

**Macalester - Groveland Community County
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

Thursday, July 15, 2010 | 7:00 PM

Edgumbe Recreation Center | 320 South Griggs Street | Saint Paul, MN 55105

Members in attendance: Rich Broderick, Gena Berglund, Mary Davis, Michelle Crain, Kellie Connor, Craig Skone, Lauren Anderson (staff)

Guests: Krista Leraas (PRI Cold Climate), Laura Cina (MN Renewable Energy Society), Dustin Denson (MN Renewable Energy Society)

Meeting called to order: 7:02pm

Approval of June 2010 Minutes: Motion to approve was seconded and passed.

Added to agenda under Other Business: none

Backyard Harvest & Garden Coaching Programs

Krista Leraas, Program Coordinator at Permaculture Research Institute (PRI) – Cold Climate, presented on the organization’s urban agriculture-focused programs. PRI – Cold Climate was founded in 2003 and became a 501 (c) (3) since 2009. Its mission is to strengthen and build urban food systems using the principles of permaculture, which means using sustainable methods that mimic the way natural systems function. They currently offer Backyard Harvest as a fee-for-service program that creates and tends a garden for homeowners from start to finish. Additionally, PRI offers garden kits; garden coaching, which assists with design, maintenance, and trouble-shooting; and trainings and workshops for the community. The Committee discussed ways that MGCC could work with PRI – Cold Climate, including tabling at Groveland Night Out and the Alley/Native Garden Award celebration, an EcoForum on permaculture, and discount services for Macalester-Groveland residents.

Native Garden Awards

Two award nominations have been received so far – since the deadline is close, the committee would like to extend the deadline until Friday, July 30th. Lauren will post on MGCC website that the deadline has been extended. Craig will have the native garden interest group help with promoting the Native Garden Awards. The committee discussed changing the policy about not awarding the same gardens multiple years in a row, having events for owners of current and past winning gardens, offering an EcoForum or training on native gardening, and altering signs so neighbors can win an award (or something small to attach to their existing award) year after year.

Groveland Night Out

The event will again be zero waste, but will have to be run entirely by volunteers because Lauren is out during the week of August 9th. A total of five volunteers are needed to set up the

zero waste stations, sit at the MGCC table, monitor the stations, tear down stations and weigh materials at the end of the night. Rich, Gena, Craig, and potentially Michelle and Kellie volunteered to help the zero waste aspects of the event run smoothly. Lauren will send out details the week before the event to all volunteers and work with Eureka Recycling to make sure materials are dropped off the day of the event.

Solar Bulk Purchasing Program

Laura Cina and Dustin Denson from the MN Renewable Energy Society presenting on the program, which is a way for neighborhoods to reduce the cost of solar thermal systems using state rebates, federal tax credits, and buying in bulk. The goal of the program is to see 1,000 systems installed in Minneapolis and St. Paul. MN Renewable Energy Society would like to MGCC to help with outreach and publicity through newsletters, website, email communication, hosting a workshop, and/or door knocking. Interested neighbors can visit the program website, www.makeminesolar.org, which will help them sign up for a discounted site assessment. The committee discussed promoting the program on the website, in the E-Illuminator, and potentially in the Villager.

Eureka Recycling/ Composting

Gena gave a brief update on the curbside pilot, which is on through September 18th and, by initial reports, is going really well. MGCC and Eureka Recycling are trying to figure out communication and decision-making aspects of the partnership through meetings. On-call volunteers for some continuing home visits may be needed as the pilot progresses.

MacGrove Moves

The brochures have been delivered and there are plenty more to pick up in the office! Thank you to everyone who was able to drop them off at area businesses!

Meeting adjourned: 8:17pm