

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*

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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.

Letter to City Manager on Strategic Planning Process

(submitted by Steve Perkins)

In August, NEF sent the following letter to City Manager Julia Carroll with recommendations to maximize the success of the current Strategic Planning process. The letter was favorably received. Similar letters were sent to each alderperson, with the intention to arrange individual meetings with them. NEF will meet as a group to discuss the results of these efforts on Sunday, Sept. 18 (see Calendar details). Also see related article below from the Circle, "Looking for a More Comprehensive Strategy".

“Dear Ms. Carroll:

“When the Network for Evanston’s Future met with you a few months ago, you offered to meet again to continue our discussion about moving Evanston toward being a more sustainable city. We would very much like to take you up on your gracious offer.

“We are greatly encouraged by the strategic planning process now underway. It opens the door to change after many years of city inertia. Many of us participated in one of the two citizen meetings and were in attendance at the open Council meeting. The Network for Evanston’s Future wants the current planning process to succeed in making Evanston and its government more strategic and efficient. However, we are concerned about two issues in the current process design.

“Values and Vision: NEF believes that the underlying goal or value for our strategic planning should be an Evanston that is sustainable 30 to 50 years ahead. This means that the strategic planning that we do today on development, economy, land planning, energy usage, water, transportation options and recycling and reuse be based on goals for a sustainable Evanston into the lives of our grandchildren.

“In the citizen planning sessions, environment and environmental sustainability were brought up as necessary for future planning. However, we are not sure that this underlying goal for Evanston’s future is being adequately noted or articulated. Without such a clear statement of values and future vision we will not know where to go. The plan will just be focused on fixing today’s problems, with no strategies to deal with the coming changes and problems.

“Citizen Involvement: Citizen buy-in and involvement is particularly important at the level of a long-term vision for the city. In the first citizen meeting, time ran out before discussion could distill and coordinate the table reports into a vision. In the open meeting fewer than 100 citizens attended. Without continued and focused broadly based citizen participation, the strategic plan will lack the power and legitimacy it needs.

“To address these two interrelated issues, we propose that the planning process to opened up to permit community-wide engagement around values and vision. There are a number of ways this could occur, but our recommendation is that the city take advantage of the fact that Evanston is already organized into hundreds of organizations and boards of all sorts. Why not designate October or November as “Values & Vision Month” during which every organization in the city is encouraged to reflect on then share its long-term vision for the city? This broad-based engagement would then be input to the strategic planning process. Of course, we hope that the aldermanic and staff planning sessions would also deal with the issue of a long term sustainable vision.

“We would like to meet with you at your earliest convenience to discuss these concerns and find a way to address them.”

Not-For Profit Day At the Farmers’ Market

(submitted by Gina Lettiere)

Network for Evanston's Future will be present at the Not-For Profit Day at the Evanston's Farmers' Market on **September 17, from 7 AM to 1:00 PM.**

Join us in this social event which the main theme is to create a better Evanston. Begin your day by educating the Evanston community about wise development and best practices to ensure a safe, productive and healthy Evanston. This is also an opportunity to gain new participants to foster our vision. Individual Future groups are preparing literature, surveys, or other interactive materials.

What is needed?

- Your willingness to spend one or two hours reaching out to the community. Schedules begin at 7 AM to set up.
- Two folding tables with table cloths (if available)
- 3-4 chairs

Please contact Gina Lettiere at AmazonPaganQueen@yahoo.com with your availability on September 17 and if you have folding tables and chairs to donate for a few hours.

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Evanston Interreligious Sustainability Circle

(submitted by Steve Perkins)

Looking for a More Comprehensive Strategy

The Evanston Interreligious Sustainability Circle has been on the search for a framework within which our various sustainability efforts can be more coherent and have a larger impact. We are also impelled in this direction because, as an integral part of every meeting, we pay attention to larger issues such as global warming lest we fall into thinking that making Evanston sustainable, however important, can solve our larger challenges.

For the past several months, we have been reading and discussing ***The Natural Step for Communities: How Cities and Towns Can Change to Sustainable Practices***. It reports on the application of The Natural Step to municipalities large and small in Sweden.

Network for Evanston's Future envisions a world in which cities are the basis for a local and global ecology and economy that is sustainable, i.e., meets what are called the "four system conditions of the Natural Step":

Nature is not subject to systematically increasing

- (1) Concentrations of substances extracted from the Earth's crust,
 - (2) Concentrations of substances produced by society,
 - (3) Degradation by physical means,
- And, in that society,
- (4) Human needs are met worldwide.

