University Sustainability Council

Meeting Summary

October 21, 2010

Attendees
Ann Wylie, Vice President for Administrative Affairs (Chair)
Linda Clement, Vice President for Student Affairs
Sally Koblinsky, Assistant President and Chief of Staff
Mahlon Straszheim, Associate Provost, Academic Affairs
Mary Ann Ottinger, Professor and Associate Vice President for Research
John Farley, Assistant Vice President for Administrative Affairs
Jay Elvove, Manager, OIT
Monette Bailey, Senior Writer/Editor, University Relations
Scott Lupin, Acting Director, Environmental Safety and Director, Office of Sustainability
Joan Kowal, Energy Manager, Facilities Management
Bruce James, Professor and Director, Environmental Science and Policy
Karen Lips, Associate Professor, Biology
Matthew Popkin, Undergraduate Student, Government and Politics
Barrett Dillow, Graduate Student, Aerospace Engineering

Meeting Overview
The purpose of the meeting was to report on action items from the September 16 meeting, discuss a potable water conservation target for the campus, discuss the need for additional metrics targets, and to approve the project review/endorsement process.

Meeting Highlights

Updates from the Chair

- Ann Wylie presented an overview of campus sustainability initiatives to the University Senate on October 13, 2010. The senate members responded positively to the campus’s progress on sustainability and several commented that they didn’t know that so much was taking place.
- Ann Wylie, Harry Teabout, and Scott Lupin presented the “Can the Can” program to the Council of Deans on October 18, 2010. The deans of the School of Public Policy and the School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation agreed to pilot the program in their departments. Lessons learned from the pilots will help determine how to implement the program in other academic units.

September 2010 Meeting Summary
The September 16, 2010 Meeting Summary was approved with one change: “Megawatts” on page 3 changed to “Megawatt hours.” The final meeting minutes will be posted on the University’s sustainability website (www.sustainability.umd.edu).
Feasibility of Undergraduate Student Requests from May 2010
Several undergraduate students presented a list of sustainability-based requests to the President’s Cabinet last spring. The Council discussed each recommendation.

- Install occupancy sensors to control classroom lighting – Occupancy sensors are being installed in classrooms, so this is already a goal, but it will take a while to roll out because there are so many classrooms on campus.

**ACTION:** Joan Kowal will invite the lighting group within Facilities Management to give a brief presentation to the Council regarding the status of this effort.

- Building managers should create energy management plans – The campus achieved a 20% reduction in electricity consumption in September when FM asked the community to power-down unnecessary equipment in response to potential rolling brown-outs in the area. As a result, there appears to be a significant amount of discretionary energy use. TVs in lobbies/lounges were identified as an issue since they use a lot of power. The Council is not sure of the feasibility of developing energy management plans for each building.

**ACTION:** Ann Wylie will ask Jack Baker and Lee Comstock about the feasibility of creating building-level energy management plans and will report back to the Council.

- Dining Services should create a zero-waste catering option – This option already exists but many departments don’t choose the option because it adds cost to their events. Catering on campus is already more expensive than outside alternatives since the University provides benefits to its Dining Services employees. Mandating zero-waste would add extra costs to events and may negatively affect Dining Services. However, it was agreed that the campus could do more to better promote the alternative.

**ACTION:** Linda Clement will ask Dining Services if they can better promote the zero-waste catering option.

- The campus should expand its composting program – The University is looking for opportunities to compost its organic waste closer to campus than the facility north of Baltimore where the compost is currently sent.

**ACTION:** Mary Ann Ottinger will investigate opportunities to develop a composting operation at the BARC facility in Beltsville and Scott Lupin will contact Frank Allnutt of the College of Agriculture to discuss the feasibility of a program at the University’s Clarksville farm.

- Faculty and staff should be better served by University mass transit – The administration is aware that a different funding structure is needed for the Department of Transportation Services. This issue will be on the agenda of the new University President and the current Facilities Master Plan Transportation subcommittee.

