

# Evanston's Future!

*Monthly Electronic Newsletter of*

*Evanston's Energy Future  
Evanston's Transportation Future  
Evanston Interreligious Sustainability Circle  
Evanston's Affordable Housing Future  
Citizens Lighthouse Community Land Trust  
Food Committee*

**December 2005**

Network for Evanston's Future groups welcome new members, at any time and at any level of interest or participation.

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## **Calendar**

**December 1, 7 – 9 p.m. Food Committee Meeting**  
Unitarian Church, 1330 Ridge Ave., Evanston  
Contact: Mary Catherine Buntin [mbuntin@yahoo.com](mailto:mbuntin@yahoo.com) or  
847-251-8057  
Debbie Hillman [DLHillman@sbcglobal.net](mailto:DLHillman@sbcglobal.net)  
or 847-328-7175

**December 6, 7:30 – 9:30pm Evanston's Energy Future**  
Location: TBD  
Contact: Joel Freeman  
847-869-0955 or [JSF@grummanbutkus.com](mailto:JSF@grummanbutkus.com)

**December 15, 7:30 – 9 p.m. Evanston's Transportation Future**  
Location: Evanston City Hall, Rm 3650  
Contact: Richard Martin, [rmartin101@comcast.net](mailto:rmartin101@comcast.net)

## 2006 Exciting Events – Mark Your Calendars!

### **January Final Stages of Development for City of Evanston Strategic Plan**

- Draft of Strategic Plan to be published
  - Opportunity for public comment on draft of Strategic Plan
  - Final Strategic Planning workshop for City officials
- Upcoming details of dates, times, and locations to be announced

### **February Future of Food**

- A provocative film – Don't miss it!
- Upcoming details of date, time, and location to be announced shortly

### **April 2 Earth Month Event**

- Join a gathering of minds to create a sustainable Evanston --
- Further details of time and location to be announced shortly

## **NETWORK MEMBER UPDATES**

### Energy: ETHS to Consider More Renewable Energy

ETHS Board will vote whether to conduct a feasibility study to purchase wind energy from a remotely sited wind turbine farm, among other possibilities. Facilities staff presented data which showed continued increase in cost to heat and light the school. As of present, Facilities has utilized all energy saving measures and sees this as the next step to offer the ETHS community viable energy savings. And the savings would go towards education -- not to the utility/fossil fuel industry. ETHS staff to research the possibility of collaborating with others such as SD65, City of Evanston, NU, local hospitals, and other non-for-profit organizations/institutions with large buildings.

### Energy: Green Building Prospects for the City

(Submitted by Joel Freeman)

Fire Station #5 on Central Street has capital funds allocated for demolition and replacement. The City is considering design of the new building for LEED certification through the U.S. Green Building Council. LEED stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design. It has become the frontrunner in green building rating systems. Facilities management staff at the City have also discussed grant opportunities with the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation to defray additional costs associated with achieving LEED certification. If the new fire station proves to be a successful endeavor, a stronger likelihood exists that the City will aspire to LEED certification for its new civic center. Northwestern University already has a policy of LEED certification for its new buildings, with the Ford Motor Company Engineering Design Center as its first. The City can certainly follow their lead.

### Food Committee: Minutes of Nov. 3 Meeting

(Submitted by Debbie Hillman)

### Film Program/Reel Time

Committee will cosponsor, along with ReelTime, a screening of Future of Food. Showing will take place Feb. 15 or Feb. 22, at the main library.

Committee will be responsible for a speaker(s) to answer questions after the film. Main purpose of the speaker(s) would be to:

- (1) answer questions about the film, and
- (2) offer some positive, local actions for people (such as a GMO labeling petition).

Event will include a table with a wide-range of literature. Possibilities include information about The Land Connection, Growing Home, and Organic Consumers Association. Informational items that we will have to produce would be a list of foods likely to contain GMOs, "10 Things we can Do to change our Food System", etc.

### **Evanston Schools**

ETHS vending machines, primarily in the cafeteria, offer a wide range of products, including fresh produce, sandwiches, soda, ice cream, chips, bottled water.

According to Rita Mary Luecke (Dist. 65 board chair), cafeteria food is ordered through the high school's food services. Presently, little is known of any particular interest/efforts to promote healthy foods. Food Committee will continue to investigate issue and will contact the PTAs for information as well.

Providing possibilities to promote a healthier food plan at ETHS, the Committee learned that a British chef, Jamie Oliver (the Naked Chef) exposed the lacking healthy foods in British schools. Through this exposure, the schools subsequently made major changes in their cafeterias. Presently, New York City schools are being looked into. For more information about the revolutionizing efforts in school dining halls, check out [www.FeedmeBetter.com](http://www.FeedmeBetter.com).

### **Community Food Assessment**

The committee has begun preliminary efforts to map out Evanston's food assets, including groceries, gas stores, emergency services (Salvation Army), etc. They are contemplating whether to put together a comprehensive community food assessment of other cities' assets. Before moving forward with this initiative, the committee is discussing the logistics of taking on such a project and how to use the information that would benefit the community. Collaboration may involve Loyola University faculty.

