

Wisconsin Urban Forestry Council

November 4, 2011
South Central DNR Service Center
3911 Fish Hatchery Road, Fitchburg WI

Members in attendance: Shirley Brabender Mattox, Patty Dreier, Tom Dunbar, Marla Eddy, Mark Freberg, John Gall, Leif Hubbard, Greg Kessler, Tom Landgraf, Don Merkes, Art Ode, Ken Ottman, Vijai Pandian, Jordan Skiff, Bryan Spencer, Jeff Treu, Kelli Tuttle, Les Werner, Kevin Westphal,

Members absent: Robert Brush, Bob Dahl, Dan Traas, Joe Wilson, Jeff Wolters

Ex Officio members in attendance: Dick Rideout, Jeff Roe, Laura Wyatt

DNR in attendance: Mark Heyde, Anne Linkert, Darrell Zastrow

Call to Order and Introductions

Kelli Tuttle

Welcome to Darrell Zastrow, DNR, who will share and discuss the Strategic Direction Operations Plan.

Approval of 6/17/11 and 9/9/11 meetings: Tom Dunbar moved, Leif Hubbard seconded for approval of both sets. Carried by majority vote.

DNR Strategic Direction Operations Plan

Darrell Zastrow

Darrell presented an overview of the Strategic Direction Operations Plan, highlighting areas pertinent to Urban Forestry, with emphasis on the following:

- What is DNR's role?
- What is next stage in implementation?
- What work that is important have we overlooked? Seeking feedback.
- Linking goal of increasing canopy with increasing investment, both in finances and partnerships.
- Focus on inventory
- Ops plan focuses on how we will try to get the work done.
- Noted complementary efforts in other areas, e.g.: Information Technology, which will improve efficiencies and operational success for Urban Forestry.
- Positive aspects: increasing investments as relate to urban forestry, increasing priority of urban forestry. Looking forward to engaging partners.
- From partners: what are desired outcomes? Develop a 'business plan' with partners.
- Strategic plan targeting next five years. Will try to unfold that plan within the year.
- No change to grant program moving forward. Dollars will remain the same, but will move from many small grants to fewer large grants, allowing partnerships.
- Intent is to implement supervisory structure by July 1, 2012.

- Looking for feedback on what has been missed within the strategic direction. Does council believe strategic direction is on or off target? Many decisions have already been made.

Darrell opened the floor for questions and discussion:

- Kelli raised question of whether this is permanent change: yes
- How often will this process be done? Originally every 10 years, now every 5 years.
- Marla: Please highlight changes to structure.
- Darrell: rightsizing of supervisory construct; change to four districts; team, area, district, Darrell reporting structure; specialized programs (e.g.: Urban Forestry) will have a team structure throughout the state, report to team leader with role of mentor and coach; Working group model will be more formalized into a team.
- Art: how will you be sure to maintain service to clients?
- Darrell: learn expectations to set service objectives and product goals.
- Mark: Focusing on outcomes? Set goals, get feedback, measure outcomes.
- Tom D.: Outcome isn't just increased canopy. It is increased air quality, increased water quality, increased jobs, etc. Canopy is a way to achieve these larger outcomes. We need to identify and talk about the true outcomes that canopy provides.
- Darrell: It is up to us to determine outcomes with partners, and how to quantify.
- Marla: what are the benchmarks for measuring successes? How often will they be reviewed?
- Tom D.: added that measurements must be used to implement change.
- Ken: Gratified to see urban forestry mentioned as much as it is in Strategic Direction. Personal feelings on reporting relationships: "it's about time". Sees changes as good, great, exceptional. Re: shift in direction: likes shift from street tree management to entire canopy. He likes the idea of partnership encouragement and looking at larger plans for grant money – moves collaborative efforts forward. Feels plan represents urban forestry well.
- Jeff Treu: would appreciate if council could stay involved in Strategic Direction plan.
- Dick: Council should look at bigger picture. Would expect that Council would be involved in making decisions and setting standards. Emphasized importance of being able to state what difference programs have made in communities, rather than just number of dollars. Again emphasized outcomes. Noted that role of Council is to advance urban forestry throughout the state.
- Tom Landgraf: students coming in are "clueless" where canopy is concerned. How it impacts energy, etc. As we are looking at Strategic Direction, now is the time to be looking at non-traditional ways to get the message out. Help people connect the dots. Secondly: real estate industry slump has benefited canopy because fewer trees are being cut on outskirts. Urban large growth now threatened as areas are being redeveloped. Advocates using this as opportunity to educate developers on the role of trees.
- Darrell: increasing investments in an economist, marketing and utilization. Will also focus on economics of non-traditional values such as mitigation of heat, cooling, services that are provided by trees in general. Here are the opportunities to add values because of trees. Speak in terms of values to public.
- Tom Landgraf: Be bold. Not just loud, but bold. Agency should educate development community and non-traditional element of educational community.

