisha Knight shared that suggestions for drivers book were all accepted by the DMV, adding 12 inserts to the entire section related to wildlife. She shared that she recently met with planning and have invited Jesse to come to the September ESC meeting to discuss ideas related to looking at where the wildlife are moving throughout Town, including mapping crash data over last four years and where mitigation makes sense. In speaking with Animal Services, they have their own database where animals have been picked up. Opportunity here to boost awareness in neighborhoods with potential for signage along the lines of “Slow, Kits at Play” versus Slow, Kids at Play to reference small animals and their parents. She asked members if any of their neighborhoods were options to be among the first to participate in community programs to protect local wildlife.

Community Events – Reminders about upcoming Growers Market days

Action Items – Dan suggested opportunities to populate the website and ideas for the newsletter, in addition to previous action items for follow up through the meeting.

Open Discussion – none.

Adjournment – Trisha made motion to adjourn. Priya seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned (5:05).