

Evanston's Future!

A 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*

October 2005

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

THIS COULD BE THE LAST NEWSLETTER.....see final article

Not-For Profit Day At the Farmers' Market

(submitted by Debbie Hillman)

Thanks to gorgeous weather, the Not-For Profit Day at the Evanston's Farmers' Market on September 17 was a very positive event for Network for Evanston's Future. Thanks to everyone who staffed the tables and shmoozed with interested citizens. We had 20 people sign up for additional information on the various NEF groups.

Information available included: (1) Bus schedules highlighting Pace's 250 from Evanston directly

to O'Hare, Pace's 208 – Evanston to Schaumburg, and CTA's 201 from Howard to Old Orchard, via Ridge/Sheridan/Central. (2) I-Go, the car sharing program now available in Evanston. (3) Energy group's samples of recycled building/interior design materials were very popular. (4) Pedestrian Committee flyer highlighting the new campaign on pedestrian rights and the Illinois crosswalk law. (5) Food Committee's activities.

Network for Evanston's Future: Notes from Sept. 18 Meeting

(submitted by Andrea Orcutt and Mary Catherine Buntin)

The Network for Evanston's Future consists of 6 groups:

The first 5 work on specific content and are secular in orientation, the sixth is a faith based group:

1. Evanston's Energy Future
2. Evanston's Affordable Housing Future
3. Citizens' Lighthouse Community Land Trust (CLCLT)
4. Evanston Transportation Future
5. NEF's Food Committee (a new group yet to be officially named)
6. Evanston Interreligious Sustainability Circle is affiliated with Faith in Place, which works through area congregations. Faith in Place is the 501(3)C organization.

In addition, an Ad Hoc Natural Step Committee is supported by the participation of members of each of the six groups.

We discussed ways to make the most of the current City of Evanston strategic planning process. The concerns were:

1. Gaining support of the City Council members to open up the planning process to greater citizen participation
2. The lack of a vision statement at this time in the process
3. To encourage passage of specific ordinances (the Evanston Sustainability Agenda)
4. Strategy for engaging the other 100+ organizations that have co-sponsored the Evanston's Futures Forums.

Process

We will draft a letter to be sent to each alderman and include our suggestions for a vision statement. We will encourage Alderpersons Melissa Wynne and Cheryl Wollin to provide leadership in moving the city toward sustainability and we hope our vision statement will help in their effort. The letter will go out with our individual signatures, to reflect minimally the number of participants at this meeting. At this point, we will concentrate on the vision statement, rather than working to open up the planning process to more citizens. Betsy Bouchard, Verna Todd, and Hal Mead will work on the letter and our version of the Evanston vision statement. Steve Perkins will make a follow-up contact to Julia Carroll, requesting a meeting.

Evanston Sustainability Agenda

Each of the six organizations that make up NEF will identify one or more ordinance(s) that they want the Council to pass in the next 6-9 months.. They will be pulled together in a document and advocated with aldermen and with other Evanston organizations.

This agenda will concretize what sustainability means and the need for a more participatory process with the citizens of Evanston.

Strategy

How to engage more people, especially those that were involved in the Forums?

- The Natural Step Committee can give presentations
- We could tape a program on the Evanston's Futures Groups and show on either Evanston TV or radio
- Perhaps we could ask one person from each of the 100 groups that co-sponsored the Forums, to come to a leadership meeting on sustainability. (When the forums were set up, they offered 3 or 4 presentation options, some with a powerpoint presentation. After an opening session, participants then attended one of the concurrent presentations of their choice.)
- We could give a presentation to the League of Women's voters

NEF Organizational Questions

- Do we need a more formalized structure?
- Do we want to create a mailing list?
- Do we want a single spokesperson for the 5 groups?

After some discussion, it was decided that a Committee of one representative of each of the six groups would act as spokesperson for NEF, with the individual selected based on interest, appropriateness, and availability. These names can be reported at the next meeting. It was also decided to define a formal membership list for each group to be used for public communications.

Andrea Orcutt and Catherine Buntin will do some of the identity projects:

- Create a brochure to describe the Network for Evanston's Futures groups, the Sustainability Circle, and the relationship to Faith in Place.
- Create a list of NEF organizations and contact persons.
- Create a mailing list – Each committee will send the names of their members
- Send out notices to newspapers of our meetings.
- Provide minutes/notes from each meeting and Steve will send them out.

Debbie Hillman has been putting out a newsletter for the Network, and she will do one more of these. We need a volunteer to continue the newsletter.

Planning Earth Month

April 2, 2006: A Sunday 3-hour workshop/program

We will focus on the Natural Step for Communities: a systems approach to becoming a sustainable community, inviting speakers from Portland OR. Their sustainability report is at

http://www.co.multnomah.or.us/dbcs/sustainability/sustainability_reports/MultCoSustainabilityReport2004_FINAL.pdf.

Depending on availability and cost, we could invite people from Wisconsin Partners for Sustainability, who are using the Natural Step. See <http://www.wiscpsa.org/modules/news/article.php?storyid=55>

April 23, 2006: a Faith in Place Workshop

The second program for Earth Month is the workshops that Faith in Place is organizing. It will (hopefully) be at the Unitarian Church on April 23rd.

Miscellaneous

The new Food Group reported that they are now also members of the newly formed Illinois Farmer-Consumer Coalition.

The decision was made to alternate monthly meetings between the Circle and NEF. This will facilitate a greater exchange of information and enhance our planning efforts. Next meetings:

Circle: October 9, 3:00 – 5:00 PM, at Lake St. Church

NEF: November 13, 3:00 – 5:00 PM at the Friends Meeting House.

