

Saint John's Arboretum Advisory Council Meeting  
Monday, October 6, 2008, 1:30 – 5:00  
Natural History Museum, Saint John's Abbey and University

**Present:** Chuck Wocken, Mike Brown, Tom Haeg, Jim Tingerthal, Terri Barreiro, Bob Russell, Alison Binsfeld, Larry Schwietz, Greg Miller, Jim Dwyer, Steve Saupe, Tom Kroll, Jenny Kutter, Jenni Poliseno, Cassie Herbst, Melissa Bach

**Opening Prayer – F. Jim Tingerthal**

**Introductions and Welcome:**

- Two new Abbey representatives on the council: Jim Tingerthal and Greg Miller
- New full-time department coordinator: Jenny Kutter

**Lands – Tom Kroll:**

- High Gemini Prairie: farmland purchased in 2003, seeded to prairie grasses and forbs June 2008.
  - Some council members toured the prairie prior to lunch
  - Unique view of campus, will put in trails that will also serve as firebreaks
- Maple Syrup Shack: renovation will provide significant increase in educational/storage space and will provide an indoor gathering place. Thanks again to Bill Mock, B. Walter Kieffer, and Steve Saupe for all their work.
- Boardwalk: Four new floats have been installed. They push the boardwalk out of the water – it may be a little shakier to walk on, but should solve the ice problem and keep the boardwalk in better shape.
- Chapel Bridge: The first bridge on the way out to the Chapel is in bad shape – was underwater this spring.
  - Soil borings have been done – will help us decide how to install footings in the future
  - Current cost estimates to replace the bridge (50-80 ft. span): \$40,000
  - Options: a floating bridge similar to boardwalk? Chris Schellinger may be able to build a covered bridge that wouldn't weather as quickly?
  - The water has gone down, and there is a trail around the bridge so the replacement is not urgent
  - The bridge is currently on the capital budget, but will likely need a special gift to rebuild unless the cost comes down significantly.
- St. Joseph Annexation Plans: City is proposing a 6,000 acre orderly annexation agreement with St. Joseph township that would include 800 acres of Saint John's land. SJ asked not to be annexed, but was turned down.
  - Utilizing LCCMR grant and Avon Hills relationship to pursue training and education on cluster/smart development
  - Green Cities conference scheduled for Oct. 20-21, leading into public hearing on new city comp plan Oct. 22
- Walz and other neighboring properties: Arboretum is continuing to work closely with adjacent neighbors

**Fundraising – Jim Dwyer:**

- Ginger Delles, SJU employee, gave \$7,000 to Arboretum for work on new prairie

- Joe Fraune, former DNR manager, will give approx. \$135,000 to Arboretum for land acquisition, student support, etc. at the discretion of Arboretum/ Abbey/University.
- Jim expressed the need for the Arboretum to have a capital expense list available for donors – it is easier for donors to give to a specific project than general giving in larger amounts

**Administrative – Tom Kroll:**

- Chair nominations – brainstorming of potential job description for chair
  - Works with staff on agenda for meetings
  - Contacts various committee chairs to provide support and be sure projects are moving forward
  - Maintains a close working relationship with Abbey/Univ./Board of Regents
  - Tracking progress on strategic plan
  - Elections for 1-yr term each December
  - Council selected two-members to form a nominations committee: Bruce Wollmering and Terri Barreiro (Tom Kroll as back-up)
  - Nominations committee will call for nominations from current council members and will present at least 2 nominations for vote at the December 5 council meeting
- Board Development – have a full discussion during the December meeting to address:
  - How do we get the right people to serve on the council?
  - Work -plan – where are the gaps?
  - Member recruitment – get University input after the Dec. meeting
- Center for the Environment – Mike Brown
  - Working with Derek Larson and Env. Studies department to envision what a Center would look like
  - Create a clearinghouse for information, identify gaps in education, research, etc. not currently met by ES or Arboretum
  - Mike will hopefully facilitate a meeting with interested parties in early January to envision the Center
  - Any other Arb council members interested in being involved should be in touch with Mike
- Long-term leadership – discussion of needs for future:
  - Initially envisioned a triangular leadership design with Director at top point and Land Manager/Education Coordinator at 2 base points
  - Currently the Director/Land Manager is being filled by one person
  - Long-term strategy would have the director as a separate person, dedicated Abbey representative (keeping Abbey interests at heart), position would ideally be funded by the Abbey rather than University
  - Director would be a visionary, “big picture” person – would have more time to develop ideas to help the Arboretum continue to grow into the next level of education/leadership
  - Better able to set boundaries to prevent land “nibbling” from University/Prep/etc. for individual projects
  - Council generally supports the need for a third staff person
  - Will continue discussion and brainstorming at a later date – Larry Schwietz will head a committee to report back to council

**Education**— Alison Binsfeld reported on committee discussions over the last 2 months

- 2 EE fellows this year — Sarah is already seeing effects of Cassie’s second year in helping remove pressures from Sarah
  - Council will discuss making fellowships 2-year positions on a rotating basis
- Discussions of quantity vs. quality
  - Assess quality of programming, improve student/teacher ratio
  - How to target audiences or be selective in the types of programming we offer to continue to improve quality without over-stretching staff resources
- Look to make the Arboretum a meeting place for other groups — help get our name out there, offer service to other environmental groups in central MN by offering a high-quality meeting/training space
- Pre/post class visits — pilot in winter to begin to assess long-term affect of offering classroom assistance before and after field experiences
- Targeting: 7-12 grade currently underserved, look at other districts outside of 742

**CSB/SJU Education**— Tom Kroll

- Fishing Club — new on campus, but has 200 members. Aligns well with Arboretum, how can we utilize the energy/expertise?
- Promote an increase in offerings of 1-credit classes on campus (i.e. maple syrup, land navigation, fly-fishing, fire-fighting, etc) to help engage students with environment/outdoor opportunities
- Make the experience at CSB/SJU a “hands-on” liberal arts education

**Public Relations and PR**— Jenny Kutter

- Reviewed highlights of annual report: increased participants in education, multiple experiences during the year for some students; successful fundraising year; significantly increased membership
  - Look into adding a yearly summary from director in future reports
- Open House — Dec. 5, will begin working on event soon, will be calling for volunteers to help; invitations will go out sometime in October
- CSB/SJU outreach — regular ads in student newspaper, getting the Arboretum name out there and encouraging students to get outside and get involved
  - Look into expanding ads to general community
  - Possibly strive for news stories rather than ads since stories are free

**Swayed Pines**—Melissa Bach

- “Old time fun with a sustainable twist”
- Folk festival went well considering it was student led and the weather was bad
- Melissa met with Lee Hanley (one of initial founders) to get ideas for how to better plan the event in the future
- How can/should the Arboretum get further involved?
  - Interest in a large fall festival to mirror the spring maple syrup season
  - Steve Saupe sees fall wildflowers as an option
  - Arboretum may be given ownership of Colledgeville Colors event in future
  - Council should prioritize how to help plan a fall festival considering the number of options available

**Next meeting: Friday, Dec. 5 (open house will be that evening)**