

DU Sustainability Council

Meeting Minutes: October 2, 2008 – DuPont Room, Mary Reed Building

Present: See attached list

Next meeting: Special Meeting - Thursday, October 16, 2008, Room 412, Sturm School of Law. Light refreshments will be served. Regular Meeting – Thursday, November 6, DuPont Room, Mary Reed Building.

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. Fred Cheever asked for introductions around the table. He said he would not be able to attend the meeting on November 6. There was consensus that Linda Kosten should serve as the chair pro tem at that meeting. Fred also commented that it was good to have the sustainability initiative mentioned at Convocation and recognized by the “sustainable” center pieces.

Fred said that the focus of the Council going forward will be on drafting the Plan. He said that at the next meeting, the Council will review outlines of each component of the plan. The Best Practices Committee can gather information about what other institutions are doing to inform the process. The months of January and February should be spent on outreach about the plan to the community and the plan should be put together during February and March. The plan should be ready to go through the DU process by spring so that the Board of Trustees can consider it at their June meeting. The plan is due in September. One key issue is finding a chief writer for the plan.

Approval of Minutes

There was a motion by Buddy Knox, seconded by Mary Jean O’Malley, to approve the Minutes of September 4, 2008. The motion passed unanimously.

DU’s Recycling Program – Progress Report – David White and Liz Pattison

Liz Pattison said that Alfredo Abad and Custodial Services have done a good job of getting the equipment distributed. David White said that the committee continues to meet with various units to keep everyone apprised about the program. He acknowledged the work of Beth Walker and the Environmental Living and Learning Community. Zoe Turrill and others said that recycle bins at the residence halls are overflowing. Custodial Services is still trying to adjust resources to the volume. There needs to be an effective way for students to report problems and for Facilities to monitor the bins carefully to avoid maintenance issues. David said that the trash compactor at J-Mac is being installed, but it will take awhile longer to complete.

Website – Karl French

Karl French reported that the website has been overhauled and has new content. He said the main links are: du.edu/green, du.edu/recycling. The e-mail address is green@du.edu. He said that any fliers and posters should have the contact information. He feels the website is now in maintenance mode. Fred asked everyone to monitor the site and let Karl know of any issues. There was no update on getting a link on the DU main page.

Proposed Amendment to Council Bylaws – Mary Jean O’Malley

Fred Cheever explained that the current bylaws call for five members each from faculty, staff and students. There is no provision for student organizations. Mary Jean said that the All University Student Association (AUSA) Senate has created a new sustainability committee. She is the chair of this committee this year so there is a connection with the Sustainability Council. However, the Senate would like to insure a formal connection in the future through a seat on the Council. She provided a proposed amendment to the bylaws, which would accomplish this request.

Gregg Kvistad asked if a similar situation might exist for a representative from the Faculty Senate and the Staff Advisory Council, just to name two groups. Fred Cheever said that the amendment does raise some larger issues which need a longer conversation. The discussion was deferred to the November 6 meeting. Fred asked everyone to think about other organizations and mail the names to him. He said that one criterion should be that the organization has a formal sustainability arm.

Drafting the DU Sustainability Plan and AASHEE STARS – Lyndsay Agans, Morgridge College of Education

Fred introduced Dr. Lyndsay Agans, who is a lecturer and diversity faculty fellow in the College of Education. She has worked with the AASHEE STARS program and will be attending its conference in November. She has also agreed to be on the Best Practices Committee.

Lyndsay provided a PowerPoint presentation on the AASHEE STARS rating program [available on Sustainability Portfolio]. She recommended that everyone go on the AASHEE site and register. She then provided a proposed structure for the plan. She reviewed the purpose, objectives, and guiding principles of the plan under the ACUPCC agreement. She then outlined what needs to be included in a plan and went into some detail about the content, which she categorized by the Sustainability Council committee areas, plus purchasing investment categories. She then went over the deadlines and some issues for consideration.

There were questions about some of the definitions used. Lyndsay pointed out that some categories are very clear but others have overlap and “gray” areas.

