



Carroll County Environmental Advisory Council

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Craig Paskoski, Chair
Curtis Barrett, Vice Chair

CarrollCountyMD.gov/EAC ♦ EAC@CarrollCountyMD.gov

*Brenda Dinne,
Staff Liaison/Secretary
Department of Planning
& Land Management*

Meeting Summary for February 19, 2025

Members

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Curtis Barrett | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Craig Paskoski |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ashley Collier | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tom Scanlan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Craig Connell | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Michele Smith |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kathleen Marasco | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tamara Strobel |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Charlene Norris | |

County Government

- ☒ Brenda Dinne, Special Projects Coordinator/ EAC Staff Liaison/Secretary
- ☒ Denise Mathias, EAC Admin Support

Guest Speaker(s)

- n/a

Other Attendees

- None

1. CALL TO ORDER –

- Mr. Paskoski, Chair, officially called the February 19, 2025, meeting of the Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) to order at 3:01 PM in Room 204 of the County Office Building.

2. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES –

a. January 15, 2025

Discussion/Decision:

- Approval of the January minutes was discussed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Motion 487-25: Motion was made by Tom Scanlan and seconded by Michele Smith to approve the January 15, 2025, meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried.

Reference/Attachment(s):

- www.carrollcountymd.gov/government/boards-commissions/environmental-advisory-council/meetings/

3. STAFF LIAISON REPORT –

Discussion/Decision:

- The next meeting will be held on March 19, 2025. The agenda will include continued discussion on the projects in the 2025 Work Plan.
- Michele Smith will help coordinate scheduling a tour for the EAC of the Howard County Composting Facility in place of the October meeting.

4. NEW BUSINESS –**a. Climate Resilience in Your Own Backyard – Discussion****Discussion:**

- Topics were preliminarily identified to be researched and addressed in the outreach document.
- Ms. Dinne will prepare a content outline into which members can drop bullets for suggested content. This content will be discussed at the March meeting.

EAC Member Action Items:

- All members Research appropriate content for all topics. Add bulleted content suggestions to Content Outline, including link to source and initials. To be discussed March 19.

Reference/Attachment(s):

- *Scope*

b. MPRP Environmental Impact Summary – Discussion**Discussion:**

- PSEG, as the CPCN (certificate of public convenience and necessity) applicant, is legally required to prepare an environmental review document (ERD) prior to submitting the CPCN application. The ERD must comply with COMAR 20.79.03.02—.04, which outlines the information that must be included. The document is nearly 60 pages without the appendices.
- The EAC will review the ERD and identify key topics and impacts to highlight. The information will be summarized in a two- to four-page document, which will be provided to the Board of County Commissioners as a quick reference tool.

EAC Member Action Items:

- All members Review the ERD. Identify most important topics and impacts to include in summary. Add bullets with suggested impact to include. To be discussed March 19.

Reference/Attachment(s):

- *Scope*

c. Cost Savings with Environmental Benefits – Discussion**Discussion:**

- Relevant potential FY 2027 projects will be identified. The EAC will research potential environmental benefits to these projects and could also result in cost savings.

EAC Member Action Items:

- n/a

Reference/Attachment(s):

- *Scope*

d. 2025 Environmental Action Awards – Discussion**Discussion:**

- The presentation to the winners of the 2025 Environmental Action Awards will again occur at the annual Environmental Symposium, which will be held on October 25, 2025.
- The public rollout of nomination packets and getting the word out will be toward the end of May. This will give time to get this information to students before school is out for the summer. The nomination deadline will tentatively be mid-September. The EAC will tentatively review and rank the nominations in time to send notification to the winners by October 3.
- The EAC members will begin contacting local businesses and potential donors of prizes for the winners. The goal is to have donors confirmed before the nomination packets and public rollout occur so the information can be included on the flyer and nomination packets. The donors will be recognized at the awards presentation and in the outreach materials.

EAC Member Action Items:

- Mr. Paskoski
 - Mr. Barrett
 - Ms. Strobel
 - Mr. Scanlan
 - Ms. Smith
- Contact local businesses to inquire about interest in donating prizes for the awards winners. At the March 19 meeting, to be discussed if need to branch out farther.

Reference/Attachment(s):

- *Timeline*

5. BUSINESS IN PROGRESS –**a. 2025 Environmental Stewardship Booklet – Discussion****Discussion:**

- Ms. Dinne will request updated data from the relevant staff.

