

Sustainability Council – Meeting Summary

Tuesday, October 14, 2008 (3:00pm-4:30pm)

Facilities Conference Room (Lab II 1250)

Attendees: John McLain, Nancy Parkes, John Pumilio, Paul Smith.

Agenda:

1. Discussion on where our work is heading.
2. Begin identifying our current situation (S.W.O.T. list).
3. Timeframe and Quarter Objectives
4. Advisory Council?

Discussion: There was no formal record keeping of the meeting. The following is a brief synopsis recalled after the meeting:

1. Discussion on where our work is heading.

- o October 28 is our next joint Council and working group co-chair meeting. We will ask the co-chairs to present the Council with a draft of their S.W.O.T. list and a brief and prioritized list highlighting their recommendations for advancing sustainability in their thematic area.
- o The Council will compile each working groups recommendations and further prioritize the work by evaluating four main criteria:
 - **Financial Savings:** Will the work result in immediate or short-term financial savings?
 - **Ease of Implementation:** will the work require considerable investment of institutional energy?
 - **Achievability:** is it a goal that can be attained and how soon can we claim success?
 - **Advance Sustainability:** if achieved, will the goal be a big victory or a little victory in our quest towards a more sustainable campus? Does the work pack a big sustainability punch?

**These criteria were based in consideration of the economic uncertainties and enormous workloads that challenge our community.*

2. Current Assessment (S.W.O.T. List):

- o *STRENGTHS (Assets)*
 - Community passion and engagement. Our community believes and embraces sustainability and wants to advance it.
 - Flexibility in curriculum (especially in evenings and weekends and graduate studies).
 - Senior management recognizes the importance of and is committed to sustainability.
 - Regional and state support. The college is located in a region that has progressive policies and state mandates that encourages sustainable development.
 - Evergreen has many community supporters and engaged alumni who are willing to contribute to Evergreen's success.
- o *WEAKNESSES (Barriers)*
 - Financial. Evergreen currently has little to no funding structures specifically designated for sustainability.
 - Drivers of sustainability? Some Evergreen community members are influenced or feel pressure to pursue initiatives that grab media attention and widespread recognition rather than focusing on behavior changes that can significantly advance sustainability (energy conservation and efficiency).
 - Individuals are overworked and overwhelmed with core job requirements and are stressed or unable to take on new initiatives.

- Lack of hierarchical structures and diffusion of energy by individuals. As a community we tend to take on too many initiatives and sometimes lose focus. Our hands are in many cookie jars.
 - **OPPORTUNITIES**
 - Evergreen is particularly strong at emphasizing the social justice and equity side of sustainability but we have not yet learned how to better articulate our work in this area.
 - Sustainability Council has the opportunity to harness a lot of campus energy and focus it into manageable goals.
 - **THREATS**
 - Individuals are overworked and overwhelmed with core job requirements and are stressed or unable to take on new initiatives.
 - State and national economic uncertainty.
3. **Timeframe and Quarter Objectives:**
- **October 28:** Co-chairs present Council with SWOT list and rough draft of work priorities for the quarter, academic year, and 2-3 year period.
 - **December 2008:**
 1. Sustainability Council presents Vice Presidents with 10-Point Action Plan for advancing sustainability at The Evergreen State College that incorporates each of the recommendations from the working groups.
 2. John McLain completes a brief white paper that articulates a vision for sustainability that can be used for fundraising and communication purposes.
 - **June 2008:** Office of Sustainability (Working Groups and Council) completes a sustainability plan that is both visionary and practical that serves as a guiding document for the college.
4. **Advisory Council (?):** In order to broaden our network of sustainability partners and to receive valuable consultation on the direction of our work the Council should consider forming a Sustainability Council Advisory Panel consisting of Evergreen alumni who are known for their work in sustainability. Potential individuals include:
1. Rhys Roth (Climate Solutions)
 2. Paul Horton (Director of Sustainability at David Evans and Associates)
 3. Karin Kraft (ECY and coordinator of Sustainability South Sound)
 4. Rachel Jamison (ECY)
 5. Sandy Dessner (Board of Directors)
 6. Lynn Helbreicht (sp?)
 7. Steve Abercrombie (MES graduate and recipient of an EPA grant)
 8. Terri Thomas (Thurston County Solid Waste)
 9. Others? Comments?
- *This list was produced during a quick brainstorming session between the Council's co-chairs and was not part of a discussion during a Council meeting. Furthermore, these individuals have not been contacted and know nothing about serving on an advisory board. For these reasons, the idea of an advisory board remains just that – an idea!*

Next Meeting:

Joint Council with Co-chairs: October 28, from 3-5pm in the SEM II B3109