Fred suggested that the Council make efforts to draw in the other members of the DU community through education, feedback loops and town hall meetings to increase buy in and reduce possible resistance.

Denver Office of Economic Development – Timothy Martinez

Tim Martinez, Senior Economic Development Specialist (and DU alum from the Korbel School of International Studies) presented information about Denver’s efforts with sustainability and development. He said the Democratic National Convention elevated the visibility of sustainability and created some legacy programs. Denver is using the economic approach to sustainability rather than regulatory. He invited people to view the Greener Denver Business Program at the website www.regonline.com/greenerdenver for more information. There are several upcoming events in which faculty and interns can be involved.

Tim said Denver would like to work together with the University on issues and programs, especially with respect to the sustainability plan.

There was a motion by Fred Cheever, seconded by Mary Jean O’Malley, to designate a liaison between the Denver Office of Economic Development and the DU Sustainability Council. The motion passed unanimously.

Tom McGee, the new energy engineer with Facilities Management, said that he plans to talk with Jeff Bemelen about interfacing with Denver and would be willing to play this liaison role. He said his priorities are still unfolding but include (1) understanding the buildings, including potential for lighting and energy retrofits and upgrades, (2) understanding the carbon footprint inventory, (3) working on retrofits and upgrades during construction projects, and (4) offering technical advice and assistance to the Sustainability Council.

Fred said that Tom, Jay Pearlman from Sightlines and Matthew Marshall (Denver Department of Environmental Health) can hopefully work together on a carbon neutrality date for the plan.

Committee Reports

Outreach Committee – Tiffany Hutchings said that the key issue for the committee is how to write the plan. She said that the committee proposes appointing a lead writer so that we have a consistent approach and stay on schedule. They estimate the workload would be 20 hours per week until the report is written. No one on the committee has the capacity to do the work as an add-on to normal duties, except perhaps over the summer. However, the report needs to be in more or less final form before it is submitted for DU review at the Provost/Chancellor level. This means that the bulk of the writing needs to be done between January and March.

Fred raised a concern over paying for a writer when everyone else is volunteering their time. Faculty release time could be a solution but is a problem during the academic year. The writer could be viewed as a paid consultant, similar to the engineers we have hired to collect data. Another option is to use a graduate assistant.

The approach might be for each committee to write its section and then hand over a draft to the writer. Another approach might be for the committees just to gather data for use by the writer.

Fred asked the Outreach Committee to submit a concrete proposal on how the plan is should be written, the time involved and the sequencing of the work. The proposal should be circulated prior to the November meeting. Gregg Kvistad offered to work with the committee on how to approach the task.

Greenhouse Gas Status Report – Jay Pearlman, Sitelines

Jay Pearlman provided a status report on the Sitelines work for the greenhouse gas inventory. He explained that the report looks at onsite (power plant, fleet, grounds), end use utilities (purchased electricity) and indirect emissions. He said that they are still refining some of the numbers but the work is 95% complete. He said that DU's emissions have been stable for four years, despite growth in square footage. The net decline has been primarily due to the purchase of RECs. DU is above average in the benchmark group for gross emissions and about average for net emissions and per student emissions. DU tends to have a more complex physical plant than the benchmark schools. He said that the data is now allowing us to understand the drivers of emissions. The biggest proportion of emissions is from electricity, then from transportation and third from air travel (1.4 million miles annually).

Next Meeting

Fred Cheever proposed that the Council meet on October 16 from 8:30 – 10 a.m. to focus on the plan. Linda Kosten and Gregg Kvistad suggested getting our business partners, such as Sodexo and Shamrock, and the 2058 Project involved.

The meeting was adjourned at 10 a.m.

DU Sustainability Council

Meeting Minutes: October 16, 2008 – Sturm Law, Room 412

Present: Fred Cheever, Lisa Dale, Bruce Hutton, Becky Powell, Mary Jean O'Malley, Julie Sutor, Jeff Bemelen, Mark Rodgers, Richard Chapman, Chris MacMillan. **Guests and Committee Members:** Lyndsay Agans, Donna Jesenovec, Frank Laird, Alyson Goud.

