

**Minutes of Saint John's Arboretum Advisory Council Meeting  
December 2, 2005  
Natural History Museum, Saint John's University**

**Council Members:**

**Present:** Terri Barreiro, Alison Binsfeld, Mike Brown, Kari Dombrovski, Emily Franklin, Sarah Gainey, Tom Haeg, Tom Kroll, Scott May, Janette Monear, Stephanie O'Keefe, Steve Saupe, Larry Schwietz, Matthew Voight, Chuck Wocken,

**Absent:** Bob Ellenbecker, David Hartwell, John Kulas, O.S.B., Abby Johnstone, Tom Wicks, Ron Wienhold, Bruce Wollmering, O.S.B.

The meeting was called to order at approximately 1:15 p.m.

Each advisory council member introduced themselves to the full council. Mike Brown is a new member to the council and this was his first advisory council meeting. We welcome Mike and are excited to begin working with him.

**Committee Reports**

The remainder of the Arboretum Advisory Council meeting was spent discussing reports from individual committees

**Community Education**

*Avon Hills Initiative Workshop*

Emily provided an update on the Avon Hills Initiative Workshop for the spring of 2006. The workshop will be on a smaller scale than the 2005 conference last spring. It will be held at Saint John's University on February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2006 from 8:30a.m. – 2:30p.m. There will be a total of eight workshop sessions, each one hour in length, followed by a panel discussion on conservation overlay districts led by Todd Holman (The Nature Conservancy). Other workshop presenters are coming from 1000 Friends of Minnesota, The Minnesota Land Trust, The Nature Conservancy and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. Janette suggested inviting builders and developers from the St. Cloud area to this workshop. This idea will be brought to the planning committee for the workshop for discussion.

*Meeting with Warner Nature Center*

Janette Monear met with the director of the Warner Nature Center to discuss reciprocal programming possibilities. The director was open to pursuing reciprocal programming possibilities and Janette suggested a meeting with Tom and Sarah to discuss further.

## **PreK-12 Education**

### *Highlights and Evaluations from Fall Sessions*

Official numbers are still being tabulated for attendance to fall EE classes. Sarah estimated that we served approximately 2,000 preK-12 students this fall. Each teacher with students participating in the program received a program evaluation form. Feedback from evaluations has been overwhelmingly positive. While this is encouraging, Sarah also indicated that she is looking for constructive criticism in order to continue to improve classes. There was one teacher who indicated they would like us to survey their students and assess them in order to see how they are progressing. Sarah indicated this was an interesting idea.

## **CSB/SJU Education**

### *Outdoor Week*

Saint John's Arboretum sponsored four events during Outdoor Week and worked with other CSB/SJU student organizations to promote and create events during the week. Arboretum events included: 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Polar Bear Plunge, Moonlight Hike through St. Ben's woods, Outdoor Poetry Reading, and a presentation by the Student Conservation Association.

### *Development of an Arboretum Club*

Developing an Arboretum Club for CSB/SJU students was again addressed. Arboretum staff will look at this idea next semester and possibly being to draft a constitution. Benefits of this club include: email privileges, ability to offer events to whole student body, fill niche for interested students, and working with signature programs.

### *Fellowship Positions*

Applications for the Office Coordinator and Environmental Educator fellowships will be made available through Human Resources after January 1, 2006. Applications will be due on March 1<sup>st</sup>, with interviews tentatively scheduled for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> weeks in March. We are looking for council members who are interested in sitting on interview panels for both of these positions. We hope to offer the positions to eligible candidates by the first week of April.

### *CSB/SJU Environmental Studies Department Letter*

It was suggested that a letter be written to all professors who teach environmental studies courses informing them of the benefits of membership and programs we can offer students. It was also suggested that Derek Larson co-sign this letter in order to get more participation by other faculty members.

### *SJU Senate*

SJU Senator Matthew Voight inquired about the proposed installation of wind turbines at Saint John's. Tom responded that wind energy at Saint John's is still a possibility and that he continues to work on this project.