Evanston's Housing Future: Update on Ordinance

(submitted by Sue Carlson)

On Sept. 26 the Planning and Development Committee of the Council received a draft teardown ordinance that would charge a fee to single family as well as multiple family residences that were torn down in the city unless the owners could attest that affordable housing units were going to replace the torn down buildings. The fee would go to the Mayor's Affordable Housing Fund. The Committee was uncomfortable with the flat fee of \$10,000 and wanted some additional modifications to the draft once they have additional information about the status of residential teardowns in the city. That is expected to be provided at the Oct. 10 meeting.

Later in October or possibly in November the City Manager has promised to have a draft Inclusionary Housing ordinance. Meanwhile, two recently approved multi-family residential developments have agreed to donate funds to the city's affordable housing fund. However, there are additional large developments in the pipeline that have not indicated willingness to participate in the city's effort to maintain affordable housing.

Some aldermen have indicated they do not believe there is a strong community desire for official city policies promoting or requiring affordable housing support. NEF members who feel it's important to maintain our economically diverse community need to remind their aldermen about their concerns.

Evanston's Transportation Future: Pedestrian Committee

(submitted by Debbie Hillman)

The Pedestrian rights movement is going regional. At our last meeting we were joined by Ben Helphand, of Center for Neighborhood Technology, and also a pedestrian activist with Logan Square Walks. Together, and hopefully with other community groups and municipalities in the Chicago area, we will embark on a campaign to publicize the Illinois law on pedestrians in crosswalks, to increase enforcement, to educate drivers, improve infrastructure, etc. Developing snow removal techniques that can become standard operating procedure will also be part of this campaign.

Contact: Debbie Hillman 847/328-7175 DLHillman@sbcglobal.net

Food Committee

(submitted by Debbie Hillman)

We're working on finding new members, letting people know we exist. We've been narrowing in on some projects/topics:

- Educational programs through a film evening/series, especially on the dangers of industrial farming, GMOs
- Legislative support for family farmers/organic farmers/diversified farms
- School programs – cafeteria food, school gardens, educational programs for PTAs
- Evanston Farmers' Market – improve, use as educational resource

We are 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."

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Debbie Hillman 847/328-7175 DLHillman@sbcglobal.net

Evanston's Interreligious Sustainability Circle: Pennsylvania Conference

(submitted by George Packard)

The North American Conference on Christians for the Environment (NACCE), of which I am a board member, is co-sponsoring a conference with Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund (CELDF) next year. The conference is titled: "With Liberty and Justice for All: Retooling Congregations to Restore the Earth", and will be held July 7-9, 2006 in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. The program will aim: (1) to share in theological reflection on the task of eco-justice, (2) to expose the root causes of erosion of our democratic and ecological processes, (3) to build practical tools and procedures to engage in responsible citizenship, and (4) to create winning strategies for energizing congregations and neighbors to protect and restore natural resources.

For more information, contact George Packard gpackard@ica-usa.org

NEF Newsletter: Wanted – New Editor

(submitted by Debbie Hillman)

Could this be the final NEF newsletter? Let's hope this is just a Halloween scare (no, the NEF newsletter has not been bought by Fox News)

After editing this monthly newsletter for 2-plus years, I'm stepping down. It's time for someone else to step up. Here's a description of the amount of work that needs to be done, but there's room for lots of creativity, improvement, and expansion.

Around the 20th of the month I send out an e-mail, a call for articles, meeting announcements, relevant LOCAL information; this goes to the chairpeople of each group, as well as a few other very active members (maybe it should go out to everyone?) I ask for submissions within a week or so, approximately the 26th of the month. Over the space of 1-2 days, I put all the submissions into the format I've developed (also room for creativity!). I do edit every article for sense and grammar, but pretty much leave each article as submitted. I send the finished newsletter to Krista Vagnieres, who manages the website with Ross, and to Joel Freeman, the keeper of the mailing lists. Within a couple days, the newsletter is posted on the website and Joel sends a text version to the entire mailing list – approximately 250 Evanstonians plus 1 MIT student.

I estimate spending about 2 hours a month on the newsletter. But it seems like there's lots of possibilities – expanding the mailing list, getting the public more aware of the newsletter/website.

If you're interested and/or have questions, please contact: Debbie Hillman 847/328-7175
DLHillman@sbcglobal.net or Steve Perkins 773/269-4055 steve@cnt.org

Calendar

Oct. 6 Food Committee Meeting 7:00 – 9:00 PM (Unitarian Church, 1330 Ridge). Contact: Debbie Hillman 847/328-7175 or M. Catherine Buntin 847/251-8057

Oct. 9. Evanston's Interreligious Sustainability Circle Meeting, 3:00 – 5:00 PM (Lake St. Church). Contact: Steve Perkins 773/269-4055 or steve@cnt.org

Oct. 20. Pedestrian Committee Meeting 7:30 – 9:30 PM. Place to be decided. Contact: Debbie Hillman 847/328-7175

Oct. 27: Evanston's Transportation Future Meeting. 7:30 – 9:00 PM (Evanston Civic Center, 2100 Ridge, Room 3650) Contact: Rick Martin rmartin101@comcast.net

Nov. 13. Network for Evanston's Future Meeting, 3:00 – 5:00 PM (Friends Meeting House, 1010 Greenleaf). Contact Steve Perkins 773/269-4055 or steve@cnt.org

