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Press Release

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Contact: Mike Hunninghake, Director, Sustainable Maryland, 301-405-7956, mikeh75@umd.edu

Town of Sykesville Receives Prestigious Sustainable Maryland Certified Award at Maryland Municipal League Conference

College Park, MD (October 18, 2023) – The Environmental Finance Center at the University of Maryland announced that the **Town of Sykesville** was one of 16 Maryland municipalities honored at the **Sustainable Maryland Awards Ceremony** at the Maryland Municipal League’s annual Fall Conference this week. **This is Sykesville’s first certification in the program. The Town was certified at the Bronze level.**

Highlights of Sykesville’s accomplishments include:

- Sykesville is home to the Snallygaster Mural Project, which is a collaboration by 10 local artists on the mythical Snallygaster, a dragon-like creature in American folklore that allegedly inhabits the Central Maryland region. In Early 2022, the Downtown Sykesville Connection partnered with former Gatehouse Museum curator, Jack White, to create a web-based story map to promote a walking tour of the murals through the downtown area.
- Sykesville is home to a very unique auditory experience as it is one of the first small Towns in America to manage the planning and installation of a full speaker system on town buildings, rather than on utility poles. The eight speakers were installed through a collaboration between the Downtown Sykesville Connection, local businesses, and property owners. The eight speakers are designed to provide ambient and holiday music, as well as evenly distributed sound for festivals and events.

“It has been an initiative of mine for our community to participate more thoughtfully and wholly in sustainable practices,” said **Mayor Stacy Link**. “When I learned about the University of Maryland’s Sustainable Maryland program and its certification requirements, I knew this was just the avenue to turn up the volume on Sykesville’s sustainability. In the last two years, we have proudly brought electric vehicles into our municipal fleet, further decreasing our carbon footprint with the conversion to LED streetlamps and were designated a Tree City USA through the Arbor Day Foundation - all actions qualifying us for the prestigious Sustainable Maryland designation.”

According to **Mike Hunninghake, Director of the Sustainable Maryland program**, “This year’s class of Sustainable Maryland Certified awardees represents a broad cross-section of the state, from rural to urban, small towns to large cities, from western Maryland to the Eastern Shore. These municipalities are united in their mutual commitment to put sustainability at the forefront of their municipal agendas. We’re pleased to highlight their achievements and look forward to supporting their future efforts.”

The attached photo shows (from left) Mayor Stacy Link, Town Planner Kevin Rubenstein, and Town Manager Joe Cosentini with the Sustainable Maryland Certified award at the Maryland Municipal League conference.

Also attached is Sykesville’s Sustainable Maryland Certified logo.

For detailed information about Sykesville’s sustainability initiatives, please contact Kevin Rubenstein, Town Planner, krubenstein@sykesville.net, 410-795-8959

Sustainable Maryland Certification: To achieve certification, municipalities are required to form a Green Team comprised of local residents, community leaders, municipal staff and officials; complete a variety sustainability-related Actions worth **a total of at least 150 points for Bronze level certification, or 400 points for Silver level certification**, and submit the appropriate documentation as evidence that the Sustainable Maryland Certified requirements have been satisfied. The Sustainable Maryland Action Menu can be seen here: <https://sustainablemaryland.com/certification/actions>

The complete list of 2023 newly certified (denoted by *) and re-certified communities includes:

Bel Air (*first certified in 2014, re-certified in 2017, 2020, and 2023*)

Berwyn Heights (*first certified in 2014, re-certified in 2017, 2020, and 2023*)

Boonsboro (*first certified in 2014, re-certified in 2017, 2020, and 2023*)

***Charlestown** (*NEW*)

Chesapeake Beach (*first certified in 2014, re-certified in 2017, 2020, and 2023*)

Chestertown (*first certified in 2014, re-certified in 2017, 2020, and 2023*)

Frostburg (*first certified in 2017, re-certified in 2020, and 2023*)

Greenbelt (*first certified in 2014, re-certified in 2017, 2020, and 2023*)

***Keedysville** (*NEW*)

***Kensington** (*NEW*)

Landover Hills (*first certified in 2020, re-certified in 2023*)

Mount Airy (*first certified in 2017, re-certified in 2020 and 2023*)



Riverdale Park (*first certified in 2014, re-certified in 2017, 2020, and 2023*)

***Sykesville** (*NEW*)

University Park (*first certified in 2014, re-certified in 2017, 2020, and 2023*)

***Washington Grove** (*NEW*)

Our 2023 Sustainability Champion: This year's Sustainability Champion is **the City of Greenbelt** which amassed an impressive 905 points on their application, more than any other community in 2023.

A full report on each certified community's Actions can be viewed here:
<https://sustainablemaryland.com/certification/participating-communities>

Sustainable Maryland Certified Municipalities as of 2023 (12th year of the program):

- Total Municipalities Sustainable Maryland Certified: **46 (29% of Maryland's municipalities)**
- Total Municipalities Sustainable Maryland Registered: **89 (57% of Maryland's municipalities)**

About Sustainable Maryland: Sustainable Maryland is an initiative of the **Environmental Finance Center at the University of Maryland** that is designed to support Maryland's 157 municipalities as they look for cost-effective and strategic ways to protect their natural assets and revitalize their communities. Using best practices in resource areas like water, energy, planning, health, food, and economy, a municipality can earn points toward sustainability certification. **Sustainable Maryland** offers a customizable menu of concrete actions, allowing communities to select initiatives that best fit their specific needs. This free and voluntary program, with the support of the **Maryland Municipal League and the US Environmental Protection Agency** helps communities choose a direction for their greening efforts; complete their chosen actions with help from program tools, trainings, expert guidance, and other resources; and be recognized statewide for their accomplishments. For more information about Sustainable Maryland: www.sustainablemaryland.com

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