University Sustainability Council

Meeting Summary

Sept 16, 2010

Attendees
Ann Wylie, Vice President for Administrative Affairs (Chair)
Sally Koblinsky, Assistant President and Chief of Staff
Mahlon Straszheim, Associate Provost, Academic Affairs
Chris Arkell, Associate Director, OIT
Jay Elvove, Manager, OIT
Scott Lupin, Acting Director, Environmental Safety and Director, Office of Sustainability
Allen Davis, Professor, Civil and Environmental Engineering
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
Matthias Ruth, Professor, School of Public Policy

Meeting Overview
The purpose of the meeting was to review sustainability developments since the last Council meeting, to review the 2009 campus GHG inventory, and to discuss where the Council will focus this year.

Meeting Highlights

Updates from the Chair
- A group of students from the Student Sustainability Committee of the Student Government Association presented a list of eight specific sustainability recommendations to the President’s Cabinet in May 2010. Ann Wylie provided a handout of the recommendations to the Council members and asked the members to consider the feasibility and validity of the students’ recommendations.
- The University of Maryland was highlighted on the cover of the Journal of Educational Procurement for the EnergyWise-UM program.
- Three major reports were posted on the sustainability website on Sept 14. These reports include the 2010 Campus Sustainability Report, the 2010 Sustainability Metrics Report, and the Carbon Footprint of the University of Maryland, College Park: 2009 Inventory Update.
- Ann Wylie is giving a presentation about the University’s sustainability initiatives to the Board of Public Works on Sept 22. The Board invited the University to talk about sustainability after the Governor learned that the University was recognized on the Princeton Review Green College Honor Roll.

ACTION: Council members should review the Student Sustainability Committee’s recommendations to the President’s Cabinet and consider the feasibility and validity of the students’ recommendations.
**Review Council Charge**

Ann Wylie reiterated that the Council’s charge is to make policy recommendations and otherwise advise the President about sustainability. The Council is not an action group and the Council members are not responsible for implementation. The Council is in place to move initiatives forward, push the envelope on sustainability, and monitor the Climate Action Plan.

*Discussion:*

- There were no objections to the charge or mission of the Council
- The Can the Can program has been successful but there is still resistance. Should the Council push this as policy? The Council agreed the program needs to be piloted in academic buildings where faculty work. Matthew Popkin recommended Knight Hall since it is the University’s first green building. Matthias Ruth suggested Van Munching Hall. Ann Wylie suggested that a presentation about the issue be made to the Council of Deans to identify academic buildings the Deans would like to use for a pilot project.

**May 2010 Meeting Summary**

The May Meeting Summary was approved.

**Campus Sustainability Update**

Scott Lupin provided an update on the Office of Sustainability and overview of sustainability highlights.

- Heather Lair resigned in August 2010 and Mark Stewart was promoted to the Manager position.
- The OS is in the process of hiring three new coordinators: Sustainability Communications Coordinator (this position is co-funded by Facilities Management and the OS), Sustainability Enhancement Coordinator, and Sustainability Measurement Coordinator.
- The OS currently supervises five interns.
- Call for proposals for the Campus Green Fund was issued in early September.

*Discussion:*

- The money is available to use now and the Council has the authority to distribute money. The Council would like to expedite the original proposal review and approval schedule and may hold an emergency meeting in December for the sole purpose of reviewing project proposals so that grants can be issued as early as January.
- Three contracts are signed for USM renewable energy development. These include a solar project at Mount Saint Mary’s University and two wind projects, one in western Maryland and the other in West Virginia.
- UM also won an MEA Project Sunburst DOE grant of $630,000 to install solar power on either the Comcast Center or Severn building.
- Knight Hall and South Campus Commons 7 each achieved LEED-Gold certification. Other LEED projects in process include Oakland Hall, Physical Sciences building, Denton Dining Hall, and the sorority house renovations.
- Allen Davis won a grant to study stormwater management on campus using biofiltration.
- The new Shuttle bus facility is being designed to have a green roof and use geothermal energy.
- Can the Can was implemented in the Service Building, Main Administration, and the Chesapeake Building.
- Singlestream recycling will be introduced campus-wide during the first week of October.
- The in-vessel composters that were tested in the dining halls last spring did not work well, probably due to the amount of paper in the wastestream. Dining Services staff will visit Emory
University to see how to better manage these machines. Recycled Green, north of Baltimore, is still receiving our compostable food waste for the time being.