EAC Member Action Items:

- n/a

Reference/Attachment(s):

- *n/a*

6. OTHER –

- Earth Day 2025: Ms. Dinne will ask around to see if there is an Earth Day events this year in which the EAC may want to participate.
- Mobilize Frederick's Climate Summit 2025: Mobilize Frederick will once again be putting on a climate summit. It will be held February 28 and March 1 at Hood College in Frederick.

EAC Member Action Items:

- n/a

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS & CONCERNS –

- None.

8. ADJOURN REGULAR MEETING -

- The meeting adjourned at 4:15 PM. The next monthly meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 19, 2025, at 3:00 PM in COB Room 204.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT – MOTION 488-25: Motion was made by Curt Barrett and seconded by Tamara Strobel to adjourn the February 19, 2025, meeting. Motion carried.

Upcoming Meetings:

 Regular Monthly Meeting – Wednesday, March 19, 2025 @ 3:00 PM, COB Room 204



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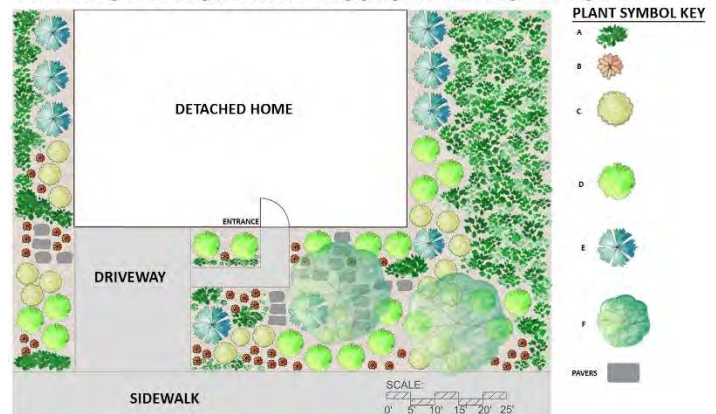
Climate Resilience in the Backyard

Scope

Climate change is expected to impact Carroll County in many ways, including hotter summers, more intense droughts, and increased precipitation. A climate resilient backyard is important because it allows your garden to adapt and thrive in the face of changing weather patterns brought on by climate change, including extreme heat, heavy rainfall, droughts, and unpredictable seasons, by incorporating practices like choosing native plants, managing water efficiently, and promoting biodiversity, thus ensuring a more sustainable and productive gardening space even as the climate shifts.

The EAC will develop a public outreach piece aimed at providing residents with key best practices and links to resources for developing climate resiliency in their own backyards. This might include a compilation or summary of practices such as drought resistant grass and plants.

PLANTING PLAN FOR LAWN REDUCTION IN DETACHED HOME



Design: Stephanie A. Pully.

<https://extension.umd.edu/resource/landscape-designs-native-plants/iaa.umd.edu/resource/landscape-designs-native-plants>

Process:

1. Research best practices for backyard climate resilience. Add bullets to content outline.
2. Review and follow up with research to fill content gaps.
3. Draft text for each section of outreach piece.
4. Review and address content gaps.
5. Prepare formatted initial draft. [Brenda]
6. Review and revise to result in final draft.

Timeline:

The EAC will strive to complete the final public outreach piece by September 2025.

Key reasons why climate resilience in your backyard matters:

- **Mitigating climate change impacts:**

By choosing plants that can tolerate extreme weather events, you can reduce the need for additional resources like irrigation during droughts or pest control when facing new pest pressures.

- **Supporting biodiversity:**

Native plants provide important food sources and habitats for local wildlife, which helps maintain a healthy ecosystem in your backyard.

- **Improving soil health:**

Practices like composting and cover cropping enhance soil quality, allowing plants to better withstand stress from changing climate conditions.

- **Reducing water usage:**

Selecting drought-tolerant plants and implementing efficient watering practices can significantly decrease water consumption.

- **Carbon sequestration:**

Healthy plant growth helps absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, contributing to carbon mitigation.

- **Food security:**

A climate-resilient garden can continue to produce food even when faced with unpredictable weather patterns, ensuring a more reliable food source.

How to create a climate resilient backyard:

- **Plant selection:**

Choose native plants that are well-suited to your local climate and can withstand expected changes.

