

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

Thursday, March 17, 2011 – 7:00 PM

Edgecumbe Recreation Center – 320 South Griggs Street, Saint Paul, MN 55105

Members in attendance: Mary Davis, Gena Berglund, Johanna Anderson, Craig Skone, Kellie Connor, Lauren Anderson (staff)

Guests: Leo Viktora (MGCC Board), Paul Lorah (UST)

Meeting called to order: 7:01 pm

Approval of February 2011 Minutes: Motion to approve was seconded and passed.

University of St. Thomas STAR Grant: Leo Viktora and Paul Lorah spoke to the group about a solar array proposed by the University of St. Thomas. The University is looking for a letter of support for the grant application for a 40kW solar array, since a link to the community would strengthen the application. The array is planned for the Anderson Student Center that is pursuing LEED Gold certification. The array would consist of 212 panels (total 40 kW) for a cost of \$300,000; the grant would pay ~\$50,000. Solar Flow, a neighborhood organization, would install the solar panels. Solar Flow sets up a website with a map of the roof; site visitors can see how much power is generated in real time, as well as estimates of other environmental benefits. After installation students would host a program for neighborhood sustainability funded by savings from the solar panel energy generated. Students would present projects on sustainability and the event would include operations staff, residents of the surrounding neighborhoods and solar providers.

- *Motion:* Per board support, the Environment Committee supports this project and will write a letter stating support (send to Bob Douglas, application due by 4 pm March 31st); motion passed.

EcoForum Recap

- **Composting:** The forum was well attended and attendees included several composting enthusiasts. Kris Hageman, City of St. Paul, and Lynn Hoffman, Eureka Recycling, presented to the 22 attendees. Not much new information was presented and the questions we provided them with before the forum were not thoroughly addressed. The committee proposed creating a larger sub-committee composed of other passionate neighborhood composters. Committee members agreed to brainstorm over email for group composition and meeting date; plan to contact the forum attendees to see if they would be interested in participating.
- *Fundraising update:* The Council received COPP funds (\$5,000 total) from Representatives Stark and Harris. Some of these funds were designated for a public hearing/forum that gathers different levels of government. The Council also received additional funds from Macalester Highwinds Fund. The Council agreed to explore options for how to continue neighborhood organics collection.
- **Energy Efficiency:** The EcoForum was a success with 24 enthusiastic attendees.

2011 MacGrove Moves

- **Promotions:** Melanie's students added labels to the brochures – thanks students! MGM 2011 will be promoted at the Home Improvement Fair, through the e-lluminator and Illuminator, and through the MGCC Facebook page. Johanna will work on creating a Facebook event for MGM 2011. Lauren will look into creating a fill-in PDF or Excel file for filling out the MGM form. Volunteers will bring brochures to the businesses that donated prizes; Melanie will also bring brochures to Linwood and Groveland Rec Centers. We should also send information on MGM 2011 to neighborhood block lists.
- **Golden Shoe Hunt:** Melanie has been following up with Run n' Fun but is still waiting to hear back from them. Kellie suggested contacting Running Room to see if they would be interested in sponsoring the event.

Proposed Committee Resolution: The committee had a discussion on the proposed resolution regarding staff presence at committee meetings. Suggestions for the resolution included changing "mandated" to "required" and adding "and MGCC Executive Committee" after "Executive Director" to make sure the ED is checking in with the Environment Committee. The group felt that this resolution might not have a huge impact because contentious meetings will have staff present. The committee is generally supportive of this resolution and does not need a staff person present at all meetings, but this will require a bit more pre-planning for meeting (i.e. staff need to get minutes sooner in order to determine whether staff presence required at the next meeting). The committee agreed to continue the conversation at the April meeting and then will send more feedback to the Board in May.

Rain Garden Workshops: The workshops are being promoted in the e-lluminator, Illuminator and the Villager. Mary and Michelle will provide supplies for the workshop and will bring the supplies to the April meeting. Workshops are scheduled for April 26th and May 3rd at Edgumbe and will start at 6:30 pm. The presenters will have aerial photos of each participant's house. Lauren would like help creating flyers to promote the workshops; she will create a draft and email to group with a goal of completion by the Home Improvement Fair. Other promotion ideas include connecting with native garden interest group and the Friends School Plant community.

Home Improvement Fair: Lauren requested help from committee volunteers for set up, take down and booth staffing at the Home Improvement Fair.

Other Business

- Kellie informed the group that the Great River Master Plan open house is scheduled for April 14th at River Centre. The proposed plans are very interesting, but unfortunately the event conflicts with the MGCC Annual Meeting.
- Johanna shared event information for the ArtStart 5K, an event planned by Art Scraps in conjunction with their annual Eco Arts Children's Festival in October. She will pass the event info along to Afton for promotion through MGCC.
- Lauren informed the group that recycling bags for apartment residents will be available at Edgumbe.

Meeting adjourned: 8:15 pm