- Shuttle-UM ridership is expanding but it is still challenging to know how many people carpool. **Discussion:**
  - DOTS is starting to collect local address data for students for better transportation demand management. It will be mandatory for students to provide a local address by January 2012.
  - There are also problems with faculty/staff local address data – approximately 500 faculty list their campus office as their local address.
  - The Facilities Master Plan Steering Committee and subgroups are currently meeting and discussing transportation. The issue of expanding Shuttle and its funding is under consideration. Shuttle-UM is primarily focused on serving students and not faculty and staff due to its source of funding.
  - The OS hosted the second Chesapeake Project workshop in May 2010. Since the first workshop in 2009, 50 faculty have participated and 56 courses were revised to include sustainability.

**Greenhouse Gas Inventory Update**

Matthias Ruth provided an overview of the 2009 GHG emission inventory and a **handout, “Key Contributors to GHG Emission Reductions.”**

- Better transportation data led to part of the observed reduction in GHG emissions between 2008 and 2009. Mild weather in 2009 also helped keep emissions lower than usual.
- The 2009 inventory is about ten percent below the baseline 2005 emission levels. **Discussion:**
  - Ann Wylie mentioned that ESCO projects have become harder to implement since ESCO debt that was carried by the State was recently transferred to the University. UM does not have the ability to take on all the ESCO work the campus would like to do.
  - The Council also recognizes the challenge of decreasing the overall carbon footprint while the campus adds more buildings, especially energy-intensive laboratory facilities.
  - The GHG inventory for CY 2010 will show a significant decrease in emissions because of the students’ purchase of 66,000 Megawatts of renewable energy credits. The 2011 GHG inventory might show a large increase in the overall carbon footprint of the University as more buildings are brought online and the one-time purchase of renewable energy credits disappears. This could lead to a communication challenge.
  - The student representatives to the Council pointed out that the undergraduate students have “stepped up to the plate” by creating the student sustainability fee and asked if a system could be put in place so that faculty and staff could also contribute. Ann Wylie said it could not be a mandatory fee because of labor relations, but sustainability could possibly be included on the faculty/staff giving list. She will talk with Brody Remmington to confirm if the sustainability fund counts as a charity. We could also add an area to donate to the fund on the sustainability website.

**ACTION:** Ann Wylie will talk with Brody Remmington to see if a sustainability fund would be an acceptable charity on the annual faculty/staff giving list.

**Areas for Council Focus and Goal/Milestones Development**

Scott Lupin reminded the Council that the members reviewed the Campus Sustainability Metrics in May and provided feedback about which metrics the Council might focus on this year. The Council members’
responses were varied but the most popular recommendations for areas of focus were water conservation, stormwater management, and waste minimization. The Council already recommended the creation of a waste minimization committee in the spring.

**Discussion:**
- Matthew Popkin recommended the Council focus on sustainability education for all students. Specifically, he recommended expanding the Student Sustainability Advisors peer-education program so that all first year students receive a basic orientation to sustainability and that students support the creation of a sustainability minor and major. Mahlon Straszheim informed the Council that the Provost asked the Deans for their thoughts about creating an interdisciplinary sustainability minor and the feedback was very positive. He will follow up with the Provost to see where things are on the minor. Ann Wylie said that curricular initiatives must have a champion from Academic Affairs. Mahon said he would speak with Donna Hamilton about introducing sustainability into the core of the UNIV 100 curriculum. Sally Koblinsky suggested that the Council should do more to get classes involved with campus sustainability projects and research.

**ACTION:** Mahlon Straszheim will ask the Provost for an update on the potential of creating a sustainability minor. He will also ask Donna Hamilton about introducing sustainability into the core of the UNIV 100 curriculum.

- Sally Koblinsky recommended that the University needs to communicate the success of Can the Can. Ann Wylie suggested that she, Harry Teabout, and Scott Lupin make a presentation about the initiative to the Council of Deans to promote the program. Ann asked if Can the Can should be one focus of the Council this year and there was general agreement.

**ACTION:** Ann Wylie indicated that she will seek an opportunity for a presentation to the Council of Deans to promote the Can the Can program.

- Barrett Dillow recommended the Council focus on eliminating bottled water. Matthew Popkin followed up by suggesting that bottled water should at least be banned from catered events. Ann Wylie said she will talk with Dining Services and Business Services to get bottled water statistics including how many units are sold on campus, issues with the Pepsi contract and what percentage of the wastestream consists of water bottles. Karen Lips said the water in her building looks and tastes bad and recommended we investigate why people use bottled water before making a unilateral decision.

**ACTION:** Ann Wylie will talk with Dining Services and Business Services about issues related to eliminating bottled water and obtain statistics including how many units are sold on campus, issues with the Pepsi contract and what percentage of the wastestream consists of water bottles.

**Conclusions and Next Steps**

In addition to the action items listed above, the Council agreed to support the transition to singlestream recycling on campus and the expansion of the Can the Can program. Bruce James and Allen Davis also offered to provide information related to tap water vs. bottled water standards. The next Council meeting will be October 21, 2010 from 1:00-3:00 pm.