Next meeting: Thursday, November 6, 8:30 – 10 a.m., DuPont Room, Mary Reed Building.

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m.

Daniels College Sustainability Event – February 12, 2009

After introductions, Bruce Hutton gave an announcement about a sustainability event that the Daniels College will be sponsoring as part of its 100-year celebration. The College is bringing Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. to campus on February 12. There will be different events throughout the day and some will be open to the DU community. It is a good bookend to the Provost Sustainability Conference last year. He said he would like the Sustainability Council to play a role in the day. The general schedule is a keynote speech by Kennedy in the morning, a lunch panel and breakout sessions in the afternoon on the top ten broad issues in sustainable development. He asked for input from the Council on subject experts and others who should participate in the sessions. He said they particularly want faculty to play a significant role. There will be some outside community involvement and, again, Hutton said he welcomed recommendations in this area. He said that the event is still in the early planning stages and he will connect with Richard Chapman when it is ready to be widely announced.

Fred Cheever said that mid-February coincides with the period when the Sustainability Plan will be in the public outreach phase, so the timing is good for feedback opportunities.

Rocky Mountain Sustainability Summit at CU – Boulder – Becky Powell

Becky Powell said that DU has been invited to participate in this regional conference, sponsored by CU – Boulder and focusing on higher education. It is scheduled for February 11-13, 2009. The deadline for proposals is October 27. It is important for DU to have a visible presence at the summit. [Go to <http://ecenter.colorado.edu/rmss2009> for details and to register.]

Drafting the Sustainability Plan – Fred Cheever, Lyndsay Agans

Fred Cheever said the purpose of the meeting is to review the committee assignments for the Plan and make sure that that the chairs agree with them.

Lyndsay Agans provided information about the template that will be used to draft the sections of the plan and about the content that needs to be drafted. Becky and the Best Practices Committee have divided up the subject areas into appropriate committees. [See the presentation, templates and example on the Sustainability Portfolio.]

There was some discussion about where topics properly fit. For example, the topic of purchasing cuts across all committees and it was agreed that the Best Practices Committee would provide coordination among committees. Jeff Bemelen will be the lead on Greenhouse Gas. He commented that we are largely dependent upon Excel Energy to generate energy differently in order to make a substantial reduction in our emissions.

Lyndsay and Fred provided additional advice. Committees should make sure that the supporting information is on the website so it can be referenced in the report by URL. This approach will save having

an enormous report. Committees should use judgment about how much detail to put in the report versus as appendices. The reports should be tied to the DU mission and the President's Agreement, as well as ASHEE STARS points. All information should be factually correct. Topics may be added to the list but we shouldn't introduce redundancy. The report does not have to address every point of STARS. Committees should identify future strategies.

There was discussion about the key issue of carbon neutrality. CSU has announced a goal of achieving it by 2020. The City of Denver and the State of Colorado have announced 80% by 2050. CU is still grappling with the date. CC has announced 2030, contingent upon energy providers. DU should probably aim for somewhere in between the range without putting too much pressure on the university.

There was also discussion about air travel, which is the second biggest chunk after energy, with Cherrington and Denver's location being major contributors. There are interesting trade offs between the carbon footprint and the value of exposing students to social equity and sustainability around the world.

There was discussion about the research component. Some key areas are having more organization in the curriculum around sustainability, perhaps an undergraduate minor, more research from the scientific side on the practicality of reaching carbon neutrality and have an integrated focus (e.g., UCD is focused on urban sustainability).

Fred said we ultimately have to articulate a vision for the university. Richard Chapman suggested a focus on "green employment" – preparing students for those kinds of jobs. Bruce said that was a good goal except it should have a broader focus, including social equity and other pieces.

Fred provided the following schedule for committees:

By November 6:

Committees need to have a clear idea about their topics, divide up the work among themselves and have begun to gather the data needed

By November 20:

Committees submit their rough drafts

The meeting was adjourned at 10 a.m.