Village of Friendship Heights Ad Hoc Committee on Climate Change and Environment

Minutes of the Committee Meeting on August 4, 2026

Persons in attendance:
Committee Members: Christine Knauer, Andra Miller, Sonya Starnes, Emmanuel D'silva, John Hisle.
Observer Loretta McClure

The minutes of July 7, 2026 were approved with one correction

Agenda Items

- **Review of Planning Board Mtg re: GEICO site**

  It was felt that the Planning Board didn't consider the community's testimonies and letters to preserve specimen trees before approving the EYA plan to cut down all trees on the GEICO site. Different points of view were presented 1) continue to press for preservation of the trees by writing to the County Council and 2) stop focusing on the trees since EYA already has permission to cut and instead go back to our previous backup plan of replanting with native trees and establishing a Miyawaki forest on the site.

  In addition, it was agreed that the proposed concrete curbside boxes will not promote tree survival and health and should instead be used for pollinator gardens.

  It was also suggested that we request that the county layer the 20 foot spaces typically left between trees along the sidewalk with other species of trees to fill in and increase biodiversity. The county has already agreed to plant trees along Willard Ave. This would be facilitated by also decreasing width of sidewalks. John Hisle was going to try to reach out to a contact at Montgomery. County DEPA.

  In follow up Sonya Starnes sent a link to the Maryland Urban Tree Program website which provides grants to help plant trees in communities that lost trees because of transportation construction projects. This may be useful to support above suggestions. https://mdot.maryland.gov/tso/pages/Index.aspx?PageId=165

- **Plug in Solar**
  - MD law went into effect in July
  - Can use on apartment balconies
  - 14 states have adopted law permitting
  - Committee will invite the technology developer to present at our meeting and extend invitation to the Village.

- **Restrict dogs from Page Park**
  - The committee agreed it would be nice to have a clean and sanitary park for children (and adults) to play and enjoy the grass. This would also protect the grass and planting in the park. It was acknowledged that there also needs to be a place for dogs, like a dog park.
  - We talked about presenting the proposal to the Village Council
- **Emergency Preparedness**
  - September is EP month. Climate change effects are making EP more important. We could write a column for the Village Newsletter. Chris will invite a person she knows who is ex-FEMA to speak.

- **Other Committee Activities Ongoing and for Future**
  - If possible, post requests for new committee members on building list serves.
- Next meeting: September 1

Submitted by Andra Miller
August 8, 2026