



FROM THE DESK OF COUNCIL MEMBER BOWERSOX

Sustainable Urbana

4/5/2007

Background

In the 2 years since the creation of the City Council Goal to "Reduce Urbana's Environmental Footprint" the Mayor, Council, and City staff have learned about many innovations and visited cutting-edge places:

- Prairie Crossing, the model conservation community
- The Chicago Center for Green Technology
- The Lt. Governor's Sustainable Cities Symposium in December 2007

In order to move from learning to action steps for the coming 2 years, the Mayor and Council Member Bowersox have planned the "Sustainable Urbana" discussion as a brainstorming opportunity to hear and collect Council Members' suggestions and ideas.

Of course the public and private sectors have already accomplished important steps:

- Completion of a second energy-efficient affordable home with Eco-lab
- Kerr Avenue Model Green Neighborhood planning with Farr & Associates
- Addition of LEED green building as recommended for PUD approval
- Growth of the Farmer's Market and U-Cycle
- Revitalization of Downtown and Philo Road and focus on compact, infill development

This "Sustainable Urbana" discussion is being held to collect ideas and suggestions from Council, with the intent to ask City staff in coming months to hold a similar brainstorming conversation and to identify which ideas can become feasible action steps for the coming 2 years.

Invitation

Council Members are invited to bring 1-3 suggestions or proposals for reducing Urbana's environmental footprint. Each Council Member will have a chance to speak during the course of the discussion. Council Members are encouraged to keep each individual proposal or suggestion brief; in future meetings the details and the feasibility will be discussed further. Members of the public are also invited to give input via the public input process and some speakers are planned.

Speakers

The following speakers are scheduled to provide their suggestions and share their knowledge:

- Katrin Klingenberg, Executive Director, E-co Lab, a builder of Urbana's super-energy-efficient affordable housing
- Lesley McCain, Midwest Director of Business Development, Community Energy, Inc.,

the 2006 U.S. EPA / Department of Energy Green Power Supplier of the Year (scheduled on April 16 because of a conflict on April 9)

Suggested Motion and Schedule

The following motion is suggested: "To direct City staff to hold a similar brainstorming session and add their suggestions to the list compiled by the City Council members, then to briefly perform a rough, initial assessment of the feasibility of each suggestion and report the complete list back to Council in July, 2007."

Therefore the suggested schedule is as follows:

April 9, 2007: Committee of the Whole: Sustainable Urbana Discussion and Motion; Katrin Klingenberg, guest speaker

April 16, 2007: Council: Motion acted on by Council; Lesley McCain, guest speaker

May - June, 2007: City staff hold a similar brainstorming session, then a rough initial assessment of feasibility of each suggestion

July, 2007: City staff report the complete list of suggestions and feasibility back to Council