

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE

Minutes

Thursday, June 18th, 2009, 7pm, Egcumbe Rec Center

Attendance: Gena Berglund, Craig Skone, Michelle Crain, Rich Broderick, Leo Viktora

Guests: Jason Rodney (Cooperative Energy Futures—CEF), Nathaniel Cook (CEF), Emma Schroder (CEF)

Rich called meeting to order at approx. 7:05 pm

Approval of May 2009 Minutes

Gena moved; Leo 2nd—motion passes

Native Gardens

Craig discussed the Native Garden Awards program; noted that master gardeners are booked for up to one year in advance--need to call much sooner to get them to be part of judging native gardens next year. We'll continue to move forward with the program and some of our own committee members (including Craig, and possibly Melanie?) have made the commitment to do the judging anyhow...Also, we found out that Tom Ibsen, champion of all things native garden, has moved to North Dakota to pursue an exciting career opportunity--we wish him well, but had so many exciting ideas we wanted to explore with him! He will be missed : (

Grand Old Day

MacGrove Moves/Grand Old Day debrief--committee may reassess if Grand Old Day is the best use of volunteer/staff time (lots of people from around the metro, not necessarily our primary audience; gave away 10,000 mesh bags, but did not even get rid of one box of MGM forms and had to fill a full day of activities with many volunteers). We estimate that the people on the street were only about 5% of our target audience; however we did have the opportunity to raise awareness of environment and reducing energy.

CEF (Cooperative Energy Futures)

Students who are interning with CEF (Cooperative Energy Futures) came to the meeting to get our approval of a survey they wanted to pass along to the community to gauge neighbors' interest in participating in looking at ways to work cooperatively to reduce energy in the neighborhood. The link to their survey went out in the last two 'News for the Neighborhood(s)' and we'll continue to gauge neighbor interest into the future. They passed around info packets about their organization. They are a for-profit cooperative, started by Macalester and surrounding community. Their focus is on neighborhood organizing around energy efficiency. Organizations can put their resources together to get the word out. Things CEF can do for Mac-Grove residents: 1) bulk purchasing programs (economies of scale)—money saving ideas, 2) insulation contracting program—pilot last year in Mirriam Park; 5% discount/7 homes were insulated. CEF has not yet decided on what the benefits will be for members. Community survey is something that will be beneficial to learn about what neighbors want.

Survey distribution: through Google forms—email list to CEF folks Gena mentioned that it would be important to add a paragraph of info at the beginning of the survey that explains what it's about. Rich mentioned that it should seem informational vs. promotional, his suggestion—here's what we're

proposing, would you like to attend a meeting to learn more about it? He thinks people will be interested in an idea but may also be wary. Gena added that instead of saying “send me a form,” the survey could say, “for more information, click here.” CEF information/survey will go out in June 23/July 7 NFTN with a link to their site (will run through Aug. 7th if space permits); paragraph in the Illuminator? We could do an eco-forum early this fall when folks are starting to think about energy efficiency. After survey, next steps? Offer a workshop; offer insulation. CEF should be invited to HIF next year.

MGCC Event Owner List

Rich introduced the MGCC Event Owner List to the committee and we gathered feedback from committee members and claimed ownership of respective environment committee programs and events--will get those updates to Todd in a timely manner...

Building a community of composters

Eureka cancelled meeting last week and had to reschedule again this week for the meeting that was set up for tomorrow (Friday, June 18th).

Gena interviewed Clarence Chaplin, a neighbor who has been composting at home and at church for many years. His article will be featured in the upcoming summer Illuminator and we would like to continue highlighting stories of this nature in future newsletters as well. (Share your story with Karmann at karmann@macgrove.org!)

Natural Lawn Care

No news at this point—Rich will be speaking to 4 or 5 natural lawn care organizations to see if they'd like to participate in our neighborhood discount program.

Hour Car

Leo Viktora came to speak to the committee about potentially obtaining an Hour Car at St. Thomas—a member of the NEC came to do a presentation on why it would be valuable to host one at UST. Leo turned to student rep. and encouraged her to bring it to student senate then write a statement of support. Leo sent email to faculty who has used hour car who responded and said that the sustainability committee reported that the students turned in the proposal too late (student didn't know there was a timeline/deadline that she had to get it in by. At a late spring WSNAC meeting with this student present (talking about parking issues in general), she mentioned that she had a car when she was a first year and her friends used to borrow her car to run errands—great example of what an Hour Car could be used for. At the meeting, WSNAC passed a resolution for a \$6000 donation. Given the current situation, Leo is going to ask WSNAC to donate the total amount to place Hour Car at or near UST and has asked St. Thomas to donate \$6000 as well. What Leo would like from MGCC is a resolution encouraging WSNAC and St. Thomas to get an hour car on campus. He knows there is student support and would like the resolution to be a bigger representation of the whole community. Rich advised that the resolution would be supported as long as it is not so specific but much more general focus on objectives and not the steps to get there. Rich also mentioned that Leo could also present his personal position and ask for personal support. WSNAC would like to demonstrate the building of support of the community; he'll be presenting his resolution to the full board in July.

Meeting adjourned at 8:03pm

Next meeting: Thursday, July 16th, 2009, 7pm, Edcumbe Rec Center