

EnviroAlums
Steering Committee Meeting
Lewis Center, 2nd floor conference room
15 March 2014: 12:30 to 2:20 p.m.

Present: Kristin Braziuonas, Carl McDaniel [in Lewis Center] and Tim Ballard, Susan Bernat, Andrew deCoriolis, Meredith Dowling, Anders Ferguson, Meredith Dowling, Walt Galloway, Lewis Gilbert, Abe Kruger, John Petersen, Paul Safyan, John Schaefer, Maggie Zimmer [via teleconference].

Absent: Andrew Barnett

Guests: David Gard, Executive Director, The Oberlin Project (via teleconference).

Updates:

The Gateway Project: McDaniel reported that the Gateway Project was approved by the Board of Trustees at its March 2014 meeting. Ground breaking is expected before June 2014. The Oberlin Inn will be taken down in phases while the new hotel is built so that hotel facilities will be available during construction.

The Oberlin Project (TOP): David Gard, Executive Director of TOP, stated that the College goal is to be climate positive by 2025 and the City of Oberlin by 2050. The College and City, as a joint project in the Clinton Foundation Climate Positive Development Program, has moved from Candidate to Participant status, a major accomplishment (4 or 5 of the 18 in the Program have advanced to Participant). A celebration will be held in Oberlin on 3 April 2014.

David gave a three word description of TOP: catalyze (pull people together to accomplish something), replicate (others can do what TOP has done), disappear (hand-off initiated projects and programs to others) with the long term goal of making sustainability the default option for College and City.

TOP has four priorities at this time: 1. Significantly reduce carbon emissions. Oberlin's electricity will be ~90% carbon neutral in 2015 and the next challenge is to transform housing stock to be energy efficient and for new buildings to be climate positive while demonstrating how to accomplish this and create jobs and self-sufficiency in the process. 2. Transform the % of local food consumed in Oberlin area from ~6% to ~70% following a road map developed by Brad Masi '93 with a early step being the creation of a hub for local food. 3. Create a process for generating cash flow and local investment to provide viable revenue streams for local initiatives and generation of jobs. 4. Foster policies that lead to long-term decision thereby making sustainability the default option.

Braziunas stated that TOP was helping POWER's (Powering Oberlin With Efficiency Responsibly) energy advocate, Greg Jones, to overcome a major barrier to energy efficiency in Oberlin houses, many have knob and tube electrical wiring that needs to be replaced before houses can be insulated. Petersen made two comments: 1.

Environmental sustainability needs to be a central component of Oberlin College's strategic plan now being formulated and not a last minute addition as it was in the current strategic plan. E could advocate for this central role. 2. The College has approved a \$10 student fee for carbon management (~\$25,000 per year). Tani Colbert-Sangree '13 has been working at TOP on carbon management and E has funded a current student to work with this initiative.

Oberlin College divestment for from fossil fuels and socially responsible impact investment or impact investing (SRI): Ferguson stated that the Trustees have taken on these two issues. He expects serious efforts including allocation of several million dollars for impact investing. The Trustees approved last weekend the formation of a

council to consider impacting investing (composed of 9 members: students, alumni, faculty, trustees, and Trustee Chief Investment Officer). This initiative is compatible with student initiatives on SRI. These initiatives will help teach Trustees about sustainability issues. Ferguson sees these as good steps forward and expects them to bear fruit. E can constructively support these initiatives through the Alumni Council to encourage more impact investing. He also stated that students are able to affect substantial SRI by engaging their families to use the family's assets for SRI. Students had a forum on SRI last weekend that E helped fund. Ferguson will give an update in September 2014.

Use of E's funds for promoting the affiliate group's goals as stated in its charter: deCoriolis reported for the ad hoc committee. From 2007 through 2013, E funded 23 projects with ~\$10,000 for professional development (including activism), educational experiences, and seed funds for environmental initiatives. The College Edge Fund (has tens of thousands of dollars per year to allocate) a few years back funded some projects similar to those E funded, but the Edge Fund is returning to its original focus on major infrastructure projects (i.e., photovoltaic panels for Kohn Hall) that E does not fund. The committee considered why requests for funds have decreased in the past few years and concluded the decrease mostly occurred because of poor promotion and lack of awareness among students.

It is agreed that a major attribute of E funding is its fast turnaround of proposal and funding, usually measured in days to a week or two. Ballard, deCoriolis, and Lewis agreed to update E's RFP (application form) and information on E's website to include a summary of proposals, E funding, and final reports.

Braziunas presented the draft proposal for the use of E Endowment income to fund an annual fellowship for a student or recent graduate. A number of concerns were raised about what E wanted the fellowship to accomplish. In the end the SC unanimously agreed that it would be desirable to fund a fellowship this coming summer/academic year and that the fellowship would be for about \$3,000 and pay between \$10 and \$20 per hour. Braziunas agreed to revise the proposal to reflect the discussion and via email gain SC consensus in time to promote the fellowship this spring for coming summer/academic year.

New business:

McDaniel reviewed the Charter-stated size and composition of the SC: up to 18 members divided into 3 equal size classes each serving for 3 year terms. The current SC has 15 members with 5 in each class. McDaniel asked each SC member to nominate one person for the SC by sending the name and person's background/qualifications to him.

McDaniel stated that he would step off the SC in September 2014 when his current term expires.

Meeting adjourned at 2:20 p.m.

Steering Committee Members:

Kristin Braziunas, Lewis Gilbert, Carl McDaniel, John Petersen, and John Schaefer (expire in 2014); Susan Bernat, Meredith Dowling, Anders Ferguson, Paul Safyan, Maggie Zimmer (expire in 2015); Timothy Ballard; Andy Barnett, Andrew deCoriolis, Walter Galloway, Abe Kruger (expire in 2016).

Next SC meeting: Saturday, 20 September 2014, time TBA, Lewis Center Conference Room.

Respectfully submitted

Carl N. McDaniel '64

Chair, EnviroAlums