- Kevin: re: education and outreach: what if we start sending message to grade school children? These students become adults with appreciation for the value of urban forest and its benefits.
- Darrell: more work in education and outreach has been identified.
- Kelli: portions of ops plan drawn from council report. Feels the council has been listened to. Does council offer support?
- Ken Ottman moved letter be drafted by council in support of Strategic Direction, including affirmation that Urban Forestry Council will - and is interested in - playing a role in continuation of implementation of Strategic Direction. Seconded by Art Ode. Passed by majority.
- Kelli reminded group to speak with WAA, etc., to get their feedback, and to determine whether those groups are also supportive.

ACTION: Letter support Strategic Direction be sent to Division of Forestry

Thanks were offered to Darrell.

10:45 break

10:52 call to order

Future Focus – Task Focus

Mark Heyde

Mark introduced handouts: recommendations - as copied from last Urban Forestry Council report - Urban Forestry Council mission statement/definition of Council role, list of future focus/potential action items. Mark gave an overview of the work done to date, and stated that today's exercise would be to circle back to 100 item list, and talk about possible admissions to list of potential action items. Ask: what are the outcomes, sense of urgency, how doable, timeframe, scope, scale of action for each item. Let's have discussion and distillation of list. Council would then take the top of the list and come up with the outcomes, etc.

- Kelli: In a nutshell, we need to step up to the plate and do more.
- Laura: we need to look at the concept of the task and its intent, not just at the specifics of the task.
- Ken: clarified that list would be brought to broad objectives/goals, with activities/outcomes defined within those objectives. Believes council should focus on mission and recommendations/stated goals.
- Future focus sheet: high = urgency, medium = timeframe, low = doable, add fourth column = consistency with strategies
- Jordan recommended addition of EAB to list of future focus items
- Ken, re: #53 = mission statement. Feels #53 should be at the top of the list.
- Mark noted that action items should be in addition to mission statement.
- Mark F., re: #81: One perspective that it is useful to include in council action, other perspective that that action should belong to others.
- Dick: define how action items fit into mission statement, then figure out the actions behind implementation. Consider how much work council wants to put into advising DNR. Make sure everything you expect the council to do is doable and the resources are available to focus on those issues.

- Leif: how much can this group do? How much effort will it be to advise DNR on their new plan? How much energy does the group have to go beyond core responsibilities?
- Mark H.: Need to consider core work moving forward. Today's effort is not an endpoint. Limitations on how much we can work on today.
- Mark F.: Should we add an EAB related item to list?
- Jeff Treu: Already there, isn't it?
- Les, re: #81: Is the role of the council to advise communities?
- Jordan: Every item on the list should start with "advise DNR on..."
- Ken: does not believe council is currently voice of urban forestry. If we would like to become that voice, the series of items from 54 to 58 address this, which are not on short list. Council needs to be more active in branding, media protocols, etc.
- Mark H.: We're not prepared to go back to the whole 100 list. Will force decision on #81 (EAB) by show of hands. Not interested in backtracking to the September meeting.
- Kelli: Did we drop the ball on some issues at September meeting?
- Art: If we have to advise DNR on EAB program, there is something out of whack.
- Mark H.: called for show of hands to add EAB item. Only one hand was raised. Not adding EAB item.
- Marla: It's EAB today, what is it tomorrow? Appreciates Jordan's suggestion, but should stay in eagle's view of situation.
- Mark H.: We're trying to define next steps. How do we want to approach this? Not working right now with the time we have.
- Tom D: If we want to change and respond to new plan, we will need to work as a group outside of the quarterly meetings. Do we have the time, and want to put in the effort? Tom is willing to work outside of quarterly meetings with subcommittees and so on, to build action plan – three year plan.
- Kelli: To expand on Tom's suggestion, are we going to have 12 subcommittees? Her understanding was to whittle down to four.
- Don: What is desired outcome from the 12 items? Where does the list get us when we're done?
- Les: In order for me to effectively manage a resource, I need to understand the resource. What are the 3 or 4 broad scale items? Do our action items fall within them?
- John Gall: We understand our mission, what are our goals, what strategies/actions?
- John: What can this council do in the next 3-5 years to meet mission?
- Mark H.: Do you want to change/redefine council role? This is what we are trying to sort out.
- Marla: Likes Patty's suggestion of highlighting bolder items, then expanding commitment outside of quarterly meetings.
- Kelli: We're slowly taking on more activities, but do we want to do even more? Are we doing a good job in advisory role, and should we stop at that? Or should we go further?
- Mark H.: Advisory role is not being discounted. Working on larger topics could advise the advice.
- Art: Not willing to step back from the future focus list. Let's move forward, not drop ball. Let's get some meaningful work out of what has already been done.