- **Diverse plant communities:**

Incorporate a variety of plant species with different growth habits and maturity times to create a more resilient ecosystem.

- **Water management:**

Implement rainwater harvesting systems, use drip irrigation, and mulch to conserve moisture.

- **Soil health practices:**

Regularly add compost and organic matter to improve soil quality and water retention.

- **Consider microclimates:**

Analyze your yard to identify areas with varying sunlight exposure and moisture levels to plant accordingly.



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MPRP Environmental Impact Summary for Carroll County Scope



Due to system overloads in the region, PJM — the regional transmission organization that coordinates the movement of wholesale electricity through all or parts of 13 states, including Maryland — determined that system reinforcements are necessary and that a new overhead transmission line is required in the Piedmont Plateau region of Maryland. Accordingly, the PSEG proposed the Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project (MPRP). The MPRP involves constructing a 500,000-volt transmission line stretching approximately 70 miles. The line would pass through northern Baltimore County and Carroll County and into an existing station in southern Frederick County.

In 2024, PSEG, the contractor for the Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project, released 10 possible powerline pathways. According to PSEG's [website](#), "As a result of the extensive data gathering and analysis, comments received from the public, field collected data, and the siting team's knowledge and experience, the siting team chose to carry forward Route H as the Proposed Route for the Project."

At the Board's request, the EAC will create a summary of environmental impacts of the Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project (MPRP) transmission line alignment. PSEG was required to evaluate the environmental impacts of the proposed alignment as part of the CPCN application process. The results can be found in the Environmental Review Document (ERD).

Process:

1. Review the ERD.
 2. Identify key environmental issues to highlight.
 3. Briefly summarize the impacts identified in the ERD for each issue.
 4. Determine if there are any gaps in the identified impacts, and if so, what those gaps are.
 5. Identify any environmental issues or impacts that may not have been addressed in the ERD.
 6. Draft text for two- to four-page summary of the key environmental issues and impacts for Carroll County.
- This summary document will serve as a quick reference for the Board.

PLM staff will review the identified gaps to provide feedback.

Timeline:

The EAC will strive to complete the final summary document to transmit to the Board in August of 2025.

The Proposed Route is subject to all governmental and regulatory approvals, including a [CPCN submission](#) to the Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC).

Next steps include:

- Engineering Due-Diligence and Design Progression
- Public Feedback
- Real Estate Process
 - Letters have been sent to landowners on the proposed route introducing the landowners to the land agent assigned to property.
 - The letter also explains that PSEG is seeking a temporary right of entry agreement to conduct surveys and other studies needed to assess the suitability of the property for the MPRP and to gather information needed for the CPCN evaluation. A temporary right of entry is not an easement and does not grant permanent property rights or construction rights or obligate the landowner to grant an easement.
 - Land agents may visit property owners who have not responded or contacted PSEG to discuss and answer any questions they might have.
 - Land agents will be badged as authorized representatives of PSEG/Contract Land Staff.
- Field Surveys
- Permitting and Regulatory Process

PSEG submitted a [CPCN application](#) to the Maryland PSC on December 31, 2024.





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Proposed Projects Providing Cost Savings AND Environmental Benefits *Scope*

At the Board's request, the EAC will identify proposed capital projects that may provide the co-benefit of cost savings as well as environmental benefits. Relevant County Departments will identify proposed projects to be requested in the FY 2027 budget that may meet these criteria.



Process:

1. Coordinate with relevant Carroll County departments to identify projects proposed for Fiscal Year 2027 that may provide both cost savings AND environmental benefits. [PLM staff]
2. Research the potential environmental benefits of the proposed projects.
3. Draft a summary of the environmental benefits of the proposed projects.
4. Prepare a report to provide to the Board.

Timeline:

The EAC will strive to complete the final summary document by September 2025.



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TIMELINE FOR DISCUSSION 2025 ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS AWARDS

Now thru May 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none">👤 Solicit prize donations: EAC members👤 Develop/update nomination packet materials: Brenda/Denise
May 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none">👤 Roll out public campaign<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Nomination packets ready (application, flyer, criteria)▪ Prizes secured (they go on flyers & packets)
Sep 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none">👤 Deadline for nominations
Sep 22-30	<ul style="list-style-type: none">👤 EAC members review & rank; rankings due Sep 30
Oct 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">👤 Winners notified
Oct 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none">👤 Awards presentation @ Environmental Symposium