- Sustainability should be included in all first-year seminar classes – The UNIV 100 curriculum is primarily controlled by Gerry Strumpf, Director of Orientation. The Council can discuss with Gerry opportunities to expand sustainability in the UNIV 100 curriculum.

**ACTION:** Mahlon Straszheim, Scott Lupin, and Mark Stewart will meet with Gerry Strumpf to discuss integrating sustainability into the core UNIV 100 curriculum.
The University should create an interdisciplinary sustainability minor – The Provost has approved the creation of a committee to design a sustainability minor. The committee is expected to complete its work within a short 3-4 month timeframe.

Faculty/Staff Giving to the Campus Green Fund
The Graduate Student Government announced it would be in favor of creating a graduate student sustainability fee (similar to the undergraduate student sustainability fee) if faculty and staff are also eligible to contribute to the University Sustainability Fund. Ann Wyle has contacted Brodie Remington about creating an option for faculty and staff to give through the Faculty and Staff Campus Campaign.

ACTION: Ann Wylie will update the Council at the November 30, 2010 meeting.

Bottled Water
As a follow up to discussion during the last Council meeting, Ann Wylie shared the following statistics about bottled water use on campus:
- 64,000 bottles of water were sold in vending machines last year
- 300 locations use 5-gallon water jugs. Last year, the University purchased 26,000 of these jugs at a cost of $80,000.
- These figures do not include bottled water sales through Athletics or Catering.

The Council generally agrees that bottled water is a complicated issue for the University because of athletic events but there may be opportunities such as expanding the number of filtered water stations that will drive down the use of bottled water.

ACTION: Ann Wylie will talk with Athletics about allowing spectators to bring empty reusable water bottles into events. Also, Bruce James and Allen Davis will discuss water quality issues at the next Council meeting.

Potable Water Conservation Goal
Whereas the University has set goals for energy, greenhouse gas emissions, and waste reduction, the University does not have a goal for reducing the amount of potable water used on campus. The campus uses approximately a half-billion gallons of water each year (roughly 1.5 million gallons per day), which costs the campus $5-6 million annually. Consultants are currently working on updating the University’s Utility Master Plan, Landscape Master Plan, and Facilities Master Plan, which makes now an opportune time to establish water conservation goals that may encourage consultants to find new ways of reducing water consumption. Joan Kowal is contracting the Utility Master Plan consultants now. The Council should revisit this issue when the consultants have their final report in or around April 2011.

ACTION: Ann Wylie will ask the Landscape Master Plan group to present their anticipated potable water reduction strategies to the Council. Joan Kowal and Scott Lupin will follow-up with the appropriate consultants and steering committees to identify feasible conservation goals.

Goals for Other Metrics
The University does not yet have goals for many other metrics. The Council honed in on paper consumption during this meeting and decided it needs more information about paper usage on campus to make any recommendations.
ACTION: The Office of Sustainability will investigate how much of each type of paper (virgin and recycled) the University purchases annually, the environmental impact of that paper, and the environmental and cost implications of switching to 30% post consumer content (PCC), 50% PCC, and 100% PCC paper campus-wide.

Student Advisory Committee
The Student Advisory Committee supports the Council in reviewing projects seeking funding from the Student Sustainability Fund. As Chair, Ann Wylie appoints the members and has received several nominations for this year’s student members. She is seeking a final recommendation from the undergraduate student representative to the Council and will make the appointments within a week.

ACTION: Ann Wylie will appoint the members of the Student Advisory Committee upon receiving recommendations from Matt Popkin, the Council’s undergraduate student representative.

Project Review Endorsement Process
The Council discussed a draft Project Review Criteria document that establishes how projects can be submitted to the Council for review and the criteria what will be used to determine the Council’s support. The draft states that besides projects seeking support from the Student Sustainability Fund, other projects may be submitted to the Council by the Facilities Council, Finance Committee, a Vice President, or a Council member. It is anticipated that project supporters may seek Council endorsement for a variety of reasons.

ACTION: Project Review Criteria approved.