

Sustainability Committee Meeting Minutes
November 10, 2011 8:30am Sharples Dining Hall Room 4

Attendees: Carr Everbach, Nicole Selby, Clara Fang, Tom Cochrane, Nadine Kolowrat, Marjorie Murray, Deb Kardon-Brown, Erin Lowe, Eric Wagner, Linda McDougall, Mark Davis. Guests: Tania Doles '12, Callie Feingold '12

Carr opened the meeting by reviewing the items on the agenda: 1) identification of short-term goals and subcommittees, 2) logo, 3) renewing fund, 4) Paces Cafe, 5) AfewSteps.org

Logo

Marjorie Murray passed around a brochure that contains a logo students had created for the “We Can: Wind Energy Clean Air Now” campaign a few years ago. The logo was used in the Earth Day events, t-shirts, and brochures. It took 15 weeks to create.

Carr expressed the view that we probably could produce a logo faster with student help, but there are many benefits in going through the Communications office to create the logo. Phil Stern from Communications had come to the meeting on November 7 and gave the committees some questions to consider in creating a logo. Carr had put those questions into a survey that he will send out again to the committee. Once the committee submits its feedback, he will compile the results and send them to Phil.

Renewing Fund

Carr would like the committee to reengage with the Renewing Fund. The Renewing Fund was established to provide funding for projects that would increase sustainability and save money for the college. Savings from the projects are reinvested into the fund to be used for other projects. Since the establishment of the Renewing Fund, SusCom has identified five projects to implement and track the performance. The ones that paid back the fastest were the lighting upgrades—Sharples wagon wheels, T5 and T8 replacements. Ralph decided that the bulbs were paying back fast enough that he could pay back the loan early. He has spent \$41,450 and the investments are saving \$20,000 a year. All this means that we now have \$40,000 dollars of unexpended funds. Carr said it is time for us to consider opening up the renewing fund to new projects. He suggested that we put out an article in the Phoenix about the renewing fund, and engage the public in finding new opportunities. Nadine pointed out that, even though the requirement for paying back the fund usually means funding facilities projects student involvement and

curricular tie-in are also important.

Nadine said that she received permission to fundraise to expand renewing fund. Their goal is to increase it to \$60,000.

Eric said that he would like to see more investment in motion sensors and daylight sensors. Eric and Ralph did a walk through of the entire athletic facility, and they noticed a lot of waste taking place. The lights in the athletic facilities use huge amounts of energy and Eric is always turning them off at the end of the day.

Mark mentioned that the classrooms lights also get left on a lot. However, the cost to rewire those classrooms often cost more than the sensors.

Linda said that instead of spending a lot of money on these motion sensors, we should train people to turn off the lights.

Eric said that education is helpful, but it doesn't always work. Unless you have a constant educational campaign, people ignore those messages and stop seeing the signs on the walls. Motion sensors ensure that the lights get turned off. It's like putting out recycling bins and hoping everyone recycles.

Nicole said that we need to talk with Ralph to see if he recommends making those investments at this time, and the subcommittee on the renewing fund could get together and develop a combined educational and technological strategy.

Clara said to make projects with longer paybacks feasible, the savings from the projects with short feedbacks should be rolled back into the renewing fund even after they have paid for themselves so that they can be used for the more expensive projects.

Carr said that this is not how the renewing fund was set up. After paying back the loan, the department that made the change retains any further savings, which is an incentive to participate. Carr showed a chart from Harvard of the payback from their energy efficiency projects.

Paces Cafe

Carr introduced Tania Doles and Callie Feingold (both seniors) who are requesting money from the Renewing Fund for their Swarthmore Foundation Project. Tania and Callie are proposing to make Paces Café a sustainable student run café. As a student space, Paces is currently not well maintained, has no sustainable features, but is heavily used. Tania and Callie will make it a sustainable space by purchasing local food from the Chester Community Coop, conducting energy efficiency

renovations, and securing the space when it's not used. They are requesting funds from the Renewing Fund for an energy efficient refrigerator and freezer, and an energy efficient dishwasher.

Currently the café does not have a freezer and students wash the dishes by hand. Milkshakes are a big source of income for Paces and they cannot make them without a freezer. The savings from the energy efficient dishwasher and freezer would not only be in terms of energy and water, but also student labor, and the ability to make more revenue from milkshakes. The savings would go to the Dean's Office, which currently funds the café as a student amenity, not expecting it will pay for itself.