### **Illinois Farmer-Consumer Coalition**

At the Food Committee's October meeting, three topics were presented:

- Water quality in terms of "permit to pollute" (Illinois's program is practically non-existent, with no monitoring and no inspections).
- GMOs,
- Community organizing around food.

The committee will feature an urban perspective on food availability due to importance of sustainable agriculture issues.

### **INFORMATIONAL**

**Local artist:** Clair Pentecost, an artist, is taking a different look at the food cycle. Topics of her interest include common ingredients in processed food, corporate cartel clusters, cycles of energy and waste, and geography of food sources in Chicago. A particular project includes a research station, MessHall in Rogers Park, to investigate reconfiguring the politics of food. To learn more about Claire and her visionary projects, visit [www.clairepentecost.org](http://www.clairepentecost.org)

**Michigan Food Policy Council:** Michigan has a 21-member Food Policy Council committed to looking at investments in small farms, local food processing, and availability of healthy foods. The Governor has brought together numerous state agencies to work on this together.

**Films and Books:** Food committee is compiling lists which focuses on food-related films and books. If you have any suggestions, please send to Debbie Hillman [DLHillman@sbcglobal.net](mailto:DLHillman@sbcglobal.net)

Small Organic Farmers: Issues impeding sustainable farming efforts include problems with distribution – i.e., transportation and stocking shelves.

The Food Committee is an official member of a new state group, Illinois Farmer-Consumer Coalition, whose mission statement is: “*The Illinois Farmer-Consumer Coalition is a statewide urban-rural network advocating food system policies and practices that promote a just and healthy, ecologically sound, economically viable, spiritually vibrant, and sustainable quality of life for all family farmers, workers, and consumers.*”

## Transportation: Possible I-Go Expansion in Evanston and Improving Evanston's Transit

(Submitted by Peter Nicholson)

### I-Go Car Sharing

I-Go representatives met with the Evanston Parking Committee in early November to discuss expansion of the car sharing program. Locations discussed would benefit south Evanston. I-GO recommended Main and Judson or Hinman near Main.

### Improving CTA Transit

Transportation Committee of the Evanston Chamber of Commerce, chaired by Alex Sproul, met on Nov. 30<sup>th</sup> to develop a plan for improved bus stop signage and schedule information on Evanston routes. Mark Pitstick and Joseph Moriarty of RTA Program Support Division, presented a project titled *Interagency Transit Passenger Information Design* (PID). Part of a regional plan, the project is an effort by RTA with State Representative Julie Hamos' support. The project's research includes extended site observation at the Davis St. Transit Center last summer. The project also includes a pilot demonstration at the Davis St. Transit Center sometime in 2006. The overall project goal is to develop standards and guidelines for passenger information signs and displays that will be used by all three RTA service boards (CTA, Pace, Metra). The standards will likely be promulgated in early 2007.

### Northwestern Shuttle Routes

NU presented their shuttle routes in Evanston. Routes include the Ryan Field, Intercampus, Purple Route, Purple Express and Shop-n-Ride Shuttles. Signs display route maps and detailed schedules showing the stopping time of every trip at that location. The NU signs have the level of detail Evanston's Transportation Future would like to see on all CTA and Pace bus stop signs in Evanston.

### Re-Construction Projects

John Burke, City's Transportation Director highlighted observed that the upcoming re-constructions of McCormick Boulevard, Ridge Ave. and Sheridan Rd. provide opportunities to create better bus stops than the current "stand at the curb" variety on those streets. The build-out of the much-discussed Chicago Avenue Streetscape may offer similar opportunities for pull-out lanes, shelters, benches, and better signs at the major stops.

### Viaduct Replacements

CTA is completing the Main St. viaduct replacement on the 'L'. They have informed the City of tentative plans to replace the Church St. viaduct next year, and a third viaduct in 2008. It was suggested that Evanston ask CTA whether a viaduct replacement that would reduce or eliminate the "slow zone" between Dempster and Main could be undertaken instead (i.e., replace the Dempster and/or Greenleaf viaducts). John Burke said he believed the selection of Church St. was based on structural soundness problems which, if serious, would have to govern, but would confirm this with CTA.

## Metra Bridges

Jonathan Perman, Ex. Dir., Chamber, raised the issue of improving the appearance of the Union Pacific (Metra) bridges, which have not been painted (except for Central St.) since 1974 or earlier. When the Central Street bridge was painted a few years ago at the insistence of the north Evanston citizenry, it took the personal intervention of our legislators to get Metra and Union Pacific to do the work. It was agreed we should discuss this matter with our current elected representatives and get them to ask the railroads to address the poor appearance of these bridges.

## Other Metra News

Bikes on Trains: Extended through to January 1, 2006. For more information about traveling with your bikes on Metra, visit [http://metrarail.com/Special\\_Promotions/bikes\\_on\\_trains.html](http://metrarail.com/Special_Promotions/bikes_on_trains.html).

## NJ Metra

New Jersey Transit will up to upgrade 543 existing and install 157 new ticket vending machines. Featuring larger screens, the machines will enable users to select options by touching icons on an interactive display. Customers will be able to select their origin and destination by touching station names on the screen rather than entering a station's three-digit code, and purchase joint tickets from other agencies. The machines also are designed to reduce transaction time, handle multiple languages and provide voice-activated audio.