

Heart of the City

November 12, 2007 – Café Carpe

Present: Joanne Moon, Leslie LaMuro, Joan Callan, Jill Ottow, Anders Yocom, Mary Linton, Kathy Kaufmann, Steve Clein, Mary Gates, Walt Christensen, Kitty Welch, Steve Tesmer, Susan Danielson, Charlie Danielson, Sarah Rotefer, Kareny Drydyk, Bill Camplin, Michael Klish, Beth Gehered, Josie Gobel, Andy Jorgensen, Bruce Meyer

Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm by President Kitty Welch.

Approval of last month's minutes. Leslie/Joan

Truth to Power Moment: Kitty read a poem by William Wordsworth (Suggested by her Mother).

Speaker: Spencer Black 77th Assembly Representative

Has been in legislature for 23 years. Considered to be the State Legislature's leading environmental advocate. Began with an overview of Global Warming, leading into a discussion of the political issues involved. California Global Solutions Act – will bring California into line with Kyoto guidelines. Over a dozen states have since adopted similar acts. Spencer has introduced "Safe Climate Act" dial back greenhouse emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. Act uses Cap & Trade system. Wisconsin has a history of taking the lead when Federal Govt fails to act: First to ban DDT, leadership in acid rain control. An as-yet unpublished poll found 80% of Wisconsin population in favor of govt taking action on Global Warming.

How will action affect our economy? Investing in energy efficiency will benefit both environment and economy. Much of recent increase in energy bills has been due to investment in infrastructure, if this investment had been put into conservation we would be in a much better position. As state we send over 10 billion dollars per year out of state to pay for energy, major economic drain in the state.

Q&A

Walt C: 1) Utilizing no-till methods of farming to reduce release of carbon in atmosphere. 2) Building coal-fired power plants that to not release carbon dioxide (requires 30% cost increase in plant construction)

SB: Agrees that some measures will take additional initial investment, but will pay back over long term. There is no one single solution – wide array of steps we can take

Anders Y: We have the good fortune of being represented by Andy Jorgensen, and also by Scott Fitzgerald – what kind of support can we hope for from Fitzgerald?

SB: Politicians will respond to public opinion, we must apply pressure on our representatives.

Kareny: Can environmental education be offered in schools at earlier ages?

SB: Yes, grants are available to schools for environmental education.

?: What about the issue of methane being introduced into the atmosphere from lakes and agriculture?

SB: Methan on a per-molecule basis is a more efficient greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide. Currently it does not account for as large an impact because it is less long lived in the atmosphere.

Bruce Mr: Is there any effort at the state level to curb sprawl, which also has negative impacts (commuting, taking land out of farming)

SB: Yes: land use is an important topic at the state level. Wisconsin's smart-growth law is a modest step toward the goal of reducing sprawl.

Sue Danielson: During energy crisis in 70's speed limits were reduced and fuel efficiency standards were increased – this has been rolled back. Is there any chance of reinstating more stringent standards?

SB: Currently at the Federal level the Bush administration is resisting stronger fuel efficiency standards, some states have adopted stronger levels.

Beth: Have you heard of the Natural Step and Atkinson Diet?

SB: Yes, has heard of both, encourages local initiatives.

Joanne M: Is the legislature encouraging local renewable energy initiatives"

SB: Last year legislature passed "Wisconsin Renewable Energy Law". By 2016 10% of electricity used in state and 20% of energy used by WI government must come from renewable sources.

Andy J: Spencer and Andy have sponsored 3 bills together since Andy took office.

Step it Up Rally

Very successful event this year – there were 9 throughout the state. A suggestion was made to have a bike/walk to the capitol on Earth Day 2008 to encourage passage of the Wisconsin Safe Climate Act

Treasurer's report:

None.

Projects Committee report:

Main project currently is finding ways to use the garbage cans we collected.

New Business

Kitty: Chamber has approached HOC about taking a larger roll in the Farmer's Market, will be discussed at next Steering Committee meeting

Announcements

Sentry now offers our "Green" grocery bags

Suggestions/volunteers for April 2008 City Council elections?

Beth: Sustain Jefferson is offering "Green" Christmas Wreaths

Kitty: Shop local event: suggest sustainable products for local businesses to carry.

Kitty: Recommended a book called "Wake Up and Smell the Planet", would make a good Christmas gift.

Kitty: Spencer mentioned "Focus the Nation" day, possibly organize a local event?

Steve Clein: Recommended looking at Sustain Dane website.

Beth: Looking for carpooling to Janesville

Kitty: Neighbor Nation community bulletin board is set up.

Beth: Was contacted by Community Car organization: they are interested in a Madison/Fort car sharing program

Next Steering Committee Meeting: November 26, Kessenich-Tesmer home

Next General Membership Meeting: December 10 Police Station

Adjournment: 8:40 pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Steve Tesmer