These four system conditions are met through the following four sustainability objectives:

- (1) Reduced wasteful dependence upon fossil fuels, scarce metals and minerals that accumulate in nature,
- (2) Reduce wasteful dependence upon chemicals and synthetic substances that accumulate in nature,
- (3) Reduce encroachment upon nature, and
- (4) Meet human needs fairly and efficiently

(From *The Natural Step for Communities*)

To achieve this, cities like Evanston need to be transformed into a network of compact, resource efficient and non-polluting settlements around mass transit that foster civic participation and effectiveness and permit residents to meet most of their needs locally – on foot, by bike or by transit – with cars the transportation of last resort.

I urge everyone in NEF to read this book and to integrate a discussion about it into meetings on a regular basis. It can anchor our individual efforts in a simple and powerful framework.

Circle Sponsors Habitat Restoration Work Day

On Sunday, September 11th, the Evanston Interreligious Sustainability Circle will sponsor a work day at Harms Woods. This tradition of an every-spring and every-fall workday began in 1999, so the Circle has been able to see the changes in the ecology of Harms Woods as a result of the thousands of volunteer hours that have been spent cutting buckthorn, pulling garlic mustard and seeding native species. The work day goes from 1-4 PM. We meet at the Harms Woods parking lot on the west side of Harms Woods just south of Glenview Road. We begin with a brief religious reflection, then get down to work. This is a great activity for anyone over 10 years old. For more information and to RSVP contact Steve Perkins at (773) 269-4055 or steve@cnt.org

Evanston's Transportation Future: Pedestrian Committee

(submitted by Debbie Hillman)

The Pedestrian Committee is working to identify a few projects. Two immediate goals are: (1) educating the public and police about the state traffic law with respect to pedestrians in crosswalks (drivers must stop). Installing more "Yield" signs such as the one at Central/Prairie is also a goal. (2) developing snow removal techniques that can become standard operating procedure for both city plows and sidewalk shovelers. Contact: Debbie Hillman 847/328-7175 DLHillman@sbcglobal.net

Evanston's Transportation Future: CTA Route 201

(submitted by Debbie Hillman)

Citizens in the neighborhood of Central St. and Sheridan are still fighting the existence of CTA Route 201 on Sheridan Road; the route was formerly on Sherman Avenue, but in an effort to capture NU ridership, it was moved to Sheridan. ETF's Bus Committee has been working for a reasonable solution to this conflict. There will be a public meeting, called by Rep. Julie Hamos, on Sept. 28; representatives from CTA and the city will be there. For specific meeting information contact: Alex Sproul asproul@sbcglobal.net

Food Advisory Committee Premier Meeting

(submitted by Debbie Hillman)

We don't know what our name is yet, but it looks like there's lots of interest on food issues. The first meeting of the food group was held on August 11, attended by 14 people. Major agenda items were:

- Poisons & Pollutants (GMOs, pesticides, herbicides, irradiation, labeling)
- Community Food Assessment
- Institutional Foods: Schools, hospitals, government
- Local Natural Resources: Recycling/Composting
- Evanston Farmers' Market
- Film evening co-sponsored with ReelTime
- Collaboration with Rogers Park NeighborFood Council

No definite goals were set; we are getting to know one another and discover our mutual interests.

Gauging by the amount of e-mailing between the attendees since the meeting, there is a lot of concern and a lot of energy to pursue such topics as: (1) declaring Evanston a GMO-free zone, (2) supporting legislative efforts to enable more organic farming in Illinois, (3) informing people of existing food options in Evanston, (4) improving the Farmers' Market, and (5) educating the general public on food issues, among other topics. There has already been much conversation about presenting a more action-oriented forum on food issues.

Some of us were able to attend a quickly arranged Saturday meeting (Aug. 20) with Jim Braun, a converted hog farmer who is working to establish a rural-urban coalition in Illinois, bringing together the multitude of environmental, sustainable agriculture, social justice, and economic justice groups that already exist in this state.

Next Food Group meeting is Sept. 8 (see details in Calendar).

Contacts: Mary Catherine Buntin 847/251-8057 mbuntin@yahoo.com
Debbie Hillman 847/328-7175 DLHillman@sbcglobal.net

Energy Conservation Tips

(submitted by Len Sciarra)

As the summer winds to an end and the days get shorter, the next light bulb you replace, consider compact fluorescents.

If every household in the U.S. replaced one light bulb with an ENERGY STAR qualified compact fluorescent light bulb (CFL), it would prevent enough pollution to equal removing one million cars from the road. CFLs provide high-quality light, smart technology, and design, requiring less energy while lasting longer than typical incandescent bulbs

They come in a variety of sizes and wattages that can fit practically any fixture. They have compact fluorescents that you can use on a standard residential dimmer type switch. They are cooler to the touch, therefore safer and should be installed in all closed spaces such as closets, low ceilinged basements and attics. They also come in different colors. That is, most of the early bulbs were sort of a blue white color but now they have developed a warmer color. Also, look for the Energy Star label; not all compact fluorescent bulbs are the same.

