

BUILDINGS, INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES COMMITTEE MEETING

January 22, 2019

ATTENDANCE:

David Arndt – Operations Engineer, AEC

Hank Baier – Associate Vice President, Facilities and Operations

Marcus Beall - Building Services

Mike Bice – Ross School Facilities

Austin Glass – CSG/RSG, PhD student COE

Jane Immenen – Forestry Specialist, Grounds

Tashia Munson – Librarian, Library Operations

Doug Richstone – Astronomy Faculty and Committee Chair

Dan Rife – LSA Facilities and Operations

Daniel Roth – LSA student, CSG rep

Guest: Andrew Berki, Director, Office of Campus Sustainability

DISCUSSION

1. Introductions
2. There was an enthusiastic discussion of University initiatives and progress in the area of sustainability lead by Andy Berki. This is summarized in the attached Powerpoint slides, which served as the basis for the conversation. Questions and comments from all followed.
3. Should the goals (adopted in 2011) be absolute, or should they be normalized for campus activities in some quantifiable manner (for example, should trash generation be normalized to the number of people on campus)? Having absolute unnormalized goals might create perverse incentives.

4. Considerable optimism was expressed about meeting the goal of 40% reduction in waste to landfill, although the optimism seemed based on ideas and possibilities for change rather than measured progress to date. Committee members provided comments based on observation of selves and colleagues. The general perception was that strategic placement of landfill, recycling and composting bins was critical. Education was critical. In general, our colleagues are sympathetic to better strategies in this area, but participate only so long as its convenient.
5. An even better result was reported in controlling waste into the Huron River. Here the campus has nearly achieved its goal by reducing surface water runoff from campus and by reducing chemicals applied to grounds. Its possible that the Office of Sustainability has underestimated campus improvement in this area because the stated reduction on slide 6 reflects only the reduction in applied chemicals and does not include the reduction of water runoff.
6. The situation concerning Greenhouse Gas Generation seems less optimistic. As shown on slide 10 GHG has been difficult to reduce. The campus power plant upgrade (which basically shifts 15 megawatts from purchased power from DTE – which is largely coal produced – to locally generated power from natural gas) and DTE's gradual shift away from coal, basically compensates for expected growth. Although the campus energy use is becoming more efficient, the gain in efficiency merely compensates for growth. Prospects for the future include improving lighting and HVAC efficiency. Its possible that a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) with an electricity provider might be an effective way to reach the goal of a reduction of 100 metric tons of CO₂ emission per year. The committee was interested in this.
7. The committee noted the formation of the President's Commission on Carbon Neutrality. The charge and membership have now been announced and a link is included below.

<https://president.umich.edu/committees/presidents-commission-on-carbon-neutrality/charge/>

MEETING ADJOURNED