

TO: Environmental Concerns Subcommittee of FGC  
FROM: Gene Bakko  
RE: Meeting minutes for 7 Oct. 2008

Present: Gene Bakko, Lisa Foster, Alan Norton, Pete Sandberg, Judy Stromayer

Introduce Student Naturalists and Environmental Coalition leaders Lisa Foster and John vanderLinden (John was not able to attend). Also announce that Paul Jackson, new chair of Environmental Studies, will be on the committee (not able to attend).

Cannon River Watershed Partnership announcement: Gene mentioned that Dave Legvold is stepping down as director of CRWP. They will also be hiring a new wetland scientist.

Electrical Transmission Lines project: Gene gave update on most recent announcement by the CAPX2020 project to run large electrical transmission lines through this area by saying it appears these lines will now not run across St. Olaf property, which was a possibility earlier.

Fall Land Activities: Gene reported there has been considerable buckthorn removal on campus including a successful volunteer student effort led by Lisa and John on Saturday, Sept. 27., and a very successful alumni volunteer effort on Homecoming morning from 8-10AM preceding the dedication of Regents NS Hall. There has also been some fall mowing of several small wetlands which may be followed later by small burns in these areas to help reduce invasive species. The large pond near Skoglund was drained late this summer to rejuvenate aquatic food chains in the water. Refilling of the pond will begin in October. There will be a tree planting later in October of about 50 native sugar maples donated by Leif Knecht at Green Grow Nursery. Gene also said we will be planning the last of our direct tree seeding projects on about 6 acres of farmland on the south side of Highway 19. This will be planted native tree seed arranged through the MN DNR.

Forest Legacy program: We discussed the possibility of enrolling out tree planting areas west of campus in the MN Forest Legacy program. Gene said he had talked to Dick Peterson, MN DNR regional forester, who told him that this would not preclude future city or state activities on this land such as new roads, etc., but would offer some status as well as some protection for the area. Gene will get the legal language that describes entitlements, possible financial benefits and limitations on activities in such a designated area.

Student Naturalist/Environmental Coalition (EC) report: Lisa reported on the volunteer buckthorn pull on Sept. 27 behind Ytterboe dorm. They also led wind turbine and natural lands tours of all the Northfield 6th graders on Oct. 2 & 3. The EC has been active in attending the MN PowerShift meeting and activities in the Twin Cities.

Industrial Park and associated roads: Alan and Pete said plans are on course to continue with this west of St. Olaf property and that Cedar Avenue will turn west over to Garrett instead of coming straight through St. Olaf land. Details as to exactly where the curves in this road will go are unclear. Also, 320th St. is on the agenda for Dakota Co. to be paved in summer of 2009. This will help alleviate some traffic through the St. Olaf part of town.

Open Door Nursery program: Alan raised the issue of liability in having field trips on out natural lands for youth groups. He will contact Open Door Nursery to make sure they are covered by their own insurance when they are on our property.

Regents Nat. Science Hall: Pete reported that landscaping for the building will be completed this fall.

New Road on Natural Lands from Tostrud Parking lot to college composter at N. Ave.: Basic work on this road has been completed. Pete said we could go ahead and plan spring prairie planting of the area adjacent to the road that has been graded. Construction of this road will not be completed until next spring and will not be open to the public.

Future Playing Field space: Judy raised the question of possible incorporation of the wind turbine field into athletic fields. While there is not a time table for this, it was suggested we should draw up possible plans for use of this field (approximately 18 acres). Possible uses could include STOGROW, Art Barn, additional parking, as well as future playing fields.

Meeting adjourned,  
Minutes by Gene Bakko