

"Where People and Trees Have Deep Roots and Grow Strong"



Somerset TOWN JOURNAL



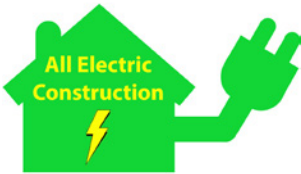
Volume 68 • No. 1

January 2023

Environment Committee Makes Two Recommendations to Town Council

By Barton Rubenstein, Chair, Environment Committee,
Dorset Avenue

All-Electric New Construction



At the December 8, 2022 Environment Committee (EC) meeting, the Committee unanimously voted to recommend to the Town Council that Somerset opt

into Montgomery County's legislation on all-electric new construction.

As most of us know, the Somerset government aspires to create a sustainable Town and to become carbon neutral before 2050, aligning itself with the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement. Toward that goal, Somerset has declared a Climate Emergency, has signed the Maryland Mayor's 100% Clean Energy Pledge, and has signed the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty. Now, homes in Somerset will need to reduce the use of natural gas, which is a greenhouse gas used for heating, cooking, grilling, hot water, fireplaces, etc.

Thankfully, Montgomery County has a determined agenda to become a more sustainable county. It has recently passed legislation, Bill 13-22, "Buildings —

Comprehensive Building Decarbonization," which requires that newly constructed homes not use natural gas, and which also creates "all-electric building standards." This legislation also applies to home renovations that require over 50% of the home to be replaced. It will take effect on December 31, 2026 (<https://bit.ly/3Wb5mJw>).

Somerset previously opted into the County Pesticide Ban; similarly, the EC believes that the Town should also opt into this legislation. But 2026 seems a long time away! In the interim, although not required by law, the Environment Committee also recommends that the Town Council strongly and actively encourage owners of new home construction to consider building homes that do not use natural gas.

Banning Plastic at all Town Events and Composting When Possible

At the same meeting, the EC unanimously voted to recommend to the Town Council that all Town events avoid using plastics, and compost whenever possible.

Plastic cutlery, plates and water bottles are used regularly at Town events and at the Swimming Pool. Plastic poses a major environmental problem, and we must take all measures to reduce its use. Presently, there is a large

Continued on page 3

IN THIS ISSUE

**Public Safety:
Winter Storm
Tips**



**PAGE
4**

**Upcoming Changes
in Medicare: What
Somerset Seniors
Need to Know**



**PAGE
6**

**New Section!
Neighbor News**



**PAGE
7**

Environment Committee Makes Two Recommendations to Town Council

collection of plastic in the middle of the Pacific Ocean the size of the State of Texas. In addition, scientists have indicated that each of us inhales approximately 16 bits of plastic each hour, and its use results in many health hazards (<https://bit.ly/3HN28aL>; <https://wapo.st/3HNj3KD>; <https://bit.ly/3PBcNHD>).

The Town of Somerset should set a standard for its residents. But it would also be great if Town residents consider not using any plastic at their own private parties. Please share a sustainable party story if you are so inclined — we would love to share it!

Composting is useful for sustainably repurposing food scraps and soiled paper products. When composted, these items naturally decompose into coveted fertilizers and rich topsoil for farmers. Somerset provides a free composting program (call Compost Crew at 301-202-4450 if you are not yet signed up) for our residents and this recommendation will help to increase our Town’s composting.

Please let us know if you have any comments or ways that our Town can become more sustainable by emailing us at: tos.environmentcommittee@gmail.com.

JANUARY 2023 TOWN CALENDAR

MONDAY, JANUARY 2

Town Hall closed in observance of New Year’s holiday

SUNDAY, JANUARY 8

Somerset Sundays #1
5:00 p.m. Town Hall (in person; for more details, see p. 5)

MONDAY, JANUARY 9

Town Council Meeting
7:00 p.m., Town Hall (in person) and via Zoom**

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11

Communications Committee Meeting
5:00 p.m., Communications Committee Meeting via Zoom*

MONDAY, JANUARY 16

Town Hall closed in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday.

MONDAY, JANUARY 23

Town Council Work Session
5:30 p.m. Town Hall (in person) and via Zoom**

*The Town Council has instituted “hybrid” meetings starting in September, to allow residents to attend both in-person at the Town Hall, or to continue to participate via Zoom.

**Login information for Zoom meetings will be sent via email the week prior to the meeting. Residents may also email town@townofsomerset for login and dial-in information.

CLASSIFIED ADS

BOZEMAN, MONTANA: Awesome Every Season! Ski Big Sky & the Bridgers! Fly fishing. Trail rides. White water rafting. Hiking/ biking everywhere. Enjoy our 4-bedroom home on 20 acres with spectacular 360 degree vistas. Four night minimum stay. Just four miles to downtown Bozeman. Contact **Birdie Pieczenik** at SRPVacationHomes@gmail.com or 301-717-8083 (2/23)

PARIS, FRANCE: Picturesque Day and Nite! And more affordable than ever! Enjoy our one-bedroom apartment in the 2nd arrondissement - the heart of historic Paris. Walk to the Louvre, the Pompidou Center, the Seine and two Metro stops. Four night minimum stay. Contact **Birdie Pieczenik** at SRPVacationHomes@gmail.com or 301-717-8083 (2/23)

SEA COLONY - BETHANY BEACH - OCEAN FRONT APARTMENT - EDGEWATER BUILDING: 2 bedrooms plus 1 tiny one with bunk bed and 2 full baths. Immaculate and all updated. Has a few summer weeks available. Contact **Luba Marx** at 301-233-2727 (7/22)

Ads are printed as a courtesy to Town residents. The Town makes no representations as to quality, safety or otherwise regarding the goods and services advertised. Readers should make their own inquiries. To place an ad, submit typed or neatly printed copy to the Clerk-Treasurer. Ads must include a Somerset phone number. Price: \$5 per advertisement per issue. Check or exact change. Fifty word limit per advertisement.