- Tom: If we really believe urban forestry is part of energy, air quality, etc, this group is poised to expand its potential. We could expand our resources to expand our work.
- Kelli: How do we move forward? Not understanding process.
- John: Choose four main topics, set up four different groups, meet, come back with something for the next meeting or later today.
- Tom: Voice of urban forestry should be a part of every item. Each item is a way to become the voice.
- Mark H.: Conversation needed to happen. Don't feel too frustrated. If council agrees, could spend time today to form committees.
- Ken: Would like to add "advise and advocate" as a category to the future focus list.
- Les: If we have new categories, there is potential for new items which could be added to the overall list since not originally looked at in this framework.
- Ken: Raised issue of jobs. List does not address this.
- Tom D: Jobs is an outcome – just one outcome which comes out of the urban forest. Let's put every item through that filter.
- Les: Qualified jobs are one thing, professional category jobs are another. Mission should be not only creating jobs, but elevating status of jobs within this career path.
- Tom D.: In your consideration of the urban forest: are apples, (species list) considered part of the urban forest? He raised issue of food and sustainability in context of urban forest.
- Dick: Prioritize outcomes. They are critical.
- Leif: We're talking about quality of life. Urban forestry has a huge role to play in that.
- Mark H.: Do we agree that we will identify three groups to work outside quarterly meetings? Let's think about that over lunch.

12:12 break for lunch

12:43 resume

Future Focus – Task Focus, continued:

Mark reopened the discussion with the suggestion that the task at hand is to form groups as follows: Expand and Manage, Encourage to Invest, Collaborations and Partnerships, Jobs. Members of these groups were chosen by show of hands, yielding:

- Expand and manage: Art, Kelli, Marla, Les, John Gall, Jeff Treu, Vijai, Jordan, Ken
- Encourage Investment: Greg, Kevin, Bryan, Marla, Tom L., Tom D.
- Collaboration: Shirley, Tom D., Don M., Mark F., Leif
- Jobs: Encourage jobs creation: Les, Tom L., Leif, Ken, Kevin Westphal, Tom D.

Mark offered a charge to these groups: Keep in mind the voice of urban forestry and role of council. Draw from variety of sources to paint a picture – from outcome perspective – of the outcomes from that group, create a list of key concepts which would drive future actions. Use as resources the statewide Forest Strategy document, the previous work of the Council, and others. Information and data are available via an existing database. Requests for specific data can be submitted to DNR.

- Les offered a reminder to always consider advisory role of Council to DNR.
- Ken suggested we park our street tree biases at the door. Develop an overall canopy view.
- Tom D. clarified that outcomes should be measurable. He would also like to see a schedule and a list of resources, roles and responsibilities as part of the charge.
- Per Kelli, the next Council meeting is in March, date to be determined via Doodle. Each group should choose a leader/point person. Let's schedule first meeting for each group, where at a leader can be chosen. The following will set up initial meeting for each group: Jobs: Les, Collaboration: Tom D., Encourage to Invest: Greg, Expand and Manage: Kelli

ACTION: Issue groups will meet and report back at March meeting.

There was a brief discussion – opened by Kevin – about the current funding source for the Urban Forestry Council, and whether other funding sources could be pursued. The current source is DNR. Dick indicated that DNR does not have the resources to be a fiscal manager for the Council, nor can the Council apply for a DNR grant. Tom Dunbar offered the Center for Resilient Cities as a potential fiscal agent as needed.

Urban Forestry Council Awards Program

Jeff Treu

Note handout provided by Jeff Treu. Jeff is new as chair to the awards committee this year. Who would be interested in serving on committee? Jordan, Tom, Jeff, and Jeff raised hands. Contacts from the public in regard to awards should be forwarded to Laura.

Jeff stated that nominations are needed for Lifetime Achievement, Distinguished Service, and Elected Official awards. He advised Council to look at website to get a feel for who might be an appropriate nominee. Big projects are not always the most important. Wanted ideas and input from all areas. Nominations are due December 30-31. We can consider more than one award in any category.

Mark F. shared his experience of presenting an award to the Potawatomi, saying it was interesting and fun. He tried to recruit a Reservation member to be part of the Urban Forestry Council. Mark noted the tribe's cultural vs. community approach to trees, then offered a description of the award process and ritual event. Laura noted that through this award process, the tribe has expressed an interest in becoming a Tree City USA.

ACTION: UFCouncil members will consider and submit award nominations by Dec. 31.