### **Fundraising Committee**

#### *Update from Institutional Advancement*

John Taylor from Institutional Advancement at Saint John's provided a brief overview of progress on the current capital campaign. Saint John's hopes to raise 135 million dollars during this capital campaign. Saint John's Arboretum falls into the Facilities and Land Acquisition category. In combination with the College of Saint Benedict's capital campaign the total amount raised will hopefully meet or exceed 230 million dollars. Saint John's and St. Ben's have to separate capital campaigns with two separate structures and fundraising goals. The campaigns were announced jointly due to the unique relationship between the institutions.

#### *Grants*

A \$10,000 proposal to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency was submitted in late November. This grant will fund a non-formal environmental education outreach program to youth participating in programs through 4-H and the Boys and Girls Club. We are currently working with program coordinators at both organizations to begin brainstorming for this program. If funded, the project would begin during the summer of 2006, with classes beginning in the spring and summer of 2007. This proposal will be submitted to other grant making organizations over the next few months.

We received \$2,000 from the Gannett Foundation to fund duplication of traveling trunks for other schools. We will likely submit a proposal to the Gannett Foundation again this year. Janette suggested a couple of grant seeking sources and the Arboretum staff will work with her to get specific names of resources for future fundraising efforts.

A letter of inquiry was submitted to the Steven C. Leuthold Family Foundation in late November. We have heard back from the Leuthold Foundation and our letter was given to a board member to hopefully bring before the board. We are waiting to hear if they will accept a full proposal from our office.

#### *Silent Auction and Membership Appreciation Open House*

Scott May has generously donated his time coordinating the silent auction for the open house again this year. There are thirty-three items for the silent auction. This should hopefully pay for the cost of the party and beyond. Tom recognized

Scott for his amazing work on the silent auction and for all of the work he has done on the Advisory Council throughout his term.

## **Lands**

### *Vision for the Walz property*

Tom and Sarah gave Larry Schwietz and Stephanie O'Keefe a tour of the Walz property earlier in the morning. Larry mentioned after seeing the property that it is even more imperative to continue our work on this project. Tom informed the council that the resolution drafted by the Advisory Council was presented to the Abbot John Klassen, O.S.B. and to the Abbot's Senior Council. Abbot John and Br. Benedict Leuthner, O.S.B. are in favor of the resolution and there was general support on the Senior Council, with some concerns that need to be addressed.

Tom also met with President Mary Ann Baenniger's executive staff at the College of Saint Benedict regarding the Walz property. This meeting went extremely well and shortly after the meeting the President approved the project and instructed Advancement Services to proceed as appropriate and necessary.

It was suggested that a team be formed with 1-3 representatives from each of the stakeholder institutions (College of Saint Benedict, Saint Benedict's Monastery, Saint John's Abbey, and Saint John's University). This team would work together to formulate a plan for jointly acquiring the Walz property, if deemed appropriate.

### *Environmental Education/Cross Country Ski Building*

Moving and retrofitting the Huschle house for environmental education may not be the best solution for creating a space to be used for winter classes and the cross country ski team. The stone house over by the hockey rink on Fruit Farm Road maybe be an alternative. This building may not be suitable for moving, but could be used for classes. This alternative will be explored further.

### *Chapel/Chapel Trail*

Renovations to the Stella Maris Chapel and the Chapel Trail are still being considered. As party of the Abby Guest House Project, the trail head will likely be restored and a kiosk may be built. Installation of benches and perhaps an overlook deck will also be implemented. The architect working on the restoration of the chapel itself is considering painting the exterior of the chapel white and installing a large statue in the interior of the structure. All designs will need approval by the Saint John's Design Team.

## **Administration/Volunteers**

### *New Arboretum Advisory Council Members*

Any ideas for individuals who could serve on the Arboretum Advisory Council should be sent to Tom. Other suggestions for Advisory Council members included:

- Mary Anne Albert: Sartell Community Education
- Sheer's sons

*Orienteering Course*

Terri Barreiro mentioned that Park Industries are willing to donate pieces of granite for the orienteering course.

Larry Schwietz made a motion to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by Janette Monear. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:00 p.m.

Submitted by,

Emily Franklin

The next Advisory Council meeting is *Monday, February 6th at 2:00-5:30 p.m.* in the New Science Center, Natural History Museum. In addition, the following Advisory Council meeting has been scheduled for *Monday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>.*