Energy Star CFL Website: http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=cfls.pr_cfls

Energy Definitions of the Month

(submitted by Len Sciarra)

And since gas has become so cheap:

BARREL: In the petroleum industry, a barrel is 42 U.S. gallons. One barrel of oil has an energy content of 6 million British thermal units. It takes one barrel of oil to make enough gasoline to drive an average car from Los Angeles to San Francisco and back (at 18 miles per gallon over the 700-mile round trip)

BIODIESEL: a biodegradable transportation fuel for use in diesel engines that is produced through the transesterification of organically-derived oils or fats. It may be used either as a replacement for or as a component of diesel fuel.

CRUDE OIL: Petroleum as found in the earth, before it is refined into oil products. Also called CRUDE.

Energy Incentives Bill Passed

(submitted by Len Sciarra)

The new Energy Bill, which has been passed by Congress and signed into law, contains new tax incentives for sustainable architecture. Below is an explanation of the provisions in the bill that impact the built environment:

Tax Incentives for Commercial Buildings: For builders and/or renovators of commercial buildings, the new energy bill includes a tax deduction of up to \$1.80/ square foot of building space for buildings that are designed to use at least 50 percent less energy than the model building energy code. One-third of the deduction (\$0.60/ square foot) may be redeemed for installing each of the following three energy-efficient systems: lighting; heating, cooling, ventilation, and hot water; and building envelope.

Tax Incentives for New Homes: For builders of new homes, the bill provides a \$2,000 tax credit for new homes that save at least 50 percent compared to the most recent model building energy code (IECC 2003). The bill also provides manufacturers a \$1,000 tax credit for Energy Star manufactured homes, or manufactured homes that save 30 percent compared to the most recent model building energy code.

Tax Incentives for Existing Homes: In addition, the expansive energy bill contains several provisions for energy-efficient improvements to existing homes, heating and cooling equipment, and appliances (as well as fuel cells, microturbines, and solar panels and solar hot water heaters). Specifically, the bill provides homeowners up to \$500, including a 10-percent credit for building envelope improvements; \$300 credit for energy-efficient central air conditioners, water heaters, and heat pumps; \$150 credit for energy-efficient furnaces and boilers; and \$50 credit for energy-efficient fans in furnaces. It provides manufacturers with credits up to \$175 for increased production of energy-efficient refrigerators, clothes washers, and dishwashers.

Promoting Energy Efficiency within the Federal Government: The bill also authorizes several initiatives aimed at promoting building efficiency within the federal government. The bill calls for the General Services Administration (GSA) to establish an “Advanced Building Efficiency Testbed” for the development, testing, and demonstration of advanced engineering systems, components, and materials to enable innovations in building technology. Further, the bill instructs GSA to establish a federal building energy-efficiency performance standard that would require, if cost effective, that new federal buildings be designed to consume at least 30 percent less energy than prescribed in the most recent model building energy code and requires GSA, if cost effective, to apply “sustainable-design principles” to all new and replacement federal buildings.

NEF Newsletter: Wanted – New Editor

(submitted by Debbie Hillman)

If there are any budding/frustrated editors out there, the position of NEF Newsletter Editor is vacant. I will continue to edit the October newsletter if need be, but that will definitely be my last. If anyone is interested in continuing this monthly digest, expanding it, improving it – please let me or Steve know. There seems to be unlimited possibilities to communicating with other Evanston residents on making this town a home for intelligent human life. You won't have to leave your computer to do it. Debbie Hillman 847/328-7175 DLHillman@sbcglobal.net or Steve Perkins 773/269-4055 steve@cnt.org

Calendar

Sept. 8: Food Advisory Committee Meeting 7:00 – 9:00 PM (Unitarian Church, 1330 Ridge).
Contact: Debbie Hillman 847/328-7175 or M. Catherine Buntin 847/251-8057

Sept. 17: Farmers' Market Non-Profit Day 7:00 AM – 1:00 PM (Oak St. & University, behind Hilton Gardens hotel). Contact: Gina Lettiere AmazonPaganQueen@yahoo.com

Sept. 17: Healthy, Smart and Green fair '05. Green products fair. 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM (Chicago center for Green Technology, 445 N. Sacramento, Chicago). greentech@cityofchicago.org
Evanston's Energy Future member Ross Vagnieres will be exhibiting.

Sept. 18: Network for Evanston's Future. 3:00 – 5:00 PM (Lake Street Church – Parker Room, 607 Lake St., Evanston). Contact: Steve Perkins 773/269-4055 or steve@cnt.org

Sept. 22: Evanston's Transportation Future Meeting. 7:30 – 9:00 PM (Evanston Civic Center, 2100 Ridge, Room 3650) Contact: Rick Martin rmartin101@comcast.net

Sept. 29: Evanston's Energy Future meeting, 7:30 – 9:30 (Call for location.) Contact: Joel Freeman 847/328-3555 ext. 216

