



MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

MCPB: 6/3/10

Item # 11

MEMORANDUM

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Mark Pfefferle, Acting Chief, Environmental Planning *MP*

FROM: Lori Shirley, Planner Coordinator, Environmental Planning *LS*

SUBJECT: 2009 "Leaves for Neighborhoods" program summary and update

DATE: May 27, 2010

In March 2009, Environmental Planning Division staff began a small-scale, countywide campaign to increase the County's tree canopy by providing financial incentives for county residents to purchase and plant native trees. The program "Leaves for Neighborhoods" provides a \$25 incentive for residents to purchase native trees from participating Montgomery County nurseries/garden centers. The tree planting campaign is modeled after Baltimore County's 'Growing Home' tree planting program.

Five nurseries/garden centers agreed to partner as retail participants in the inaugural program year. As valid coupons were collected at a point of purchase, participating nursery/garden centers submitted coupons with cash register receipt as proof of purchase to Environmental Planning Division staff for reimbursement at \$20 per valid tree coupon. The total number of tree coupons received for reimbursement in 2009 was 207. The program is funded from the Department's Forest Conservation in lieu fund. This fund is entirely financed by forest conservation plan applicants that choose to pay a fee instead of planting offsite.

In the first year more than 85% of the coupons processed by the Department were submitted by Stadler Nurseries in Laytonsville. Ms. Lisa Stadler will attend the June 3, 2010 Planning Board meeting to receive a Resolution from Chairman Hanson and to be publicly recognize for the outstanding efforts by Stadler Nurseries in promoting the 2009 "Leaves for Neighborhoods" program.

In the current year, two new nurseries/garden centers are participating. Early indication is that the second year will have even higher participation rates.

Ben Gruswitz of the Environmental Planning Division will be present to discuss a geographic information systems (GIS) layer being created to assist staff in data tracking from the program, regarding for example, tree planting locations, watershed and water quality analysis.

Updating Data Tracking & Analysis

In the next year we plan to upgrade our systems for tracking tree plantings and associated coupons in order to further our analysis capabilities and set goals for the future of the program. Staff will input coupon information into a web-based Oracle database, including scanned copies of the coupons themselves. We will be able to “geocode” each tree planting based off its address on the database, allowing us to see on a map where the plantings are located. Similar to our own Forest Conservation Easement web map application, the tree plantings locations could be made public to further our outreach and demonstrate the success of the program. Geocoding will also allow us to analyze plantings by any number of GIS layers with which they intersect. Possibilities include:

- Subwatershed (and thereby water quality)
- Forest Conservation Plan
- Forest Conservation Easements at a given address
- Special Protection Areas
- Area Impervious Surface Density
- The State’s “Marylanders Plant Trees” planting locations at the same address
- Homeowners Associations
- Zip Code
- Census Tracts
- Community Analysis Zones
- Master Plan boundaries
- Zoning
- Council District

This information will allow us to consider targeting areas where we are not getting as much participation, or to identify neighborhoods from which to build off past success by reaching out to frequent coupon users.