

Campus Sustainability Committee
Meeting Minutes
September 18, 2012

Present: Dan Svedarsky, Linda Kingery, Peter Phaiah, Rich Connell, and Elizabeth Tollefson

Dan brought copies of the sustainability summary from the UMore Park project located on 5,000 acres of University land on the south edge of the TC in Rosemount. Goal is to develop a forward-looking, sustainable city of 20 – 30,000 people. This booklet is a summary of a two-day workshop and outlines guiding principles starting with health and happiness. Harkening back to the words of last spring's Earth Week speaker, Jim Farrell, environmentally conscious people should be the happiest people in the world.

Last summer there was a summer retreat (called an Advance) with sustainability people from the U of M system. Topics included; individual campus updates, a student conference that Linda is co-organizing called "Self-Sustain" scheduled for Duluth, the TC bike program which is amazing. Blue Cross Blue Shield funded it. There are 20 zap units around the St. Paul and Minneapolis campuses and this too was supported by a major grant – perhaps the Department of Transportation. There is even a bike shop on campus but they have a lot of customers. It was inspirational. The advance also featured a tour of the *Cornucopia*, student run garden on the St. Paul campus.

Peter asked about status of bikes in storage on our campus. There are 15 to 20 bikes in different states of readiness and repair. We loaned two out from the pool to two students one from Senegal and one from Nepal. Jeanne Collins is willing to assist with the bike program this year and is working on a plan. Jeanne is one of 3 student sustainability assistants along with Ben Williams and Lauren Snively.

Rich Connell is thinking about expanding the garage for a permanent place for the bikes. One of the garages is half way cleaned out and there will be a rummage sale in the next few weeks. Vehicle fleet is going to be increased. We have lots of storage that is filled with stuff that needs to reorganizes or disposed of in some fashion. Peter says we are trying to recycle "stuff" instead of sending it to the landfill.

Peter has purchased some things to use in a tool shop for the bikes like tool kit, seats, etc. Checking for space for storage and space for pick up and work. Assessment will be done on space on the status of the dairy barn by TC which had been a suggested space for the bike storage.

Regent's report on sustainability: Linda and Peter are working on "Local Foods" status for the report. Peter has already established some categories and

they will build a report around those. Dan and Rich are working on other sections. A draft is due to Amy Short the week of 24 September.

Need to refine the Crookston campus' communications plan as part of the subcommittee of the systemwide sustainability committee chaired by Ann Freeman. Dan is on that group along with the education subcommittee. Linda co-chairs the student engagement subcommittee along with Troy Goodnough from Morris. Pam Wheelock is the new VP for University Services and the overall coordinator for sustainability for the system along with Jacquie Johnson from Morris. She will be on campus on Friday, 2 November. Leadership and modeling, Operations/Energy efficiency improvements were additional subjects in the sustainability report.

Crookston Sustainability Committee. Peter and Linda will co-chair the Local foods subcommittee and Rich will heads up the Facilities subcommittee. Elizabeth will co-chair the Communications and Outreach subcommittee with Amber Shultz. Recycling subcommittee might be reframed to include "waste management." Purchasing is a subcommittee on the Systemwide Sustainability Committee. Should purchasing and waste management be looked at together? Perhaps they are two separate issues. Procurement is a separate issue. We are so small that perhaps there would be advantages to looking at them together. What you buy up front has so much to do with what ends up as waste. Recycling renamed as Recycling, Waste Management, and Purchasing subcommittee. Leslie Bowman serves on the systemwide committee and does food service contracts. *Dan since visited with Jeanne Collins and she has an interest in serving on this subcommittee.*

The Education and Outreach (includes curriculum development) subcommittee was co-chaired by Katy Smith and Paul Aakre. Rob Proulx has also expressed interest in serving on this committee. The key focus of this group would be to promote a Sustainability minor. Dan has since checked with a few folks to ensure broad representation on the subcommittee and Eyad Youssef,

Dan can chair the Research subcommittee now that David Demuth has left for Valley City State.

Amber Schultz has agreed to co-chair communications with Elizabeth.

Dan since checked with Twyla Treanor on the additional members on the official Campus Assembly membership of the Sustainability Committee and they include; Ken Myers, Brian Dingman, Neal Benoit (rep from Residential Life), Jason Brantner (rep from NW ROC), and CSSD rep.

How are the LEED certified buildings working in the system? The University has contracted with a St. Paul firm to evaluate the efficiency of all LEED certified

building throughout the University. How efficient is Evergreen Hall compared to other non-LEED buildings? Efficiency reporting is part of building constructed to B3 specifications. The LEED specifications on our building were not about performance but more about what went into the construction of the building. The new residence hall will have B3 standards and will follow certain standards and some follow-up.

