

Heart of the City June 11, 2007 – “Big Thinks” Beth Gehred and Andy Yocom

**1) Beth introduced** an 18 minute video about Whistler, a Canadian community, making great strides in sustainability using the Natural Steps model. Highlights included:

- Addressing a need for common goals in the community
- How to engage local businesses as leaders in the vision, how to reach out to them as early adopters of the vision
- Series of speakers to community to train people to explain the vision using the Natural Step as a resource. Training Tool Kit was provided
- Hired a coordinator
- Natural Step Principles became overall plan and common language for a plan called 20/20.
- Creation of 20/20 plan strategies and measures of success were defined

Key issue areas included: priority actions, community driven direction for new initiatives and business opportunities, educate business owners and in turn they educate customers to use “better” products (examples provided), use of hybrid vehicles, customers/consumers feel good about helping community be sustainable.

**2) Truth to Power – Beth Gehred**

“Only those who will risk going too far can possibly find out how far they can go.”  
T.S. Eliot

**3) Meeting Set-up**

What is the next direction and where are we going? Heart of the City can be an early adopter? There is resistance to sustainable direction. There are many misconceptions about what it means. How do we “fix” systemic errors of past thinking and how we “forward think” about our community?

We need to start somewhere. Let’s consider projects using back casting and ABCD principles and become leaders so that the paradigm shift in Fort Atkinson will begin.

**4) Call for “Big Thinks” – Andy Yocom**

- Kitty Welch – Alternative low emission and/or off grid energy that the city can use to power itself.
- Matt Loup – Provide incentives to business to become more sustainable.  
(ie: Spacesaver – property tax break to install more efficient energy systems.)
- Joan Callan – Hook up local agriculture with energy production keeping farmland to help us create energy. Use our farmland and farmers to help.
- Jenna Lokken – Creating a charter school based on a holistic mindset for children. Farmer education (possible partners with public schools, FFA and County Extension)
- Kathy Kauffman – Use surrounding local area used to produce food for this area. (Lessen this community of dependence on trucked-in food.) More local food.

- Lue Ehinger – Use manure to create energy. Cows produce manure, study shows that it takes about 1,000 cows to sustain a commercially feasible energy center. We easily have that in our area.
- Mark Furst - Generate electricity in a cleaner manner & then provide a place to charge cars for short trips.
- John Landowski - Educate people about how to move towards getting off the grid. Making creating energy “chic” and a hip thing to do. He is working on a model for a garage that will collect solar energy and then power an electric car.
- Paul Hable – Create a Heart of the City subcommittee that spends time identifying and grooming people to serve on City Council and in County Government helping to identify those that can represent sustainability as a community goal.
- Jill Ottow – Identify ways to eliminate resistance in our business, governmental, and manufacturing communities. Generate viable ideas for manufacturing and business.
- Elaine Dorough Johnson – Eliminate Chem Lawn and True Green also other poisons that run into the river and land runoff.
- Ann Engelman– A fulltime person whose job is to focus on sustainability in our community.
- Gus Klatt – Create a view of the river from Riverside drive. Some trimming is needed to be able to see the river. Main Street should not be four lanes, only two lanes. Re-establish Main Street parking on all blocks downtown.
- Suggestion from Web site e-mail – Less reliance on auto transportation. More collaborative transportation options.
- Joanne Moon – Make using Brown Cab “trendy or chic” a smart thing to use. (ie - State of Washington provides small vans from town to town at one hour intervals) Encourage race and gender diversity.
- Chris Roedl – Create more consumer co-op opportunities. Be more efficient locally. (Including food.)
- Michael Clish – Problems not local but federal and state government and the media coverage. Not getting needed, critical coverage of environment issues. Should be outrage that environment technology is advancing so slowly. Medical breakthroughs happen every year. Federal government still funding research with car makers (\$8 million recently) that was not publicized. Pressure is needed, public is not aware.
- John Ottow – pick one or two things we already do and then do them VERY WELL. Work hard and do a good job at building community leaders and promoting the Atkinson Carbon Free Diet.
- Mary Linton - Combine charter school’s education opportunities with new city leaders. Working from school level and include adult education.
- Paul Moderacki - Use local farmers to collectively provide food for school menus providing better, fresher, local food to children. Would also provide a local outlet for local farmers. (Paul is creating workshops to help communities with the ABCD process of assessing needs, gathering data - what is your base line now? picking actions as multiple year process, doing them, and evaluating them.)

- Andy Yocom - Create common housing (co-housing) opportunity based on sustainability principles.
- Beth Gehred – Land conservation. (ie Use Intervale model in Burlington Vermont and apply principles to Fort Atkinson. Could be combined with co-housing, charter school and school lunch ideas.)
- Bill Camplin- Greenbelt around the city. Improve more efficient transportation around the city using paths with electric mobiles, 2 or 4 wheels.
- Greg David - Biomass gasification and pyrolysis – a process by which carbon is taken from the atmosphere and reused, with a by-product that can be spread on ag lands to increase their productivity, resulting in a carbon reduction.

### **5) What is the next step?**

Committee established, meeting monthly, to sort through these ideas, making sense of them and make recommendations to Heart of the City. Members:

Jenna Lokken, Mark Furst, Matt Loup, John Landowski, Chris Roedl, Paul Bouboutsis (?), Greg David, Paul Moderacki, Beth Gehred, Kitty Welch, Bill Camplin

Andy Yocom - Chair