AB-216 Billboard Vegetation Bill

Shirley Brabender Mattox

Shirley: "Legislators don't have a clue about trees." She offered a copy of the fiscal estimate narrative for review by the group. Prior to 2006, standards existed for getting a permit. With this bill, the standards are removed, so all permit applicants receive the permit. Shirley noted that the bill's "fiscal impact on the vegetation removal on 703 miles of right-of-way is valued at over 100 million dollars". Putting a value on our public landscaping, feels the bill is not necessary.

It was further noted that the Council cannot make a recommendation, and Shirley asks that DNR make a recommendation. Individuals may also make recommendations, as may other entities. Tom D. suggests that the DNR could support the bill if billboard companies were charged.

Shirley made a motion: "Whereas AB 216 could have direct impact on trees along urban corridors, the Wisconsin Urban Forestry Council asks the Wisconsin DNR – Division of Forestry to oppose this bill in a similar fashion to the opposition voiced by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. We are especially concerned about Section 15 of the bill: 84.305(3)(c) which eliminates the requirement to notify adjacent landowners and municipalities of vegetation removal."

Motion seconded by Jordan.

- Jordan: Where does this bill fall in schedule in legislative process?
- Shirley: Due to go back to committee, then discussion, then vote. No further public hearings scheduled.
- Dick: Bill is in transportation committee at this time. Unsure whether public testimony can be accepted at this time.
- General discussion of bill and its implications ensued.
- Leif pointed out impact to urban vs. rural.
- Dick: his belief is that DNR would not make a recommendation, but that certainly the council should speak with the DNR legislative liaison/secretary.
- Ken advises letter should go to Secretary and Paul DeLong.
- Motion as read earlier, and seconded by Jordan, is put to the council for vote.
- Leif removes himself from vote

Motion passes by majority.

Kevin excused self from remainder of meeting.

ACTION: An advisory letter will be sent to Paul DeLong.

DNR report

Jeff Roe

Laura noted that a question has been raised about ability to perform business via email. After discussion with attorney, this has been dropped. There was a further question about how many Council members can meet without needing public notice. Laura's understanding is that a walking quorum of seven members is the limit before public notice is required. This will affect the committees just formed. Shirley asked if there is something called a working committee, and does that have different guidelines? Laura will clarify definition of walking quorum, and will get clarification on public meeting requirements.

ACTION: Laura will seek clarification on requirements.

Jeff Roe presented some printed updates, and reviewed highlights of those updates.

Ken: is there going to be an opportunity for the Urban Forestry Council to be represented at December 5 meeting, and to have input? Jeff will bring for discussion.

Dick: Regarding joint networking at Johnson's nursery: Connected with Secretary of Agriculture, then Director of Agricultural Marketing, then Marketing Specialist. Interest was expressed in developing a plan that would support diversity of trees at nurseries.

There was also discussion about short term plantings for nurseries to stimulate nursery sustainability.

Open Mic

Kelli Tuttle

- Les noted budget lapses being distributed over UW system campuses. He also noted impact of sharp decrease in number of enrolled students. Urban forestry at Stevens Point is also anticipated to decline.
- Per Ken, Stevens Point produces 10% of the forestry graduates in the United States.
- Vijai stated that Brown County is receiving broad support from the public. 30% of calls at extension are related to urban forestry. He anticipates public outreach to increase due to a grant.
- Art completed tree inventory and management plan for City of Bayfield, using grant funds.
- Leif: "Things are evolving in the state."
- Marla is waiting to hear for approval of budget amendments. Madison will be hiring two arborist assistants to help with EAB. Madison is also working on tree inventory, and looking to hire assistants for that task as well. Serious concerns over EAB.
- Jeff Treu offered apologies for missing last meeting, appreciative of clarifications on his behalf..
- Ken: Thanks for listening.
- Mark F. stated that the Packers will do another year of First Downs for Trees.
- Dick: Completed Tour de Trees, raised over \$7,000 on behalf of the tour.
- Jeff R. noted that CTMI starts next week, with 20 students this year.
- Bryan noted that, thanks to DNR, received Urban Forestry grant for parks tree inventory and EAB management plan.
- Don is continuing EAB plan with \$5,000 match. Neighborhood newsletter carried article on value of urban forestry.
- Tom D. removed 22,000 square feet of asphalt to build outdoor classroom in Milwaukee. In Madison, Resilience Research Center is under way.
- Shirley noted participation of Tracy Salisbury in spreading the word on urban forestry.
- Patty stated that storm cleanup in Stevens Point now completed, will take a long time to recover. TCUSA came through for Stevens Point.
- Greg advised the Council to keep tabs on assembly bill 303. Assembly approved, but failed to send to Senate.

Date, time, and location of next meeting are to be determined via Doodle poll.

2:35: meeting adjourned.