Callie and Tania explained that their financial goal for the café is for it to break even. The café provides jobs for students but leaves them with no money to invest in new appliances. Last year they were thousands of dollars over their budget. The additional cost is absorbed by the college.

Nicole said it seems that the Sustainability Committee is supportive of their project and would be willing to provide money from the Renewing Fund if they write up the projected cost and the savings. Nicole recommended that they meet with Tom Cochrane to figure out the cost paybacks. The Renewing Fund subcommittee can assist the students in finalizing the calculations, after the applicants write up what they can.

Callie said that an Energy Star dishwasher costs no more than \$500, and a freezer refrigerator combo would cost about \$1000.

Carr asked Tania and Callie about where they purchase their food. Callie said that they currently buy food from the Swarthmore Coop and Ginardi's. Carr asked if they can combine their food purchases with the dining hall to make it more efficient for everyone? Linda offered to meet with Tania and Callie about this.

Sub-Committees

Nicole resumed the conversation from last time about creating short-term goals and forming subcommittees. Last time, the Greenbox and Renewing Fund were in the same subcommittee. Both of those projects involve community outreach. But the Outreach subcommittee already has a lot of projects under their purview, and it's important that Greenbox and Renewing Fund get immediate attention. The rationale for the subcommittees is not so much putting together projects that are similar as deciding what to work on right now.

The subcommittees were read out loud and committee members raised their hands for the ones they wanted to join.

Curriculum: Allison, Marge, Eric, Carr, Clara
Renewing Fund: Deb, Mark, Eric, Carr, Cameron
Outreach: Clara, Mark, Tom
Greenbox: Linda, Tom, Erin, Nicole
STARS: Carr, Clara, (everybody)

Nadine proposed another subcommittee for fundraising and alumni events, including Garnet Weekend, Alumni Weekend, and Spring Weekend. Nadine, Carr, and Nicole signed up for this. Nadine would like to see a student representative on this subcommittee.

At the last meeting the idea of a subcommittee to work on the student agenda was raised. Erin said that it would make more sense for students to work in the other subcommittees rather than have a subcommittee of their own. Nadine suggested that as a way to get more student voice on the committee, there should be a standing agenda item to hear from the students at each meeting. The committee approved this suggestion.

Nicole suggested that each subcommittee could brainstorm on how to leverage the New York Times grant (\$250) to advance its goals. Nadine suggested that the Renewing Fund subcommittee be responsible for administering the application and decision process. Nadine also said that every subcommittee should conduct progress reporting.

Nicole said that SusCom members who are not attending this meeting will be asked to join subcommittees.

Nicole also said that in her conversations with two of the associate deans, there was support for SusCom attending a "Big Dean's Meeting", at which over 30 of the Dean's staff --representing academic affairs, student life, the health center, and more-- could help brainstorm how sustainability is integrated in college practices and policies. Nicole suggested that each subcommittee brainstorm on how it could utilize this opportunity.

[A Few Steps.org](#)

Clara gave an update on a meeting she had with AFewSteps.org, a community organization that works on sustainability initiatives in the region and the school districts. AFewSteps.org was formed when sustainability leaders from adjoining municipalities and school districts got together to consolidate their sustainability efforts. Now they are a nonprofit organization with a few hundred members. They were mentioned in the Philadelphia Inquirer article about Swarthmore

being a model green community. They would like a closer association with the college Sustainability Committee in order to achieve greater synergy and mutually beneficial partnerships. For example, the organization is working with a local middle school to build a green roof. The school has built the roof to accommodate green, and AFewSteps would like Swarthmore to provide some students who would be interested in working on the project and organizing volunteers. Is there a faculty member who would be interested in using it as a learning project for their class? They've already spoken with the Arboretum about getting some plants. AFewSteps also organizes neighborhood affinity groups that get together to monitor energy, water, and waste and to help each other improve their sustainability. Beth Murray and Phillip Coleman are the contacts for AFewSteps. Clara said she thinks it would be good for Beth and Phil to attend a future SusCom meeting so that we could be mutually kept abreast of each other's efforts. The Committee agreed to this suggestion.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30am

Respectfully submitted, Clara Fang

*** Future planned meetings of the Sustainability Committee ***

Friday, November 18, 2011, 2-3 pm, Lang Center Seminar Room (106)

Monday, November 21, 2011, 11:30-12:30, Lang Center Keith Room

Thursday, December 1, 2011, 8:30-9:30, Sharples Room 4

Monday, December 5, 2011, 11:30-12:30, Lang Center Keith Room
