

Sustainability Committee Minutes

Friday 5 February, 2010

Keith Room, Lang Center, 12:30 pm

Attending: David Burgy, Eric Chiang, Evelyn Strombom (had to leave early), Nadine Kolowrat, Linda McDougal, Nicole Lewis, Debra Kardon-Brown, Carr Everbach, Mark Davis, Maurice Eldridge, Ralph Thayer, Camille Robertson

Carr discussed an email exchange he had had with Departmental Administrators via email regarding the number of water coolers on campus. Most departments have a water cooler, and many have more than one. A possibly greener alternative is CoolerSmart: filtered hot and cold water taken from tap water. Economically such systems pay for themselves in under a year, but this option would not work for departments without a plumbing connection near their current cooler. Ralph expressed the view that it is good to keep unnecessary “specialty” water coolers inconvenient and expensive, to minimize their use. Carr will approach specific departments who seem like a good fit for CoolerSmart (or equivalent) and get back to SusCom at a future meeting.

Carr next addressed the GreenBox suggestions on the SusCom website and asked how they should be organized (now reverse chronological, but perhaps should be by topic area?). Carr will post the GreenBox suggestions to SwatFiles so that committee members can take ownership of suggestions that they can address. Camille suggested an icon indicating the category of suggestion could be appended to the reverse-chronological list of suggestions.

Jacob Socolar had sent an email message to SusCom about EVS leaving lights on after cleaning. Ralph said there are no instructions to staff to leave lights on, and so this issue is a red herring. If incidents occur, they can be brought individually to Ralph’s attention.

Carr will ask Jeff Jabco to send the campus revised and updated recycling rules soon. Jeff likes to include last year’s recycling totals with this message.

Nicole reported that the alumnus she was hoping to interview to join SusCom is not available during our meeting times. Nadine volunteered to contact HG Chissell to ask him to send out a request via the LinkedIn alumni network.

Carr reported that Peter Collings gave a great faculty talk about his Earth’s Climate and Global Warming course. Nadine informed us that money for the course came from the Mellon-Tri-Co fund. The money was used to sponsor meetings between staff members from the three campuses. Carr noted that the connection between the meetings and Peter’s course development is not clear, but certainly there is strong Tri-Co support for courses on Climate Change.

Andrea Packard will attend our March 16th meeting to talk about the printing and distribution of glossy List Gallery exhibit flyers.

Carr reported that Denise Disney of the Swarthmore Borough Environmental Advisory Committee is interested in working with us to discuss sustainability in Swarthmore

Borough. Ralph suggested that we look for synergy opportunities between the College and Borough such as electrical purchasing and monitoring.

Carr reported that the Temple Ambler GHG team members have finished their analysis of the greenhouse gas emissions audit data and will come to a future SusCom meeting. Carr will schedule.

Carr asked Camille for updates on Green March. Camille said that student leaders will come to next week's open meeting to talk about what kind of supporting role SusCom can play [n.b.: this meeting was rescheduled from Wednesday to Friday due to a huge snowstorm].

Mark requested that members contact him with calendar insertions and revisions.

There was a discussion of "ecopurchasing" by departments. Nadine and Mark spoke in support of centralized purchasing through the bookstore. Nicole suggested that we talk to Cathy Grace about ecopurchasing. Ralph volunteered to work with her.

Maurice reported on the ethical purchasing task force that is formulating a policy to be considered by the Board's Social Responsibility Committee.

Carr indicated several points in the Inauguration Committee minutes that may be relevant to us and mentioned that he will be facilitating one of the panel discussions. Maurice mentioned that they will be looking at the environmental initiatives that Bryn Mawr and Haverford took at their large-scale events.

Ralph reported that he has started replacing 40-watt T-12 lamps in the facilities building with 23-watt T-8s. Due to the unresponsiveness of the LED vendor he initially corresponded with, he is looking for another vendor.

Mark offered to share printing reports with the committee. He does not think we will switch to a print-release model this year, but preliminary monitoring will be useful in soliciting involvement from the Student Council and other organizations.

As part of the GHG project, Carr asked how we think we might account for carbon emissions from travel to and from campus. Nadine reported that Middlebury buys carbon offsets to account for travel to and from campus instead of trying to deter travel. Carr suggested that Swarthmore College at least calculate one round trip to and from the permanent homes for each student as a lower bound on a carbon estimate. Nicole said that we are not going to do anything about where students live and travel, and suggested therefore that we focus on faculty and staff transportation. Mark asked us to consider how a survey about transportation would be utilized and implemented. David said he feels we have an obligation to include the emission costs of having an international student body. Carr asked if this is something we want to address and if so, how. Debra said that we would not need our own survey because the administration has information that would give us a ballpark number. Debra also brought up the HR transit program. Nadine is going to e-mail the Middlebury representative to understand their methodology for counting transportation-related carbon.

Mark suggested an end-of-the-year event to encourage faculty, staff, and students to think about environmental sustainability during the summer. Carr said that we should expand Ralph's Friends and Neighbors document and add Nadine's video to that part of the SusCom website. Camille will work with Stacey Kutish to make these changes to the website.

The meeting adjourned around 1:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Carr Everbach (based on Camille Robertson's notes)

Future meetings:

Friday, Feb 12, 8:30-9:30 am Sharples Rm 4 (open meeting). Agenda: Hear from student green groups about their ideas for improving campus sustainability.

Friday, Feb 19, 12:30-1:30 pm, Lang Center

Wednesday, Feb 24, 8:30-9:30 am Sharples Rm 4 (open meeting)

Wednesday, March 3, 8:30-9:30 am Sharples Rm 4

<Spring Break>

Tuesday, March 16, 2:30-3:30 pm (open meeting)

Friday, March 26, 12:30-1:30 pm, Lang Center

Wednesday, March 31, 8:30-9:30 am, Sharples Rm 4 (open meeting)

Tuesday, April 6, 2:30-3:30 pm

Friday, April 9, 12:30-1:30 pm, Lang Center (open meeting)

Wednesday, April 14, 8:30-9:30 am, Sharples Rm 4

Tuesday, April 20, 2:30-3:30 pm (Everbach away; open meeting)

Wednesday, April 28, 8:30-9:30 am, Sharples Rm 4

Tuesday, May 4, 2:30-3:30 pm (last meeting before Finals and Inauguration; open meeting)