

Climate Action Coffee October 6, 2021 Message to Takoma Park City Council

Greetings Council Members. My name is Ken Allen, I'm from Ward 2 and I am representing Climate Action Coffee, which is an offshoot of Takoma Park Mobilization. We are planning to appear regularly at these sessions to share our thoughts in our community regarding our Climate Emergency.

Climate Action Coffee (CAC) focuses on local and regional climate action and education. We meet weekly on zoom, every Wednesday morning 8- 9:30. We have people from all wards but Ward 6 and would encourage anyone interested from that ward to join us. We invite all city residents interested in climate action to join us Wednesday mornings on Zoom at: <http://tpmobilization.org/talle>

Now for tonight's climate testimonial:

Thanks to the organizing of Chesapeake Climate Action Network (CCAN) many invasive vines have been removed from trees in Takoma Park. As the council knows, Takoma Park's urban tree canopy is vital for providing shade, lowering energy costs, reducing stormwater runoff, and making Takoma a vibrant, liveable city. Perhaps less known is that our canopy trees are a vital tool in addressing climate change. With all the threats to our urban forest, it seems that we should do that one thing - removing invasive vines - that is relatively within our control. When I have participated in CCAN's workdays I have knocked on doors where almost every homeowner is delighted to have invasives removed for free. (Some have even offered to pay me.) All homeowners seem to sense, even if they don't know the details, that non-native invasive vines are harmful to trees. Then on other Saturdays CCAN organizes teams to go into parks owned by MNCPPC which gets even more trees freed from vines. Recently I was in Becca Lily park with more than a dozen other volunteers. By now the program has removed vines from over two thousand trees in Takoma Park. CCAN's efforts should be commended.

CCAN is not the only group removing non-native plants. Last Saturday a group of citizens organized to pull weeds from Heffner Park. They met with Ana Mische John, the city gardener, before hand to discuss exactly what should be

done. Then on Saturday morning, ten or so citizens pulled out 4 different kinds of invasive weeds. I want to commend Ana Mische John for taking the time to give direction to some citizens to improve one of our parks. We, CAC, hope to organize citizens to go into other parks to remove vines. Possibly we could also put in some native plants.

We encourage the city to work on educating homeowners, local landscapers and city staff on the benefits of removing non-native invasive vines and planting more natives. There are many local nurseries that sell natives. It would be great if this information could be spread via the Insider and in the City Newsletter. Non-native invasives removal and planting of native plants and trees should also be considered in the Public Space Management Plan now under review.

Thank you for your time, and for your willingness to address the Climate Emergency. Climate Action Coffee will be back next week to share more.

Ken Allen on behalf of Climate Action Coffee