Rich Connell reported on our campus program of measuring electrical usage in buildings. This was assisted by the Chancellor's initiative monies last spring for the energy dashboard system. When completed, we will be able to break down energy use by building and display it on a touch screen monitor in the Student Center. G and R Controls are coming up again today from Fargo and Rich's goal is to have it up and running by Christmas. Peter pointed out that we are still establishing a baseline with these things. Retro-fitting is more difficult than when you build it in. Steam measuring has been flawed because of leakage on campus and Rich says need to do something really well until we can move on to the next level. B3 measuring device takes into consideration temperature when it considers performance of a building and compares it to similar buildings.

In mid-summer there was a discussion on our energy usage was going to go up—more lab space, more air conditioners. We have to make sure there is understanding about why our usage is going up. We are increasing satisfaction but at a cost. We need to educate the end user. Additional energy saving measures are being looked at all the time. Many of these things include a cost and we are changing the way spaces are used all the time so education is important about what is happening and why.

An energy study of our heating plant is in the final draft. We are still under the pollution control standards. Discussion followed on energy benefits and costs. We need more information to make the right decisions on choosing energy options for our campus.

Another study on the use of biomass in our heating plant has been completed by Kerryanne Leroux, a scientist at EERC. This was funded by CERTS.

One of the recommended projects for CERTS support this year was a torrefaction plant proposed for the TRF area. Supposedly any type of biomass could be used as feedstock, including cattails be used. The proposed in product is called biochar and can be pelletized for a variety of uses. Any kind of biomass you end up with this biochar, a densified energy product like charcoal. Torifying makes it more consistent. Biochar stores well. Dan is researching cattails and visited researchers in Manitoba this summer who cooperated with a Hutterite colony who used chipped pallets as a feedstock but the intent is for them to use cattails to make the biochar. It is problematic to move a variety of fluffy biomass materials into a torrier or biomass unit, ex. cattails, woodchips, corn stalks. There is a lot that goes into the logistics of dealing with these kinds of products

with the bottom-line being economic considerations. Dan is going to bale some cattails to test it out because it is nice and dry this year.

Rich Connell relayed that the latest issue of Fortune magazine had an article about Navy running everything on biofuel: Planes, helicopters, etc. Very expensive to run the biofuel but these same questions were asked of energy options of the past. There is always a huge learning curve and a huge shift when changes are made. We could be forced to make choices eventually to live on less energy.

Local foods: Abbey is working on his research and a survey is going through IRB. Finding out when the survey should go out - probably before Sodexo's in early October. The other piece is how can we do local food production on this campus? An acre sized garden would be a huge step. TC grew into a full acre over about 3 years.

Let's look for small opportunities and bigger opportunities and see how it fits into the comprehensive site plan. What are the opportunities to add edible landscaping? The Cornucopia model in the TC is a good one and some of the research dollars they were using eventually helped fund the acre-sized garden. They have a full time outreach person and two student workers. By growing it steadily they have been able to pay for the next year with their sales and this is a good model to follow. It has to be done at a level where you can have success so start at a doable scale. **We need a champion to coordinate the whole project.** Duluth has a person hired part time by Facilities. We are maybe talking about a half time position to oversee this operation. Maybe someone who could add to the curriculum and willing to take over this operation and lead it? No one could take it over extra and we can't rely on students to run the operation year in and year out. You have to have the commitment and resources to do it.

Morris has a horticulture and research person at the West Central ROC and they have a fantastic horticultural demonstration.

*Who is going to be the champion? Can we find a person to do it and piggyback into a department? Should our committee make that request. One approach might contribute how other people are doing. Who are they hired by, what is the time commitment? Develop the position description and pass along to the Chancellor. Where should the funding come from? Can Abbey develop a position description? Linda bought a book called *Field of Learning*. We could learn something from what is written there. Abbey has already interviewed the person at the TC, maybe interview the one at UMD. Community economics person Rani Bhattacharyya, starts next week in Extension, and we have a constellation of people who could help us in our decision on what is best in a job description, etc.

Crookston In-Motion is using their “destiny drivers” as guiding principles in community development and one is related to sustainability. Many things are already ongoing such as the CommUniversity Trail.

What would it take to get a paved shoulder on Hwy 71 behind campus since a lot of people use that road to bike, walk, and run, etc. It would promote exercise as well as increase the safety factor.

**Since our meeting Dan has visited with a local gardener who has a commercial garden and might be interested in consulting with UMC to get things going and perhaps be an on-going coordinator. Such a person could provide the necessary know-how and on-going coordination. UMC summer student workers could provide the hand labor, planting, weeding, harvesting, etc. This can be discussed further as to the most appropriate garden site, size, etc. We need an overall plan including financial aspects. Is there a current student who might do a UROC to develop such a plan in conjunction with Abbe? It might be possible to identify a site yet this fall and perhaps do some initial site prep to ready for planting next year.*